Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 20 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA JANUARY 1, 1929 No. 10

The Field is the World

THE YEAR 1928 has demonstrated afresh the power of ideas and that the conflict proceeding is in and over the minds of men. Being the tenth year from the Armistice, Nov. 11, 1918, statesmen and political writers are looking back and asking: What are the gains following the world war and developed during these ten years? and proceed to name certain events. Others enumerate the same events and claim that they are not the result of the war but of the trend of public opinion manifested before the war and in a measure interrupted by that conflagration. The most ignorant and stolid may seem to lack the ability to think, but as a matter of fact their condition is the result of thought, the outcome of ideas—either of their own, or impressed upon them by others.

THE GREAT IMAGE which king Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream represented not only a succession of empires but a demonstration of a variety of ideas. And it was in the feet and toes of the image that the idea of democracy became prominent; that is, government by the people through accredited representatives. But right down to the last there is still manifested the iron of despotism. In the dream nothing is said of active rivalry and contention between the iron and the clay; but the brittleness of the clay is referred to as a menace to the strength of the iron.

With this Scriptural illustration of world power before us, we should have no difficulty in recognising that the world war is not to be taken alone, but must be viewed as one of a series of attempts at adjustment between the clay and the iron—a realignment with some increase of the clay as against the iron. The conclusion of the war became the occasion for a change of government in Germany—from a group of States under an Emperor, to a federation of States in a Republic. But the seeds of that change had been sown as long ago as the French Revolution and the campaigns of Napoleon, revolt was threatened in 1848, and the social-democrat idea had been persistently kept before the people until their demand for reform was at last realized. Yet Germany still has the iron of a strong government, to a large extent dominated by the Roman Catholic hierarchy acting through political parties.

* * *

RUSSIA IS NOW a self-styled Republic as a result of two revolutions—a Union of Soviet States. The war offered a favorable opportunity, yet the war itself can hardly be given the credit for it, for some of the ideas which the Soviet stands for had been circulated for many years previously and the people thus prepared for a Dictatorship under the guise of a free socialistic State. Any one who has read of events in Russia needs not to be told that there is still much of the "iron" of despotism remaining, being transferred from Czardom to Commissardom.

So one might go on to discuss other changes in Europe that the war either assisted or retarded, but of which it can not be considered their fundamental cause. In the Balkans three religious ideas have been seeking the mastery for centuries—Greek Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, and Mohammedanism, backed by Russia, Austria, and Turkey respectively. There is now no established state religion in any of these States, but political and ecclesiastical ideas are still being fought out, and many wires pulled to keep the people in mental and spiritual slavery, while both France and Italy seek to take the place of Austria as overlord. How sad that, though our Lord said "the truth shall make you free," those who claim to be His representatives on earth refuse to give out either the truth or true freedom, but seek political power and wealth through the suffrages of the people as they previously sought and obtained it through the crowned heads.

* * *

TURKEY separated Church and State, but is working for a nation professing one religion only [Mohammedanism Reformed], in the interests of unity. To this end Greeks and other Christians were expatriated to the number of many thousands. But Western education and dress, modern invention, and a liberal form of government are favored. Women have been freed from the bondage of the veil, being now allowed to appear in public places and take part in public

affairs. Regret is now expressed by the Turkish leaders that they were so long prevented from being the help to their menfolk that they might have been had they not been compulsorily secluded and forbidden to dine with males, even the male members of their own family. Reform in Turkey includes the substitution of monogamy for polygamy.

* * *

A REVISED ALPHABET. One of the most far-reaching of Turkey's reforms is the revision and simplification of the Turkish alphabet, and the adoption of Latin characters in place of the Arabic hitherto employed; also the promulgation of compulsory education laws. This greatly simplifies learning to read, and thus facilitates general education, one of the main objects of which is to raise Turkish nationals to as high a standard of literacy as is enjoyed by the more enlightened of the nations of the West. Having expelled the Greeks and the Armenians, by whom most of the trade of the country was conducted, it has become necessary to provide Turks with mental equipment for carrying it on, and also with higher moral and technical standards, to compete successfully with the industrial West. Agriculture also is to be brought up to date by the use of modern machinery and scientific methods of cultivation. The better class of Turk is said to be a hard worker, and needs only education and training to make him the equal of the Westerner.

In all this is to be seen a concrete example of the power of ideas. Though long resisted, they have penetrated at last, and because of the dictatorship of Kemal Pasha what would have taken years to bring about has now been accomplished almost overnight. It remains to be seen whether the nation will continue Mohammedan, whether the influence of Western religions will increase in spite of barriers, or whether the nation will gradually become atheistic.

Revelation, ninth chapter, contains a prophecy concerning the rise of Mahomet, the spread of Islam, the conquest of Arabia and other Saracen possessions by the Turkish hordes of the East, and their use as a scourge on Christendom fallen into idolatry. Readers who have kept their back numbers of the N.C.A. will find in our issue of February 1916, pp. 183-187, details concerning the rise and progress of the Ottoman empire as forecast by the Revelator.

* * *

DICTATORSHIP AND DEMOCRACY seem to be contradictory, but the representatives in a democracy do not always regard the wishes of their constituents; at other times they are too subservient. General Primo de Rivero, Dictator in Spain for the last five years, claims that as conducted by himself dictatorship is a success, bringing prosperity to the country. Mussolini makes the same claim for his dictatorship in Italy. Recently he cleared Italy of bandits, for many years sheltered by the monasteries and almost impossible to capture, or if captured to punish. Sicily, land of secret societies and the assassin's knife, is said to be reformed, and the peasants are being taught up-to-date agriculture. His latest move is to take over the control of youth from the Roman Catholic priests, who up to now have claimed the training of the young as their right. Mussolini proposes to train them along the lines of the Boy Scout movement. To be taken away from the priests will mean a tremendous change in the character and outlook of the boys. But perhaps it is too soon to say they will be without religious training of any kind. Religion has its uses even to a dictator, as Napoleon found when he compromised with the popes after having been opposed to them. But, in view of the wider spread of knowledge, the people to-day may be more ready to respond to Mussolini's lead and support his efforts to free the country from priestcraft.

In Italy organisations of Protestants, we read in the Press, are circulating cheap copies of the Gospels by the thousands.

* * *

MEXICO AND THE CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN STATES are examples of a lessening bondage to Rome and a more enlightened outlook by their peoples. The part played by the Bible Society colporteurs and Protestant missionaries must not be overlooked when considering these movements toward greater liberty. At the same time it must also be remembered that the Labor movement has had much to do with pointing out the ignorance and superstition fostered by the Church among the Indians and peasants, and the pride and heartlessness encouraged by the Church among the wealthy land owners.

* * *

IN ARGENTINE 100,000 Gospels have recently been published by an organisation said to resemble the Y.M.C.A., and are being sold in the streets of Buenos Aires. Recently a "Gospel Day" was celebrated, and a great meeting attended by the Government and civil authorities was held. One speaker said that

"This meeting has a clearly defined end in view, which is to arouse a general movement for the study and the propagation of the great code of Christian civilization."

* * *

This move to popularize the Bible in a Catholic country is partly explained by a statement by Robert Esmonde Sencourt, described as an English student of politics and religion in Italy and other European countries. Writing on tendencies and intrigues in the Roman Catholic Church and the support of the Pope as head of that church, he says—

"This play of tendencies is made more tense because in the Catholic countries the actual Catholics are in a minority, while Freemasons, modernists, rationalists, and crowds who are absolutely indifferent threaten to drown them.

"It is only in Protestant countries that Catholics as a whole really fulfil their obligations, and it is a fact that more practicing Catholics are Americans [i.e., U.S.A.] than belong to any other nation. If Americans have become interested in the Vatican, the Vatican lives upon America. To its upkeep France, Italy, Germany, Spain now contribute for various reasons very little. It is America which feeds it, and it is quite content to let well enough alone there."—"Current History," Oct. '28.

While still discouraging independent study of the Bible, maintaining that the Roman Catholic Church is the only authorized interpreter of it, the Papacy has now been forced to act as its defender. This is because of the growing strength of Modernism within its pale as well as by the fact that it labors largely in Protestant countries where the Bible is freely circulating. It is good propaganda in its special missions to Protestants to take Scripture texts for sermons, and it is not uncommon to see its interpretations of Scripture in the secular press.

But the more it speaks the more the Papacy becomes involved in difficulties, as witness the outcry against the Pope's Encyclical on Church Unity, issued at the beginning of 1928. Also during the late Presidential Campaign in America, when for the first time a Roman Catholic ran for the office of President, confusion was manifest among Roman Catholic archbishops in the interpretation of Catholic doctrine, of the decrees of church councils, and of the utterances of the Pope. As one of the practices of the Papacy is to deny its own teaching if thereby gain can be made for the Church, it is not surprising that in their efforts to make Roman Catholicism appear harmless the archbishops contradicted each other. But all appeared to agree in this, that it would be foolish to contend for the right to rule the State in a country where they could not possibly gain the consent of the people to such a procedure. It seemed to be all a matter of expediency.

Linking itself with the Anti-prohibition forces did not help Romanism in America. It was a confession that the Church considers its prospects brightest where men's minds generally are dulled and frequently befuddled by alcohol. It took its stand as a disrupter of the unity of the States under the Federal government, apparently hoping by the cry of States' Rights to hold the vote of the "Solid South." Here again the Papacy lost, for the greatest "landslide" in the history of the country took place: the so-called "Solid South" was divided for the first time since the creation of the Mason and Dixon line, only six of these states supporting the "wet" candidate, while eight voted for the dry candidate and a continuance of the Republican policies. The poll of the whole country gave 444 electoral votes, representing 40 States, to the "dry" candidate, and only 87 electoral votes representing but 8 States to the "wet" candidate who had the backing of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Some of the newspapers in commenting on the election seek to eliminate the religious question, as they did during the campaign. But those who are watching the signs of the times and the Lord's dealings with the Papacy cannot but see in this flouting of Romanism another blow to its prestige.

Another circumstance should be placed alongside all the Papal claims to enlightenment so freely made in enlightened Protestant countries. That is the failure of its claimed miracle working power. We know that has always been a false claim and that its so-called miracles are shams. But in this instance failure was so public and knowledge of it was so widely circulated that it must surely open people's eyes to Papal impotence. We refer to the following effort to stop the eruption of Mount Etna, as reported in the Melbourne "Argus," November 13—

ETNA ERUPTION

Worst Since 17th Century

An area of 18 square miles has been completely devastated. The molten stream is slowly swallowing up every tree and building on the way. It was an extraordinary spectacle to see the stream, with jets of small flames and bubbling like red-hot steel, tackle a three-arched bridge on the seacoast railway. The arches burst and toppled over singly, as though they were toys kicked over by a giant. The stream ultimately penetrated the largest and most solid wine cellars, the heat bursting the casks.

Troops have done remarkable work in widening the roads and reducing the congestion of the refugees.

The lava has caused intense heat, and even Messina, Catania, and Taormina people are sleeping in the open air. The whole neighbourhood is impregnated with the odour of petroleum.

Vain Appeals to Madonna

CATANIA, Nov. 12.

Despite the eruption the population of Sicily loyally celebrated King Victor Emmanuel's birthday, which coincides with Armistice Day. Specially enthusiastic messages were sent.

Meanwhile religious fervour in the devastated regions has been redoubled. Votive offerings are being made at the altars, including precious stones and workmen's tools. Pious processions are being held, the people carrying images and relics, amid awe-inspiring scenes, lit at night time by torches and the glow of the molten lava. In such an atmosphere the statue of the Madonna of Annunciation was brought out at midnight, and placed facing the advancing lava. Those in the procession knelt on the ground, *imploring the Madonna to intercede with the Almighty*, pleading for a miracle to stop the incessant eruption, *but without avail*. FINALLY the statue was *hurriedly loaded on a lorry and driven off to escape destruction*.

Worst Eruption Since 1669

ROME, Nov. 12.

Professor Ponte estimates that Etna will yet disgorge twice as much lava as that which has hitherto swept the country. He regards the eruption as the worst since 1669, when it lasted for nearly a year.

Nunziata is now blotted out. A feature of the eruption is the electrically saturated clouds of cinders, which have caused terrific explosions followed by whirlwinds.

So that while the Papacy was supporting a "wet" policy for the United States, and being defeated, it was also defeated in its miracle-working claims and unable to save the wine cellars of Sicily from the devastating lava. Even the Madonna, like the heathen gods implored on Carmel, was helpless, and words similar to Elijah's would be appropriate in the circumstances.—1 Kings 18.

* * *

THE BIBLE NOT DEAD YET. Far from it! As the Revelator tells us in the symbolic language of chapter 11, the two witnesses—the Bible as the written Word and the Church as the living witness to the truth—though for a time trampled underfoot, were revived in the period of the French Revolution and have since occupied honorable positions in the "heavens" of religious influence, "and their enemies beheld them." The position of authority occupied by the Word of God cannot be gainsaid. It is a power in the life unequalled by any other book. In 1926 General Chang Chih-kiang (now President of the restored Chinese Republic) ordered from the American Bible Society 2,000 Bibles and 6,000 Testaments for distribution among the Army. Later a second order—for 4,500 Bibles and 6,000 New Testaments—was received from him for the same purpose. And all paid for.

Though some feeling was aroused in China against missionaries during the recent war, principally against Roman Catholic methods in provinces where that church predominated and was said to be more or less in league with bandits and also with Buddhist priests, advices from China via Protestant sources are that Christianity is still welcome in its appropriate place as an instructor in righteousness and an uplifter of the people in every way. We should like to see the circulation of the Bible in these countries

followed up by true interpretations and explanations of its pages.

• • •

A BALD MISSTATEMENT. A brother in N.S.W. writes—"I am pleased to hear that my contribution reached you safely. Am enclosing herewith one pound towards L.S.F., also some clippings from Sydney dailies which speak for themselves and plainly show the foolishness of the wise." One of these clippings reads as follows—

The Rev. Alexander Nairne, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, and Mr. T. A. Glover, public orator at Cambridge, are editing a new abridged edition of the Bible.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch says: The present Bible is repellent as a book owing to the system of double columns, marginal references, and numbered verses. People are no longer buying or reading it. We are condensing it to a volume of 900 pages, dispensing with marginal notes and numbered verses. We are retaining Genesis, Exodus, and Deuteronomy (except the genealogical trees), deleting most of Leviticus and Numbers, greatly reducing Proverbs, and separating the poetical from the historical sections of Isaiah, merging the latter with Kings. We exclude Chronicles altogether and are printing the Psalms and Job in free verse. The whole of the New Testament is being retained except a few epistles, and we are inserting between the Old and New Testaments the best parts of the Apocrypha.

Here we see not only an exhibition of "the foolishness of the wise," but also a bald misstatement of fact in the assertion that "People are no longer buying or reading it." The very fact that these scholars are preparing this crippled "Bible" is evidence of the widespread interest in the Bible, and that they expect that interest to provide a market for their production. Perhaps in this they are financially wise, not otherwise.

One might ask, What right have they to take the historical portions of Isaiah and merge them with Kings? The historical parts included in Isaiah as that book is found in available manuscripts and as preserved in the Septuagint, whose antiquity cannot be questioned, add greatly to the interest of the prophecies and in some cases assist the understanding of their import. Again, why condemn the division of the Bible into numbered chapters and verses for convenient study and quotation? Text books for school use have numbered sections and paragraphs, to facilitate study and citation, and no one complains. If in a few instances the chapters are divided in not the best places, that is easily rectified in comments thereon, without throwing out the whole system of chapter and verse and marginal references and notes. Marginal notes are supposedly favored in universities and colleges, where students are encouraged to read Shakespeare and other authors with marginal comments and explanatory notes. Why the set against helpful marginal notes in the Bible?

However, the more the Bible is opposed and maltreated, the more eagerly its friends rally to its support. The Bible is still the world's "best seller," and while some scholars and critics disapprove of it, many others of equal scholarship and learning do approve of it and accept it as the inspired Word of God. The Lord said to the disciples that if they were rejected in one community they should flee to another. And so the Bible, rejected by some who should be its supporters, is being turned to the hungry masses of the world who sense its superiority to the outgrown systems of heathendom and to the false creeds of Christendom. Whatever anyone may say, the Word of God is still the ever living, incorruptible seed that begets a new life of holiness in those who accept it and the Saviour from sin it proclaims.—James 1: 18; 1 Peter 1: 18-25.

The same brother quoted above tells of the passing of one of the brethren of like precious faith aged 90, and adds—"I used to call and see him when in T——, and enjoyed it very much, always wondering at the clearness of intellect in one so old: he could quote chapter and verse and repeat Scripture equal to any young man, although very deaf and nearly blind." Let the young consider this, and fill their minds with the Scriptures while they are young and their memories are good. Its wisdom will help them through life, and if other powers fail they will have in themselves a never failing reserve of comfort and joy, a perpetual feast on the promises, and hope unfailing, fastened as an anchor to that within the veil.

We might add that the Variorum Bible, which we are now able to supply, is a good example of the Bible with notes and comments by those who love it; who, while calling attention to the readings of ancient manuscripts and here and there more exact renderings of the original, do so for the purpose of enhancing its value and inspiration; showing that whatever faults may exist in our English Authorized Version they are not numerous in any important passages, while those errors which affect important doctrines are clearly indicated; such as the omission from the most ancient manuscripts of portion of the fifth chapter of John's first epistle, concerning which the reader will find further comment in the book "The Christian's Comforter."

The Kellogg Peace Pact

THIS PACT, designed to accomplish the outlawry of war among the nations that have signed it, is now before the Senate of the United States for consideration, and for ratification if thought fit. The whole world is expecting great things from this pact; but while every move in the right direction is commendable, the Lord's people know that peace on earth will not be established as a result of the efforts of men, but by the powerful rule of God's Kingdom, which will cause His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. So we pray, "Thy Kingdom come!" At the time of this writing the Senate has not completed its deliberation over the pact, but it is expected in what appear to be well informed circles that the effort for ratification will be successful.

Memorial Supper, 1929

According to the calendar in use among the Jews in our Lord's day, and still followed by them, the Anniversary of the night in which our Lord was betrayed, and in which He instituted the Supper that He commanded should thenceforth be observed in memory of himself, will fall this year on Wednesday, April 24, after sunset. This Supper displaces the Passover Supper that had been observed by our Lord, His disciples, and all loyal children of Israel in commemoration of the deliverance of their nation from Egyptian bondage, hence is observed annually

on the same night, the Lord's Memorial Supper having been instituted by Him immediately after His last celebration with them of the Jewish Passover.

The Memorial date this year comes nearly a month after the Papacy's "Good Friday," which is generally, but erroneously, in Christendom regarded as the anniversary of our Saviour's death on Calvary. This announcement is therefore made so that all N.C.A. readers may have the notice in good time. Further explanation may be found in the book, "The Church and its Ceremonies," and there will, D.V., be more on the subject in the N.C.A. for February.

♣ ♣ ♣

The Work of Faith

— Annual Report —

WITH THANKS AND PRAISE to Almighty God, our loving Heavenly Father, for His preserving care through the year, we have pleasure in presenting the Report of the Work of Faith for the year 1928. We also desire to express appreciation for the loving co-operation of friends of the truth, both in financial support and in active service in the circulation of reading matter, as well as by talking privately with any disposed to listen to the good news. This all constitutes a Work of Faith because it is carried on under the conviction that it is a Work the Lord desires to have done, the instruments of His service being His people now as in past times, and the specific implement being the truth in their hands.

Experience has shown that the truth in printed form is one of the best means of serving out the truth, since each tract and book contains numerous quotations from Scripture which thus the reader has placed before him in convenient form to refer to and compare with his own Bible. In printed form the truth can be circulated far and wide through the post, reaching the "back blocks" as well as the cities, foreign lands as well as home neighbourhoods. If the one who receives the book or tract is not interested thereby, it may be passed on to some one else who will be interested. Through the year we have been encouraged by hearing of results from books and tracts given out or sold many years ago. How many persons have read them in the meantime we cannot say, but eventually they fell into the hands of some who appreciated them as truth more satisfying than anything previously known. And those who were the means of scattering the seed in this way may well feel that the Lord used them and will still further bless their efforts.

The Advocate Sustaining Fund

The monthly publication of "The New Covenant Advocate" is useful as a bond between those of like precious faith who are enjoying the fellowship the New Covenant in Christ's blood makes possible, since under it we have our standing as forgiven and reconciled believers accepted as sons of God. Walking in the light we have fellowship with God and with Christ, who are Light, and with one another. And through the N.C.A. this oneness is encouraged—oneness of doctrine through addresses and articles going into the Scriptures on the various topics, oneness of concept concerning the signs of the times in which we live, and oneness of love through having the ideal of Christ's love constantly held before us. "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." And our love for one another, even those unknown ones who are hungering and thirsting and longing, leads us who love them to make many sacrifices on their behalf, for self-sacrifice is the true test of love—"as I have loved you." The financial statement is as follows—

FINANCIAL REPORT, "NEW COVENANT ADVOCATE," December 19, 1927, to December 18, 1928.

Receipts.								
Subscriptions and Sales of Extra Copies					£188	3	5	$914.50
"Advocate" Sustaining Fund					213	9	1	1037.39
Expenditure.								
Adverse Balance brought forward from last year			£17	4	1		$83.61	
Paper and Printing			357	11	7		1737.83	
Postage			49	18	0		242.52	
Part Office Expense			60	11	2		294.31	
			£485	4	10	£401 12 6	$2358.27	$1951.80
Adverse Balance carried forward						83 12 4		406.38

In addition to the Adverse Balance there is an unpaid printer's bill for £25: 11: 8 ($124.33).

From this it will be seen that the N.C.A. is largely supported by donations. The prospects for the coming year 1929 are that it will still need co-operation along this line, and this we confidently expect to receive because it is the Lord's Work, and while we are humble and trustful and obedient to His will we may feel assured He will continue to use it to His own glory and praise.

The Cheerful Givers' Fund

This Fund is used to meet the cost of printing tracts for free circulation, with freight and postages. Knowing that some who like to engage in distributing tracts have not the means to pay for them, while some who through illness or other causes cannot do door to door work but can supply funds for printing, while others of course do both, the supply of free tracts is presented as another means of active co-operation in giving out the message. Thousands of tracts have been distributed in one day in large cities by a number systematically joining in the work, while other thousands are distributed by individuals working their own districts in spare time. Some who do this are by no means strong, and can do only a little at a time, but they are glad to do it, and they get a blessing from it. That which causes us a measure of pain and inconvenience in the doing of it for Christ's sake is a sweet savor to God, being in imitation of Him who voluntarily suffered so much for us.

This Fund also defrays the expenses of special public Lectures and Chart Talks in the effort to reach new hearers. And we are glad to say that results have followed this method also. Besides which the minds of those already familiar with the teaching are refreshed by the repetition of these great truths, according to the ages and dispensations of the divine purpose, which God formed for His Son. (Hebrews 1 : 1, 2.) The financial statement follows—

REPORT OF CHEERFUL GIVERS' FUND. December 19, 1927, to December 18, 1928.

Receipts.			
Voluntary Donations		£171 14 10	$834.66
Expenditures.			
Adverse Balance brought forward from last year ..	£34 2 9		$165.90
Paper and Printing Tracts	77 6 9		375.85
Freight, Postage and Duty	58 12 7		284.95
Part Office Expenses	60 11 1		294.29
Special Lectures	81 9 0		395.85
	£312 2 2	£171 14 10	$1516.84 $834.66
Adverse Balance carried for'd		140 7 4	682.18

The deficit above indicated, which is carried over to the New Year, is occasion for regret. Yet we believe that it will soon be made up. We still have on hand a quantity of the tracts "Gospel" and "The Blessing of all Nations" published during the past year, and any who would enjoy distributing them are asked to write us, stating about how many can be placed. If you live in a large city and have not yet done door to door work with tracts, try it, and see what a blesing there is in it. Now that the Post Office has made letter boxes at the gate compulsory (at least in Australia), tract distribution is not so wearying as when there was first a long walk up to the door, and then back-breaking stooping to shove the tract under the door. However, that is one way to keep young! in this age when everyone wishes to look at least ten years younger than they are. Good exercise in the open air—as beneficial as baseball or cricket. Look how they have to work to bat a ball and make a run, how they sweat, how they shout with glee! Yet we can shoot a hundred tracts home via the letter boxes with only a fraction of the labour and excitement! Let us all be in on this game this new year 1929.

The Library Supply Fund

Sailing the sea through calm and storm has many attractions if we may judge by the shiploads of Australians who go abroad and the thousands of tourists who visit these shores. Since steam driven and latterly oil propelled liners and freighters have taken the place to a large extent of the sailing ship, the beauty and utility of the latter are being idealized, partly because of the play given to nature—God's own free air the motive power, increased or decreased as it were by His will irrespective of the strivings of man. Yet the crew must be ready to take advantage, must be ready with sails set and every man at his station, to increase or decrease the spread of canvas as required.

So appealing is this figure of the sailing ship—especially in view of the fact that the gospel in the early days was carried westward by the apostles principally by means of the ships constantly plying between Mediterranean ports—that two years ago we began a "voyage" to carry a copy of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to every Public Library in the English Speaking world. The thought was that many of us desire to see the truth brought before readers not conveniently reached by personal contact, and

Public Libraries afford a cheap and effective means for doing this without the time and expense of a personal visit to the town or village in which the Library is situated. In the first year thousands of copies were placed in the Public Libraries of England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and Canada; the libraries of Australia and New Zealand having been previously supplied. At the beginning of 1928 a new "voyage" was begun of 10,000 miles, each mile standing for a copy of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to be placed in American Public Libraries. As our Skipper we acknowledged the Lord, and the breeze to carry us along was the cash payment for books sent in by those who sympathized with this method of reaching new readers; at the rate of £1 for eight books. Some sent in large sums enabling us to supply many volumes, while others sent in small amounts which combined to swell the total number of books placed. South African friends joined in by supplying all the African Public Libraries. Since the last report in December issue we have received the following—

94, £30; 95, £30; 96, £4: 12: 7; 97, £30; 98, £30; received at Brooklyn, 17, $10; 18, $30; 19, $10; total at Brooklyn, $50 (£10: 5: 9); total for month, £134: 18: 4 ($655.69); previously reported, £472: 6: 7 ($2295.97); total for year, £607: 4: 11 ($2951.66).

The donations above reported enable us to send 1070 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 4138 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

For a while we have been as it were in mid-ocean with progress governed by comparatively light winds: but this last month a good stiff breeze has filled our sails and carried us well past the half-way mark. We are pleased to see our English and American friends coming forward with enlarged donations for this Fund, and our hope and prayer are that by the Lord's favor the New Year 1929 will see the journey completed and every American Library supplied.

Let us carry on this branch of the great work in faith believing; let us ask the Lord to direct so that many truth seekers may be led to the rooms and shelves where the books happen to be placed; or, instead of "happen," shall we pray that His overruling providence may direct in that matter also? It was not by chance that Philip overtook the Ethiopian riding home in his chariot and frankly puzzled over the meaning of a certain passage in Isaiah. Oh, may the Lord, who still searches the heart, gratify the longings of the genuine truth seeker by the explanations found in one of these silent messengers on the Library shelves.

The Book Department

During 1928 there has been a steady though not large circulation of the various books (large and small) listed in the New Covenant Book List which usually appears on the last page of each issue of the N.C.A. The "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," which contains Scripture evidence of the foundation principles of the Christian faith, showing how the Bible is harmonious from cover to cover, and clearly reveals the love and mercy of God toward all mankind, is recommended as the chief book to circulate. "The Parables of our Lord" and "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days" are important too, in that they deal fully with those subjects. The smaller books on special topics, such as "Everlasting Punishment" and "The Dead—Where are They?" are helpful on the state of the dead and the nature of the punishment God has visited on our race because of Adam's sin and the nature of the Second Death prescribed for wilful and persistent sinners. The titles show the special topic of each of the other small books.

Through the call for books to meet the requirements of the Library Supply Fund the 36,000 edition has been exhausted. A new edition, raising the total to 56,000, has now been printed, with additions in the way of a Chart of Ages, Dispensations, and Covenants and a Scripture Index, portion of chapter 1 being condensed to make room for a short explanation of the Chart.

Following is the financial statement for this Department—

FINANCIAL REPORT, BOOK DEPARTMENT, December 19, 1927, to December 18, 1928.

Receipts.				
Credit Balance brought forward		£227 15 5		$1106.98
Sales and Donations, including Library Supply Fund		£846 16 0		4115.45
Expenditures.				
Printing and Publishing	£579 17 10		$2818.27	
Office Expenses and Labor	145 1 0		704.94	
Postage	87 18 4		427.28	
	£812 17 2	£1074 11 5	$3950.49	$5222.43
Credit Balance Carried Forward	£261 14 3		1271.94	

At present this credit balance is nearly all represented in the combined deficits of the N.C.A. and Cheerful Givers' Funds, which total £223: 19: 8 as per above statements. As donations come in to make up these deficits, the amounts will be available for use in the Book Department.

The spread of the truth by the sale of books has been assisted by colporteurs the past year, as in previous years, working on days and half days at the disposal of a few earnest workers, whose faithfulness in this direction is much appreciated, and who express themselves as being well repaid by the interest they have found here and there. While undoubtedly there are much worldliness and growing indifference on the part of a section of professing Christians, there is also without doubt another section who love God's Word and are seeking a clearer understanding of it. To reach these necessarily all kinds are met and the truth presented in the hope that each one approached will prove to be a truth seeker; for there is no certain way of determining by appearance who is and who is not a truth seeker. The Lord's saints are found in all classes, high and low, rich and poor, old and young. One brother saw a fine large house, and wondered if the occupant would be too worldly to care for such a book as Bible Talks. But the lady when interviewed was deeply interested in the subject and immediately purchased a copy. Further on was a very poor looking little cottage, and he wondered if the occupant would be a reader or have the means to purchase. But she also was desirous of having Bible explanations, and had the price too.

In the early days the Lord sent out His disciples to go from door to door with the glad message. Today the printed page enables the colporteur not only to deliver a message from door to door but also to leave it behind to be read after his departure in quest of other truth-seekers. There is a great opening for full-time colporteurs. Any who can arrange their affairs so as to give all their time to this work are invited to write for particulars.

The Work of Faith Coming of Age

On another page of this issue will be found a reference to the length of time the Work of Faith represented in these publications has been carried on, and the suggestion is there made of a special celebration of our twenty-first year. We feel sure that friends will be pleased with the suggestion, and will give it their enthusiastic support. Let us all co-operate to make our Coming-of-Age year a special testimony of thanksgiving to the Lord, whose ambassadors we are.



For the Children

The People Waiting and Two Wonderful Miracles

When that fearful storm raged over the Sea of Galilee as Jesus and His disciples were crossing over to the other side, the people on the land would hear the great waves breaking on the shore and roaring loudly. They would hear the wind sweeping over the land, the trees and the houses, and we may be sure that all of them who knew that Jesus and His disciples were out in all of it would be anxious for their safety. They would ask themselves what little ship could get through such a fearful storm without sinking? And still it went on roaring and raging.

It must have been a great puzzle to them, as they listened, when the wind suddenly ceased and the waves fell flat, and all was calm and quiet. But they had no means of knowing that the little ship had not been wrecked before the wind ceased and the waves fell; and of course they did not know that Jesus had used His wonderful power and had caused the great calm. What could they do then? only one thing: go down to the landing place the next day, and wait—looking over the sea and hoping to catch sight of the little ship returning.

If you will please read Luke 8: 40 you will find that the people did the very thing we might have expected. Lined along the shore, "they were all waiting for him." How glad they must have been when the sails of the little ship hove in sight, and to see when they reached the landing place that all were safe and sound after the terrible storm.

But it seems that Jesus had not long set His feet on the land when a great man named Jairus came and fell down before Him. Poor man, he was full of grief. He had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was dying. Would Jesus be so kind as to come "and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live. And Jesus went with him." Please read this in Mark 5: 23, 24.

Faith Receives its Answer

How ready Jesus is to do kindness to anyone asking Him! He did not say to Jairus, I am too busy with all these people around me to attend to you just now. No: Jairus had called upon Him for help in his deep distress, and Jesus at once set out to give it. And He is our example, that we "should follow his steps." Please find this in 1 Peter 2. This means that we must be ready to do any kindness we can to deserving people who ask us.

But as He went with Jairus people crowded round Him so much that it seems He could scarcely move. And then one poor woman in the crowd, a great sufferer, came up behind and secretly touched His garment, and she was immediately made well. How marvellous! But Jesus turned around, and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" (Mark 5: 30.) Then the woman who was healed told Him all. And while He was saying some kind words to her, someone came hurriedly from Jairus's house and said—"Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?"

To this messenger it looked as if there was now no hope for Jairus: his daughter was dead, and nothing could be done. But since we have read the story of the widow of Nain we know better, do we not? This is what Jesus said—"Fear not; believe only, and she shall be made whole." (Luke 8: 49, 50.) It was kind of Jesus to say these words, for thereby Jairus was comforted.

The Greatest Kindness Possible

We all love kind people, and sometimes what they say to us in kindness is better far than anything they could give us. That unknown person who first told Jairus about Jesus did him the greatest kindness possible; for we now see that he knew where to go when he was in distress and sad trouble. We may be sure that Jairus could not sufficiently thank the one who brought him the good news of Jesus, the kindest and most comforting one of all.

Boys and girls! What about our telling everyone we can of our wonderful Saviour who is going to raise not one only but "*all* that are in the graves"? Could we do people a greater kindness?

And when they came to the house Jesus would not allow anyone to go into the room where the little girl lay except only three of His disciples (which three?) and the father and mother of the maiden. Then what? Then Jesus took the little dead hand in His own, and said the simple words, "Maid, arise," and immediately she was alive again! No wonder that her parents were astonished. And shall *we* ever cease to wonder at the marvellous works of Jesus?

Yet all that He did while on the earth only gives us a faint idea of what He will do when He comes back over another kind of stormy "sea" made calm by the word of His power, and finds all the people waiting for Him. Please read Luke 8: 40-56.

—UNCLE FRANK.

A Thanksgiving Issue

THE NEW COVENANT ADVOCATE has been published continuously since its first issue in April 1909. If the Lord shall preserve us in His work to get out the issue for March 1929, the "Advocate" will have completed twenty years of publication, and for the favor thus vouchsafed as well as for the divine leading and preservation that have been our portion throughout these years we shall ever be thankful to our heavenly Father through our blessed Redeemer, Mediator, Advocate, and Lord, Jesus Christ. In this thankfulness we feel sure all our readers will heartily join.

Some who are now readers of the N.C.A. have been so from Vol. 1, No. 1, and we are thankful for their constancy and for their encouraging cooperation in the Work of Faith in many ways.

Some who were readers at the first have finished their course, we trust with joy and with divine acceptance. We miss seeing their names on the list, and we miss their friendship in the service of the Present Truth. Yet we could not think of wishing them back with us; rather we congratulate them, and our ambition is to go onward, to be joined in the Lord's due time with them in the glorious Kingdom to which we and our predecessors in the narrow way have been called by the gospel of our Lord and Saviour.

Still others who were readers of the N.C.A. at the first continued only for a season. Overcharged with the cares of this life or with other extraneous matters, they have succumbed, and have fallen out by the way. We miss them too; some of them were personally known to us, and we had thought to continue together unto the end. In the circumstances we cannot feel to congratulate them; but we can and do still pray for them that repentance may be granted them to the acknowledgment of the truth, and that they may return and do the first works.—2 Timothy 2: 25; Revelation 2: 5.

Still others now readers of the N.C.A. have not been so from the beginning, their names having come onto the list more recently—some of them only within the past year. These brethren in the most holy faith are also appreciated, and from some of them we have had most encouraging letters (shared with all our readers from time to time in these columns), testifying their love for the Lord and their joy in His truth and in their opportunities for service.

Our older friends will know that in the past twenty years there have been seasons of stress as well as of joy, and will realize more keenly than the younger ones how much cause we have for thankfulness that the Lord has brought us thus far along the way. The prayers of all readers—old and young—are besought that we may be permitted to enjoy to the end of our service here the same divine favour and guidance that have been our blessed portion in the past, and that we may be permitted also to realize that our dear Lord is still using the N.C.A. for His glory and for the upbuilding of His dear saints on the most holy faith.

Recognizing the Occasion

It has seemed to us that the completion of twenty years, and the beginning in April 1929 of the twenty-first year, of publication should be marked by something more substantial than a few words about it. But how to do it? What would the Lord wish us to do by way of celebration (if that word may be used)? Could anything be more pleasing to Him as an expression of our gratitude for His mercies than some special activity—above and beyond the usual—facilitating the wider circulation of His truth in the twenty-first year of the N.C.A.? We feel sure that something of this sort is quite obviously in order, and that all readers will say Amen to it.

A Special Thanksgiving Issue

We propose, therefore, D.V., that the N.C.A., Vol. 21, No. 1, for April 1929, shall be a special "Thanksgiving Issue" of eighty pages and cover containing "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," complete, with chart. There is to be a large edition. This will not be new reading for our friends generally, albeit even they may like to read the "B.T." again in this form, while all—we are satisfied—will wish to use this as a special missionary number.

The proposed "Thanksgiving Issue" with cover will be more than five times the size of the ordinary N.C.A. Nevertheless it is intended to supply it at the usual price per copy—fourpence in Australia and New Zealand; fivepence (ten cents) elsewhere—as part of all renewal and new subscriptions and three-month trial subscriptions in which the issue for April 1929 would ordinarily be included. Also, extra copies of the special "Thanksgiving Issue" will be supplied at the same prices (no reduction for quantities) up to the end of April in Australasia and to the end of May elsewhere.

Thus our friends may order the N.C.A. sent for six months or a year to any persons they would like to interest in the present truth, and all such subscriptions, if received in Melbourne before the end of April or at any of our branches before the end of May, will include the "Thanksgiving Issue."

Trial Subscriptions. In the past the N.C.A. readers have frequently been invited to send four names and the price of a year's subscription—4/- or 5/- ($1.25), according to location—and the N.C.A. would be sent to each address for three months. This offer applies also to any three-month period in which April 1929 would fall, and such Trial Subscriptions will be received up to the end of April or May, as above defined. They should be sent in now, and will be begun with the February, March, or April issue, as you may specify. Any number of Trial Subscriptions may be sent in—you are not restricted to four names.

Then you may order extra copies of the April issue only—as many as you will at the prices and within the time above mentioned—to be sent to yourself for personal distribution or to lists of addresses that you supply. Orders for these should be sent as early as possible, and the copies will be despatched in due course.

Financial Considerations

In order to produce the "Thanksgiving Issue" as cheaply as possible an edition of 20,000 has been arranged for; the paper for this is now on order, and is expected to arrive here in good time to get the printing and binding done before April. But even with this large quantity the cost per copy will be only partly met by the above named prices. Nevertheless, we trust that our readers will take full advantage of the above offers and order liberally—*very liberally*. The idea is to get the Truth into the hands of the people in any way we can.

At the same time we are not in a position entirely to ignore the financial aspect of this or any question, not having a fortune to draw on, nor even a reserve fund, our policy being to use what comes in—not accumulating, but sometimes even anticipating receipts, as our readers know. Therefore after the dates above mentioned the remainder of the "Thanksgiving Issue" will be supplied at prices more nearly related to the production cost. In the ordinary way this would be 1/- (25 cents) for single copies, 8/- ($2) per dozen to one address, 9/- ($2.25) per dozen to various addresses; and our expectation would be to supply practically all of them to N.C.A. readers at the 8/- per dozen price, which would be at the rate of eightpence per copy.

But even so, we desire, if possible, to supply these at a still lower price. Therefore it is intended that any donations received to assist the publication of the "Thanksgiving Issue" be utilized to reduce the prices at which it will be supplied after April 30 in Australia and May 31 elsewhere. Donations for this purpose are now receivable at Melbourne and our branches and will be welcomed and set apart to this special purpose. They will operate as follows—

1. On receipt of £80 ($400) in donations, the quantity price to our readers after the above dates will be reduced by a penny per copy to 7/- ($1.75) per dozen, the price for single copies remaining unchanged at 1/- (25 cents) each.

2. On receipt of another £80 in donations the quantity price to our readers after the above dates will be reduced by another penny per copy to 6/- ($1.50) per dozen.

3. On receipt of another £80, both prices will be reduced by a penny, so that single copies will be 11d. (22 cents); quantities to N.C.A. readers at 5/- ($1.25) per dozen.

4. On receipt of another £80 in donations the single copies will be 10d. (20 cents); quantities at 4/- ($1) per dozen.

5. On receipt of another £80 in donations the single copies will be reduced to 9d. (18 cents); quantities at 3/- (75 cents) per dozen.

6. On receipt of another £80 in donations there will be a like reduction in both prices and so on for each additional £80 in donations received until the price per single copy becomes 6d. (12 cents), and the price in quantities to our readers will be zero. This will mean that by this co-operation of friends, added to what we hope to receive from subscriptions and orders for extra copies between now and May 1, we shall be about clear of the cost of production and distribution, and able to supply the remainder of the edition without price to our readers, while colporteurs receiving them free will be permitted to sell them for sixpence (12 cents) per copy to assist them with their expenses.

Inasmuch as the price (whatever it is to be) for the remainder of this "Thanksgiving Issue" is to become effective in May, it will be necessary for us to know by then how we shall stand in respect of donations in aid of reduction of the price. *The campaign will therefore be short and urgent.*

It is not desired to shut down on the activities represented by the Library Supply Fund, the Advocate Sustaining Fund, and the Cheerful Givers' Fund, but rather to increase them if possible. But for the effort on behalf of the "Thanksgiving Issue" there will not be another time so appropriate as the N.C.A. "coming-of-age" year. Therefore, *if it be necessary*, the other Funds can stand by for a time in favor of the "Thanksgiving Fund," which will be closed in May or June after receipt of reports from the branches, or earlier if sufficient donations to reduce the price to zero come in. If the other Funds go short in the meantime their deficiencies can be made up later in the year.

Now—are there among us any friends who can clip the first penny off the eventual price of the "Thanksgiving Issue"? and the second penny? And then the

third penny? And then the subsequent pennies! Perhaps there are not many N.C.A. readers who could do it alone. Therefore smaller sums will be welcome, and will go to make up the total required. It is our earnest desire to get this "Thanksgiving Issue" all in circulation before the end of 1929, and nothing would please us better than to be able to send it out free after May. It is perhaps a task; but people who are thankful, as N.C.A. readers are, smile at tasks, and undertake them by the grace and in the strength which God our Father supplies. Therefore let us all pray and work to the desired end; and may divine blessing attend this effort for the glory of God, the honor of His Son, and the blessing of many of His people with increased light and joy in the knowledge of God's wonderful purposes in the ages arranged in His glorious plan.

The Watching Servants

(Conference Addresses continued from December issue)

AS RUNNERS IN A RACE

WE HAVE JUST been hearing from previous speakers that there are many ways in which servants may be watching; we may also compare them to runners in a race. Let us read 1 Corinthians 9: 24—"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain."

At the time the Apostle wrote these words the Grecians were fond of athletic games, and most prominent among those games was racing, either in the form of foot or chariot. So the people to whom he wrote would readily understand the lessons he drew from the games.

The competitors in a race ran for a fixed objective. They did not stop and look around to see how the others were getting on, but they kept on. If it was a long race, they would keep a steady pace; but if a short race their pace would be faster. So it is with Christians. They have to keep pressing on, and as the race draws to an end they have to press on even harder, and not falter or sit on the road side to have a rest, for these are things that would hinder them, but they must keep their eyes fixed on their objective.

The apostle also compares the Christian life to wrestling. Not as the Grecians did, that is, wrestle to overpower one another, but there is a wrestling which goes on in ourselves. Ephesians 4: 22-24 reads—"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

When a Christian takes his stand and has decided to follow his Lord and Master in all things, he has to put off the "old man," which is his old sinful nature, and must put on the new man, or the new nature, which is Christlike, and it is just here where the trouble begins. Although the Christian puts off the "old man" in the beginning, he has to keep him off, for he is all the time seeking his former position, and this is where the "wrestling" comes in. He has to keep the old man under, for if he does not, then the old man will be on top and the new man under, which is most undesirable.

Then again there is another wrestling spoken of in Ephesians 6: 12—"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Wrestling is close contest, in which the combatants come to firm grips in the endeavour to bring the opponent to a standstill—completely immovable. We ourselves wrestling with the ruling powers of this world must overpower them or they will overpower us. We must watch that we do not become ensnared by any spiritual wickedness set up by the rulers of the darkness of this world.

The Rules of the Game

In the Christian life as in the athletic games there are rules to observe. The main rule is to be honest and play the game, or to strive lawfully—not seeking to get the better of another by some mean underhand work, and hoping to be unseen by the judges, for such a one is sure to be disqualified; as it is said in 2 Timothy 2: 5—"And if any one contend in the games, he is not crowned, unless he contend lawfully." (Diaglott).

In 1 Corinthians 9: 26 the Apostle says—"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." Paul was running in the race with full confidence of attaining his objective; he was fighting with skill, and not as one that beats the air to no purpose.

In boxing the main object is to see who is the most skilled in the art and who can overpower the other. That means that each must get in some solid blows. If one started frantically beating at the air, he would make no advance but would be giving the other a chance to overpower him.

So it was with Paul: he got in some hard hitting truth from the gospel, also he established something which was absolutely new to many of his hearers. He says in 1 Corinthians 9: 27—"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Self Control

Not only did Paul have to show his authority to his hearers, but he had to rule over his own body and keep it under subjection. Here he is referring to the sinful tendencies which are ever present in all the members of our fallen race. He must do this so that he may be "fit" to carry on the gospel (verse 25)—"And every man that striveth for

the mastery is temperate in all things." If the Apostle was not temperate in all things, or took an excess of intoxicating liquors (which dull the senses), he would not have been ready when the occasion arose to deliver the gospel.

The athletes were very particular about their mode of living, they did a lot of training and also had their muscles massaged to keep them fit, and in some cases they would go on a strict diet and deny themselves many things which under ordinary circumstances they would be able to have.

An Obstacle Race

From the verses we have read in 1 Corinthians 9: 24-27, we see how Christ's servants are likened unto runners in a race. First of all a call goes out for competitors; and as each one signs on, or (in gospel language) is converted, he starts in the race. The length of the race is the remainder of the lifetime of the individual. Each must keep up the pace to the end of his or her life, be it long or short. Now, what kind of a race is it? An obstacle race? Yes. For there are many obstacles which we must leap over, such as temptation which occurs many times.

But a question might well be asked — Can a Christian leap over these obstacles without aid— for many of them are very high? And the answer is No: but we read in 1 Corinthians 10: 13—"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it." When we meet such a temptation we must pray to God for strength to help us over, and He will give us strength so that we may continue the race. Indeed at all times we must pray to God for strength for all our needs, knowing that He will surely give it to us, for He loves us and it is His desire that we should overcome.

But is that all that Christians have to do while running in this race? By no means: It is also their duty to sound out the message of salvation which shall be to all people, and invite as many as possible to join in the race. And not only that, but they must as often as possible lend assistance to others who are running in the same race with them, for it is written in Mark 9: 41—

"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward." Even the simplest act done in the Lord's name will have its reward. Also James 5: 19, 20. "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

So we see that the more we help others, the more we help ourselves and are pushing ourselves on in the race.

An Endurance Race

It may well be termed an endurance race: for "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7: 14.) The course is a narrow and rough one, and Satan and his associates are always ready to place snares and pitfalls in the path of the runners. What then is the best aid to endurance? The main thing is prayer. Do not neglect to pray to God. Tell Him all your troubles, and ask Him for assistance, and He will bestow as much more of the Holy Spirit upon you as you need.

Then again we must arm ourselves with the gospel. In order that we may do this God has caused certain men who were with or in the presence of our Lord Jesus to write books for our edification: and in His loving kindness He has preserved them and handed them down to us that we may study them. And in order to do this effectively, Christians everywhere assemble themselves together in small or large groups, and compare scripture with scripture, that they might by the guidance of the Holy Spirit obtain a correct understanding of them.

The Reward

What is the reward for the winning of this race? The prize which was presented to those Grecian athletes was a wreath of laurel leaves, which was corruptible and faded away. But the prize for the winners of the Christian race is incorruptible, which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven. It is actually the opportunity to become joint heirs with Christ in heaven, and to live and reign with Him a thousand years. The Apostle Paul deemed this a great prize, for he says (Philippians 3: 13, 14)—

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark [or, "along the line"—Diaglot] for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

It was something which Paul greatly desired, and it is something which we would do well to work for and endeavour by all means to obtain. Just think of it: To be joint heirs with Christ, and live not on earth, but in heaven: for ever and for ever!

—W.S.

As Armed Warriors

IN THE sixth chapter of Ephesians (verses 13 to 19) mention is made of different pieces of armor worn by ancient warriors in battle, and also when engaged in personal combat. The offensive weapons were—arrows, slings, spears, swords, etc. The defensive weapons were helmet, breastplate, sandals, sword, and shield. Some of these are mentioned in 1 Samuel 17. A battle was arrayed between the Philistines and the children of Israel. And among the Philistines there was a champion named Goliath.

From all accounts Goliath was very powerful and exceedingly tall—height, 9 ft. His armour consisted of an helmet of brass, coat of mail weighing 5,000 shekels (about 156 lb.), and on his legs were greaves, also made of brass. The staff of his spear

was like a weaver's beam, and the spear head weighed 600 shekels of iron (about 12 lb.). His shield was carried in front of him.

Try if you can to picture a man 9 ft. high wearing this great armour, challenging one from the children of Israel to fight, in order to decide the battle. And when Israel saw him they were afraid. (Enough to frighten anyone.) But there was one among the children of Israel who was not afraid, although in appearance about half the size of the giant. He was not afraid because he trusted in God. However, King Saul equipped him with a sword and armor, which David had no faith in; therefore he discarded them. And if we read verses 45 to 47 in the same chapter, we will see the reason why David became victorious.

The Christian's Armor

Coming now to our illustration in Ephesians 6, we see that it is a great fortress to all Christians throughout the Gospel age, enabling them to wage successful war against the enemies named in verse 12. Furthermore, the same illustration is very appropriate for us to-day, even after the invention of high explosive guns and long-distance fighting, because the enemies of a Christian still deal in personal attack, which requires him to adopt armor capable of turning aside a sword point and hold a shield able to "quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

Can we realize what a wonderful armor this is, which God has provided for His watching servants? David had proved it when in personal contest with the champion Goliath and we are to wear the same armor in order that we may get the victory.

Not Carnal Weapons

In 2 Corinthians 10: 4 we read—"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." These strongholds are Satan's fortifications. Satan is the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4: 4), and he maintains his position by entanglements of lies, even as he gained it by the lie in the garden of Eden—"Ye shall not surely die." The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is one of these lies, and the teaching of eternal torment is another. These defences of Satan must be pulled down by the truth—by the Scripture teaching on these subjects.

Put Up thy Sword

A further proof that our weapons are not carnal is found in John 18: 11. Peter having cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest, he was commanded by Jesus, saying—"Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" The cup mentioned here by our Lord was something further that Peter had to learn—which he did after receiving the Holy Spirit; and that was submission to the Father's will, the reward being eternal life. But he who fights with the sword will also perish by the sword.—Matthew 26: 52; Revelation 13: 10.

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The breastplate was one of the most important pieces of armor, because it protected the vital organs. The apostle used it to represent righteousness—not inherent righteousness, but the reckoned or imputed righteousness which God supplies to those who exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Reckoned righteousness is a defence against attacks of the adversary. When he endeavors to discourage the Christian by reproaching him with his natural weaknesses and deficiencies, the Christian is defended by the assurance of righteousness imputed on account of his faith. "With the *heart* (protected by the "breastplate") man *believeth* unto righteousness.—Romans 10: 10.

The "whole armor of God," which we are about to describe, is necessary for every Christian to wear, it being provided for his salvation in the conflict with evil powers and institutions, as it is clearly shown by the apostle in his illustration with its different pieces.

The Helmet and the Shield

The carnal helmet was made of metal or strong leather to act as a protection for the head, to resist whatever might be thrown in that direction. But in 1 Thessalonians 5: 8 we read that "the hope of salvation" is our helmet. This hope of salvation is a great protection for our minds; keeping us from despair, and encouraging us in our warfare.

In Hebrews 6: 19 the apostle speaks of hope as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. Also in Romans 8: 24, "we are saved by hope." 1 Peter 1: 3 states that God "hath begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Corinthians 13: 13 declares—"Now abideth faith, hope, love."

So much for our helmet Hope. Now what about the Shield?

The carnal shield was made of similar material to the helmet. It was shaped like a disc, and fastened to the arm, in order that it might be moved about in different directions to ward off the fiery darts; and for this to be effective good sight and skill were necessary.

Keeping this purpose of the shield in view, we shall be better able to realize the value of "the shield of faith" carried by all God's children throughout the ages. Without it, it is not possible to please God.—Hebrews 11: 6.

Feet well Shod

Next come the sandals the warrior would have to wear to protect his feet from the thorns and briars which would hinder his progress when pursuing the enemy; the feet being very imporant members. But our feet are to be shod with "the preparation of the gospel of peace"; i.e., our conduct must be in keeping with our profession. And we must not be hindered in our mission: the king's business requires haste.

Strong in the Lord

Now strength is required for all this. And how are we to obtain strength? In exactly the same way as the natural man: by eating; only we eat of the bread and drink of the water of life, to sustain us on the battlefield. (John 6: 35, 50, 51; 4: 14.) And as the apostle says in verse 18—"Praying al-

ways with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit," giving thanks unto the Lord. If we do that we shall have what is written in John 14: 27—"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Many more beautiful illustrations are derived from warfare throughout the Bible. Thus in 1 Peter 4: 1—"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.

Romans 13: 12—"Put on the armor of light." That is, Be prepared with light to make war against the lust of the world and the works of darkness.

2 Corinthians 6: 7—"By the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left."

1 Timothy 6: 12—"Fight the good fight of faith."

These exhortations given to us, dear friends, are of Divine origin, and must be obeyed. We must keep our armor on and in use—the helmet, the hope of salvation; the breastplate, imputed righteousness; the shield, Faith in God's Word; sandals, the Gospel of peace.

The Sword of The Spirit

Remembering that the warrior has to put on the *whole* armor of God, we must not forget the Sword. In Hebrews 4: 12 a two-edged sword is mentioned; the weapon in general use which would cut both ways. No doubt Peter's sword was sharp when he cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. But the sword mentioned in our text, the *Word of God*, is even sharper than the two-edged sword, and requires greater skill in handling, because we can easily cut ourselves and injure one another. The sharpness of it is described in the same verse—"piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

If you will pause for a moment and think over these words, you will notice the things mentioned are not visible to the natural sight; all being under cover. But the Word of God is an X-ray, able to penetrate the thing done in darkness, and will show what manner of persons we are.

Matthew 10: 34-36 tells us what His Word will do. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Verse 34.) Here a separation would be caused by the sword (God's Word). And do we not see that this sword entrusted to us to disarm our foes will have to be used in the right spirit towards our enemies, in order that we may disarm them and assist them to put on the armor of light, by our manifesting towards them the fruits of the Spirit?

In Revelation 1: 16 a description is given of our Lord in battle array—"And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword"—the same sword, the Word of God. With His sword He is to "smite the nations" as stated in Revelation 19, beginning with verse 11, where we find another description of our Captain and of what He is about to do and put into operation. I will ask you to read it for yourselves; time will not permit at present. However, I trust we are all on the Lord's side, putting to flight this great evil system conjured by Satan, and personified in Romans 6, Sin the taskmaster. Therefore can we wonder at the apostle giving out the cry, "Take unto you the whole armour of God"—not a portion, but the whole, so as not to give the slighest chance to the devil. Take the whole armor, "that ye may be able to withstand [i.e. resist] in the evil day, and having done all [margin: overcome all] to stand"; i.e. *stand upright;* not slain or wounded, but upright and victorious.

A Mind for Victory

When a soldier is fully equipped and in action against his enemy, his attitude of mind is to gain victory. Thus with ourselves. Although we can see neither our armor nor Satan our foe, nevertheless we know both are there.

As for Satan and his hosts, we were at one time his servants, and the apostle gives us the credit of knowing this. For he says (Romans 6: 16)—"*Know ye not,* that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Having then this knowledge that we were once under Sin's dominion, and have been taken out by the servants of righteousness to wear the gospel armor, let us give God thanks, and go forth, and bring those who are willing to surrender all and with us become soldiers of the Cross.

May we all be obedient to our Captain and keep our armor shining that we may be able to hold against Satan and his hosts.

Our Glorious Captain

In Hebrews 2: 10 we have the comforting words—"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Jesus then being our Captain, we have nothing to fear. More comforting words are found in John 16: 33—"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith [*The Shield*]."—1 John 5: 4.

Being now God's children and the soldiers of Jesus Christ, we are to strive to please Him. And the way to do that is to do as nearly as possible what Jesus did (John 8: 29); for He said—"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him." Now if we do likewise, I am sure we shall meet with His approval.

In the late war the opposing forces had barb-wire entanglements. If a soldier from either side got entangled it would be difficult to get clear; and if he happened to get clear it would not be without being very much hurt. This would be a very good illustration of the affairs of this world. If we get tangled up in that, well then we will lose what the apostle said to Timothy—"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 right-

eous judge, will give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."—2 Timothy 4: 7, 8.

Although we are besieged by many a foe, let us keep the hope and have faith in His promises, for he is faithful that promised. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

—F. R. McK.

As a Bride Making Herself Ready

THE BOOK OF REVELATION is a book of symbols, the object being to convey to the mind of the reader, who is willing to be enlightened, what God's purposes are on the many different phases of His great plan.

In Revelation 19: 7, 8 we are shown in language which can be readily followed what the portion will be of those who faithfully continue in the way in which God has purposed that they should walk. They are to occupy a position in their association with their Lord similar to that of a bride when she is associated with her husband. Their hopes and aims are one, their desire is to be a help to each other in every way possible, so that their home life may be a happy one.

Such is to be the lot of those who love their Lord and serve Him faithfully. They are to live with Him, and share His throne and work. So the Revelation aptly describes them in symbol as a bride, and in this passage we are told that—"the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath *made herself ready*"; special emphasis being placed on those three words—"*made herself ready.*"

Before going further let it be clearly understood that this making ready does not at all refer to reconciliation with God, because all the work in that connection was done by our Lord when He died for our sins, and redeemed us to God. What it does refer to is our future reward. Redemption is from death, the penalty which was passed upon all men. But having been redeemed, and having been justified by faith, we have access into this favoured position; or, as the apostle puts it in Romans 5: 2, "this grace wherein we stand." It is particularly this point that we wish to deal with: the invitation to joint heirship with Christ, the invitation, the work, etc., and makes her preparations accordingly. If her position in life is to be higher than that which she is in, she will need to study etiquette. If she is going to a foreign land, she will need to study the language. All this, together with the study of domestic art, will keep her busy. Then there is that big box in the corner which is to be filled with all kinds of sewing and needlework. The days of waiting are busy days, for her desire is to be an agreeable companion for the one she is to wed.

What Getting Ready Means

We have already heard of the marriage custom under the Jewish arrangement, how the whole ceremony was carried out. But perhaps if we deal with it more from custom in vogue in our own day it will appeal to us more. There is always a time before the marriage, spoken of in the Scriptures as the days of betrothal, but better known to us as the days of their engagement, during which time the prospective bride makes such preparations as are necessary. She takes into consideration what her future position will be: the surroundings, the company,

Holiness Essential

Applying these symbols to spiritual things, we find that the invitation to be with the Lord and to see Him as He is involves that we be made like Him. (1 John 3: 2.) "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3: 3.) The Lord is pure and holy, and it is necessary for the prospective bride to exercise herself along these lines to become like Him. In 1 Peter 1: 15, 16 we read—"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." And then the apostle goes on to say (vs. 22)—"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

This we find we have to practice right here in the Christian family circle. This comes as an exhortation and a command, as in 1 John 4: 21—"And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." We cannot see God in person, but the brethren, are good subjects to practice on, because we can see them and know how they respond to our exhibition of love; "for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4: 20.

During this preparation work there is a certain washing to be done. The Lord assists His prospective bride in her preparations, "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." (Ephesians 5: 26.) This means the application of the instruction contained in the Scripture to our lives. If we live according to its precepts, we will be clean, renewed in the spirit of our minds.

This cleansing is also spoken of in Titus 3: 5, according to the reading of the Diaglott, as "a renovation of the Holy Spirit." So that we have the assistance of God's Holy Spirit in the difficult task.

The Material and the Pattern

The material we have to work on is a bit rough and tangled, but by patient continuance in well doing we will gradually work out the beautiful patterns, as in a piece of needlework, which will be an adornment to the garment. We must keep our eye on the pattern, and endeavour by the grace of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be like Him, remembering that the imperfections belong to the "old man," and when the marriage takes place the old man or nature will be left out, and only the "new man" be there, which is fashioned in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 4: 22-24; Colossians 3: 9-14.) This is like getting the garments ready.

On account of the fall we have lost much of the divine likeness in which our first parents were created, and it should be the desire and effort of each individual Christian to be like Christ, who is set forth as our example or pattern. Therefore he turns to the photograph to see what He is like, and there finds the description (Hebrews 7: 26)—"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." If we grow like this, we will be pleasing to Him, and the natural outcome of it will be that we will produce peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, fruit, the fruit of the Spirit, which is "love, joy, meekness, temperance."—Galatians 5: 22, 23.

This is the garment to get ready, and for an ornament (1 Peter 3: 4)—"The ornament of a meek, and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

When the marriage takes place, the Revelator shows that those who compose the bride are no longer in their imperfect bodies, but are changed into His image, for "the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints." (See Variorum, Revised Version, and Diaglott rendering.) In the resurrection they will then be like Him, glorious spiritual beings, able to do righteous acts as it is not now possible to do. Then the Bride will be "ready" in the fullest sense, and suitable to be His everlasting companion in the heavens. —H.S.

(Conference Addresses to be continued)

The Cheerful Givers

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.

112, 15/-; 113, 10/-; 114, £2; 115, 4/-; 116, 3/-; 117, 10/-; 118, £3; 119, £1; 120, £3; 121, 13/6; 122, £5; received at Brooklyn, 229, $7.50; 230, 75 cents; total at Brooklyn, $8.25 (£1:13:11); total for month, £18:15:5 ($92.98); previously reported, £152:19:2 ($741.62); total for year, £171:14:7 ($834.60); plus 3d to correct error in addition in a previous list, makes total for year, £171:14:10 ($834.66).

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!

139, 2/-; 140, £1; 141, £1; 142, 2/-; 143, £5; 144, 8/-; 145, 2/-; 146, £1:17:6; received at Brooklyn, 362, $1.75; 363, 75 cents; 364, $10; 365, $15; 366, $2.50; total at Brooklyn, $30 (£6:3:6) total for month, £14:15:0 ($71.68); previously reported, £198:14:1 ($975.69); total for year, £213:9:1 ($1046.37).

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit: Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Covenant Advocate and . . . Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-

In other Countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.

23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.

676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y. U.S.A.

P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 20 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. FEBRUARY 1, 1929 No. 11

The Lord's Supper

OFTEN THE NAME given to an object or process is an index of its origin or method. Discoveries and inventions perpetuate the name of discoverer and inventor—Hertzian waves, Bell telephone, Edison phonograph, Harveyized steel. Each and every reference to the discovery or invention pays tribute to the genius whose name is associated with it. The world over Hertzian waves mean a certain kind of vibration, and not some other kind. There are many other vibrations or "waves," but none of them can truthfully bear the name Hertzian. Anyone who gave this name to something else would be called an ignoramus and told to study up the subject.

It is the same with anniversaries. Names of persons identify them individually; and if a celebration is held in their honor it is usually on the day of their birth, or in commemoration of some outstanding fact in their adult life. Many other persons may have been born on the same day as the King, but it is the King's birthday that is celebrated. George Washington's birthday is regularly observed on the recurring date, and the Fourth of July always calls to mind the Declaration of Independence, proclaimed at Philadelphia, July 4, 1776. Moreover, it is the Fourth that is celebrated, not some other day of the month. Societies celebrate the date of their founding, and sections of Protestants observe special historical dates connected with the Great Reformation, such as the date of nailing Luther's Theses to the door of Wittenberg church. But always the name, date, and the reason for commemorating them are associated as one. By "associated as one" we mean that Washington's birthday is not, for instance, celebrated on the date of Lincoln's birth. Wesley's birth, ministry, and death are not commemorated on dates associated with Calvin, and vice versa. In such ordinary affairs as these governments and societies concerned avoid confusion; everybody knows what day to keep, and why they are keeping it, and how it can be most fittingly observed.

Date of Our Lord's Birth

There is just one Person whose anniversaries governments, churches, and people have seen fit to throw into more or less confusion. According to the Scriptures our Lord's birth took place on such a date that He was in His thirtieth year when He applied to John the Baptist for immersion, and this was in the autumn. John's reference to Jesus as the Lamb of God that beareth away the sin of the world indicated that our Lord was the antitype of the goat of the Jewish day of atonement, on whose head the sins of the nation were confessed, and thereupon were borne away out of sight. The day of atonement comes in September or October in accordance with the time set by the Passover calculation, which had to bear a certain relation to the harvest season in Palestine.—Leviticus 2: 14; 23: 10, 11. See "The Church and Its Ceremonies," page 131.

Our Lord's birth in September or October is also found by consideration of the fact that a "week" or period of seven years was set apart for a particular purpose, as foretold in Daniel 9. Sixty-nine weeks would reach to Messiah the Prince, and in the midst of the 70th week He would be "cut off, but not for himself." Our Lord's ministry lasted 3½ years, and then He was crucified—"Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Corinthians 5: 7.) Since this occurred in the spring, at the Passover time, it follows that 3½ years previously, when He began His ministry, was autumn, when at 30 years of age He was baptized.

September-October mild weather is more consistent with the circumstances of our Lord's birth than December cold—the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, the lodging in a stable; the shepherds with their flocks out over night instead of housed in the fold. Yet December 25 is the generally accepted date of our Lord's birth. Why? Because on that date the pagans had a festival to one or more of their gods; and when Christianity was adopted as

the religion of the Roman Empire, and it was desired to make compulsory. Christians of pagans, the process was simplified by taking the pagan festival and giving it a new name. It was no desire to honor the Lord by finding and celebrating the true date of His birth which led them to do this. It is merely an early example of Rome's policy in dealing with the heathen, the same policy which she has pursued ever since, and which is in evidence in China and in Africa to-day. Regarding this practice of giving Christian names to heathen customs the Rev. Robert Hamill Nassau, M.D., for forty years a missionary in the French Congo, says in his book "Fetichism in West Africa," in connection with the *taboo* or "orunda" (the forbidding of certain articles of food), a native custom—

The Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries to the Kingdom of Kongo, more than two hundred and fifty years ago, found this custom "of interdicting to every person at their birth some one article of food, which they were not through life, upon any consideration, to put into their mouths. This practice was regarded [by those Roman Catholic priests] as specially heathenish, and was unconditionally forbidden."

Explanation may here be found why a church which two hundred years ago had baptized members by the hundreds of thousands, with large churches, fine cathedrals, schools, colleges, and political backing, and no other form of Christianity to compete with it, shows in Kongo to-day no results in the matters of civilization, education, morality, or pure religion. Its baptism was only an outward one, the heathen native gladly accepting it as a powerful charm. For each and all his fetiches the priest simply substituted a Roman Catholic relic. The ignorant African, while he learned to bow to the Virgin, kept on worshipping also fetich. The Virgin was only just another fetich. The Roman Catholic priests were to him only another set of powerful fetich doctors. They commanded that, instead of the orunda, "the parents should enjoin their children to observe some particular devotion, such as to repeat many times a day the rosary or the crown, in honor of the Virgin; to fast on Saturdays; to eat no flesh on Wednesdays; and such other things as are used among Christians."

A similar substitution was made in the case of a superstition of the Kongo country which exists universally among all African tribes to-day, viz., "to bind a cord of some kind around the body of every new-born infant, to which were fastened the bones and teeth of certain kinds of wild animals." In place of this, the Roman Catholic records enjoin "that all mothers should make the cords, with which they bound their infants, of palm-leaves that had been consecrated on Palm Sunday, and, moreover, guard them well with other such relics as we are accustomed to use at the time of baptism."

Thus the heathen, in becoming a baptized Christian, left behind him only the name of his fetich ceremonies. Some new and professedly more powerful ones were given him, which were called by Christian names, but which very much resembled what he had been using all his life. His "conversion" caused no jar to his old beliefs, nor change in its practice, except that the new fetich was worshipped in a cathedral and before a bedizened altar.

In like manner centuries ago when Rome made Christianity the established religion of the Empire a pagan drinking festival, held in honor of the Sun God, was given a new name—Christ-mass, and was accepted as just another name for what they had been accustomed to. The "mass" is called by the Lord an "abomination"; it purports to sacrifice Christ afresh in a mysterious manner suited to the love of mystery characteristic of heathen religions but repugnant to those who know and love the simplicity of the cross of Christ. He died "once for all," and no repetition in any shape or form is required. But the fact that the date December 25 is without Scripture warrant as the date of Christ's birth did not trouble the Roman authorities. It suited their purpose to give Christ's name to a heathen festival, and they did so. And the fact that the Lord condemns the "mass" makes no difference either. The Church wants the mass as a superstition or fetich to bind upon the people, to cause them to look to the Church for salvation instead of to Christ, and they persist in its use in spite of Scripture condemnation. The Scottish people were more consistent in their rejection of Popish superstitions when they abolished the Christmass superstition with the rest, and repudiated December 25 as a so-called "holy day," than were others who rejected the Papacy as a political head and religious authority, but have retained its teachings and superstitious observances. Nevertheless the Scots by their New Year customs (no doubt unwittingly) perpetuate the idea of festival and drink-offering to the gods.

Our Lord's Death

Searching the Scriptures we find no command to observe some certain day of the year as an anniversary of Christ's birth. The date is not so much as recorded, and there is no record of the apostles ever having observed it. From these facts we may gather that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus desired His people to celebrate every day as a thanksgiving for the most precious gift of His Son, telling out the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." On the other hand, we do find a distinct command to observe the day of His death; and having commanded us to observe it the Scriptures give us the information necessary to keep it on its anniversary.

Here again, however, the church nominal has been indifferent and disobedient to the apostolic commands as well as to our Lord's own words; here again Christianity has been subverted to honor a heathen goddess instead of our Lord Christ, the anointed of God. On this point we quote from "The Church and Its Ceremonies," pp. 134-136—

Changing Times and Laws

"Of the "Man of Sin," the Papacy, it was foretold that he should "wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws." The "Papal millennium," by which the thousand years of Christ's triumphant reign was misused by Rome to signify what Protestants call the "dark ages," is a striking fulfilment of this prophecy.

Another instance of Papacy's attempted change of times which God had otherwise arranged was in reference to the celebration of the anniversary of our Lord's death. No command to the contrary having been given, the early disciples would understand that the yearly remembrance be held on the same night on which the Memorial had been instituted to take the place of the Passover; viz., the 15th day of the month Nisan. But the Papacy, unwilling to be associated to this extent with Judaism, formulated another method of reckoning the time. The Council of Nice (A.D. 325) decreed that "Easter" should always be kept on a Sunday—the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox; Good Friday being regulated accordingly. The Scriptural method, as already shown, is to celebrate the Memorial on the 15th day of Nisan, irrespective of the day of the week on which it falls.

The appearance of the word "Easter" in Acts 12: 4 can be accounted for only on the ground that the Authorized Version translators were still under Romish influence, for the word so rendered is *pascha*, meaning "Passover." It is

translated "Passover" in all modern versions, and obviously corresponds to the "days of unleavened bread" mentioned in verse 3.

The Scriptures recognize no such day as "Easter," that term being an adaptation of the name of the Saxon goddess *Eostre*. When the Church of Rome rose to power, she endeavoured to bring all the pagan tribes into the Church by concessions to their superstitions and idolatrous rites, such as the use of images, Easter eggs, vestments,* etc. The so-called "saints' days" were made to correspond with the ancient festivals of the gods. As the Pagans were accustomed to worship many gods and goddesses, they readily accepted the new names which the Church applied to the ancient images and rites, especially as it was in their interest to acknowledge peaceably the new religion. The Saxon goddess *Eostre* is said to correspond with the Babylonian goddess Astarte or Ashtaroth, or Queen of Heaven, whose worship was introduced into Britain by the Druids many centuries before Christ. In other words, Easter is a Christianised form of Baal-worship, Ashtaroth (Venus) being the feminine god usually associated with Baal, the sun god.

To thousands of Christians who celebrate "Easter" the heathen origin of the festival and of the forty days' fast preceding it will come as a surprise, for their thoughts may be only of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and of their joy in the promises associated with His present glory and power. But when the scriptural method of reckoning and observing the Memorial Supper is recognised, and when the appropriateness of celebrating it not on the Romish "Good Friday," but on the date the Lord indicated is understood, a clear cut division is inevitable. We cannot have fellowship with the table of the Lord and the table of demons. (1 Cor. 10: 21.) To "come out of her, my people," means to come away from her practices and teaching as well as from her organisation.

This Do in Remembrance of Me

Attention to our Lord's words when He instituted the Supper which He enjoined on the apostles to be observed as a Memorial of Him, and due consideration of the time and circumstances under which He partook of the Passover Supper with His disciples just preceding the inauguration of the Lord's Supper, will keep us from entanglement with the pagan festival to the goddess Eostre, with which Rome has without authority associated the name of Christ.

The early Corinthian church fell into the practice of observing what they were pleased to call the Lord's Supper on days which suited their own wishes and convenience. For this they were reproved, and reminded that they were to follow the apostle's directions in the matter, which he had received of the Lord. Whatever time God set was the right time, and no other. Paul wrote—

"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 Corinthians 11: 23.

The *anniversary* of that "same night" is therefore the *correct date* on which Christians should meet to partake of the Lord's Supper. The Scriptural method of finding that date is simplicity itself. From Matthew 26: 17 and Mark 14: 12 it is clearly seen that the Lord and His disciples kept the Jewish Passover on the same day in which the nation as a whole kept it, and that was in accordance with the arrangements made by the priests whose duty it was to reckon and announce the true date, and to kill the passover lambs at the proper hour for delivery to the people who would call at the gate of the temple to receive them—a lamb for a family, or if the family was small a lamb for two or three families joined together into one for the occasion.

*See 2 Ki. 10: 22.

It has been suggested in some quarters that the Lord observed the Passover 24 hours before its proper time, but there is not a scrap of evidence that He did so. Rather the texts already cited and all the other accounts as well indicate that the Lord recognized His obligation as a Jew to conform to the God-ordained time as originally prescribed at the Exodus. Turning to Exodus 12: 1-20 we find the Lord setting apart a certain month as the first month of the year. On the 10th day of that month lambs were to be set aside. On the 14th day "between the two evenings"—that is, between noon and sunset—the lambs were to be slain. After sunset, which would be the beginning of the 15th day, they were to eat the roast lamb with bitter herbs, after having sprinkled the blood on the door posts and lintels of their houses, and that same night they would be delivered from Egypt. This deliverance from Egypt the Israelites were instructed to commemorate all their lives on its anniversary. There was to be a feast of unleavened bread lasting seven days, beginning on the 15th, and for this reason all leaven was cleared out of their houses on the 14th, the day on which the lambs were killed.

The disciples asked the Lord their question on the 14th, secured the lamb and prepared it, occupied the upper room, and had all in readiness when the Lord arrived after sunset. (Matthew 26: 17-20.) In the course of that night (15th Nisan) the Passover was eaten, and at its close the new Supper was instituted. Following that they went out into the garden, the Lord was betrayed by the despicable Judas, the Roman soldiers arrested Him, the priests denounced Him before Pilate, He was condemned, scourged, led to the cross and crucified—all in that one twentyfour-hour period. The accounts in the Gospels agree perfectly with the statement of the apostle—"the same night in which he was betrayed" Jesus took bread and wine and instituted the Lord's Supper, to be eaten in memory of Him as they had previously eaten the Passover in commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt.

Commemorate His Death

The virgin birth of Jesus at Bethlehem as the Son of God and heir of David was important. Unless He had become a man He could not have tasted death for every man. The birth was the necessary means to the end, and yet it was His death which the Lord told His disciples to commemorate, His death as the paschal lamb for the deliverance of those who believe on Him from the power of sin and death. He died the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God. (1 Peter 3.)

Unleavened bread and unfermented wine beautifully represent the sinlessness and vigor of His perfect life, which He laid down on our behalf. While the blood was in His veins he gave the wine as a symbol of that blood shortly to be shed as the blood of the New Covenant for the remission of sins. (Matthew 26: 27, 28; Mark 14: 23, 24; Luke 22: 20.) All who believe and accept the remission of our sins under the terms of that New Covenant are thereby qualified to partake of the emblems in remembrance of Him. One can see that it would not be fitting for any who do not

accept the terms of His salvation to take part in the Lord's Supper. No one can fittingly commemorate something he or she does not believe in; hence those who have not humbled themselves before God and confessed their sins and their faith in Christ for reconciliation are out of place at the Lord's table. Let us by prayer approach to God in the name of Jesus that we may be forgiven our trespasses and made acceptable at His table.

The Date This Year

Adhering to the Biblical method of finding the correct date, which method is still followed by Jews all over the world and printed in their calendar, we find that the first day of Nisan, the first Jewish month, will begin at sunset on Wednesday, April 10. Consequently the 15th Nisan will begin at sunset Wednesday, April 24. The Jews have no facilities for celebrating the Passover with a slain lamb, since the temple at Jerusalem was the only place where the lambs for the purpose could lawfully be killed. But the Christian is not confined to any place in the remembrance of the true Lamb, for it is not ours to slay Him, but rather to make acknowledgment with gratitude that He has been slain, and that the benefits of His sacrifice may now be appropriated by us, and that we may by the simple elements of bread and wine give witness to our love for Him and to our acceptance of His undying love for us.

Melbourne believers in the One Offering will meet at 8 p.m., Wednesday, April 24, for this purpose, and all of like precious faith are exhorted to do the same at the same time. The solitary, who cannot meet with others for the solemn occasion, are not thereby shut out of the feast. They can commemorate the death of our Lord wherever they may be at the appointed time.

The Date for Easter

The discrepancy between the true anniversary of our Lord's death, on Thursday the 15th Nisan about 3 p.m., which by the Jewish method of reckoning days from sunset to sunset began on Wednesday at sunset, and the date for Good Friday announced by the ecclesiastical authorities of Christendom is due wholly to their adherence to the decrees of Church councils and their refusal to return to the Scriptural method of reckoning.

In British countries Good Friday to Easter Monday are public holidays, and there has been much complaint by the commercial world on account of interference with business, especially the fact that these are moveable holidays, and vary from year to year. Legislation is now pending to make Easter a fixed date and Good Friday also. Gratification is expressed in the current news that the churches of all creeds are agreed on the need and upon the date to be fixed. Would that they might yet see the disloyalty to Christ implied in fixing a date in commemoration of our Lord's death to suit ecclesiastical and business interests rather than the date the Lord himself arranged for and commanded His people to observe.

The fact that Good Friday comes nearly a month before the true date and that Easter holiday arrangements provide cheap and convenient travel accommodation may lead some to ask why we do not decide to adopt the Good Friday date for our observance instead of the true date. Any reader who has such a question in mind has found its answer, we trust, in the foregoing article. Were we to accommodate our observance of the Memorial to the time of greatest convenience, we should only be doing what we condemn in nominal Christendom. What would be the use of knowing all this about the correct date and our Lord's particularity in instituting it on a day associated through nearly two thousand years with Jewish history and the miraculous deliverance from Egypt if we deliberately set that aside and ourselves associate the Memorial with a heathen festival under the behest of an apostate church? Knowledge on divine things is certainly not to be treated in that way if we would escape the condemnation of the Lord. Come out from among them, He says: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Revelation 18: 4.) How many who are not in Babylon by actual membership are in her by doing as she directs? Remember, his you are to whom you render service to obey.—Romans 6: 16; John 8: 34, 44.

* * *

For the Children

FORGIVING AND HEALING

More Wonders in "His Own City"

Before we tell the story intended for this month we wish to know where Jesus went after He came back from "the other side" of the sea of Galilee. If you will please read Matthew 9: 1 you will find that He "came into his own city." Some may think that Nazareth was his "own city"; but let us see. Please read Luke 4: 16, then read Mark 2: 1. These texts tell us that while He was "brought up" in Nazareth it is Capernaum that is called "his own city" because when He arrived there from "the other side" He was "in the house," or as we sometimes say "at home."

But there were many houses in Capernaum; which one is meant by "in the house"? We think it was the one named in Luke 4: 38. There were several reasons for making Capernaum "his own city." One was that Nazareth had rejected Him and He never went there again. Another was that His apostles lived at Capernaum or near by, and Peter's house was always open to Him as His home.

After landing on the shore Jesus was not long in reaching Peter's house, and dense crowds followed Him. There was not room in the house for all of them, so they crowded around the door—so many of

them and so thickly that no one could pass through.

While Jesus was teaching these people four men came up bearing on a couch (or bed) a man who had palsy. Perhaps my little readers are asking "What is palsy?" If so, the answer is, that there are many different kinds; but I will mention two. One kind makes the hands and fingers continually shake or tremble. Another one causes all the flesh of the body to gradually shrink away, so that they cannot stand up, walk, or do anything. It seems to have been this sort of palsy that this poor man had, for he had to be carried to Jesus.

When the four men arrived, of course they could not get in through the door for the crowds. But they had made up their minds to bring the man to Jesus, so they had to find another way to reach Him. It was fortunate for them that in those days the houses had a flight of steps on the outside which led up to the roof; and again fortunate that the roofs were flat. As this seemed to be the only way to get in, they carried the man up the steps and, resting him on the roof, they pulled away enough tiles to make a large hole. Through this hole they lowered the man and his bed down and down until he reached the floor and lay just in front of Jesus.

Now I am sure we can all say that two things are certain: Those men must really have believed that Jesus *was able* to heal the palsied man, or they would never have gone to so much trouble. And they must have believed that Jesus *would* heal him if he were laid before Him. This belief in Jesus is real Faith; and having this faith they would not let anything stop them from finding Jesus.

Everything that they could do had then been done. It was for Jesus to act next if He kindly would. No one seems to have asked Him to heal the man, but "when he saw their faith" and looked down upon the man lying there too weak to move and altogether a pitiable object, He said unto him—"Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." And the people heard what He said!

For a few moments there seems to have been silence in the room. Then whispers began to pass one to another. Certain visitors who were there from Jerusalem (great people called Scribes and Pharisees) did the whispering. One said: "Who is this which speaketh blasphemies?" And another said: "Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" No doubt these visitors were also looking very shocked at what Jesus had said to the man. Jesus could see their faces: perhaps He did not hear their whispers, but that made no difference; He knew. He knew their thoughts, and He told them that their thoughts were wicked—"Wherefore think ye *evil* in your hearts?"—Matthew 9: 4.

It is true that God can forgive sins, as they said; but so can Jesus. These visitors did not believe that He could. They did not know that God had sent Him with power to forgive sins. But if Jesus had said those words without God telling Him to, then of course He would have done wrong. And to do wrong is to sin, and if Jesus had sinned, oh, how terrible it would have been! God would never have enabled Him to do another single miracle. But the very next minute Jesus said to the man—"Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house"; and he was at once able to get up, carry his bed, and walk away!

So Jesus had not displeased God nor done wrong when He said to the man—"Thy sins be forgiven thee," because God enabled Him to do that miracle just afterwards.

And when all the people saw what was done they were very greatly surprised and greatly pleased too (except the visitors from Jerusalem), and they were "filled with fear" because they could see that Jesus had such wonderful power. But they soon began to talk again after the brief silence, for they all "glorified God, which had given such power unto men" (meaning the Lord Jesus); some of them saying "We never saw it on this fashion"; others saying "We have seen strange things to-day." And of course they had. Was it not a "strange thing" to see the roof come off and a man let down on his bed through the hole? And even more "strange" that someone amongst them should be able to heal a sick man by saying a few simple words? And again, very much more "strange" that some one not being the high priest of the Jews should have divine authority (proved by the immediately following miracle) to tell a man his sins were forgiven?

It makes us wish that we could have seen and heard all these things. And, if we had, would we have joined with the visitors from Jerusalem who allowed themselves to think evil things about the good Lord Jesus? None of us would want to be amongst *them!* And we can show this by speaking about our wonderful Saviour now (as the others did then), and glorifying God who has sent Jesus to forgive and then to heal.

—Uncle Frank.

The Thanksgiving Issue

COMING OF AGE is a great experience. It is an opportunity to show one's mettle, whether the previous years of training have succeeded in producing some knowledge of affairs, some judgment, some stability of character. Not only so, but some fitness for responsibility and some ripeness for service. We trust that the coming of age year of this journal, to which reference was made in the January issue, will find us with some knowledge, some judgment, and some stability of character; and that our activities will prove the soundness of this knowledge, judgment, and character. Our judgment is that the best way to "celebrate" is to *do something* befitting the occasion; to render thanksgiving to the Lord by

doing *something out of the ordinary for His children.* For well we know that we can do nothing to benefit the Lord direct; but what we do for His "little ones" He accepts as done unto Him.

From several readers we have received encouraging approval of the plan set out in January issue, to publish "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" as the April 1929 issue, that being the first number in our coming of age year, and hence most appropriate as a special Thanksgiving number; to print 20,000 copies, and by our united efforts defray the cost of practically giving them away; the hope being that that many copies put at once into circulation will do a great work in enlightening and comforting truth-hungry Christians and other honest inquirers into whose hands they may be placed, causing them to give praise to God. To some the proposition looked rather formidable at first—almost if not quite impossible of accomplishment. We were therefore doubly pleased to receive the following letter from a dear brother in the faith, who on reading the article set himself at once to do some practical thinking on the subject, with the result that the whole proposition is greatly simplified; and instead of climbing a sheer precipice as it were, we have only to go up a gentle gradient—still requiring perseverance and push to be sure, but nothing beyond the ability of most of us. Following is the letter—

The Thanksgiving Issue—A Suggestion

Dear Brother Henninges:

The N.C.A. for January has been duly received. Many thanks.

I have read with much interest the article under heading "A Thanksgiving Issue." The "coming of age" of institutions as well as of individuals is usually made the subject for a celebration, and hardly anything better than the article indicates could have been suggested. But as this is the first intimation we have had of it in the "Advocate" it struck me as "swift work," and my first impulse was that humanly speaking at least the task set out could never be done within the specified time. I had just previously read the Annual Report and felt "weighed down" by the deficits there named in connection with the C.G. Fund, the adverse balance of the N.C.A., and the many "miles" yet to go in the "ship" L.S.F. The need of another additional large sum to finance the new departure suggested a "breaking strain."

The situation however seemed eased a bit by the statement that the deficit on the C.G. Fund might be allowed to stand over and be attended to later; and presumably the same might be said of the L.S.F. should the financial resources of the friends make it quite necessary. And all this while a concentrated effort be made to finance the new and special project.

Further consideration induced me to think that the task is not so formidable as it may at first look if "Advocate" readers will "get together" mentally at least and make a united attack according to a plan. Like other tasks seemingly difficult which tumble before system and determination there seems no reason why this one should not be in that list. To all who realize the value of the teaching in "Bible Talks," there will be no need to urge that any good method by which the work is got into the hands of the people is justifiable and worthy of support. Similarly any labour expended in that way is worthy of all praise. It now only remains to say that any money used for the same end is glorifying God by the setting forth of His truth.

Now I have something to submit which will involve the lovers of truth in both labour and expenditure, neither of which should be beyond the capacities of most of us, and which would sweep out of the office the whole 20,000 copies of the new issue on a cash basis before the end of May.

The suggestion in the article is that all these copies might be in the hands of people before the 21st year is out. I believe that in what I have to submit that should not be much of a difficulty either. But, as already hinted, determination is essential, coupled it may be with some self-denial.

Of all the readers the N.C.A. enjoys, only 100 will be required for the purpose of this plan. If more than that number should "join up," it need not necessarily be of embarrassment to the office, and where readers are not strong financially two, three, four, or more could unite and count as one of the 100.

Let each one of the 100 then order 200 copies of the new issue to be sent to their several addresses. Each one would thus be taking up *one per cent.* of the gross issue. That looks surprisingly little to do for each, but it would absorb the whole 20,000. At the price the copies are to be issued (4d. each), 200 would cost 66/8 without freight—not a large amount considering the special circumstances. But should that amount be impossible to some while a less amount is practicable, uniting with others and counting as one (as already suggested) is the remedy.

The next matter would be the distribution of the copies. Individual circumstances must count largely in settling that detail, but as the whole arrangement is in the nature of a thanksgiving or thank-offering to God for past favours, it would be quite consistent with the spirit of the movement to *give* them away.

Distribution would involve the purchaser in some labour, and those who live in towns and cities sufficiently large could visit the homes of neighbours and others and make the presentation at the door with appropriate words. A great personal blessing will be missed, and possibly the householder not impressed, if the copy is merely placed in the letter box. But only where there is an evident interest in Divine things and where a promise to read the book can be elicited, and there only, it seems to me should a copy be left. They are too precious to waste on the known indifferent.

What has been said in the foregoing you will observe is in full agreement with paragraph four page 180 first column of January N.C.A. There is no wish on my part to make of none effect the arrangement already made in the article. This is merely a suggestion which might commend itself to some—perhaps a hundred. It is at least the course that I have decided upon for myself, and accordingly I

ask for 200 copies to be reserved on my account as one of a possible hundred. These I will undertake to distribute in the best manner I can within the year. Enclosed is £3:6:8 to pay for these at the rate of 4d. per copy. But as I understand that the fourpenny price does not meet the cost of production and postages I am adding a donation of £20.

For those amongst us who for reasons of timidity or diffidence have never done house to house work (the apostles were directed by the Lord to this method of announcing the glad tidings), the free distribution of Bible Talks in N.C.A. form as above outlined appeals to me as a fine way of beginning. For the "timid" would learn that many on hearing of the work in hand are very kindly disposed, sometimes inviting the worker inside, and are always of course comforted by the good message of the truth. What greater joy and delight in the world for the Lord's people than experiences like these, even though they may be but occasional? And how the worker becomes more and more "grounded and settled." The benefits from such service are primarily and mostly ours, no matter what other results may follow. Were not the Thessalonians Paul's "joy and crown"? Possibly there may be one or more for you and me, and labour in the service of the Truth is the means of attaining such "joy and crown."

At all events, dear Brother, I pray that God may speedily bless this effort by uniting the minds of His people in concentration and determination to fulfil their utmost part, that many of the truth-hungry may be found by this means.

How glad we are to receive a letter like this and to note the earnestness and zeal! May the Lord richly bless the writer of it and make him a blessing to many. His plan as outlined is excellent, and makes the whole undertaking in connection with the coming of age "celebration" seem very light indeed. We shall most certainly be pleased if 99 others who rejoice in the truth would join him in this most excellent plan of determination, concentration, and co-operation: for our anticipation is that the Thanksgiving Issue will be divinely used for the enlightenment of many now sitting in darkness. And the Lord never forgets to bless and comfort His servants in their service for Him.

The brother is right in gathering that, since the April Thanksgiving issue will cost more to produce and post than the fourpence per copy at which it may now be ordered, donations to defray the additional expenses will be very acceptable. His donation is much appreciated, and will be applied in reduction of the eventual price at which the Thanksgiving issue will be supplied after April in Australasia and after May elsewhere: all as set out in the January number, page 180.

It would be most delightful to see the entire Thanksgiving issue "swept out of the office" by the end of May by the adoption of our brother's plan. Indeed, if all N.C.A. readers who *can* do so *will* follow our brother's lead in ordering 200 copies, the proposed edition of 20,000 copies will need to be more than doubled. And when to these two-hundreds are added the orders of hundreds, fifties, and dozens, think what a testimony for the present truth will be given by this means!

What about it? Why not do it? Send in your order now at fourpence per copy in Australasia, fivepence (10 cents) elsewhere, with an added donation, as our brother has done, or without such a donation. The necessary donations will come along, we feel sure. In the March issue there will D.V. be a statement of donations received for this purpose up to the end of February.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *forget not* all his benefits."—Psalm 103: 1, 2.

"O *give thanks* unto the Lord; call upon his name: *make known* his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: *talk ye of all his wondrous works.*"—Psalm 105: 1, 2.

The Watching Servants

(Conference Addresses continued from January issue)

AS STUDENTS OF PROPHECY

THE POINT OF THE PARABLE of the Watching Servants was the watchfulness necessary to be always in readiness to open the door at whatever hour the master should return from the wedding. The Lord emphasized this point when he said to His disciples (Luke 12: 40)—"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Watchfulness would imply alertness and faithfulness in the performance of duties allotted to them by the Lord. Each of the many parables must be studied for its particular lesson or lessons. Parables such as "the Talents," "the Pounds," "the Faithful and Wise servants," etc., teach the Lord's method of dealing with those who have been "called and chosen" by Him. Having delivered to them the goods, the Master expects, and rightly so, each individual who has been so favored by Him to respond suitably, showing gratefulness, and exercising energy and determination in the carrying out of whatever task is allotted to him, whether great or small. The above mentioned parables show what the Master expects of His servants. They also vividly demonstrate the methods He adopts in dealing with both classes, faithful and unfaithful, at His return after a prolonged absence as depicted in the parable containing the words—"a man travelling into a far country."—Matthew 21: 33; 25: 14; Luke 19: 12.

Again, other parables point to signs which were to appear throughout the Lord's absence, and which would indicate to His watching servants His far or near returning. The disciples would realize when these signs appeared that their Lord's return was imminent or otherwise. Such a parable is found in Matthew 24: 32, 33—

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

It is this aspect, "as students of prophecy," we wish now to consider in connection with the watching servants.

Great Signs

The Lord told His disciples that "great signs shall there be from heaven"; also earthquakes, famines, pestilences, and fearful sights. (Luke 21: 11.) Also (Matthew 24) in reply to the disciples' question (literally)—"what the sign of thy presence? and of *the end of the age?*" *the Lord not immediately answering* their question gave many details which would come to pass in heavens and earth. Not in the literal heavens—in which we see the sun, moon, and stars, nor the literal earth in and upon which we live, but those things for which they stand in symbolic language. The heavens represent the *political, religious,* and *governmental* systems occupying ruling positions over the minds of men, and in which great men—kings, emperors, and conspicuous teachers are as stars, to whom people look up as guides or lights, who as time passes fall while others take their places, and who illuminate the earth with their particular form of civilization or religion.

The earth may well represent that which is ruled over by the heavens; that is to say, the social order or arrangements—financial, commercial, educational, etc.—under which we live. The sea might picture the restless masses of humanity, growing more so as time passes.

The Jews sought some great sign from heaven; but the Lord said—"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.—Matthew 16: 4.

Other evidence that the Lord did not desire the Church to look into the astronomical heavens for signs of the times is emphasised in Luke 12: 54-57. The weather could easily be discerned by looking at the sky. Not so the signs of the times. Jesus rebuked them—"Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?" The correct place to look was not the sky, but at the things which were happening at that time—the Messiah in the midst of them, and His miracles, and previously His birth (time and place of which could be known), appearing of John the Baptist, and numerous other events were to be seen by the watching ones.

People to-day are prone to look at the sky rather than at the happenings around them. Any unusual occurrence in the astronomical heavens or physical earth—such as meteoric displays, falling stars, destructive cyclones, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, etc., cause many people concern for the well being of our earth, and they jump to the conclusion that "the end of the world" has come or is near. One dear Christian lady, on seeing recently the sky writing done by aeroplane, was a little fearful and afraid, feeling sure that this must be some kind of message from the Almighty, until reassured of the facts. The Lord told His disciples that there would be famines, earthquakes, etc., throughout the age. These things have been happening since the beginning, and are not to be taken as signs of the end of the age.

Many aids are given in the New Testament, including the book of Revelation, which have proved very helpful indeed to the watching disciples. One significant sign recognizable in events is recorded in Matthew 24: 15. The Lord said—"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth let him understand:)." This "abomination of desolation" would appear in the holy place or Christian worship. Jesus doubtless had in mind Daniel 12: 11—"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up," etc. The same power is spoken of in Daniel 7: 25, as a horn—"And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." The same power is again shown in the book of Revelation, which was given to "shew things which must shortly come to pass." (Revelation 1: 1.) Hence the power referred to was to rise future from our Lord's day, and is described in 13: 1-9 as deceiving the whole world.

In this chapter is depicted the rise of the Papal system out of the sea of anarchy into which the Roman empire fell. The resemblances to the different beasts—leopard, bear, and lion show the beastly aspects of its teaching and practices in God's sight, and its inheritance of universal empire from previous empires. Allegiance and power were given to it by the ten sovereign states or divisions into which Rome became divided. "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." (Verse 7.) This beast was to continue for forty and two months or 1260 days, understood as 1260 years.

Again in Revelation, chapters 17 and 18 describe the same system under other symbols. The woman arrayed in scarlet and purple, sitting on a scarlet-coloured beast; representing the Apostate Church, clothed with sinfulness, and in a ruling position as a world power. The gold and precious stones, etc., represent the teachings purporting to be truth, yet spurious. The vision goes on to picture the exalted position of the Church nominal, finally the 10 horns or kingdoms which upheld the woman turn against her and destroy her: so fulfilling God's will.

We, looking back over the age, can see the fulfilment of all these prophecies: of the visions mentioned in the Revelation, also the prophecy by the

Lord Jesus in the 24th of Matthew, when He mentioned Daniel's propheecy as something future from His day, and to be looked for as a sign of the times, which would appear before His second presence and the end of the age could take place.

In the apostle Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians he corrects a wrong idea prevalent among them, that the day of the Lord was at hand then. 2 Thessalonians 2: 3 (Diaglott)—

"Let no one delude you by any means, because the apostacy must come first, and there must be revealed that man of sin, that son of destruction, the opponent, who indeed lifts himself above everything called Divinity or Majesty; so as to seat himself in the temple of God, exhibiting himself that he is a God."

Here was a sign, the apostle reminds them, which must come to pass before the day of the Lord's presence—something they were to watch for. He continues—

"Do you not remember that while I was with you, I said these things unto you? and now you know what restrains, in order to his being revealed in his own season. For the secret of lawlessness is already working, till only the one restraining for the present shall be out of the way; and then will be revealed the lawless one (whom the Lord Jesus will consume with the breath of his mouth, and annihilate by the appearing of his presence)."

The apostle doubtless when present in person in Thessalonica talked these things over with the brethren, warning them even as he did the elders at Ephesus referred to in Acts 20: 29-31—

"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. *Therefore watch*, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

The apostle warned the Thessalonian brethren, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." He could see signs even then of this great apostacy, which has prevailed so mightily. The hindrance which kept back the full growth at that time was the Roman empire. When the dissolution of that empire took place, and the division into 10 sovereign powers, Rome grew and expanded and flourished.

The ten horns remind us of Daniel's explanation of the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar. The image's head of gold represented the king, and he was followed by inferior metals representing inferior kingdoms which should arise, until the division into the legs representing Eastern and Western Rome, and subsequently the apostate church has flourished.

Perilous Times

In the apostle's letter to Timothy (2 Timothy 3: 1-7, 13, 14), he warns him of *perilous times to come*. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" "*my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*"—2 Timothy 2: 1.

In Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, warnings are given to the Church as a whole, right throughout the age, of events which would affect it, with exhortations how to meet the trials and difficulties as they would arise. During the darkest centuries of the age there were faithful men and women who saw the abomination, perhaps in part only, yet suffered persecution for righteousness' sake, who were not afraid to denounce the evil practices of the nominal Church, which demanded allegiance to itself under penalty of fearful torture and death, fulfilling in every detail the propheecy of Daniel and referred to by the Lord as the abomination of desolation.

The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on Calvary was the one and only all-atoning sacrifice necessary for the sins of the world; the Lord being then exalted to be the one Mediator between God and men. (1 Timothy 2: 5, 6.) The Papal Church has established *thousands of mediators* in the shape of its officiating priesthood, who claim to *create the Lord Jesus Christ* as often as they please, offering Him again and again thousands of times daily in as many localities by as many priests as a *necessary sacrifice for the sins* of the believers in this teaching and who are willing to pay for the same. It is this additional offering as a sacrifice for sin which constitutes an abomination in God's sight. The necessary offering for sin made on Calvary requires no addition or supplement. To all who seek deliverance from sin by the sacrifice of the mass the cross of Christ becomes of none effect, because such an one is not coming to God in the appointed way (that is, through the one mediator He has provided), and through Him only can sins be forgiven.

We, looking back, can see much more clearly than those living in earlier times, they not having all the details of this awful system as we now know it. As the faithful ones in the apostle's day were able to discern this great apostacy in its infancy and recognize it as a sign of the times, thank God we now can see still further. We see it being consumed by the Lord's presence, we believe; and we earnestly long and pray for the time when it shall be utterly destroyed by the *revealing* of the presence of the King of kings. —A.K.

Watch for the Bright Shining of His Presence

THE EARLY WATCHING saints having received the promise that Jesus would return again, it would be quite in order for them to think of His coming or being on the way and of the nearness of the time when His knock would be heard; and His presence after coming would be the time for the dealing with His servants and carrying on any other works appropriate to a feudal lord or sovereign taking over the reins of office.

The disciples being Jews, and having the Scriptures, did believe that He was the Messiah, the Anointed One sent from God. The miracles which

He wrought in their midst were a proof of His Sonship and convinced them that He was the great Prophet spoken of by Moses. In His instructions the Lord had informed them that He was to go away, and that if He went away He would come again, and receive them unto himself, "that where I am, there ye may be also." This would cause them to ask the question recorded in Matthew 24: 3—

"And as he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, Tell us, when these things will be? and what will be the sign of thy presence, and of the consummation of the age?" (Diaglott rendering.)

The disciples asked this question so that God's people would know what would be, and by what means the sign of His presence and the end of the age would be manifested. Jesus referred the disciples to the prophecies of Daniel, which foretold certain events to be fulfilled. In Daniel 12: 1, 4 we read—

"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

In verse one we read of a time of trouble which is the first thing to indicate that a new power is taking hold of affairs from the end of the 1260 days. That was the time when Michael, the name given to Jesus in His pre-human existence, would "stand up." The standing up of Michael would mean that our Lord Jesus who is King of kings and Lord of lords has begun to exercise His authority as heir of the world and of the Fifth Universal empire mentioned in chapter 2.

This would bring a great time of trouble; our Lord would begin to overturn the work of that evil system, "the abomination of desolation," and deliver His faithful children who had been kept in bondage.

Many signs would be noted after Michael would stand up—"many shall run to and fro." What wonderful inventions of transit have appeared during the 19th century; as railways, trams, motors, steamships, airships, etc. How conveniently we can receive messages from a great distance in a little time by wireless, telephone, telegraph, cable. And the wonderful increase of knowledge both religious and secular, which would indicate His presence, has been no less remarkable.

The Desolating Horn or Power

The prophet Daniel foretold that an abomination of desolation or evil system would arise and stand in the holy place. He also foretold the falling away. This power was exceedingly strong, and sought to change times and laws, and it persecuted God's people who were given into its hand for 1260 years. —Daniel 7: 25.

The process of dealing with this evil system, or as the apostle Paul calls it in Thessalonians "the man of sin," would be a sign by which the saints would know that the presence of our Lord had begun.

This evil system is sometimes symbolized in the prophecies of Daniel as a beast or horn. Daniel 7: 11—"I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame."

When Michael stood up (which was the beginning of the end) He did not immediately destroy this evil system; but its consumption began then. It was to be a gradual consumption, and our Lord is present for that purpose. In Daniel 7: 14 the judgment of the beast is associated with the transfer of universal dominion to the Kingdom of God.

The Sign of His Presence

The entire consumption of this evil system now proceeding can be accomplished only by our Lord. Men of themselves are unable to loose themselves from its hold. Hence the Lord undertakes to deliver them. Only those who believe the prophecies can realize that this is a real sign of the bright shining of His presence.

His presence is not a visible one, but the consuming of this evil system is a great "sign," and in due time it will be completely destroyed by His open manifestation, as the apostle Paul states in 2 Thessalonians 2: 8—

"And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall consume with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of His presence." (Revised Version margin).

A further sign was foretold in Daniel 2. There was a great image which symbolized the four successive "universal empires" or powers. When it came to the time that the feet were partly clay and partly iron, the God of heaven would set up His kingdom, which shall not be destroyed. The clay represents democracy, or the rule of the people, which has caused brittleness in the former "iron" or despotic Roman empire. This sign is one that can be recognized and understood by the least of God's children if they will keep awake and watching, for there is no great learning necessary to realize the great political changes now being brought about all over the world.

The Great Shaking

Jesus exhorts all His saints to be watchful and prayerful, and it is only by divine favour and by being watchful and prayerful that we can escape the trouble that is to come upon the world, which we shall read about in Luke 21: 25, 26—

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

"Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken."

Jesus who is now present is consuming and weakening the powers of this world before the final overthrow. Never was there a time when "the powers of the heavens" were shaken as they are being shaken at the present day. Both Christian and non-Christian political and religious systems are being overthrown. The people do not know the real cause of the shaking, nor of the trouble and confusion in social affairs. But those who believe

and are watching for the bright shining of His presence recognize these things as "signs" that He is actively engaged in this shaking of the kingdoms of this world.

The Lord said to the disciples that there would be wars and rumors of wars, but this would not be the sign of the end. As the apostle Paul states in his epistle to the Thessalonians, "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them"; for "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."—1 Thessalonians 5: 2, 3.

In this final phase of the time of trouble shall His presence be revealed, and they shall see the Son of man coming with power and great glory, and the kingdom of this world will be openly manifested as having become "the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ."—Luke 21: 27; Revelation 11: 15.

Let us be watchful and prayerful, as our Master exhorts us to do in Luke 21: 36. "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." —Luke 21: 28. —J. McK.

Recognizing the Enemy

IF I SAY TO A CHILD, Do you see a ship on the bay? and he has never seen a ship, or known the word, there might be a dozen sails, and he might think they were big waves or white clouds; he would not know them for ships. Before we can speak of "recognizing the enemy," we must know what "enemy" means, and we must know the appearance or other marks by which to recognize it when we see it. In the confusion of battle soldiers have been known to kill their own men in mistake for the enemy, and on the other hand the enemy has sometimes been mistaken for friends and admitted within the lines with disastrous results.

We as Christians are instructed in God's Word on all things that concern us; and so we find in the Bible information on what is an enemy and how we may recognize him or her as such. Adam and Eve failed to recognize Satan as an enemy in Eden, and were led by his subtleties to think that God was their enemy. Enemy is defined by the Standard Dictionary thus: "1. One who cherishes resentment or malicious purpose toward another; an adversary; foe. 2. One of a hostile army or nation; a hostile nation or military force collectively." It is derived from two Latin words meaning "not" and "friend." Satan showed by his talk and actions in Eden that he was *not a friend*, either of God or of the two set over the garden to dress and keep and enjoy it. Satan deliberately set out to do God an injury by depriving Him of their love, confidence, and obedience.

Our Lord said that the devil, another name often used for Satan in the New Testament, "was a murderer from the beginning, and 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.) In all this Satan is opposed to God, a wilful enemy. So much a foe is he, that he even attempted to entrap the Son of God, whom he knew to be the true and holy One sent down from heaven

"An Enemy Hath Done This"

Another statement that enables us to understand what an enemy is occurs in the parable of the Tares of the Field. The master sowed good seed in his field, but while men slept some one came along and sowed tares in that field. And when he heard of it the master said: "An enemy hath done this." Any person who would enter the house or property of another to steal or to cause damage is an enemy.

The parable illustrates how our Lord Jesus sowed good seed, which brought forth "the children of the kingdom." But the same Satan who interfered in Eden entered into the field—where the "children of the kingdom" were developing as sons of God—to do damage by sowing imitation Christians. Perhaps he hoped the true would be entirely choked out by the false. This he did not succeed in doing, but his will to do so has been fully demonstrated by the state of the "field" to-day. After many centuries it is still a "tare" field, and the harvesters must do some searching to find the stalks of "wheat." (Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43.) That Satan has not succeeded in depriving the Lord of the true wheat is no fault of his. It is due to the fact that the Son of God is stronger than Satan. The Son of God is able to deal with the imitations that look much like His in outward appearance, but are not His in heart

In another parable the Lord called those who would not have him to reign over them his enemies (Luke 19: 27; Matthew 21: 41-44), and they thus became also the enemies of His disciples. Later on the apostles warned us of those who were enemies of the cross of Christ. Consequently our enemies also.

Shall We be Friends with Enemies?

Having seen from these Scripture examples that an enemy is one who would do us an injury, and does so when opportunity offers, we are confronted with the problem as to how to conduct ourselves toward those who have proven themselves to be enemies. In this, too, we have the guidance of Scripture.

Were our first parents told to continue on friendly terms with the Enemy of God who had demonstrated himself to be their enemy also, having become, as our Lord said, their murderer, in that he caused them to sin and so to come under condemnation to death? No: Satan's true character having been manifested, they were to have nothing more to do with him, but were to cling to the Lord who was and is their true Friend, and obey Him. God himself declared that there should be enmity between those who would obey Him and those who, in spite of all warnings, would follow Satan in evil thinking and doing.—Genesis 3: 15.

This attitude of enmity toward evildoers was necessary as a safeguard. Men had to choose whether they would worship and obey their Creator, or associate with those who despised God and preferred their own selfish and sinful ways. Cain and Abel made a choice, and when Abel was killed Seth took his place at the head of those who loved and served God.

When Modernists and others reject the Bible they deprive themselves of the benefits the Bible confers on those who read it attentively as the inspired Word of God. The Word of God enables us to recognize God as the God of righteousness who has a claim on our obedience, which is one of the most important lessons we can learn, and which should be impressed on all children from an early age. This of necessity means that, while yielding obedience to God, we must refuse obedience to all who are opposed to God and righteousness. Taking our stand with God, His enemies become to a large extent our active enemies, and we need His assistance in overcoming them.

A Circle of Foes

Taking our stand with God, then, and using as a field-glass the Word of God, we find these foes confronting us: (1) Satan and other evil spirit beings. (2) The Grave, (3) Death, (4) Sin, (5) The World, (6) Self. All of these are arrayed to do us injury.

(1) Of Satan as an enemy something has already been said. Assisting him in his attacks upon humanity are the evil angels mentioned in 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, and Ephesians.

(2) The Grave is an enemy because it is the receiving house of the enemy Death.

(3) Death is an enemy because it deprives us of the boon of life, passing us on to the prison, the grave. Born into the world as we are, under condemnation to death, death assaults us from the cradle to the grave with complaints and disease of all kinds, which we do our best to stave off or to cure, but to which we are ultimately obliged to succumb.

(4) Sin is an enemy, because of its injurious effects on mind and body, and because "the wages of Sin is death." Sin is like the sting of a bee, the bee in this case being death. Once stung with sin, death is inevitable, as our entire race has found.—1 Corinthians 15: 55, 56.

Love Not the World

(5) The World is an enemy because it stands for the present order of things on earth, whose ruler is Satan; he being called "the god of this world," who blinds the minds of them that believe not. To be blind is a calamity, and whoever and whatever afflicts with blindness is an enemy. It is not a general blindness, but a peculiar kind—a blindness to God, to Christ, to truth, and to righteousness, while the eyesight is keen for pleasure and for evil. All the governments of the world are afflicted with this peculiar blindness—all (or most all) the leaders and teachers, kings and governors, and its ecclesiastical institutions also. All "blind leaders of the blind."

The apostle says Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. There are things in the world which are not evil in themselves, such as machinery, trees and flowers, homes and furniture. But if they are loved to the absorbing of all time and thought, they become enemies too, because they interpose themselves between us and the prize we are seeking. Truly, as James (4: 4) says, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Whosoever desires to be a friend of God must be an enemy of the world with all its enticements and allurements. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."—Matthew 6: 24.

While we were yet Enemies

(6) Self is one of our enemies, because it is one of God's enemies. Naturally, we are inclined to think our own thoughts and ways are right. We are born with certain characteristics and form certain habits. It comes as a shock to some to learn that in an unconverted state we are enemies of God. But many are glad when they hear that "while we were yet enemies, Christ died," and that we are forgiven, reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and by faith in that work as done on our behalf.

Still that does not rid us of the flesh with its imperfections, and so for our good we must recognize that "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and must be continually fought and kept subdued. (Romans 8: 7.) Mind and body must be kept in subjection to Christ, with prayer for more of the Holy Spirit to energize us in His service instead of the service of Self.—Romans 8: 11-13.

Perfect flesh is not at enmity with God. Our Lord while on earth was perfect, and did always those things which pleased the Father. But the flesh and the carnal or fleshly mind referred to in Romans stand for imperfection and sin characteristic of all the descendants of Adam. By obedience to God our imperfect flesh may more and more be sanctified and separated from the evil around us. "Sanctify them by thy truth: thy Word is truth."—John 17: 17.

The Roaring Lion

And now, having taken a brief survey of six of our worst enemies, we notice that the first mentioned, Satan, is likened to an animal which most of us have seen in the Zoo if not in the forest. 1 Peter 5: 8 reads—"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

The lion emits a tremendous roar, enough to strike terror to the heart of the bravest. But does he roar to announce his coming, so his prey may take warn-

ing and escape? No: the lion is stealthy; he stalks the intended victim in silence, and springs suddenly upon it unawares. His roar is a roar of triumph as he plants his claws in the shoulders of his victim, and it is then too late for flight.

When we become Christians we must not think that Satan has lost interest in us. On the contrary, he is more anxious than ever to get hold of us, and destroy our spiritual life. We must be very watchful, ever on the alert to discern his stealthy creeping upon us. "Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." (1 Peter 5: 9.) We must recognize Satan as a real live antagonist, a personal being of great cunning and resource, untiring in his hunt.

Another of Satan's devices is to transform himself into an angel of light. He makes sin appear attractive, and he makes use of human beings as his messengers. These human agents of Satan and of darkness also transform themselves into angels of light, says the apostle in 2 Corinthians 11: 13-15. He calls them "deceitful workers," who profess to be "ministers of righteousness," but who underhandedly try to lead the true children of God astray. By flattery they gain the confidence of their victims. By sophistry they make evil appear good, and good evil. Thus they confuse the mind and dull the conscience of those who are foolish enough to believe their flatteries and compliments and their professions of friendship and love. (Romans 16: 18.) Let us beware, "lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."—2 Corinthians 11: 3.

The Clothing of Humility

The apostle Peter, in conjunction with the warning against the roaring lion, admonishes us to "Be sober, be vigilant," and also to "be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Peter 4: 5, 6.) James likewise associates humility toward God with resistance of the devil. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4: 6, 7.)

To resist (*anthistemi*, from *anti*, against, and *histemi*, stand) means to stand against. We must resist or stand against the devil, our wily foe, but we must not resist God. Toward God we must be humble, seeking the shelter of His wings, in acknowledgment of our weakness and our dependence upon Him. (Psalm 91.) And we have also the exhortation of 1 John 5: 18—"he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Keep—put a guard about. The best guard we can put about us is the everlasting arms, the protecting wings, the loving care of our heavenly Father and our precious Saviour Jesus Christ

If we do this we shall be preserved, and the promise of Romans 16: 20 will be fulfilled to us—"the God of peace shall bruise [margin, tread] Satan under your feet shortly." Exalted as overcomers to their heavenly inheritance, the joint-heirs with Christ shall be forever beyond the power of all their enemies: they shall witness the sublime spectacle of all enemies subdued under His feet, that God may be all in all. —1 Corinthians 15: 24-28; Revelation 5: 12, 13.

—R.B.H.

The Church at Philadelphia

IT IS VERY GENERALLY admitted by Bible scholars that the letters to the Seven Churches of Asia, although they may have had some local application to the several churches, yet in a wider sense they apply more particularly to the Church as a whole during the entire Gospel age. Therefore, even although these epistles may be looked upon as a prophecy concerning the state of the Church from first to last throughout the gospel dispensation, yet no doubt it was the Lord's intention that His people should as individuals profit from the warnings, reproofs, commendations, and encouragements contained in them. All down the age the Church as a whole has also found obedience the best way to increase our faith. During the age many trials, afflictions, and persecutions came upon the faithful, but these very trials were the means, when patiently endured, of increasing their faith, both as individuals and as groups of believers. All the faint-hearted gave up, some even making public recantations to avoid the stake and pillory.

The manner in which the Lord's people have been called to walk and to suffer for the truth's sake has ever been a mystery to the worldly minded. Being blinded by the god of this world—Satan—to the beauty of truth and holiness, having no higher standard or ambition than the rewards which this world can offer them, they fail to appreciate the great and precious promises which Christ holds out to all the faithful overcomers of this gospel dispensation. It is only the faithful followers of our Lord who can in any sense understand or appreciate these great and precious promises, held out to the faithful ones; or who can understand the love of God in the gift of His dear Son to redeem the whole world from sin and death. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4: 10.) When we can realize in some measure the great love wherewith God loved us, even while we were yet enemies, and that in His boundless compassion for our necessities and miseries He *sent His Son*

to be the "propitiation for our sins," and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2: 2)—that is, to make an atonement for them by offering His beloved Son as a sacrifice, and thus opening up a way whereby we might be reconciled unto God, and introduced into His favor as sons of God—having some appreciation of this great transcendent, free and inconceivable love, which God manifested towards us, we, in imitation of the divine example, ought to love the brethren and to be willing to lay down our lives in the Lord's service.

The Church at Thyatira

In the letter to Thyatira (Revelation 2: 18-29) the Lord commends His people for their works and love, service and faith, but shows that He expected resistance to "Jezebel" and rejection of the "abomination"; and what of faith or knowledge they had they were to "hold fast till I come."—Verse 25.

The Lord's people are at all times expected to resist the encroachments of false teaching and error; they are exhorted to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5: 21); to "try the spirits [influences or doctrines] whether they are of God." (1 John 4: 1.) The Scriptures are given that the Church may be fully equipped with the invincible truth, and thus enabled to expose and resist the errors of the Adversary. The apostle Paul urges us to "Put on the whole armour of God," and thus be enabled to stand in this evil day. (Ephesians 6: 11.) It is only by neglect of our Lord's instructions as contained in His Word, that any of His people will be overwhelmed by the delusions and errors instigated by Satan.

The systems of error introduced into the Church under the names of "Jezebel" and "abominations" may have some reference to the union of Church and State which has been so prevalent in Christendom, and which in the Scriptures is called "adultery." The Lord's people are urged to avoid all entangling alliances with worldly governments and institutions, and to "come out from among them, and be ye separate," saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." (2 Corinthians 6: 17.)

Union of Church and State

We know from past history that the early Church fell into this entangling error, at the time of the Emperor Constantine, when he presided over the Council of Nice, at which were present 318 Bishops, almost all Eastern. This council was held A.D. 325, so thus early was the abominable alliance of Church and State inaugurated. From this period onwards the Church continually grasped after power and wealth, and rapidly progressed into various forms of error adopted from the pagan peoples whom they desired to bring into the Church. But, even amidst this great falling away, there were a few faithful ones, "which have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden"—depths of Satan being a true description of the doctrine of the mass, in which the Papacy claimed to sacrifice Christ afresh.—Revelation 2: 24.

To those faithful ones he promised—"hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. (Revelation 2: 36, 27.)

The Lord thus encourages His faithful ones to abide in the truth until He come, and be separate from those who are seeking to reign as kings; and *at His coming* he would give them "power over the nations."

Even at this present time the great mass of nominal Christian people is grossly deceived and deluded by this "Jezebel" doctrine, that Church and State are reigning together "by the grace of God" as the representatives of God's kingdom on earth. It is given to very few to recognize this doctrine in its true light as an abomination in God's sight.

The Church Ruling the State

The great Papal system is evidently pictured here under the name of "Jezebel." Just as Jezebel was an enemy of God's faithful people, and her persecuting power was exercised through her husband King Ahab, even so the Papacy's persecuting power was exercised through the Roman Empire, to which she was joined. All condemned by the Papal Inquisition were handed over to the secular governments to be punished, whilst the Church confiscated the property of all convicted of heresy. Thus heresy hunting was an extremely profitable undertaking to this great "Jezebel" system.

The Lord foretold in this prophecy that this great system of error, which deceived millions of people, should undergo "great tribulation" (Revelation 2: 22) *for her misdeeds, and her children* "killed with death." (Revelation 2: 23.) This would seem to refer to the great Protestant Reformation during which both the Papacy and the kingdoms linked with her lost many "children" through their refusal to submit longer to Papal tyranny.

"But unto you, I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden. But that which ye have already hold fast till I come."—Revelation 2: 24, 25.

The Reformation instituted by Martin Luther, 1517 A.D., was, in a sense, the beginning of a new era. The word of God began to be circulated among the people, the darkness of ignorance began to be dispelled by the preaching of the truth concerning justification by faith, which was the keynote of Luther's message. This great Bible doctrine of justification by faith in the precious blood of Christ has been the means of breaking down the power of Rome over the minds of the people. When the people learned that truth, they naturally saw through the false pretentions of the Romish Church to be the *only power on earth by which sins could be forgiven.* Consequently, in the light of this increased knowledge, masses, penances, indulgences, and all other means instituted by the Church of Rome for procuring forgiveness of sins, were seen in their true colours as simply idle and absurd superstitions. Rome has done everything pos-

sible to prevent this increase of Scriptural knowledge. She has proscribed the Bible in every country where she has the ruling power.

The Message to Sardis

The message to the Church at Sardis reveals a condition of deadness in the nominal Church after the zeal of the Reformation had waned, when even Protestanism became to a large extent formal. Still there were some in Sardis, "which have not defiled their garments." (Revelation 3: 1-4.) That is, they did not conform to the prevailing worldliness of the time. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." (Revelation 3: 4.) The faithful and watching servants in Sardis were encouraged to "be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God."—Revelation 3: 2.

Amidst the prevailing worldliness even the Lord's true servants were inclined to be lax in their service and devotion to God, and required an admonition. They were exhorted to "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." (Revelation 3: 3.) The intimation is given here to search the Scriptures which they had "received and heard," otherwise the Lord would come to them unawares—as a thief—and punish them for their laxity. But the names of the faithful would not be blotted out of His book of life.—Revelation 3: 5.

The City of Brotherly Love

To Philadelphia was given a message of expectancy, of opportunity, of holiness ("These things saith he that is holy"), of being able to distinguish between mere professors and true believers. (Revelation 3: 7-12.) The faithful ones in Philadelphia are approved because they have "kept the word of my patience"; and they were exhorted to "hold that fast which thou hast." (Verses 10, 11.) Like the parables, these messages show the necessity of holding on, of holding fast the faith that one has, and clinging to such of the truth as one possesses. Because Thyatira and Sardis held on, held fast, Philadelphia came at last, when the Lord opened a "door" for his people—

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."—Revelation 3: 8.

We have herein a message of greater liberty—an open door—clear out of the constricted conditions of the past, a door into increased knowledge and larger opportunities of service, a door into a better understanding of the meaning of brotherly love.

With the revival of interest in holiness and consistent Christian living under the Wesleys in the middle of the eighteenth century came also a deeper interest in the reading and study of the Bible as the true guide of life. While revolutionary political and social movements eventuated in the French Revolution and subsequent movements for liberty and justice, Christians awakened more and more to their duty to print and circulate the Word of God by the formation of Bible and Missionary societies. So that, in spite of Rome's efforts to suppress the Bible, its circulation has increased yearly until to-day it is published in whole or in part in almost every known language and dialect.

This "door" was opened by the Lord, "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." (Revelation 3: 7.) No earthly power can avail to close this "door."

With the increase of scriptural knowledge amongst the Lord's servants more and more interest has been manifested in the Lord's return to reward his watching servants. All earnest students of the Bible could discern that the second coming of our Lord occupied a very prominent part in Scriptural teaching. The Lord's injunction, "Behold, I come *quickly;* hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Revelation 3: 11), seems to denote that these messages to the Churches indicate epochs drawing nearer and nearer to the great climax of history, the manifestation of the Lord's presence for the overthrow of the nations, for the completion of the Church, the closing of the Gospel age, and the opening of the kingdom age. Therefore it is not surprising that an increasing amount of interest has been manifested in that great event.

The "Miller Movement" of 1829-1844 seems to have been the most important in awaking interest in that subject, and since then there have been various movements amongst the Lord's watching servants, all tending to keep up and revive interest in our Lord's return.

A Life-giving Spirit

Our Lord's second coming is seven times described as thieflike, stealthy. Many neglect these Scriptures which declare that only those who "watch" in the way prescribed by our Lord shall be aware when His presence is due. Failing to realize the fact that spiritual bodies cannot be seen by human eyes without a miracle, some cannot understand how He can be present and yet unseen, arguing as some did of old that "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the Creation" (2 Peter 3: 3, 4), notwithstanding the many notable "signs" visible on every hand. They are unable to understand "the signs of the times," and hence discredit the evidence concerning His return. "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh *as a thief in the night.* For when *they* shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and *they shall not escape.* But *ye*, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief."—1 Thessalonians 5: 2-4.

How strange, in view of these and other equally emphatic statements of Scripture on this subject, that any should look for a fleshly appearance of our Lord at his second advent. Were that true, all would be aware of His return, both worldly people and Christians, and none would ask—"Where is the promise of His coming (or presence)?"

(Conference Addresses to be concluded.)

Special Notice

NEARLY ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to The New Covenant Advocate expire with the March issue. This reminder is therefore given so that all Readers may co-operate by sending their renewals promptly. The price per year in Australia and New Zealand is 4/-, elsewhere 5/- ($1.25): and it will be a great help if all will give early attention to this.

Trial Subscriptions

Send four addresses of friends whom you desire to interest in the Good Tidings along with the price of a year's subscription. The N.C.A. will be sent for three months to each of the addresses. You are not limited to four addresses: any number above four may be sent at the same rate. And

Remember

that each of these Trial Subscriptions received in Melbourne before the end of April, and at our branches before the end of May, will include a copy of the special Thanksgiving Issue for April—being the beginning of the twenty-first year of publication of The New Covenant Advocate, so compile your lists of friends, and send them along as early as possible.

Those who receive the N.C.A. free on special terms on account of inability to pay are as welcome as ever. But we need to hear from such at least once in the year, so we may know they still live and desire to continue as readers. All such should send in their requests before April.

New and Renewal and Trial Subscriptions, orders for single copies, and requests for N.C.A. on special terms, also orders for books and tracts, and remittances for all purposes may be sent to Melbourne, Nottingham, Brooklyn, or Durban, which ever is most convenient.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

1, £3; 2, £1; 3, £5; 4, £3:5:0; 5, £2:2:0; 6, £25; 7, 5/-; 8, £1; 9, £1; 10, £1; 11, 4/-; 12, 2/-; 13, £1; 14, £2; 15, £2; 16, 17/-; 17, 10/-; 18, £1; 19, 2/-; 20, 6/8; total to Jan. 31, £50:13:8 ($246.31).

This reduction of the adverse balance shown in last Annual Report is greatly appreciated. The adverse balance is now about £90 ($450).

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!

1, £2; 2, 2/-; 3, £3:5:0; 4, £8; 5, 10/-; 6, 2/-; 7, 8/-; 8, £1:5:0; 9, 2/-; 10, £1:12:0; 11, 2/-; 12, 6/-; 13, £1; 14, 2/-; 15, 2/-; 16, £1; 17, £1; 18, £3:15:0; 19, £2; 20, 6/8; 21, 10/-; total to Jan. 31, £27:9:8 ($133.57).

This reduces the adverse balance of the N.C.A. to about £56 ($280).

Library Supply Fund

1, £1:3:0; 2, £9:8:0; 3, 6/8; 4, £30; 5, £1; total to January 31, £41:17:8 ($203.55). This amount enables us to send 335 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 3803 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other Countries 5/-; $1.25
By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET,
MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.

Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.

23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y. U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents). postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—*Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own* Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents), paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Shewing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, *1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.*

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your liking and postpaid. Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal, and one copy of each of the above books in the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 26/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 20 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, MARCH 1, 1929 No. 12

The Church at Philadelphia

(Continued from February issue)

Although there is much that is erroneous connected with many of the views presented on that subject, still many who "love his appearing" can discern that our Lord's return to set up His Kingdom means not only a blessing to the Church, but in *some measure* also a blessing for the nations. But only a small number of God's people realize how extensive that blessing will be, what the return of Christ and the setting up of His Kingdom will really mean to *all mankind*. It means the glorious deliverance of the Church from earthly to heavenly conditions, from mortality to immortality, from a condition of humiliation to one of exaltation as joint heirs with Christ, to reign with him for a thousand years in that Kingdom.

Jesus Christ is the Seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth are to be blest. Those called out of the world in this age are blessed in advance of the others, to whom a blessing is still to come. To the whole world of mankind, all in Adam, the light will ultimately be given and to those who accept it this will mean deliverance from the bondage of sin and death. (Romans 8: 21.) During that blessed reign of Christ and His joint heirs, the obedient of mankind will be lifted up from present imperfect conditions to a condition of absolute perfection and righteousness; and all the wicked and incorrigible will be destroyed in the Second Death.

We may hope that comparatively few will incur that dread penalty; but all those who rebel against the righteous laws of the kingdom will undoubtedly merit that punishment, and the love and justice of God will be clearly manifested in the utter destruction of all evil, including evil beings and systems which are obnoxious to the Divine arrangements. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." "This is the second death."—Revelation 20: 14, 15.

At the close of that glorious reign of Christ all the redeemed and restored of mankind will rejoice in that great salvation which God has wrought through His well beloved Son—"he that is holy, he that is true, that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." (Revelation 3: 7.) For his obedience to the Father's will, He has been invested with "all power . . . in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28: 18. He was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Philippians 2: 8-11.

Throughout the coming ages the wonderful story of redeeming love, as manifested in the great and marvellous love of God and of Christ shown forth in the plan of redemption, will be the principal theme of the redeemed ones. They will bow before the Father and His well beloved Son in true worship and adoration; for the love, justice, mercy, wisdom, and power exhibited in His wonderful plan of salvation, and for the love and obedience of Christ in carrying out the Father's will, which required that He should "taste death for every man."—Hebrews 2: 9.

"Love strong as death, nay stronger;
Love mightier than the grave,
Broad as the earth, and longer
Than ocean's wildest wave.
This is the love that sought us,
This is the love that bought us—
To gladdest day from saddest night,
From deepest shame to glory bright,
From depths of death to life's fair height,
From darkness to the joy of light."

—A.M.A.

Will Come Forth and Serve Them

OUR CONFERENCE TEXT shows the Lord's attitude towards His disciples in another aspect. He serves them. After having performed all the duties assigned them, the household servants wait up, with loins girded and lamps burning, to admit the master at any hour he may return, and in readiness to look after his wants following a journey. And "blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching." He is so pleased with their faithfulness, the parable says, that he, the lord and master of the servants, girds himself and serves them.

This is a tremendous condescension on the part of the lord in the parable, and is intended to teach us that on the return of Jesus at His second advent a great feast of truth is due to the faithful. It is intended to show also Christ's high appreciation of faithfulness in His servants, inasmuch as He himself will serve them.

Although the setting of this act of serving is made at the second advent, it does not mean that there would be no truth given out during the previous years of the age, for the principle of inspecting and rewarding individual believers has been operating throughout the age. The Lord Jesus has known all along who have been faithful to Him, and has rewarded them by providing "meat in due season" (i.e., portions of truth) to stimulate and encourage them as may be required at any time throughout the age. But in order to reward He must first and continually inspect or observe the conduct of those whom He rewards with the meat in due season. The Lord Jesus undoubtedly observed the faithfulness of the great apostle Paul, and during his life served him with abundance of truth because his life was correspondingly abundant in zeal and service.

No one could ever doubt that as a follower of Christ Paul was the greatest worker that ever lived. His zeal and daring knew no limits, and because of this Jesus rewarded him with utterance in explaining the most profound spiritual truths; while from his pen we have the most wonderful letters ever written. Because he suffered the loss of all things temporal for Christ's sake, he was made marvellously rich in spiritual things. It has been the same throughout the age with all who have similarly put aside temporal gain; they have come into spiritual possessions; a consciousness of the approval and pleasure of God, and much spiritual joy. Verily He has indeed come forth and served them.

But there is to be a more pronounced and intimate serving than this by the Lord Himself.

These that have been so served did not live until the time for Him to return to take them to himself; and this the apostle Paul knew, and said after realizing that he had been faithful—"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 also that love his appearing."—2 Timothy 4: 8.

Profound Truth for Our Time

Hence it appears that at the Second Advent there is to be a serving of greater magnitude than any that has occurred in the past; for then it is that great and impressive truths are due. We shall refer to just two such truths—

(1) The fact of His secret presence.

(2) The giving of the full rewards to His servants.

Considering the first, the fact of His secret presence is precisely what we see in the parable. The parable covers the entire gospel age and the Lord's return, and He comes as it were in the night secretly. But He is going to "knock," and that is how the watching servants will know that He is present. He may be here a good while before He knocks, but the "knock" will be in the nature of an announcement that He is present—the making of the fact of His presence clear to the understanding of the faithful watchers. And how will this be done? Through the Scriptures.

The fact of his secret presence is the most profound truth of our time, easily discernible now from the Scriptures, which has provided stimulation, joy, and encouragement to the watching servants, and is the first item of the promised feast to be served up by the Lord himself.

To this must be added the rich viands of Divine truth concerning the high calling; the restitution of all things spoken by the prophets; the covenants—especially the place and purpose of the new covenant by which we receive forgiveness of our sins and reconciliation with God; to say nothing of the many other precious and palatable things the Lord has served up. It is simply exhilarating to realize that God has prepared such things for us, and that He had away back in the distant years arranged to make them known for the obedience of faith, with the promise of great reward.

The abundance of truth which the Lord is serving up now is best appreciated in comparison with the long period of famine experienced by the servants of God during the dark ages, and also the period of error and confusion prevailing on many Scripture subjects right up to the end of the 1260 year period mentioned in Daniel. (Revelation 6: 5, 6.; Daniel 12: 7.) Food served by the Master himself is a wonderful boon after a period of want and waiting.

Who Will Hear the Knock

Following the conditions set forth in the message to Philadelphia came the conditions represented by Laodicea, and again we have a promise that the Lord will personally serve the faithful—those awake and listening for His "knock." This is particularly stated in vs. 30 of Revelation 3—

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Anything more intimate and friendly between Master and servant could hardly be imagined. Yet it is made clear in the message that this special fellowship is for those individuals who resist the common

tendency to lukewarmness foretold as then rampant amongst professing Christians, and who cultivate love and zeal in their hearts for Him and His cause.

His dissociation of Himself from lukewarm Christians is equally emphatic. If they are "neither cold nor hot," he will *spue them out of His mouth*. Nevertheless, He still gives them counsel to buy of Him "gold tried in the fire," "and white raiment," and "eyesalve," that they may anoint their eyes and may "see." He is therefore still ready to serve them—even them. But a condition is attached; they must forsake their lukewarmness, get zealous again, and repent.—Verse 19.

They must hear His "voice" in this message and His "knock," and they must "open the door"—first to cast out that which has been improperly entertained as a guest, and second to take Him in as the sole occupier of their hearts. Then the Lord will "feast with him, and he with me" (Vs. 20, E.D.). The presence of a third party would make the "feast with him, and he with me" impossible; for there are only two persons in this arrangement—the Lord, and the individual.

From another viewpoint, Whatever is permitted by the individual to come in while the "feast" is in progress will stand between him and his Lord, and become a serious interruption to the "feast," for the attention of the individual will be divided. The Lord will under such circumstances "rebuke and chasten" (vs. 19), in order that the proper conditions may be restored. But if this should go unheeded, the only possible conclusion is that the feast will end; for the third party—be it person or thing—will ultimately get the most if not the entire attention from the individual.

In this event there can be no progress made in the truth, but rather retrogression, and that which was sweet and palatable while feasting alone with the Lord becomes distasteful and without zest, for the zeal has gone out to another object.

The Lord's Requirement: "Be Zealous"

Lack of zeal means not only impossibility of acquiring more truth, but the loss of such truth as we may have. Our Lord declared this to be the teaching of the parable of the Talents. He said (Matthew 25: 29)—"For unto every one that hath [the zeal] shall be given [the truth], and he shall have abundance [of truth in proportion to his zeal]: but from him that hath not [the zeal] shall be taken away even that [truth] which he hath."

This is doubtless the reason why so many professing Christians are utterly unaware of the first great truth of our time; viz., the fact of Christ's secret Presence. So they are necessarily unaware also that, as He was during His presence to superintend the "harvest" at the end of the age, the reaping and separating work are going on now, and that "strong meat" is now being given to assist the laborers. This is what He is serving. But we are not within the pale of such ignorance. Nevertheless the need for zeal in the cause of Christ and for consistent labor in the harvest field is most pressing.

What strong words are those which come to us from our Lord and the apostles: to "watch" lest there be anything like an intruder come between us and our Lord, and our love and zeal for Him suffer. How urgent is the apostle when he says—"Make these things thy care; be occupied in them; so that thy progress may be manifest in all things."—1 Timothy 4: 15, E.D.

The Lord regards zeal as of high importance. True zeal implies a readiness, a willingness to accept truth when it is given and understood. That kind of zeal cannot, unfortunately, be said of many professing Christians. But true zeal will lead one into truth; and then when it is received and efforts are made to spread it abroad, the Lord favours such with yet more.

To be given an insight into divine things, to understand something of the character and purposes of the God of heaven, is in itself a wonderful reward for anything we may do for the Lord. But added to this is a joy and a peace that pass the understanding of other men. All this the Lord has been serving to His faithful people throughout the age; but toward its end, in the period of His secret presence, truth was to be more than ordinarily abundant.

Serving the Full Reward

But now we see in this same message to Laodicea that the Lord will yet serve some named as "overcomers" in a way more magnificent than at any time or manner in the past. It will be the serving of them with the full reward. He says they shall "sit with me in my throne." As the apostle Peter has said, they shall be given "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" (1 Peter 1: 14)—a blessing of unimaginable magnitude.

The question is, then, Do we sincerely desire these things that the Lord is serving and will yet serve? If so, we must be zealous; we must repent of any wrong course we may have taken; we must keep Him as the sole occupier of our talents—the King ruling supremely there.

If the Lord has been kind enough to come forth and serve us, as we must say He has, there is not one of us who would wish to think lightly of such action on the part of our Lord and Master. Let us awake then to a greater realisation of the wonderful facts of our time and of the enormous possibilities that are before us, and give that devotion to His will which is but a fair and reasonable response for His kindness. —F.S.

(Conclusion of Conference Addresses)

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other Countries 5/-; $1.25
By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP
YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y. U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Arabia

HOW MANY PEOPLE realise that Arabia is larger than all the United States lying east of the Mississippi put together? Even those who pride themselves on their geographical knowledge are amazed when they trace on the map the dimensions of this sub-continent, this "Island of the Arabs" as the native geographers call their land. Though in Arabia the streams of life of three continents meet, though the most important sea-road of the Old World follows its shores for close on three thousand miles, it is so poor a land that international trade has little or no concern with it, and so forbidding that the long circuit by sea is preferred to any short cut by land. Nevertheless, few regions in the world have played a greater part in the history of mankind, for the Arabs not only founded Mahometanism, but during that brief period of marvellous expansion, when they set forth to conquer the world for Islam, they assimilated to their creed, to their speech, and even to their physical type, more aliens than any stock before or since.

The Arabian peninsula, which contains upwards of 1,250,000 square miles, forms a vast tilted tableland, highest at its western and southern margins, where mountain ranges rise to a height of 8,000 feet and more, and falling northward and eastward by a long and easy decline to the basin of the Euphrates. As most of the moisture from the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean is intercepted by these western and southern steeps, whose narrow seaward slopes are consequently well watered and highly productive, the bulk of the peninsula has to depend on such uncertain vapors as may ride down on the air currents from the Kurdish mountains, or may come off the Persian Gulf. Arabia is, therefore, one of the most rainless regions on earth, and further, through its low latitude, one of the hottest. Nor are these all of its physical disadvantages, for it cannot boast a true river in all its immense area, though its surface is broken by numerous "wadis," which become raging torrents for a few months each year. It follows that settled life is sporadic over almost all of the peninsula, being maintained only in such isolated spots as collect the little ground water from wide surrounding areas. In other words, Arabia has no continuously cultivated regions, save in the favored coastal tracts, but only scattered oases, usually of small extent, which are divided from one another by expanses of sun-swept steppe, capable of supporting only the scantiest vegetation, or by deserts of shifting sand on which can exist no living thing.

Arabia, it should be understood, is not a political entity. It is the name applied to the great rectangular peninsula forming the south-western corner of the continent of Asia, which is bounded on the north-west by the mandated territories of Palestine and Syria, on the north-east by the Euphrates, on the east by the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, on the south by the Indian Ocean and on the west by the Red Sea. This vast territory consists, politically speaking, of a fringe of Arab states, having more or less firmly established governments, and more or less clearly defined boundaries surrounding a barren and inhospitable region of mountain, steppe, and desert, which, though occupied by numerous nomadic tribes, has no political boundaries, and no government at all.

The independent Arab states are eight in number. On the north-west lies Kerak, which corresponds with the Biblical land of Gilead. Its capital is Amman, a town on the Damascus-Medina railway. Stretching southward from Palestine and Kerak runs the long, narrow kingdom of the Hedjaz, with an area considerably greater than that of California. Formerly a territory of the Ottoman Empire, it achieved its independence as a result of the Great War. Its political importance lies in the fact that it contains the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, which are visited annually by thousands of pilgrims from all parts of the Moslem world. Next comes the principate of Asir, and, below Asir, Yemen. Here perennial waters flow among the hills, so that cultivation is not wholly dependent on artificial irrigation. In western and southern Yemen, therefore, there is found a considerable population, and in this part of the peninsula alone Bedouin society is unknown except as an intrusive element. The great height of the mountains gives an Alpine character to the scenery, and the forested ridges and the upland valleys support towns and villages much larger and more numerous than are found elsewhere in Arabia, save only in Oman. Considerable areas are devoted to the raising of live stock, and the cultivation of cereals and coffee. At the south-western extremity of the peninsula is the British protectorate of Aden, which, though little more than a sun-scorched, volcanic rock, on which only a salamander could feel at home, is of immense strategic importance, because it commands the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Bordering the Indian Ocean seaboard is the region known as Hadramaut, the incense land, the fabled home of Balkis, Solomon's Sheban queen. Hadramaut possesses an exclusive, but highly-civilised society. Its valleys contain as many and as considerable settlements as the better parts of Yemen, and since the dawn of history it has been famous for its spices. The south-eastern corner of the peninsula is occupied by Oman, much of which is extremely fertile: fields of cotton and sugar cane stretch along for miles, and streams of water flow in all directions.

The physical characteristics of Arabia, reacting on its inhabitants, render them in great part—particularly those of the interior—of unsettled, predatory habit, intensely individualistic, jealous of the secrets of water and pasture which barely make life possible, and arrogantly proud of the liberty which has never been long infringed. The coastal states, because of their comparative fertility, are able to maintain a settled population, numbering perhaps 4,000,000, which supports itself by stock raising, agriculture, fishing and trade. But the vast and little known interior of the peninsula, though dotted with oasis towns, which boast buildings four, five, and even six stories in height, is ranged by numerous Bedouin tribes whose total number can only be conjectured, depending for exist-

ence solely on their camels, their horses and their sheep. The Bedouins, in order to find pasturage and water for their flocks and herds, are compelled to migrate, according to the seasons of the year, from one region to another, spending the winter months in their home land, in Central Arabia, but starting each spring on a vast trek, which takes them as far northward as Kurdistan and Anatolia, where they spend the summer months fattening their animals in the lush valleys, only to turn their faces southward again as winter draws near. Thus, the Bedouins are not nomads from choice, but from sheer necessity. They must move or starve.—*The Age, Melbourne.*

For the Children

The Man in the Office Who Left All

Somewhere in or near Capernaum there was a building which was used as an office by a man whose business it was to collect money from the Jewish people. The money collected was called "tribute" or tax money. When collected it belonged to a ruler called Cæsar, who lived in the city of Rome, hundreds of miles away from Palestine. If you will please look at Luke 20: 22 you will find both these words "tribute" and "Cæsar" mentioned together.

The Jews hated having to pay this money, and they hated those who gathered it. It was certainly not very nice to have to pay it, especially to a king who was not one of their own nation and whom they had never seen. But the Roman king had conquered the Jews by battle and the tribute money was for the wages of the governors, officers, and soldiers whom the king employed to rule them.

Many of the Jews thought that when Messiah came He would stop all that and would make the Jewish people the greatest nation in all the world. Then they would not have to pay the hateful tribute. But that was all a mistake. All the years that Jesus their Messiah was in Palestine He never did a thing to stop Cæsar taking the tribute money, and never once told anyone not to pay it.

If you will please look at Matthew 17: 24-27 you will see that Jesus himself always willingly paid His tribute money and that was the good example to all the Jews to do the same. And instead of grumbling and hating the tax gatherers (they were also called publicans) they should have tried to find out why God had allowed another king to rule over them and take their money. And they would have found that the fault was in themselves. How very often it is that when we are unhappy about anything the fault lies with ourselves, and not with God.

But what about the "Man in the office"; are we forgetting him? Oh, no, we are not; we have just been telling you what kind of business he was in. Who was he then?

In answer let us say he was one who knew about Jesus. He knew because everybody knew that Jesus was even then in Capernaum at Peter's house doing wonderful miracles. He had just healed the palsied man who was let down through the roof.

Jesus had been in Capernaum several times before that, and perhaps the man in the office had seen Him, heard Him preach, and witnessed His miracles. But of this we are sure: he sincerely believed that Jesus was the Son of God, the Messiah. Would he not then be very glad to hear that Jesus was again in Capernaum, and be anxious also to see Him? Perhaps when Jesus would leave Peter's house He and the rejoicing crowds would pass by the office? Now that is exactly what Jesus did: He "passed by." But He did more than that: He looked in: and there He saw the man, and the man saw Him. Then, lovely to tell you, Jesus spoke to him!

And still we do not know who he was, so we must see and also learn what Jesus said to him. All this we shall find in Matthew 9: 9. So Matthew was the man in the office; and although he was despised and hated by the Jews because he was a tax-gatherer or publican, he had then been called even by the king of the Jews to become Matthew the apostle.

Now there were plenty of other people round about just then: why should Jesus pass by all of them and call Matthew? The reason is because Matthew was sincere; he believed in the Lord Jesus and loved Him. Was he not therefore the right kind of person to be following Jesus—sincere, believing, and loving? Yes; Jesus wanted that sort then, and He wants them still, and is asking all such to "follow me." What a chance for you and me, boys and girls! If it was a grand thing for Matthew to follow Him because He was the King of the Jews, it is grander for us because He is now King of all the universe. Please read Matthew 28: 18.

If you will look at Luke 5:28 you will see that Matthew "left all" to follow Him. That means that he left a lot. Matthew was getting lots of money as a collector of taxes and had plenty of rich friends in the same business. But now he had seen, and heard, and received a call from the King of the Jews whom he sincerely loved, and that changed his mind altogether about making money in the office and keeping his old friends. So he "left all" to follow Jesus.

But Matthew got wealth of another kind by following Jesus on the earth, and will have the greatest and most abundant of all riches by and by, which will last for ever and can never be lost.

This is our chance too, boys and girls, if we will

"Follow me."

—Uncle Frank.

Grateful Hearts

GRATITUDE, A FEELING of thankfulness and appreciation, is one of the finest instincts of the mind. Animals share it with human beings, though the expression of their gratitude for kindness received may rise no higher than a vigorous licking of the patron's hand, a cheerful whinny, or a purr of content. By gratitude we do not refer to fawning, which is often expected of the poor toward the rich who have scattered their largesse; we mean a mental acknowledgment to one's self that one has been benefited, and that the one who has done the good turn should have some love, to say the least, in return.

But even animals do not stop short at the lick of the hand or the purr. Faithfully the cat keeps the house clear of mice. With great pleasure the dog fetches and carries and performs his little tricks. But even more: many a life has been saved by the dog's warning of fire and flood, many a child has been rescued from drowning.

Because He First Loved Us

It is on this ground of appreciation of favors received that the Lord appeals to us to love Him. He sets forth His great love toward us in that He sent His Only begotten Son to die for us, and to grant us the favor of life if only we will show a little gratitude for the Gift. If we have only a little thankfulness of heart for the gifts of nature, the sunshine and the rain, the fruitful seasons, the joy and gladness of even merely living and participating in these bounties, our hearts will well up and tears fill the eye to think how good God is. But when we see, beyond nature's provision for daily needs, the redemption from sin and death which His love offers us if we will only accept it gratefully, we are led to see that true gratitude means service—to take up our cross daily and follow Him; and then the Lord showers on us innumerable further blessings, including the precious gift of His Holy Spirit.

Yet another blessing He has given is enlightenment of mind—to be brought not only to the knowledge of God, but to know the "deep things" of God. And it is gratitude for this that moves us to the desire to help others—to liberate them from the false ideas of God wherewith the creeds of men have blinded their eyes, and share with them the wonderful height and the wonderful depth of that knowledge.

Gratitude for all God had done for us led to the establishment of "The New Covenant Advocate" in April 1909, as a means of spreading this knowledge and otherwise to encourage fellow participants in His love. And now, as suggested in the January issue, gratitude proposes to testify in a practical way our appreciation of the fact that we are "coming of age."

We are about to enter our twenty-first year, and wish to signalise the fact by some testimonial of thankfulness to the Lord. And as we can do nothing direct except in our thoughts and prayers, for He already has all things, our plan is to make a special effort to circulate the truth in the form of the April 1st number. This special issue will be "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" in the same size and form as the usual monthly "Advocate," but consisting of 88 pages and cover, instead of the usual 16 pages. Readers are advised to reread the proposals as set forth in January issue. We are glad to say there has already been some response to the proposals, which involve both financial assistance and personal service in this testimony.

The following two letters from opposite sides of Australia were received at Melbourne on the same day. Both are from old people of very limited means and great physical weakness. What these two dear old saints propose to do notwithstanding their handicaps will encourage other aged ones to do what their strength and means will permit, and will no doubt stir up younger ones who enjoy good health and greater financial ability to do what they can to take part in this witness to the truth.

Dear Brother Henninges: Greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer. I am enclosing £1 for my subscription for N.C.A. and the little book I received today—"Christ's Promised Return." [This little book was sent free to all subscribers, for each to read and if desired pass along.—Editor.]

I see in the February N.C.A. you are publishing a Thanksgiving Issue. Send me three copies, and use the balance of the £1 as you see fit. How the time slips away! I did not think it was 21 years since you commenced publishing the N.C.A. When I look back through my life and see God's guiding hand through it all, even when I did not know Him or His dearly-beloved Son for years after I came to West Australia, and how He brought me out of darkness into His marvellous light, I can say—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." And I thank Him for all His benefits. (Revelation 15: 3; Psalm 103: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 15.) The whole Psalm is beautiful, and when we need comfort God's Word is the only place where we can find it. (See Jeremiah 17: 5-8.) So let us bless the Lord for evermore. I cannot walk about now to distribute anything, but I have opportunity sometimes to say a few words for the Master at my cabin door.

Give my Christian love to all of like precious faith, not forgetting yourself and all co-workers. Your brother by His grace, ———, *West Australia.*

Dear Brethren: I am a bit late in sending my subscription to N.C.A., but I have been waiting to see what I could do toward the "Thanksgiving Issue." It is but very little, as our income is very small, but I will take one dozen April Issue of Bible Talks at 4d. each, and will do my best to distribute them, although I am deaf, and incapable of walking far, and my husband is a complete invalid. The small amount over will perhaps assist in paying postage, etc.

With the Psalmist and the N.C.A. I can say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits"—one of which is the monthly arrival of the N.C.A., which I look forward to as "meat in due season." By the grace of God, your sister in Him,

———, *Queensland.*

So here we have North-East and South-West joining in this Coming of Age Thanksgiving. And what of all between? Yes, there have been some between also. But first we will say that the foregoing two donations have been placed in the Thanksgiving Fund to assist in making up the first £80 for defraying expense of publication beyond what is brought in by orders for the April Thanksgiving Issue. At the close of this article we report what has thus far been received to this end.

Now here are some "in-between" letters, the writers of which are not so elderly, but who possess the same faith and zeal—

I am enclosing some money for the Thanksgiving N.C.A., and when it is ready will you please send me 100 copies and use the balance as a donation; I hope to be able to send a further donation later on. Also please send 10 - worth of the new booklets, "Christ's Promised Return," paper covers. Another says—

Please find enclosed Advocate subscription and £2 as a donation towards expenses of the April Thanksgiving issue.

One Hundred Two Hundreders

Both these brethren while making these initial donations and expressing their approval of the Thanksgiving project also think well of the suggestion put forth by a brother in February N.C.A.

One says—That idea of the brother in the February N.C.A. is splendid. If 100 N.C.A. readers would come along and take up that number of copies the work would be light for all concerned, and 66/8 is not a great sum. And might I suggest that those who cannot run that amount in a lump sum send in their order for that number and pay the amount in instalments, or get a money-box and put in a few shillings each week along with any odd coins, and by April they might have a nice sum to send in to the work.

The other says—Our brother's suggestion is good. I have no doubt that all of "like precious faith with ourselves" will wish to participate in one way or another. I have been thinking what measure of service I myself can render. There may be some brother or sister who can render more efficient service than I but who from financial reasons would not be able to assist as they might wish. I would like you to make available 200 copies free of cost to any brother or sister that would care for them and would dispose of them. No payment of course is needed from any whom they may reach in distributing—"freely ye have received, freely give." As soon as possible I will send you the £3: 6: 8 to pay for the 200 copies, together with something over to cover any postage that might be needed.

In reply we would say, Both these suggestions are good. Doubtless many of us have had fond mothers who instilled into our minds "Where there's a will there's a way." Of course we must now in our better knowledge of Scripture say of all projects, "If God will," and pray that our "will" may be in harmony with His will, and so the "way" may be sanctified by prayer and not be of the jesuitical sort that considers suitable any means that will attain the desired end. If all enter heartily into the spirit of this Thanksgiving Issue the "will" will find the "way" of doing something, however small, and thus have the pleasure and satisfaction of having taken part in the Coming of Age celebration.

Here are two more letters of interest—

I am enclosing cheque for £15 out of which please take pay for my N.C.A. subscription and the following order. The balance you can apply to the Work of Faith as you think best. I see you have a big scheme afoot for the Coming of Age number of the Advocate. Thanks for the little book, "Christ's Promised Return"—a necessary book for myself, to remind me that we are not tied to the things of time, and that there is more in living than the things we see around us and have to do with.

———, *Victoria.*

This brother's balance (£12: 7: 6) is placed in the Thanksgiving Fund. The other brother writes—

I enclose herewith £2 as subscription to N.C.A. and for the book "Christ's Promised Return" just received, and the balance toward the Thanksgiving issue of N.C.A. Also enclosed are clippings from Sydney papers showing the trend of present day teaching. Yours in thankfulness for the Truth,

———, *New South Wales.*

This brother's balance for the Thanksgiving Fund is £1: 15: 8. Perusal of the clippings he sends makes us all the more appreciative of his sentiment—"Yours in thankfulness for the Truth"—that prompted his donation. One of the clippings says—

Dean Inge, in his presidential address at the modern churchmen's conference at Cambridge (England) said:—I have reached the conclusion that we are immortal spirits on probation and have millions of years in which to work out salvation as a species. The notion that civilized man is a very new experiment in nature has hardly yet sunk into our minds.

This that has been reached by the Dean as his "conclusion" is as unscriptural as anything can be, just an echo of the original lie told by the serpent in Eden, "Ye shall not surely die." As for the "millions of years," the entire purpose of God regarding human salvation for those of the past as well as the present and the future will be gloriously completed in about a thousand years from now. The Thanksgiving issue shows what God's purpose is. We cannot afford to have the Dean's "conclusion" even on the surface of our minds, much less "sunk in."

Another of the clippings says——

"The Bible is not the natural revelation of God," said the Rev. T. E. Ruth at the Pitt st. (Sydney) Congregational Church last night, in the first of a series of sermons entitled "God's Older Bible." "This Bible points to the natural Bible, which is so many years older. This Bible covers about 6,000 years; the older Bible is at least 600,000,000 years old. Compared with 600,000,000 years, 6,000 is but an episode."

The preacher described Jesus as the Christ of the open air and the hills, who was calling men away from what is written. Christ thought in terms of flowers, and fields, and sheepfolds: he read his Scriptures in the sky, the seas, and the soil. Science to-day, he considered, was calling us in a strangely similar way to that in which Jesus called us. The voice of science sounded almost as if it were the new Messiah—but he was not prepared to say that it was.

Is it true that our blessed Lord Jesus "was calling men away from what was written"? No! that is not true, and no one has a right to stand in a pulpit

to say anything of the kind. The first record we have of a sermon by our Lord was that in the synagogue at Nazareth, when He read a portion from the prophecy of Isaiah, and said to the congregation —"This day is this scripture [literally, "this *writing*"] fulfilled in your ears." (Luke 4: 16-21.) Constantly during His earthly ministry did our Lord direct His hearers to the *written* Word of God. He repulsed Satan in the wilderness temptation by three references to the *written* Word, and near the close of His ministry He referred His disciples to something *written* by "Daniel the prophet" that would serve to guide them in a coming crisis!

After reading the clippings we can appreciate all the more that the brother who sent them signs himself—"Yours in thankfulness for the Truth." He is thankful, and we all are thankful. He manifests his thankfulness by using this opportunity in connection with the "Bible Talks" Thanksgiving issue of the N.C.A. Let us all do all we can to direct men, as our Lord did, to the WRITTEN WORD, and, by assisting in the publication of this special Thanksgiving issue, do something to make the *written* Bible "talk" to thousands of readers, and try to save some of them from the dreadful teachings of present day pulpits.

Following are the donations received thus far for this purpose—

Thanksgiving Fund

1, 10/-; 2, £2; 3, 10/-; 4, £1:10:0; 5, £20; 6, £10; 7, 10/-; 8, 6/-; 9, 12/-; 10, 9/6; 11, £4:5:8; 12, 14/-; 13, 15/10; 14, £2; 15, 3/8; 16, 15/-; 17, £2; 18, 10/-; 19, £1; 20, 3/-; 21, £12:7:6; 22, £1:15/-; 23, £6; 24, £2; 25, 16/-; 26, £1:12:0; total to date, £73:11:10 ($857.65).

Summary

1. N.C.A. April 1, 1929, 88 pages and cover, Coming of Age Thanksgiving Issue, beginning twenty-first year of publication. Contents—"Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," complete with Chart and Diagrams.

2. Price per copy until April 30 in Australia and New Zealand, fourpence; elsewhere until May 31, fivepence (10 cents). N.C.A. Readers are invited to order at these prices before these dates any number of copies to be sent to themselves or to lists of addresses of friends. The Thanksgiving Issue will also be included in 3-month, 6-month and yearly N.C.A. subscriptions at ordinary rates received before the above dates.

3. After these dates the price of the Thanksgiving Issue will be 1/- (25 cents) per copy, or 8/- ($2) per dozen, which will be nearly approximate to cost of printing and distribution. These prices will be subject to reduction by donations—the first £80 ($400) will reduce the quantity rate to 7/- ($1.75); the second £80 will reduce it to 6/- ($1.50), the price per single copy remaining undisturbed. The third £80 will bring the quantity price down to 5/- ($1.25) per dozen, and single copies to 11d. (22 cents); and so each succeeding £80 in donations until the quantity price disappears and single copies will be sixpence (12 cents), at which latter price colporteurs will deliver them, retaining the sixpence for their expenses.

4. Donations are receivable for this Thanksgiving Fund to May 31, when the eventual price of the Thanksgiving Issue will be determined by the donations which then will have been received.

5. Nothing would please us better than to have the donations come in at such a rate as to enable the Thanksgiving Issue to be sent out Free. Shall it be done?

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from December issue)

Fools for Christ's Sake

But all have the privilege of being counted as fools for the same reasons that the great apostle Paul was called a fool; that is, by manifestations of zeal in carrying forward the Lord's work and spreading the truth. Selfsacrifice for Christ's sake as a rule brings the comment that we are fools for doing it, when the same amount of zeal and energy in the things of this world would secure wealth and honor among men. Paul's zeal concerning the resurrection led Festus to say, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." (Acts 26: 24.) The philosophers on Mars hill called him a "babbler," or (margin) "base fellow"; "literally, a seed-picker, a name given to crows, etc., and applied to a person who picks up scraps of knowledge, which he imparts to others without sense or purpose, and upon any and every occasion." (See Emphatic Diaglott footnote, Acts 17: 18.) Former friends think it strange we do not engage in worldly pleasures and "run not to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you."—1 Peter 4: 4.

All such reflections on our sanity and character and fitness to teach made by the world of unbelievers are unpleasant and more or less a test of our perseverance and faithfulness. But the apostle Paul was called a fool by the Corinthian brethren, a trial far more difficult to endure. He says they suffer real fools gladly, listening to their errors and indulging evil propensities, and thinking these leaders astray and themselves also very wise, and thus the apostle by comparison a fool. (1 Corinthians 4: 6-13; 2 Corinthians 11: 1-15.) But, he says, since you consider me a fool, I will speak foolishly by boasting of my achievements and sufferings, and glorying in my infirmities. (2 Corinthians 11: 16-33; 12: 1-15.) "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me." (2 Corinthians 12: 11.) Those who professed to be Christians in the Corinthian church, and yet opposed the apostle and tried to make him out a fool in the eyes of the brethren, were certainly in danger of, or liable to, the Lord's condemnation as committing an offence more serious than the murder of the body, if their influence led the brethren to reject an inspired apostle of the Lord and accept them instead, and so be side-

tracked, put out of the running for the prize of the high calling, and ending in apostasy, or complete rejection of Christ after once having known salvation from sin through Him.

To-day the same class of persons is to be found among professed Christians everywhere, professing to be followers of Christ, yet ridiculing the faithful who in their zeal leave all to follow the Master, and telling the young that such sacrifice is needless; that it is better to get on in the world, make money, and so on. But now, as in the apostle's day, there are some who become fools for Christ's sake, *counting all things but loss* for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and *actually suffering* the loss of all things for the privilege of carrying the message abroad. Of such likeminded followers of the apostle were Epaphroditus, "because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life," and Timothy and Titus who were like sons upholding and working with the apostle in every way. (Philippians 3: 4-14; 2: 25-30; 1 Timothy 1: 2-4; Titus 1: 4, 5.) If we like them are fools in the eyes of the lukewarm let us rejoice that we are in such good company, and praise God the more. It was Ishmael who mocked Isaac. (Galatians 4: 29.) The less spiritual persecute and slander the more spiritual, but often in so clever a way that they seem to many as angels of light, was Paul's warning to the brethren. —2 Corinthians 11: 13-15.

Murder in its Worst Form

"But whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell [*Gehenna*] fire." It is a pity that in the Authorized Version the translators lost an opportunity of assisting clarity, by not giving the original of the word rendered "fool," as they gave the original *Raca* in the preceding clause. The Lord is expounding degrees of culpability, of seriousness, in the conduct of brethren toward one another. To be angry with a brother is equivalent to murder, as God reads the heart. Persons who cherish anger against another usually wish him out of the way. Perhaps the brother in some way blocks their designs, and so they hate him, and would be rid of him if they could. This is a wrong state of mind, and makes the ones harboring these thoughts liable to condemnation by Christ, the Judge under the New Covenant. However, this wishing a brother out of the way, or even actually killing him, cannot affect that faithful brother's salvation. But a brother's saying "Raca," vain fellow, and otherwise ridiculing another brother who manifests zeal for the Lord, is a more serious offence, inasmuch as ridicule and contempt often lead the person attacked to cool off and perhaps even give up entirely the new life of faith and service of God he had begun. Any brother so ridiculing another brother is in grave danger of being condemned by the Lord, before whom every one of us must give an account. (2 Corinthians 5: 10.) But there is another action towards a brother even more serious, that brings the transgressor in danger of, or makes him liable to, *Gehenna* fire—not, we are thankful to know, an eternity of torment in literal flame, but that punishment for which the fire of *Gehenna* is the symbol; namely, the second death.—Revelation 20: 14.

What is that offence for which the Lord prepares so severe a punishment? Is it simply saying a brother is a "fool," as that word is carelessly used to-day in the sense of "foolish" or "ill advised," "gullible" or "soft"? Certainly these terms are not lovely to apply to brethren. But if we look at the word the Lord actually used and its associations we see that He meant much more than that.

The Revised Version helps by a footnote, but would have done better by placing the word in the text itself. The note reads—"Or, *Moreh*, a Hebrew expression of condemnation."

Moreh

If now we look back in the Old Testament to see what offensiveness there is in this word in the Lord's sight, we find that Moses used it when he struck the rock twice, and said to the people, "Hear now, ye rebels [*Moreh*]: must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Moses was one of the meekest men who have ever lived on the earth, if not *the* meekest, Christ alone excepted. He had great patience with the people, again and again pleading for them before the Lord. The people were rebels, and the name was appropriate, but Moses erred seriously in allowing his anger to override his judgment in two respects.

First, the Lord had told him to "speak" to the rock, not to strike the rock as on a former occasion. And, second, Moses' meekness waned for the time being under the influence of his anger, or he would not have ignored God and said, "Must WE [i.e. Moses and Aaron] fetch you water out of this rock?"—Numbers 20: 1-11.

Concerning this the Psalmist says (Psalm 106: 32, 33)—

> "They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes;
> Because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips."

The rock in the wilderness which supplied life-giving water to the children of Israel was a figure or type of Christ. They "did all drink the same spiritual drink [i.e. provided by the spirit or power of God]: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them [or, margin, that went with them]: and that Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10: 4.) Christ Jesus in His prehuman existence was the angel who guided Israel through the wilderness and supplied all their needs, particularly their need of life to continue the journey and ultimately reach the promised land.

It was in God's purpose that our Lord Jesus should be once offered for sin and be raised again to give life to repentant sinners. It was not God's purpose that He be twice offered. Hence the command to Moses that on this the second occasion on which God purposed giving them water from the rock he should "speak" to the rock, and the life-giving waters would gush forth.

The first occasion is mentioned in Exodus 17. Shortly after leaving Egypt the children of Israel reached the wilderness of Sin and suffered from a lack of water. Whereupon they chided Moses, and on Moses appealing to God, he was told to take his rod, with which he had smitten the waters of Egypt, and smite the Rock. Moses did as commanded and the

people were supplied with the life-giving fluid. But the place was called Meribah, meaning "chiding" or "strife."

Upon the people murmuring for water the second time, having been turned back from entering the promised land because of unbelief and condemned to wander many years more in the wilderness, Moses evidently became overwrought and so spoke unadvisedly, as though some of the credit of bringing water from the rock belonged to him.

The Lord's reproof indicates that there was a measure of unbelief in Moses' mind when, instead of speaking to the rock, he struck it twice. Also he failed to sanctify God in the eyes of the people, by omitting to emphasize that all the power and authority to call forth water from the rock rested in God.—Numbers 20: 12, 13.

Therefore when our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount used the epithet *Moreh* to represent that third and highest or rather worst form of murder, He included the anger which caused Moses to strike the rock twice, followed by his all-advised statement, "must *we*," etc. That anger and pride illustrate the state of heart of brethren under the New Covenant who neglect to give God the glory and who exalt themselves over the flock, taking credit to themselves that belongs to God only. The parable of the wicked servant who smote his fellow-servants illustrates the same possibility of anger and pride in the believers of the Gospel age whom the Lord has made stewards or rulers over his household to give them meat in due season. (Matthew 24: 48-51.) As soon as any servant takes too much credit to himself, and assumes too much authority, and begins to call names, the tendency is to strike the rock the second time; i.e., to crucify unto himself the Son of God afresh.—Hebrews 6: 4-6.

Let us not then allow pride and anger to arise in our hearts because that condition tends to murder; not only to murder the brother against whom the anger rages, but also to murder the Lord in the sense of wishing Him out of the way in order that we may carry out our own ideas. Our Lord was qualified to call the scribes and Pharisees "Moreh," for He was able to read their wicked and rebellious hearts, and to utter their condemnation with no feeling of hatred or murder in His own heart. (Mathew 23: 17.) We in our imperfect state cannot speak with such confidence, though we may, as the Lord's disciples, acquiesce in His verdict when expressed. So great was the hypocrisy and pride of the scribes and Pharisees that they were in danger of Gehenna fire. (Matthew 23: 33.) It was these same scribes and Pharisees, full of hypocrisy and deceit, who turned their anger and malice against the Lord, as though He were the "rebel" instead of they, and compassed His murder.

Seeing to what a pass wrong feelings and angry thoughts may bring us if indulged in against our brethren, let us consider well our Lord's next words, addressed to the multitude before Him in the Mount—

23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

In the first seven chapters of Leviticus are given directions concerning the various offerings which the children of Israel should bring to the altar to be slain and offered by the priest, and the portion or portions which should be eaten by the priests. The Israelites were to bring sacrifices for sins and trespasses of various kinds, and also thank offerings, vow offerings, etc. The vow offerings were animals or other specified gifts which the Israelite might bring in accordance with a vow he had made to present such a gift to the Lord either as a voluntary offering or in return for some benefit received from the Lord in response to a prayer and pledge.

All those offerings were offered in the court and none of the blood was carried in to the Mercy Seat. For we read that into the Holiest went the High Priest alone every year to make an atonement for the sins of the nation by sprinkling the blood of sacrifice on the Mercy Seat between the cherubim. (Hebrews 9: 7; Exodus 30: 10.) But throughout the year it was the duty of members of the tribes to bring their individual offerings, and it is to these the Lord refers in so far as His Sermon was applicable to His Jewish hearers in their relation to God under the Law.

Suppose a Jew had trespassed against another Jew —cheated him in a business deal, or stolen an ox or an implement or a household utensil—not to mention jewels or other valuables. It is obvious that a sacrifice of thankoffering to the Lord to the value of part of the proceeds of his dishonesty would not be appreciated by the Lord. Or, if he recognised that he had wronged his neighbour and hence brought a trespass offering to the Lord, it is obvious such an offering would not be appreciated by the Lord so long as he retained the stolen or otherwise ill-gotten gains, and made no effort to restore them to their rightful owners. Yet the Jews had fallen into such a befuddled state of mind that they thought they could sin as much as they pleased, making no attempt to right the wrongs done, and still have their offerings acceptable on God's altar. The whole history of the Jews as recorded in the Old Testament and as testified to by our Lord shows that this was their deplorable mental state.—Matthew 13: 13-15; 15: 3-9; Isaiah 6: 9, 10; 29: 13.

Not only did the Jew who made a gift offering to the Lord out of ill-gotten gain or who offered a trespass offering without first making things right with the one he had wronged show himself deficient in moral perception and decency, but he transgressed a definite commandment in regard to what his course should be toward the one he had wronged. Leviticus 6: 1-7 reads—

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered unto him to keep, or in fellowship [i.e. in a matter on which there had been an agreement], or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

"Or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning it, and sweareth falsely; in any of all these that a man doeth, sinning therein:

"Then it shall be, because he hath sinned, and is guilty, that he shall restore that which he took violently away, or the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten, or that which was delivered him to keep, or the lost thing which he found,

"Or all that about which he hath sworn falsely; he shall even restore it in the principal, and shall add the fifth part

more thereto, and give it unto him to whom it appertaineth, in the day of his trespass offering [*Hebrew*, "in the day of his trespass"].

"And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest:

"And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord: and it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein."

This commandment of the Law was doubtless in the Lord's mind, and would occur to most if not all His hearers. It enables us to understand what He meant by the words "rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee." If one had stolen from his brother Jew that brother would rightly have it against him; and according to the law the stolen article should be returned; or, if destroyed, restitution made to its full value, with twenty per cent. added.

This ordinance was evidently framed to act as a deterrent from transgression as well as to provide punishment for the sin. The whole law given at Sinai was framed to draw a clear distinction between right and wrong, what would please God and what would displease Him; and as no law is worth much without a penalty attached for violation, the Mosaic law prescribed very definite punishment "to fit the crime." Thus, in the words of Proverbs 13: 13-15—"Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. Good understanding giveth favor: but the way of transgressors is hard." One has only to read the curses pronounced against the transgressors, in addition to the specific penalties attached to certain defined sins and iniquities, to realize how "hard" the way of transgressors was made by the law. (Deuteronomy 27: 9-26; 28: 15-68.) These punishments and curses were continued for centuries. (Amos 4: 4-12; 5: 11-27, and other prophets.) Yet the severity of these punishments availed in only a limited degree to curb the transgressors; largely, we believe, because individual sins and transgressions were not duly repented of and the prescribed reparation was not made to those transgressed against. Individual acts form habits, and habits rule the life. If each sin is made light of and no effort made to undo the wrong, a habit of life is formed which it is most difficult to alter, since to do so requires confession, and confession is a most difficult thing to the proud, selfish and perverse. Hence the Law made confession and restitution for individual wrongs committed the first essential to forgiveness at the hands of God. If each offence were repented of, restitution made, and the Lord's forgiveness sought, the sins would not pile up, and God's favor would be continually realized. Under the law there were some who thus lived near to God and dealt justly with their neighbours, and these were all men and women of faith. While they saw the wicked flourishing around them in spite of their violations of God's law, they steadfastly pursued the way of righteousness and looked to God as their rewarder in due time if not in the present life. Of these a few names are given in Hebrews 11.

Gifts Brought under the New Covenant

All this in regard to what Jehovah their God considered the right attitude of mind and consistent conduct under the Law Covenant is of assistance in understanding our Lord's teaching under the New Covenant: for, as said previously, we believe the Sermon on the Mount to have been a setting forth of New Covenant principles. The law having provided "a shadow of good things to come," and the things written aforetime having been "written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Hebrews 10:1; Romans 15: 4), we can readily see that any Jew who had been accustomed to confess his transgressions and sins, and make amends to the person sinned against, would have formed a habit of mind and a character favorable to the reception of the New Covenant message; for the reason that the New Covenant requires confession and making amends and the seeking of forgiveness. The advantages of the New Covenant over the Old are not that God looks with any greater leniency upon sin, or permits us to treat others shabbily and still be accepted in His sight, but rather (1) that the arrangements for forgiveness are simplified and (2) that the development of a sound character is facilitated by the provision that God will write His law in our minds and hearts.—Hebrews 8: 10-12; 2 Corinthians 3: 3, 18.

We have seen that the Jews brought two kinds of gifts to the altar—(1) offerings which had to do with their sins and transgressions as atonement for sins, and (2) offerings which were voluntary expressions of worship and gratitude. The altar in the court was the place of sacrifice, and the priests were authorized to make the offerings and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifices on the horns of the altar, etc. Now under the New Covenant there is no temple or tabernacle structure such as the Jews possessed, but there is nevertheless a worship maintained on the basis of a Sacrifice. Instead of tens of thousands of animals being sacrificed, we have but one Sacrifice for sin. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the one and only Sacrifice for sin; and when we seek forgiveness we bring no separate sacrificial offering, but plead the value of His one offering made on Calvary. If we come in the right attitude of humility and confession, we may ask forgiveness *in His name*, and be confident that we will receive it. All this is set forth in the tenth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews. Each of us as individuals may draw near to the throne of grace by the new and living way which He consecrated or set apart for us. It is not necessary that Christ be sacrificed afresh for each and every one of our individual transgressions, but we bring Him as it were in our hand when we ask forgiveness for His sake. And in view of the sacrifice once made by the offering of His perfect life, the body God had prepared for Him, God is able to accept our pleas thus made and to grant the forgiveness. So the apostle says—"even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4: 32.) "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2: 2.

The necessity of confession in order to forgiveness is set forth in 1 John 1: 8-10; 2: 1—"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. . . . And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Is this Gift Always Acceptable?

Having nothing of value in ourselves to offer, the Gift then which we bring in all cases of transgression is the one supreme Gift, the only begotten Son of God, who gave himself for our sins, and is now our Mediator and Advocate at the right hand of God the Majesty on High.—Hebrews 1: 3; 7: 23-28; 10: 11, 12; 1 Timothy 2: 4-7.

And now we come to the crucial point of our Lord's words—"if thou . . . rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way." Does this apply to us as Christians? Shall we when about to present our petitions at the throne of grace leave Christ there, and go away? Yes, that is what the great Teacher's words imply. We are not authorized to present Jesus' name in a request for forgiveness if we have lied and stolen and cheated and made no confession and no reparation to the person wronged. Why, some one may say, Such a teaching would shut out more than half of Christendom! Well, what of it? Do we not know that Christendom in the Lord's eyes is corrupt, blind, and naked, and is spued out of His mouth for lukewarmness?

But what the effect of such a teaching on Christendom may be, while of interest, does not concern us as much as does the application of this teaching to each one of us individually. Sometimes the teaching is beclouded and obscured by confusing it with what our Lord said on the importance of forgiving those who trespass against us. But that (Matthew 6: 14) is looking at the matter from the standpoint of the one trespassed against, who should be willing to forgive when the trespass is confessed. In Matthew 5: 23, 24 the case of the trespasser is under consideration, the one who has done the wrong, and yet without confessing the sin or making amends to the one whose property he or she has misappropriated or whose name he or she has defamed, approaches the throne of grace in prayer in the name of Jesus. In such a case they should realize that they are not authorized to use the name of Jesus. His name is not for the use of unrepentant persons even though they profess to be Christians and have a prominent position in some Christian assembly. As our Lord said later on in this same "Sermon," to say Lord, Lord, will get no man into the Kingdom (Matthew 7: 21-23); or, as in the parallel passage in Luke (6: 46)—"And why call ye me, Lord Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

The lesson intended is that followers of our Lord Jesus Christ must resolutely put away sin, and not presume on the Lord's generosity or leniency to receive and forgive them when they refuse to go to the person or persons they have wronged and make apologies with the return of the money or articles fraudulently obtained or secretly stolen, and without recalling slanderous and hurtful statements they have made.

On the other hand, the lesson is not intended to discourage those who are "overtaken in a fault," but when their error is made clear to them confess it and make recompense for the wrong they have done. All the Lord's children are faulty, some more so in one direction and some more in another direction, so that there is much need of patience and forbearance. The Lord is patient too, but He cannot tolerate workers of iniquity, by which He seems to mean those who use His name solely for the worldly advantage it will be to themselves. (Matthew 7: 22, 23.) Though they used His name, He says He never recognized or acknowledged such use.

"Leave There Thy Gift"

Doubtless more could be said in regard to misuse of the Lord's name as a plea for forgiveness, which Name is the offering we must bring if we desire the forgiveness of sins. We pass now to other gifts the Christian may bring to the Lord—corresponding with voluntary offerings of thanksgiving formerly offered at the tabernacle and temple by devout Jews. The apostle Paul refers to such gifts (Hebrews 13: 15, 16)—

"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

In verses 11, 12 reference is made to Jesus as the antitype of the day of atonement sacrifices whose blood was sprinkled by the high priest on the mercy seat for the sins of the people, the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ being sufficient as an atonement for the sins of all mankind, so that His is the only atoning sacrifice. The sacrifices we offer are prayer and praise and kind deeds done in His name. And in these offerings of prayer and praise the same rule obtains as in requests for forgiveness. If we have lied to or stolen from a brother or sister, or anyone else for that matter; if we retain as our own something that we were merely entrusted with to keep or guard; if we have broken a contract or bond and placed the other party or parties under a disadvantage; if we have taken a thing from anyone by violence or by deception; if we have found something that another person lost and have lied about it and continued to keep it—if we have done any of these things we should lose no time in righting the wrong in order that the Lord may be willing to hear our prayers and our hymns of praise.

This is a very serious matter. Paul speaks of some whose sinning is so subtle and well covered over that it may be years before their true character is made generally manifest, though the ones imposed upon may be well aware of it. For this reason Paul advised Timothy to be cautious regarding the persons he laid hands on by way of appointing them to office or other prominent position in the church, since his recommendation might be mistaken for endorsement of their wrong life and character.—1 Timothy 5: 17-22, 24, 25.

The apostle Peter also speaks of a holy, consistent life as desirable if we wish our prayers to be heard. Husbands who are kind and considerate to their wives may expect the Lord to be more ready to hear their prayers; for believing husband and believing wife are heirs together of the grace of life in Christ Jesus and of the wonderful promises of joint heirship. He quotes from the Psalms to show that God hears the prayers of the righteous, but is against those who do evil. (1 Peter 3: 7-12.) The good works of the Christians should put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. (1 Peter 2: 12-14.) But the person who associates himself or herself with a body of Christians for what of gain may be gotten by underhand means is a dishonour to the name he or she professes. There were such persons in the early Church and have been all the way down the age. What is required in their case is a sound conversion—repentance and confession and prayer for forgiveness and making amends to the persons wronged during the period of mere profession.

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord held up the Pharisees as examples to be avoided. Their righteousness was not of the right sort. They made great professions of sanctity, but their true character is exposed in Matthew 23, as well as in various incidents recorded in the gospels. In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord shows how true righteousness may be obtained under the New Covenant, and makes it clear that personal effort to do the will of God at any cost to pride and selfwill is essential. If you have done wrong hasten to correct the wrong and be reconciled to the one you have injured by showing him the sincerity of your repentance. Then the Lord will be pleased with you, your prayers will be accepted, and you will make progress in true holiness.

Adversary, Judge, Officer, and Prison

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.

(To be continued)

The Italo-Papal Concordat

A CONCORDAT is an agreement or treaty, and is used chiefly of an "agreement or treaty between the papal see and a secular power." (Standard Dictionary.) In "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," pages 420 to 425, the reader will find an account of the Concordat drawn up between Napoleon and the Pope in the year 1801, following some of Napoleon's victories, and its varying fortunes; and on page 452 reference is made to the abrogation of the Concordat by France a little more than a hundred years later—in the year 1907, and the effect upon Papal institutions in France. Following the world war a new Franco-Papal Concordat was entered into, maintaining the separation of State and Church, but making concessions to the Vatican in regard to churches and religious houses.

The Concordat or agreement recently signed by the Italian Government and the Vatican is intended to define the spheres of State and Church in Italy. It is an extravagant statement of the case—in fact, an untrue report—which recently appeared in press despatches that the Italian Government had restored the Pope to the position occupied by him in 1870. The rise of modern Italy is briefly described in "Daniel the Prophet," pages 440 to 452. The Congress of Vienna which met in 1815 recognised ten Italian States; of these, three (known as the Papal States) were by this treaty restored to the Papacy. These States stretched across Italy from the Adriatic to the Mediterranean, dividing the new independent Italy in two. They contained a population of several million. Following the campaigns of Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel, the Papacy was deprived of these States and in 1871 Rome became the capitol of United Italy, the inhabitants voting almost unanimously for the change. The present Concordat drawn up between Mussolini's Government and the Vatican does not, as claimed, restore the Pope's temporal power over these States. The concession now granted by the Italian Government consists of a comparatively small area containing the Vatican and other ecclesiastical buildings, and requires that embassies to the Vatican be removed from the city of Rome to the Concession. In this concession the Pope is given some (not all) sovereign rights, and consequently he has revived the use of former titles, not all of which are appropriate under present conditions. The Vatican claims great gains, and has received many congratulations from all over the world, according to a cable to the Melbourne "Argus," March 10. Mussolini's explanation of the Concordat is expressed in the following interview, which we extract from the Melbourne "Herald," March 10—

Signor Mussolini to-day described the Concordat as "a logical step, resulting in a beneficial separation of the Church and the State."

Addressing 4,000 delegates at the Opera House, Signor Mussolini said the Church and the State each now possessed its own rights, duties, powers and limits. It was puerile to talk of victors and vanquished. The agreement was an absolutely equitable peace between the Italian Foreign Office and the Vatican. The event was of supreme importance to the whole world.

"The kingdom of Italy, with Rome for its capital, has been solemnly recognised; similarly the State has recognised the sovereignty of the Holy See, because the supreme head of a universal religion could not be the subject of any State," he said. "We have conceded the Roman Catholic Church a pre-eminent place in the religious life of the Italian people, which is pre-eminently Roman Catholic, but this does not mean that other denominations will be suppressed or even harassed."

The Memorial Supper

ACCORDING to the Calendar observed by the Jews in our Lord's day and to the present time, the date (Nisan 15) for the observance of the Supper instituted by Him to commemorate His death will correspond this year with Wednesday, April 24, after sunset. Reasons for the celebration of the Lord's Supper at this date were given in our February issue, to which all are referred. Let all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Redeemer and Saviour, who shed His precious blood as the Blood of the New Covenant for the remission of their sins, and who acknowledge that He as Mediator has reconciled them to God, celebrate the solemn Supper with faithful, grateful hearts, in company with others of like faith if possible: if this be not possible, celebrate the Supper alone, yet not alone, for the Lord will be present by His Holy Spirit to bless.

Special Notice

NEARLY ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to The New Covenant Advocate expire with the March issue. This reminder is therefore given so that all Readers may co-operate by sending their renewals promptly. The price per year in Australia and New Zealand is 4/-, elsewhere 5/- ($1.25): and it will be a great help if all will give early attention to this.

Trial Subscriptions

Send four addresses of friends whom you desire to interest in the Good Tidings along with the price of a year's subscription. The N.C.A. will be sent for three months to each of the addresses. You are not limited to four addresses: any number above four may be sent at the same rate. And

Remember

that each of these Trial Subscriptions received in Melbourne before the end of April, and at our branches before the end of May, will include a copy of the special Thanksgiving Issue for April—being the beginning of the twenty-first year of publication of The New Covenant Advocate, so compile your lists of friends, and send them along as early as possible.

Those who receive the N.C.A. free on special terms on account of inability to pay are as welcome as ever. But we need to hear from such at least once in the year, so we may know they still live and desire to continue as readers. All such should send in their requests before April.

New and Renewal and Trial Subscriptions, orders for single copies, and requests for N.C.A. on special terms, also orders for books and tracts, and remittances for all purposes may be sent to Melbourne, Nottingham, Brooklyn, or Durban, which ever is most convenient.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

21, £2; 22, £1; 23, 4/-; 24, 5/-; 25, £5; 26, £1; 27, £4:10:0; received at Brooklyn, 231, $5; 232, $2.50; 233, $3.75; 234, $3.75; total at Brooklyn, $15 (£3:1:9); total for month, £17:0:9 ($82.80); previously reported, £50:13:8 ($246.31); total for 2 months, £67:14:5 ($329.11); reducing the adverse balance to about £73 ($365).

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!

22, 2/-; 23, 2/-; 24, 8/-; 25, £2; 26, 2/-; 27, £1:10:9; 28, £1; 29, 13/-; 30, 2/-; 31, £1; 32, £2:10:0; 33, £1; 34, £5; 35, 2/-; 36, 7/-; 37, 2/-; 38, 10/-; 39, 2/-; 40, 2/-; received at Brooklyn, 367, $10; 368, $15; 369, $5; 370, $2.50; 371, $5; 372, $5; total at Brooklyn, $42.50 (£8:14:11); total for month, £25:9:8 ($123.85); previously reported, £27:9:8 ($133.57); total for 2 months, £52:19:4 ($257.42); reducing the adverse balance to about £31 ($155).

Library Supply Fund

6, 10/-; 7, £3:10:6; received at Brooklyn, 20, $10 (£2:1:2); total for month, £6:1:8 ($29.56); previously reported, £41:17:8 ($203.55); total for 2 months, £47:19:4 ($233.11); the amount received this month enabling us to send 48 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 3755 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—**The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents). postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.**

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents), paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, *3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2),* postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($8); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents), paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit: Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—*Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible.* Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your liking and postpaid. Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal, and one copy of each of the above books *in* the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 26/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, APRIL 1, 1929 No. 1

The Shining Light and the Open Mind

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."—Prov. 4: 18.

THIS description of the path of the just is equally true, whether it be considered in the individual or in the collective sense. As the sun each hour increases in brilliancy and power, so each year of life means to the just an increase in all the virtues, and added power to shed beneficent influences upon others. Who would not follow in the path of the just, to receive the benefit of their shining?

Contrasted with the path of the just person is the way of the wicked, "which is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble."—Prov. 4: 19.

But there is a larger sense in which the path of the just is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day. In the beginning, through the introduction of sin, a dark night settled down upon our race. A curse had been pronounced, and death laid a dark pall over all mankind: "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Thus have countless millions of our race in weariness laid themselves down—the vast majority of them "having no hope, and without God in the world."—Eph. 2: 12.

Yet through the darkness there has run a path of light, increasing in brightness as the ages have rolled onward. The first ray of hope was given very soon after the sin—a promise that the Seed or offspring of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. 3: 15.) That ray of light was soon lost to the sight of the majority, but a few walked in it, and are referred to in the New Testament as persons of faith. Subsequent promises were also accepted and believed in by men and women of faith. They were not "just" in the sense of absolute perfection, but they were *counted* just because of their faith. (Rom. 4: 1-4; Heb. 11: 2-8.) They believed the promise that at some time in the future God would raise up a Deliverer who would conquer Satan and undo or overrule Satan's evil work; but, passing through many vicissitudes, questions still remained unanswered and problems unsolved.

Light for Our Day

And so generation after generation has come and gone, each repeating the questions, hopes, and fears of its predecessors, with additions of its own. Our own day has its problems, and many are longing for their satisfactory solution. Is more light to be had on these questions?

There has been much suffering in the world; conditions have been very unequal, so that the righteous have often been ground down, while the wicked have flourished; are the sinful and unhappy conditions we see and experience to continue for ever? Our thoughts often go back to those with whom we loved to walk and talk, and who have passed away; has God been pleased to reveal anything concerning their present condition and future prospects? Above all, is there any assurance of good concerning those who have died without a knowledge of Christ, or who, having heard, it may be, His name, never seemed attracted to Him?

To this we may reply confidently, Yes; the light shines more and more. There is no need to be in doubt or ignorance on these subjects. Many prophecies have been fulfilled, while others are fulfilling under our very eyes; the Scriptures are opening up, and revealing God's purposes in Christ in ever-increasing beauty and harmony, and now, more than ever before, the "just" may walk in the "shining light," more and more "unto the perfect day."

The Open Mind

But properly to appreciate the light when it does shine the open mind is required. One must be willing to allow the light entrance into the mind; and for that purpose the mind must be kept "open"—so far as possible free from prejudice and mere superstitious beliefs.

An open mind implies *a will to learn*. This means, not only a willingness to receive what of truth is thrust upon one, but an active interest in searching for it, and a readiness to make sacrifices to obtain it, as expressed by the Wise Man—"Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; *then* shalt

thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." (Prov. 2: 3-5.) Every avenue of learning, every fact established by scientific research, every examination of the wonders of the heavens above and the earth beneath, every inquiry into the operations of moral law and spiritual force, may lead to the knowledge of God; for He is revealed by the things that He has made.—Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 24-26; Rom. 1: 20.

The Custodian of Light

But to admire God's work in nature is only the beginning of knowledge. And we may well ask ourselves, Are we willing to give time and thought and study to knowing God *personally?* To understand as an engineer the application of His principles of weight and force, for example, is good—so far as it goes. By these we learn of His wisdom, might and power in the physical sense. But, what the earnest inquirer wants to know is more about God's characteristics of love, mercy, and justice as exercised toward mankind.

To gain this intimate knowledge of God it is evident that the possession of an open mind is not enough. There must be also the shining light; and God, no doubt, is the Custodian of that light. If we desire it, we must appeal to Him for it. And we come up against this proposition: Is He who possesses the information willing to impart it? No person of dignity cares to gratify mere idle curiosity, or to give knowledge to one who will misuse it. No stranger can walk into the Court of St. James and demand audience; he cannot examine the archives at the State Paper Office without showing his credentials and explaining the object of his search; he cannot enter a public library to consult a volume without following a prescribed mode of procedure. Nor does he expect the custodian of the documents or the librarian to scatter manuscripts and books promiscuously to the crowd. The information is there for whoever will come for it in the right way.

It should not surprise us, then, that the Almighty maintains an attitude of dignity, and that while desirous of revealing to man His purposes, He has adopted a mode of procedure to which those desiring knowledge must conform; furthermore, that He will impart at a given time just as much as He pleases, and this to the nations or individuals He pleases. We must recognise at the outset that He is obliging us by His attentions, not that we are specially benefiting Him by accepting them. The mind must be open, not only in readiness to receive truth, and in activity to search for it, but in willingness to recognise the propriety of certain conditions and methods by conforming to which the desired knowledge may be obtained.

Revealed to the Humble

What then are the conditions on which God is ready to instruct the inquirers, to let the light shine into their hearts and minds?

In the first place, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11: 6.) If we do not believe in the existence of a personal God, we are not likely even to desire to approach Him; and, even granting that a God exists, were no benefit expected, the average person would not trouble Him. But we who believe that God is the great First Cause, and that He has a rich reward for those who seek Him, have at once an *incentive* which gives keenness of search and indifference to pain and hardship in attaining our end.

We find that "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart;" also that "*God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace* [or favour] unto the humble." (Psa. 97: 11; James 4: 6; 1 Pet. 5: 6.) If the mind be open enough to take in these conditions, a good start has been made in learning the character of God; for, justly to demand these characteristics of uprightness and humility, God must himself possess them. When the Jews were puzzled as to whether Jesus were in reality the Messiah, some saying, "he is a good man," and others, "he deceiveth the people," they were given an easy mode of determining the matter. "Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man *will to do* his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." (John 7: 17; Comp. R.V.) The Jew could not consistently expect enlightenment unless willing first to acknowledge God and seek to do His will; for he had been for centuries under God's providence and care, and was in covenant relation with Him, having at Mount Sinai promised that very thing—"All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." (Exod. 24: 3-7.) Our Lord's intimation was, therefore, that to receive and appreciate a message from God's messenger, they must be on proper terms with God himself—willing to do His will.

Jesus the Light of the World

The prophet had said (as quoted by Matthew concerning Galilee)—"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." (Matt. 4: 14-16.) That great Light was the long-promised Messiah, the "Sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4: 2), which was to rise upon Israel. (Isa. 60: 1-3.) The light increased for the blessing of His chosen people, and, thank God, it shines farther. He was the "true Light" which was to lighten "every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."—Acts 13: 47.

Shining More and More

From the consideration of these things we find not only that God has set times for accomplishing His purposes, but also prearranged times and means for revealing them to His people. When about to destroy Sodom He said, "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" On another occasion He said to Israel, "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Gen. 18: 17; Amos 3: 7.) Hence, while desirous of acquiring all the information available in our own day, we must recognise that if it does not please God to reveal certain mat-

ters to us, we must go on in faith with what has been granted, confident that all His purposes will be fulfilled and all mysteries finally made known. Whatever of obscurity may yet rest upon the divine Purpose will not endure for ever, for it is still true that the path of the just is as the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. On one point, however, we must be on guard; that is, not too readily to assume that it is not His will to reveal certain things just because *we* do not understand them; nor is it necessary to believe that every feature of His plan must be revealed directly to us, as by inspiration or vision.

John the Baptist was ordained to point out the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God (John 1: 29-34), and the Apostles were specially chosen as witnesses of His death and resurrection, that their testimony might be believed by those who should hear it. (John 17: 20; 2 Thes. 1: 10.) Their writings, inscribed under the power of the Holy Spirit, together with the Old Testament Scriptures, are profitable, and thoroughly furnish the man of God unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3: 14-17.) So we read, "*Thy Word* is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psa. 119: 105.) God's order now is not to inspire fresh writers, but *to open up and make plain what is already written.* To this end he uses instruments; and hence it is necessary to have an open mind not toward God only, but toward any of His children who may be used by Him to call our attention to a truth contained in His Word.

Unfortunately, that Word has in many respects been made void by the traditions of men, so that much of its real meaning has been lost; the "dark ages" are responsible for many perversions of the Word. But, thanks be to God, He has never left himself without a witness, and from the Reformation onward one truth after another has been recovered, *until now it is possible for His people* to delight in His glorious plan as never before. In succeeding pages of this volume an attempt is made to set forth in a systematic manner some prominent features of the divine purpose, in an harmonious interpretation of the Scriptures, which we trust will commend itself to all readers.

Encouragement to Study

Are there definite promises of enlightenment, to stimulate the timid Christian, who feels that God is too great or too far away to care for one so insignificant? Yes—"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." "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: . . . how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" "The Spirit *of truth . . . will guide you into all truth.*" "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?" (Jas. 1: 5, 6; Matt. 7: 7-12; John 16: 13; Rom. 8: 32.) The experience of Daniel is an encouragement to all earnest, prayerful truth-seekers—"O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee."—Dan. 9: 3, 22, 23.

Truth is the common heritage of all God's people, and is to be regarded as a sacred trust. While rejoicing in the "glad tidings," the "blessed hope," "the peace that passeth understanding," and in the countless other blessings which accompany salvation, they have imbibed so much of the spirit of their Master, that they delight to share all these good things with as many others as possible. As He was a light shining in darkness, so they wish to be, as He commanded, reflectors of that light—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 5: 16.) Oh, may it be our blessed privilege to be as a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid, but offers to all a guiding light, a hearty welcome, a "feast of fat things," and rest at the Master's feet. May we all, with renewed courage and zeal, lift high, that all may see,

The Glorious Standard of the Cross!
Christ, and Him Crucified—
The Power of God, and the Wisdom of God!
—1 Corinthians 1: 18, 23, 24.

Chart of Ages, Dispensations, and Covenants *

With a view to aiding the Open Mind to receive the Shining Light, the Chart facing the title page * has been prepared, and various portions of it will be referred to in the course of these Talks.

The broad outline of the Divine Purpose is distinguishable to a considerable extent in the covenants and promises that God has made from time to time. We read in Revelation 13: 8 of Jesus Christ as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," this being an intimation that the Divine Purpose was arranged in God's mind before ever man was created. This statement is a further intimation that many things were done and said by God in ancient times in view and in anticipation of the great Sacrifice that was to be offered in the fulness of time on Calvary. This much is indicated by means of the broken lines at the top and left hand of the Chart.

Creation of Man and Fall into Sin

Man was created perfect of his kind, an original pair, from which "one blood" all nations were to be and have been developed, as the Apostle assures us in Acts 17. The perfection of the first pair is indicated in the chart by the upright figure at the beginning of the line HP. Not for long did our original ancestors remain in that blessed estate and the enjoyment of divine favour. They fell into sin, and brought upon themselves divine displeasure and the sentence of death that had been threatened. Their fall and its consequences are shown in the Chart by the prostrate figure on the line AD. The New Testament teaching that the whole of their race to be born was involved in their trouble is represented by similar prone figures further along on the same line, AD.

* Chart appears on pages 14:96, 24:22, 25:24, 29:138, 31:152

Promise to Eve

But on the very day the sentence of death was pronounced, and before ever the guilty pair had been expelled from their specially prepared, beautiful home, the Garden of Eden, a statement was made by the One who sentenced them, that some descendant of Eve would bruise the head of the serpent, who had been instrumental in procuring the disobedience of herself and her husband. In the Chart this is shown by the star high up—the Promise to Eve.

This promise was far from definite in expressions of detail. In itself it indicated only that at some unspecified future time the serpent who had misled would be crushed, and his present advantage would be turned to defeat. But as to who was to be the descendant of the woman, and how He would accomplish His victory, was not stated. Neither was anything said as to the scope of the benefits, if any, that would accrue from this to the woman and her other posterity. Nevertheless, it might have been inferred by our first parents that this promise, indefinite though it was, gave some ground for hope that the calamity, in which their disobedience had involved themselves and their race, would be undone. In the Chart this star of promise is high up, to indicate the fact that only a tiny light was permitted then to shine. The promise was made six to eight thousand years ago, and it has not been fulfilled even yet. But as showing that God's appreciation of time is on a much larger scale than ours, so that with Him a thousand of our years are but as one day, the divinely inspired apostle said nearly two thousand years ago—as it were yesterday morning in God's sight—"the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet *shortly*." It will be done.

Promise to Noah

After the Flood (concerning which more will be said in the next Talk) had subsided, so that Noah and his human and animal companions could leave the ark and again inhabit the dry land, God made a promise to Noah, which later was expressed as a covenant between God and all flesh, that never again would the earth be destroyed by a flood. The perpetual succession of seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, on the earth was divinely guaranteed in this covenant. This is indicated in the Chart by the star of promise to Noah. In guaranteeing the perpetual existence of the earth, the ordained dwelling for the human race, it would seem that God would have it understood that inasmuch as the dwelling is to be preserved there will also be human beings to occupy it. This is a ray of light additional to that shining in Eve's star of promise, therefore Noah's star is represented as being a little less remote than hers—the light shining a little more than it did in her time. Noah's star began to shine on the second or third (thousand-year) day after Eve's, so the additional light granted to him was not long in coming—albeit the darkness of sin and unbelief had become very dense indeed just before the flood.

Let us rejoice in the light of these two stars of promise, for they still shine for us to see.

Promise to Abraham

Some few hundred of our years—the next "day"—after Noah's star of promise began to shine there appeared a new luminary—the promise to Abraham and the covenant God made with him embodying this great promise. This will be referred to at some length in subsequent Talks, but now may be pointed out the beautiful light shining from it in addition to that emanating from the stars of Eve and Noah. To Abraham God promised—and confirmed the same with an oath formally sworn according to the manner then in vogue among men—that in his seed "shall all families of the earth be blessed." From Eve's star shone the light that the serpent shall be bruised, but nothing was said of a benefit to her descendants; now from Abraham's star shines the light desired—all the families of the earth are to be blessed in one of his descendants; while from Noah's star came the light that the earthly home is to be preserved in perpetuity. Verily the light shines "more and more"; therefore in the Chart Abraham's star is placed in a less remote position than that of Noah, and considerably less than that of Eve.

But in the meantime dark clouds of error—some superstitious, some scientific, all more or less sinful—have obscured, and from many have absolutely hidden, these beautiful stars of hope and promise, so that vast numbers of persons are quite in ignorance of the existence of these lights, while others who know or who have heard something of them can not see them at all clearly. That this should be so is very saddening, and part of the purpose of these Talks is to clear away as much as possible of the clouds, so that more and more of the light of these stars may be seen and an increasing number of hearts be gladdened by their gracious rays.

Faith Counted for Righteousness

Of Abraham it was said that he "believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." While this statement in so many words first occurs in connection with Abraham, it is to be understood from Heb. 11 that the same thing was true of Abraham's predecessors in the way of faith, back to the very first, just as it has been true since Abraham's time of all his successors in the same way—"the path of the just"—to the present day. The principle of the imputation of righteousness on account of faith is indeed one of the fundamentals of God's dealings with men, and will continue to be so until all His purpose respecting the blessing and salvation of men is completed.

The imputation of righteousness on account of faith to a person who is not righteous in himself requires the offering of a sacrifice acceptable to God who imputes the righteousness to the imperfect believer. This sacrifice is shown by the Apostle Paul to be none other than that of Jesus Christ on the cross at Calvary. Many Christians fully realize this to be so, and as the subject is to be dealt with in one of the Talks, it is merely mentioned at present.—Rom. 4: 3, 20-25; 3: 21-26; 5: 1.

But the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for our sins had not been offered in Abraham's time, and was not

offered until two thousand years later. How then could it be the basis or ground or sure foundation of that righteousness imputed to Abraham, to Noah, to Abel, and to others in ancient times on account of their faith? The answer to this is that from the very foundation of the world Jesus Christ was "the Lamb slain," and even though the sacrifice had not actually been offered in Abraham's time, God foreknew that it would be offered in the fulness of the time already arranged; therefore He was able to impute righteousness to believers before the event, as He now imputes righteousness to us who believe after the sacrifice has been offered.

In the Chart on the line RJ there are kneeling figures with eyes uplifted and hands outstretched in worship and prayer to God. These represent the justified believers who in all the ages have had righteousness imputed to them on account of their faith. They are on a higher level than the unbelievers on AD. Originally involved in the condemnation along with all other children of our sinful ancestors, those on RJ have escaped from the state of condemnation because they have become believers. From the beginning of the antediluvian age to the end of the Jewish age—four to six thousand years—justified believers have been under the broken line at the top of the Chart, which represents the sacrifice of the Lamb of God as arranged for but not yet accomplished. Since the end of the Jewish age that line is no longer broken; it is a solid line, representing that the sacrifice arranged for became then an accomplished fact.

Promise to Moses

Moses was one of the great men; one of the majestic figures of human history. Under divine guidance and upheld by divine power he accomplished a feat that has never been equalled before or since, in leading safely away, notwithstanding the hostility and armed opposition of Egypt, the greatest and most cultured nation of that day, an army of about three million slaves, the children of Israel, and welding them into a nation. How little self-discipline there was among those people, and how much forgetfulness of the wonders wrought by divine power on their behalf, how little faith, was shown when, soon after their deliverance from Egypt, and while Moses was in the mount receiving instruction from God, the children of Israel contemptuously said—"Up, make us gods; . . . for as for this Moses, . . . we wot not what is become of him."—Ex. 32: 1.

Moses was not only the divinely appointed leader of this people; he was also their lawgiver, and he was the mediator of the covenant formally made between God and them. In his personal character Moses was one of those men of faith to whom righteousness was imputed in anticipation of the sacrifice that was to be offered. In his official capacities Moses was a shadow of the Coming One who would supersede him as Leader of God's people. Moses had been given this promise of another Leader to be raised up, and he made it known to the children of Israel so they might be watchful and expectant, ready to receive the promised One and to render Him obedience in whatever He would say to them. —Deut. 18: 15; Acts 3: 22-26.

Moses' star of promise increases the light that had been shining from the earlier stars of Eve, Noah, and Abraham. The New Testament (Acts 3: 22-26) associates the promise to Moses with that to Abraham and indicates that both find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ, who is not only the Seed of Abraham but also the One who was to be raised up like unto Moses; which gives assurance also that He is the promised descendant of Eve who is to bruise the serpent's head, as indeed the New Testament plainly enough says in 1 John 3: 8.

As Moses in his official capacities, one of which was that of Mediator, was a shadow, so also was the Law Covenant which he mediated. This is indicated by the line SS in the chart. It was indeed a "shadowland." More will be said of this in another Talk, but just now we would direct attention to the grey figure, kneeling with downcast mien, and with hands on breast calling for God's mercy upon himself, a sinner. This was the attitude of all pious children of Israel under that covenant. But the law had no merciful provision of justification and life for those who sought, unsuccessfully though sincerely, to commend themselves to God by its means. The Law of Moses said, Do, and Live. None of the children of Israel could do, therefore none could live—our Lord Jesus alone excepted—and so all came under the curse of the Law, represented by the line CL in the chart. This curse was a complication additional to the AD under which the children of Israel were born like the rest of the race, and it required of the Redeemer that He hang on the tree of Calvary in order that His death might be effective for Jew as well as Gentile.—Gal. 3: 13.

Promise to David

When David desired to build a house for the Lord because he considered it was not fitting that he should dwell in a house of cedar while the Ark of God dwelt behind curtains, the prophet encouraged him in what must have seemed to them both an entirely worthy conception. But that same night the Lord gave the prophet a message for David, to say that David should not build the proposed house for the Lord, but his son should build it. Meanwhile the Lord promised to build David a house, not meaning a material house, but that his "house" or family should supply the One who would sit on the throne of the Lord for ever. This promise is called elsewhere "the sure mercies of David," and it was fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of David, who is also David's Lord. This star gives us the additional light, that the Seed of the woman, the Seed of Abraham, is the Son of David, the root and the offspring of David—the Offspring of David according to the flesh who will be the Root or Source of life to David in the resurrection.

Promise through Jeremiah

The Law Covenant, under which the children of Israel were bound and specially cursed, was "weak through the flesh"; that is, none of those under it was strong enough to obey all its precepts and thus

become entitled to life. Under the Law, the children of Israel were in a hopeless position of despair. They were prisoners in a pit wherein was no water; they found no way to be delivered from "this body of death." But the Lord caused a star of promise to shine in the time of Jeremiah the prophet, about six hundred years before our Lord's first advent. The promise was that a New Covenant should be made with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, and that this New Covenant would contain every necessary arrangement for the extension of divine mercy and forgiveness to those under it, so that God would be able completely to forget their sins and iniquities.

An arrangement of this sort is exactly what the children of Israel need, and so do we all. This promise should have been to them the most precious star of hope; but when the Lord Jesus came to ratify the New Covenant by the sacrifice of himself and the shedding of His blood of the New Covenant for many for the remission of sins, the children of Israel would acknowledge neither Him nor His covenant, but turned away, thus bringing upon themselves "wrath to the uttermost," in which their city and temple were destroyed, and themselves scattered abroad.

Much more will be said about the New Covenant in another Talk; therefore we will not dwell longer upon it now. Those who realise that the New Covenant is the divine instrumentality for the clearing away of Sin and Death, and for the bringing in of Righteousness and Life, will rejoice in Jeremiah's bright star of hope and in the realization that the New Covenant promised through him has been ratified by the requisite sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary, and is now in operation for the benefit of all believers, whether born Jews or Gentiles.

Let us thank God with all our hearts for these stars of hope and promise, and let us rejoice in their light as it shines more and more into our open minds.

There are great truths that pitch their shining tents
Outside our walls, and though but dimly seen
In the gray dawn, they will be manifest
When the light widens into perfect day.

—*H. W. Longfellow.*

The Three Worlds

(*See large arches in frontispiece Chart.*)

IT has already been pointed out that in our endeavour to understand the divine Plan, revealed in the divine Word, we need to follow with open mind the shining light, praying always that God might be pleased to guide us by His Spirit into truth as it may become due. Perhaps in nothing is this necessity more manifest than in the subject now to be considered, for it is in this connection that the Apostle tells us of some who have not thus followed the light, who consequently are measurably in darkness, and who, by reason of their remissness, have gone so far into a wrong way as to become "scoffers, walking after their own desires, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter 3: 3, 4.) How careful we should be to submit our minds fully to the moulding influence of truth, so that we might be conformed to the divine Will!

In 2 Peter 3: 5-14 we find the three "worlds" connectedly described: (1) the world that then was, composed of "heavens" and "earth"; (2) the "heavens" and "earth" which are now; (3) new "heavens" and new "earth," to be expected and looked for, according to divine promise.

Of the "world that then was" we read that it, "being overflowed with water, perished." It is essential to the correct understanding of the remainder of this chapter, and of a great deal that is set forth elsewhere in the divine Word, that we have accurate information as to that which perished. The allusion is to the flood in Noah's day. Did that flood destroy the terrestrial earth, or the astronomical heavens? Did it destroy the heaven where God's throne is set? Such questions almost supply their own answers, and it immediately becomes plain that "heavens" and "earth" are here used symbolically. Symbolic language is by no means unusual in Scripture. A moment's thought will bring to mind many instances of its use. Imagery was conspicuous in our Lord's ministry of the truth; so much so that it is written—"Without a parable spake He not unto them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables."—Matt. 13: 34, 35.

By "world that was," we are evidently to understand the *order of things* that existed before the flood in connection with the affairs of mankind on the terrestrial earth. The order of things is to be considered as having consisted of two parts, symbolically represented as "heavens," and "earth." The "earth" portion of that *order of things* was the social order of that time; the "heavens" were those higher beings and influences which exercised sway over the "earth" portion, and dominated it.

The English word "world," as used in the New Testament, is the translation of four different Greek words: *aion*, meaning "age," applicable to either definite or indefinite periods, 38 times, adjective form, 3 times; *oikoumene*, "the habitable," 14 times; *ge*, "earth," or "land," once; *kosmos*, "orderly arrangement," or "order of things," 185 times. It is

the last word, *kosmos*, that is here used by Peter.

It is not easy to determine how the domestic, commercial, and governmental affairs of the race were regulated in antediluvian days. Little information about the customs of that period has come down to us, so that we could offer nothing better than a surmise on the subject. Did they dwell in houses or tents; did they carry on interchange of products under the system that we know, or one similar; did they entertain themselves with games, with music and the arts? Beyond what can be gathered from the very general statements of Gen. 4: 21, 22, all these questions are at present incapable of satisfactory answers.

We know that farming and pastoral pursuits were followed; that there were artificers in wood and metals, also makers of musical instruments; and there was at least one family of ship builders.

We can gather, from Scripture, something about the "heavens," or spiritual ruling powers, of those times. From Genesis 6 it appears that angels were permitted to exercise considerable influence over humanity. What the object was is not definitely stated, but it may have been in the nature of an experiment—not, however, for the satisfaction of the Omniscient One (Isa. 46: 9, 10), but rather as a demonstration to both angels and men of the impossibility of altering, by the introduction of reforms, the death penalty that had come upon the race through the original transgression. (Gen. 2: 17; 3: 17-19, 22, 23; Rom. 5: 12.) The result of this contact of angels and humanity was unsatisfactory. Some of the angels were degraded; they "kept not their first estate"* (1 Peter 3: 20; Jude 6), and so plunged our race deeper into the mire of sin. The end of it all was that God concluded that *kosmos*, or order of things, by bringing upon it the flood. The fallen angels were bound in chains of darkness (2 Peter 2: 4), and the social order of that time was so completely swept away that only Biblical information of it remains.

It is "the proper thing" in our day to be sceptical about the great flood. Many of those who stand in the pulpits, as well as the professors who prepare them to stand there, have relegated the narrative of the flood to the region of the nursery tales—a "cunningly devised fable," they call it, not a "faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation." And yet, these sceptics profess great respect, even reverence, for the name of Jesus, and esteem Him as the greatest exponent of practical morals the world has known. Some will condescend to admit that in some sense, not clear to them, He was the Son of God. But their position is an impossible one; and a moment's reflection will show that it is neither reasonable nor in harmony with good morals. Our blessed Lord, Redeemer and Teacher referred to the flood of Noah's day as an historical fact, and based on it some of His teaching. (Matt. 24: 37-39.) This being so, present-day deniers of the flood must consistently cease respecting Jesus, for, if their contention be correct, they are bound to admit that He was either ignorant or a deceiver. If they say Jesus was ignorant, let them forthwith discard Him as a reliable teacher; if they say he was a deceiver, let them immediately cease referring to the Sermon on the Mount as an exposition of practical morals, and let them, in their capacity as leaders of the people, strictly warn their flocks against Jesus, and against accepting either the Old or the New Testament as the Word of God. Some have adopted this position, others are approaching it; and it may be questioned whether the present-day flood of scepticism, prevailing as it does above all the heights of intellectuality and reason, is not more devastating than was the flood of waters.

*For further explanation on this point, please see book, "Do the Dead Communicate?" mentioned in Book List.

The Heavens and the Earth which are Now

Following the destruction of the antediluvian order of things, came the institution of another arrangement to take its place. This is also composed of "heavens" and "earth," these terms being still used symbolically, with the same general meanings as before. The social arrangements which began after the flood with those who came out of the ark have continued generally the same to the present. Certainly there have been revolutions, in Bible symbolism called "earthquakes," and these have altered the forms and customs in some parts; but the general substance and contour of our social arrangements have been much the same for several thousand years. The central principle of the present "order of things" is that those who govern do so while they can; or, to express it otherwise, "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." Examine all the forms that government has taken among men in the past forty centuries, and all the forms under which it is known by the present generation: whether you contemplate the Patriarch and his tribe, the Baron and his feudal retainers, the Absolute Monarch and his subjects, the Constitution (Monarchical or Democratic) and its citizens, the principle is the same. Let your vision range into futurity, contemplating the forms, or lack of them, eagerly desired by some, of Socialism or of Anarchy, and the principle above cited is still at the centre. But the motive power of all the social and governmental arrangements of the past and present, and the motive power that urges forward desire and effort toward Socialism and Anarchy, is *selfishness*. Governing classes, ecclesiastical, political, commercial and social, have grasped and retained power at the inspiration of sordid self-interest, individuals here and there being occasional noble exceptions to the general rule; the governed have "consented" to the dominance of the others only for as long as they felt obliged to do so, their pent-up discontent now and again breaking forth as a "volcano" or an "earthquake."

The "elements" of the present order of things are well symbolised in a general way by the natural divisions of the physical earth. The dry land stands for the conservative, order-loving portion of humanity; the mountains for the governmental (civil and religious) institutions rising up out of the social body; while the sea, always restless, sometimes raging, stands for the discontented masses of humanity, not very respectful toward law and order, increasing in numbers, and at present held back by the bulwarks

of conservatism, but always beating against them, wearing down and devouring when they can. How forcible is the symbolic language of Psalm 46: 1-3, thus interpreted!

The "heavens" of the existing "order of things" consist of Satan and his agencies, wicked spirits in high places (Eph. 6: 12), and of governmental and ecclesiastical systems, by means of which theories of error and superstition have been foisted by him upon the darkened minds of a too-credulous race of fallen beings. Satan is the "prince of the power of the air," or region of mental and spiritual control; he it is who has effectually worked in the hearts of the "children of disobedience." Satan is "the god [mighty one] of this world," and the whole world is under his influence.—Eph. 2: 1-3; 2 Cor. 4: 4; 1 John 5: 18, 19.

Some there are, so much "ignorant of his devices" (2 Cor. 11: 3, 14; 2: 11), that they deny the personality of this Satan or Devil. In support of their contention, they state that the word "Satan," transferred from the Hebrew language to English, means "adversary," and that the word "Devil" is from the Greek *diabolus,* meaning "false accuser," and that these words are applied to human beings, even to women, and also to systems of evil. Against this nothing need be said, for it is quite true. But when asked to believe that the chief "Satan," or "adversary," "the god of this world," is but the depraved human mind, or an evil principle, without personality, we must dissent; and in this connection would ask for thoughtful consideration of the seventh and eighth chapters of Exodus.

In Exod. 7: 8-10 we find Moses and Aaron, the messengers of Jehovah, performing miracles before Pharaoh, by way of showing their credentials. In verses 11, 12 we are told that the magicians of Egypt did the same by their enchantments. In 7: 20-22 we have another miracle by God's messengers, and duplication by the magicians; and yet once more in 8: 6, 7. But in 8: 16-19 the course of the magicians is checked, and they confess themselves stopped by "the finger of God." We find no difficulty in believing that the power of the personal Jehovah was exercised in the miracles performed through Moses and Aaron. We know perfectly well that such wonders were, and are, beyond natural human powers, either of Moses and Aaron, or of the Egyptian sorcerers. What or whose power was exercised in the duplication, so far as allowed, of the wonders by the sorcerers? Are we not obliged to deduce, from these incidents, the existence of a power *above the human,* therefore spiritual; *opposed to Jehovah,* as evidenced by the effort to discredit Moses and Aaron; *intelligent,* as evidenced by the duplication, as far as possible, of the divine credentials; *evil,* as evidenced by the effort to keep the Israelites in bondage; but *not supreme* (thank God!), as evidenced by inability to go beyond certain bounds? If the personality and almighty power of God may be "understood by the things that are made" (Rom. 1: 20), may not the personality of Satan and the limitations of his power be understood on a similar principle? Our Lord Jesus also spoke very definitely of the devil as a murderer and liar, thus showing him to be a personal being.—John 8: 44.

"Reserved unto Fire"

In 2 Peter 3: 7 we are told that "the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire," and the thought is repeated in verses 10-12. The reading of God's Word has become distasteful to many because of the unreasonable things it is supposed to teach; for example, that the beautiful earth on which we live is to be destroyed, the lamp of day extinguished, and the thousand eyes of night forever closed. The verse now under consideration is supposed to be the bulwark of such teaching. But we encourage you to look again at verse 7, and consider the significance of the words, "heavens and earth *which are now.*" Do not the words, "which are now," clearly intimate that the present "heavens and earth" are not the same as those *which were then,* the world *"that then was"?* But the physical earth and the atmospheric and astronomical heavens *are* the same now as they were before the flood, and they cannot therefore come into consideration, either as having been destroyed or as being about to perish. The *order of things* that then was, composed of "heavens" and "earth," perished in the flood; another *order of things* has succeeded it, and this order of things, consisting of the symbolic "heavens" and symbolic "earth," *which are now,* is to be destroyed by the fire of a great time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation.

The Hebrews were not unacquainted with the use of the symbol, "fire," as indicative of trouble and destruction. In his Song of Triumph, at the close of the wilderness journey, Moses used highly figurative language to express the experiences of the children of Israel. A reading of the whole Song will make clear the symbolic use of the word "fire." (Deut. 32: 22-24.)

> "For a fire is kindled in mine anger,
> And shall burn unto the lowest sheol,
> And shall consume the earth with her increase,
> And set on fire the foundations of the mountains.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> They shall be burnt with hunger,
> And devoured with burning heat"—i.e., fever or pestilence.

For other instances, similarly descriptive, see Judges 9: 15, 20, 56, 57; Psa. 78: 21, 31 (Here the "fire" is a plague—Num. 11: 33); Isa. 33: 11, 12; 34: 5-10; 43: 2; Amos, chaps. 1 and 2. The trouble upon Babylon was described as a "destroying wind," a time of "threshing," an overflowing of the "sea," judgment by the "sword," and burning with "fire." (Jer. 51: 1, 33, 42, 47-50, 58.) The conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar was also described as a fire.—Ezek. 30: 8, 10, 16.

Another passage in which "fire" is used as a symbol is Zeph. 3: 8, 9, in which God declared his intention to punish Judah and all the surrounding nations for their idolatries—"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger, for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Evidently not a literal fire is meant, but trouble and destruction, because the Lord's patience had been tried and His jealousy aroused by the wor-

ship given to false gods. The punishment predicted was sent by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.—Deut. 4: 23, 24; Psa. 78: 58; 79: 5; Zeph. 1: 18.

John the Baptist, assuming that his hearers would understand his meaning, described, under the symbol of "fire," the trouble coming upon the Jews—"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3: 12.) Our Lord said, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?" (Luke 12: 49.) And when, in explaining the parable of the wheat and the tares, he said, "And shall cast them into a *furnace of fire*," no doubt the disciples would think of Jer. 11: 4, where "the iron furnace" is used figuratively, and they would understand that symbolic "tares" would be cast into a symbolic "fire"; i.e., trouble and destruction.—Matt. 13: 42.

But, while attentive consideration of Peter's words brings us inevitably to the conclusion that the divine Spirit was not inspiring him to teach that the planet and the universe generally are to disappear in an awful conflagration, it will be interesting, and helpful to faith, to keep in mind a few other portions of Scripture on the same subject.

God made promise to Abraham (Gen. 13: 14-17), subsequently confirmed and ratified over a sacrifice (Gen. 15: 7-21), that he should, with his descendants, become the owner of a certain portion of land which he saw, and through which he walked as a pilgrim and a sojourner, but never as a possessor. (Heb. 11: 8, 9; Acts 7: 2-5.) This promise became a favourite with the Jewish sect of the Pharisees, who used it as the basis for an argument in favour of the resurrection of the dead, against the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. (Acts 23: 6-8; Luke 20: 27.) The argument was, and is, good; if God promised the land to Abraham, who died without realising the fulfilment thereof, he must be brought back from death, and the promise then accomplished. We are not to suppose that death can hinder the fulfilment of the least of the divine promises. (Acts 24: 15; Rev. 1: 18.) But this precious promise to Abraham, duly ratified and confirmed, is altogether made of no effect, if, as some think, the resurrection day is to witness the destruction of the land which Abraham saw, and in which he walked. It behooves us to cast away the foundationless tradition, and to retain the promise of God, for it is a "faithful saying."

Our Lord taught His disciples to pray (Matt. 6: 10)—"Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." From countless hearts, privately and in concert, audibly and silently, has this prayer risen to the throne of the heavenly grace, and many have cried, "How long, O Lord?" But the tradition, which makes void the Word (Mark 7: 13), would have us believe that the advent of the King and His Kingdom means the destruction of the earth on which we live. Does God's will being done in heaven mean wholesale destruction there? If the earth were destroyed, how could God's will be done on it?

There is yet another statement that deserves consideration in this connection. In Isaiah 45: 18 we read, "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." Young's "Analytical Concordance" defines the Hebrew *tohu*, here rendered *in vain*, as "ruin, vacancy, vanity," so that this part of the text really means, "He created it not to be ruined," or, taken in connection with the following clause, which, after the manner of Hebrew poetry, may be considered antithetic, it would read, "He created it not to be vacant; He formed it to be inhabited." Thus again does the light of the Word scatter the darkness of the tradition.

The Almighty has no controversy with the planet earth, but He has a just cause against the symbolic "earth," or social order; also against the symbolic "heavens," or spiritual and political controlling powers. He is exceedingly indignant and fiercely angry with the present order of things, "the heavens and the earth, *which are now*," and is even now arising "to shake terribly the earth" (Isa. 2: 10-21), to cause the earth (social, political and commercial arrangements) to "fall, and not rise again," while He punishes "the host of the high ones that are on high ["wicked spirits in heavenly places" (Eph. 6: 12, margin), ecclesiastical systems and all systems of superstition—the symbolic "heavens"], and the kings of the earth upon the earth [influential persons and institutions in every department of society as at present constituted]." (Isa. 24: 19-23; 26: 21; Heb. 12: 26, 27). A most graphic description of this is given in Rev. 19: 17-19, under the figure of a great supper—

> "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."

Do we see the nations being gathered now to some *locality on the earth*? *No, we do not; and there is* no reason to expect such an event. Nevertheless, the gathering of the nations is proceeding most marvellously; it is transpiring under our eyes; every reader of these words is assisting to bring it about.

Geographically considered, the nations are pushing forward to occupy the waste places of the earth, and they are extending their influence over vastly more territory than was dreamed of four centuries ago, or than would have been possible then. But the recent (about a century) great increase of knowledge, in fulfilment of divine prophecy (Daniel 12: 4; Psa. 97: 4), has so wonderfully facilitated the "running to and fro," that Britain is now nearer to the most remote of her colonies than a century ago she was to Canada. The number of miles is no less now, but the ability to cover them is increased. When the writer first crossed the Atlantic Ocean, he was "out of the world" for a week: on another occasion, there was wireless communication with a steamer, out of sight, when the voyage was half accomplished: now, the Atlantic voyagers have their daily newspaper the same as the people ashore. A hundred years ago, *communication between Australia and England* required at least three months: now, three hours will do it. For this purpose, Australia is now 1-720th the

distance from home she was a century ago. Can we say that the nations are not being "gathered"?

Gathering "the Kings of the Earth"

The nations are also being "gathered" in bonds of sympathy with one another. That is to say, the spirit of discontent and unrest in the world is causing the rulers of all nations to realise that their interests are identical, and that they will need to do something if they desire to preserve their present positions for their heirs, if not for themselves. So we hear of increasing fraternal feelings among the rulers and statesmen, efforts to arrange their differences by "Arbitration Courts," "Peace Congresses," etc., etc.; and, with every indication of the increase of the peaceful disposition of nations towards each other, we are told that the necessity for war is gradually disappearing, and ultimately will vanish away. We sympathise with Peace, and our own desire and effort is that we might live at peace with all men (Rom. 12: 18); yet we fear that the signs of the times are not rightly interpreted by some of the great ones of earth. (1 Thes. 5: 3.) For while there is undoubtedly a greater friendliness than ever between rulers of nations, and it may even be that efforts to avoid international war on a large scale will be measurably successful,* there is another factor that requires to be reckoned with, viz., the growing discontent, *among the people*, with present political, social and commercial arrangements.

Gathering the Masses

While the great ones of earth and their sympathisers are being "gathered" into a community of interest, the masses are being similarly "gathered," largely by means of the Laborite and Socialist propagandas, in order that they, too, may take their share in the "great supper" of the Lord. Though sympathising with much, very much, that the Socialists would like to introduce, and admitting the sincerity and devotion of many of its adherents, the writer cannot recognise Socialism, much less Anarchy, as the remedy for present unsatisfactory conditions. It cannot be questioned that in all nations the former is making tremendous strides in the favour of the people, and that they mean to try, if they can, to substitute it for the present order. But, as has often been pointed out by able publicists, Socialism cannot hope to accomplish the desired reformation, because the mainspring of selfishness is not suitable to drive such a machine, and Socialism has no remedy for the disease of selfishness, with which we are afflicted—incurably, as far as our own efforts go. If it had such a remedy, it is doubtful whether the "consent of the governed" could be gained for its application.

There is another reason why Socialism or any other human remedy cannot effect the needed cure of the body politic, and that is, *because it is not God's way.* To us this reason appeals more than any other. The people are discontented—daily more so—and we expect that they will be allowed to manifest their discontent in an uprising so terrible, that it will completely destroy present institutions. Already the "gathering" is causing such "fervent heat," that the "elements" of the present order must shortly melt, and the earth (social) with all its works (institutions) must be burned up. (2 Pet. 3: 10.) Thus, in an apparently natural way, as when centuries ago Jehovah poured out His indignation and fierce anger and fiery jealousy upon the "gathered" nations and "assembled" kingdoms described in Zeph. 3: 8, will He gather together the present nations,* to "the battle of that great day of God Almighty."—Rev. 16: 14-21; 19: 11-21.

Ecclesiasticism, superstition, and religious error of all kinds, in which for centuries the people have been bound, and which have hidden the truth from them, will not escape the Lord's anger. For the "heavens" are also to be "dissolved," and are to "pass away with a great noise," in the impending overthrow. "Now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth [society] only, but also heaven [spiritual and political influences and organisations]. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." There have been troubles, severe ones, which have sorely tried men and institutions, but the "shaking" which began when the Lord Jesus was exalted to the position of Mediator of the New Covenant will come to a climax shortly ("yet once more"), in the most searching trouble of all—"such as never was since there was a nation." (Heb. 12: 18-29; Daniel 12: 1.) Everything that totters under its "shaking" must be removed, whether it be highly esteemed among men or not. And this trouble will be so searching, and the "shaking" and "burning" so thorough, that another such demonstration will never be required.—Rev. 21: 1.

While the coming trouble will effect the total disintegration of present ecclesiastical and social arrangements, and must, undoubtedly, occasion much loss of life, it is not to be allowed to go on until all life is destroyed from the earth. Psalm 46: 8-10 shows this. In Rev. 21: 1-8 we are informed that after the present heavens and earth are passed away, the Lord will establish a new heavens and a new earth, in which an invitation will be given to the peoples to drink of the fountain of life. God's controversy is not so much with the ignorant and down-trodden masses of humanity as with the institutions of present governments—political, ecclesiastical, financial and social—which oppress them.

New Heavens and a New Earth

Now we begin to realise something of the divine purpose! God will let the discontent of the peoples work itself out in a delirium of fury, until they come to a realisation of their own impotence, and will then take steps to deal with them in a manner to bring about all the good things they desired and vainly

*Since these words were written, the breaking out of the greatest war of all history, in August, 1914, involving nearly all the nations of Europe, with their colonies in various parts of the world, has shown that the efforts to preserve international peace were not successful. The question now (1928) is—Will the League of Nations succeed?

*For more detailed explanations concerning the gathering of the nations for the battle of the great day of God Almighty, please see the book, "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," mentioned in Book List.

strove to attain. Those who have faith in the divine promises, and are not disposed to scoff at them (2 Pet. 3: 13, 3, 4), will rejoice in the provision that God has made for the future. New "heavens," consisting of the Lord Jesus and His joint-heirs, instead of the deposed Satan and his wicked spirits, will exercise their all-powerful and benevolent, though strict, rule over a "new earth" or social arrangement. And if the present rulers have "derived their powers from the consent of the governed," it will not be so in the new order of things. As since the first advent of Jesus, so following His second advent, justice will be the line and righteousness the plummet, by which all transactions will be measured. (Isa. 28: 16-18; Am. R.V.; 1 Pet. 2: 6-8; 4: 17.) This may not, at first, be esteemed altogether pleasant or desirable by some who have prospered under present imperfect arrangements, but God's Kingdom is appointed to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven, and it will surely succeed, because all His purposes come to pass. (Isa. 14: 27.) When the tabernacle of God is with men, and when the knowledge of Gospel Truth is spread abroad, we believe they will be glad to learn of the Lord, to call upon His name, and to learn peace instead of war. "God shall wipe all tears from their eyes." "Neither shall there be any more pain."—Isa. 2: 2-4; Rev. 21: 3, 4, 24.

If the motive power of the present and past has been *blind selfishness,* that of the future will be *discerning love.* Or, may we say, men will learn then, as now they do not, that true love to God and to one's neighbour is really the highest manifestation of an *enlightened self-interest;* because it is the only state in which, and the only mode of life by which, perfect happiness can be secured to the individual, the community, the nation, and the world.

While not seeking to discount the Bible prophecies concerning the "fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19: 15), let us endeavour rather to emphasise the blessings that are to follow. It is in view of these things that the Apostle exhorts to holy living, and that we should be *diligent,* that we "may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."—2 Pet. 3: 11, 14

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants His footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill
He treasures up His bright designs,
And works His sovereign will.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain;
God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain.

—*William Cowper.*

The Eternal Purpose

"According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Eph. 3: 11, R.V.

DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH has at all times been accorded a prominent place in Scripture. The message for the day has, from time to time, been sent by God through His honoured servants the prophets, and even the Son of God had such a message to deliver. (Matt. 3: 1, 2; 4: 17; Heb. 1: 1.) The message has not invariably been honoured by those to whom it has been sent; yet there have always been some among the professors of religion who have been attentive to know the truth message which it might please God to send. No doubt there has always been some foundation for the complaint made by Elijah—"Lord, they have killed Thy prophets, and digged down Thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life." But equally true has it always been, and is now, "What saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal."—Matt. 23: 29-31; Rom. 11: 3, 4; 2 Tim. 2: 19.

When the Messiah was present among them, the lack of attention to truth then due prevented those who were well versed in the traditions and in the text of their Scriptures from discerning the day of their visitation. (Matt. 16: 1, 4; Luke 19: 44.) Similarly, disregard of the dispensational method of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth" is a weighty cause of the confusion to-day existing in Christendom.

The chapter preceding this has illustrated in a general way the necessity of "rightly *dividing* the Word"—distinguishing between literal and symbolic language, and also between various "worlds." We have found three great orders of things mentioned in the Scriptures, and have seen that some things were true of the first that could not be stated of the second or third. For example, in Noah's day it was truth for the time that a flood was coming. But it would not be right for us to preach that the present order of things is to be destroyed by a flood of waters, nor will such preaching be appropriate at any future time. (Gen. 8: 21, 22; 9: 8-17.) It was also seen that Satan is the ruler of this world, but that our Lord Jesus Christ is to be King in the promised new "heavens" and "earth." If Satan is ruler now, "the god of this world," present evil conditions need not be ascribed to Jehovah, nor to our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, we feel a sense of relief at realising the truth that as yet our Lord has not completely manifested His power to reign over the earth. If He had, the present state of the world would be no credit to His government.

A right division of the Word on this subject clears up many things. Our Lord said, in John 18: 36, "My Kingdom is not of this *world*" (Greek *kosmos,* meaning "order of things," the same as in 2 Peter 3: 6), but He taught the disciples to pray and to expect that His Kingdom would some day be estab-

lished in power on this earth. (Matt. 6: 10.) The fact that we have been praying, "Thy Kingdom come," should help us to realise that it has not yet come, and that we need to divide the Word of truth rightly as applied to the three "worlds," or orders of things. As we read the Bible, we should ask ourselves to which "world" the portion is intended to apply, thus (see also large arches in frontispiece Chart)—

The world that then was— 2 Peter 3: 6.	The "heavens" and the "earth" which are now— 2 Peter 3: 7.	New "heavens" and new "earth"— 2 Peter 3: 13.

So we shall come to realise that the planet earth may be likened to a stage, and the "worlds" may be likened to the acts of a great drama. Each part is played and finished, but the stage remains. "The earth abideth for ever."—Eccl. 1: 4.

While the things permitted in the three "worlds" furnish striking evidences of the necessity of rightly dividing the Word of truth, the evidences along this line will be multiplied by a consideration of the "ages," for these specially represent to us God's purpose or PLAN, the work He has devised and has been carrying on. The word "age" means a period of time, of greater or less duration, and is a translation, in the New Testament, of the Greek word *aion*. It is unfortunate that this Greek word has often been mistranslated in the Authorised Version, usually by the word "world," which is in no sense an adequate interpretation of the original, and which obscures the meaning of much in the teaching of the Lord and the Apostles. Instances of this mistranslation are—"The harvest is the end of the *world.*" "What shall be the sign . . . of the end of the *world?*" "Written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the *world* are come." "By whom also He made the *worlds.*" "According to the *eternal purpose,* which He purposed in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Matt. 13: 39; 24: 3; 1 Cor. 10: 11; Heb. 1: 2; Eph. 3: 11.) In each of the texts above cited, the word "age" should be substituted for "world"; the plural form should be used in 1 Cor. 10: 11 and Heb. 1: 2; in Eph. 3: 11 the words "eternal purpose" obscure the meaning, which is more clearly expressed by the Revised Version marginal reading, a "purpose of the ages." Many other instances could be mentioned, but the student will readily find them with the aid of an analytical or exhaustive concordance.

We are to understand, by Eph. 3: 11, that the divine plan comprehends a number of ages or periods of time. And when verse 10 is considered in connection, following the Revised Version marginal reading, and other modern translations, we learn that these ages are so arranged as to express the great diversities of God's wisdom—"*the manifold* wisdom of God, *according to* a Purpose of the Ages." The Greek word here rendered "manifold" means "much diversified," or "much variegated"; that is, "multifarious." We should expect, and we shall find, that the ages comprehended in the divine plan do exhibit these diversities of divine wisdom; and we shall be able to identify the ages by noting the introductions of the diversities.

The Bible reveals five ages, or periods of time—Antediluvian, Patriarchal, Jewish, Gospel, and Kingdom—the diversities of which we shall now proceed to examine. (See small arches in Chart.)

The Antediluvian Age

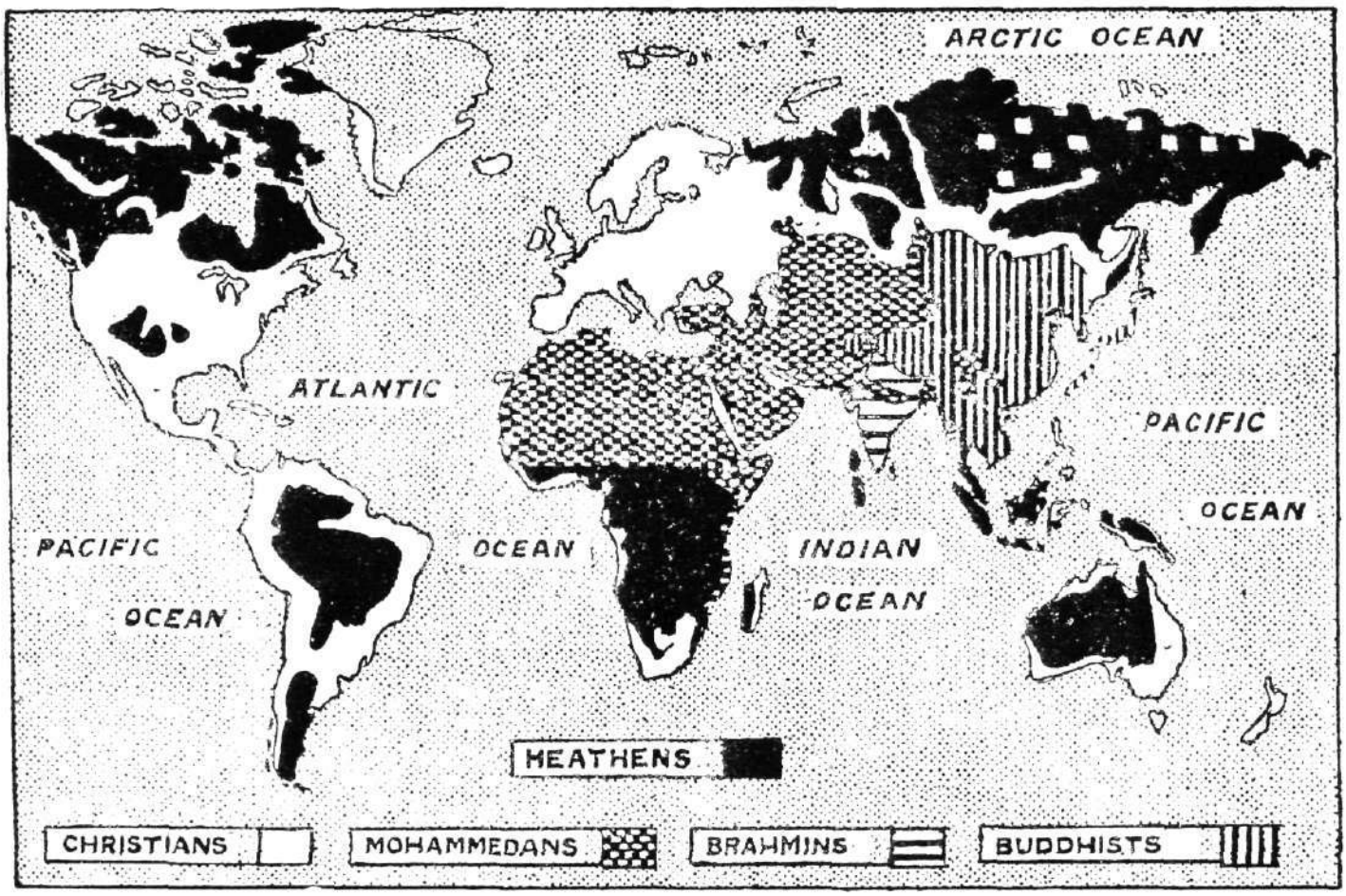
The first of these ages covered the entire period of the "world that then was"; it lasted from Adam to the Flood. After the fall, Adam and Eve were repentant. They wore the skins the Lord had provided, and, so far as the Record shows, were sincere worshippers, accepting the promise which God had made concerning a Deliverer. Abel and Seth were godly men, and we read that when Seth reared a family public worship of God was a recognized institution—"Then began men to call themselves by the name of the Lord."—Gen. 4: 26, margin.

Other godly men, men of faith and mighty works, followed, some of whom are mentioned by name—Enoch, Noah, Shem, Ham, Japhet. (Gen. 5; Heb. 11: 4, 5, 7.) These have the testimony that they pleased God, for they did not follow in the evil ways of men generally. Noah and his sons and their wives were saved in the ark, and after the flood not only began the repeopling of the earth, but established in the new dispensation the true worship as it had been carried down from the beginning by the faithful.

The Patriarchal Age

The second of these ages began after the great Flood. God called Abraham, who obeyed. Before this, God had made certain statements about a future triumph of righteousness over evil (Gen. 3: 15), but no record of a very plain utterance has been preserved. When He called Abraham, He condescended to express His purpose more explicitly, and Abraham was able to gather that it was the divine intention to grant great blessings and dignities *to* his "Seed," and subsequently to bless all the families of the earth *through* the "Seed." (Gen. 12: 1-3; 18: 18; 22: 15-18.) While the plan itself was formulated before the creation of man, as indicated by the statement that Christ was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13: 8), and during the antediluvian age certain persons of faith were accepted, the call of Abraham was the beginning of the formal *working out* of that great Plan, which is ultimately to have a glorious culmination. God often uses agencies for the accomplishment of His purposes; we need, therefore, feel no surprise that it has pleased Him to appoint that some should be used for the blessing of the many. If this be His way, let us be glad that He can not only provide a blessing for all the families of the earth, but also that He can honour some with the privilege of being associated with the Lord Jesus Christ in its distribution.

The wisdom of God arranged that Abraham alone, of his day and generation, should be the chosen one—the elect, if you prefer. It is not asserted that there was no one else in all the earth at that time who would have been as suitable for God's purpose; had that been the case, the Omniscient would have been exceedingly limited, and the question would not have been whether to choose Abraham or another; it would have been Abraham or none. Melchisedek, King of Salem, and Priest of the Most High, was a contemporary of Abraham, and the fact that Abraham paid



Map of the World
Exhibited at the Pan-Anglican
Congress, London, 1908

Population of the World
Classified according to their
Religious Professions

"THIS GENERATION"

(Statistics taken from Diagram Published by the Church Missionary Association)

Protestants	150,000,000
Greek Catholics	110,000,000
Roman Catholics	231,000,000
Jews	7,000,000
Mohammedans	206,000,000
Heathens	796,000,000
Total	1,500,000,000

tithes to Melchisedek and received his blessing is cited to show that Melchisedek was a greater personage than Abraham. (Heb. 7: 4-7.) Since there was a priest of the Most High in those times, there must also have been a people on whose behalf he served, so that there may have been a good supply of material from which the Lord could have drawn for His purpose. But, be that as it may, Abraham was the chosen. There was no competition of candidates to demonstrate which of them should be honoured; God simply spoke to Abraham, and made him the proposition.

It does not appear that Abraham was coerced into this arrangement; so we are not to take that extreme view of God's election. Rather, the manner of stating the proposition (Gen. 12: 1-3) was a test of Abraham's faith. He was invited to leave his country and people, and to go over into a land of which he knew nothing; if he would do so, God would bless him, and through him all the families of the earth. The fact that Abraham made the removal indicates a formal understanding or covenant, his part of which he immediately began to perform. An overland journey of about two thousand miles, with flocks and herds, from prosperous conditions to unknown perils, is not to be lightly undertaken. The usual course is for the unprosperous to emigrate to countries and conditions which they feel reasonably certain will be better than those left behind. But Abraham could trust, even where he could not trace; and of him it is written (Heb. 11: 8), "he went out, not knowing whither he went." Had he been deficient in faith, he must surely have failed to overcome the initial test, in which case he would not have made his calling and election sure, and, presumably, the honour offered to him would have passed to another. Therefore, while acknowledging God's perfect right to offer His special favours to whom He will, it still remains clear that these offers are so made as to test the faith of the prospective beneficiary, with a view to determining his appreciation of the blessing, as manifested by the heartiness of his obedience to the divine call, and hence his fitness for the position.

Abraham did not become the blesser; he did not in his lifetime possess the land promised him; but he became the inheritor of the promise, which will be fulfilled to him at a later day; and he became the progenitor of the line through which the true Seed ultimately came. (Heb. 11: 13-19, 39; Acts 7: 3-8.) He was told that in Isaac, the son born of promise, his seed should be called (Gen. 21: 12); but even this did not say that Isaac himself should be the seed, only that the promised One should come in his line. Isaac became the heir of the Covenant (Gen. 17: 21), and during his lifetime, after his father's death, he was the one man in all the world who was recognised and dealt with pursuant to this special line of promise. After his death, Jacob was the only man in the world who had any rights in connection with the grand and gracious promise made to Abraham, the divine wisdom having decreed that during these three generations only one individual from each should inherit it. (Gen. 27: 27-29; 28: 13-15.) The divine choice of Jacob and the rejection of Esau, as described in Rom. 9: 10-12, may appear to be arbitrary, and they are made to bear a most horrible aspect by the thought, without warrant introduced, that Jacob was chosen to be saved forever in heaven, whereas Esau was rejected to be tortured forever in "hell." The Bible nowhere says that such was the purpose. But it is clear that the one was chosen to inherit the original promise, made to Abraham, and that the other, rejected from this his birthright, because he had more respect for a mess of pottage than for it, was relegated to subserviency to the heir of the promise.—Rom. 9: 12; Gen. 27: 39, 40.

Diversity of Wisdom

At the time of Jacob's death was exhibited a conspicuous "diversity" of divine wisdom, in that God took all Jacob's sons and their posterity to be His people, while the honor of being the progenitors of the promised One was given to the tribe of Judah. Such a demonstration of "diversity" in God's dealing must not be overlooked. Therefore, according to the reading of Eph. 3: 10, 11, "much diversified wisdom of God *according to* a purpose of the ages," we are obliged to recognise that at Jacob's death the Patriarchal Age came to its end, and the Jewish or Israelitish Age began. The Patriarchal Age from Abraham's call was short—only about 250 years—yet even that seems a long time for a single operation of the Divine Plan, dealing with only three men and their wives in respect to the promise of blessing all the families of the earth. Let us take from this a lesson of patience, and of trust in the Lord, so that if in our perplexity we begin to think His work is progressing too slowly we may not be discouraged, but still keep on doing with our might what our hand finds to do.

As we reflect that in the space of three generations God had selected only some half-dozen according to this purpose, and had not even spoken to others, when quite within His power to do so, thoughts and questions arise for consideration. We realise that God is in no hurry; evidently He has appointed certain works for certain times, and while He sees to it that His appointments for "times and seasons" do not fail, He is equally careful to allow no infringement of any work upon the times appointed for other activities. We naturally question, What about the thousands not approached and dealt with during the Patriarchal Age? Because in those days nothing was said to them about salvation, are they relegated to indescribable woe? It would be unspeakably sad, were we obliged to think this. Let us not hastily consign them to so terrible a fate. The Bible does not teach it, and we have just been seeing that in the Lord's wisdom certain persons during the Patriarchal Age were honoured with the call or invitation to become *blessers* of "all the families of the earth." If this invitation meant that, after having been themselves blessed, this high honour was in store for special persons, what shall we suppose is implied on behalf of the others? Shall the honoured ones "bless" them with everlasting pain? Let us hold fast to the promise, and steadfastly hope that something better than this will yet appear.

The Jewish Age

The Jewish Age was several centuries longer than the Patriarchal Age. Instead of dealing with one individual at a time, from generation to genera-

tion, the Eternal was now pleased to take unto himself all the posterity of Jacob, and deal with them collectively as His people. He allowed them to be afflicted in Egypt, brought them thence on "eagles' wings" unto Himself, to Mount Sinai, and there proposed to them to enter into a Covenant, to the effect that if they would keep His words, they should be *unto Him* "a *Kingdom of priests and a holy nation.*" (Exodus 19: 1-6.) The people were well pleased at this prospect, and in due course the Covenant, sometimes called the Law Covenant, was ratified. (Ex. 24: 7, 8.) Never, during all the centuries of the Jewish Age, did the Lord vouchsafe to take into His favour any other nation—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3: 2; Psa. 147: 19, 20.) He sent the holy prophets to Israel; He committed unto them His oracles, so that they had much advantage every way (Rom. 3: 1, 2); but none of this was for the Gentile outsiders; all was for the Israelites, the people of the Covenant. God fought for His people, destroying armies for their sakes; He punished their lapses into idolatry by permitting the Gentiles to oppress them; yet He was always ready to hear their cry, when in their affliction they turned to Him. He instructed them in His ways, rebuking and entreating them with the most marvellous patience and love; but so little were divine favours appreciated by them, that the Almighty was obliged to say, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."—Rom. 10: 21.

The favour to this people culminated in the sending of God's Son to them—*to them; for we are not to* allow ourselves to overlook the Scripturally stated fact that "He came *unto his own.*" (John 1: 11.) Nor are we to forget that His ministry did not extend beyond the land of Palestine. Neither should we ignore our Lord's own recognition of the limitations imposed upon Him by divine wisdom, in that He said, "I *am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house* of Israel." (Matt. 15: 24.) In harmony with these limitations He commanded His disciples, when sending them on a tour—"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.

The Kingdom at Hand

Bearing in mind the promise made to the Jews, when they entered into the Covenant, that if they kept it they should become "a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Ex. 19: 5, 6), and recalling that John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, and our Lord Himself preached that the Kingdom was at hand (Matt. 3: 1, 2; 4: 17, 23), the time being fulfilled (Mark 1: 14, 15), we apprehend that since so conspicuous a part of our Lord's ministry was the announciation of the Kingdom He could not possibly, in the circumstances, have been sent outside Palestine or to others than the Jewish people; because they, being the only nation related to the Covenant, were the only people that could have an interest in such a message, and, at that time, a right to hear it. To this agree the Apostle's words to the Jews of Antioch—"It was *necessary* that the word of God should first have been spoken to you" (Acts 13: 46); and there is much more to the same effect in both Old and New Testaments. Jehovah is a covenant-keeping God; not one of His words falls void to the ground. Having promised the Jews that under certain conditions their nation should become a kingdom of priests (not some of them kings and some of them priests, as during the Jewish Age, but all of them kings and all of them priests), He sent His Son to proclaim the time at hand for them to enter the kingdom and priesthood. But the Jewish expectation differed so radically from the reality which was offered them that they, as a nation, repudiated the Message and crucified the Messenger. Only a few were without guile and ready to receive with meekness the Word, and to enter into the Kingdom opportunities. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not," is the sad description given of the apparent failure of His ministry to that people. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He liberty to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John 1: 11, 12.) These last were the guileless ones, and they entered into what the Lord had promised, while the nominal mass was rejected from favour, and their city destroyed. (Matt. 23: 37, 38.) In this way was the double prophecy of John the Baptist *fulfilled*—(1) "He *shall baptise you with the Holy* Spirit, and (2) with fire; He will (1) gather His wheat into the garner, but He will (2) burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Matt. 3: 11, 12.) The guileless "Israelites indeed" were (1) baptised with the Holy Spirit, and were gathered into the "garner" of the "great salvation which began to be *spoken by the Lord*" (Heb. 2: 3); *the remainder* were (2) baptised thirty odd years later with the fire of an awful time of trouble, in which the "chaff" was "burned up."

Though our Lord's mission to the Jews was apparently not successful, yet He accomplished two very important parts of the Divine Purpose. He demonstrated His loyalty and obedience to the Father, thereby winning great exaltation (Phil. 2: 7-11; Heb. 5: 6-10; Rev. 3: 21); and by the grace of God He "tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2: 9.) He died for our sins, according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15: 3), and He was raised again the third day for our justification. (Rom. 4: 25.) The accomplishment of these two things was not only important but absolutely necessary; and, as we proceed in our study, we shall see in them the perfect manifestations of divine *wisdom, love, justice and power.*

The Gospel Age

The Jewish Age came to its end, as above described, and has been succeeded by the Gospel Age, in which we are now living. The "diversity" of wisdom which requires us to note the end of the Jewish Age and the beginning of the Gospel Age is not hard to recognise. If God gave exclusive favours to Israel for a very long time, and then cast them off from those favours; if He committed to them His oracles, and afterwards sent "blindness in part" upon them, giving His oracles to the Gentiles; we may be sure that such "diversities" are not to be unheeded, if we would "rightly divide the Word of Truth."

Another "diversity" marking the close of the Jew-

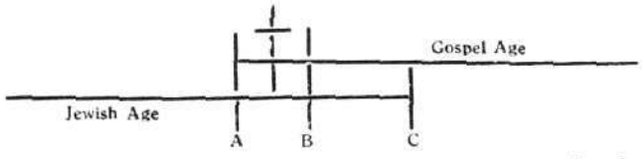
ish Age and the beginning of the Gospel Age is most strikingly brought to our attention by a comparison of our Lord's two commissions to His disciples, the one recorded in Matt. 10: 5, 6, and the reason for it in Matt. 15: 24, the other recorded in Matt. 28: 19, and the reason for it in verse 18. Comparison will be facilitated by placing the two in parallel columns.

"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

"These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, 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. 15: 24; 10: 5, 6.

"Then the eleven disciples [Judas now excluded] went away into Galilee into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them. . . . And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."—Matt. 28: 16-19.

Why this great "diversity" in so short a time? Because "the ends of the ages" (1 Cor. 10: 11, literally translated) had come. That generation was witnessing the closing of the Jewish age and the beginning of the Gospel Age. That is to say, while the one was closing, the other was beginning, so that the two were co-existent for a time; thus—



Several common points of time there were in the transition period. "A" marks the beginning of our Lord's ministry, when He came with the "fan" of truth in His hand to thoroughly purge His "floor," separating "wheat" from "chaff." (Matt. 3: 12.) This occupied three-and-a-half years, to the midst of the "week" of years, when He was crucified; or, as the Prophet was inspired to foretell it, "cut off, but not for Himself." (Dan. 9: 26, 27.) But if His ministry was important as marking the closing of the Jewish Age, it was equally so as indicating the beginning of the Gospel or High Calling Age, because in His teaching were expressed things "kept secret from the foundation of the world," and which only "began to be spoken by the Lord." (Matt. 13: 35; Heb. 2: 3.) Two important events we find on either side of the sacred Cross: before it, the abandoning of the Jewish house to desolation (Matt. 23: 36-38); following it, the Pentecostal outpouring (Acts 2: 1-4); the first of these having to do with the closing of the old age, the other being more especially a mark of the beginning of the new. "B" marks the end of the "week" of years in the midst of which Messiah was cut off, and during which the favour of the Gospel was still to be restricted to the Jews, until the prophecy had been fulfilled. (Dan. 9: 24-26.) But if it marks in a special manner the end of exclusive favour to Israel, we believe it may also be considered the mark of the time when the Gospel began to go to the Gentiles, being taken first by Peter to the house of Cornelius. (Acts 10.) "C" marks the consummation of the Jewish Age in the destruction of Jerusalem. By this time, the Gospel Age was about forty years under way.

But we must return to the Cross to find the reason for the "diversity" between the two commissions above quoted, and the explanation is found in the inspired words of Rom. 14: 9—"For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." From this it may be gathered that since His death and resurrection, and because of them, our Redeemer occupies a more exalted station than He had before, which thought agrees perfectly with His own words in the second commission, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," and with the Apostle's language in Phil. 2: 9, where, after telling of the Redeemer's obedience unto death, "even the death of the cross," he says, "*wherefore* God also hath highly exalted Him." Now we can realise that in the first commission our Lord could send His disciples no further than He was Himself sent, whereas under the second commission they are at liberty and under command to go to all nations, "beginning at Jerusalem," because, on account of His obedience unto death, He had become Lord of all. By giving Himself as the "ransom for all," He purchased the race, and secured the right, as Abraham's "Seed," to bless all those for whom He died.

The Work of the Gospel Age

Those who have followed the presentation of the ages thus far, and have noted that one of the "diversities" between the Patriarchal and Jewish Ages was that the work of the latter was on a larger scale than that of the former, in that it dealt with a nation instead of with merely a few individuals, will not be surprised at the thought that the work of the Gospel Age is on a larger scale than was that of the Jewish Age, in that during the Gospel Age God has been dealing with many individuals out of all peoples, nations, and tongues, instead of with only one people in one land.

Yet there are limitations to be observed, and we must not allow ourselves hastily to suppose that because our Lord sent His disciples into all nations He did so with a view to the enlightenment and conversion of every individual in the present age. This view, while held by many earnest and zealous Christians, some of whom have been striving to bring about the end which they suppose God desires, is not justifiable by Scripture or by facts.

God said, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but *it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*" (Isa. 55: 10, 11.) Consider the religious state of the world as shown in the diagram (see page 13), exhibited at a great Pan-Anglican Congress, and say whether, after nearly two thousand years of preaching, the Gospel may fairly be said to have *accomplished* the conversion or even the enlightenment of the world. The 796 millions of sin-darkened heathen of the present generation, who have never yet heard that Jesus died for them, answer, as with one voice, NO!

Listen to the complaints of discouraged preachers, who tell us of the decay of Christendom, of its waning influence in former strongholds, and of the blighting power of worldliness in the nominal Church, and ask yourself whether you would like to assert that the Word of God has *prospered* in making saints of all Christendom. Surely not!

For all those who have respect unto God's Word, and faith in His power, there can be but one conclusion reached from these considerations; viz., if God's Word has not *accomplished* the conversion or even the enlightenment of Heathendom during the Gospel Age, that is in itself sufficient evidence that God was not pleased that the Word should undertake that work in this time. And if the Word has not *prospered* in making saints of all Christendom, during the Gospel Age, that in itself is sufficient evidence that God did not send the Word for such a purpose during this age; for God's word always *accomplishes* that which He pleases and it always *prospers* in the thing whereto He sends it. Our Lord explained the limitations of the Word during the Gospel Age, saying, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world *for a witness* unto all nations; and then shall the end [of the age] come." (Matt. 24: 14, 3.) To give a *witness* or testimony to all nations is a different thing from an attempt at the conversion of all the individuals of all nations. Are we to conclude that God's interest in our poor race is to find no wider expression than that which has been visible during the Gospel Age? It would be disappointing indeed should we find ourselves obliged to admit this; let us for the present encourage faith by those beautiful words—"God so *loved* the *world*."—John 3: 16.

We are reminded here of the original promise to Israel, when they entered into the Covenant with God at Mt. Sinai—"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." (Ex. 19: 5, 6.) We have seen how God invited or called Abraham, and how, after passing test after test, Abraham made his calling and election sure, to the honour of being a blesser of all the families of the earth. But Israel as a nation called and invited did not successfully pass the tests, did not make their calling and election sure, and hence as a nation have been rejected from the honour of being "a Kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." Will God therefore give up the idea of having kings and priests, a peculiar people, a holy nation? He would have had them had Israel kept the covenant; does Israel's national failure oblige Him to abandon this portion of His Purpose?

A sorry comment on Isa. 14: 24, 27 would that be! God will not fail to have a "peculiar people"; He will have the "kings and priests"; the "holy nation" will be manifest to our sight in due time. Hear the Word, which describes what God has been pleased to allow it to accomplish, and in which work it doubtless has prospered, during the Gospel Age. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded"; "*there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*" (Rom. 11: 7, 5.) This agrees with John 1: 11, 12—"As many [of His own, the Jews] as received Him, to them gave He power [margin—privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." Those individual Israelites who believed in Jesus were accepted as probationary members of the Kingdom of Priests, but they were not sufficient to fill up the number required; hence the gospel message was extended to the Gentiles, that they also might receive "forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them [believing Jews] which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts 13: 32-42, 46; 26: 20, 18.) Wherever the Apostles went they observed the prescribed rule (Rom. 1: 16), "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"; and the record is that while the majority of the nation rejected the Word as above referred to, thousands of Jews received the Word gladly (Acts 2: 41, 42), and it was these believers who formed the nucleus of the Gospel Church, to which believing Gentiles were subsequently added. Further corroboration as to the work of the Gospel Age is found in Acts 15: 14—"God at the first did visit the Gentiles to *take out of them* a people for His name." This is the appointed work of the Gospel Age; and while it is on a much larger scale than were the operations of the Jewish and Patriarchal ages, it is still similar to those, in that it is a work of choosing, selecting or *electing*. There is even a certain arbitrariness exhibited in connection with this work, for God has chosen, as undoubtedly he had a right to do, to send the Gospel message generally westward and north-westward from Jerusalem, the starting point, and much less southward and eastward. It was not a question of nations competing for the honour of hearing the glad tidings, but of God providentially directing the courses of his servants. (Acts 16: 7-10.) The distinctive processes by which the election or selection of the members of the Gospel Church is conducted will be considered in a subsequent Talk, when it will, we trust, be clear that there are reasonable conditions to be fulfilled by all who become the elect.

The faithful chosen of the Gospel Age are to be kings and priests unto God, and they are chosen unto sonship, that they should become joint heirs with the Redeemer. (Eph. 1: 4, 5; Rom. 8: 14-17.) The fact that this should be so, and that the joint heirs with Christ should be chosen from among Gentiles, as well as a remnant from among the Jews, was not clearly revealed in former ages, as since Pentecost. (Eph. 3: 3-7.) Says the Apostle Peter, writing to the "elect strangers," "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; . . . which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." (1 Pet. 2: 9, 10.) Our Lord Jesus Christ is in his own person the inheritor of this promise of the Law (Exod. 19: 5, 6), as well as the "Seed" of the Abrahamic promise, having by faithful obedience observed all the precepts of the Law to do them. Hence, he became, in accordance with the divine oath, and as explained in Heb. 5: 5-10; 7: 15-28, "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec"; and, as stated in Heb. 3: 1-6, "High Priest of our profession" or confession. Like Melchisedec, He is both king and priest, reigning now in the hearts of the believers (Col. 1: 13), and ministering for them in the heavens (Heb. 8: 1); and, thank God! His kingdom and priesthood will extend the blessing more

widely after the faithful, who "suffer with Him," become His joint heirs, united to Him in the glory.

This call to joint-heirship was referred to by the Apostle Paul—"I press toward the mark [or, along the line or track] for the prize of the High Calling of God in Christ Jesus." The Gospel Age may therefore appropriately be called also the "High Calling Age." —Phil. 3: 14.

The word "Christ" means "Anointed," and is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." While Jesus on earth was the Messiah to whom the Scriptures pointed, He did not in His earthly career fulfil all the prerogatives which pertained to that office. It was necessary, as He explained to the disciples on the way to Emmaus—"Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" (Luke 24: 26)—that He should give Himself a ransom, and purchase the race for Himself, before He should as the Messiah enter into the more exalted portion of His office. Thus the Apostle Peter explains—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."—Acts 2: 36; 5: 31.

The risen Lord is the "Seed of Abraham," THE CHRIST, in whom all the families of the earth, whom He purchased with His own blood, are to be blessed. "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." (Gal. 3: 16.) Immediately upon His ascension He began the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, beginning with His disciples who had followed Him during His earthly career. Upon them was poured out the Holy Spirit, and by them was the message of peace and good will delivered to others, according to the commission already given them—"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 25: 46, 47.) This was Peter's message when he stood up on the day of Pentecost and subsequently (Acts 2: 38, 39; 3: 19, 20, 26), and this was the message which later gladdened the hearts of Cornelius and other Gentiles. (Acts 10: 36, 43; 11: 18; 13: 38, 46.) To be brought to the knowledge of the truth is the first feature of the "blessing." The "blessing" is further described in the third and fourth chapters of Romans as the justification of those who believe in Jesus. Their faith is counted to them for righteousness. Thus they are "blessed *with* faithful Abraham" (Gal. 3: 9) in being accepted of God for the same reason; namely, implicit faith and obedience.

The blessing which Christ, the Messiah, gave and will give to those who believed in Him during the Gospel age is further described in Gal. 3: 26—"For ye are all the *children of God* by faith in Christ Jesus." By accepting Christ, acknowledging Him as the Blesser, and owning Him as Lord, they are said to be "all one IN Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3: 28.) And by being in Christ Jesus, they become the heirs of Abraham. "If ye be Christ's [that is, possessive case —if ye belong to Christ], then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3: 29.) Those who believe are counted for his seed, as John the Baptist said—"Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." And our Lord said—"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."—Matt. 3: 9; John 8: 39.

Those who belong to Jesus Christ, and are counted as Abraham's seed, not only receive a blessing from Him, but are commissioned to impart a blessing to others, for to them is committed "the word of reconciliation"—"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5: 20.

Moreover, those who during the Gospel age manifest the faith of Abraham, and are accepted of God as His sons, are the inheritors of the promise of Ex. 19: 6. They are a Kingdom of Priests, an holy nation, and as such they are to reign with Christ a thousand years. (1 Peter 2: 9; Rev. 20: 6.) They are, because sons, heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord. He, as the "Heir of all things," both by creation and redemption, is willing to associate with Himself in the glories of the Kingdom those who are now the called and chosen and faithful. Jesus Christ, the heir of the Kingdom of David, has appointed unto them a Kingdom, and the work of that Kingdom when established in the earth will be to give to all men (including those raised from the dead) the blessing of knowledge of the way of salvation, in order that they may receive the further blessing of repentance and forgiveness "in His name."—Luke 22: 29; Isa. 25: 6-9.

Think of this; grasp its meaning; Keep all these things, and ponder them in your heart! Did ever such visions of grace and glory rise before the eye of faith as now appear to him who begins to comprehend the scope of the divine promise? For the seed is not only *to be blessed*, but beyond that rises the summit of a grander height; this same seed is to be, under Christ, the *blesser* — THE BLESSER — aye, THE BLESSER—OF ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH.—Gen. 22: 17, 18; Rev. 20: 4.

Once in the dark narrowness of our error-circumscribed minds, we may have thought that we were all right for heaven, and that the others were all bound for ——. Now, thank God, the weapons of the Spirit have proved their mightiness to the pulling down of some of the strongholds, and the light—the shining light—is illuminating our opened minds. "God . . . hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," "the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ." —2 Cor. 4: 6, 4.

Once we may have contemplated with pleasure the "harps" and "crowns" which we believed were laid up for us, while we shuddered to think of the awful conditions prepared for some of our friends. Let us not now be unmindful of what the "harps" and "crowns" may mean to us, should we be so happy as to receive them; but let us also think of the good the Church will be permitted to do as kings and priests, and the privilege to be enjoyed, to resolve the discords which now prevail into the glad notes of harmony and peace.

Have we often queried in ourselves, and never were quite satisfied, as to the apparent slowness with which the Gospel had progressed for nearly twenty centuries? We need only to be reminded that the work arranged for the Gospel Age is merely one of world wide witnessing, and of choosing out a people from among the peoples. In harmony with this, we read the prophecy quoted in the New Testament—"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this, I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up; that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things."—Acts 15: 14-17.

Have we rejoiced in the love that God had for the whole world, in that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us all (John 3: 16; Heb. 2: 9), and have we then felt perplexed at the thought that not all were being blessed as a result of that sacrifice? Let the Word dissolve our perplexities and confirm our joy. "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." "For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But, "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8: 19-22.) Precisely so! How could it be supposed that the groaning creation should experience its deliverance before the sons of God, under Christ the "Seed," would be ready to enlighten and bless them? This is why the blessing has not yet extended to all, and why "the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth," or is delayed; the sons of God must first be manifested in the glory of their joint-heirship with the Son of God, at His second advent. (Col. 3: 4.) Then the "waiting" period will end, and the blessing of all earth's myriads will begin. Out of ashes shall rise beauty; mourning shall be turned into joy; the groaning spirit of heaviness shall be exorcised, and praise, filling every heart, shall employ every tongue.—Isa. 61: 3, 4.

"Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below!"

The Kingdom Age

Following the Gospel Age, whose end will be coincident with the destruction of the present symbolic "heavens" and "earth," as described in Talk II., will come another age in this marvellous "Plan of Ages."

The duration of the Kingdom Age will be a thousand years, whence the frequent designation "Millennial" Age. This is correct enough, if one have only the length of time in mind, for "millennial" is derived from two Latin words meaning "a thousand years." Our preference for "Kingdom Age" is because the word "millennium" has taken on the meaning of a glorious time of serenity, happiness and perfection, which definition does not accurately describe the thousand years of the Kingdom Age. The Kingdom of God on earth will be a blessing, but circumstances will sometimes be such that the blessing will need to be the rather forcible one of the "rod of iron," for the correction, discipline and instruction in righteousness of all the families of the earth. Since these conditions will obtain more or less throughout the thousand years of the Kingdom, and since, at the end of that age, there will be an uprising to be dealt with (Rev. 20: 6-9), our reason for preferring "Kingdom Age" to "Millennial Age" will be readily understood. After the Kingdom Age shall have accomplished its appointed work of putting all enemies under the feet of Christ (1 Cor. 15: 25), untold blessings will follow, with nothing to mar or interrupt the peace and perfection then to be enjoyed: but it will require the Kingdom rule and discipline to prepare the earth and all its families for those grand times.

Like the preceding age, the Kingdom Age will play its part in exhibiting the "much diversified [or multifarious] wisdom of God." Perhaps one of the most striking "diversities" then to be manifested will be the Kingdom of God in power on earth, having come to cause God's will to be done; whereas during the Gospel Age the divine appointment has been that the Kingdom should "suffer violence," and that those seeking to enter it must do so "through much tribulation."—Matt. 11: 12; Acts 14: 22.

Another "diversity" between the Kingdom Age and all its predecessors will be in the then restraining of the "Strong Man," who has been the "god of this world." His deceptions have been most potent in their opposition to the world-wide spread of the truth; or shall we rather put it another way, and say that because God has not, as yet, desired to enlighten the whole world, He has allowed Satan to remain at comparative liberty to deceive and to blind the world generally (2 Cor. 4: 4), annoying those who have been trying to walk in the ways of righteousness, and endeavouring to corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. 11: 3, 14.) But when the time comes for these specially tried and tested ones to invite the people generally to the divine blessing (Rev. 22: 1, 17), all of the pernicious activities of Satan, of his sympathisers, and of the systems of evil, inaugurated and fostered by him, must cease; "or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house."—Matt. 12: 29; Isa. 35: 8-10; 11: 9.

Consideration of the details of the work appointed for the Kingdom Age will be presented in succeeding Talks, when more will, we trust, be seen of the "diversities." But first we shall consider the basis upon which all these blessings rest; the ground upon which God is able to maintain the justice of the penalty which He inflicted upon man for disobedience, and at the same time to set in operation His merciful arrangements for their salvation.

"A Ransom for All"

"The Man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a Ransom for all, a testimony in due time."—1 Tim. 2: 5, 6, margin.

FROM earliest times to the present day, the necessity of sacrifice of life for expiatory purposes has persisted as an idea in the human mind. This necessity was illustrated at the first by the coats of skins which the Lord God made for Adam and Eve after sentence had been pronounced on account of their sin. That incident should convey the thought of a victim, and that the sinner was not himself able to make the necessary provision. It should also teach us that just as the Lord God provided the victims whose skins were made into robes for the sinners, so He would, and He only could, in due time provide the necessary sacrifice that would actually supply the needed covering, and would expiate the sin. In a word, the incident in the Garden illustrated the love of God for the guilty pair, and foreshadowed its grander manifestation to be made in "the fulness of the time" on behalf of them and all their race.—Gen. 3: 21; John 3: 16; Gal. 4: 4, 5.

The extent of the ignorance of and alienation from God of the race is shown in the fact that most of the tribes of men are worshippers of demons or idols, not knowing the true God. As the divine likeness in them has been more and more obliterated, notions of cruelty and vindictiveness, on the part of their deities, have been introduced into their religions in connection with the still persisting idea of the necessity of expiation, in order to atonement. The fact that the sinner could not himself provide the victim, but that it must be provided by God, has been quite lost sight of. Thus the teaching concerning the relationship of the creature to the Creator has been so distorted that it might be said of some that their gods have been made by men. Even Christendom has not escaped the bane, as is evidenced by the vindictiveness of character often ascribed to the Almighty.

Doubtless Justice must be exact and stern; but it can be both without being vindictive; in fact, vindictiveness is a beginning of injustice, for it leads to excess. On the other hand, a loving provision for the exact satisfaction of the divine penalty against the sinner is quite compatible with justice; it magnifies the divine honour, exhibits the love of both God and Christ for a lost world, and lays the foundation for a substantial benefit, which in due course will accrue to all who desire to avail themselves of it. The teaching of Scripture on this most important subject is both harmonious and convincing.

The Sin

When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden which God had planted "eastward in Eden," they were perfect of their kind; "very good" was the word used to describe them. (Gen. 2: 8; 1: 31.) Man's estate is not the highest in the universe. There are at least two above him—the divine, and the angelic. If there be grades between the angelic and the divine nature we know not; but the angelic nature is doubtless the lowest plane of spiritual nature, for of the man it is said, "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." (Psalm 8: 5.) Man was made for an earthly habitation, and his dominion was earthly—over the fish, fowl, beasts, and to tend and keep its agricultural products. (Gen. 1: 26-28; Psa. 8: 6-8.) Angels are heavenly beings, differently constituted from mankind, and dwelling in other conditions.—Psalm 115: 16; Dan. 9: 20, 21; Matt. 18: 10; Mark 12: 25.

"A little lower than the angels," but perfect on his own plane, was our father Adam, when placed by his Maker in the garden. Being without experience, and, therefore, without established character, though their physical and mental processes were perfect, he and his beautiful companion were placed under a command which was to test their obedience and loyalty to their Creator. The point of the test was a very small one, being merely the abstinence from the fruit of a certain tree, the lack of which would in no way have interfered with their sustenance. As no law is of force unless a penalty be arranged for infractions, so a penalty was provided in case of disobedience to this command. And just here is a difficulty to some, that the penalty arranged for seems out of all proportion to the insignificance of the offence to be punished. Men were hanged in England for sheep-stealing, when sheep were sold for 2d. each, and a Bible cost £40. But such penalties are now abolished, and capital punishment is pronounced only for a few offences, considered very heinous. In the Garden of Eden, however, we find capital punishment the penalty for eating a little fruit! If it be inquired, Why was this? the answer is that the value of the fruit was not at all the consideration, but the loyalty of the creature to the Creator. It must not be overlooked that the smaller and less significant the incident, the more severe is it as a test of loyalty; whence the principle enunciated by the Saviour, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." (Luke 16: 10.) God had a right to require perfect obedience from His creature, man, and to declare that the disobedient should not be allowed to live.

The Penalty

This is very different from the usual misunderstanding of the penalty threatened and pronounced in the Garden. Many think that God meant to torture the transgressors to all eternity. Had He so intended, He would certainly have stated it in the plainest terms, under which no misunderstanding could have been possible. Considering the issues involved, nothing less than the clearest possible expression of His intention could be justified by Him Who is the embodiment of Justice, not to mention Love.

Perusal of the first three chapters of Genesis reveals not a word that could be construed as implying an eternity of pain as the threatened penalty for disobedience. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die." (Gen. 2: 17, margin.) This is the only record of God's words to Adam on this subject before he sinned, and here should be found the straightforward teaching of eternal torture, had that been the penalty of dis-

obedience. But God said nothing about it; instead of saying that Adam should expect to be kept alive in pain, He said that the transgressor should die. On subsequent occasions the penalty of sin was repeated in the same terms—"The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" death came by sin.—Ezek. 18: 4; Rom. 5: 12.

Some have found difficulty in understanding how Adam died *in the day* he ate the forbidden fruit. He did not die within twenty-four hours of his sin, for we read in Gen. 5: 5, "And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died." This difficulty is more apparent than real, and it resolves itself when the wide use of the word "day" is recalled. We speak of "our day," not meaning a period of twenty-four hours, but a number of years. This usage is common in the Bible; two instances will suffice for the present—"Harden not *your* hearts, as *in the provocation, in the day of* temptation in the wilderness, when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works *forty years*. (Heb. 3: 8, 9.) "But beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." (2 Pet. 3: 8; Psa. 90: 4.) When these and similar references are considered, it is not at all difficult to understand that Adam died within the *day* that he sinned. The dying process began promptly, and it was completed in less than a thousand years.

If the words threatening the penalty say nothing about eternal torment, much less do those in which the sentence was pronounced and more fully explained after the transgression. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken (Gen. 2: 7); for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3: 19.) This language is very precise. None need mistake its meaning. The sinful man was to return to the ground from which he had been taken. Did Adam, when God formed him "of the dust of the ground," emerge from a condition of misery and woe unspeakable? Let those answer who believe that "*return* unto the ground" means eternal torment.

The language describing the execution of the sentence is equally clear, allowing no room for the thought that eternal torment was intended to be understood. "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken." (Gen. 3: 22, 23.) Here is the best possible evidence that the penalty was not to be a perpetuation of existence in misery, but rather a taking away of all power to live, as indicated in the act of excluding the man from the Garden where the trees were, the eating of whose fruits would have kept him alive. In order that the sinner might *die*, he was driven forth into the unprepared portion of the earth, to struggle on as best he might with the thorns and thistles—which have remained and multiplied to this day, but which, with all other unfit conditions, shall be eradicated during the Kingdom Age—until, near the close of his "day," the execution of the sentence was finished, and he returned to his dust. Had he not sinned, he would have been permitted to live on.

"Many Made Sinners"

The sentence thus pronounced and executed has become the inheritance of the sinner's posterity. Certain it is, we all die; and the Bible furnishes the only reasonable account why this is so. Many Christians, instead of recognising death as the penalty of sin, look upon it as the gateway to glory. This is a great mistake, and has contributed much to the prevalent confusion. The Apostle explains, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin . . . *so* death passed upon all men." And again, "In Adam all die," and "by a man came death." (Rom. 5: 12; 1 Cor. 15: 21—Rotherham—22.) The whole of the race has entered into the results of Adam's transgression. No other explanation than that of God's Word suffices to tell why infants die. These do not bring death upon themselves, because they know not right from wrong. Yet they die. It must be as the Scripture says, that by "one man sin entered, and death by sin." What is true of the infant is true also of the youth, of the middle-aged, and of the old; all die because of the legacy of death bequeathed to them by our first parents. All are born subject to death, and the whole of what we call life is imperfect growth and a process of decay, arrested temporarily by such expedients as man can devise. Adam completed the journey in nine hundred and thirty years; the present average length of life is only about forty years.

Why did God so arrange that the penalty of Adam's sin should descend to some twenty-seven thousand millions who did not enjoy the privileges of perfection and favourable environment that he had? Does it not seem unjust that such a vast multitude should, without being consulted, and without power to avoid it, enter into a curse which they did nothing to bring upon themselves? Is there any wisdom in it? Before mentioning what seems to be the Scriptural answer to these urgent and reasonable questions, it might well be asked whether it is at all likely that we, in Adam's position, would have done better than he did. Let each one carefully think it out for himself, and the conclusion must be that the most of us, if not all, would have done precisely what our progenitors in the garden of Eden did, circumstances being the same. It cannot, therefore, be alleged that God was unreasonable in not giving us an experience exactly like that of our first parents. And when the arrangements made for atonement for sin are comprehended, it will be clear that the course God took was not only reasonable, but was the most advantageous for the human race.

All the World Guilty before God

God requires the punishment of disobedience, and cannot allow the guilty to be cleared. (Exod. 34: 6, 7; Rom. 3: 19.) This is the basis of God's dealings; "Justice and judgment are the habitation of Thy throne." (Psa. 89: 14; 97: 2.) He is "the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1: 17; Num. 23: 19.) This inflexibility of purpose is the guarantee of God's reliability and of the steadfastness of His designs. Did we not have some assurance on this point, we could not feel sure of anything. If God, after condemning Adam, had been brought to acknowledge that He had been unjust, what assurance could there be

that He might not be unjust again? Divine Justice may seem severe at times, but its fixity is the guarantee of stability for the universe.

The Omniscient foresaw the difficulty into which the entire race would be plunged by the transgression of the first man, and before even creating the man He had the relief measures fully arranged. One can fancy the attributes of the divine character harmoniously co-operating to devise the plan, Wisdom showing the way in which the interests of Mercy, Love, and Justice would be fully served by meeting the requirements of the latter and giving full exercise to the former, not only making plain the way by which the race might be blest, but also giving Love and Mercy the opportunity to exercise themselves all the more by providing the sacrifice—a corresponding price which alone could satisfy the righteous claim of divine Justice.

And what would be a corresponding price? A corresponding price would be the substitution of life for life; and whereas nothing more could be demanded, nothing less would be satisfactory. Twenty-seven thousand millions! Where shall we find so many? Where shall we find even one? Since all the race was condemned, "none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psa. 49: 7.) Shall we create other twenty-seven thousand millions, and ask them to lay down their lives for the condemned ones? Divine Wisdom would not agree to such use of Divine Power, since the newly created ones would in all probability have taken the same course as Adam did, and the difficulty would thus have been increased. Divine Love and Mercy would have been in despair had not Wisdom shown the way by pointing out that the whole race was condemned on account of *one man's* sin, his posterity in his loins at the time of the transgression sharing therefore in the sin and its penalty. If a man of perfect righteousness could be found, willing to give up his life, as a sacrifice, Justice could accept that as full satisfaction, because this man would also be giving up the life of a possible bride and race which might have been developed from him as from the first man.

But where was such a man? No member of Adam's race could meet the requirements, and there could be no assurance that another inexperienced, newly-created man, such as Adam was, would not have followed his way of sin.

Bought with a Price

The Son of God shared the Father's love for and interest in the race, and when Divine Wisdom pointed out that He might become the Man required, and might, by giving up His life and that of His possible wife and posterity, thus supply the Ransom which Divine Justice required, He at once agreed to make the sacrifice. Here was one of experience, better fitted than any other of the heavenly host, by reason of acquaintance with the Father, to carry out this portion of the Plan devised by Wisdom. He had been with the Father from the beginning; He had been the Father's right hand in the creation of all things; without Him was not anything made that was made; He was Himself "a God." (John 1: 1, literal rendering.) But He was not a man; how could He be a ransom, or corresponding price? In the glory of His pre-human estate He would be far in excess of the value required; and divine Justice, which could not be satisfied with less, could not demand more.

He could be satisfactory to Justice only by leaving the heavenly glory and becoming a man; then He would be able to offer a ransom, or price to correspond.* Could divine Power accomplish such a wonderful change of nature, as to transfer Him from heavenly to earthly conditions? Yes; divine Power could do this.† And so it came to pass that He Who was in a form like God's form, and Who counted not that equality with God was a thing to be grasped (Phil. 2: 6, R.V.), "emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant." He became a member of the Jewish "house of servants," being born under the Law. The blood of bulls and goats, not being a corresponding price, could never take away sin; and the life of a heavenly being could not have been a proper price; one was not valuable enough, the other would have been too valuable. "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body didst thou prepare for me." ". . . We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."—Heb. 10: 5, 10, R.V.; John 6: 51-58.

"One in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." Thus is described the glory and perfection of the first man. The entrance of sin made a great change, so that the Apostle says, "We see not yet all things put under him. But we see *Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death*, crowned with glory and honour, that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." (Heb. 2: 6-9.) Could the ransom be more plainly described than is here done? Adam, crowned with the glory of perfect humanity, a little lower than the angels, and with the honour of being ruler over the works of God's hands, loses all by reason of sin, and his posterity shares the loss. Jesus, a heavenly being, the Creator of angels and men, divests Himself of His glory, and takes instead the glory and honour of perfect humanity; in a word, He also is made "a little lower than the angels," as the Apostle says. He takes this lower position temporarily, for a very particular and special purpose which is so definitely expressed that there is no room to question it—"Jesus,

*The word "ransom" occurs but three times in the New Testament—Matt. 20: 28; Mark 10: 45; 1 Tim. 2: 6. It is in each case a translation of the Greek *lutron*, meaning a redemption price, joined with *anti*, indicating correspondence—"a corresponding price." Thus is indicated the strictness of divine justice. The word "ransom" is used in Hos. 13: 14 and Isa. 35: 10 to translate the Hebrew *padah*, which has more the sense of release or deliver. This translation is not quite accurate, as the release or deliverance is not the ransom, but is the *consequence* of the payment of the ransom.

†It is not supposed that the divine attributes, Justice, Wisdom, Love, Mercy, and Power actually engaged in a colloquy as above described. This is merely a free parabolic form of description of the harmonious co-operation of those grand attributes in inspiring, devising, sanctioning, and executing the wonderful plan, determined on from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 5: 6; 13: 8.

. . . made a little lower than the angels *for the suffering of death*, . . . that He by the grace of God should *taste death for every man.*"

The Corresponding Price a "Touchstone"

This makes several questions quite clear. It shows that our blessed Redeemer, when on earth, was *really* a man. He had to be such, in order to present a satisfactory price to divine Justice. He was not "the God-man." Such an expression is foreign to the Scripture. Neither is He described as "God the Son," though He is "the Son of God." Before He came to earth He was a God, and since His return to heaven He is a God; but it was as the MAN, Christ Jesus, that He "gave *Himself* a ransom [corresponding price] for all." Now it can be understood that His temptations were real, that His prayers to God were more than formalities, and that He really gave up His all for us, trusting the Father to raise him from death. Now it is plain that in giving up Himself He was giving up the companion who might have been formed from and for Him, as Eve was formed for Adam, and the race which might thus have been developed, so supplying a price to correspond with every requirement of Justice. "To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living." "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—Rom. 14: 9; 1 John 2: 2.

The ransom by the Lord Jesus for all was "the testimony" of God's love for our race given in its due time, of which testimony the Apostle Paul was made a witness, a preacher and an apostle. "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." "Herein is love."—1 Tim. 2: 5-7; Rom. 5: 6; 1 John 4: 9, 10.

By reason of a clear view of the Ransom, and what it required, we can also understand that the Penalty of Sin is not life in misery, but is the taking away of all life, in death. If the Son of God had to leave the heavenly glory, in order that He might correspond in nature and perfection to the first man, whose race He was to redeem, it must be that divine Justice would be equally scrupulous concerning the penalty He was to pay for us. Scripture is explicit on this point. If the original transgressor was told he should *die* if he sinned, we are instructed that the very first article of the Christian faith is that "Christ *died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15: 3.) If death meant eternal torment in Adam's case, it could signify nothing less for Jesus, the Ransom-price. Since the iniquity of us all has been laid upon Him, and since He bare our sins in His own body to the tree, must not Jesus now be suffering eternal torment, if eternal torment be the penalty of our sins? (Isa. 53: 6; 1 Peter 2: 24.) The case is plain: If eternal torment be the penalty for our sins, and Jesus is not suffering it, then we are not redeemed; no corresponding price has been paid to divine Justice, and we can look forward to nothing but unspeakable woe to all eternity.

But we *are* redeemed; we *are* "bought with a price," even "the precious blood of Christ." He *is* the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. This being so, eternal torment cannot be the penalty for our sins, because our Redeemer, upon whom they were laid, is not suffering eternal woe. He tasted *death* for every man, and the evidence that His sacrifice was satisfactory is in that He was raised from the dead by the power of the Father.* (Eph. 1: 18, 19; Acts 2: 24.) Let those who believe in eternal torment ask themselves the solemn question, "Has a ransom, a propitiation, a corresponding price, a satisfaction, ever been offered for what is due on account of my sins?"

Since the Scripture teaching on the Ransom makes clear so much that before was not so, it is not surprising that William Tyndale, the great Reformer, said that the doctrine of the Ransom is the "touchstone to try all teachings." A few illustrations of the Ransom teaching as a "touchstone" have been given. The student will at discretion apply this "stone" to other religious or so-called Bible teachings. Whatever he finds out of harmony with the Ransom is to be rejected forthwith; time spent with it is wasted. Although there may be beautiful thoughts expressed by some who openly or covertly deny the Ransom, we are not to go through their error for the sake of a few good things which, by the grace of God, we can get from His Word, without wading through a mass of false teaching.

But some one will say that the Apostle commands us to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." (1 Thes. 5: 21.) It cannot be that the Apostle means that God's people are to undertake to acquaint themselves with all the details of all the religious teaching in the world. Life is too short for this. He Himself wrote that there was one foundation, Christ, and other foundation can no man lay. If a teaching be presented for our consideration, we are not to shut our eyes and ears, and, as it were, run away from it without knowing what it is. We are to prove it; and the first question will be, Does it agree with the one foundation, the fact that Jesus "gave Himself a ransom for all?" If it do not agree, even though the words "ransom" and "propitiation" be frequently employed, the task of proving it is finished—perhaps in one minute—and our obligation toward it is discharged in full. If the teaching presented be found to be harmonious with the Ransom, it will be right for us to examine it more closely, and derive whatever blessing we may from its presentations.

The Ransom as a "touchstone" will not only be a test of all teaching brought to it, but it may also be a test of the student, in that some long cherished beliefs may be found to be inconsistent with the faith in the Ransom. Happy will he be to whom the "touchstone" does not become a "stumbling stone and rock of offence," as it was to the Jews, and is now to a large number in Christendom.—1 Cor. 1: 23; 1 Pet. 2: 8.

The Lord of All

The Ransomer, raised from the dead, is no longer "a little lower than the angels;" that is to say, he is no longer a human being. Another change has occurred. He is now "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

*In John 10: 18 the word "take" should be "receive," as in the last sentence—"I have power to lay it down, and I have power to *receive* it again. This commandment have I *received* of my Father."

is to come." Nevertheless, He is "this same Jesus"; the change in condition and position does not alter His identity. On account of His obedience unto the death of the cross, "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." He has been raised from the dead "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," being now the exact image of the Father's person.—Eph. 2: 20, 21; Phil. 2: 8-10; 1 Peter 1: 4; Heb. 1: 3.

While He was the man on earth, Christ Jesus was not a combination of two natures. Had He been that, He would not have been a "corresponding price," because Adam was not a combination of two natures.* Yet, as a man, Jesus had the benefit of His experience and knowledge acquired in heaven, and of this the prophet was inspired to write, "by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities." (Isa. 53: 11.) Since His resurrection our Lord is not a combination of two natures. Nevertheless, the memory of His experiences on earth is still of value to Him, and to us; "for we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—Heb. 4: 15.

The risen Jesus is not only the merciful and faithful High Priest for His people; He is also the *Lord*, with all authority in heaven and in earth. (Rom. 14: 9; Matt. 28: 18.) He is priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was both king and priest. (Heb. 7: 1, 7.) He is the King of kings and Lord of lords; and while other lords and potentates of earth have reigned for a time, and have then been obliged by death to lay aside their sceptres, the Redeemer of the world is the only potentate of earth that has immortality, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto," and is at the same time a priest "after the power of an endless life." (1 Tim. 6: 16; Heb. 7: 16.) "As the Father hath life in Himself, *so hath He given* to the Son to have life in Himself." (John 5: 26.) This life was given Him at His resurrection. It could not have been before, else He could not have died, hence could not have given the *corresponding price* required by Justice. But since His resurrection He is the image of the Father's person, the exact impress of His substance. And this is the prize held before those who faithfully follow in His steps—"glory and honour and incorruptibility," joint heirship with Him whom the Father has appointed heir of all things. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . 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." —Heb. 1: 3; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Rom. 2: 7; 8: 17; Heb. 1: 2; 1 John 3: 1, 2.

The Everlasting Father

This title, given to our Lord Jesus in Isa. 9: 6, 7, is in harmony with what has just been said concerning His position, since His resurrection, of Lord or Owner of all for whom He died. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called *Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting* Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." This is not an intimation that our Lord Jesus is the Almighty God whom He acknowledged as His Father (John 20: 17), but rather that our Lord Jesus stands in the relation of Father to those of the human race who believe in and are accepted by Him; as He said, "I *am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth* in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." —John 11: 25, 26.

Carrying out the same figure, the Apostle Paul speaks of Christ as the "second Adam." "The first man Adam was made a living soul: the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." (1 Cor. 15: 45.) Having accomplished the death on the cross, our Saviour was raised by the Father's mighty power, and is now a quickening, or life-giving *spirit*. "Put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit," is the way it is literally expressed in 1 Peter 3: 18. (See also Heb. 2: 9; 5: 7; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7.) The *risen* Lord, then, and not Christ Jesus as a man, is Adam II.

Adam I. was set in the earth as head of and life-giver to a race that was to be. Disaster overtook him before he had become the father of even one, and the whole of his prospective race was by divine decree involved in the disaster, so that all of Adam's posterity became subject to death. Thus it is stated —"In Adam all die;" and—"So death passed upon all men;" and—"By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—1 Cor. 15: 22; Rom. 5: 12, 19; 8: 20.

Adam II., the quickening or life-giving Spirit, is set at the right hand of God as life-giver, or "Everlasting Father." Christ's race, in order to receive His life, must be united to Him, just as Adam's race received death on account of being united to him when he sinned. But here observe a reversal of process: Adam's race sprang *from* him; Christ's race consists of those who come *into* Him, and includes all who will be saved, both in this age and the next, the union with Christ being, of course, not physical, but a union of allegiance through faith and obedience. The opportunity to become members of Christ's race is, or will yet be, extended to all who were overtaken by disaster on account of being members of the race of Adam I.; and all of them who fulfil the requisite conditions of faith and obedience are transferred, as it were, from Adam I. and his death to Adam II. and His life. He that believeth "is passed from death unto life." (John 5: 24.) Those who refuse this gracious offer after proper enlightenment still have death abiding in them. So it is written—"*In* Christ shall all be made alive;" and—"Whosoever believeth in [literally, "into"] Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and—"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."—1 Cor. 15: 22; John 3: 16, 36; 1 John 5: 11, 12.

*Concerning Adam's nature, see pages 20, 68.

Adam I. bestowed death upon his race; Adam II., *by purchase with a price of blood*, takes over the defunct race of Adam I., and offers to adopt as His children as many of them as will fulfil the simple yet *necessary conditions. Adam II. will bestow life* upon such as become His: not life for a while, but *everlasting life;* hence His title, *"Everlasting* Father."

He Shall be Satisfied

Of our risen Lord it is written, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isa. 53: 5, 11.) It cannot be supposed that our Lord would be "satisfied" with small results of the "travail of His soul," or that divine Wisdom would have arranged such a plan of a Ransom, and of enlightenment and other blessings to follow it, unless there had been in the divine foreknowledge of events such a view of results as would justify the outlay. It may therefore be understood that the permanent results of the Ransom will be in every way worthy of the Father who devised it, and satisfactory to the Son who executed it, and brings it to its glorious consummation. Some there will be in the Kingdom Age, who, after enjoying all the favours of light and knowledge, will be ungrateful and disobedient. Such will not be allowed to live forever; after their incorrigibility and hardness of heart are fully demonstrated, they will be destroyed in the Second Death from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power, and will be heard *of no more forever.* (2 Thess. 1: 9; Acts 3: 23; Rev. 20: 7-10.) The loss of these does not, however, interfere with the Lord's satisfaction over the "travail of his soul," since they will have been given every opportunity to repent and to receive the life everlasting offered to the obedient.

The study of the Scripture teaching on the Ransom has, it is hoped, resulted in a clearer view than ever *of the harmony of the divine* Wisdom, Foreknowledge, Justice, Love, Mercy, and Power. It has also shown us that God, Who required an atonement sacrifice, provided it; had He not done so the race must still be unredeemed. This study has delivered us, we trust, from any thoughts we may have had of vindictiveness on God's part, and has enabled us to recognise Him as the God of love and mercy. It has also shown us the sure groundwork upon which rests the whole of the divine purpose for the blessing of all the families of the earth by and through Him who is not only the "Seed of Abraham," but who also by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and gave Himself as the satisfactory "corresponding price," "the propitiation," the "Ransom for All." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3: 11.

"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, 36; 1 John 5: 11, 12.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure:
Save me from its guilt and power.

Not the labour of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands.
Could my zeal no respite know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone:
Thou canst save, and Thou alone.

—A. M. Toplady.

Hope Beyond

"And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."—Acts 3: 20, 21.

WHEN the progenitors of our race were driven from the garden, the right to enjoy which *they had forfeited by their sin*, a brief word of promise was given them that some day the effects of this transgression should be undone. The word was that the Seed of the Woman should bruise the Serpent's head. (Gen. 3: 15.) True, this expressed little, but it must have been a source of consolation to the condemned ones, and to those of their posterity who believed in it. We have traced the amplified repetitions of this word of promise through the ages of the divine plan, and have noted the preparations being made for the fulfilment of the prediction. We have also considered the sure foundation upon which the word of promise rests—the Ransom for All, on account of which God can *justly* perform the things so graciously promised. It has, we trust, been made plain that what many have misunderstood for complete fulfilment of the promise has been little more than preparation for fulfilment, though including the *most glorious feature of the divine purpose; namely,* the calling, election, and blessing of the joint heirs with Christ, in whom all the families of earth are to be blessed. The fulfilment, as applicable to the most of the race, must now be considered, and we shall, for the present purpose, take our standpoint at the close of the cataclysm (mentioned in Chapter II.), by which the present social "earth" and ecclesiastical "heavens" shall be destroyed, and which will also mark the close of the Gospel Age, and the close of the "door" into its wonderful favours of becoming kings and priests and joint-heirs with Christ.

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth: He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire," is one of the first words to attract our attention. (Psalm 46:

9.) This will be brought to pass after the raging of the nations, the moving of the kingdoms, and the melting of the "earth" spoken of in verse 6. The Almighty is interested in the cause of Peace, and He has appointed a time when wars shall cease, and Peace shall reign. If it could be realised that it is hopeless to expect universal Peace before the melting down of the present social and political arrangements, because the Lord has a great controversy with the nations, and is even now preparing to pour upon them "the wrath of the Lamb," from what distress of mind many might be delivered, as they view the naval and military activities in Christendom, and the world-wide social unrest. The instructed and well-informed Christian, fully assured that the trouble must come, and that it cannot be delayed, much less prevented, can rejoice in God as his refuge and strength, and his very present help in trouble. Such an one will not fear, though the "mountains" be carried into the midst of the "sea," and the "earth" be removed, for he will know what to hope for beyond the trouble, and will rejoice as he realises his redemption drawing near.—Rev. 6: 16, 17; Luke 21: 28.

The purpose of making wars to cease is that the people may be invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, that the pure Gospel may be turned to the nations (Rev. 19: 9), and that, in the quietness of the calm which will follow the furious tempest, they may learn to know that Jehovah is God. "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalm 46: 10.) "He shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it."—Micah 4: 1-4.

It is to be understood from this that the effect of the Kingdom Age work will be not to prepare the people to be taken to heaven, but to prepare them to live in peace and happiness on the earth, made fit for the abode of a race of perfected human beings. Our ancestors, in the Garden, were perfect—"very good" in God's sight. When sin and its penalty entered, decay set in, and eventually the transgressors died, and all their race has followed them into death. But words of inspiration assure us (Acts 3: 20, 21) that "times of restitution," or reconstitution, are to continue from the second advent of Christ, and that these times have been "spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets since the world began." The above citation from Micah, which is found duplicated in Isa. 2: 1-4, is evidently one of God's utterances on this subject, through one of the holy prophets.

The word "restitution" helps us to understand the divine purpose in respect to the Kingdom Age. It means "*reconstitution,*" and suggests a return to the Edenic conditions of communion with God and perfection, as described in the prophecies already cited, and others which the student will readily find in his search through the writings of the holy prophets, as he seeks to verify the words of Peter, recorded in Acts 3: 21. Sin having entered, and marred God's beautiful creation, and mankind having built up a social order out of harmony with God, it is evident that the affairs of this earth must be reconstituted, or reconstructed, on different lines, in order to bring mankind back to the original perfection lost through sin. Hence, the promise of a "new" heavens and a "new" earth. Referring to that coming time, the Lord said—"Behold, I make all things new."—Rev. 21: 5.

Consider Father Adam's estate before the entrance of sin. "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands." (Psa. 8: 4-8.) Perfect in organism, well supplied with all the necessities to maintain that perfection without aches or pains, exercising a benevolent rule over the lower creatures, all in peaceful and willing subjection to him, dwelling in a lovely garden, which contained none of the pests, vegetable, animal and climatic, which now make the existence of the farmer and orchardist a constant gamble, and enjoying the favour of his Creator—what more could he and his beautiful companion have desired? It was for them to develop their characters and talents in harmony with the Creator's just and beneficent laws. Had they done so, all would have remained well with them. Since they did not obey, all of these favours, including life itself, were taken from them. But what a grand prospect is in store for the race according to the inspired prophecies! RESTITUTION!

Contemplate all the manifestations of talent you have heard of; the artists, musicians, orators, men of affairs, etc., etc. Remember that those who show preponderance of talent in one or two faculties are invariably deficient in some others of importance, so that the properly rounded out and fully developed man is not known amongst us. But try now to think of one in whom all the talents proper to humanity would be fully represented and developed; imagine such an one in Edenic environment, with the elements favourable; care free as to provision for his sustenance; with physical development perfect; with character established in righteousness; in the enjoyment of divine favour and communion; imagine the earth full of such beings: this is a picture of the effect of the "restitution," or reconstitution, work of the Kingdom Age. What a grand future awaits the poor, "groaning creation!"

It must not be supposed that these benefits will forthwith, after the cessation of the time of trouble, be bestowed upon every individual on earth. Each one will need to be prepared, by instruction and training, as well as by recollections of former experiences of evil and its results, within himself and without, to appreciate the restitution blessing, and to strive by acceptance of Christ as His Saviour, and by obedience to Him, then ruler instead of Satan (Isa. 2. 2; Acts 3: 22), to develop that character which will be pleasing to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Progress toward the goal will be in proportion to obedience, diligence and zeal.

One of the prophets illustrates the Kingdom Age and work by the picture of a road which he calls a "highway," "the way of holiness." (Isa. 35.) A "highway" is a road constructed for the convenience of travellers, and under proper conditions is well kept.

The more zealous the traveller who begins this journey of faith and obedience, on the "highway," the sooner will he arrive at his destination; the more attentive and obedient the individual under the Kingdom, the sooner will he reach the end of the "way of holiness," which will be a character established in righteousness and obedience to God, and the sooner will he be granted all those blessings bound up in the prophecies of "restitution."

Let us now suppose that the Kingdom Age has so far advanced that the survivors of the time of trouble have all been enlightened, with a view to giving them the blessings of restitution, if they manifest faith and obedience. Some of the survivors of the trouble will think of friends and acquaintances, perhaps on this wise: "My brother John and I were standing together in such a place. He was accidentally killed, and I was not scratched. How he would enjoy being here! He was quite as good a man as I, and it is a thousand pities that he should be missing all these good things which we are now receiving."

But is John to be forever deprived of the Kingdom Age blessings, because death overtook him a few months or years before the time for them to begin? Did not Jesus, our Lord, die for John as well as for his brother? Was not His death on the cross as much a manifestation of interest in and love for John, who died in the time of trouble, as for John's brother, who survived the time of trouble? We are bound to admit that it was even so; and if we ask such questions about John, the same queries and answers would apply to John's father and mother, and their parents, also to theirs, and so right back to the earliest members of our race.

It is written of Jesus, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) Also that God "will have all men to be saved [literally, protected or preserved], and to come unto the [literally, an accurate] knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2: 4.) Yet nothing is clearer than this: that the true Light has not enlightened every man that has come into the world, and this: that all men have not been brought to the accurate knowledge of the truth. Is the Divine Word discredited, and the Plan a failure? What is the *position of these unenlightened ones? God loved* them all; Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for everyone of them; on what ground must we suppose that they are excluded from the blessing of enlightenment which, according to the original promise, was to be for all the families of the earth? There is no ground in Scripture for such a supposition, which we believe would be unworthy the love and wisdom, as well as the justice and power of the Almighty; but there is much in the writings of the Holy Prophets pointing to something better. Let us examine the Scriptures which declare

God's Gracious Provision for Those Who Have Died Without the Knowledge of the Truth

This is a most interesting question, and there is not a single reader of these lines but is deeply concerned to know what God's Word may reveal to the humble seeker for truth on this subject. If God says nothing about it, it is a foregone conclusion that we must remain in ignorance; but if it has pleased Him to speak on this question, let us all attend reverently to His lightest Word, desiring to receive it with meekness, for the engrafted word, so received, is able to save our souls.—James 1: 21.

At the outset, it will be well for us to realise that the appointed channel, through which salvation flows, is faith and obedience. There is no other way. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must *believe* that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." "*Being made perfect, Jesus became the author of* eternal salvation unto all them that *obey* Him." (Heb. 11: 6; 5: 9.) "For 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.) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John 5: 11, 12; John 3: 36.) All this is very clear and straightforward, effectually excluding the thought that those who have died without the knowledge of the truth are, or are to be, saved in or on account of their ignorance.

Nevertheless, some Christian friends, not knowing what else to say when asked about our present subject, declare it to be their belief that since those who have died without the knowledge of the truth did not know enough to reject Jesus the Saviour, they are sure to be saved; "shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

To this we reply, No doubt He will; yet they are zealously contributing their means to send some of their number to place the heathen in imminent peril; for as soon as the poor, ignorant heathen has been told something of Jesus he is no longer sure of being saved, as he was while ignorant; it is more than likely he will eventually be a rejecter of what he has been told. Think of the white men's lives and the black men's souls that would surely have been saved if India and Africa had been left in their ignorance! If those who die in ignorance are sure to be saved by reason of that ignorance, the Missionary is a mistake, and zeal to preach the Gospel is the grand crime against humanity. And in that case, if God really loves all, He could not possibly give a better demonstration of it than by leaving us all in ignorance, for then we should all be saved, because we should not know enough to reject the Saviour!

The idea of salvation through ignorance not only makes the love of God seem hatred, but it reduces His wisdom to something worse than foolishness; besides which, it is directly contrary to the Scriptures above cited, which show that there is only the one way of salvation, viz., through faith and obedience. Now it is manifest that one cannot exercise faith in a Saviour of whom he is ignorant, nor obey a Lord whose commands he has never heard. We are therefore obliged to admit that those who have died without the knowledge of the Truth are not saved. To put it more plainly, they are lost. (2 Cor. 4: 3.) By "lost" we do not mean doomed to eternal torment, either physical or mental. The "whole world was lost in the darkness of sin," as the well-known hymn expresses it. All mankind are "lost" because all are condemned to death. But, thanks be to God, even though lost, they are not hopelessly so.

If Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; if He gave Himself a ransom for all; if He is the propitiation for our sins—and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world (Heb. 2: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6; 1 John 2: 2); and if the benefits of that Sacrifice reach forward from the time of its offering, even to the present generation, why should we say that the multitudes who died in ignorance of God, in the forty centuries that preceded the offering of the Sacrifice, are altogether to be excluded from its benefits? If we were to say that, should we not be laying ourselves open to a charge of presumption, and of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think? We shall find that the Almighty is to be hindered by nothing, not even by death, from the glorious accomplishment of His purpose to have every human being enlightened by the true light, and brought to an accurate knowledge of the truth. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." He will bring them back from the grave, in order that they may learn to know Him, whom to know is life eternal.—Jer. 31: 15-17; John 17: 3; Acts 24: 15.

"All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord; and shall glorify Thy name." Thus does the Psalmist (86: 9) foretell the privilege which shall be granted in the Kingdom Age to all nations of men, made of one blood, to dwell on the earth. (Acts 17: 26.) Those who died in ignorance of God are here particularly mentioned as glorifying His name; and the succeeding sentiments of David's prayer are appropriate to them also. "Teach me Thy way, O Lord; I will walk in Thy truth. For great is Thy mercy toward me; and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest grave." (Marginal reading, Psalm 86: 10-13.) Were they already informed, they would not require to pray that the truth might be taught them, after being delivered from the grave.

The general statement of the Psalmist is fortified by many particular statements of the same import concerning various nations, some of them now extinct, which went into death unenlightened by the true Light. They could not have been so enlightened, because in their days the true Light had not begun to shine. Consider the following statements—

"Yet will I bring again the captivity [literally, "restore the prosperity"] of Moab, in the latter days, saith the Lord."—Jer. 48: 47.

"And afterward I will bring again the captivity of the children of Ammon, saith the Lord."—Jer. 49: 6.

"But it shall come to pass in the latter days that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the Lord."—Jer. 49: 39.

"In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land; whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance."—Isa. 19: 24, 25.

Israel, Sodom, and Samaria

—Ezekiel 16: 44-63.—

A notable utterance through one of the holy prophets is found here. In verses 47, 48, the Lord declares the extraordinary wickedness of Israel in comparison with that of Sodom and Samaria. Many scriptures assure us that Israel was exceedingly hard-hearted and stiff-necked, a rebellious and gainsaying people, to whom the Lord vainly held out His hands all the day. (Isa. 65: 2; Rom. 10: 21.) But the passage in Ezekiel puts it most forcibly, in that it states in verse 51 that Sodom and Samaria, though exceedingly wicked, were just by comparison with Israel. We are to bear in mind that Sodom here spoken of is that wicked people whom God destroyed in the days of Abraham. "Therefore I took them away, as I saw good." (Verse 50.) Sodom is one of the extinct peoples, and had been so for about fifteen centuries before this prophecy was uttered.

This is indeed a serious indictment of Israel. The reason for it is given in our Lord's words, recorded in Matt. 11: 20-24. The people of Israel had enjoyed many favours from the Lord; they had had the "oracles" committed to them (Rom. 3: 1, 2); eventually the Son of God came to them—His own—and was rejected as all divine messengers before Him had been. These great privileges brought Israel into a position of greater responsibility than that of others having less light, and they constitute the explanation of Ezek. 16: 51. But it is most interesting to note that our Lord said, "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven [in the enjoyment of privileges of light and knowledge], shalt be brought down to hell [*hades*]; *for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.*" (Matt. 11: 23.) The thoughtful reader of these words of inspiration, from the lips of our blessed Saviour Himself, will be impressed with the statement that Sodom might—*yea, it would*—have been saved had its people seen the wonderful works of Jesus and heard His words of grace. One cannot but pause to wonder why, if He could have saved them, did not God send Jesus to Sodom? Why did He "see good" to take them all away? And what seems still more peculiar—why did God send Jesus to Capernaum, which did not repent, instead of sending Him to Sodom, which would have repented, but was given no opportunity, such as Capernaum enjoyed? The systems of religious teaching which fail to recognise a Hope Beyond the grave, as well as that on this side, confessedly cannot deal satisfactorily with these questions.

Since man cannot help us, we must look to God; and blessed be his Name! the answer is easily discerned in Ezek. 16: 53, 55, "When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them." "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall *return to their former estate* [Does not this sound very much like "restitution"?], and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate." Now the difficulty is solved, because we see that, while God destroyed those Sodomites in the Patriarchal Age, He had in mind the "times of restitution" in which to deal with them with a view to their salvation. He has not overlooked them; much less does He intend to pass them by without giving them an opportunity for salvation, such as they have never enjoyed; He will, "in due

time," the reconstitution times, continuing from our Lord's second advent, bring them to that "accurate knowledge [Greek, *epignosis*] of the truth" concerning the one God and the one Mediator between God and men, vouchsafed to a comparatively small number during the Gospel Age, but to which all must some day come; He will surely cause them to be enlightened then with "the True Light."—1 Tim. 2: 4-6; John 1: 9.

Those will be the days of regeneration, of which our Lord spoke. When the Sodomites and other dead are brought back to their former estate as living peoples, it will not be to indulge their former sinful dispositions unchecked, but to be ruled over by the King of kings, and taught a better way.—Matt. 19: 28.

Some have thought that in these statements of future blessings for Israel, Sodom, and Samaria the Almighty was speaking ironically, and that he has no intention of so blessing these peoples. We leave it for such to explain *why* it should be thought that God holds out false hopes of impossible salvation for those who never had such opportunities as some others enjoyed, but who would have repented had the opportunities been vouchsafed them. We have no sympathy with that distorted view of the love of God; and His own utterance through the prophet (vss. 60-63) constitutes an effective rejoinder—"Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee . . . thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger . . . that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, *when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done*, saith the Lord God." Surely if God can find how to be pacified toward Israel, for all that she has done, it will not be nearly so difficult for him to be pacified toward Sodom and Samaria, which, by comparison with Israel, were considered "justified."

A Feast of Fat Things

—Isa. 25: 6-9.—

This prophecy is one of those concerning the reconstitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all God's holy prophets, including our Lord's return and His Kingdom. (Acts 3: 20, 21.) The opening words, "In this mountain," so indicate. As before mentioned, the Scriptures abound in symbolic language, all the products of nature and art being laid under contribution to assist in vivid portrayals of the divine purpose. But it must not be supposed that these symbolic expressions are used indiscriminately for fantastic effect. Such is not the case; they are used orderly and methodically; and with few exceptions a given object in nature or art, used symbolically, will bear one interpretation throughout the Scriptures. Attention has already been drawn to the interpretations attaching to "earth," "sea," and "heavens"; now "mountain" presents itself for consideration.

The Scriptures themselves present the interpretations of many of their symbols. "Mountain" is explained in Daniel 2: 34, 35, 44, 45. There the stone that smote the image is defined as representing the divine Kingdom, which shall be "set up" and shall "stand forever," and shall become "a great mountain and fill the whole earth." It may be taken from this that the symbolic "mountains" of the Bible stand for "kingdoms"; this is the generally recognised interpretation, and God's Kingdom is so represented as well as the kingdoms of men (Isa. 2: 2-4), the context indicating which is to be understood.

In Isa. 25: 6-9 there can be no doubt that God's Kingdom is meant; for "in this mountain [Kingdom] shall Jehovah of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things." "He will destroy in this mountain [Kingdom] the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations. [That is to say] He will swallow up death in victory." This is the prospect which is held out for the families of the earth. Not that they can see it, at present, though they earnestly long for it; only those who have faith in the prophetic Word are able as yet with the eye of faith to "see afar off" the things not now visible to the eye of flesh. Even the dead are to be brought forth, for death is to be "swallowed up," and the beginning of this swallowing up of death must surely be that those in the tombs shall come forth.

This prophecy is mentioned in 1 Cor. 15: 54, but the scope of the Apostle's words has not, we fear, been apprehended. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption [literally, incorruptibility], 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." It is usually understood that the first part of this verse describes the fulfilment of "the saying that is written," but we believe that if it had been intended to be so understood, the Apostle would have composed his sentence differently in respect to the tense of one verb; thus, when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then *will have been* brought to pass the saying that is written. There would be no room for question, had the sentence been so constructed. Neither is there room to doubt that, having composed the sentence as he did, the inspired writer meant his readers to understand that the fulfilment of "the saying that is written" would *follow* the putting on of immortality by the called-out ones of the Gospel Age. "When . . . this mortal shall have put on immortality, then *shall be* brought to pass the saying that it written, Death is swallowed up in victory." Our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Gospel Age church of overcomers, will be the "mountain" or Kingdom—the "Kingdom of priests," the divinely established government, under which all nations shall be blessed. (Rev. 3: 21; 1 Pet. 2: 9; Gal. 3: 16, 29.) The prophecy of Isa. 25: 6-9, therefore, describes the blessing that is to be given in the Kingdom Age.

"The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." (Isa. 25: 8.) Under present and past evil conditions it has meant much of rebuke, and even of persecution, to confess oneself a child of God; but in the Kingdom Age conditions will be reversed. Then it will be esteemed an honour to be recognised as a member of the divine family, and the rebuke will be against those who will not submit themselves to the righteous rule of the Kingdom, and who will not accept the blessings of that "feast of fat things."

"And 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, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." (Isa. 25: 9.) So does this grand prophecy agree with those already referred to in describing the willingness of the people once they come to know God properly, and are freed from the deceptions of Satan which now blind them (2 Cor. 4: 4), to submit themselves to the divine will. Then God's Kingdom ("mountain") shall cause His will to be done on earth as in heaven. "We have waited for Him!" Ah, yes; even though the "groaning creation" has not known really what it was waiting for, nor all the good things which God has in store, we, by His favour, may understand that the "creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But it must be remembered that "the earnest [if ignorant] expectation of the creation waiteth for [cannot be realized until] the manifestation of the sons of God," in the glory of the Kingdom.—Rom. 8: 18-23; Col. 3: 4.

"Mine Evil Neighbours"

—Jer. 12: 14-17.—

God's people, Israel, after they entered Palestine, were surrounded by nations of idolaters. They had for near neighbours such peoples as the Egyptians, Philistines, Arabians, Moabites, Ammonites, Syrians, Sidonians, Hittites, Edomites, and Elamites. Some of these were blood relatives of the children of Israel, and the most of them were worshippers of Baal and Ashtaroth. These peoples exercised great influence over Israel, and often led them into idolatry, for which departure from the truth God at sundry times punished them severely. The prophecy now to be considered tells of God's purpose in respect to these evil, idolatrous peoples, who led his own chosen people astray.

"Thus saith the Lord against all mine evil neighbours, that touch the inheritance which I have caused my people Israel to inherit: Behold, I will pluck them out of their land, and pluck out the house of Judah from among them." This has been done, and their countries are desolate to-day.

"And it shall come to pass, after that I have plucked them out I will return and have compassion on them, and will bring them again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land." This has not been done; but as surely as God will bring back Sodom, Samaria and Israel "to their former estate," so He will, in the same period, the "times of restitution," which include the setting up of His Kingdom on earth, bring these "evil neighbours" of Israel "again, every man to his heritage, and every man to his land."

"And [then] it shall come to pass, if they will diligently learn the ways of my people to swear by my name, the Lord liveth; as they taught my people to swear by Baal; then shall they be built in the midst of my people." How kind and good the Lord is! These leaders astray shall be enlightened with the "True Light," and shall have the opportunity, if they will, of swearing allegiance to Him who is God indeed, instead of serving an imagination of their own minds; and if they will surrender, then they shall be built up in the midst of God's people; that is, they will be received by Him as His people—"whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt, my people."—Isa. 19.

"But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord." What proportion of persistent, wilful, disobedient ones there will ultimately be is not revealed to us. All things considered, we believe the number will be small. (Rev. 5: 13; Phil. 2: 9-11.) Nevertheless, whether few or many, all who persist in evil-doing, after coming fully under the enlightenment of the Kingdom Age, with all its influences and helps to reformation of life, will be "utterly plucked up and destroyed" "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power!"*—Jer. 12: 17; Acts 3: 23; 2 Thes. 1: 9.

"Whosoever Will"

—Rev. 22: 17.—

In chapters II. and III. we endeavoured to set forth the Bible teaching that God has been choosing, or electing, during the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Gospel Ages, various persons to be blessed with light and the opportunity for salvation in advance of the time when these blessings will be universally supplied. These are to be used by Him in various capacities in the Kingdom. (Luke 19: 17.) He has not chosen all, only a few; He has not even enlightened all.

The Gospel Church has been selected from among both Jews and Gentiles, and in this particular there has been no respect of persons with God. (Acts 10: 34, 35; Rom. 10: 13.) But since the enlightenment necessary to enable them to call upon the Lord in faith (Rom. 10: 14) has been granted to only a small portion of our race, and since the name of Jesus is the only one whereby they must be saved (Acts 4: 12), it follows that the majority have died unsaved, and must remain so, unless some arrangement be made for their enlightenment in the future. Such an arrangement is brought to view in the beautiful picture of Rev. 22. Vss. 1, 17 show that it belongs to the Kingdom Age; and the right dividing of the Word of Truth, thus indicated by a recognition of the "diversities," will enable us to apprehend that "whosoever" will have a much wider application in the Kingdom Age than it has had in the Gospel Age, because the opportunities of salvation will then be within reach of all.

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." "And the Spirit and the Bride

*The theory of "eternal torment" is not taught in the Scriptures, though it has obtained a surprising degree of influence in Christendom. Its effect at the first was to bring members into the churches; its present effect, though not so much preached just now, is to alienate sympathy from the churches. But many preachers, and lay members, who do not believe in it, do not, in a straightforward manner, repudiate it. The result of this lack of uprightness is the alienation of sympathy from the Bible, because the people are allowed to remain under the impression that "eternal torment" is there taught, and thus many infidels are made. If eternal torment be true, those who believe it are not nearly active enough in their efforts to save souls from it; if it be untrue, those who are so persuaded should esteem it a privilege to do what in them lies to remove the misapprehension from the popular mind, and the foul blot from the Divine Name. Please see Book List at the end of this volume, and write us for publications on this subject, explaining parables and dark sayings.

say Come; and let him that heareth say Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The fact that this water of life will proceed from the throne, and that the "Bride" will join the Spirit in inviting all to take it, is clear evidence that this is a prophecy of the Kingdom Age. As yet, the Kingdom has not been established on the earth; and there is no "Bride," because the "marriage of the Lamb" has not taken place. The church is now regarded as the "espoused virgin," and will be the Bride when joined to the Lord in His Kingdom glory, to sit with Him in His throne. After this "marriage," and the establishment of the Kingdom in power and great glory, the work in which the Church has been called to share will begin. All the families of the earth will be blessed in the manner described in this beautiful prophecy, by being invited to the "marriage supper" (Rev. 19: 9), and to come and take the water of life, which will then be flowing freely. That will be the age of greatly extended missionary activity, because the time will then have arrived in which the Lord will send forth His Word to enlighten all individuals of all nations. Then it will "prosper" to that end, and will accomplish that which God pleases. We have already seen that it could not in present and past ages prosper in fully enlightening the world, because God's time for that had not arrived. In the Kingdom Age all this will be different. The time will be right; the deceptions will be removed; the power will be sufficient; the Word will prosper in its mission; "whosoever will," in the widest sense, may come; "for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."—Isa. 11: 9.

Let us realise, by seeing the picture complete, the grand comprehensiveness of the divine purpose. In Rev. 20: 11, 12, we have a view of the same throne, described as "great" and "white"—powerful and just. The "earth" and the "heaven," social and ecclesiastical and spiritual arrangements of the present order of things, will flee away from Him who will sit on that throne, and they will be replaced by new "heavens" and new "earth" wherein dwelleth righteousness, for which we look, according to God's promise. (2 Peter 3: 13.) Under those blessed influences, the present evil world and its ruler put away, the vision continues—"And I saw the DEAD, small and great, stand before the throne [reading of oldest MSS. and Revised Version of Rev. 20: 12]." Surely, if they stand before the throne they must see the River, they must hear the Invitation, and must have the Opportunity to drink and live. How grand are God's purposes, how much higher His thoughts and ways than our thoughts and ways! Must we not acknowledge that He has not forgotten His promise, to bless all the families of the earth, but has made ample provision for the accomplishment of all his loving designs?

"O the Depth of the Riches
Both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!
How Unsearchable are His Judgments,
And His Ways past finding out!
For who hath known the Mind of the Lord,
Or who hath been His Counsellor?
Or who hath first given to Him,
And it shall be Recompensed unto him again?
For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things:
To Whom be Glory for Ever. Amen."

Concerning Objections to "Hope Beyond"

"God forbid that I should limit the time of acquiring faithto the present life! In the depths of the divine mercy there may be opportunity to win it in the future state."—MARTIN LUTHER, in a letter to Hanson von Rechenberg, 1522.

MANY have been the sore, bereaved hearts comforted, and the perplexed minds set at rest, by the Scripture teaching that there is hope beyond the grave for those not enlightened before death. God, Who sets the standard of enlightenment, must also be the judge of each individual case; none of us is competent for that. And we are fully persuaded that He will not overlook the smallest circumstance that should be considered; He will deal righteously and mercifully with each individual.

But, notwithstanding the clearness of the Scriptures on this subject, difficulties present themselves to some minds. The objections may be classified as moral, physical, and Scriptural. In this order we shall examine them, trusting to be able to show that they have no real foundation.

Moral Objections

"It is too good to be true."

As a matter of fact, the more clearly a teaching reflects divine love, justice, and wisdom, the more reason there is to consider it true; and nothing is too good to be true. Nothing is too kind for God to plan, or too good for Him to bring to pass. Nevertheless, one can well sympathise with the hestitating state of this inquirer's mind on realising the Scripture truth to be so different from human tradition, and can give the assurance that faith and trust in God, with continued prayerful searching of the Scriptures, "to see whether these things be so," will presently make quite clear that the promise to bless "all the families of the earth" is *not* "too good to be true." This objection may be regarded as an indication of the surprised state of the mind of the inquirer, rather than as an objection to the teaching of a blessing to come.

"Is it not *unfair* to give to some an opportunity for salvation in a future life under favourable conditions, when now to obtain salvation it is necessary to endure 'a great fight of afflictions,' denying one's self every indulgence, for Christ's sake? And would not such a teaching induce in those who accept it carelessness toward present responsibility?"

Were the rewards of present self-denial and future obedience of precisely the same value, it would seem

very strange that the conditions of salvation now prevailing, as represented in the "narrow way," should be so much more difficult than those of the future, as represented in the "highway of holiness." But the reward of present faithfulness is to be so much superior to the earthly life to be offered in the Kingdom Age, that instead of deeming the present severe conditions too rigorous, one will be inclined to think of them as only "a light affliction," which is but for a moment. It has already been mentioned that the faithful of the Gospel Age are to be blessers of the nations in the Kingdom Age. This is only one item of the superior value of the reward of present faithfulness; more will be mentioned in the next chapter.—Matt. 7: 14; 2 Cor. 4: 17, 18.

While the terms of salvation will be more easily complied with in the next age than is possible now, because deceptive influences now active will then be restrained, it is by no means correct to suppose that the conditions then will be perfectly easy. Obedience in all things will be required. (Acts 3: 22, 23; Phil. 2: 10, 11; Heb. 5: 9. This will necessitate self-surrender, which will be found exceedingly difficult by the proud and haughty and self-indulgent.

Experience covering a number of years of acquaintance with and preaching of this gracious doctrine does not at all confirm the thought of the questioner that acceptance of it tends to carelessness toward present responsibilities. Having had the privilege of knowing many Christians in many lands who have accepted this teaching as Scriptural, the writer can say that his observation supports the thought that this is a very valuable element of the truth which *sanctifies*. (John 17: 17.) This realisation of the greatness of divine love, of its "breadth, and length, and depth, and height," received into a good and honest heart, will be a power to transform that heart into the likeness of the One it is contemplating, so that the principle will be more and yet more appreciated, "we love, because He first loved us."—Eph. 3: 17-19; 2 Cor. 3: 18; 1 John 4: 19.

On the other hand, it must be patent to all that if God's saints are to be sanctified by the truth, it is useless to expect error to have that effect. Therefore we invite careful consideration of the following queries: Has the preaching of "eternal torment" for those who die unconverted reformed the world? This error has been preached for fifteen centuries with considerable vigour: is Christendom, which has stood for this teaching all this time, waxing or waning? Has eternal torment preaching caused men to think less of money and more of morals? Has it caused women to think less of society and more of salvation? Has it purged Christendom of worldliness? Everyone is perfectly well aware that only a negative will answer these questions. And yet, some have persisted in the delusion that to preach a "real, old-fashioned Gospel sermon" means to give the unconverted hearers vivid portrayals of the flames which await them. Much depends on how "old-fashioned" the preacher wishes to be. If a century, or two or three, be "old-fashioned" enough, no doubt a good deal of "torment" was preached in those days. But if one go back to apostolic times, he may find that the great Paul took the elders of the Ephesian congregation to record that he was pure from the blood of all men; "for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20: 27.) Yet the Pauline epistles, constituting the major portion of the New Testament, may be searched in vain for the teaching of eternal torment. And if one go back about fifty years earlier than Paul's time he comes to some shepherds, watching their flocks by night. To them appears an angel, who soothes their fears by preaching to them a Gospel sermon—"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings [this is the meaning of the word 'gospel'] of great joy, which shall be to all people." It does not appear that the angel was filled with forebodings, lest the declaration of such a message should make the shepherds careless, and that he sought to improve on it after the modern manner, by changing "good tidings" to bad tidings, and "great joy" to eternal misery.—Luke 2: 10.

But as though to set at rest all doubt as to what a gospel sermon really is, the Scriptures give us the record of a very short one preached by the Almighty Himself, some four thousand years ago—"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith [observe, not through ignorance], preached before the Gospel unto Abraham, saying, *In thee shall all nations be blessed.*" (Gal. 3: 8.) This is the Gospel, on the Highest Authority. Let us all take notice. If our preaching has been different from this; if we have fallen short of declaring all that God implied in His Gospel Sermon; we ought to revise our preaching forthwith, and follow the model set for us from above.

Strange as it may seem, it is yet true, that this, the real Gospel, has never had popular favour, from the time God preached it till now. So our inquirer need have no fears that the preaching of it will make the world careless of present responsibilities. The world generally, and worldly Christians, as a rule, are not interested in topics of this kind, therefore they do not trouble themselves about them. The *goodness* of God is the very thing they cannot comprehend, as the Apostle explains—"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: 4.

Although God has not been dealing with the whole world in an individual sense, He is nevertheless causing a record to be made of everything in the life of each individual, and is by no means ignoring their present conditions. Not that a "recording angel" writes up everything for and against each person in a heavenly ledger; that would be both tedious and ineffective. The record is made automatically on the character of each person; and every thought, word, and deed bears its little part in the formation of that combination of habits which constitutes character. This is effective; everything, good and bad, small and great, is recorded, and the elevating or degrading effect cannot be gainsaid. Accordingly, when in the Kingdom Age men are being dealt with individually, those who have led evil lives will have difficulties in proportion, under the strict laws that will then be in force and enforced, while one who has tried to do the right thing, even in his worldly way, will be then in a correspondingly better position to appreciate the blessings of the Kingdom and to profit by them.—Jer. 12: 14-17; Matt. 10: 42; 23: 29-33.

Physical Objection

"Is the resurrection feasible? Would the earth be able to accommodate and sustain the human race if all who have ever lived were brought back?"

We are confident that the plan of Restitution, or Reconstitution of All Things Spoken by the Prophets, is perfectly feasible. There will be an abundance of room and sustenance on the earth for the restored families, because it is God's plan, and He makes no mistakes in His arrangements. He it was who at the first commanded our progenitors to "multiply and fill* the earth." (Gen. 1: 28.) He knows perfectly the capacity of the earth. Bearing in mind that at the beginning development was much less rapid than now, so that, before the flood, about sixty-five to eighty years seems to have been the marriageable age; that the flood reduced the population of the earth to eight persons, and that wars, famines and pestilences have from time to time removed large numbers of productive individuals, we believe that twenty-seven thousand millions (27,000,000,000) would not be far from the right figure as the total number of descendants of Father Adam and Mother Eve.

The State of Victoria, in the Commonwealth of Australia, would be able to allow twenty square feet of surface to each individual of these thousands of millions four times multiplied. England and Scotland together are a little larger than Victoria, so also are the American States of New York and Ohio together. Moreover, it may yet occur that more continents will rise out of the waste of waters which now covers about two-thirds of the earth's surface. In addition to this, those parts of the earth which are not now comfortably habitable, such as the tropics and the poles, will become so, as it is well known that the polar regions formerly were, and thus will be supplied still more space for habitation and tillage. And when the wilderness shall be made to blossom as the rose, we need not anticipate difficulties over the feeding of the multitudes in a very natural way; though, if it were necessary, He who sustained the Israelites for forty years in the wilderness, and fed five thousand on a few loaves and fishes, could doubtless furnish miraculous supplies to all eternity.

"Now is the Accepted Time"

"We are told in 2 Cor. 6: 2 that 'now is the accepted time,' and 'now is the day of salvation.' Does not this antagonise the teaching of salvation at a future day?"

Referring to the previous chapter (2 Cor. 5: 13-21), it is seen that as Christ died for all, all must have been dead; and that by means of His death the basis for reconciliation between God and men was laid. As the sinless One, He was able to make His soul an offering for sin (Isa. 53; 2 Cor. 5: 21), "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

By examining the prophecy which the Apostle Paul here quotes—Isa. 49: 8—it will be seen that the Lord Jesus is the one referred to as having been helped. He required help during the trying days of His earthly ministry. "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, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him."—Heb. 5: 7-9.

It was because of this fidelity even unto death that our Lord was heard, and succoured, and helped "in an acceptable time" (Isa. 49: 8; 61: 1, 2; Luke 4: 16-21; Psa. 69: 13), and that He inherited the promise made through the prophet—"I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." (Isa. 49: 8.) He is the One whose precious blood, shed on Calvary, ratified the New Covenant (Matt. 26: 28; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25), thus making possible the blessings described in Luke 4: 16-21 and Isa. 49: 9, 10, some of which are being fulfilled in our day, and some of which are to be fulfilled in the future. (Rev. 7: 16, 17.) And it is because Jesus has been heard, succoured, and helped that we are able to recognise the fulfilment of this much of the prophecy, and that on the authority of His word we can say, as does the Apostle —the acceptable time or year of the Lord has truly come, and men may now be reconciled to Him through Christ.—Luke 4: 18, 19.

But the blessings of this prophecy are by no means limited in scope to the Gospel Age. The mercies provided in the New Covenant, and the salvation of all that "obey Him," are to be extended to the ends of the earth, and are to be placed within reach of all for whom He died; for in the Kingdom Age the knowledge now limited to a few is to be placed within reach of all, living and dead, as already explained.

"The Resurrection of Damnation"

"In John 5: 28, 29 we read, that '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 damnation.' How shall this be understood in harmony with the texts that teach the enlightenment and blessing of all?"

The first part of the text presents no difficulty, as it is quite readily understood that those who in ages past "obtained a good report through faith," and those who have made "their calling and election sure" during the Gospel Age, should be raised at once to the everlasting inheritances which have been provided for them. The difficulty in the phrase "resurrection of damnation" exists only on account of a mistranslation, recognised and corrected by all modern versions. When the phrase is accurately translated, "resurrection of judgment," the difficulties are immediately resolved, and this text is recognised as being in strict harmony with all those

*The word "replenish" in the Authorised Version is very misleading indeed, and has been the basis for theories of pre-Adamic races in the earth—one or many, according to each person's fancy. "Strong's Exhaustive Concordance" defines the original, *mala*, as meaning simply "to fill," with no thought of re-filling. It should be observed, however, that in Old English the word replenish was used in the sense of "fill," as well as of "refill."

before cited. The Greek word translated "damnation" in verse 29 is correctly rendered "judgment" in verse 30, where also the teaching is expressed that the wicked dead are to be raised *to* the judgment, and not, as erroneously supposed by some, that the judgment is already passed upon them and their cases decided. Concerning the judgment to which those that have done evil are to be raised, our Lord said, "*As I hear, I judge;* and My judgment is just." This agrees with Rev. 20: 12 and 22: 12—"The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, *according to their works*"; "every man *according as his work shall be,*" after the second advent of Him who at His first advent was Redeemer, King, and Judge, and at His second advent will establish His Kingdom forever on the earth.

Consideration of the judges of ancient Israel will be helpful at this juncture, assisting us to apprehend that our Lord, in His capacity of Judge in the Kingdom Age, will not be, as it were, President of the Grand Criminal Assize of the Universe, but will be in the first place a Deliverer and after that a Ruler and Instructor in righteousness. The typical judges of Israel first delivered the people from their oppressors, then ruled over them to bless and instruct. (Judges 2: 11-19; 3: 7-11, 14, 15, 30, 31, etc.) So will the antitypical Judge, our Lord Jesus, and with Him His saints (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3), deliver the people from the oppressions and evil conditions of the present order of things, and from the prison house of the tomb, and will rule over them to bless and instruct them in the ways of righteousness, punishing those who will not obey Him, even with the Second Death, if they persist in disobedience after full enlightenment. The blessings of that day are foretold in Isa. 32: 1-8; in verses 9-14 the evil conditions of the present are described, and in verses 15-20 the peaceable effects of the future rule of righteousness are again mentioned.

That peculiar, though very prevalent, idea, that the Day of Judgment is to be a period of twenty-four hours, has done much to make the divine plan seem unreasonable to the minds of thinking people, and rightly so; for it is a most unreasonable view to take of that solemn occasion, and really makes the sublime ridiculous. If, for convenience, we estimate the whole number to be judged in that one day at 24,000,000,000, we find that each hour would require to dispose of 1,000,000,000 cases. In each minute of that day, 16,666,666 eternal destinies would need to be decided: in each second 277,777. Allowing but 18 inches of space to each person, a speed of nearly 80 miles per second, or nearly 288,000 miles per hour, would be required to pass the 24,000,000,000 before a given point in single file in a period of twenty-four hours. If the total number of cases to be decided be estimated at 48,000,000,000, then all figures would require to be doubled, and the absurdity of the idea would increase proportionately.

But when we remember that the Kingdom Age of a thousand years is appointed for the reign of the great Judge (Rev. 20: 4), we find no difficulty in comprehending that He will be able to give full and proper attention to each case, by taking note of their then attitude towards Himself and His rule of righteousness—which attitude will be to a considerable extent determined by their sympathy or lack of sympathy, after enlightenment, with the former evil conditions—"to give every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. 22: 12.

"After Death the Judgment"

"In Heb. 9: 27, we read that 'It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.' Does not this seem to indicate that the destiny of each person is fixed at death, thus conflicting with the teaching that there will be opportunities for reformation during the Kingdom Age?"

In verses 24-26 of this chapter, the Apostle draws a contrast between the typical sacrifices, which were often offered, and which could not take away sin, and the antitypical sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, which was offered but once, and needed not to be repeated. "Now once in the consummation of the ages hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Then, according to the Revised Version marginal reading, the Apostle states: "And *inasmuch as* it is laid up for men once to die, and after this cometh judgment; so Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation."—Heb. 9: 27, 28.

Verse 27 contains two principal parts, which correspond with the same parts in verse 28, as follows:—

Verse 27—

1. "It is laid up for men once to die."
2. "After this cometh judgment."

Verse 28—

1. "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many,
2. "Shall appear a second time . . . unto salvation."

"It is laid up for men once to die" came to pass on account of the sin in Eden—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." (Rom. 5: 12; 1 Cor. 15: 21.) This conclusion was reached after a test of the man's loyalty to God, because of his disobedience under the test; and his posterity are the heirs of his condemnation, thus fulfilling part 1 of verse 27. But Christ, "having been once offered to bear the sins of many" (literally "the many"), it is possible to have a new judgment of the whole race (already judged and condemned on account of Adam's sin). Had there been no offering for the sins of the many, a new judgment would have been out of the question.

And what is the meaning of the new judgment, which comes after the death resulting from the Edenic judgment? Part 2 of verse 28 says that as the result of His sacrifice, Christ "shall appear a second time . . . *unto salvation.*" This is the grand possibility opened up by the death of Christ for our sins. Without His death on our behalf, the race must remain for ever dead; by reason of His death, the way to salvation and everlasting life is opened up.—Heb. 10: 14-22.

He "shall appear a second time . . . unto salvation." This refers not only to our Lord's second advent, but also, and in the first instance, to that ex-

perience of forgiveness of sins, and turning away from iniquities which He gives to the Gospel Age believer, and which is spoken of as a resurrection from the dead. (Acts 3: 26; Eph. 2: 5, 6; Col. 3: 1.) At His second advent, the salvation which is now "by hope" (Rom. 8: 24, 25) shall be brought in *reality to us who "wait for Him."*—1 Peter 1: 13; Col. 3: 4, 1 Thess. 1: 10.

Instead of teaching that the destiny of each person is fixed at death, Heb. 9: 27, 28 teaches the very reverse.

"Where Shall the Ungodly and the Sinner Appear?"

"In 1 Pet. 4: 17, 18, we read, '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? And if the *righteous scarcely* [Alford *translates*, "with difficulty"] be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?' Does not this effectually discountenance all hope for the future blessing of those who have not been truly enlightened in the present life?"

Again is the inquirer referred to the context. Beginning with verse 12, it is seen that the general topic is the suffering endured by Christians. "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed." These are the "righteous" *mentioned in verse 18; the "ungodly" and "sinners"* are such as are described in verse 15, who, though in "the house of God," "the household of faith," do not appreciate their privileges of righteous conduct and of suffering for righteousness' sake (1 Peter 2: 19-23), but who "suffer as a murderer, or as a *thief*, or as *an evil doer*, or as a *busybody* in other men's matters." The "righteous" are not easily saved to their promised glory, honour and immortality; through much tribulation they must enter the Kingdom. (Rom. 2: 7; Acts 14: 22.) Where, then, could the others appear in this Kingdom? Not at all. They are rejected as unfit.*—Heb. 10: 38, 39; 2 Pet. 2: 20; Luke 9: 62.

But even were one to go so far as to say (which such Scriptures as Luke 12: 47, 48 would not permit) that all of this "ungodly and sinner" class, of every degree of remissness, are forever excluded from participation in the favours of God on any plane, it is still to be remembered that the Apostle Peter is writing of a very limited number, "the house of God," and that those outside the "household of faith" are not considered in this connection. "Judgment must begin at the house of God." It began at the beginning of the Gospel Age, and has continued ever since, in the trials, testings and disciplinings of those who have been candidates for joint heirship with Christ. In this sense, those of this "household" have all been before the judgment seat of Christ, ever since entering the Christian life. (Rom. 14: 10.) But the world generally has not as yet been thus on probation. Their time is coming, in the Kingdom Age, as testified by the many scriptures already cited, and there is nothing in 1 Peter 4: 17, 18 contradictory to the assurances of other portions, including Acts 3: 19-26, by the same Apostle.

*See parable of the drag net, in "The Parables of Our Lord," page 46.

"Condemned Already"

"In John 3: 18, we read, 'He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in *the name of the only begotten Son of God.' Does* not this seriously conflict with the teaching of a future blessing for present-day unbelievers?"

The answer to this question is best furnished by the 19th verse: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." In thus stating the reason for the condemnation of the unbelievers, our Saviour showed that the ultimate condemnation will not come upon any such unless he persist in his unbelief notwithstanding enlightenment. How else can verse 19 be understood? How can one love darkness *rather* than light, unless he know something about both? We are to regard this passage as a confirmation of all we have been considering about the love and kindness of the Lord, and the abundance of His provision for the enlightenment of every member of our race. "That was the True Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) He has not yet enlightened all, but He will do so "in due time," and then all those who have known darkness, and little or no light, shall be tested to determine which they prefer. If they love the light, they shall have a reward; if they persist in loving the darkness, they must be condemned, and their end must be destruction. Well will it be for us, already enlightened to some extent, if we take to heart the lesson of this passage, that light brings the responsibility of choice between itself and the darkness. This responsibility cannot be shirked; whoso seeks to evade it proves by his effort that he loves the darkness rather than the light, and thereby places himself in danger of heavy condemnation.

"As Many as Have Sinned Without Law Shall also Perish Without Law"

"In Rom. 2: 12 we read as above quoted. Does not this show that the ignorant heathen shall be finally judged without reference to their knowledge of God's Plan, but solely with respect to their attitude toward the promptings of their unenlightened consciences?"

No; these words of the Apostle do not so teach, when considered in connection with their context. The passage is a long one, and its beginning may be found at least as far back as Rom. 1: 18, 19. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness: because that which may be known of God is manifest to them [margin]; for God hath showed it unto them." Words like these do not refer to the ignorant, but to those favoured with some knowledge of the truth. The thought is repeated in Rom. 2: 8, 9—"Unto them that are contentious, and *do not obey the truth*, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile." Here again we find reference to severe

dealings with sinners against light, but nothing at all concerning final judgment being administered before enlightenment has been granted. The Jew, having been under the Law, was now being brought into contact with the superior light of the Gospel; the Gentile, who had not been under the Law, was also being enlightened by the Gospel. The Law could not save the Jew, nor the little light of conscience the Gentile; but 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: 16.) But if any one enlightened by the Gospel (whether a Jew formerly under the Law, or a Gentile never under the Law) is contentious, and does not obey the truth, he is preparing serious retribution for himself. These are the sinners mentioned in Rom. 2: 12.

In Adam or in Christ

"When quoting 1 Cor. 15: 22, is it not to be considered that although we are all in Adam by descent, a way is prescribed whereby we may come into Christ, or put on Christ; hence not all are in Christ. Although what Paul writes to Timothy about Christ dying for all is also true, will the death benefit those who do not come into Christ in the way laid down?"

Experience shows that in teaching the raising of all (both just and unjust) we are not giving out something that is pleasing to the "flesh." The "flesh" prefers to believe that it has a soul that lives the more happily while the body is dead, which of course makes the resurrection not only unnecessary but a great inconvenience; so that this doctrine is no more acceptable now than it was in the days of the apostles, who preached Jesus and the resurrection.

So far as this questioner has expressed himself on 1 Cor. 15: 22, we are quite in harmony, for we also believe that no one will be made *alive*, and be allowed to live forever, except he have come into Christ in the way of faith and obedience appointed thereto. The difference between us in this connection would be more in that we understand the Scriptures to teach that *all will have an opportunity to come into Christ;* and that none will be destroyed in the Second Death without having had this opportunity.

The questioner's idea seems to be that those who have died in ignorance of the "Only Name," as most of our race have done, will never hear about Him and His love for them, which would be contrary to the above Scriptures and many others. On the contrary, the Scriptures show that death does not interfere with God's purpose to bring all men to an exact knowledge of the truth, because the Lord Jesus, who has the keys of hell and of death, will call them forth for the very purpose of being enlightened. (John 1: 9; 1 Tim. 2: 4.) Such will be waked up out of their sleep, will be enlightened, and will be confronted with the responsibility of choosing either to obey the Great Prophet and live, or to disobey Him and perish.

If we understand our questioner's thought correctly, it would represent the Lord as having given a price sufficient to redeem the whole race, from Adam onward, yet as receiving an opportunity to bless with light and knowledge only about one in a hundred of all those for whom he gave a sufficient price. (1 John 2: 2.) No one would be well pleased with the result of a transaction which would return him £1 for every £100; is it any more reasonable to suppose that the Redeemer of the world should be satisfied with the opportunity to bless only one soul, when by the investment of his entire capital (Himself—1 Tim. 2: 6) he purchased with a price the lordship over a hundred? Having redeemed 27,000,000,000, could He be satisfied with the opportunity to resurrect, and enlighten, and rule over only 144,000? Would not such an outcome of the Great Transaction be a reflection on the Justice of the Almighty, to whom the price was paid? Could the first portion of Isaiah 53: 11 in such a case be said to be accomplished?

"They are Dead, They Shall Not Live"

All the supposed scriptural objections to "Hope Beyond" are based on what seems a misunderstanding of a few texts, with apparently no effort to see how these and all others may be harmonised. If the Bible be self-contradictory, it is unreliable; and the effect of objections which merely set some passages of Scripture in opposition to others, practically saying "I prefer these to those," is to encourage the spirit of scepticism, already too rife in the world. Does not the Bible Student who pursues such a course really convict himself of lack of reverence for the Divine Word? The following objection to the resurrection and enlightenment of all the families of the earth is based on a group of much misunderstood texts.

"Can you explain the following, which seem to show that some will not be raised?—Isaiah 26: 13, 14; Jeremiah 51: 39, 57; Proverbs 21: 16; Psalm 49: 19, 20. Does not Ephesians 4: 17, 18 show that ignorance alienates from God?

To this objection we reply—It is possible that some now dead will never be raised; namely, those who have wilfully sinned against the sufficient enlightenment of the truth. (Heb. 6: 4-6; 10: 26-31.) And in so far as these conditions are met by those described in the references cited from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Proverbs and Psalms, we are bound to believe that they belong to the class that will not be raised. But there were not many in Old Testament times (if there were one) that could have fulfilled the conditions mentioned in Hebrews; and even since Pentecost the greater part of the world has been left in so much darkness that for them to have come under the conditions enumerated in Heb. 6 and 10 has been impossible. A certain amount of enlightenment is necessary, and this has been withheld from the world as a whole.

Verse 14 of Psalm 49 seems to show that it is necessary to seek some interpretation of verse 19 that will not cause the inspired writer to be saying that they shall never be brought back from the dead; for how could the upright have dominion over non-existent persons? Does not the Psalmist rather seem to be saying that those who persist in the foolish ways of the world shall be allowed to go on so, without being enlightened concerning a better way? They shall never see light before death overtakes them; but who can say that they will not see a very great light when the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning? This is harmonious with all the rest of the

Psalm, and with other Scriptures already mentioned; and should it not be the aim of every Bible student so to interpret the Word that all the parts harmonise, and no plain statement need be ignored?

Proverbs 21: 16 seems to express exactly the sentiment elaborated in Hebrews. This is telling about the man who wanders out of the way of understanding. It refers, therefore, to one who has been enlightened; and, whatever it may say about him, it teaches nothing concerning those who have never been in the way of understanding, which has been the condition of most of the race.

In Jeremiah 51: 39, 57, the word "perpetual" is translated from the Hebrew word *olam*, which signifies "lasting," or "enduring," and the length of the duration must be determined by the context, or by other Scriptures. That it comes short of meaning "endless" is readily seen by reference to the Scriptures, and it is instructive to place in parallel columns some texts which describe certain things as *olam*, with other texts which tell of the doing away of the same.

"OLAM."	"OLAM" ENDED.
Exodus 29: 9. Here the Aaronic priesthood is "olam."	Hebrews 7: 12. Here the Aaronic priesthood is supplanted by the Melchisedec order.
Jeremiah 25: 9. Here the seventy years of desolation are "olam."	Jeremiah 32: 15. Here the "olam" desolation is ended.
Jeremiah 51: 39, 57. The "olam" sleepers.	Isaiah 25: 7; Ezekiel 16: 53, 55, 61-63; Jeremiah 12: 14-17; 48: 47; 49: 6, 39; Psalm 86: 9; Phil. 2: 10. "Olam" sleepers awake.

The "perpetual" sleep of the Babylonian desolators of Palestine has not been interrupted as yet, but it is to be, for "He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations." That is to say, "He will swallow up death in victory." They have slept long; but they shall be waked up in due time, and with the Assyrians, Egyptians and Israelites (Isaiah 19: 24, 25), with the Moabites, Ammonites and Elamites (Jeremiah 48: 47; 49: 6, 39), with the Samaritans and the Sodomites (Ezekiel 16: 53, 55), and with all the *nations* whom God has made, then shall come and worship (Psalm 86: 9), and with all the *families* of the earth shall receive the blessing through the promised "Seed," which is Jesus Christ. (Gal. 3: 16.) Yea, at the name of Jesus every *individual* knee shall bow, whether it be on the earth or under the earth; and surely those under the earth will need to hear His voice and come forth, and will need instruction before they can acknowledge the Lord Jesus, and confess to the glory of God the Father that He is the Lord. There is nothing in Jeremiah 51: 39, 57 that conflicts with the grand testimony of all God's holy prophets, Jeremiah included, concerning the enlightenment and life to be made available in the Kingdom Age.

The "lords" in Isaiah 26: 13, 14 we understand to mean the various nations and systems that have oppressed Israel. Some of these are dead, and the remainder will die, and as institutions they shall not rise; but this in no way antagonises the thought that the individuals composing these nations shall be brought back from death. How else shall this passage be understood in harmony with the Scriptures above cited?

Without doubt, ignorance has alienated and does alienate (as we are told in Ephesians 4: 17, 18) men from the life of God; but when, under the Kingdom, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, all will learn to know God, and many, we trust, will gladly obey Him, and will no longer be alienated, but will become members of His family. Indeed, the same Apostle assures us that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, and shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.—Rom. 8: 22.

"The Whole Land shall be Desolate"

"In Jeremiah 4: 23-27 we read, 'I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; . . . I beheld, and, lo, there was no man; . . . For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate.' In Isa. 34: 8-10 we read, 'the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof . . . burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.' As this in Isaiah is associated with 'the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion,' would it not be contradictory to the teaching of hope for salvation of the masses of men during the Kingdom Age?"

Again is one reminded of the absolute necessity of considering the context. Examining that in Jeremiah 4, beginning with verse 16, it is seen that these woes *were pronounced against Jerusalem, and consequently* against the whole of the country over which it was the capital city. The faithful prediction of these desolations brought Jeremiah into much disfavour at the Court (Jer. 20: 1, 2; 37: 11-15), so that he was imprisoned and severely illtreated. As it was predicted, so it came to pass—"I beheld, and lo there was no man." (2 Kings 25: 22-26.) But this was the *olam* desolation referred to foregoing, and in due time it came to its end—in seventy years. Jeremiah's prophecy, therefore, refers to events that transpired 2500 years ago; it has no reference to the Kingdom Age just impending.

The prophecy in Isaiah 34: 8-10 referred to the land of Idumea, with the people of which the Lord had a great controversy on account of their opposition to the children of Israel. But one must make allowance for the symbolic language used, and must not force a literal significance, which would undoubtedly be foreign to the intention of the prophecy. For example, no present day visitor to Idumea would find verses 9 and 10 literally fulfilled. He would not see "the streams turned into pitch," "the dust into brimstone," and the land into "burning pitch, not quenched night or day"; neither would he find the smoke thereof still ascending. He would see, however, the conditions resulting from *the trouble symbolised by* "fire," "brimstone," etc.; namely, as stated in plain language, "from generation to generation it shall lie waste." A prediction of terrible desolation is this prophecy, and Idumea has abundantly experi-

enced it; but the context following, through chapter 35, predicts that this desolation "for ever and ever" (again the Hebrew word *olam*) shall come to an end. The "desert" (Isa. 35: 1, 6) seems to refer to Idumea, rendered desolate by the Lord's vengeance. (34: 10-15.) And the promise is, "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose; in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." This restoration of Idumea will take place during the Kingdom Age, when all things shall be reconstituted, of which "God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." (Acts 3: 21.) The prophecy in Isaiah 34: 8-10 cannot, therefore, be considered as being in opposition to those other prophecies, such as that in Isaiah 25: 6-9, which have foretold the blessing of all the families of the earth during the Kingdom Age.

"But the Rest of the Dead Lived Not Again Until the Thousand Years were Finished"

"In Rev. 20: 5 we read, after verse 4, in which the resurrection of the saints is described, that the rest of the dead lived not again until the expiration of the thousand years' reign. Surely, this is contrary to the teaching of a blessing for all the families of the earth in the Kingdom Age, under the reign of Christ and the Church."

It cannot be denied that the first part of Rev. 20: 5 is contrary to the presentations of former chapters of this volume, in which it is hoped the student has found something to help and encourage him in the perusal of the divine Word. If the teaching of chapter V. be deemed harmonious with Scripture, then anything opposed to it is similarly to be considered as opposed to Scripture. And these words are clearly *in contradiction of such teaching as is found in* Isaiah 25: 6-9—"In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things"; for how could they enjoy such a feast if they were in their graves during the thousand years? The words in question are also contradictory to the teaching of the Apostle Peter, to the effect that the restoration times, or times of reconstitution, or reconstruction, continue from our Lord's second advent; and if contradictory to this, then also to the teaching of all the holy prophets since the world began, for all of them foretold these times of blessing. Citations have been given in chapter V. from many of their writings on this grand subject.

It is worth observing, also, that these disputed words make Rev. 20: 5 self-contradictory. For if it be true that "the rest of the dead" are not to live again until the thousand years be ended, it is more than a little peculiar that the Revelator should, immediately (after telling about "the rest of the dead") say, "This is the first resurrection." How could the "rest" be the "first?" If, however, the reader omit these peculiar words, and read direct from verse 4 to the latter part of verse 5, all will be clear, as follows:—"They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection."

The Scriptures may be searched from Genesis to Revelation, as with broom and candle, and nothing like these words in Rev. 20: 5 will be found. In no other place is their sentiment expressed, but one cannot avoid coming in contact with the testimonies which abound to the contrary. It is therefore no surprise to learn that these words are not found in the Sinaitic manuscript of the New Testament, which is the oldest Greek MS. of the Scriptures yet found, and which is believed to date from the fourth century, A.D. In order that the latest information on the subject of the ancient Greek MSS. of Revelation may be placed before the reader, a selection is given from "Apocalypse of St. John," by H. B. Swete, London, 1906—

"*The following Uncial* MSS. *contain the Greek text of* the Apocalypse, or a part of it.

"Cod. Sinaiticus, 4th century.

"Cod. Alexandrinus, 5th century.

"Cod. Ephraemi Parisiensis, 5th century—contains 1: 1 to 3: 19; 5: 14 to 7: 14; 7: 17 to 8: 5; 9: 16 to 10: 10; 11: 3 to 13: 13; 18: 2 to 19: 5.

"Cod. Porfirianus Chiavensis, 9th century—contains 1: 1 to 16: 12; 17: 1 to 19: 21; 20: 9 to 22: 6.

"Cod. Vaticanus Gr. 2066 olim Basiliensis 105, 8th century.

"Cod. Kosinitsanus, 9th or 10th century—not yet edited or collated.

"Thus at present there are available only three complete and two imperfect uncials of the Apocalypse. The minuscules also are comparatively few; while we have 1725 MSS. of the Gospels, 520 of the Acts and Catholic Epistles and 619 of St. Paul, those of the Apocalypse do not, according to von Soden (1902), reach 230."

Of the above mentioned MSS., containing the Book of Revelation, the Sinaitic is the most ancient, and it omits the words in question from Rev. 20: 5. The *Alexandrine, about a century later than the Sinaitic,* contains them. A very ancient Greek MS., the Vatican 1209, which is considered by some to be more ancient than the Sinaitic, omits the Book of Revelation entirely, therefore is not mentioned in Mr. Swete's list. The next most ancient MS. to the Alexandrine is the Ephraem. It contains important fragments of Revelation, but nothing after 19: 5. The next is the Basil MS., which is of the eighth century—three centuries after the Alexandrine—and here we find the next appearance of the disputed words. The next uncial is the Porfirianus, of the ninth century. It is fragmentary. It certainly omits *the disputed words,* but since at the same time it omits the first eight verses of the twentieth chapter, and begins at the ninth verse, it would scarcely be right to call this MS. in evidence. The next uncial is Kosinitsanus, of the ninth or tenth century, not yet edited, therefore not available as evidence.

The witnesses on this subject, then, are only three, as far as the ancient Greek MSS. are concerned. And as one of these belongs to the eighth century, and the *other two are so much more ancient than it,* one might say that practically the witnesses are only two, and that the question, as far as evidence at present available is concerned, lies between the Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS. Since the Sinaitic is about 100 years nearer the inspired sources than the other, its testimony is that much more weighty, so that it is not at all difficult to arrive at the conclusion that these disputed words are indeed spurious, and that, being so, they require no further consideration at the hands of Bible students. There is therefore no text of Scripture that can be cited as being contrary to the teach-

Diagram of the best 50 Greek Manuscripts of the New Testament now available.

Names of Manuscripts	Century	Where Deposited	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	Acts	Romans	1 Cor.	2 Cor.	Galatians	Eph.	Phil.	Col.	1 Thess.	2 Thess.	1 Tim.	2 Tim.	Titus	Philem.	Hebrews	1 Peter	2 Peter	1 John	2 John	3 John	James	Jude	Revelation
Sinaiticus	IV	St. Petersburg	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣
Alexandrinus	V	London	0	♣	♣	☒	♣	♣	♣	☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣
Vaticanus 1209	IV	Rome	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣					☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	
Ephræmi rescriptus	V	Paris	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Bezæ Cantabrigiensis	VI	Cambridge	☒	♣	♣	☒	☒																						
Claromontanus	IX	Paris						♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣								
Basiliensis	VIII	Basle	♣	♣	☒	♣																							
Laudianus	VI	Oxford				☒																							
Sangermanensis	IX	St. Petersburg						☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	☒	♣	♣	♣	☒								
Boreelianus	IX	Utrecht	☒	☒	☒	☒																							
Augiensis	IX	Cambridge						☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣									
Cois'ianus	VII	Paris	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																			
Harleianus	IX—X	London	☒	☒	☒	☒																							
Petropolitanus	VII	St. Petersburg					0																						
Boernerianus	IX	Dresden						♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣									
Seidelii	IX	Hamburg	☒	☒	☒	☒																							
Mutinensis	IX	Modena					*																						
Euthalianus	VI	Paris-Peterbrg.							0	0	0			0	0		0	0	0		0								
Petropolit. rescript.	V—VII	St. Petersburg	0	0	0	0	☒		0										0										
Nitriensis	V	London				0																							
Cyprius	IX	Paris	♣	♣	♣	♣																							
Mosquensis	IX	Moscow						☒	☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	
Parisiensis	VIII	Paris	☒	☒	☒	☒																							
Angelicus-Romanus	IX	Rome					☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	☒	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣		
Campensis	X	Paris	♣	♣	♣	♣																							
Wolfianus	IX	Lond.-Hamb.								0	0										0								
Purpureus	VI	Lon-Rom-Vien	0	0	0	0																							
Mosquensis	IX	Moscow				0																							
Codices var.	VI—IX					0																							
Codices var.	VI	St. Petersburg								0		0																	
Guelferbytanus	VI	Wolfenbüttel	0	0	*	0																							
Porfirianus	IX	St. Petersburg					♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	♣	☒
Basiliano-Vaticanus	VIII	Rome																											♣
Guelferbytanus B	V	Wolfenbüttel				0	0																						
Nitriensis	VI	London				*																							
Vaticanus 354	X	Rome	♣	♣	♣	♣																							
Borgianus-Petropolit.	V—VII	Rome-Petersb.	0	0	0	0																							
Nanianus	X	Venice	♣	♣	♣	♣																							
Mosquensis	IX	Moscow	☒	♣	♣	☒																							
Codices var.	VII-IX		0	0	0	0																							
Monacensis	X	Munich	*	*	*	*																							
Barberini	VIII	Rome				0																							
Dublinensis	V—VI	Dublin	*																										
Tischendorfianus	IX	Oxford	*	☒	♣	*																							
Sangallensis	IX	St. Gall	♣	♣	♣	☒																							
Codices var.	VI—IX	Leipzig-Peterb.	*	*	*	*																							
Oxoniensis	IX	Oxford			♣	♣																							
Zacynthius	VIII	London			*																								
Petropolitanus	IX	St. Petersburg	♣	♣	♣	♣																							
Rossanensis	VI	Rossano	♣	♣																									

♣ = complete ☒ = incomplete * = considerable portion 0 = small portion

The Sinaiticus is by many esteemed the oldest, and is the only complete one of the fifty. Its date is about A.D. 350. It was discovered by Constantine Tischendorf at the Convent of St. Catherine in Mount Sinai in 1844-59. This is the manuscript most used by modern translators of the New Testament.—Translated and adapted from the French of "Le Phare de la Tour de Zion"

All Rights Reserved.

This Diagram on thin paper, suitable to fasten in your Bibles. 5 Copies postpaid for Sixpence (12 cents). New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins st., Melbourne, C1, Australia; 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton st., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1672, Durban, South Africa.

ing of all the Holy Prophets concerning the glorious "Hope Beyond."*

The Evolution Theory

"Does not modern scientific thought, now proclaimed from many pulpits, and winning much popular favour, conflict with the teaching concerning Restitution, or Reconstitution?"

Yes, there is an irreconcilable conflict between the teachings of the Scriptures and the Evolution theory. Many have been the attempts made to harmonise the two, but not one has been successful. Indeed, the advocates of the theory are now so far convinced of this, that they have abandoned all effort to reconcile them. But herein is involved the necessity of surrendering either the Bible or the Evolution theory; which shall it be? Many have already answered this question by dispensing with the Bible. The haste with which this is done by many learned men is cause for surprise, inasmuch as the Evolution theory is as yet only a theory, lacking the proof necessary to transform it to a certainty, while the Bible is an established fact. More especially is there occasion for surprise in the case of Christian ministers and college professors who hold their positions as defenders and exponents of the faith and misuse them by introducing and disseminating this subtle form of infidelity, surrendering to the enemy all that is vital to the Christian religion. This inconsistency on the part of those who occupy high places does not assist the people to respect either the Bible or the men who so readily betray it.

If evolution be the dictator of universal destiny, its processes should be visible in active operation in all parts of the world at the present time. Of the fact that they are not in evidence every truth seeker may convince himself by a little investigation. Notwithstanding the lack of proof, we are required by the evolutionist to believe that man has gradually evolved through untold ages from the simplest forms of life to the complex organism with which we are acquainted. More "faith" is really required to accept this assertion than to believe the Bible teaching, for the Scriptures are at least in harmony with present observation and experience. On his own claim (Isa. 41: 21-24), "show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods," which is the proper test of divinity, Jehovah and His Word stand alone, unmatched and unapproachable. Can Evolution "show the things that are to come hereafter"? Can it even "show the former things what they be, that we may consider them"? The Bible shows both the past and the future: the fact that many of its prophecies have been fulfilled gives strong foundation for faith concerning those as yet unfulfilled. "Evolution," being comparatively a newcomer in the realm of thought (and already repudiated by some of the greatest scientists who formerly received it), should be treated with due consideration. Let us not therefore impose the supreme test by requiring a forecast of "things to come"; let us not ask to be shown even "the former things"; let us ask for demonstrations of the present only. Let "Evolution," if it be the way, the truth and the life, show us to-day individuals of lower forms changing into higher species. When it is able to do this, its claims for the past and the future may be considered. True scientific reasoning proceeds from the known to the unknown; the "evolved" reasoning, however, starting from that which is not known, seeks to find that which does not exist.

As the Scripture teaching and the evolution theory cannot be harmonised, and as both cannot be true, each searcher after truth must choose which he will believe. "As for me and my house," said Joshua, "we will serve the Lord." Regardless of the fact that such choice throws discredit upon the great philosophers and wise men of this world (1 Cor. 1: 18-31), let the same sentiment be crystallised in our hearts; let us take our stand on the Lord's side. He that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. (1 Pet. 2: 6-8; Psa. 22: 4, 5.) And when, in a few years, scientific investigators acknowledge the falsity of their present hypothesis, and seek to establish another, still more vain and unscriptural, we shall be equally undisturbed; for our faith is founded on the Rock of Ages, which abides unmoved amidst the tempests of conflicting doubts and the varying winds of human tradition and theory.

Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning!
Joy to the lands that in darkness have lain!
Hushed be the accents of sorrow and mourning!
Zion in triumph begins her glad reign.

See the dead risen from land and from ocean:
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;
Fall'n are the engines of war and commotion,
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky.

—*H. L. Hastings.*

*It has pleased God to allow His Word to be transmitted through human instrumentalities, and He has not interfered to prevent the occasional manifestation of the imperfections of human copyists. The original writings from the hands of the inspired Apostles are not now available, therefore we have to do the best we can with what Divine Providence has allowed to reach us, trusting the Lord so to overrule that His people may not be hindered by insurmountable obstacles to their sincere search for Truth. No doubt God could have handed down a perfect version of His Word for every people, nation and tongue; but the fact remains that He did not do so, possibly because to have done that would have made the acquisition of exact knowledge too easy, and too much like walking by sight, whereas His people are now to walk by faith. Thanks are due those scholars who have patiently, sometimes at the cost of impaired sight, deciphered the often well-nigh illegible treasures of the ancient manuscripts. The reader is recommended to peruse that excellent little work, "The Inspiration of the Bible," mentioned in Book List.

VARIORUM BIBLES

EVERYONE who has read thus far is a Bible reader who searches the Scriptures, we feel sure. To all such we desire to recommend the *Variorum Bible*, so named because on each page it shows the *various* renderings of many Versions, including the Revised, also the *various* readings of the most ancient manuscripts of the Bible now known, wherever these differ substantially from the Authorized Version. The Editor of this Journal considers the *Variorum* the most useful edition in existence. It is published by the King's Printers, and can be supplied by us, printed on Bible paper or on the special "*Royal*" India paper, very light and strong, in two sizes of type, in several splendid bindings, and with or without Teachers' Aids. Descriptive Price List showing sizes of type will be sent on application.

NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

294 Little Collins St., Melbourne C1, Australia.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

"Some Better Thing for Us"

"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. 11: 40.

PRECEDING chapters have sought to outline something of the general principles which should be observed by all who wish to study the Scriptures with any hope of success. There must be meekness, and willingness to learn, else how can one receive instruction? Being in the right frame of mind, there must also be prayer to God for the help of His Spirit, and this must be backed up by perseverance in endeavour to learn what He may be willing to teach His people at any given time. It must be acknowledged that God is a God of order, and that He has a Plan or Purpose in process of fulfilment. The dispensational characteristics of this Plan must be recognised, and the Student must seek to apply each portion of Scripture to its appropriate dispensation and age, if he would avoid confusion, and find real enlightenment. The exhortation is, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth," "the much diversified wisdom of God according to a purpose of the ages." —2 Tim. 2: 15; Eph. 3: 10, 11.

Some of the "diversities" of divine wisdom have already been considered. The Scriptures have shown that God's plan proposes a blessing for all the families of the earth. This blessing is to be given to every member of Adam's race, and it consists of being enlightened by the True Light, and being brought to an accurate knowledge of the Truth. This blessing has in some measure been vouchsafed to a comparatively small number in past times, and is to be generally bestowed during the Kingdom Age. But the blessing of "everlasting life" will be given only to those who have by faith come into the "Second Adam," the "Lord from heaven," whether that be in the present or in the future age. Those who become children of the Second Adam, who was by lineal descent and by promise Abraham's Seed through whom the blessing was promised, thereby also become Abraham's seed. (Gal. 3: 16, 29.) Another feature of God's eternal purpose now comes forward for consideration; namely, that those of Christ's children or "seed" who are developed in the present Gospel age are invited to a still higher honor; namely, to be the "bride" of the Lamb, joint heirs with Christ, and as such to take part in the Kingdom age work of blessing all the families of the earth not previously enlightened. That any could be Christ's children and His prospective bride at the same time might seem somewhat paradoxical; but all is plain when we remember that both "children" and "bride" are terms used to express spiritual relations, the first of a dependent, and the second of an intimate and companionable sort. (1 John 2: 12-14; Eph. 5: 25-33.) Perhaps no portion of the divine Plan exhibits the "diversities" as much as this one, concerning the position to which the joint heirs are invited.

At the time of our Lord's crucifixion his followers were overwhelmed with consternation. The Shepherd was smitten, the sheep were scattered. Their hopes, centred in Him, were blasted, and they knew not what to do or which way to turn. The general disappointment was expressed in the sad words of the two on the way to Emmaus—"We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." (Matt. 26: 31; Zech. 13: 7; Luke 24: 21.) But when they realised that He was raised from the dead, their hopes revived. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away." (1 Peter 1: 3, 4.) Our blessed Redeemer was then made the express image of the Father's person, and God appointed Him to be the heir of all things. (Heb. 1: 2, 3; Matt. 28: 18; Phil. 2: 9-11.) No feeling of surprise overcomes us as we realise this, for we appreciate that the Lamb that was slain was worthy "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing;" and this will yet be acclaimed by every creature which is in "heaven," and on the "earth," and by such as are in the "sea."—Rev. 5: 12, 13.

God's determination was that in all things His dear Son should have the pre-eminence. (Col. 1: 17-19.) Without Him was not anything made that was made, and by Him all things consist. (John 1: 3.) No one shared the honour of the work already accomplished by Himself (Heb. 7: 27; 9: 28; 10: 7-14), nor are any invited to share His office of Mediator. Some are, however, invited to an inheritance of "glory, honour and incorruptibility" (Rom. 2: 7), "incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," for it is "reserved in heaven for you."—1 Peter 1: 4, 5.

Oh, what riches of grace! what marvels of condescension toward men of low estate! what abounding love and kindness! To think that such as ourselves should have the opportunity to become joint heirs with the Son of God, the heir of all things! Words fail us; we are

"Lost in wonder, love, and praise."

Were this the only portion of Scripture setting forth such an amazing thought one might well hesitate to grasp it as being applicable to God's people of this time; but there is much to confirm it, as Rom. 8: 16-18; 6: 5; 1 Cor. 15: 49; 2 Tim. 2: 11, 12; 2 Thes. 2: 14, and many similar passages.

In the first place, then, it will be seen that the invitation to heavenly glory began with the Gospel Age; it was not presented to the holy prophets and others of olden times as a calling, though the prophets were caused to speak of it, and were interested by it, so much so that they inquired about it. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace [favour] that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that *not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are* now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Pet. 1: 10-12.) That the holy prophets may have experienced regrets at not having the prophecies which they uttered explained to them can

easily be imagined; but as they must have realised their disappointment to be His appointment, they were not grieved or embittered thereby, but rather rejoiced in the greatness of God's favour to others. A noble example of this will be referred to later in this study.

If it be asked, why should God have passed by the holy prophets and other ancient worthies, withholding from them the great honour now extended to us of the Gospel Age, the answer must be, for the present, it was the good pleasure of His will so to do. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour [less honour]?" (Rom. 9: 21.) There is no reason to believe that God's people of the Gospel age are by natural endowment better qualified for joint heirship with Christ than were His people of former times. Indeed, the portion just cited from Romans would seem to show that we are neither better nor worse than they, all being of one lump of clay. Whether we do or do not understand the reason for so marvellous an exhibition of divine grace during this age, we who have heard of and accepted the wonderful favour must give all diligence if we would make our calling and election sure.—2 Peter 1: 5-15.

There is no lack of Scripture to establish the teaching that this "high calling" was not made known as a calling in former ages. "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect *so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord*, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will?" (Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 1-4.) Here we get the thought that this "great salvation," which "began to be spoken by the Lord," was so different from what had been understood up to that time, that special mention is made of the fact that it "was confirmed unto us by them that heard him," and also that God Himself testified to the authenticity of this, the beginning of the New Covenant, by special demonstrations of divine power, as at the inauguration of the Law Covenant. (Heb. 12: 18-28.) This agrees precisely with 1 Peter 1: 12.

The Jews hoped for everlasting life under their Law; they searched the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life; but they acquired no information about incorruptibility. This is not to be considered strange, for both life and incorruptibility were first brought properly to light by our Lord and Saviour, and by His teaching of the Gospel. The apostles were able to comprehend the difference between eternal life and incorruptibility, and to explain it to others. (2 Tim. 1: 10, 11.*) Incorruptibility is that quality of having life in one's self, neither dependent upon food for sustenance nor affected by any influence whatever. This was originally a possession of the Father solely; He gave it to His Son at His resurrection (John 5: 26), and proposes to give the same incorruptible inheritance to the Church of the Gospel Age, not having offered it to any before our Lord's first advent. He is the forerunner for us into this heavenly glory. (1 Peter 1: 3-5; 2 Peter 1: 4; Heb. 6: 20.) Eternal or everlasting life, though sometimes applied, as a descriptive term, to the reward of the Gospel Age Church, is not so decisive an expression as incorruptibility. "Eternal life" also describes the earthly life which will be enjoyed endlessly by those who will experience the full measure of restitution blessings in the Kingdom Age. Although that life will be perfect, it will be sustained by appropriate foods, as was Adam's perfect life in the Garden of Eden; but without proper sustenance their life would fail, just as Adam's life, though perfect, failed when he was driven from the Garden.—Psalm 115: 16; Micah 4: 4; Isaiah 65: 17, 21, 22; Gen. 1: 29; 3: 22-24.

"Some Better Thing for Us"

Attend now to the lesson of Hebrews 11. In this, which is called the Faith chapter, we are told of the lives of those Ancients who sought to please God. They testified by their lives, by the endurance of much persecution for righteousness' sake, the sincerity of their professions of love to God. Take the example of Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, rather "than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of the anointed greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." (Heb. 11: 24-26.) The word "Christ" means anointed. In this case, the reference is to the anointed people, Israel. Consider well all the illustrious examples of faith and patience narrated in this chapter. By these, the Ancients, being dead, yet speak to us (Heb. 11: 4), and so it is that we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses—testifiers—to the faithfulness of Him who has promised. (Heb. 12: 1.) "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, *God having provided some better thing for us*, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. 11: 37-40.) The excellent things provided for them are earthly (Gen. 13: 14-17); the "better thing" provided for us is reserved in heaven.—Col. 3: 1, 2; Phil. 3: 10, 11, 20; 2 Cor. 5: 1.

*The word translated "immortality" in 2 Tim. 1: 10 is translated "incorruption" in the Revised Version. There is some distinction between "immortality" and "incorruptibility" which is worth observing, and of which more may be said on another occasion.

Again the question arises—has God provided the "better thing" for us because we are better than were the Ancients? Could we suppose that our faith and patience are greater than theirs, we might think yes; but as it is not possible for us to think so highly of ourselves, we come back to the only answer now available, and, acknowledging that there is no superiority in ourselves, admit that the reason why we are more highly favoured than they were is because we are living in the age which God had arranged for the publishing of the High Calling.

John the Baptist

The line of division between the earthly calling of the Jewish age and the heavenly calling of the Gospel age is drawn with considerable distinctness. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of God is preached." "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John." "From the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."—Luke 16: 16; Matt. 11: 13, 12.

Of John the Baptist we are told: "There hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he." (Matt. 11: 11.) This is very remarkable, showing as it does that the greatest and most highly honoured of the prophets will have no place in the heavenly realm, where the inheritance of the Church is reserved. And, again, we have to acknowledge that this is not because of superiority in us, but wholly because we are living in the time of this favour, and he was not. It is all of God's grace, and is His own arrangement. But if John will have no place in heaven, where will his place be? The answer is, On earth, with the faithful of the past, for whom great things are provided, though some "better thing" is provided for us of the Gospel age.

"Where will you spend eternity?" is a solemn question; and we are glad that the true Christian can in faith explain his hope of heaven. It is to be regretted, however, that with many the only alternative for those who have not this hope is everlasting torment or annihilation. The earth as a possible inheritance is quite lost sight of. In view of Matt. 11: 11, how can the question be answered from their standpoint concerning John the Baptist? "Where will John the Baptist spend eternity?"

John understood his position and prospects perfectly, as his own words show. "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that *hath the bride* is the *bridegroom*; but the *friend* of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled. . . . . He that cometh from above [Jesus, the "bridegroom"] is above all; he that is of the earth [John the Baptist, the bridegroom's "friend"] is earthly [literally, "of the earth," being the same phrase as those before and after], and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven [Jesus] is above all."—John 3: 27-31.

A greater manifestation than this of true humility, and that nobility of character which rejoices in the superior position of others, can scarcely be imagined. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." The least of the divine favours is not to be forcibly seized, but is to be accepted gratefully, and as an unmerited favour. This was John's standpoint, and from it he was able to see what others have not discerned. He was able to recognise Jesus as the "bridegroom," and that there would be a "bride" to share the heavenly inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled. As for himself, he, John the Baptist, was not the "bridegroom," and he was not a member of the "bride" class; but he was the "friend." Was John grieved, embittered or made jealous by the realisation that some coming after him, some, indeed, of his own disciples, were to be granted higher positions than his? No; John was a true nobleman. He *rejoiced* at the exalted prospects of the "bridegroom" and the "bride," realising that they could not possibly receive the glorious inheritance except it were given them from heaven. If it were the divine will that the "bridegroom" and the "bride" be exalted to the divine nature, and that the "friend" remain on earth, John not only acquiesced, but he rejoiced in it. The contemplation of such lowliness, yet grandeur, of character cannot be other than profitable to us all: it stimulates imitation, that we may not aspire to anything to which the Lord has not invited us.—1 Cor. 4: 7.

Thy Fathers Thy Children

Near the close of His earthly ministry, our Lord effectually and permanently silenced His critics by asking them, "What think ye of Christ? whose Son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit [by inspiration] call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."—Matt. 22: 42-46.

The point of this lies in the fact that under the tribal form of government the father of the family was recognised as the chief, and it was unthinkable that a father should speak of his son as his lord or chief. Yet the answer to our Saviour's question was ready to their hand, in the Scriptures, and the Pharisees, being diligent students, should have been able to point to it. The Saviour, at His first advent, was described in the symbolic language of prophecy as "a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a *Branch* out of his roots." (Isa. 11: 1.) In the glory of His resurrection, of His present rule over His people (Col. 1: 13), and of the Kingdom age, He is symbolically described as "a *Root* of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and His rest shall be glorious." (Isa. 11: 10; Rom. 15: 9-19.) That is to say, He who as concerning the flesh came forth from Jesse, as a Branch, is now the

Root of Jesse, and shall be the source of resurrection life to Jesse. David, Jesse's son, and our Lord's ancestor, was a root, and is to be the offspring of Jesus.—Rev. 22: 16.

This is beautifully described in Psalm 45. The principal characters of the Psalm are the King (Jehovah), the King's Son (our Lord Jesus), and the King's daughter (the Gospel age Church, sometimes called the Bride, the Lamb's wife). The Psalm is addressed to the King's Son, and in verse 16 is found the peculiar statement, "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." The fathers of the King's Son were Jesse, David, and others in the line of his fleshly ancestry. These will be children of the King's Son when He raises them from death at the beginning of the Kingdom age. Whereas they were His fathers, they will then be His children, and He their father. "The Everlasting Father," as already explained, is one of the Saviour's grand titles (Isa. 9: 6). Then they will recognise Him as their Lord, according to the word of inspiration.

The King's Son, now sitting in the Father's throne, will at that time associate with Himself the King's daughter, all glorious in her clothing of "wrought gold," emblematic of the glory and honour which are to be granted to her, the Church of the Gospel Age. (Psa. 2: 6; Rev. 3: 21; 1 Pet. 1: 3-5.) These will enjoy the heavenly inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, and will be kings and priests unto God. (Rev. 20: 6.) But the one-time fathers, who shall then be the children of their child, Jesus, will be made "*princes in all the earth,*" participating under the direction of the heavenly King in the grand work of blessing all the people with the Truth, and helping the willing ones to understand and follow after righteousness.—Isa. 61: 6.

The "princes" are described in Psalm 45: 14, 15, as the "virgins" (companions, or friends) following the "King's daughter"—the Bride of Christ.—John 3: 29.

From this it is seen that the Kingdom of God is to be organised in two divisions, one heavenly and one earthly. Our Lord spoke of the heavenly portion when intimating that John the Baptist would not be in the Kingdom. (Luke 7: 28.) The legislative functions will be vested in the invisible heavenly Kings, and the administrative privileges will belong to the visible earthly "princes." Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, will be seen in the earthly portion of the Kingdom of God by some who boasted in their lineage, but who will not be admitted. Denied admittance into the ruling privileges of that time, they will stand without, weeping and gnashing their teeth in vain regrets at finding themselves subjects instead of rulers. Having been so ready to take the "upper room" at the feast, they will be filled with unspeakable chagrin on finding themselves relegated to the lower positions. Let us hope that they will be rightly exercised by the experience, and become loyal subjects of the Kingdom: and let us in the meantime take to ourselves the appropriate lesson on the subject of humility.—Luke 13: 24-29.

That there is in this a lesson for God's people of the Gospel Age is not to be gainsaid; for it is plainly indicated that an experience similar to that predicted for the boasting Pharisees is prepared for a similar class in Christendom. "Not everyone 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 unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied [Dean Alford translates "preached"] 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.) Referring, as this does, to a class who acknowledge Christ as Lord, it cannot have been spoken of infidels and other open rejecters of the Son of God, but must be understood as pointing to a large class of energetic workers in Christendom. The Lord of all will know how to distinguish between those who say, "Lord, Lord," with their lips, but are not thus expressing the real sentiments of their hearts, and those others who do indeed "hold the Head." In the parable, the virgins without oil in their vessels were excluded. (Matt. 25.) It is for us, who read His solemn words, to see to it that our activities are so ordered as to be in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. His will is that the same mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2: 5-8), and that our service should in its small way contribute to the forwarding of the interests of His grand plan. And as the various ages have shown the "much diversified wisdom" of God, it behooves us to ascertain which portion of the divine programme is now being accomplished, and to join in those labours, lest, instead of being co-workers with Him, we be found fighting against God.—1 Cor. 3: 6-16; 2 Cor. 5: 18 to 6: 10.

We do not want to be doing the right thing at the wrong time, or the wrong thing at the right time, but the right thing at the right time. What would we have thought of the "twelve," if when sent out on their missionary journeys and expressly forbidden to go to the Samaritans and the Gentiles they had taken upon themselves the responsibility of improving on their marching orders, by going where they were told not to go, lest some soul be left unsaved because of their not going? And how would the Lord have viewed the activity of His disciples if, instead of tarrying for ten days in Jerusalem to wait for the "Power from on high," they had said, "Let us be up and doing, lest some soul perish while we are waiting for the promised Spirit"?

We are not to anticipate the Lord's arrangements, neither are we to lag behind. It is not for us to presume that the Lord would be pleased to have his people undertake the "wonderful work" of the Kingdom age, for the resurrection of just and unjust must precede that. Shall we suppose that God in heaven will alter His plans because some on earth have made a mistake? By no means! Let us, rather, humbly inquire of the Lord, and as we find in His Word the teaching that the Gospel age is for the purpose of

giving a "witness" to all nations and of "taking out a people for His name," and that the work of blessing the remainder of men will have attention in the time appointed for them, *but not before that due time, no matter how earnestly any of us endeavour to bring it about*, we should conform our thoughts and activities to His directions.

Servants or Sons?

In Heb. 3: 5, 6, attention is drawn to the "diversity" between the Jewish and Gospel ages. "Moses verily was faithful in all his house as a *servant*, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after: but Christ as a *Son* over His own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." Moses, the honoured leader of the Lord's host, prophet and lawgiver, priest and ruler, mediator of a covenant between God and the people, and in addition, after they had sinned, advocate for the people before God, was a servant of God, the head of a house of servants. After his death he was still regarded as the head of the nation, for his influence remained among them in the books of the law. To this people came Jesus, the Son of God, prophet like unto Moses, giver of a new commandment, priest after another order (the Melchisedec), rightful King to sit in the "holy hill of Zion," Mediator of a New Covenant, and Advocate for those under the New Covenant, when transgressors, offering to as many of the servants as would believe on Him the opportunity to become sons of God. (John 1: 11, 12.) "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son." (Gal. 4: 7.) The house of servants had promises of earthly things conditioned on obedience and faithfulness to their covenant. (Exod. 20: 12; Lev. 26: 3-13; Mal. 3: 7-12.) The house of sons has promises, exceeding great and precious, of heavenly things, and these will be given them in due season.—2 Cor. 5: 1, 2; Matt. 5: 11, 12; 1 Pet. 1: 4; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Rom. 5: 2; Col. 3: 1, 2; Phil. 3: 10-14.

The Course to Pursue

All who have followed thus far the delineation of the "diversities," and have appreciated the wonders of the grace of God in granting to some the privilege of becoming joint heirs with the King of kings, will be deeply concerned to know what conditions are attached to the "high calling." Since the Apostle exhorts God's people to give all diligence, to make their calling and election sure to so wonderful a favour, it is to be expected that some stipulations are mentioned, which will need to be fulfilled by all candidates for this highest of honours. These must now be considered, and it will be assumed that the start is being made from the condition of ignorance of and alienation from God.

Our Lord said, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (John 5: 22; 9: 39); and when He went away He promised to send a Comforter, the Holy Spirit, which should perform, for Him, a two-fold office; (1) to "convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," and (2) to guide the disciples into all truth. (John 14: 3, 15-18; 15: 26, 27; 16: 7-15.) As the Son, while on earth, was the representative of the Father, so, since the departure of the Son, the Holy Spirit in the Church is the representative of the Son. The Holy Spirit came from the Father to the Son, and to the Church from the Son. "He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; . . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall *receive of Mine*, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16: 13-16; 14: 17, 26; 1 Cor. 2: 10; Acts 2: 33.) That the Holy Spirit is not a person,* but a holy power or influence, is shown by Peter's words, "Jesus . . . hath *shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*" This was exactly what our Lord had promised—"Ye shall receive *power* after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you."—Acts 1: 8.

The work of the Holy Spirit, to convict or convince the world of sin, was a continuation of the work which our Lord began during His ministry, for it was His constant effort to bring home to the minds of the Jewish people the fact that while they considered themselves free they were really the slaves of sin, needing a deliverer, and that He himself was the only one that could bring about their release. He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (John 15: 22-24; 9: 39-41; 8: 30-36; Matt. 9: 13.) Throughout the Gospel Age the same methods are employed to convince of sin as were used by our Lord; namely, *the truth* concerning sin and its penalty and the way of escape provided in Him. When this truth is grasped by anyone who hears it, he is convinced, not only concerning sin in general, but also concerning his own sins in particular, and his own need of a Saviour. The Acts of the Apostles records how from Pentecost onward they preached repentance and forgiveness of sins, in harmony with the Lord's last commission, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in fulfilment of that office of the

*If the "Comforter" is not a person, why is the masculine pronoun used in referring to Him? For the same reason that the "iron gate" of the prison (Acts 12: 10) is referred to by a masculine pronoun, and also that the "salt" (Mark 9: 50) is described as having lost "his" saltness. Those who understand any of the Continental languages have no difficulty here, for they are familiar with the grammatical construction which requires personal pronouns for inanimate objects. Thus in French and German it is ungrammatical to refer to the piece of furniture called "table" by a neuter pronoun, as is the proper grammatical form in English, for in French the table is feminine, while the German language has two words for table, one masculine, the other feminine; therefore the masculine or feminine pronoun is required. "Fork" is feminine in both French and German. "Chair" is masculine in German, but the French language has two words for "chair," one masculine, the other feminine. Many more illustrations could be mentioned. In the Greek, the noun *Paracletos* ("Comforter") is masculine, and therefore requires a masculine pronoun. The noun *pneuma* ("spirit"), on the other hand, in the Greek, is neuter gender, and therefore requires a neuter pronoun, as in Rom. 8: 16, 26—"the spirit *itself*." The use of the masculine pronoun in John 14: 16, 26, etc., no more proves that the Holy Spirit is a person than the use of the same form in Acts and Mark proves that "gate" and "salt" are persons. In translating from a Continental language, ancient or modern, into English, it is the duty of the translator to adapt the gender of the nouns and pronouns to the English idiom, and vice versa. For further explanations concerning the Holy Spirit, please see the book, "The Christian's Comforter," mentioned in Book List.

Spirit described in John 16: 9. (Acts 2: 37, 38; 3: 19, 26; 5: 31; 10. 43; 13: 38; 26: 18.) Not only was this the case in their discourses to the Jews, but it was the first specific point made in their preaching to the Gentiles; for, as Paul said to the Athenians, though previously their condition of idolatry and moral corruption had been largely "winked at," God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17: 29, 30; 14: 16.) The glad tidings for Cornelius and his household were the same as for the Jews—"*Whosoever* believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10: 43; 11: 18; 13: 38-46; 26: 17-20; 28: 28.) The same glad tidings of the forgiveness of sins run through all the Gospels and the Epistles, and the joy of those thus forgiven is frequently pictured in the Apocalypse.

When convincing the world of sin, the Holy Spirit (through the disciples who possess the Spirit, and through the Word which expresses the will of God) also convinces the attentive hearer of righteousness. When He was present in the world, the Lord Himself convinced of righteousness, for He was a living example of perfection and holiness; and the contrast between Him, as the embodiment of every grace, and the people around, steeped in sin, superstition and self-righteousness, was unmistakeable. He was as light shining in darkness. But when He went away, it was necessary that the contrast between light and darkness, good and evil, holiness and depravity, truth and error, be maintained; and that blessed privilege He has bestowed upon His people in whom the Holy Spirit is a mighty power. The Holy Spirit in them convinces the onlooker that this is righteousness; this is what it means to conquer self, to purge out sin, and to live the life of God. In how many sinners have the first impulses toward a holy life been inspired by observing the kindness, forbearance, and loving spirit of a true Christian! The desire to be like that has brought abhorrence of self, and finally inquiry as to how the change can be induced. And with what gladness they have heard of the Saviour, of the forgiveness of sins, and of the possibilities of reconciliation and sonship!

The Holy Spirit is to convince the world of judgment. As already pointed out, our Lord's words and ministry were a condemnation of the proud and Pharisaical, to such an extent that He said, "How can ye escape the condemnation of Gehenna?" But His death was a judgment in a still larger sense, in that by the payment of the ransom-price He purchased the race and so "cast out" the "god of this world," in whom the whole world lay helpless. (2 Cor. 4: 4; 1 John 5: 19; Eph. 2: 2.) Nor can Sin longer tyrannise over those who flee for refuge to the Great Sin Bearer. The judgment against Sin is decisive; the ability to flee from it is to be had for the asking. (John 8: 34-36; Rom. 5: 8-11, 19, 21; 6: 11-14, 23.) Sin is revealed as the Tyrant, and the Lord Jesus is revealed as the Prince of Life and Peace, who has conquered the Tyrant, and is ready to liberate his captives. (Rom. 6: 6-23; 8: 2, 3.) Therefore it has been the privilege of the Church, as the dwelling place of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6: 19), to proclaim—As "ambassadors for Christ, . . . we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God." —2 Cor. 5: 20.

The gospel (or good news) of the Kingdom is described by the Lord as seed sown broadcast, which falls upon different sorts of ground. It finds no lodgment whatever in the hard "wayside" heart; the stony ground receives it but for a time; for, though it springs up quickly, it has no depth of earth, and cannot survive the sun of persecution. In other hearts the effect of the truth is also transitory; for, though the ground is good, the thorns are already in possession, and their rank growth soon chokes the seed: the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches are more potent than the Word of the Kingdom. In all these cases the heart is ultimately left very much as it was before the truth entered it. Lastly, the effect of the gospel message on some is like seed falling upon good ground, which brings forth fruit, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred-fold. (Matt. 13: 18-23.) The sun of persecution shines upon them as well as upon the stony ground class, and the cares of this life would overwhelm them as they do others; but, by the grace of God, the thorns are kept down, and the hot sun of persecution becomes, with the "showers of blessing," an assistance to their development as children of the Kingdom.

The first necessity, then, that any may be recovered from the condition of ignorance and alienation from God is a measure of enlightenment; for "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10: 14.) Sufficient light is required to make plain to the individual concerned the lost and ruined condition in which all the descendants of Adam are by nature, hence his need of a Redeemer; that Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but should have everlasting life; and that Jesus Christ both died and rose and revived, that He might be the Lord of the dead and living. (Rom. 14: 9.) These verities realised, and the divine provision under the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sins through faith in the Redeemer being gratefully accepted and confessed to, the newly-made Believer is no longer in a state of alienation from God, but is "made nigh by the blood of Christ." He has "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. 2: 12, 13; Rom. 5: 1; 10: 8-10.) He is justified freely from all things, the sins of the past being forgiven, and his faith is counted unto him for righteousness. Thus God can be just, and yet the justifier of him who believes in Jesus. (Acts 13: 38, 39; Rom. 3: 24-26.) This state or condition of remission and acceptance with God through faith in Jesus Christ is called Justification.—See Chart, line AD and line RJ.

Whoever takes these steps is said to be "born of God;" that is, he is considered as God's son, and as having begun a new life. (2 Cor. 5: 17.) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John 5: 1.) "Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3: 26.) But the Believer, thus starting the Christian life, must not halt, and consider that there is nothing more to be done. The Apostle says, addressing believers (1 Thes. 4: 3), "This is the will of God, even your

"Sanctification"

The new convert, accepting Christ as Lord, and accepted by God as His son through Christ, has much

to learn. He is as a new-born babe, requiring the sincere milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby. He also needs experience, in order that his faith may grow stronger, and his character be established in righteousness.—1 Peter 2: 1, 2.

To sanctify means to make holy. This may be done ceremonially by setting apart to a holy purpose or by ceremonial cleansing; or it may be done morally by purifying the heart and life. The condition of justification before the bar of God must be maintained by continued faith, and by a consistent daily life; and to this end it is necessary to purge out the leaven of evil which pervades the "old man," that the life may be pure and holy. "Be ye holy, for I am holy." He "that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (1 Peter 1: 16; 1 John 3: 3; 2 Cor. 7: 1.) The Word of God is the means employed in the sanctification, or setting apart to holiness, of the Believer. "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth"; "the washing of water by the Word."—John 17: 17; Eph. 5: 26.

Again addressing Believers already "Saints" or holy ones, the Apostle says—"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12: 1, 2.) Thus is the Believer admonished to devote his body to holiness rather than, as formerly, to the desires of the flesh. (Rom. 6: 14-18.) He must "Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth," etc., and "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering," etc.—Col. 3: 5-17.

The Hope of Glory

Those who are justified by faith, and therefore accepted as the sons of God, have not only peace with God, and many other spiritual advantages in the present life, but they have also a hope for the future life, most wonderful and precious, even the "hope of the glory of God," "called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," to be "like Him," and to "see Him as He is."—Rom. 5: 2; 2 Thes. 2: 14; 1 John 3: 2.

The Apostle views the truly converted Believer as a "new creature" (2 Cor. 5: 17), just beginning life and the formation of character. He exhorts, "Be not conformed to this world!" And how little heed has been given by Christendom generally, and by many Christians in particular, to this exhortation! Conformity to this age and its spirit has been sought by Christendom, instead of avoided. The excuse given has been that something must be done to attract and hold the people; therefore, instead of remaining separate from the present evil world, and its evil institutions, Christendom has adopted a good many of the "attractions," thus corrupting itself without benefitting the world. Losing sight of the purpose of God that during this age a people was to be "gathered out," Christendom has also, with most lamentable results, forgotten that the Gospel of Christ is the appointed power of God unto salvation, and that it is capable of attracting as many as the Lord requires for His present purpose.

To yield up the life to God and holiness means that a great conflict must be waged, for the "flesh" devoted to His service even unto death is not in accord with the sacrifice; neither is the spirit of the world in harmony with a sanctified life; and the "Prince of the Power of the Air" is most determinedly opposed to everyone who seeks to do the will of God. Notwithstanding these powerful enemies, however, the Believer need not fear nor be discouraged, because, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"—Eph. 2: 2; Rom. 8: 31.

The immediate object of the Christian life is that the Believer may become a copy of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8: 29, 17, 18.) It was predestinated by God that He would have a number of such "copies," the selection of the individuals being accomplished by the above described process. And a special course of discipline must be undergone. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. 12: 6.) Implicit obedience must be learned (Heb. 5: 7-9; Phil. 2: 12), and the experiences of life, as well as the promises of the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit, work in them, as agencies of God and of Christ, to cleanse and perfect the character. (Phil. 2: 13-15; Eph. 5: 26, 27; Rom. 8: 11; John 17: 17.) Only those who submit willingly to this severe training can be considered seriously in the race for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—Phil. 3: 7-14.

The importance of the development of the character-copy of God's Son in the Believers who have first received the New Covenant blessing of "forgiveness of sins" is most forcibly stated in 2 Peter 1: 4-15. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, fortitude, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, love. . . Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for *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." And again, in Heb. 12: 14, the extreme importance of this is emphasised. "Follow. . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." If we become like Him in character now, we shall, according to the terms of the high calling, become like Him in person, and shall see His face, shall follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, always to be with Him and share His glory. (1 John 3: 2; Rev. 14: 1-4.) While, as already discerned, there will be vast multitudes of others saved, they will be on earth, human beings. The "little flock" of "first fruits" will alone become joint heirs with the Redeemer in His heavenly inheritance.

The way of sanctification is difficult. Just as Jesus suffered for righteousness, so are genuine Believers in Him invited to "follow His steps" (1 Peter 2: 19-23); "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." These are not easy steps in which to follow, for the tendency of the old nature is to do the reverse of

these things; nevertheless, His promised grace is sufficient for all who really desire and are endeavouring in all sincerity to make their calling and election sure; and God is faithful and just to forgive us our trespasses, when confessed, even as we forgive them that trespass against us.

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him"; this is the gracious promise. If any expect to attain the reigning position without having experienced present suffering, they must be disappointed. And not every sort of suffering answers to this, but only "if so be that we *suffer with Him,* that we may be also glorified together." (2 Tim. 2: 12; Rom. 8: 17.) As stated in 1 Peter 2. suffering for our own faults does not count, but suffering for righteousness' sake, as Jesus our forerunner suffered, while enduring hardship in the service of the truth, is what counts. Not many are of this mind (Phil. 2: 5-9); therefore not many will be glorified with Him, but only a "little flock." There is no hint that the conditions are variable, so that some may enter into the glories of the Kingdom without having endured the suffering; there is but the one way, that in which our Redeemer walked. But even in the sufferings we may rejoice, as did the Apostle, saying, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the Church: whereof I am made a minister, . . . whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." "I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."—Col. 1: 24-29; 2 Tim. 2: 3, 8-10.

As the glories promised to the overcomers (Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17, 26; 3: 5, 12, 21) are great, and as "grace sufficient" for each trial and difficulty is assured (1 Pet. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 10: 13; 2 Cor. 12: 9), it is but just that the penalty attached to wilful apostasy is correspondingly severe. In Heb. 6: 4-9; 10: 26-31, the teaching is that "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come," are in a condition of great responsibility. For such to persist in sin, and thus crucify afresh the Son of God, indicates the possession of so hardened a disposition that renewal to repentance would be impossible, even under the benign influences of the Kingdom Age. To those who, through the cares of life, or through discouragement or weakness, have not been as faithful and zealous as they should have been, and who sincerely regret past errors, and earnestly desire to make a fresh start in the service of God, these words are not a condemnation; for the very fact that they are penitent and desirous to do better gives evidence that it is possible to renew them, and therefore that they have not sinned the "sin unto death." (1 John 5: 12-17; 2 Pet. 2: 17-22; Jude 12, 13; Matt. 12: 31, 32.) Forgiveness is arranged for as described in 1 John 1: 9; 2: 1, 2, on the basis of the New Covenant, which was ratified by the blood of Jesus Christ, who is "the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Only a comparatively few out of earth's billions have had the enlightenment above referred to, for only a small proportion have heard the gospel; and of those who have heard something about Jesus and salvation, only a minority have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have experienced the powers of the coming age for the eradication of sin and the development of righteousness.

It is not suprising that some asked, "Are there few that be saved?" Our Lord in reply gave an explanation and exhortation, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate!" (Luke 13: 23-30.) If the conditions seem severe, compare them with the reward, and join in the sentiment of the Apostle, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 18.) If the requirements are too great for our feeble strength, let us not be discouraged even by this. If we had only our own strength to depend on, the best of us must fail; having God's strength made perfect in our weakness, the feeblest must succeed. "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."—Rom. 8: 37.

The Gifts of the Spirit

A moment's digression from the main topic, to consider the "gifts of the Holy Ghost," mentioned in Heb. 2: 4, will not be amiss. Considerable attention is being attracted to these in our day, because some are claiming the possession and operation of these gifts. The statement is frequently made that, had the Church not relapsed into worldliness, she would have been the happy possessor and demonstrator of these gifts throughout the age, from Pentecost till now. Whence, of course, arises the claim that those who possess, or say they possess, these gifts to-day (though so far as we are informed the present-day claims centre about the gifts of "tongues" and "healing"), are superior in spirituality to others less fortunate than themselves. From all parts of Christendom, and even from heathendom, the accounts of wonderful experiences are published; therefore it behooves God's people to understand what His Word says about these "gifts," lest they be taken in a snare of the adversary.

Without doubt, the Church has relapsed into great worldliness; and it is very saddening that one must acknowledge that it grows worse instead of better. And yet, this worldliness is not the reason why the "gifts" of the Holy Spirit have ceased to be present in the Church. Even in the midst of the sins of Christendom, God has always had some, if only a few, that were faithful to Him, and it cannot be supposed that they, any more than the faithful of the present generation, would have been deprived of the "gifts" on account of the evil doing of the majority, had it been God's will that these "gifts" should continue in the Church during the whole of the age.

Distinction must also be made between the Holy Spirit itself, which is God's gift through Christ to every Believer (Acts 2: 38; 1 Cor. 2: 10-12; Rom. 8: 9; Eph. 1: 13), and those special manifestations of divine power which were called "gifts of the Spirit." —Rom. 12: 6-8; 1 Cor. 12: 4.

That the "gifts" were part of the divine testimony to the authenticity of the new teaching of the "great salvation," which "began to be spoken by the Lord," has already been noted in Heb. 2: 4. Might it not be

reasonably supposed that after the new teaching was well established, and there was no further need for miraculous demonstrations on its behalf, these "gifts," "signs," and "wonders" would be withdrawn, and this quite apart from considerations of the spiritual condition of the Church?

That this was the divine arrangement is made clear by consideration of the method employed for the bestowing of the spiritual "gifts." While all the believers of apostolic times received at least one "gift," whether of healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, or some other (1 Cor. 12: 4-11), there was only one way by which such gifts could be communicated; namely, by the laying on of an Apostle's hands, the only exceptions being at Pentecost and at the conversion of Cornelius' household—the latter being essential to establish in the minds of the Apostles themselves the fact that the Gentiles should be "fellow-heirs." This special honour and privilege of being able to confer "gifts" was granted only to the "twelve apostles of the Lamb." There were talented evangelists in those days, under whose preaching many were converted to Christ; but these could not impart a "gift," although they could use such as had been imparted to them.

Philip preached Christ in Samaria, and many, including Simon Magus, believed; and all wondered at the miracles which were worked through him. When the apostles at Jerusalem heard how the Word had been received in Samaria, they sent Peter and John, who prayed for the new converts that they might receive the Holy Ghost; for although these believers had been baptised, the Spirit had not fallen on them. Then the apostles laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. "And when Simon saw that *through laying on of the apostles' hands the* Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts 8: 5-19.) Simon marvelled at the miracles done by Philip, but he wondered still more at the privilege the apostles had *to impart the power* to do miracles; and this latter ability he desired to buy.

Since only the apostles of Jesus had the power to confer these gifts of tongues, healing, etc., and since there were but twelve apostles, and no succession arranged for, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, revealing but twelve names, as Apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21: 14), it follows that after the death of the last Apostle there would be no one in the Church with power to confer spiritual gifts: therefore, believers converted after the death of the last of the Apostles could not receive such gifts. At the time of the decease of the last Apostle there would be many Christians in possession of these gifts: but eventually these would finish their course, and when the last of these had passed away, the miraculous endowments of prophecies, tongues, etc., would have "failed" (literally "vanished away") from the Church. (1 Cor. 13: 8.) It must be concluded, therefore, that the "gifts" of the Spirit were intended only as a temporary help, to start the Church on its way, and that by about the end of the second century, A.D., they, having fulfilled their mission, had "vanished away."

The demonstration on the higher plane of the Spirit's presence with the Church in and since those days has been in the power to understand and to expound the Gospel and in the possession and exhibition of the "fruits." (John 15: 1-5; Gal. 5: 22, 23.) These are of gradual growth in each faithful, consecrated one. Of the "fruits" of character our Lord said, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7: 15-20); and of the ability to understand and to teach the "deep things of God," we read, "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; and He will show you things to come." "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you." (John 16: 13; 1 John 2: 27.) This indicates that the correct understanding of the Scriptures and the teaching office are confined to the true Church, and that no Christian can expect to receive the real interpretation from any outside source. The world by wisdom knows not God, and His ways are foolishness unto them; but in the Church God reveals His purposes. "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets [i.e., expounders], thirdly teachers," etc., for public service; and each member has the privilege not only of believing and rejoicing in the truth, but also, as he has ability and opportunity, of declaring it for the exhortation, edification and comfort of others. (Rom. 12: 3-8; 1 Cor. 12: 28; 14: 1-5; Heb. 5: 12-14; Jer. 23: 28.) Instead of walking by the sight of miracles and wonders, God's people have been commanded to walk by faith, relying upon His Word, and its sanctifying power, for the Scriptures are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus, and they have been given "that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."—2 Tim. 3: 14-17.

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize.

"Oh, watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

"Ne'er think the victory won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
The work of faith will not be done,
Till thou obtain the crown."

We Shall be Like Him

The glorious hope of the Church is referred to by John, the beloved disciple, who enjoyed greater intimacy than any of the others with the Lord. He says, "We shall be like Him;" but, while we rejoice in this, we must observe that he adds—"it doth not yet appear what we shall be." However, "we shall see Him *as He is.*" (1 John 3: 2.) All this shows plainly that "as He is" is very different from "as He was." If He were still a being of flesh, only somewhat more glorious than He was while on earth, the beloved Apostle could not have used such expressions. His language also reminds us of the several appearances of our Lord to the disciples after His resurrection. If John, who witnessed several of these appearances, could say, after fifty years, that he had not seen Jesus "as He is," therefore, although we

expect to be like Him, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, it obliges us to acknowledge that by the several appearances which our Lord made to His disciples during the forty days after His resurrection He did not exhibit to them His glorious Person, partaking of the divine glory, but, as all spirit beings could do (except those bound in chains of darkness—Jude 6), He used fleshly bodies temporarily, when He desired to manifest Himself to their sight or touch. (John 20: 19-30.) The bodies assumed were dissolved when the purpose of assumption was accomplished.—Gen. 18: 1-22; 19: 1, 10-16; Judges 13: 2-21.

Careful perusal of the accounts of our risen Lord's manifestations of Himself show that He was not, as a rule, recognised by the sight of the eye, but by something He said or did, thus showing that the bodies assumed were not the same in each case, and sustaining the Apostle's teaching that they had not seen Jesus "as He is." By these appearances the disciples were able to realise that Jesus was no longer a human, but was now a spirit Being. But, being filled with the thought that a man could not survive the sight of a spirit (Judges 13: 21, 22), they were on one occasion much affrighted. (Luke 24: 36-43.) But the Lord comforted them, and gave them to understand that what they had seen was not spirit, but flesh. A spirit is not composed of flesh and bones, as they saw Him having at that time. Yet John's word that he had not seen Jesus "as He is" obliges us to believe that the fleshly bodies in which our Lord manifested Himself to them were not His proper spirit body. When such an one as John writes afer this manner, we must needs abide by his word.

Saul of Tarsus came nearest of any to viewing our Lord's glory. This happened on the road to Damascus, and he was stricken with blindness by the brightness. His reference to the incident is striking—"Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (1 Cor. 15: 8.) The intimation is that as Jesus, since His resurrection, is "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see," the vision which Paul had of the divine glory of Jesus was sent upon him before he was prepared for it. Here again John's words help us, also Paul's: "We shall be *like Him;* for we shall see Him *as He is;*" "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; . . . we shall all be changed;" "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. 15: 50, 51, 49.) The words of the Saviour to Nicodemus give the same teaching on the difference between the human and spirit natures, showing that the two are not associated, but are forever kept separate and distinct. "That which is born of the flesh is *flesh;* and that which is born of the Spirit is *spirit.*" (John 3: 6.) We, at the present time, are flesh, because we have been born of the flesh. If we follow the way of faith and consecration, the High Calling open during the Gospel Age, we shall be born of the Spirit, and shall then no more be flesh, but shall be spirit beings, joint heirs of the heavenly inheritance. Our Lord was put to death flesh, for the purpose of giving the Ransom; at His resurrection, He was quickened in the spirit (1 Pet. 3: 18, Revised Version), and is no longer flesh, as John teaches. After His resurrection He could and did come and go as the wind, invisible to His disciples and others, except when He chose to manifest Himself. So shall the members of His Body be, when born of the Spirit.—John 3: 8.

The Scriptures use the figure of the natural birth to illustrate two distinct spiritual truths: (1) The regeneration or present experience of the child of God, and (2) the resurrection change or birth. The Christian life is illustrated by the infantile state, by childhood, and by maturity. 1 Pet. 1: 23 speaks of the believer as "born again," as a result of the operation of the Word of God, he having been previously dead in trespasses and sins; and 1 Pet. 2: 2 describes the necessary food to be the same Word of God. John speaks of "young men," "fathers," and "little children." (1 John 2: 12-14.) But from the standpoint of John 3: 3-8, the idea is the birth of the resurrection, for only then will the believer have experienced that change of physical ability which will enable him to transport himself invisibly. Our Lord entered a room after His resurrection, "the doors being shut"; and everyone born of the Spirit will be able similarly to come and go like the wind.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit."—1 Cor. 2: 9, 10.

Blessed promises are given
To the overcoming soul
Who amid the world's allurements
Gains o'er self and sin control.

He who to the end endureth
In God's temple shall abide;
In His secret place most holy
From the wrath to come shall hide.

In communion with the Saviour
He shall walk in spotless white,
Feasting on the hidden manna
In the heavenly city bright.

In the presence of the angels
Christ the Lord his name will own;
Free from sin and death forever,
He shall share the victor's throne.

—*Zion's Glad Songs.*

Shadows of Calvary

"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Gal. 6: 14.

THE DIVINE WORD, as already noted, expresses much of its teaching in symbolic language, such as parables and figuratively expressed prophecies. But, besides these, there is a deal of typical incident and arrangement intended to assist God's people to a better understanding of His purposes. That is, certain persons and companies of persons have been caused to do various actions

illustrative of God's dealings in respect to the promised salvation from sin, though the typical arrangements thus carried out were not in themselves able actually to take away sins, but rather by their constant repetition showed their inability to do this.

It is not wise, however, to suppose that every incident and personage in the Old Testament was in some sense typical of greater things to come. The safe way is to seek what the inspired writers of the New Testament pronounced to be typical, and to base our thoughts on that information.

Israel as a Type

God used Israel very much in this illustrative manner, and a very elaborate system of types is found in their arrangements and ceremonies under the Mosaic Law. Some of their experiences and the purpose of them are referred to in 1 Cor. 10: 11—"All these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." That is to say, we may hope to get from these types more actual instruction and benefit than did the participators in the typical incidents. Yet types are never to be considered illustrations of doctrine without the sanction of plain statements of Scripture; and whoever bases a teaching on an interpretation of a type that is not authorised by the Word prepares for himself confusion of face. As William Tyndale wrote, centuries ago, in his quaint language—

"Allegory proveth nothing, neither can do. For it is not the Scripture, but an ensample or similitude borrowed of [by the†] Scripture, to declare a text or a conclusion of the Scripture more expressly, and to root it and grave it in the heart. For a similitude or an ensample doth print a thing much deeper in the wits of a man than doth a plain speaking, and leaveth behind him [it] as it were a sting to prick him forward and to awake him withal. Moreover, if I could not prove with an open text that which the allegory doth express, then were the allegory a thing to be jested at, and of no greater value than a tale of Robin Hood." "In many places, where the text seemeth at the first chop hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and often reading together, make it plain enough."—Biography, by Demaus, pp. 198, 363.

In his "Preface to Leviticus," Tyndale wrote—

"We had need to take heed everywhere that we be not beguiled with false allegories, whether they be drawn out of the New Testament or the Old, . . . but namely [especially] in this book [Pentateuch]. Here, a man had need to put on all his spectacles, and to arm himself against invisible spirits. . . . Beware of allegories; for there is not a more handsome or apt thing to beguile withal than an allegory; nor a more subtle and pestilent thing in the world to persuade a false matter, than an allegory. And, contrariwise, there is not a better, vehementer, or mightier thing to make a man understand withal, than an allegory. For allegories make a man quick-witted and print [imprint] wisdom in him, and make it to abide where bare words go but in at one ear, and out at the other."—Demaus, pp. 230-232.

The Shadow

Our Lord's sacrifice in various aspects was represented in the typical sacrifices offered for Israel, the typical people. He was foreshadowed by the Passover Lamb, and so marvelously did He fulfil this type that He died on the very day of the eating of the Passover. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us." His sacrifice was also foreshadowed by the Atonement Day offerings for sin, and so accurately did He fulfil this type that the beginning of His ministry, when He came to do the Father's Will (Heb. 10: 5-10), was at or about the time of the offering of the typical Atonement Day sacrifices.*

The sin offerings of the typical Day of Atonement are fully described in Leviticus 16. A bullock was slain; portions of the carcase were burnt on the altar in the court of the Tabernacle, and some of the blood was carried into the Holiest, and was sprinkled upon and before the mercy-seat, where the divine Presence was represented by the supernatural light. The remainder of the carcase, with the hide, hoofs, etc., was burned outside the camp, the body of the bullock being thus completely destroyed. Two goats were presented before the Lord at the gate of the Court. One was chosen by lot, and was dealt with in precisely the same manner as the bullock had been before it. Some of the blood of the bullock and of the goat was put upon the altar in the court to cleanse it. The bullock was for the sins of the high priest and his house—the house or tribe of Levi; the goat was for the sins of the people; that is, the other eleven tribes. The second goat was called a "scapegoat." Over it the high priest confessed "all the sins of the children of Israel," and then sent it away by the hand of a "fit man" ("a man that is in readiness"—R.V.) into the wilderness. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited"; that is, a region "cut off," whence it would not readily find its way back.†

The Substance

Concerning the actual atonement for the sins of the whole world, we are informed that our Lord Jesus Christ is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2: 2.) This statement is plain and clear, and if we were left without specific information as to the interpretation of the typical sacrifices, it would be our duty to explain them in harmony with the teaching of this plain statement, which can be rein-

*It is not stated in so many words that our Lord's ministry began at the Atonement Day time; but if He was "cut off" in the midst of the week of years, His ministry was of three-and-a-half years' duration. Counting back from the Passover, when He died, this length of time would bring us to the Atonement season, as the time of year when His ministry began. Thus is our Redeemer's death beautifully identified with two of the great sacrifices which particularly typified it. Our Lord's death, as the sacrifice over which the New Covenant was ratified (Matt. 26: 28), is also associated with the time of the Law Covenant Sacrifice, which typified it (Ex. 19: 1, 11: 24: 3-8), inasmuch as Pentecost, when the Spirit was given as the formal sign of the glorification of Jesus and the acceptance of Believers under a new Covenant (2 Cor. 3: 6), came at the season at which the Mosaic Law Covenant was ratified.—Lev. 23: 15, 16: Heb. 9: 19, 20.

†According to Nevin's "Biblical Antiquities," the total number of sacrifices offered yearly, in the stated services of the sanctuary for the whole congregation of Israel, was 114 bullocks, 40 rams, 1,103 lambs, and 32 goats. To these must be added the probably far larger numbers of various animals which were brought by individuals as peace-, thank- and trespass-offerings. Present day sceptics look back at this with disgust. They forget that few of these animals were totally destroyed in the ceremonies; most of them were eaten by the priests who did the service (Lev. 6: 24-30), and they were thus provided with a portion of their food. The voluntary offerings were mostly eaten by the donors thereof. Would not those who look upon the Law with disgust on account of its sacrifices do well to consider the economy of administration thus arranged?

forced by many others. But God's spirit has not left His people without help in respect to these things, for the bullock and the two goats of the ceremonial day of atonement are clearly referred to in the New Testament, and the explanations there presented are to be received, because given by authority.

One of these explanations is given in Heb. 7: 26, 27 Here our Lord is referred to as the great High Priest, not according to the Aaronic order under the Law Covenant, but according to the order of Melchisedec, under a New Covenant. (Vss. 12-14.) He is Priest "after the power of an endless life"; and inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest, by so much was Jesus made "surety of a better covenant," that is, the New Covenant. (Vss. 16, 20, 22.) Then, referring to the typical atonement sacrifices, the Apostle explains that Jesus, our High Priest, has not the daily or continuous need "to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's," as those high priests did annually on the Day of Atonement, "for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." (Vs. 27.) Being Himself without sin, and being also the sacrifice, it is manifest that our Lord did not require an offering to be made for Himself; neither did he require to be offered separately for several classes, as the bullock was offered for the Levitical tribe, and the goat for the remaining eleven tribes, etc.

The text in Heb. 7: 27 is very explicit. It refers to the typical atonement sacrifice in both its parts, and then in no uncertain words describes their antitype, telling what was done, who did it, when it was done, and what it was that was represented by the bullock and the goat; "*this He did once, when he offered up Himself.*" Analyse these last words, comparing them with that which they explain, and note the explicitness with which the Apostle states himself on this subject.

"THIS"—Offering sacrifice for the whole world, including those who would become His joint heirs.

"HE"—Jesus, Himself, our High Priest.

"DID"—Past tense; action completed some time before A.D. 64, when the Book of Hebrews is supposed to have been written.

"ONCE"—Greek *ephapax* means "Once for all," no repetition required.

"WHEN HE OFFERED UP HIMSELF"—No supplements or additions required.

He is Himself the "Ransom for All," and is the antitype in His own Person of the typical bullock and goat. It was "finished" on Calvary, as intimated by the miraculous rending of the temple veil at the time of our Lord's death, this showing that the typical usefulness of that veil and of the typical mercy-seat behind it was now past.—Mark 15: 38; Luke 23: 45.

A further explanation is given in Heb. 9: 12, where the Apostle, again mentioning the blood of the typical goats and calves (bullocks), shows that the blood of Christ, the High Priest, is the antitype of these, and that by it He went into the Divine Presence, "having obtained eternal redemption." The words "for us," being in italics in the Authorised Version, were supplied by the translators, and were not in the original. They really impose a limitation not authorised by the preceding words or the explanation in Heb. 7: 27, where it is made plain that His sacrifice was not only "for us," Believers of the Gospel Age, but also for the whole world, typified by all the people, for whom the goat sacrifice was offered.

In Heb. 9: 13, 14, reference is again made to the typical bullocks and goats, and to them are added the ashes of an heifer, used to accomplish the typical cleansing that might be required by individuals from time to time after the atonement for past sins had been made. The blood of Christ, *who offered Himself* (note again the past tense and the reference to Jesus' finished offering), is set forth as the *antitype* of all these; thus showing its efficacy, not only to atone for past sins, but also to cleanse from present transgressions.—1 John 1: 7-9; Num. 19: 1-22.

In Heb. 10: 1-4 is found another reference to the typical atonement offerings, and the impossibility of sin being removed by them. "Wherefore when He [Jesus] cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared Me . . . 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. . . . This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. . . . By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified [literally, being sanctified]." (Heb. 10: 5-14.) Thus again is the one sacrifice of Jesus affirmed to be the antitype of both bullock and goat.

Sanctifying the People with His Own Blood

In Heb. 13: 11, 12, the teaching is repeated, more emphatically, if possible, than before. "The bodies of those beasts [bulls and goats] whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin are burned without the camp. Wherefore, Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." It has already been noted that the sacrifice offered "for the people" was a goat. In this passage, the Apostle refers to it direct—that He might sanctify the *people* with *His own* blood"—thus showing that Jesus is to be regarded as the antitype of the offering for the people. Again, as in Heb. 7: 27, is the action placed in the past tense, as referring to what He did—"suffered without the gate." This and the preceding references by the inspired writer to the typical sacrifices and their antitype are clear, plain and straightforward, leaving no doubt as to his meaning, and as to the mind of the Spirit, that Jesus Himself should be regarded as the antitype of the several typical sacrifices for sin. Doubtless, this is why the reference to His one sacrifice is put in the plural, in Heb. 9: 23. Various phases and views of His one sacrifice were foreshadowed by the bullock, the goat, the ashes of the heifer, and by other sacrifices, and from that standpoint each phase of the one sacrifice would be regarded as a separate and distinct sacrifice, though all were consummated at one time and in one Person.

Bearing His Reproach

In Heb. 13: 13-16, the Apostle speaks of us going forth to Jesus without the camp, bearing His reproach.

Does this mean that we are to consider ourselves and our sacrifices (Rom. 12: 1) as sin offerings, as it were the goat following the bullock? It cannot mean this, for the goat sacrifice has already been referred to in verse 12 as having been fulfilled by Jesus. We are therefore effectually excluded from considering ourselves in such a light. That we are invited to follow in the footsteps of the Redeemer, suffering for righteousness' sake, is most plainly set forth in the Word of God. (1 Peter 2: 21-23; 4: 13-16.) And just here is the point of distinction that needs to be observed, if confusion is to be avoided, and we are not to be made ashamed. Our Lord's sufferings and death were (1) as a ransom for the sins of the whole world, the sin offering for His own house, and for all the people, as represented in the bullock and the goat (Heb. 7: 27; 13: 12; 1 John 2: 2); (2) for righteousness' sake, enduring much contradiction of sinners against Himself, ostracism, being cast out, etc. It is written (Heb. 5: 8), "Though He were a Son, yet *learned He obedience* by the things which He suffered." This second aspect of His sufferings is left us for an *example*, that we should follow His steps, and let this mind be in us, which was also in Christ Jesus. To this aspect of His sufferings did our blessed Saviour refer when on several occasions He emphasised the necessity of taking up the cross to follow Him, and the further fact that if His name had been cast out as evil, His followers should expect their names to be similarly cast out. The reproaches heaped upon Jesus by a time-serving priesthood and people have been heaped upon His followers because they acknowledge Him as their Lord and as the true sacrifice for sin; as he suffered "outside," so have His followers been ostracised and persecuted for His Name's sake, and to this the Apostle refers in Heb. 13: 13. If Jesus learned obedience by the things He suffered, let us also learn obedience by what we are graciously allowed to suffer with Him. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye." To the extent that you are made partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; and glorify God on this behalf.—1 Pet. 3: 14; 4: 13, 14.

The sacrifices which we offer are not in the nature of offerings for sin, but rather the thankofferings of prayer and praise. "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His Name." (Heb. 13: 13-16.) Let us then, with all our hearts, appreciate the privilege of bearing reproaches similar to those heaped upon Him, in the hope that we shall in the end be made partakers of His glory. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." (2 Tim. 2: 12.) If we be faithful, even unto death, we shall receive a crown of life.—2 Tim. 2: 11; Rev. 3: 21; 2: 10; Rom. 6: 5

Jesus as the Scapegoat

After the sacrifice of the bullock and goat, on the typical day of atonement, the high priest confessed the sins of the children of Israel, priests and people, over the head of the live goat, and sent him, thus laden, by the hand of a "man of opportunity" (marginal reading) into the wilderness, into a land "cut off," from which the goat would not readily find its way back. This is a manner of representing the bearing away of the sins atoned for by the bullock and the goat, and its antitype must be sought in the Scriptures first of all. If no explanation be found there, one may be suggested from another source; but if the Scriptures give an explanation it is to be accepted without reservation, and the student need seek no further. Fortunately, there are Scriptural allusions to this type, which beautifully explain it, and help us indeed to realise that "whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Rom. 15: 4.

In Isaiah 53: 6 it is written, "Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"; or, as the marginal reading puts it, "hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on Him." This is a prophecy concerning our Lord at His first advent, and the allusion to the type of the "scapegoat," upon which "all the iniquities of the children of Israel" were laid, is manifest.

In John 1: 29 are found the inspired words of John the Baptist, who, pointing to Jesus, said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which beareth away [marginal reading] the sin of the world." This is another allusion to the "scapegoat" laden with the sins and transgressions of the children of Israel. An apparent difficulty arises from the use of the word "Lamb," whereas the typical animal that bore away the sins was a goat. Some have thought that John the Baptist alluded to the Passover Lamb, also a type of Jesus; but a moment's consideration will show that he could not have had the Passover Lamb in mind, as it was not a live animal, carrying away sins, but was slain. Moreover, the Passover Lamb was not a sin offering, therefore could not have been in John's mind in connection with the taking away of sins. The Passover Lamb was for food, to prepare the Israelites for the journey out of Egypt, and it is a representation of Christ dying to become spiritual food and sustenance for His people, as well as to provide the sprinkled blood for protection from the destroying wrath of God.*

John the Baptist used the word "Lamb" in harmony with the well-known fact that the word translated "lamb" in Ex. 12 is used for both sheep and goats, and that lambs and kids were interchangeable for sacrificial purposes under the Jewish law. (Exodus 12: 3-5; Lev. 5: 6.) It is also to be particularly noted that John spoke this testimony of Jesus at the beginning of Jesus' ministry; that is to say, about October, or the time of the Atonement Day. This being so, both he and his hearers would have in mind the goat being led away by the hand of a "fit man," and would understand that John's allusion to Jesus was in some sense to be connected with that typical ceremony. Having in mind the time of year, we must see that they could not have thought otherwise. John's words, therefore, come down to us as divinely provided assistance to the understanding of the type of the "scapegoat."

*All this, and more, that is signified by the Passover Lamb—"Christ, our Passover, sacrificed for us"—and reasons why His death should be remembered with the emblems of wine and unleavened bread annually on the date corresponding to Nisan 15, when the Lord's Supper was instituted, and which was, by divine reckoning, the day of His death, is explained in the book, "The Church and Its Ceremonies," as announced in Book List.

Bearing Away the Sins

In 1 Peter 2: 24 is found a most beautiful allusion to the "scapegoat" type, as fulfilled by our blessed Redeemer—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." The reading of the margin makes this plainer than does the ordinary text—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body *to* the tree." Other translations of this text are:—

"Who His own self carried up our sins in His body to the tree.—*Revised Version, margin, Alford, De Wette, Huther.*

"Who carried up our sins Himself in His own body to the tree."—*Emphatic Diaglott.*

"Who our sins Himself bare up in His body unto the tree."—*J. B. Rotherham.*

"And He took away all our sins, and in His body lifted them to the cross."—*Syriac (Murdoch's).*

Could anything be more striking than these Scriptures, or more evidently intended "for our learning" in the study of these wonderful types? The "scapegoat" was led away by the hand of a fit man, or man of opportunity, in readiness for the work, to the uninhabited wilderness.

Our blessed Lord was led away by the Roman government, the "man of opportunity" for the occasion, the power of capital punishment having been taken from the Jews. He, carrying our sins—the sins of all mankind, past, present and future—was led to the land uninhabited, the wilderness of death; and as the goat would not easily have found its way back, so could our Redeemer not find His own way back, but He was raised from the dead by the power of God, His Father.—Acts 3: 15; 5: 30.

Assurance of Sins Forgiven

Shortly before His ascension our Lord opened the understandings of the disciples, that they might understand the Scriptures; and He said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24: 45-48.) Just as under the Law Covenant, on the day of atonement, the Israelite, in order to receive the benefit of the atonement offerings, was enjoined to afflict his soul before the Lord, and to acknowledge the sacrifices as being made for his sins (Lev. 16: 29-34), so under the New Covenant, repentance and acceptance of Christ and His ever efficacious sacrifice for sins are necessary before the sinner may consider his sins as forgiven. Under the New Covenant the affliction of soul does not require sackcloth and ashes, as was customary in those days, but it does require sincere regret for the sins of the past, with reparation as far as possible for wrong done, and determination with the Lord's help to lead a new life. One who so humbles himself, and applies for forgiveness, may have full assurance of receiving it.

The disciples, according to the command, preached the remission of sins first at Jerusalem; and from there the message extended over all the then known world—to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. (Acts 2: 38; 26: 20; Rom. 1: 16.) And as a token, and assurance, that the sins were forgiven, the Lord sent to each believer the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2: 33, 38; 3: 26; Heb. 10: 15; Gal. 3: 2, 14; Eph. 1: 13.) This assurance and the Holy Spirit have been available to all sincere believers up to the present day. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. . . . our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation." "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God."—Rom. 5: 6-11, 1.

As for the Kingdom Age, now near at hand, enlightenment will be given on a still larger scale, when circumstances will be much more favourable to right living than they are now. But the blessing of sins forgiven, and of the Holy Spirit as a token of that forgiveness, will be given only to those who believe in that day. There will be no prize of glory, honour and incorruptibility held before the people then, as there is now. The prize then will be restoration to perfection of human nature, and the enjoyment forever of God's favor in a beautified earth from which all trace of sin and death will have been removed.—Rev. 21: 1-4.

Thanks be unto God for the ever efficacious Sin Offering, and also for the beautiful types of it which were arranged for our instruction!

The Burdenbearer

"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.

"But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

"My faith would lay her hand
On that dear Head of Thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sin.

"My soul looks back to see
The burden Thou didst bear,
When hanging on th' accursed tree,
And knows her guilt was there."

—*Isaac Watts.*

Salvation and the Covenants

PHILOSOPHY has at all times engaged the attention of man. The desire to know the ins and outs of various subjects, the reasons for this or that phenomenon, and the principles governing various actions has kept busy all but the most limited intellects of humanity. Some have occupied themselves with minor questions; others have sought to solve immense problems; some have dealt only with

affairs of the senses; others have endeavoured to explain the higher subjects of morality, life, and death.

The power of thought over the lives of men is universally recognised. Thoughts harboured express themselves in actions. Actions repeated form habits. Habits make up character. Character determines destiny. The beginning of all this, which has so widespread and enduring an influence, is in the mind. How important, therefore, that right thoughts on all subjects, particularly right thoughts about God, His Purpose and His Plan of Action, should be received and entertained by all Christians. These thoughts of Truth, derived from the Bible, are the power to transform and sanctify the Believer, causing the divine likeness to be more and more manifest in him, while the unbeliever, groping about in a benighted condition, appreciates not the divine likeness, and does not grow in it. How can he, being ignorant of it? It is surprising that the remnants of the divine image remaining in the hearts of various individuals have not been more marred than they are.—John 17: 17; Rom. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 18; 1 Cor. 1: 20, 21; Rom. 1: 20-22; Eph. 4: 17, 18.

Affecting eternal interests and the divine programme in respect to them, the subject of Salvation and the Covenants is worthy the most attentive consideration and painstaking inquiry. The result of such investigation, if conducted in submission to the Divine Spirit and Word, cannot be other than beneficial to him who seeks with the key of knowledge to unlock the treasures of wisdom.

Salvation

In previous chapters the necessity for Salvation has been seen, also the fact that God has provided a way for men to obtain it, through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. All of Adam's descendants were involved by him in sin and death. The wisest and best of the race have made laws and suggested remedies, but have been unable to eradicate the disease or to hinder its result. Nevertheless, the remedy has been arranged for by God, and eventually sin is to be eradicated, and death destroyed by Him who by the grace of God tasted death for every man. The opportunity to gain freedom from sin, and everlasting life, is to be presented to every child of Adam, and only those who, after enlightenment, wilfully oppose the Lord will be destroyed in the Second Death.—2 Thess. 1: 9, 10.

The ultimate conditions of being, to be enjoyed by those for whom Salvation from Sin and Death is provided, have been seen to be two; viz., the heavenly for those who, during the Gospel Age, believe in Jesus and follow in His footsteps of sacrifice, and the earthly for all other obedient ones, whether of the future age or of those ages preceding the Gospel Age. It has been clearly realised that while these two results of salvation are provided, the one condition of faith and implicit obedience—full consecration—is necessary to be observed in order to obtain either. The difference is not in the terms of salvation, but in the environment and time under which the faith is exercised and the obedience rendered.—Acts 3: 22; 2 Thess. 1: 9, 10; John 5: 22-24; Rom. 3: 22, 23, 26.

The Covenants

A Covenant is an agreement or compact entered into by two or more persons. An agreement or contract usually consists of mutual promises to fulfil certain prescribed conditions in return for mutual concessions or benefits. Thus in a building contract or covenant one party promises to build a house according to certain plans and specifications, and the other party promises on the completion of the work, or at specified dates, to pay a certain amount of money.

Many covenants are mentioned in Scripture, most of which originated with God as promises, and became covenants or agreements when the persons to whom they were made acquiesced in them or fulfilled certain conditions. When Noah and his sons emerged from the Ark, God established a covenant with them, that the earth should no more be destroyed by a flood of waters. The rainbow was set as a token of this divine promise, which secures the earth as the everlasting home for all flesh, both man and beast. (Gen. 9: 8-17.) God made a covenant with David, that his house should be established forever. (2 Sam. 7: 15-29.) David had implicit faith in this promise, and in his last words referred to it as "all his desire." (2 Sam. 23: 5.) This covenant is elsewhere called "the sure mercies of David" (Psalm 89: 20-37; Isa. 55: 3; Acts 13: 34), inherited by David's Son and Lord, who has been raised from the dead, now no more to return to corruption. The tabernacle or house of David had fallen when Zedekiah was dethroned. (2 Chron. 36: 11-21.) The Lord then said, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, until he come whose right it is, and I will give it Him." (Ezek. 21: 25-27.) The investiture of the Lord Jesus as King meant therefore that God had rebuilt or re-established the tabernacle or house of David. This was done in order that both Jew and Gentile might seek after the Lord. (Acts 15: 14-17.) In the revival under King Josiah, he and his people entered into a covenant to observe faithfully all the requirements of the Law Covenant. (2 Kings 23: 2, 3.) Jehoiada, the priest, made a similar covenant at the accession of Joash. (2 Chron. 23: 16, 17.) The orderly succession of day and night is called a covenant of the Lord.—Jer. 33: 20-22.

The three Covenants which particularly have to do with the divine arrangement for Salvation from Sin and Death are now to be considered. Each of these covenants was a contract between two parties; each was instituted or established over a sacrifice, each had a sign or token, and each had a condition attached.

The first of these covenants was the promise made by God to Abraham, and confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob, that his seed should be great, that he should possess the land of Palestine, and that all the families of the earth should be blessed in his seed. The condition of obedience was attached to this covenant (Gen. 12: 1-3; 13: 14-18; 18: 17-19; 22: 17, 18), it was confirmed after the manner usual in those times over an animal sacrifice (Gen. 15: 3-18), circumcision was its sign or token (Gen. 17: 9-14, 23; Rom. 4: 11, 12), and it was further confirmed by an oath.—Gen. 22: 16-18; Heb. 6: 13.

The second great covenant was the Law Covenant. This was made between God and Israel over a sacrifice at Mount Sinai. Some of the blood of the sacri-

fice was sprinkled on the Book of the Law, and some on the people, and so the bond was established. Moses had the honour of mediating this covenant between God and the children of Israel, and its Sabbaths were its sign or token.—Ex. 19: 1-8; 24: 1-8; 31: 12-17; Deut. 5: 12-15; Ezek. 20: 12, 20.

The third great covenant is styled the New Covenant. It is a better covenant than the Mosaic one, being instituted upon better promises. Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. His flesh is the sacrifice over which the New Covenant is ratified, and His blood is "the blood of sprinkling." (Heb. 9: 15; 8: 6; 12: 24.) It is a ministration of the Spirit, written on the believer's heart, not of the letter (i.e., not of the Law Covenant written on stones and in books—2 Cor. 3: 3, 6, 7); it has for its Sabbath the perpetual rest of faith in the finished work of Jesus, and its circumcision is that of the heart.—Heb. 4: 1, 9-11; Rom. 2: 29; Col. 2: 11.

The line of thought to be followed in our study concerning these covenants is that the Abrahamic Covenant is the expression of God's purpose to bless all the families of the earth. The Law Covenant, while demonstrating the exceeding sinfulness of sin, was an attempt to develop a kingdom of priests, Jesus alone fulfilling the prescribed conditions. The New Covenant is the means by which is made possible the everlasting blessing of all the families of the earth, and the development of a Kingdom of Priests to be joint-heirs with Jesus.

The Abrahamic Covenant

The particular covenant feature in which Abraham was concerned was that, if he would be obedient to God, the Seed should be born of his line. Abraham was obedient, and he secured the honour of having the Blesser in his line, as proposed. Note that Abraham's obedience did not secure a blessing for all the families of the earth. This had been determined and expressed long before (Gen. 3: 15), and Abraham's obedience or disobedience could not alter it, though he did by his faith and obedience secure for himself the honour of being the one in whose line the Blesser should come.

Jesus Christ the Promised Seed

It must always be remembered that the true "Seed" of Abraham, promised to him, was not Isaac, but Jesus. (Gal. 3: 16.) Considerable space in Matt. 1 and Luke 3 is used to give the genealogies that show (particularly that in Luke) our Lord to have been the descendant of Abraham, and of David, and therefore entitled to be considered the heir of the promises made to those worthies. But just as Isaac was obedient so was our Lord tried and tested that He might learn obedience. (Heb. 5: 8.) Isaac was received back from the dead "in a figure"; our Lord actually died and was actually received back from the dead. (Heb. 11: 17-19.) Thus was shown the necessity for our Lord's death, before He, as the "Seed," could fully enter into His exalted office and begin the work of blessing, which He did on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 3: 25, 26.) Those blessed during the Gospel age have the additional privilege of following in His footsteps with a view to becoming joint heirs with Him of His glory, and with Him blessers of the remainder of the families of the earth in the Kingdom age. These, because they are Christ's, are called "Abraham's seed."—Gal. 3: 29.

The Abrahamic Covenant may be considered in two parts; (1) *to* the Seed, (2) *through* the Seed. It contains in its specifications no provision for the eradication of sin and the destruction of death. As the associates of the "Seed" were to be chosen from the fallen race, some such provision would be absolutely necessary before the gracious design of the Lord could be accomplished. (Gal. 3: 16, 29.) The "Seed" must be prepared first. The Abrahamic Covenant did nothing more than to indicate that the "Seed" should be of Abraham's line. How it should be developed, and how it should get life, so that it might be a blesser indeed, was not expressed in the contract. Therefore, some other arrangement must be made, so that the promise to Abraham might become effective in both its parts; and at this point enters the Law Covenant, proposing to prepare the "Seed" for the great work.

The Law Covenant

That this was one of the purposes of the Law Covenant is clearly stated in Exodus 19: 1-6. In fact, no other purpose was mentioned at the time save that of developing a nation of kings and priests by obedience to the Covenant then about to be made. Other ends served by the Law Covenant are elsewhere mentioned, but it is evident that this was the primary purpose. It came to pass that during the Jewish age that nation had some kings and some priests. But this was not in fulfilment of Ex. 19: 6, which promised that the nation *as a whole* should be kings and priests, if obedient to the terms of the Covenant about to be made. Kings rule, and priests instruct and bless the people; so that this promise could mean nothing else than that the Law Covenant proposed to develop the Seed promised 430 years previously.

When the Law Covenant was mentioned to the people, they unanimously and most willingly entered into it. Moses was its Mediator*, in that he was a go-between, God being on the one side, and the people on the other. Both in its negotiation and in its administration, he was mediator in the primary sense of internunciator, or mutual friend and spokesman. When the people sinned, he exercised the office of mediator in the sense of reconciler, or intercessor. He pled their cause, acting as their advocate before God. At this time they were the Covenant people, the agreement having been made only a short while before their sin, which was the occasion of Moses interceding for them. The two shades of meaning of Mediator are clearly and beautifully represented in these two capacities in which Moses acted—first, as spokesman or messenger on behalf of the parties to the Covenant; second, as Intercessor, on behalf of the transgressing party, that the Covenant just ratified might be allowed to go on, the people being forgiven their iniquity.—Exodus 19: 1-8; 24: 1-8; 32: 30-32.

*The word "Mediator," which signifies a "go-between," has two shades of meaning, according to Dr. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, which thus defines the Greek word *mesites*, used in Gal. 3: 19—"a go-between; that is (simply) an internunciator, or (by implication) a reconciler (intercessor)."

By what process did the Law Covenant—added* on account of sin—endeavour to develop the "seed"? By obedience, as the people had agreed. (Deut. 6: 17-25.) Commandments were given, ten of them written on the tables of stone and the remainder, equally important and moral, in books. These were to be scrupulously observed to the smallest detail. Not one jot or tittle was to fail, and life was the promised reward to the doer of the Law. (Lev. 18: 5; Ezek. 20: 11; Gal. 3: 12.) Life was the prime necessity; for without it the kings and priests which were to be could never accomplish the blessing of others. Moreover, if they who desired to be kings and priests were themselves sinners, not fit to be allowed to live, they would also be unfit for the exalted offices they sought, and could not be acceptable as the "seed." The standard must be perfection of holiness; anything less than this would leave the race in a perpetual state of unrest and turmoil. This standard was upheld by the "commandments, statutes and judgments" which the Lord commanded Israel, and they essayed to be obedient and thus prove themselves worthy of life, and to be the kings and priests, the "seed" to bless all the families of the earth.

Penalties were provided for infractions of the Law. Some of these were against individual transgressors, while others were against the people collectively. As the reward of obedience was life, the penalty of disobedience was death, individually and nationally. (Lev. 23: 29, 30; 26: 14-39.) Yet if the chastisements upon the nation should move them to repentance, the Lord would not forsake them utterly, but in harmony with this Law Covenant, and in fulfilment of it, He would bring them back to their land again, even though their hopes had perished and become, as it were, a mass of dead bones.—Lev. 26: 40-46; Ezek. 37: 1-14.

The Law Covenant Weak through the Flesh

For many centuries the Jews were allowed to try to prove their ability to keep the Law and gain the reward of life. Sad experience proved to some few of them their inability and the fact that the Law ordained unto life was really a ministration of condemnation to them, and could never be anything else, because the Law was not suited to them nor were they suited to it. They were all born in sin and shapen in iniquity; their tendencies were toward unrighteousness. They were constitutionally sinful, and the perfect standard of the Law was unattainable by them. (Rom. 7: 10, 12-19; 8: 3; 2 Cor. 3: 7.) Had they been favoured with some arrangement by which the sinful tendencies of the fallen flesh could have been set aside, and not counted against them, it would have gone much better with them. But there was no such provision in the Law Covenant; it was merely "do and live." The offerings for sin were of only temporary value, both the private trespass offerings and the public atonement day sacrifices. The natural depravity of the flesh was a constant and insurmountable obstacle to their efforts at keeping the Law. Though with their minds some of them delighted in the Law, these could not bring the flesh into subjection, and therefore those Jews who realised the situation were in a state of despair, described by the Apostle's words, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?"—Rom. 7: 24.

The Law Covenant failed in its attempt to make good the first portion of the Abrahamic Covenant or Promise, but it served other ends. Though it had not the substance, it was a shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10: 1; 8: 5); though it could not deliver the prisoners of Sin and Death, it did serve to make Sin become exceeding sinful. (Gal. 3: 19; Rom. 7: 13.) And whereas it did not fulfil the Abrahamic Covenant, neither did it interfere to prevent the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, so as to make this promise of none effect. (Gal. 3: 17.) As a would-be fulfiller of the divine purpose expressed in the promise to Abraham, it has been set aside "for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof." (Heb. 7: 18, 19; 8: 7.) Even in Jeremiah's day its limitations were pointed out. (Jer. 31: 29, 31.) It could "never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."—Heb. 10: 1-4.

One Jew—Jesus the Messiah—was approved of the Law, and under its provisions was entitled to everlasting life; but He had come into the world for the express purpose of dying for our sins (Heb. 2: 9), therefore He relinquished His right to the reward of Ex. 19: 6. But God raised Him from death, and conferred upon Him the dual office of King and Priest, as the "Seed," as He had before sworn to do, saying, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec."—Psalm 110: 4; Heb. 7: 11-18.

The effect of setting aside the Law Covenant, as weak and unprofitable through the flesh, was to leave the Abrahamic promise as it had been before the Law was introduced—a grand promise of a Seed to bless all the families of the earth, the privilege of having the Blesser in his line having been made sure to Abraham by the divine word and oath. (Heb. 6: 13-18.) But this promise, grand and glorious though it was, contained no provision for its own fulfilment; for the eradication of sin and the destruction of death are essential to a permanent blessing. The impotence of the Law Covenant to accomplish these has been so fully demonstrated that it has been found fault with and set aside from further attempts. (Jer. 31: 31; Heb. 8: 8.) What is now to be done? Some other attempt must be made to overcome the difficulties of sin and death.

Must God try another experiment? No; He does not experiment, for He knows the end from the beginning. He foreknew and foretold the failure of the Law Covenant and its sacrifices. His Son Jesus was the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second," said the Apostle, who also said of Jesus, "He taketh

*The Law was "added" to the experience of the descendants of Abraham: it was not added to the Abrahamic Covenant itself; for the Abrahamic Covenant had been sworn to; and once a Covenant is thus confirmed nothing can be added to or taken from it.—Gal. 3: 15-19.

away the first, that He may establish the second." (Heb. 8: 7; 10: 9.) Thus is brought to our notice

The New Covenant

This covenant was instituted on better promises than those of the Law Covenant (Heb. 8: 6); it had Jesus as the covenant-victim, His death as its ratifying sacrifice (Heb. 9: 16); and it has Himself, by virtue of that sacrifice, as its Mediator. (1 Tim. 2: 5, 6; Heb. 9: 15.) As He is Mediator of the New Covenant, instituted upon better promises, His Priesthood is correspondingly better than was Aaron's; so much better is it that He is able to "save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." —Heb. 8: 6; 7: 16, 20, 22, 24, 25.

Better Promises

The Law Covenant called for strict compliance with the letter of commandments that were external to the people, and contrary to their constitutional tendencies. The better promise and provision of the New Covenant is that the law of God can be written on the hearts and minds of its beneficiaries, so that, eventually, it becomes part of their very being. The Law Covenant had no provision for mercy to be extended unto everlasting life to those who slipped on account of weakness of the flesh; the better promise of the New Covenant is that God will be "merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins will I remember no more." Under the old covenant the people were only involved the more in death, and additionally condemned; "the letter" (meaning the Law) killed them. Under the New Covenant, the believers' disposition and desire of heart to do right are acceptable (Matt 5: 21-30), and by the processes of this Covenant their characters gradually become established in righteousness. "The spirit" (meaning the New Covenant) gives life; and this is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which makes free from the law of sin and death.—2 Cor. 3: 3, 6-8, 18; Heb. 8: 8-12; 10: 16, 17; Rom. 7: 6, 25; 8: 1-4.

The New Covenant Victim

It was customary to ratify covenants over a victim. The covenant with Abraham, concerning his seed, and the possession of the land, was so ratified. (Gen. 15: 8-18.) The Law Covenant was similarly ratified. (Ex. 24: 5-8.) The New Covenant must also be attested by the death of a victim, and it was so done. But as this was to be a better covenant than that of the Law, and was to be the means of doing away with sin and death, and thus of bringing in a permanent blessing (Rom. 4: 13-16, 22-25; 5: 1, 2; Heb. 9: 15), it must have a better sacrifice than that of the Law Covenant. Jesus was that victim or testator of the New Covenant; He died in order that the covenant might be of force, or valid and firm.—Heb. 9: 16, 17.

In the preceding chapter we have seen the testimonies that Jesus' sacrifice was the antitype of the bullock and the goat sacrifices offered on the Jewish Day of Atonement, as well as of the Passover Lamb. His sacrifice was also the sole antitype of the "calves and goats" whose blood ratified the shadowy and typical Law Covenant (Heb. 9: 18, 19; Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25); and, when "sprinkled" on the repentant one who desires to enter into a covenant with God (Ex. 24: 8; Heb. 9: 19, 20; 12: 24), His blood becomes the bond of union between God and the other party. The shed blood of Christ is a "surety" (Heb. 7: 22) to God on behalf of the penitent, in that it is at the same time a corresponding price for him. It is also surety to a penitent on God's behalf, because it is a corresponding price, and allows God to be the justifier of him who believes in Jesus, in respect of all sins and weaknesses traceable to the Adamic transgression. (Rom. 3: 22-26.) The "sprinkling" is effected by the believer accepting it and by God's recognition of it as applicable in the individual case.

Neither the Law of Moses nor the New Covenant is properly described as a "testament" or "will." Moses, as Mediator, did not die in order that his "will" might be executed. Neither did Christ die in order that His "property" might descend to "heirs." But He did die to give Himself a Ransom, and to supply the blood for the ratification of the New Covenant, as typically represented in Ex. 24: 5-8. (Heb. 9: 16-20.) The word "testator" in Heb. 9: 16 should therefore be "covenant-victim," as should also the word "men" in verse 17, according to modern translations.

The New Covenant Mediator

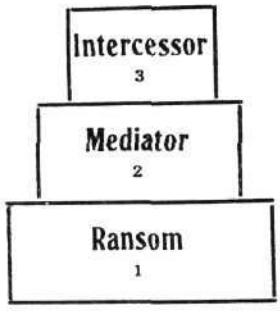
Moses was mediator of the Law Covenant. The Lord Jesus is Mediator of the New Covenant. (Heb. 12: 24.) As Moses was mediator in the simple or primary meaning of that word, viz., an internunciator, so is Jesus referred to as the "Messenger of the Covenant." (Mal. 3: 1.) Moses was mediator between God and a people who were entirely willing to enter into the Law Covenant. Jesus is Mediator between God and those who, when the New Covenant for forgiveness of sins is proposed to them, and they realise it, are entirely willing to enter into it. Nothing is more obvious than that a covenant cannot be arranged between parties not disposed thereto. Moses did not personally communicate the message of his covenant to all the host of Israel, but to the elders of the people, who passed the word on to the others; and so that covenant was instituted by angels (messengers) in the hand (under the direction) of a mediator—Moses. (Gal. 3: 19.) Similarly, Christ Jesus does not, in this age, and will not in the next, personally impart the message of the New Covenant to every individual of the race. He has sent forth His messengers, to speak in His Name on the subject. The message has been delivered to some during the Gospel age, and it will be delivered to the remainder of men during the Kingdom Age.—Luke 24: 47-49; 2 Cor. 5: 18-6: 3; 3: 6; 1 Tim. 2: 5-7; John 1: 9.

The New Covenant Intercessor

The negotiation of the Law Covenant did not fulfil all of Moses' obligations in respect of his office of Mediator. He did not leave the people to their own devices, but was still interested in them, and continued to be spokesman for God to them, and for them to God. So much was he devoted to them that he continued mediator in the sense of reconciler or intercessor with God on their behalf. The first occasion for this came soon after the covenant had been ratified. (Ex. 32: 30-32.) Similarly our Lord Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant, does not leave to their own devices those who have entered into that arrangement, but continues to be interested in their

welfare, so that it is written, "If any man sin, we have an advocate [or helper] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." (1 John 2: 1.) He ever lives to make intercession for them that have come unto God by Him (Heb. 7: 25), and is therefore able to save them to the uttermost, being the surety of this better covenant.

It is necessary to be remembered, too, that our Lord's priestly office of Intercessor is based on His Mediatorship of the New Covenant, just as Moses' intercession for fleshly Israel was based on his mediatorship of the Law Covenant. (It had been the divine intention to vest the two offices permanently in Moses; but on his demurral (Ex. 4: 10-16) Aaron was given him for spokesman, and Aaron subsequently occupied the high-priestly office, thus becoming a type of Christ as Intercessor.—Heb. 7: 20-26.) And as Moses did not intercede for other people, outside the covenant relationship, neither does Jesus act as Intercessor for any outside the New Covenant relationship. "Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, *by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant.*" (Heb. 8: 6.) He is the Mediator because He gave Himself "a ransom for all." He is Intercessor "by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant." These offices of our blessed Saviour are interdependent; none can be wholly a success without the others. The Ransom is the foundation; the Mediatorial office for the negotiation and administration of the New Covenant is based on that *foundation*; the Mediatorial office for Intercession is the third course of the structure.



"Now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the Mediator of a better covenant."—Heb. 8: 6.

"There is one God, and one Mediator, . . . the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all."—1 Tim. 2: 5, 6.

"Christ died for our sins."—1 Cor. 15: 3. "Other foundation can no man lay."—1 Cor. 3: 11.

New Covenant Processes

Three conditions have to be dealt with if the blessing of all the families of the earth promised in the Abrahamic Covenant is to be permanent. These are (1) the "sins of the past," both of Jews under the Old Covenant and of Gentiles under no covenant; (2) sins committed, whether through weakness or wilfulness, after the past sins have been remitted; (3) the tendency toward sin in all the race.

For the first two of these conditions the Law Covenant made some provision in various offerings, such as those of the Day of Atonement, which were for the whole nation, and the individual sin and trespass offerings from time to time brought by transgressors. All of these, however, never took away sin, but served as reminders of the sinful conditions. (Heb. 10: 1-4.) For the third condition there was no provision in the Law Covenant. Its arrangements could not meet the requirements of the case, and could not overcome the difficulties for those who desired to lead righteous lives.—Gal. 2: 21; 3: 21.

Past Sins Remitted

The New Covenant makes ample provision to deal with these three conditions. (1) It provides an efficacious atoning sacrifice, which has not only redeemed the Jews, who were under the curse of the Law, but which is also a propitiation for the sins of the whole world. (Heb. 9: 15; Rom. 3: 22-26; Gal. 3: 13; 4: 4, 5; John 3: 16; 1 John 2: 2.) "This is My blood of the New Covenant," said our Redeemer, when offering the cup at the Memorial Supper to His disciples; "drink ye all of it." "And they all drank of it." (Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 23, 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25.) This cup represents His blood shed for many (all the world) for the remission of sins. The disciples, being sinful men, must eat His flesh and drink His blood, else they would have no life in them. (John 6: 47-58.) So must all do who would have life. All who would have everlasting life must believe on Him, for no other way has been provided by which God can justly remit the sins that are past, both of Israel and of all nations.—John 3: 36; Acts 5: 31; 13: 38-49; Luke 24: 47; Rom. 5: 1.

Present Sins Forgiven

(2) The New Covenant arranges not only for remission of past sins, thus passing the believer from death to life (John 5: 24), but also for clearing away such future transgressions as shall result from the weaknesses and imperfections of our fallen nature. This is all provided for in the blood of Jesus. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1: 9, 7.) Here is manifest the intercessory work of the High Priest on behalf of all who have entered into this covenant relationship with God, through His mediation. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." "We" who have the advocate are not the uncovenanted. He ever lives to make intercession for *those that come unto God by Him*, those who have made a covenant with God by or over the sacrifice of His Son, and so have come into the household, being no longer aliens and strangers. (Heb. 7: 25; Psa. 50: 5; Eph. 2: 12, 13, 19.) Moreover, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer's heart also constitutes an intercession for him in such a time of need; for if God is accepting the will and effort, notwithstanding the weakness of the flesh to the contrary, the fact that he has the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2: 12, 16; Phil. 2: 5) must, under "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus," constitute a powerful intercession on behalf of the believer who has been overtaken in a fault to which the mind of Christ in him gave no consent.—Rom. 8: 2, 26, 27; Gal. 5: 25; 6: 2.

Wilful Sins Punished

The New Covenant deals effectively with sins committed wilfully by those who have come into the relationship with God which it provides. "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with

few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him will they ask the more."* (Luke 12: 47, 48.) A just discrimination is made in respect to all wilful transgressions. No doubt, the master of the house takes into account that some of the wilfulness which needs correction, and which is susceptible to nothing else than painful experience, is hereditary, and is to that extent, when confessed, covered by the precious blood. He knows the hearts of His people, and suits the correction to their need.

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?" "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven."—Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 2, 3; 12: 25.

The sacrifice of Jesus does not cover the intelligently wilful transgressions—small or great—of those who have entered into the New Covenant arrangement and have been sanctified by its blood. "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." (Heb. 10: 26.) The Scripture then tells of the extreme measure of wilfulness, and of a "knowledge of the truth" far beyond the merely having-heard-it stage. This is made plain in v. 29—"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the *blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified,* an *unholy* thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" The shed blood of Jesus, which is the blood of the New Covenant, and which alone is able to make the comers thereunto perfect, is here referred to. In verses 10, 14, this is described—"*By one offering* he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" [literally, being sanctified]. What shall we suppose, then, of those who are proclaiming that the blood of the New Covenant is not that of Jesus only, the one offering, but is the joint sacrifice of the Church with Jesus? The Apostle has predicted precisely this most grievous error. The word translated "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29 is *koinos*, which means, according to Strong's Concordance, "common; literally, shared by all or several." In a ceremonial sense, this word also means "profane;" but that definition does not apply here, because the Apostle is dealing not with ceremonies, but with vital facts.† If we believe the words of our blessed Master, that the blood of the New Covenant is "*my* blood," let us hold to that precious truth at all cost: and let us not constitute ourselves candidates for the "much sorer punishment," by wresting our Lord's words. Those who claim in any sense to participate in offering the atonement sacrifice are thus counting the blood of the covenant, the "*one* offering," a "common thing," "shared by several." When the disciples drank the cup handed them by our Lord, at the institution of the Memorial Supper, that ceremony was not intended to represent the disciples and other consecrated believers as sharing with Jesus the honour of being the propitiatory sacrifice, but it represented how they shared among themselves the *benefits* of the "one offering." This is made plain by the fact that our Lord drank none of the Memorial Cup. And our Lord's concluding words are significant also: not this do in remembrance of yourselves, but "This do in *remembrance of Me.*"

Sin Punishable by the Second Death

Another description of wilful sin punishable by the Second Death is given in Heb. 6: 4-8—"It is impossible for those who 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, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." The powers of the coming age are those arrangements which God has made through His Son for the bringing of mankind to an accurate knowledge of the truth, the eradication of sin, and the conquering of death. All these are enjoyed by the saints now (in part actually, and in part by imputation—Rom. 4: 24) in sufficient measure to bring full responsibility. They taste Jesus, the heavenly gift, they are passed from a death unto a life standing, they partake of the Holy Spirit, and they feed on the good Word of God. All these are realities of their experience now. Hence the reasonableness of the penalty of the second death upon those who sin wilfully. Even were they to come up for probation in the Kingdom Age, when progress toward physical perfection will be possible to those who accept the terms of the New Covenant, they could expect no change of verdict. Therefore, the verdict found against them in the Gospel Age stands.

God provided for all the necessities of every case coming under the New Covenant in Jesus' blood, everything but absolute wilfulness after full enlightenment being forgiveable. The *absolutely wilful* one has no sacrifice offered for his wilful sin, whether it be crucifying the Son of God afresh by repudiating His death, or counting the blood of the Covenant, the "*one* offering," a common thing, to be shared by a number along with Jesus, or whether it be a grievous misrepresentation of the Holy Spirit, in attributing good works to an evil power, as did the Scribes and Pharisees. (Matt. 12: 23-37; Heb. 6: 4-8; 10: 26-31.) The Lord alone is competent to judge how much wilfulness is associated with the transgression; and He alone can say whether few stripes, many stripes, or destruction in the Second Death would be the appropriate punishment. No doubt, in His love and mercy, He would administer "few stripes" at the first; if these did not suffice to warn the transgressor, "many stripes" would follow; if still obstinate in wilfulness and perversion of the truth, even after all the loving dis-

*For further explanation of the parables of Luke 12, please see "The Parables of our Lord," also "Everlasting Punishment," as advertised in Book List.

†The word *koinos* is translated "common" in Acts 10: 14, 28; 11: 8, 9; "defiled" in Mark 7: 2; "unclean" in Rom. 14: 14; in all of which cases it is used ceremonially. It is translated "common" in Acts 2: 44; 4: 32; Titus 1: 4; Jude 3; "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29, in all of which cases it is used literally. These are all the occurrences of *koinos* in the New Testament.

cipline of the Lord, "that which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."—Heb. 6: 8; 10: 31.

Writing the Law on the Heart

(3) How is the law of God "written" on the hearts and minds of the New Covenant people? By the ministration of the Spirit, and the sanctifying power of the truth. (Acts 2: 1-4, 16-21; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9, 18; John 17: 17.) As the consecrated believer in the "one offering" submits to these influences his character is gradually transformed into the divine likeness. "With open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord," he realises himself being "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

The New Covenant is so arranged as to thoroughly eradicate from those who come under it, and are faithful to the end, all tendencies to evil doing, substituting for these a character established in righteousness. The Old Covenant wrote the law of God on tables and in books, and required the people to obey. These writings, being external to the people, were antagonistic and condemnatory, and were a ministration of death to the people. The New Covenant not only puts away out of God's remembrance the past sins and iniquities, and shows mercy to present and future unrighteousness, but it also puts God's laws *into the hearts and minds* of those under it. This means more than learning by rote; it means that obedience to God becomes constitutional with the New Covenant people, and that their "stony" hearts are displaced by hearts of flesh; that is, their naturally stubborn and rebellious "stony" dispositions are gradually transformed into more susceptible, human-like dispositions.

In the case of the Jews, it had been foretold, "They shall be all taught of God," and Jesus was set forth, as God's representative, to be the Teacher, as well as the Saviour. (John 6: 27-29, 44-47.) It was His mission to reveal the Father. (John 14: 7-11; Matt. 11: 27.) Those who become pupils of the meek and lowly Jesus learn to love Him for His character as well as for His offering of Himself as their Saviour; and they are also made acquainted with the character and plans of the Heavenly Father. They know Him not by hearsay only, and not by observing what He is to others, but each one for himself. As he understands more and more of God's character and disposition, and as he imitates that character, he is transformed more and more into the same image. He thus comes to know God experimentally. A person lacking in conscientiousness cannot understand or know a conscientious person, for the reason that the principles on which a conscientious person acts are unknown to him. So one in alienation from God, and living in sin, cannot know God, His character, or the principles governing His acts. (Eph. 4: 18.) But those who repudiate sin and accept the terms of the New Covenant are so transformed by the renewing of their minds that they are able to prove by practice the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (Rom. 12: 2.) In them is our Lord's prayer fulfilled —"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."—John 17: 3.

Those who know God in this way now need none to say to them, "Know the Lord," for each one knows Him for himself. And as the gracious terms of the New Covenant are more widely circulated, during the Gospel Age and during the Kingdom Age, this blessed experience will be the portion of the vast majority of mankind. It is written concerning the New Covenant ministry during the Gospel Age—"Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters,' saith the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor. 5: 18-21; 6: 16-18; Heb. 8: 10.) Concerning the New Covenant ministry of the Kingdom Age similar language is used—"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God."—Rev. 21: 3; Heb. 8: 10.

The Application of the New Covenant

To what purpose, and to whom, does the New Covenant apply? The New Covenant was instituted to supersede the Law Covenant (Heb. 8: 7, 8), for the purpose of accomplishing what the Law could not do on account of weakness of the flesh. (Rom. 8: 1-4.) Bearing in mind that the purpose of the Law Covenant was to prepare Israel to become kings and priests, which it failed to do (Ex. 19: 5, 6), it should be expected that the first task of the New Covenant would be to develop this kingdom and priesthood, to be associated with Jesus Christ, the High Priest and King. (Rev. 1: 6; 20: 6.) This harmonizes with what is written, "And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, that . . . they which are called (Rom. 9: 24) might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9: 15; 1 Peter 1: 4.) This is the force of the "allegory" of Gal. 4: 22-31. The Galatian brethren had become confused, and were drifting towards the bondage of the Law. The Apostle's letter to them contrasts the Law with the Spirit (Gal. 3: 1-5), as also in his epistle to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9), and now, by the figure of Sarah and Hagar, he would teach them the same thing; viz., that they were not under the ministration of the Law, which bound, but of the Spirit, which liberates. (Gal. 5: 1.) In a word, they and all who looked upon themselves as Christ's and therefore Abraham's "seed," were not children of God by the Law Covenant, but by the New Covenant; they were not of Hagar, but of Sarah.

Remembering that the Abrahamic Covenant promised a "Seed" and a blessing through that "Seed," but provided no means for the fulfilment of its promise; and remembering that the Law Covenant endeavoured to bring forth the Seed, but was not able see how Hagar and Sarah beautifully represent the Law Covenant and the New Covenant respectively. The literal Hagar could not be the mother of the child of promise, for God had arranged otherwise but Sarah was. So the Law Covenant could not bring forth the children of promise, sons of God, but the New Covenant can, and it is doing so.—Gal. 5: 1; 4: 4, 5. See "Shadow" line (SS) on Chart.

The ministration of the Spirit is not confined to the Gospel Age, for, after the "first fruits" are gathered (Rev. 14: 4), the "everlasting gospel" is to be still more widely proclaimed—"to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." (Rev. 14: 6; Rom. 8: 19-22.) The New Covenant is thus seen to extend through the two ages of God's plan following its ratification by the blood of Jesus. "After those days" in which the Law Covenant had been found unsatisfactory (Heb. 8: 10, 7, 8), the Lord Jesus came and gave Himself as the sacrifice for sin, a New Covenant was instituted, and the Holy Spirit testifies to us that our sins may now be freely forgiven. (Heb. 10: 14-23.) Again, when the Lord will deal with mankind in the Kingdom Age, He will do so on the terms of the only Covenant that really can take away sin. See Black Line at Top of Chart.

The New Covenant with Israel

But why does the Scripture name Israel and Judah in connection with the New Covenant?—Jer. 31: 31.

The reason is that at the time Jeremiah wrote the kingdom of Israel was divided as a consequence of the secession of the ten tribes many years before—the ten tribes being known as "Israel," and the two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) remaining faithful to the worship at Jerusalem being called "Judah." Judah was also often called Israel, because the true worship and the God-ordained government for the whole of Israel still resided at Jerusalem. (Ezek. 20: 3; Isa. 48: 1, 2, 20.) The promise of a new covenant to be made with Israel and Judah indicated, therefore, that a time was coming when the breach between the two would be healed. That time came after Judah had also been rejected, and punished with seventy years' captivity in Babylon. (Jer. 25: 1-11.) On their return from this captivity, and the re-establishment of the true worship of God at Jerusalem, the opportunity was open for the return of as many descendants of the ten tribes as still retained faith in the promises—if not to live in Palestine, at least to observe the three annual feasts if their means permitted them to make the journey. Thus in Palestine a people was segregated, from among whom John the Baptist afterward made ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1: 16, 17.) Those living in Palestine at the time of our Lord's ministry, though consisting mainly of the two tribes, were called by Him "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10: 6.) Israelites of all tribes and every nationality, gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, heard the Apostle Peter proclaim the New Covenant for the forgiveness of their sins. Residents were called, "Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem," but the whole assembled multitude was addressed as "Ye men of Israel"; and all received the one message of the crucified and risen Lord, and of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, as foretold by the holy prophets.—Acts 2: 9-11, 14, 22; 13: 16; 26: 7.

The Olive Tree

A further answer to the question is indicated in Rom. 9: 4 and 11: 17-32. The olive tree represents the favours of God which on certain conditions "pertained" to Israel—not by virtue of their Law Covenant, but by virtue of the fact that Messiah the Deliverer, the great Prophet, would be of that nation, and would offer deliverance and blessing to that nation first of all nations. (Acts 3: 26; 13: 23.) Hence the limitation of our Lord's ministry to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," the restriction of the Pentecostal message for a term to the Jews, and the preference given to the Jews subsequently—"to the Jew first."—Rom. 1: 16; Acts 13: 26, 46; Gal. 4: 5; Heb. 9: 15.

The Root of the olive tree, therefore, is Jesus Christ (Rom. 15: 8-12); the trunk of the tree sustained by the Root is the favour of God expressed in the promises, which "in Him are yea, and in Him Amen" (2 Cor. 1: 20); the branches are the individual believers who have faith in the promises, and who are therefore borne or sustained by the Root, Jesus.

In Rom. 11: 1-5 the case is so stated as to express the thought that whereas fleshly Israel as a whole was cast away from the favours, yet the people of God, called Israel, were not cast away. The Apostle cites himself and others who were not cast away as proof, and intimates that the remnant who entered into the favour of the Gospel Age promises were to be considered the "Israel of God," while the majority who had been cut off were not to be considered as of the Israel. The same teaching is expressed in Rom. 2: 28, 29—"For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly." On account of the hardness of heart prevailing in many individuals, Israel was reduced to a "remnant"; but the remnant that remained was to be considered the "Israel of God."

The "tree," thus deprived of nearly all of its "branches," would require other "branches" to take the places of those cut out. For the purpose of finding such, the Lord visited the Gentiles, or "wild olives," to gather "branches" to be graffed into the places vacated by the "branches" cut off. In describing this process, the Apostle improves the opportunity to impress upon the Gentile believers a lesson in humility. Assuming that some might be so high minded as to consider themselves in some way superior to the broken-off branches, he reminds them that those were broken off on account of unbelief, and as for the newly-graffed-in branches they could retain their position only by the continual exercise of faith; therefore—"Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."—Rom. 11: 18-23; Heb. 3: 19; 4: 1-3; 1 Peter 1: 5.

It is thus made clear that the Gentile believers do not constitute a separate community from Jewish believers. Both have been incorporated into a new Israel; they have become members of "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6: 16), the Gentiles being thus numbered with the sealed ones of the twelve tribes, the "seal" being the Holy Spirit. (Rev. 7: 1-4; Eph. 1: 13.) It is necessary, however, to bear in mind that the "remnant" of Israel according to the flesh is not under the Law Covenant, nor have the believing Gentiles been placed under that regime. The Law Covenant, because it could not take away sin, was not able to develop the true Israel. Not even those who were most sincerely attentive to its requirements

could be made members by means of its processes. At most it could but prepare them, as it did prepare some (Rom. 7: 22-24), to realise their undone condition under it and to realise their need of One Who could and would save them under a New Covenant or arrangement. "The Law was our schoolmaster [or slave] to bring us unto Christ." (Gal. 3: 23, 24.) This Covenant, based on the sacrifice of Jesus, would judge them according to the law of the Holy Spirit, and not according to that Law—holy and good, yet weak through the imperfections of the flesh—written in books and on tables of stone. (Rom. 8: 1-4; Heb. 10: 14-23.) Of these twain—the Jewish remnant and the added Gentile believers—the Lord is making a "new man," by the processes of the New Covenant; and so it is written—"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."—Gal. 6: 15; Eph. 2: 12-15.

The Apostle concludes his argument by saying—"**And SO** [that is, in this manner, by the selection of Gentiles to fill the places of unbelieving Jews] *all Israel* shall be saved," or delivered—not all the *old* Israel, but all the *new* Israel, who are "Israelites indeed." The unbelief of some Jews did not frustrate God's purpose to have a new Israel by the New Covenant. (Rom. 11: 26.) But this salvation and deliverance depended upon their acceptance of the Deliverer, who came "out of Zion," and through whom alone they should receive the forgiveness of sins as foretold by the prophet Isaiah.—Isa. 59: 12, 13, 19, 20; Rom. 11: 26, 27.

Since this New Covenant is to take away sin, and since it is the only one that can do so, every reference to the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ must be taken also as a reference to the New Covenant. Repentance and remission of sins were to be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, whence it is clear that the New Covenant provisions are and will be applicable to Gentiles as well as to Jews. (Luke 24: 47; Eph. 1: 7; Col. 1: 14, 21, 22.) The Sermon on the Mount was the first proclamation of the New Covenant, and showed its advantages over the Old—"Ye have heard that it was said, . . . but *I* say unto you." (Matt. 5: 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43.) It set forth also the New Covenant arrangement by which God accepts the thought and desire of the heart (sincere or wilful) as though the deed—whether good or bad—were actually performed.—Matt. 5: 2-12, 22, 28.

The New Covenant is thus seen in its proper light, as an instrument fully able to clear away the disadvantages of sin, and to form a character of righteousness and holiness in its beneficiary. This character is to be endowed by God with everlasting life. Those who have followed in the footsteps of Jesus in the High Calling Age are to be exalted to joint heirship with Him; those who did God's will in former ages will be made "princes in all the earth;" those who obey under the easier conditions of the Kingdom Age will have human perfection and everlasting life on the earth, the difference between them and the Ancient Worthies being in point of time, and in the honourable position to be held by the latter during the Kingdom Age. The New Covenant says nothing as to the plane of being on which everlasting life acquired under it shall be enjoyed, and thus it is able to operate for the benefit of both the spiritual and the earthly classes.

New Covenant in Gospel and Kingdom Ages

(See solid line at top of Frontispiece Chart.)

The "dispensation of the fulness of times" covers the two ages of the New Covenant operation. (Eph. 1: 10.) That the New Covenant is applied to both Gospel and Kingdom ages is perfectly plain from a consideration of the specifications of the New Covenant as referred to in various Scriptures.

"I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." (Heb. 8: 10.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—2 Cor. 3: 3, 9, 18; Heb. 10: 14-16; in the Kingdom age—Rev. 21: 27.

"I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people." (Heb. 8: 10.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—2 Cor. 6: 16-18; Kingdom age—Rev. 21: 3.

"They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest." (Heb. 8: 11.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—Eph. 2: 19; John 17: 3; 14: 7-10; 1 John 3: 1, 2; 2: 13; in the Kingdom age—Jer. 12: 14-17; John 17: 21-23.

"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. 8: 12.) Fulfilled in the Gospel age—Heb. 10: 17-20; Eph. 4: 32; in the Kingdom age—Rev. 21: 4-8; 7: 9-17.

New Covenant Terms Applicable to Ancients

(See broken line at top of Frontispiece Chart.)

Before the New Covenant had been ratified by the death of Jesus, its terms were made applicable to those who had faith. If we do not take this view of God's dealings with the Ancients, we practically assert that God has two arrangements for the forgiveness of sins, one through faith in Christ, applicable since Calvary, and another through faith generally considered, without reference to Christ's death and the Covenant ratified by it. If God could accept the Patriarchs on account of their faith alone, and could justify them without consideration of the New Covenant blood shed for the remission of sins, He could equally well accept others in the same manner. This would be tantamount to saying that Christ died unnecessarily. On the contrary, there is only the one way of salvation.—Acts 4: 12.

We read, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4: 3, 21-25; 3: 22-26.) The non-imputation of sin where it exists, and the imputation of righteousness where it does not exist, can be accomplished only in view of an arrangement satisfactory to divine justice. The sacrifices offered by the Patriarchs were acknowledgments of need on their part, but those sacrifices could not take away sin, any more than could those of the Law Covenant. The only satisfactory arrangement is that in the New Covenant ratified by the blood of Jesus; and we must conclude that the forgiveness of sins and the imputation of righteousness

extended to those who had faith in God and believed what He told them, before the death of Christ, were on New Covenant terms, *in anticipation* of the actual inauguration of the arrangement. That is to say, God took the risk, if there were one, of counting Abraham's faith to Him for righteousness, in view of the sacrifice that had been arranged for from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 13: 8.

"The righteousness which is of faith" was made known to the Jews. (Deut. 30: 11-14; Rom. 10: 6-12.) This was something they could have done, whereas the Law Covenant was beyond their ability to do. Some of them had faith, and got a good report through it. (Heb. 11: 39.) By these dealings of God with His faithful ones of old, it can be discerned that God was pleased to accept on New Covenant terms those who had faith in Him, before the ratification and formal publication of the New Covenant, not ignoring it, and not without consideration of it on His part, but in anticipation of it.

Inauguration of the New Covenant

It has been pointed out that there are many parallels between the Law and the New Covenant. These extend to some particulars connected with the inaugurations of both. The first item of the Law was the Passover. The first item of the New Covenant was the antitype of this—"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." This antitype superseded the type at the Passover season. Christ was crucified on the 15th Nisan, though He had been received enthusiastically by the people a few days earlier, when He rode into Jerusalem. (Zech. 9: 9; John 12: 1, 12-16; 1 Cor. 5: 7, 8.) The Day of Pentecost (Jewish reckoning) is observed by the Jews as the festival of the giving of the Law. (Deut. 16: 9-12.) On the Day of Pentecost following our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension, the New Covenant had its formal beginning in the ministration of the Spirit, which was to supersede the ministration of the old "letter." The Law Covenant was introduced with signs and wonders. So was the New Covenant. (Exod. 19: 16-18; Gal. 3: 19; Heb. 2: 2-4.) And—"If they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven."—Heb. 12: 18-25.

At the inauguration of the Law Covenant the mountain shook; at the inauguration of the New Covenant a shaking began which has continued throughout the age (Acts 17: 30; 2 Cor. 10: 3-5; Eph. 6: 12; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16; Rev. 8: 5, 8); and which will ultimately remove completely not only the social "earth," but also the ecclesiastical and political "heavens." But we who have received a Kingdom which cannot be shaken may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.—Heb. 12: 25-29.

When the New Covenant shall presently be proposed to the world generally, there will be more signs and wonders. As Pharaoh and his host were overthrown, so will Satan and his evil spirits be rendered powerless, for a thousand years, and finally destroyed.

The Everlasting Covenant

Several of the Covenants which God made are styled "everlasting." Not that they all are to be considered endless, but rather uninterrupted or perpetual until such time as may have been appointed for them to expire. The Covenant with Noah (Gen. 9: 9-17), that of the Law (Ex. 31: 16; Lev. 24: 7-9; Num. 18: 19; Isa. 24: 5), that with David (2 Sam. 23: 5; 2 Chron. 13: 5), that with Abraham (Gen. 17: 7, 13, 19; Psalm 105: 8-11), and the New Covenant (Jer. 32: 40; Heb. 13: 20, 21) are called everlasting, although it is well understood that the Law Covenant was strictly limited as to time.—Gal. 3: 19.

Throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Law and the New Covenant are continually contrasted, with a view to showing the superiority of the New—its permanence as against the temporary character of the other. Just at the close of the Epistle, considering his case proved, he refers to the Covenant whose superiority he has sought to demonstrate, and calls it the "Everlasting Covenant." There is some difference of opinion among translators as to whether "through the blood of the everlasting covenant" should modify the phrase that follows it, or the one which precedes it, but the greater number seems to be in favour of the opinion that our Lord Jesus is "the Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant," as expressing the Apostle's meaning in this connection. Whichever opinion be right, there is truth in both. Our blessed Redeemer has become the Chief Shepherd, because He shed His blood of the New Covenant for many for the remission of sins, and His people are made perfect by that "one offering" which He gave. (Rom. 14: 9; Heb. 10: 10, 14; 1 Pet. 2: 24, 25.) That the New Covenant is here meant is further evident from the fact that His blood belongs to no other, never being Scripturally associated with any but the New Covenant.—Heb. 9: 14, 15.

Summary

"Now, of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum." It has been seen that salvation from sin and death, the prime necessity of our race, has been provided in the divine purpose. (Gen. 3: 14, 15.) Pursuant to the accomplishment of His purpose, God covenanted with Abraham that the blessing to all the families of the earth should be given through his seed. The Abrahamic Covenant was not an agreement that the families of the earth should be blessed, but that the honour of blessing them should be granted to Abraham's Seed, which is the Lord Jesus Christ. (Gal. 3: 16.) Those who become Christ's are also counted as Abraham's seed.—Gal. 3: 29.

The Abrahamic Covenant did not contain within itself the provision for the fulfilment of its gracious promise, but God had arranged other two covenants—the Law covenant as a demonstration of the impotence of men, and the New Covenant as a demonstration of the power of God. (Rom. 8: 3.) These two covenants were represented by Hagar and Sarah.

Hagar, the bondmaid, brought forth *a* seed, but her child was not *the* seed promised. The Law Covenant sought to bring forth the promised "seed," but could not. It brought forth a seed unto bondage, just as did Hagar in the allegory.—Gen. 15: 15-21; 21: 9-12; Ex. 19: 5, 6; Rom. 8: 3.

In due time, Sarah, the free woman, bore Isaac, the promised child. So, in due time, the New Covenant, a covenant of liberty (Gal. 5: 1), is bringing forth the sons of God by Jesus Christ.—Gal. 4: 5-7; 3: 26; Eph. 1: 5; Rom. 8: 1-4; Heb. 9: 15; 10: 20.

The Hagar or Law Covenant was ordained unto life, but it was found inadequate, gendering only to bondage. The New Covenant contains a provision for salvation from sin and death, based on the blood of Jesus, shed for its ratification and also for the remission of sins. The New Covenant provision is entirely adequate for the forgiveness of past sins and of future ones, as far as they arise out of Adamic weakness. The New Covenant is, therefore, competent to be the "mother" of the promised "seed," that is, of those who are Christ's.—Gal. 3: 29; 4: 22-31; Heb. 10: 1-10; Rom. 5: 6-11; 1 John 1: 7-9; 2: 2.

Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and is also High Priest on behalf of all who come under the New Covenant. He both reconciles God to us and us to the Father; and, after we have entered into Covenant relationship, he intercedes on our behalf when we transgress. Moses was a type of Christ, both as messenger of a covenant and as intercessor for the transgressing covenant people.—Ex. 19: 1-8; 24: 1-8; 32: 30-32; Mal. 3: 1; John 12: 32, 33; Heb. 7: 22, 25; 8: 6; 9: 15; Rom. 8: 34

Those who submit themselves to the ministration of the New Covenant shall receive life; it is a ministry of the Spirit which gives life, whereas the "letter," i.e. the Law Covenant, brought condemnation and death. The New Covenant operation is for the formation of character, and the life granted to those who are faithful under it may be on any plane; the New Covenant does not in itself stipulate. Christ, its Messenger and Mediator, has brought *both* life and incorruption to light through the Gospel, the New Covenant message.—2 Cor. 3: 3, 8, 9, 11, 18; Heb. 8: 6-13; 2 Tim. 1: 10, 11.

Those who are reconciled to God are honoured with the privilege, and entrusted with the duty, as ambassadors, of extending the message concerning the New Covenant and its Mediator, and should do so as much as they are able.—2 Cor. 5: 18-6: 3; 1 Tim. 2: 4-7; Luke 24: 47.

The blood of the New Covenant is that of Jesus alone. The Church is invited to be followers in His footsteps of suffering, that she may share His glory; that as He overcame and inherited a throne, so she may overcome and inherit the throne with Him. This sharing of His sufferings is not to be viewed as participating with Him in the payment of the "ransom," or in the one offering for sin, or in shedding the blood required for the sealing of the New Covenant. By His Own sacrifice He did all these things, the perfect human body offered on the cross having been specially "prepared" for the purpose, in order that we might be permitted to obtain the eternal inheritance. The blood of the Covenant which perfects and sanctifies is "my blood," Jesus said, and if we count it as something "common" (*Koinos*, translated "unholy" in Heb. 10: 29, means "common" in the sense of sharing), we shall be deserving "much sorer punishment" than were transgressors against the Mosaic Covenant.—Matt. 26: 28; Mark 14: 24; Luke 22: 20; 1 Cor. 11: 25; Heb. 9: 15; 6: 4-6; 10: 5, 10, 14, 26-31.

Death and Resurrection

"Man giveth up the ghost [breath], and where is he?"—Job 14: 10.

QUESTION of Questions! The Universal Inquiry! What is the state of those who have passed away?

Not an individual but has been indirectly affected by death, through the loss of dear ones; not one but has to look forward to being directly affected by his own experience of death. No wonder that great interest in this question has been and is manifested by people of every condition and colour the world over. Love for friends requires that interest in their welfare should not cease immediately they have been entombed. Self-interest, if there were no higher motive, urges one to acquire for one's own benefit all possible information concerning this great question.

In quest of this information, men have applied to all and sundry, and varied have been the replies received. The Atheist has given his answer; the Philosopher has published to the world his speculations; the Scientist has made known the results of his investigations. And they do not agree.

The Atheist's Answer

The Atheist gives a very straightforward answer to the question, "The Dead—Where are They?" There is no mincing of words. He says that the dead are forever gone; they will never again be seen or heard of. This gives no consolation to the bereaved heart, and offers no pleasant prospect concerning the future of the inquirer. It is not surprising that some who accept the Atheistic view have adopted as their guiding principle, "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die."—1 Cor. 15: 32.

The Philosopher's Answer

The Philosopher undertakes an answer to the question. He notes that in the human mind there is a longing for the continuance of life and activity. It is possible that this "longing" would be more accurately described as a difficulty in realising that life and activity will some day cease, and that out of this arises the all but universal belief that death is the portal to new scenes and conditions. At any rate, the Philosopher, realising that most human beings who reach years of discretion are more or less persuaded that death does not end all, and that this thought,

variously modified according to peoples and times, has been in the minds of men from time immemorial, comes to the conclusion that such thoughts could not exist without cause, and he thinks the cause is that the thought is true. He is therefore quite prepared to believe and teach that death is the departure from present conditions to others, pleasant or painful.

There can be no doubt that the prevalent thought in men's minds is as the Philosopher finds it; but he certainly takes much more for granted than the follower of "pure reason" should allow himself to do, when he assumes that the only way to account for the universality of this thought, even among peoples who have had no communication with each other, is to admit that it is true. The answer of the Philosopher, while more comforting to many than that of the Atheist, is to be regarded with great reserve; for, after all, it is based on an assumption, and it does not consider all the details that should be examined.

The Scientific Answer

The Man of Science also has an answer. He takes man as he finds him, and, after many years' examination of living beings and study of practical anatomy in the dissecting room, admits that as yet he knows little or nothing about Life and Death. The following extract from "The Hospital" quoted in *The Age*, Melbourne, Jan. 2, 1909, shows the present position of Medical Science in regard to our question:—

"We know neither what Life is, nor what Death is, nor how nor why the one passes into the other. This is not for want of guessing, for many centuries and much hard thinking have been devoted to this business in the realm of pure speculation. But these speculations have not advanced us a whit, and even now, when the sacrosanct problem of Life has long since been impounded by biologists and submitted to the cold contemplation of science, we are forced to confess that the secret remains remarkably well hidden. Though much has been learnt of the processes attending Life, and of the conditions governing its continuance or conclusion, what in essence it is, how it begins, and what determines the gradual failure which we call senescence, on these matters we are still pretty thoroughly in the dark. 'Radiobes,' the putative examples of a spontaneous generation under the influence of radium emanations, have had their day, and have left us what we were, unexplained examples of the first and greatest mystery that man has encountered—Life."

The mission of Science is the acquisition of exact knowledge. In his search for accurate information, the Scientist is supposed to take nothing for granted; though, as we have seen, the student of the evolution theory has not always adhered to this maxim. Up to now, the Scientist is not able to agree with the Philosopher's answer to our question, because he cannot find anything to show that mind is capable of acting without an organism. Cases of injury to the skull are continually being dealt with in hospitals. If the patient be brought in unconscious, he knows nothing at all until consciousness is restored, and the time of unconsciousness is to him a perfect blank. The surgeon by raising depressed bone and thus relieving pressure on certain parts of the brain, has sometimes been able to restore memory, and even identity, which for a long period had been lost. By the same benevolent use of the knife, vicious and destructive persons have been transformed, as though miraculously, into kind and gentle beings, who would not think of injuring others. These and related facts prevent the Physician from adopting the Philosopher's answer to our question; and as the Physician's careful studies teach him nothing about resuscitation of those whose organisms have returned to the original dust, he is at present inclined to see nothing better than what the Atheist points out. This is not strange; for Science knows nothing beyond what is comprehensible by sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. The Scientist, therefore, while he lays us under obligation for much information that is both interesting and valuable, cannot help us to a conclusive answer to our question about the Dead.

The Spiritualist's Answer

In the last half century, the cult of Spiritualism has acquired much prominence. It claims to furnish the answer to the question now before us; in fact, its prominence and notoriety are based on its dealing with this question, which it regards as its own special province.

The special interest attached to the Spiritualist's answer to our important question is that he claims to prove what the Philosopher regards as reasonable, and what the Scientist cannot demonstrate; that is, he claims to prove the persistence of conscious being after the event of death. In support of this, the Spiritualist produces many phenomena, including extraordinary demonstrations of power, and alleged messages from deceased persons to their surviving friends, these exhibitions being invariably made through a "medium" or "sensitive."

There is much testimony of eye witnesses to the Spiritualistic phenomena. The testimony is not borne only by the uneducated and those who have had no scientific training; much of it, particularly within the last few years, is given by men of high standing in the scientific world. The phenomena and messages may therefore be accepted as facts, not as fraud nor illusion. But the crucial question is not thereby answered; and these scientific men, though almost persuaded, generally admit that the identity of the spirits producing the phenomena and sending the messages has never been established. It has never been proved that the spirit sending a message is the deceased person it claims to be. As long as this point remains open, the Spiritualist's answer to the question, "The Dead—Where are They?" must be considered incomplete, therefore not acceptable.

Our belief is that the Spiritualistic demonstrations are produced by evil angels, who have never been human beings, but who know the history of our race, and who are able to impersonate the deceased, even to the mimicry of small peculiarities, unknown to all except intimates. These are the angels who associated with the human race before the Flood, to their mutual disadvantage, and who have since been bound in chains of darkness, unto the great judgment day, when they shall also be judged, to determine whether they will submit themselves to be brought under the one Head, even under Christ. They have not since the flood possessed their former liberties; hence their work is mostly done under cover of darkness or reduced light, and through mediums.*—Gen. 6: 1-4; 2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6.

*Concerning the judgment of these angels, and their relation to modern Spiritualism, see the book, "Do the Dead Communicate?" mentioned in Book List.

God's Answer

Coming to the divine Word, seeking its answer to the great question, we are at once impressed with its candour and simplicity. The Scriptural answer to the problem is direct and straightforward, without appeal to passion or prejudice. Having proved the Bible worthy of all confidence, and having found in it the expression of the divine purpose for the blessing of the race—a purpose so grand and comprehensive, so wise and just, and loving, as to command our unqualified admiration and reverence—we may well consider in advance that the Bible answer, whatever it may be, to our question will not only commend itself to reason, but will also be found harmonious with all the divine attributes so grandly manifest in the plan of salvation.

A clear description of the state of the dead is found in Psalm 88: 10-12. This is Hebrew poetry; its construction is according to the manner of those times—thought repetition. It will be observed that each line consists of two members, and that as the first members correspond throughout, so do the second members agree; the second member of the first line being defined and explained by the second member in each of the following lines:—

"Wilt thou show wonders—*to the dead?*
Thy lovingkindness—*in the grave!*
Thy faithfulness—*in destruction?*
Thy wonders—*in the dark?*
Thy righteousness—*in the land of forgetfulness?*"

"Dead — Grave — Destruction — Dark — Forgetfulness!"

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

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."—Psalm 115: 17.

The Psalms were the Hebrew hymnal, used in the worship of God. How different their testimony from much that is found in modern hymnals! will at once occur to the reader. It is a great misfortune that, along with so much that is grand and Scriptural, some Christian hymn writers have produced other work which is based on the uncertain speculations of philosophy rather than on the sure foundation of divine truth. The following lines, when contrasted with the above selection from the divinely inspired Hebrew hymnal, will illustrate this point—

"Why should we start, and fear to die!
What tim'rous worms we mortals are!
Death is the gate of endless joy;
And yet we dread to enter there."

—*Isaac Watts.*

Testimony corroborative of that in the Psalms is not lacking in other parts of the Scripture—

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

"To him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion." This contrast is better appreciated when it is remembered that in those countries the dog was not a household pet as with us, but was a half wild outcast, the scavenger, as once in the streets of Constantinople. The lion, on the other hand, was regarded as the majestic king of the beasts. What difference does death make, to justify this comparison between dead and living persons, intimating that the living, however meanly circumstanced, is in a better condition than the dead, however majestic the latter had been in life! The difference is explained to be—"For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished, neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." (Eccl. 9: 4-6, 10.) The advantage that the living have over the dead is that the living know at least this much, that they shall die; but the dead know nothing at all.

Death a Sleep

In harmony with the foregoing, death is described as a *sleep*. "Man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? . . . Till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their *sleep*." (Job 14: 10-12.) "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are *asleep*, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which *sleep* in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are *asleep*." (1 Thes. 4: 13-15.) The martyr Stephen, while being stoned, after seeing the vision of Jesus' glory, and praying for his persecutors, "fell *asleep*."—Acts 7: 60.

These Scriptures show the great impropriety of considering that those who have fallen *asleep* in death are more awake than they were before their decease. The use of the word *sleep* in the natural way does not imply wakefulness on the part of the sleeper; neither should it be so thought of when used figuratively for death. In both cases the meaning is the same—quiet, unconscious, dark, forgetful *rest*.

The above texts also show that the saints and faithful of present and past ages did not at death immediately pass to their everlasting reward. This thought is corroborated by several other portions. "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 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: 2, 3.) Here our Lord makes the union of His saints with Himself depend on His second advent, and in 1 Thes. 4: 16 the Apostle says the same, showing that those who sleep in Jesus, and who are to be brought with Him, are not in heaven. "The Lord Himself shall *descend* . . : and the dead in Christ shall *rise*."

David was a man after God's own heart, for though he sometimes sinned grievously he repented and sought to repair the wrong he had done; yet the Scripture says of him, "David is not ascended into the heavens." (Acts 2: 34.) Our Lord said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven."*—John 3: 13.

*The words, "which is in heaven," are an interpolation, omitted from Sinaitic and Vatican MSS. See Revised Version, margin.

Sheol, Hades, Hell, Gehenna

Death is the same for both good and bad men. The same word describes their condition many times over: "Then Abraham gave up the ghost [literally, "breathed out"], and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people." (Gen. 25: 8.) "And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people." (Gen. 35: 29.) "So David slept with his fathers." (1 Kings 2: 10.) "So Ahab slept with his fathers." (1 Kings 22: 40.) All of them—good kings, bad kings, good subjects, bad subjects—went to *hell*. This may seem a severe statement to make, and, in truth, if "hell" means eternal torment, it is too severe a penalty to prescribe for even the most hardened wretch that has ever polluted the earth. But "hell" does not mean eternal misery. In the Old Testament it is a translation of the Hebrew word *sheol*, which occurs 65 times. It is rendered "hell" 31 times, "grave" 31 times, "pit" 3 times. In no case is the thought of eternal misery associated with the word, but always death—in which there is no remembrance, no joy, no love, no hate, no envy, no sensation whatever. In the New Testament, "hell" is a translation of the Greek words *hades* and *Gehenna*. The former is the equivalent of *sheol*.—Compare Psalm 16: 10 with Acts 2: 27, R.V.

Sheol and *hades* both mean the covered, hidden, or concealed place or state. The English word "hell" originally had this meaning, and four centuries ago it was in common use in England among the people. The farmer would "hell" his root crops; that is, he would bury them to protect them from the frost. The builder would "hell" a house; that is, he would put a roof on it. The word was probably in a transition stage about the time the Authorised Version was being made, A.D. 1611. Other words used in this version, the meanings of which have materially altered in the last three centuries, are "prevent," in 1 Thes. 4: 15, which then meant "precede," but which is not now used with that meaning. The word "let" in 2 Thes. 2: 7 meant "hinder," three hundred years ago, but now it means nearly the opposite of that. So the word "hell" had originally none of the terrible meaning that it has now. The reader should verify the above statements concerning the now obsolete meanings of "hell," "prevent," and "let," by consulting any unabridged dictionary of the English language.

Gehenna was the name given to a valley outside Jerusalem, into which everything fit for destruction was cast. Fires were kept burning there; but if something cast into the valley lodged on a rocky ledge and did not fall into the fire, worms would presently consume it; no one would interfere with the destructive work of either the flames or the worms. Just as Jerusalem in Palestine typified the "New Jerusalem," so did the "Valley of Hinnom," called *Gehenna*, typify the "lake which burneth with fire and brimstone," "without" the New Jerusalem. (Isa. 66: 24.) This lake means "the second *death*," not everlasting torment, and it was to this that our Saviour referred. (Mark 9: 43-48; Rev. 20: 14, 15; 21: 8; 22: 15.) The words *sheol* and *hades* may be understood as generally referring to the death that has come upon all the race on account of the transgression in Eden. This has passed upon all. (Rom. 5: 12.) *Gehenna* may be understood as referring to the death which comes as a punishment of persistent wilfulness upon those who have been brought to a knowledge of the truth.

To note a few instances of good men going to *sheol* will be instructive, as showing that *sheol* means the death condition, not torment—"O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave [*sheol*], that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past." (Job 14: 13.) Evidently Job did not think of *sheol* as meaning a place of torment, since he prayed to be hidden there until God's wrath were overpast. Gen. 37: 35; 42: 38; 44: 29, 31 are similar instances, telling of Jacob's trouble over the loss of Joseph and the anticipated loss of Benjamin. "For I will go down into the grave [*sheol*] *unto my son* [Joseph, supposed dead] mourning." "If mischief befall him [Benjamin] by the way in the which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave [*sheol*]."

Death for Man and Beast

Having noted the Scripture testimony that death is the same for both good and evil men, it is now necessary for us to learn a further lesson; viz., that death *as such* is the same for man as for the beast—the cessation of life. This may appear humiliating to us, who regard ourselves as lords of creation; but if it be true there can be no possible advantage in disregarding it. Here is the Scripture statement on the point—"That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; *as the one dieth, so dieth the other;* yea, they have all one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast, for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man *whether* [this reading is supported by many versions, including the Revised] it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, *whether* it goeth downward to the earth?" (Eccl. 3: 19-21.) It would seem that already in Solomon's day, nearly 3,000 years ago, there were philosophers arguing on the same lines as those mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, that man had some advantage over the beast in death. Solomon reproves these, not with the unwisdom derived from his association with false religions, but by expressing the sentiments of the divinely inspired Psalms of his father David, which he must often have heard sung in the temple service. In view of Psa. 88: 10; 115: 17; 6: 5, what else could he have written than "*Who knoweth* the spirit of man, *whether* it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast, *whether* it goeth downward to the earth?" Surely the vain philosophers did not *know* it, even though they may have thought and taught it; and Solomon, instructed by divine wisdom, knew what the philosophers did not know, viz., that man and beast have one breath, breathe the same air, and when they cease to breathe they cease to live. This being so, the good man, as far as death itself is concerned, is no better off than the evil one, and neither is worse off than the beast.

The Spirit of Man

The words *ruach* in the Old Testament and *pneuma* in the New Testament are equivalents, and are trans-

lated "spirit." Their primary significance being an unseen power, both words have a wide range of meaning; viz., spirit in the sense of a spirit being, as God, Christ, angels, and the joint heirs with Christ; spirit in the sense of mind or disposition; air or wind, breath, including the idea of power to live. In the last of these senses the word *ruach* is used in Gen 7: 15—"breath of life," or life sustaining breath, referring to the power to live by breathing that God had given to the beasts of the earth and the fowl of the air. The same phrase, "breath of life," occurs in Gen. 2: 7, where the creation of man is described, and it refers to the power to live by breathing which God gave to man as well as to the lower animals. With the same significance is *ruach* used in Eccl. 3: 21—"who knoweth the spirit of man"—the breath, and v. 19—"they have all one breath." In Eccl. 12: 1-6 the gradual decay of the human body is described In v. 7 the result of the separation of breath and body is shown to be that the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit (*ruach*), or power to live by breathing, returns to God who gave it. To "give up the ghost" means, literally, "to breathe out."—Job. 3: 11; 14: 10.

Man Became a Living Soul

Gen. 2: 7, after describing the uniting of the body and the breath of life, states that the result of the union was that the "man *became* a living soul." It has been thought by some that the man *received* a soul unto himself; but the Scriptures use a different word, whose significance should not be overlooked. All are fully acquainted with the difference between "received" and "became." Before God started the breathing process (by breathing into the man's nostrils "the breath of life"), there was no being, no animation. The breathing process started, animation resulted; and the hitherto inanimate form "*became* a living soul" or being. The union of breath and body produced the soul or being; the dissolution of that union between body and breath means the death of that soul or being. This was the condemnation that Adam brought upon himself. When he stopped breathing, his power to live ceased: the soul or being died, as the Scriptures say—"All the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and *he died.*"—Gen. 5: 5.

Man in God's Likeness

Wherein consisted the likeness of the man to his Maker? We see that it was not in that man was given to have "life in himself." That was originally the quality of Jehovah, solely (John 5: 26), and was given by Him to the Son at His resurrection. It is also to be given—which shows it is not yet possessed by them—to the Church, the joint heirs with Jesus. (Rom. 2: 7; 1 Cor. 15: 49, 53.) The original likeness to God, as manifested in the first pair, was in the moral attributes. They were able to appreciate and to exercise within their limitations the moral qualities which find full expression in the Almighty. After the transgression, the likeness began to grow dim, and the present condition of the race is far from being an expression of the divine likeness. Provision is made in the New Covenant for the re-writing of the divine law on the heart of whosoever will submit to the process, and in the end God's likeness will once more be perfectly manifest in His human sons, as well as in those who will attain to the spirit nature. Any of the race not submitting himself to the New Covenant processes after full enlightenment on the subject will be cast into the Second Death.—Gen. 1: 26; Luke 3: 38; Heb. 8: 8-12; Jer. 12: 14-17; Frontispiece Chart, line LF.

The Resurrection of the Dead

The Scripture testimony concerning the state of the dead has been examined, and it has been seen that the dead are asleep. The Scriptures have been found to teach that the whole of the race has been condemned to death on account of one transgression in Eden (Chart, line AD), but that redemption has been accomplished through the Ransom for all given by Jesus. This brings us to the teaching which distinguishes the Bible from all other religious systems. These, based on vain philosophies, would have us believe that the dead are not dead, that they do not cease to exist but rather enter at once more fully into life, still keeping on with their conscious activities. Their hope of a future life is therefore based on something within themselves. The Scriptures, on the other hand, fully recognising that the dead are dead, and that they are powerless to help themselves, preach Jesus and the Resurrection. He purchased the race, hence has the right to call them forth from the grave, and He will do so. (John 5: 28, 29; 11: 25.) All of heathendom's and most of Christendom's teaching concerning the hope of a future life is based on the fallacy of the philosophers: all the Scripture teaching concerning the hope of a future life for the human race is based on the fact that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was raised from the dead by the power of God. (1 Cor. 15.) Christendom, with its teaching concerning the persistence of life in death and that the faithful have gone to be with the Lord, finds the Scripture teaching of the resurrection of the dead a great inconvenience. Christendom teaches that the soul or spirit (it has been seen that unscriptural meanings have been given to these words) is liberated by death from the "prison" of clay, that the resurrection is a resurrection of the body only; in its opinion, the resurrection is to be a re-imprisonment of the soul. No wonder the resurrection is an inconvenient doctrine.

Deliverance is provided from death and the grave. "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 [*sheol*], I will be thy destruction." (Hosea 13: 14.) Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory!

Depart and be with Christ

The expression in Phil. 1: 23, of the Apostle's earnest desire to be with the Lord, has caused considerable discussion, and some have found difficulty in harmonising this passage with the general teaching of the Scripture on the subject of Death and Resurrection. On the one hand the Scriptures Paul's writings included, teach that the saints must wait until the Lord's second advent before they can be with Him. (John 14: 3; Col. 3: 4; 1 Pet. 5: 4 Rev. 11: 15-18.) But in Phil. 1 the Apostle seem to teach that at the moment of departing this lif

he would be with the Lord. Does he really contradict himself?

No; the Apostle does not contradict himself in this matter. He was a prisoner in Rome, at the time of writing to the Philippians. He did not know which day might be his last. Being a fully consecrated saint, the devoted Apostle was ready for Christ to be magnified through him in any way, whether by a life of activity, or by a martyr's death. Either would be to the Lord's glory (Phil. 1: 20, 21), and which *of them to choose he wot not.* (v. 22.) He was *in a* strait betwixt these two—life and death. The apparent contradiction is here: that whereas the Apostle plainly says he is in a strait between life and death, not knowing which of them to choose, the Authorised Version unfortunately makes it appear that after all he preferred death, that being generally understood by "depart." This version belittles the Apostle by *representing that he did not know his own mind.* The word *analuo,* translated "depart," occurs in only one other place in the New Testament, and it is there translated "return"—"And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when He will *return* from the wedding." (Luke 12: 36.) A derivative, *analusis,* occurs in 2 Tim. 4: 6—"The time of my *departure* is at hand." The word *analuo means "loosing again."* In Phil. 1: 23 it refers to the resurrection, at our Lord's second coming, when Paul and all the other faithful would be loosed from the bonds of death and all present evil conditions, and would be received by the Lord unto Himself.—John 14: 3; 1 Thess. 4: 14-18.

This, which the Apostle much preferred, was not one of the two things between which he could not *choose, but was a third thing, different from the* others, and "far better." The promise was, a crown of righteousness and glory "at that day."—2 Tim. 4: 8; Col. 3: 4.

"Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord"

These words of the Apostle (2 Cor. 5: 8) have been held by some to favour the thought that the faithful are ushered into the Lord's presence at death. Yet the Apostle does not say this; he merely expresses his preference "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In this verse he does not refer to the intermediate condition of sleep, waiting for the Lord, because that was not his preference. He speaks of this in verses 1-4—"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are (1) in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be (2) unclothed, but (3) clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

"In this tabernacle" (1) is the present unsatisfactory state of the consecrated Christian, seeking to walk in the Lord's way, but hampered by the weakness of the flesh, which causes those who have *the first fruits of the spirit to groan within themselves.* (Rom. 8: 23.) The "unclothed" condition (2) is the period of waiting for the resurrection, when the faithful one, having finished his course in death, sleeps until the voice of the Lord calls him. This condition was not craved by the Apostle; yet he knew it must needs be. The "clothed upon" condition (3) is that in which the faithful consecrated of the Gospel Age will rejoice when they receive the new estate, the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Then they shall be in the presence of the Lord, for they shall see Him as He is, and shall be like Him.—1 John 3: 2.

In verse 8 the first and third conditions are mentioned, and a decided preference for the third is expressed. The second condition is not mentioned in verse 8, but this does not authorise the thought that the Apostle expected to pass from the first to the third without staying for a time in the second or grave condition. He expected to remain "unclothed" for a time, and looked forward to receiving a "crown of righteousness" at our Lord's appearing, at which time he would be "clothed upon."—2 Tim. 4: 7, 8.

The Thief on the Cross

In His dying hours our Redeemer was associated with malefactors. One of these "railed on Him, saying, If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us." The other was more kindly disposed. Instead of railing against Jesus, he rebuked the railer, confessing that they two were receiving the just punishment for their crimes, while Jesus had done nothing amiss. Then he said to Jesus, "Lord, remember me when thou comest in [Revised Version and most ancient MSS.] Thy kingdom." (Luke 23: 39-43.) What measure of understanding and faith the thief had respecting our Lord's kingdom cannot be gathered from the few words of the narrative. In any case, he was a suppliant, not for a place in the throne, but for kindness to be shown him by the Saviour. Joint *heirship in the kingdom is prepared for those who* take up their cross daily and follow in the footsteps of Jesus, learning obedience by the things which they suffer. (Heb. 5: 8, 9; 2 Tim. 2: 12.) Manifestly the thief on the cross, making his request only a few hours before decease, could not be reckoned in with the cross-bearing, footstep followers and overcomers. But he was among "all the families of the earth," *who shall be blessed by that kingdom, even as he* prayed. This is the purport of our Lord's answer to him, "Verily, I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with Me in Paradise."—Verse 43.

In order to show the harmony of our Lord's words with the general teaching of the Scriptures on the state of the dead, the comma is placed after the word "to-day," instead of before it, as in the Authorised Version; and lest it be thought that an unwarranted liberty has been taken in doing this, the reader is asked to note* that there was no punctuation in the oldest manuscripts of the Bible—not even spaces to separate the words. The reader of the ancient Greek manuscripts, devoid of punctuation, would have other aids to the understanding. Such an aid is given in the case under discussion. The late Dr. Bullinger explains the matter thus—

"The verb 'say,' when used with 'to-day,' is sometimes separated from it by the word *hoti* ('that'), and sometimes it is joined with it by the absence of *hoti*. The

*The reader will also note that the Revised Version punctuation is not always like that of the Authorized Version.

word *hoti*, put between 'say' and 'to-day,' throws 'to-day' into what is said, and cuts it off from the word 'say,' e.g., Luke 19: 9—'Jesus said . . . that (*hoti*) this day is salvation come to this house.' Luke 4: 21—'He began to say unto them that (*hoti*) this day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' But this is not the case in Luke 23: 43. Here the word *hoti* is absent, therefore the verse should read—'Verily I say to thee this day, thou shalt be with me in paradise.'"

The correctness of this reading is assured not only by the fact that our Lord's words are thus shown to be in harmony with the Scriptures which teach that the dead are really dead, but also by the fact that He did not come in His kingdom on the day of His death. The coming *in His kingdom* is at the second advent of the Redeemer, when the kingdom will come to cause God's will to be done on earth as in heaven, to cause the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and to establish in the whole earth the paradise which was once in miniature represented in Eden, but which was lost on account of sin. Our blessed Saviour was not in His Kingdom on the day of His death, neither was He or the thief in paradise on that day. He was three days in *hades*. (Acts 2: 31; 1 Cor. 15: 4.) Jesus was of the royal family of David, and King of the Jews, but He did not become King of kings, with all power in heaven and on earth, until His resurrection from the dead.—Rom. 14: 9; Acts 5: 31; 13: 33, 34; John 7: 39.

The word "paradise" means a park or garden, and here refers to the kingdom which, when set up, will make the whole earth an Eden of peace and happiness. The thief, who is still in *hades*, will not be in paradise until the Saviour calls him out of the tomb. The blessing he sought, no doubt with a measure of faith, on that day, when everything seemed against Jesus and the possibility of His coming as the King of kings and Lord of lords, will then be given him. His "cup of cold water," given to the Lord in the hour of trial, shall not go unrewarded, for "Verily I say unto thee to-day, thou shalt be with me in paradise."

The Souls Under the Altar

In Rev. 6: 9-11 the souls of martyrs "under the altar" are said to cry, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Some have taken this to mean that the martyrs were enjoying a conscious existence between their death and their resurrection. This passage, from the allegorical and highly figurative book of Revelation, is not a proper foundation for a teaching that contradicts the plain statements of Scripture, viz., that the dead are asleep, that they know not anything, and that therefore they cannot call on the Lord. The dead martyrs, slain on account of their faithfulness to the testimony of Jesus, were offered on the altar of the worldliness of a persecuting church and state—all of them "slain" socially, in the sense of ostracism, and many slain physically also. They could not, while in the death state, personally pray to God, yet the *fact of their martyrdom* could and does cry to Him emphatically, "with a loud voice," in the same way that Abel's blood cried unto God from the ground, and in the same way that the faithfulness of the Ancients is a testimony to us. (Gen. 4: 10; Heb. 11: 4.) The martyr Stephen did not in his dying moments cry for vengeance on his persecutors; and were he consciously existing in a disembodied state he would be unlikely to alter his prayer—"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." (Acts 7: 60.) The narrative plainly states that, "when he had said this, he fell asleep." But God, in whose eyes the death of his saints is precious (Psa. 116: 15), has arranged retribution for the persecutors of his people, details of which are given in later chapters of the Apocalypse. It is said of Babylon the great, "*In her* was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."—Rev. 17: 5, 6; 18: 5-8, 24.

The Spirits in Prison

This passage (1 Peter 3: 19, 20) has presented great difficulties, especially to those who have not discerned the Scripture testimony concerning the future blessing. They have been puzzled to understand why, if some were preached to by our Lord, with a view to repentance and salvation, no similar provision was made for subsequent sinners.

The spirits that were disobedient in the days of Noah are not to be understood as spirits of deceased human beings, for the Scriptures have shown us that the dead man is not survived by the soul or spirit. The dead man knows not anything. The disobedient spirits were the spirit beings, or angels, who kept not their first estate, but associated themselves with the human race in a manner not approved by God. (Gen. 6: 1-4; 2 Peter 2: 4; Jude 6.) For this they were imprisoned—"bound in chains of darkness"—and cast down to "hell." Here the phrase "cast down to hell" is a translation of *tartaroo*. This is the only occurrence of the word *tartaroo* in the Scriptures.

The disobedient, "cast down" angels were in the earth's atmosphere at the time of our Lord's first advent, and He often came into conflict with them, driving them out of some who were possessed and crazed by them. To them our Lord "went and preached."* What did He say to the disobedient angels? How did He say it? These interesting questions are fully answered in 1 Peter 3: 18, 19—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by [literally "in"] the spirit; *by which* also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." Our Lord preached to these fallen angels by His suffering, His death, and His resurrection. There was no formal discourse on a fixed date. His entire ministry and His reward by the Father constituted the "preaching;" and to the angels it must have been a wonderful object lesson on the reward of obedience as contrasted with the penalty attached to their own disobedience.

Is this preaching likely to profit the disobedient angels? It was intended to do so, if they will learn the lesson; for it is written that the dispensation of the fulness of times is not only for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth under Jesus, but also for the purpose of gathering under that one

*"Went and" is here used in that superfluous manner, more common in times past than now, which still survives in our expression—"I've gone and done it." In this case, "gone and" does not imply that a journey was taken; neither is this implied by "went and" in 1 Peter 3: 19. Examples of pleonasm are fairly numerous in Scripture. See Deut. 29: 18; 1 Kings 9: 6; Jer. 29: 12; Matt. 9: 13; 19: 21.

Head "things in heaven" now out of harmony, that is, the imprisoned angelic beings to whom Christ preached by His life, death, and resurrection.—Eph. 1: 10.

If the disobedient angels† turn from Satan, and submit themselves to the Lord Jesus, they will join in the glad ascriptions of praise and honour to God and His Son (Phil. 2: 10; Rev. 5: 13); if they wilfully persist in disobedience, they must be destroyed; for, "All the wicked will he destroy."—Psalm 145: 20; Matt. 25: 41.

Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration

In fulfilment of Matt. 16: 28, our Saviour, as recorded in Matt. 17: 1-9, took Peter, James, and John into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them. On this occasion Moses and Elias appeared unto them, and spoke with Jesus. This incident has been thought by many earnest Christians to be a certain indication that Moses and Elias were not really asleep; for, if they were asleep, how could they take part in the conversation? is the question.

The answer is found in the words of Jesus in verse 9. He charged Peter, James, and John, saying, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead." It was a *vision*, not a real visitation from Moses and Elias, that they saw. Jesus was a real person; Peter, James, and John were real persons; Moses and Elias on the mount were appearances, but not substantial persons. Visions in which the prophets have themselves borne a part are by no means uncommon in the Scriptures, the other participants in such visions sometimes being figurative beasts or creatures, impossible in a real or natural sense, but emblematic of great realities to be accomplished. John on the isle of Patmos was himself an actor in some of the visions he describes.—Rev. 4: 6-8; 5: 1-4; 6: 1, 3, 5, 7; 10: 8-10; 13: 1, 2, 5, 6.

Having the express word of the Lord that this occurrence was a *vision*, it is clear that there is no conflict between it and the plain statements of Scripture, which show that the dead are really dead, and must sleep until the resurrection day.

Peter, one of the eye witnesses of the vision, described it as a vision of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of His majesty. (2 Pet. 1: 16-19, R.V.) The teaching of the vision is that Moses and Elias were superseded by Christ. Moses represented the Law Covenant, and Elias represented the ancient Prophets. Both testified of Christ, and till Christ. "The law and the prophets were until John." "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." God, who spake unto the fathers by the prophets, "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Luke 16: 16; John 1: 17; Heb. 1: 1.) This was the purport of the voice which the three disciples heard—"This is my beloved Son, . . . *hear ye him.*"—Matt. 17: 5; Acts 3: 22.

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

The question is sometimes asked, "Was not Elijah taken to heaven in the chariot of fire, and so ushered, without dying, into God's presence?"—2 Ki. 2: 1-11.

At first sight, this narrative would seem a formidable contradiction of our Lord's word—"No man hath ascended up to heaven" (John 3: 13), but the solution of the apparent difficulty is at once made clear when the reader remembers the variety of ways in which the word "heaven" is Scripturally used. There are the heaven in which God dwells (Isa. 66: 1); the heaven in which the stars shine (Gen. 1: 14-17); the heaven in which the birds fly, that is, the air (Gen. 1: 20, 26); and "heaven" used symbolically to represent a portion of the "world" or order of things. From John 3: 13, we are obliged to deduce that Elijah did not go up to the first of these heavens, where God dwells; and there is no reason to believe that he was taken to some place in the astronomical heavens; but it is perfectly feasible to believe that he was taken up into the air, where the fowl of heaven fly. Elisha saw Elijah thus taken away into the air, but, as our Lord's word plainly intimates, he did not enter the Divine Presence. In order to view Elijah's experience in harmony with other Scriptures, we must consider that he died, while being taken up, and has since been asleep. This sudden taking away of Elijah may be illustrative of the taking away of the last of the joint heirs with Christ —"We who are alive and remain." The fiery chariot and the whirlwind in which Elijah was taken are symbols of the trouble and distress of nations with which this age is closing, and in which the Lord is gathering His own to Himself. More of this in succeeding pages.

Enoch Translated

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him." "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him."—Heb. 11: 5; Gen. 5: 24.

Nothing in these texts says that Enoch was taken to heaven; nothing in them says that he did not die, and Heb. 11: 13 would seem to include Enoch with the others mentioned when it says, "These all died in faith." Again remembering our Lord's words in John 3: 13, the reader is guarded against supposing that Enoch was taken to heaven. Referring to Gen. 5: 24, we are told that "he was not," which is another way of saying that he had ceased to live. The expressions "was not," "were not," and "are not" are used in Psalm 37: 36; Jer. 31: 15; Matt. 2: 18 to denote death. That Enoch was translated (set over) without seeing death should therefore be understood as meaning that his end came so suddenly that he had no warning or intimation of its approach. The people of his time were very long-lived; compared with others, he was taken at his prime, and probably had experienced little of the aches and pains which accompany death. The Lord "took him" in the same way that He received the spirit of Stephen, when that martyr fell asleep. He took their power to live, preserving their characteristics in His own records until such time as the resurrection should call them forth. In the same manner, the spirit, breath, or power to live, of all human beings returns "unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12: 7), to remain in His keeping until the resurrection, when the power to live shall again be bestowed. This "spirit" is not, as we have already seen, a separate personality, which consciously lives apart from the body, but it

† For further explanation in regard to the fallen angels and their prospects, please see the book, "Do the Dead Communicate?" mentioned in Book List.

is the breath of life, which God placed in the first man's nostrils (Gen. 2: 7), and by reason of which the man "became a living soul" or being.

King Saul and the Witch of En-dor

In 1 Samuel 28 is related the experience of Saul with the witch of En-dor. Saul had been most desirous of knowing how his affairs would go, but could get no answer from the Lord. (Verse 6.) Therefore he sought out this "witch," who belonged to a class with which Israel was not permitted to have dealings, or to allow to live (Exod. 22: 18; Lev. 19: 31; 20: 27; Deut. 18: 10, 11; Isa. 8: 19), and which, moreover, Saul had put out of the land. (Verse 3.) The medium asked Saul whom she should bring up, and he said, Samuel. Influenced by her description, Saul "*perceived* that it was Samuel." (Vs. 14.) It cannot be supposed that power would be given to a "witch," one of the prohibited class, to raise Samuel from death; for if the Lord would not answer Saul when he called upon Him in the appointed ways, much less would He answer through a spiritualistic medium. What the woman "saw" and Saul "perceived" was not Samuel, but a counterfeit of him, impersonated by a fallen angel—one of those who had been disobedient in Noah's days, but was now "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Samuel had died; and, being asleep, dead, he could neither know nor tell anything. He had before his death prophesied that the kingdom should be taken from Saul; this was known to the evil spirit, which impersonated Samuel, and was referred to in the warning that was given to Saul. It seems also that the evil spirit was correct in saying that the battle should go against Israel, and that Saul should be slain. It could not have been otherwise, since God had at last definitely withdrawn His favour from Saul, in refusing to hear or to answer him.

Body, Soul, and Spirit

"I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. 5: 23.

That the Apostle was not praying thus on behalf of individual believers, consecrated to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is evident from several considerations. (1) The prayer has not been so answered: no believer has been preserved alive through the Gospel Age. (2) If the Apostle's prayer be regarded as for the Church as a whole, it is readily understood, for the True Church has been preserved through the age, notwithstanding many attacks against it. (Matt. 16: 18.) The Holy Spirit has been preserved to it; its soul or life has not died; it has been preserved as a body or company of believers. The membership has never been recognisable by the world, for the world has not known them, even as it knew not Jesus. God has known them, and therefore His foundation has stood sure. (2 Tim. 2: 19.) The Apostle's prayer has been answered on behalf of the Church collectively, as it could not have been, and was not intended to be, answered on behalf of any member individually.

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

— Luke 16: 19-31. —

This is the concluding parable of a group of five running through Luke 15 and 16. The reason for giving this series is stated in Luke 15: 1, 2—"Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." The Pharisees and scribes were hardening their hearts against the truth preached by our Lord, while the publicans and sinners were more often sufficiently humble to receive the truth gladly, and to reform their lives in harmony with it. The opportunity to enter the race for the high calling and joint heirship in the Kingdom was being proclaimed to the Jewish people. The scribes and Pharisees were not only indisposed to enter, but they sought to prevent others who were willing to enter. (Matt. 23: 13.) One of their special grievances against the Lord Jesus was on account of His willingness to receive all sincere penitents, regardless of their social position, while at the same time He exposed the real wickedness of the hypocritical ones who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, not needing repentance. The group of parables now under consideration is a specially good example of our Lord's attitude. Beginning most mildly, with the parables of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Silver Piece, it carries the reader on through the parables of the Lost Son and the Unjust Steward, until the grand climax is reached in the last of the group, and the end awaiting the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, as well as the blessing reserved for the penitent publicans and sinners, is vividly portrayed, by the symbolism of The Rich Man and Lazarus.*

In Luke 15: 3-7 and 8-10, our Lord justifies His conduct by illustrations which must have appealed to all the right minded among His hearers. If a man have lost one sheep out of a hundred, or a woman one of her ten silver pieces, the lost one claims more interest and attention than the others, and great rejoicing is made when it is found. Similarly, there is more joy in heaven over one of these repentant publicans or sinners than over ninety and nine scribes and Pharisees who in their own estimation are just, and need no repentance. This was a mild reproof against the just-in-their-own-eyes, but it must have given great joy to the sincerely repentant.

The Prodigal Son

In verses 11-32, that most beautiful and touching of all parables, our Lord further justified His position by depicting the depth of sin and misery into which the prodigal son had fallen, and the gladness with which the father had received him again. So, although the publicans and sinners had wasted their substance spiritual in "riotous living," and had even associated themselves with the Gentiles, it pleased

*For detailed explanation of this parable, please see the book, "Everlasting Punishment"; see also the "Parables of our Lord," mentioned in Book List.

God to receive them with gladness on their sincere repentance. Not only was He pleased to receive them, but He also made a feast of spiritual good things for them; and just as the father in the parable bestowed on his repentant, returning son the best robe, the ring and the shoes, so did the heavenly Father bestow on the repentant publicans and sinners the best robe of righteousness (that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ, much superior to that of the Law), the hope of immortality in the high calling just then being opened up (a ring or circle, being endless, symbolizes immortality), and the shoes, the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, wearing which their walk and conversation would be better than it had been.

In this parable the murmuring scribes and Pharisees are represented by the elder son, who would not take part in the merry-making, but in a discontented spirit boasted of his righteousness and long service to the father. The kindness and long suffering of God toward the Pharisees are shown in this, that the privileges were all theirs, as well, and they were desired to partake of them ("All that I have is thine"), and to rejoice in the return of the penitents. The Pharisees and scribes should have appreciated this, and should have taken the lesson to heart; but they were not so disposed; therefore the Lord proceeded, in the parable of

The Unjust Steward

(Luke 16: 1-15), to show them the effect of the wrong use of their superior position and privileges as stewards of the divine favours, as far as the Law had revealed them.—Matt. 23: 1-3.

The scribes are here represented as standing between God and the people, as the steward in the parable stood between his lord and the debtors. The steward was wise; when he realised that his office was about to be taken from him, he made friends with the debtors, by writing off portions of their debts, so that they would be ready to favour him when he was cast out. Here was a broad hint to the scribes. They, sitting in Moses' seat, had unjustly bound grievous burdens on the backs of the people. They had imposed burden upon burden by means of their traditions, which made the word of God of none effect. To have relieved the people of these weights of tradition would have been no more than just, and it would have been a wise policy for them to adopt, seeing they were about to be cast out of the stewardship; but, instead of conceding anything, they sought all the more to justify themselves, and thus made themselves even more abominable in God's sight.—Luke 16: 15; Matt. 23: 1-6.

The Rich Man and the Beggar

Finally, the superior position of the Pharisees and scribes (rich in spiritual things, clothed in purple and fine linen, representing their own estimate of their righteousness and hopes of royalty, and faring sumptuously every day—Psalm 69: 22; Rom. 11: 9) is contrasted with the outcast, beggarly condition of the publicans and sinners (poor in spiritual things, lying at the gate of the "rich man," and desiring to be fed with some crumbs of the favour so bountifully enjoyed by the "rich man"—Rom. 3: 1, 2). Knowing that the scribes and Pharisees would not accept the good advice offered them by means of the parable of The Unjust Steward, the Lord now makes a positive prediction of the course of events, and by means of the picture of the deaths of the beggar and the rich man shows the changes that were to come in the circumstances of the self-righteous Pharisee class and of the penitent class of despised publicans and sinners.

The latter, dying to their unfavourable spiritual conditions, were to be carried by "angels" (messengers of truth) into "Abraham's bosom"; they would by this change come into line to inherit the good things of divine favour expressed in the Abrahamic promise. The Pharisees boasted of their lineage, not realising that fleshly descent from Abraham would profit them nothing, if their hearts were not right. When their class, as a class, "died" to their favourable circumstances, it, as a class, was "buried." How accurately this describes the condition of the scribes and their sympathisers for nearly twenty centuries! They have been "buried" beneath the social "earth"; every nation has crushed them down, and while in this *hadean*, or covered, or buried condition, they have been in the most grievous torments—being persecuted, or at least ostracised, in all the countries to which they have fled for protection.

In an earlier portion of this study, we have seen that the condition of dead *persons* is such that they know nothing and feel nothing. Many scriptures indicate this plainly, and we must not suppose that our Lord would contradict the straightforward utterances of the Old Testament, which He constantly quoted as the Divine Word. By recognising that our Lord was in this parable depicting the fortunes of two *classes*, as carried through the group of parables beginning with that of The Lost Sheep, the perfect harmony between Him and the Old Testament is clearly discerned.

While in his "torment," the "rich man" class apprehends something of what he has lost and the "beggar" has gained. The Jews realise that they are under the divine disfavour; they also know that they are in many nations socially beneath the "earth," and without doubt they realise that they have been tormented in the "flame" of trouble which destroyed their city and polity in A.D. 70, and which has been "burning" them ever since. They call to "Father Abraham" for relief, as though their lineal descent should avail to relieve their trouble; but God refuses to send it, not even a drop of the cool water of truth to relieve their distress; for all His favours are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and not for those who deny Him. This, however, is not on account of vindictiveness on God's part, though the "rich man" is reminded that circumstances once were different. The hardness of heart of the Pharisee and scribe class and their sympathisers has caused a "great gulf" of pride and prejudice to be "fixed" between them and those who have entered into the divine favour ("Abraham's bosom"), so that it is practically impossible for spiritual benefits to pass to the Jews. This "gulf" represents also, we understand, the "blindness in part" of Rom. 11: 25, which has been so effective that but few Jews comparatively have been converted to Christ since A.D. 70.

Near the close of this most marvellous of parables,* in which the great Teacher so wonderfully used the impossible to represent the actual, is found a reference to the written words of Moses and the Prophets. If the "brethren" of the "rich man" (possibly representing the Jews living outside of Palestine at the time of our Lord's ministry) were indisposed to hear them, neither would they regard the testimony of the "beggar," now received into divine favour, nor of the Gentiles who have been received into divine favour with him, having been raised from the death state of trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2: 5, 6.) This should be to us an intimation of the reverence we are to render to God's Word, as expressed in the Old Testament, and that we are not to suppose that the New Testament contradicts Moses and the Prophets, when they tell us that "the dead know not anything."

The Second Death

In the Garden of Eden, death was pronounced as the penalty for the transgression there committed, and the whole of the Adamic race was involved in it. This was the unfortunate result of the first great Judgment of our race.—Rom. 5: 12, 16.

Another Judgment Day has been appointed, because the Son of God tasted death for every man, thus purchasing the entire race, and having the right to put each individual of the race on probation for life, with the alternative of death to the wilfully disobedient. (1 Peter 1: 18, 19; 1 Cor. 6: 20; Rom. 5: 15, 18, 19; I Cor. 15: 21, 22; Acts 17: 30, 31; 3: 23.) The death which is a possibility of this great Judgment is called the Second Death. Whereas the possibility of complete deliverance from the Adamic penalty is to be put within reach of all because of the Redeemer's death, there is no hope of release for those who may be condemned to the Second Death; it will be final, because none will be sentenced to it until after it has been determined that their character is wilfully opposed to God and righteousness. A thousand thousand re-trials would not alter such a case; therefore none will be granted.

The Judgment which has for its alternatives eternal life and eternal death is going on now, in some cases. (2 Cor. 5: 10.) Each enlightened one comes under a measure of responsibility, and some who have enjoyed a great deal of light are thereby brought under very much responsibility, so that wilfulness on their part would involve them in utter destruction without hope of remedy. (Heb. 1: 1, 2; 2: 2, 3; 6: 4-6; 10: 26-31; 12: 25; Acts 3: 23, 26.) Even a small degree of enlightenment is not to be trifled with. Let us therefore be very careful that we be rightly exercised by the divine mercies.—Rom. 12: 1; 2 Cor. 5: 14, 15.

Satan in the Second Death

Second death does not necessarily imply dying twice. Satan, his sympathisers among the angels, and all his evil systems of superstition are to be destroyed in it, though they have not previously died. (Matt. 25: 41, 46.) Thus is shown the fact that the significance of "second," as attached to this death, is not in the number of times the transgressor dies, but in that it is the condemnation which may be pronounced as a result of the second great Judgment, which includes heavenly, as well as earthly, beings, also false systems.—Eph. 1: 10; Col. 1: 20; 2 Tim. 4: 1; John 5: 22, 30; 2 Thess. 2: 3-8.

Throughout the book of Revelation (2: 9, 13; 12: 3, 9, 12; 20: 2, 7, 10) the name "Satan" is applied to a political system, of which we hope to say more on another occasion. In Rev. 20: 10, this "Satan" system is mentioned with two other systems ("Beast" and "False Prophet"—Rev. 19: 20) as being tormented forever and ever in the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the Second Death. The "Beast" and "False Prophet" are cast into the burning lake at the end of the Gospel age; the "Satan" system at the end of the Kingdom age. Since systems have no nerves, they cannot feel pain; this passage must therefore be viewed as strongly figurative, describing the severe dealings of the Lord with all systems of evil, looking to their utter destruction.*

Everlasting Punishment

The "everlasting punishment" mentioned in Matt. 25: 46 is not to be understood as everlasting pain. When a criminal is executed by sentence of an earthly court, his punishment is everlasting, or permanent, as far as men can make it so, but his pain is not everlasting, nor is it intended to be so. What the "everlasting punishment" of the wilfully wicked is to be is plainly stated in 2 Thes. 1: 9—they "shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*"; not everlasting *destroying*, an interminable process, but everlasting *destruction*, a completed work, the Second Death.

In Matt. 25: 46, the adjectives "everlasting" and "eternal" are translations of the Greek *aionios*, derived from *aion*, meaning "age." As already shown, this Greek word and its Hebrew equivalent, *olam*, do not always mean "endless." But in Matt. 25: 46 there can be no doubt that endlessness, in respect of both the life of the blessed and the punishment of the condemned, is meant.

The word translated "punishment" is *kolasin*. It means "cutting off," and thus plainly indicates the nature of the punishment to be meted out to the wilfully wicked, expressing precisely what has been seen in 2 Thes. 1: 9, that "everlasting punishment" means permanent destruction without hope of recovery. They shall be "blotted out"—"destroyed from among the people." (Psalm 69: 28; Acts 3: 23.) That we all may be so commended to God in Christ Jesus as to escape this fate is our earnest prayer.

*The subject of the penalty for sin is fully examined, and the Scripture evidences are presented, in the book entitled "Everlasting Punishment," mentioned in Book List.

*For more concerning the beast and the false prophet, see book "Everlasting Punishment." The fact that the name of Satan is used in the book of Revelation to describe the Satanic system which will oppose God at the end of the Kingdom age must not be taken to deny the existence of a spirit-being named Satan. Rather, that system is named after him because it will be actuated by his motives of pride, ambition, and self will, which have been the mainspring of his opposition ever since he tempted our first parents in Eden. That the person Satan will be destroyed is indicated in Matthew 25: 41, where it is shown that the final destruction of the devil, or Satan, was arranged for in God's purpose.

Our Lord's Return

"If I go, I will come again."—John 14: 3.

CHRISTIANS of all persuasions are agreed in believing that our Saviour promised to return to earth. "From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead" is a sentiment familiar to Protestant and Catholic. No time need be taken, therefore, to cite proofs of this, our Lord's intention. It is, however, to be regretted that this expectation, though publicly professed in many congregations every Sunday, has fallen upon a season of much neglect, whereas in the Apostolic days it was the great hope of God's people, cheering and sustaining them in much affliction and distress. "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven. . . . Wherefore comfort one another with these words."—1 Thes. 1: 9, 10; 4: 16-18.

The reason why the early Church was so deeply interested in the Lord's return was that their hope and expectation of seeing Him and sharing His glory could not be realised until then (1 John 3: 2; Col. 3: 4); besides which the reign of Christ and the Church over the nations could not begin until His second advent. (Matt. 25: 31; Rom. 8: 19-22.) Scriptural teaching on this subject is now sadly neglected, present-day Christians not realising, as did the early Church, that the fulfilment of the Church's every hope for herself, and on behalf of mankind in general, is made dependent on the Lord's return. Many Christians now think that they immediately pass into glory at death, and therefore the Lord's return is not necessary in order that they might be with Him. Having no expectation of blessing for the world in connection with the second advent of Christ, but having the belief that eternal woe will overtake those unconverted in the day of His return, it is not surprising that they see no beauty nor desirability in the event, and therefore think as little as possible about it. What else could be expected in the circumstances? Even among those who realise that the doctrine of our Lord's return occupies a most prominent position in the divine Word, there are many whose anticipations in respect to that event are gloomy enough to discourage them altogether. There is no "silver lining" to their cloud. All the more cause have those whose eyes have been opened to see some of the wonderful things in the Bible to thank God for the light now shining into the open minds of all who call upon Him in sincerity.

The Scriptural teaching, showing that the purpose of our Lord's return is to receive His Bride and to bless all nations, has perhaps been sufficiently examined in previous chapters. The present study will therefore be devoted to the Manner of His advent, and subsequent manifestations, the correct understanding of which is most essential, in order that we may not fail to recognise the day of our visitation.

The Disciples' Question

"What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matt. 24: 3.) The significance of this question of the disciples is unfortunately obscured by the mistranslation of two important words. The word "world" is a translation of the Greek word *aion*, which, as already noted, means "age," or a period of time. The disciples did not ask our Lord about the destruction of the earth; they did not expect such an event. They did, however, expect the age to end, and concerning this they asked Him. The word "coming" in Matt. 24: 3 is a mistranslation of the word *parousia*, which means "presence," as being alongside of. Coming is the traveling preceding arrival; arrival is at that moment when the coming is finished; presence is the remaining at a place after coming is completed and arrival is accomplished. The differences between these words need to be clearly comprehended, and always observed, if we would understand the teaching of the Scriptures concerning the manner of our Lord's return.

The word *parousia* occurs twenty-four times in the Greek New Testament. Twenty-two times it is mistranslated "coming" in the Authorised Version. The Revised Version corrects the error to the extent of giving in the margin the correct word, "presence," in every case where another word is used in the ordinary text. The following are all the texts in which the word *parousia* occurs. Read them all, substituting "presence" for "coming," and observe the difference in the sense.—Matt. 24: 3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15: 23; 16: 17; 2 Cor. 7: 6, 7; 10: 10; Phil. 1: 26; 2: 12; 1 Thes. 2: 19; 3: 13; 4: 15; 5: 23; 2 Thes. 2: 1, 8, 9; James 5: 7, 8; 2 Peter 1: 16; 3: 4, 12; 1 John 2: 28.

Let it be understood, then, that the disciples' question was, "What shall be the sign of thy *presence*, and of the end of the *age*?" They did not ask to know the sign of His coming, by which they might realise that He was on the way; neither did they ask to know the sign of His arrival; they desired to know how they might be able to recognise the fact of His *presence*. The reason for such a question will be apparent when it is remembered that the manner of our Lord's first advent was so different from the expectation in the Jewish mind that the faithful of those days had great difficulty in realising the fact of Messiah's *presence* among them. They had expected a great warrior; instead they were called upon to acknowledge the meek and lowly Jesus as the One sent of God. They had expected a king; instead there came one who was servant of all, and who washed their feet. Is it strange, then, that they asked the Saviour, "What shall be the sign of Thy *presence*, and of the *end of the age*?" Would that God's people of the present day were all as deeply interested in this subject as were the disciples.

Many of those ardently longing for the Lord's second advent have been intently looking for signs of His *coming*, whereas it appears from the disciples' question and our Lord's answer that they should rather seek to know the sign of His actual *presence*. A too literal interpretation of some figurative expressions used in describing our Lord's second advent, and the unfortunate mistranslation of *parousia* in nearly every instance of its occurrence, have done

much to lodge unscriptural ideas in the minds of many dear children of God, so that they do not realise the necessity for looking for signs of Christ's *presence*, their thought being that the fact of His presence will be unmistakably known to the whole world at the moment of His arrival. They therefore seek to interpret every "sign" as an indication of the imminence of the second coming, whereas some, at least, of the "signs" are given to indicate that the "presence" will be an accomplished fact when the "sign" is manifest.

The Lord's Reply

Traversing the entire Gospel age in His reply, our Lord pointed out many things to the disciples. He told them there should be wars and rumours of wars; they were not to be troubled over these, because, while all these things must come to pass, "the end is not yet." He told them also (Matt. 24: 9) that they should be delivered up to be afflicted, and that all nations should hate them for His Name's sake. Many false prophets should arise, and should deceive many. How can we identify these? There have been numerous individual false prophets who have deceived comparatively few, all told. But where are the *many* false prophets who should deceive *many?* That charge must, we fear, be laid against the false teachers of Christendom generally, who for centuries have deceived many—themselves often included—with eternal torment and other false teachings. Beside these, the occasional leaders astray of small followings have been as nothing.

The Lord also warned His disciples against those who might teach that He would be in the desert or in the secret chambers. Whether this was directed against the hermits and monastics of the middle ages, or against the demonstrations of latter day Spiritualism, which has sometimes, we understand, claimed to have Christ present at its seances, or whether directed against both, this is at least a warning against endeavouring to localise our Lord's second presence, as some have sought to do.

As evidence that the Master was using much figurative language in this discourse, the reader is referred to vss. 29-31, followed as they are by "Now learn a parable of the fig tree. When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things [mentioned in vss. 29-31], know that he is *near, even at the doors"—present.* "Verily I say unto you, this generation [which sees these things] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."

Knew Not—Know Not

Attention is specially requested to vss. 37-39. In this passage, the word *parousia* occurs twice, and is mistranslated "coming" both times. "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the *presence* of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and *knew not* until the flood came, and took them all away, so shall also the *presence* of the Son of Man be." Thus did our Lord intimate to the disciples, and for our learning, that His second presence at first would be a secret, unknown to the world and to all except those who, like Noah, had "eyes of faith." Such a thought will not surprise the reader who remembers that the risen Lord was invisibly present with the disciples for forty days before His ascension, though he manifested His presence only a few times

Bearing in mind what we have found in our previous studies of the Word, that the faithful consecrated may hope to see our Lord "as He is," not as He was, and that He is now dwelling in light unapproachable, whom no man hath seen nor can see (1 John 3: 2; 1 Tim. 6: 14-16), so that Saul of Tarsus, who saw our Lord's glory, could do so only by a miracle, we are not surprised even at our Lord's words, spoken shortly before His crucifixion, "Yet a little while, and *the world seeth me no more*; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14: 19.) This has been literally fulfilled; after our Lord's resurrection He showed himself not to the world, but only to chosen witnesses. (Acts 10: 40, 41; 1 Cor. 15: 5-8.) Remembering also that at His first presence faith was required in order to recognise Him and admit His claim to be the Messiah, one need not be surprised that the recognition, at first, of the fact of His second presence would be as impossible for the world and for worldly-minded Christendom as was the recognition of His first presence impossible for hard-hearted Judaism, and one will recognise the force of our Lord's comparison of the days of His presence with the days before the flood—"they knew not."

Noah, "a preacher of righteousness," was not silent while the ark was building. The people of his day must have been fully forewarned of the impending calamity. Likewise our Lord's first presence was not without demonstrations of divine truth and power, in preaching and miracles, continued after his ascension by the apostles and believers, so that the professed people of God of that time were warned of the impending "wrath to come" (Matt. 3: 7; 23: 36-38; 1 Thes. 2: 14-16), and of the way of escape by acceptance of Jesus. It is certain also that the first portion of our Saviour's second presence will not be without some attending "signs" that will enable the eye of faith to recognise what the eye of flesh is not to see. But just as unbelief prevented the people of Noah's day from making their escape in the ark, and as unbelief hindered the Jews from accepting Christ, and thus averting the "wrath" which came upon them in A.D. 70, so will unbelief hinder Christendom from recognising the fact of the *parousia* of Christ, and will bring upon it the world-wide time of trouble, "such as never was since there was a nation," which is associated with Messiah's standing up to take His power and reign over the nations.—Daniel 12: 1; Matt. 24 29, 30; Rev. 11: 15-18.

The parallel passage to Matt. 24: 37-39 is Luke 17 26, 27—"And as it was *in the days of Noe*, so shall i be also *in the days of the Son of man.*" Withou using the word "presence," this record of our Lord' discourse presents the thought. "The days* o Noah" were not days shortly before Noah's time "*the days of the Son of man*" are not the moment o

*The *days* of Noah led up to a great *day*; so also do th *days* of the Son of man. For further comment on the grea significance of this fact, please see the book, "*Christ's Pro*phecy on Olivet," mentioned in Book List.

his public manifestation, but are days of His actual presence. How attentive all His people should be; how watchful, lest the slightest indication of the *presence* of the Son of man escape notice; how careful, lest, like the Jews, we should fail to recognise the day of our visitation! For failure on this score will surely mean the outer darkness of error for those whose eyes are closed; it will surely mean the keenest of regrets for such, when they realise their mistake.

Not with Observation

The teaching of the invisible presence of the Lord in His Kingdom is expressed in Luke 17: 20, 21—"And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the Kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation [margin, "with outward show"]; neither shall they say Lo here! or lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within [margin, "among"] you." The propriety of the marginal reading, "among you," is immediately evident, when it is remembered that our Lord was addressing the Pharisees, of whom He said they were "whited sepulchers, full of dead men's bones." He would not have said that the Kingdom of God was within them, in the sense of being in their hearts. But just as Satan's kingdom is among men, exercising its powerful influence for evil over their affairs, so the Kingdom of God, in the person of Jesus, the King, and heir of David's throne, was among them; likewise in the Kingdom Age, when the "strong man" shall be bound, the Kingdom of God, with Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords, will be invisibly present, "among you," exercising its great power for good, and for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Our Lord's reign with His church will be of a thousand years' duration. (Rev. 20: 4, 6.) The beginning of that thousand years does not wait until all the world is converted, or even enlightened; if it had to wait for that, He would never come, if affairs were to continue as at present. He himself intimated that faith would be rare in the earth at the beginning of His *parousia* (Luke 18: 8), and the Holy Spirit expressly declared the same through the Apostle.—1 Tim. 4: 1; 2 Tim. 3: 1-7.

Our Lord's Parousia in the Harvest

(See Frontispiece Chart—Sun in Gospel Age.)

The close of the Gospel Age and the beginning of the Kingdom Age are arranged to overlap, just as it has been seen that the close of the Jewish Age overlapped the beginning of the Gospel Age; so that another period of "ends of the ages" (1 Cor. 10: 11) is to be experienced by God's people. The end of the Gospel Age is a "harvest" time, separating the wheat from the tares. This requires our Lord's presence to oversee the work, as He said in His parable—"The harvest is the end of the age." "So shall it be in the end of this age. The Son of man shall send forth His angels [messengers], and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." (Matt. 13: 39-41.) As the disciples were permitted to act as Christ's messengers in the harvest of the Jewish Age, so His people on earth are honoured with the privilege of being His "angels" or messengers in the Harvest of the Gospel Age, separating the "wheat" and "tares" which have grown together in the "field"—the world—until the separating time should come. Doubtless the Lord uses other instruments than His saints to deal with the "tares," to bind them into their denominational and other "bundles," preparatory to the conflagration of the great time of trouble. A work of this magnitude requires time; the "harvest" of the Gospel Age is therefore not to be thought of as the last day of the age, but as the concluding years of the age. The Jewish "harvest" was a period of forty years; the Gospel Age harvest is, we believe, even longer.

Wheat and Tares

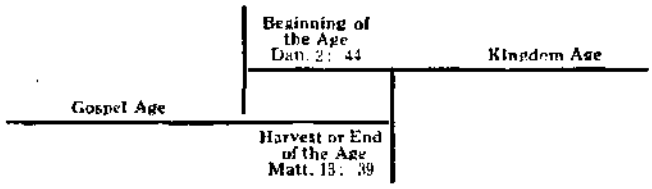
The Harvest is a time of much testing and sifting among those who have named the name of Christ; and truth now due—"present truth"—to the household of faith is the means of separating, just as in the Jewish harvest the truth preached by the Lord and the apostles was the separating influence—the "fan" with which He purged the threshing-floor. (Matt. 3: 12; John 15: 22-24.) The feature of truth which was the greatest stumbling block in the Jewish harvest period was the Cross of Christ; over it the unbelieving stumbled into "outer darkness" and "blindness in part." Those who put their trust in Him were not confounded, but were brought into intimate fellowship with God through Him. In the end of the Gospel Age the Cross of Christ is again the feature of "present truth" which serves as the principal test to determine who are "wheat" and who are "tares," and to separate them from each other. Everyone who has followed the trend of events in the last fifty years can observe how this is so. Multitudes of professing Christians openly say that they see no need of any sacrifice to propitiate divine Justice on their behalf, and are thus stumbling over the Cross, which is to them an offence. Others, still jealous for the Cross, associate with it the errors of eternal torment, etc., which practically make the Cross of none effect; so they stumble, misleading others, and causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of. (2 Peter 2: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 1: 18-24; 1 Peter 2: 4-8.) These repudiators, direct and indirect, of the Cross of Christ, in the "house" of Jehovah (Matt. 22: 11), are of the "tares," who are being bound into their various "bundles" of sectarianism of one sort or another, for the "burning" in the impending time of trouble, which shall destroy the bundles and burn up the "tares," returning them again to the "field," the world.—Matt. 13: 42; Jer. 11: 4.

Those who cling to the Cross, through evil report and through good report, are also gathered, but not into sectarian bundles. Just as bees swarm, because they seek to associate themselves with their queen, so these are gathered to the Lord Himself, and thus to each other. These, the "wheat" class, are gathered into the "barn," into joint heirship with their Lord. Then shall they shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom Age, to rule over and enlighten all nations. —Matt. 13: 43, 30.—See Chart, Frontispiece.

Our Lord's Parousia as King

If the "harvest" portion of the Gospel Age requires the presence of Jesus as Chief Reaper, so does the beginning of the Kingdom Age require His *parousia*

as King. Since the nations are not to be found by Him in a state of submission to the truth; indeed, since the nations, governmentally considered, cannot be allowed to continue as they are, the first work of God's Kingdom, when coming in power, must be to overthrow the nations. In order to do this, God's Kingdom must be set up before the world kingdoms fall—must be set up in order to make them fall. (Rev. 2: 26, 27; Psalm 149: 5-9.) This is exactly the divine programme, as explained by Daniel to the great king Nebuchadnezzar—"In the days of these kings [the last of the world kingdoms represented in the great image which Nebuchadnezzar saw] shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."* (Dan. 2: 34, 35, 44, 45.) This informs us that the divine Kingdom and the world kingdoms shall be coexistent on earth for a time, the latter being smitten to their overthrow by the former. Doubtless this is the same period as the harvest already mentioned, so that the closing of the Gospel Age and the beginning of the Kingdom Age may be represented thus—



The saints on earth have the privilege of acting as harvest messengers or angels, to separate "wheat" from "tares." The saints in glory, raised from the dead, and made like their Lord, no longer flesh, but born anew of the Spirit, have the privilege of dashing the nations to pieces like a potter's vessel. (John 3: 5-8; 1 John 3: 2; Rev. 2: 26, 27.) Those in the flesh may see the results, but cannot trace the operations of the glorified ones. Doubtless many who are now agitating against the present social order are quite in ignorance of whose influence, invisibly exerted, it is with which they co-operate in their own revolutionary way. Though God is not in all the thoughts of present day social agitators, He is using them for the accomplishment of some of His purposes, overruling their violence to His own glory.

His Presence Revealed to the Saints

The fact of our Lord's presence, and that "the kingdom of the world [once Satan's stronghold] is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. 11: 15, R.V.), must in time be made known to all men. For the purpose of the present question, these may be divided into two classes—the believing saints and others. The methods used to reveal His presence to these classes are as different as the classes themselves.

To the saints, eagerly watching for the "sign," His presence will be revealed as that of the rising sun is made known to him who is not asleep. The sun in his rising does not come with trumpets and drums; but noiselessly, at the appointed time, he begins to shine. He who is awake before break of day will hear the first twitters of the rousing birds, he will be conscious that in the east the darkness is changing to grey, and presently to gorgeous hues, and finally the sun himself appears. The sleeper will be all unconscious of this, and the sun may be far on his upward journey before he wakes to a realisation that day has dawned.

Thus is the manner of our Lord's revealing of His *presence* to the saints described—"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24: 27.) The mistranslation of *parousia* by "coming" occurs in this verse (27) as well as in vss. 3, 37, 39. The word here rendered "lightning" is *astrape*, which occurs again in Luke 11: 36, where it is rendered "bright shining," as it should be in Matt. 24: 27, which would read—"For as the bright shining cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the presence of the Son of man be." Lightning does not invariably shine from the east to the west, though the sun does. Where no direction is expressed, as in Luke 17: 24, the word *astrape* is correctly translated "lightning." But whether rendered "lightning" or "bright shining," our Lord's thought evidently was that His presence would be universally manifested, since both sunlight and lightning are visible over a wide area by everyone awake and watching. See also "Christ's Prophecy on Olivet," p. 68.

Thus, quietly as the sun's rising, is the fact of the *Parousia*—presence—of the Lord to be brought to the realisation of the watching saints. To them will appear "the sign of the Son of man in heaven" before others see it, because others will be asleep, while they will be awake. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." (Matt. 24: 29, 30.) The "tribulation" is understood to mean the times of distress experienced by God's people during the 1260 years of Papal domination, ending with the close of the eighteenth century. Since then, the "sun" and "moon" of Christendom have become dark, by reason of higher criticism and other vain philosophies; the various State churches, and denominational and political institutions, do not give light. The stars—prominent religious teachers—have been falling from the "heaven" of spiritual things and religious influence to the "earth" of political, commercial, and social affairs, busying themselves with "social uplift" movements and the like. The powers of the "heavens"—the influence and stability of Christendom's religious, ecclesiastical, and governmental organisations—are being shaken. That so much has been fulfilled, and is daily being fulfilled, is patent to all. Our Lord said, "*Then* shall appear the sign," the very thing the disciples asked to know; it would not be a sign of His coming, but of His *presence*. In the heavens of ruling power and authority it would appear, and, with the shaking, the gathering of His elect to Himself, as He had gathered the disciples during his first presence, is the sign, as stated in vss. 29-31.

We have seen that the "harvest" is a period of time, and requires the presence of the Lord to direct the work. Now we can see that the carrying forward of that work is the sign of the Son of man in

*For further comments on Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, and other visions, please see the book, "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," mentioned in Book List.

"heaven." "From one end of heaven to the other," from every quarter of ecclesiasticism—Presbyterian, Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, and all—God's people who have ears and eyes for "present truth" are being gathered to an appreciation of it, just as were the "Israelites indeed" in the Jewish Age harvest. "For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together." (v. 28.) Wherever the food is, there will the hungry ones gather to it.

Whoever realises that the "Harvest" time is here, and that the work of the Harvest is here, should also realise the grand fact which this indicates; viz., the presence of the Master in this, the end of the age. Thank God for this realisation! It means that the time of trial and testing is upon God's professed people, to determine who are really His and who are not. This may mean more than we have known hitherto of separation from others, but separation is one of the principal operations of the harvest time. The wheat and the tares must be separated from each other, because the tares are not to be garnered. May the tests of the "harvest" time determine each reader of these words to be true wheat!

His Presence Revealed to the World

In a much less gentle but not less loving manner will the fact of our Lord's presence be made manifest to the world and worldly Christians, and they shall mourn when they see Him "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."—Matt. 24: 30; Rev. 1: 7.

How can these words last cited be found to agree with John 14: 19, which records our Saviour's words, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more"? By remembering that the eye of flesh is not the only organ of "sight." Even a blind man sometimes "sees" things, and all of us, when a problem is demonstrated to our understanding, are in the habit of saying, "I see." How many times has the reader said, "I see," when physical sight was not at all in question? So the world, when the time of trouble, symbolised by the "clouds," gets very severe, will begin to realise that the new King, Jesus, is taking to Himself His great power to reign, and that His Kingdom is smiting, surely though invisibly, "the kingdom of the world"—the whole present "order of things"—to its overthrow. The time of trouble will increasingly reveal to the world the fact of the *parousia*—presence—of the King of kings and Lord of lords. "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"; "every eye shall see Him."

The Apostle Paul gives like testimony concerning the manner of Jesus' revealing. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance," etc. (2 Thes. 1: 7, 8.) Here, as in many other passages, the coming trouble is mentioned under the figure of "fire." In and by this fiery trouble, which will be such as the world has never known, the *presence* of Jesus will be revealed to the world. Not that men will see Him with the eyes of their flesh; they will realise the fact of His presence by the sight of their eyes of understanding, just as the saints are to *discern* the fact of His presence as it were the dawning of a beautiful day.

Before they properly learn their lesson, the poor world will undoubtedly have a most distressing time. But, thanks be to God, after the trouble is over, and the eyes of their understanding are opened, they will realise Who it is that has dealt so severely with them, and that the severe trial of the time of trouble was necessary, in order that they might be brought to their senses. Then, when the Good Physician shall apply balm to their wounds and sores, they will be glad for the cure He has brought, and will thank Him for the severe treatment at first administered. The "smiting" by the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands" has not yet gone far enough for the world to recognise it; but soon they will begin to "see." Even now the hearts of some men great and wise in this world's affairs are failing them for fear and for looking after the things they see coming on the nations; but as yet they do not see Him in the trouble clouds.—Luke 21: 25-28.

The Shout, the Voice, and the Trumpet

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."—1 Thes. 4: 16; compare Matt. 24: 31; 1 Cor. 15: 52.

Some are inclined to take an extremely literal view of the "shout," "voice of the archangel," and "trump of God" mentioned in these verses, and to suppose that our Lord's arrival at His second advent will be accompanied by tremendous demonstrations of audible sounds. If this were to be so, His presence could not be a secret one for a time, because the whole world would at once know all about it; yet our Lord distinctly compares the days of His presence with the days of Noah—"they *knew not*." We are to harmonise Scriptures, and we must not set one passage against another, and choose between them. It is therefore our duty to seek an understanding of this Scripture which will not cause it to conflict with others.

Considering first "the trump of God," we refer to Rev. 11: 15. This tells of the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which is evidently the one referred to in 1 Thes. 4: 16, since both have to do with the Second Advent of Christ and the setting up of the Kingdom. The seventh trumpet is preceded by six, as described in Revelation. Most students agree that at least five or six of these trumpets have sounded, yet not one of them has been heard with the fleshly ear.

If this be true of five or six, it is equally true of the seventh, so that there is no reason to expect a literal trumpet blast to announce our Lord. The "trumpet" is thus seen to be symbolic, and the associated "voice" and "shout" must be similarly explained, if we desire to understand the passage.

Under the "sounding" of the seventh "trumpet" everything pertaining to the Kingdom is to be accomplished, including the gathering of the Lord's saints to Himself from one end of the ecclesiastical "heaven" to the other, the raising of the dead, the rewarding of the prophets, the blessing of all the families of the earth, and the destruction of the finally wilful ones.—Rev. 11: 15-18; Matt. 24: 30.

Descending with "the voice of the archangel" would be an intimation that our Lord is Himself the archangel or chief messenger, as indeed He is, one of His

titles being, "The Messenger of the Covenant." (Mal. 3: 1.) Therefore, all the commands He shall issue and the requirements He shall make will be as the Chief Messenger of God to the people, and they will need to bow to the divine authority vested in Him, or take the consequences, which, in the case of wilful sin, will be the Second Death.

The word translated "shout" in 1 Thes. 4: 16 is *keleuma*, which means "a cry of incitement." There has never been such opportunity, such incitement or encouragement to look into the Word, and become acquainted with the great purpose of God as has been brought before people in the last century by the spreading abroad of the Bible in all languages. And when has there been a period in the history of humanity in which more attention was given to looking into the "rights" of men than is now being done? There never was such a time as the present for discussions of these things. What has "incited" them to it? The believer in God's Word will at once recognise the *parousia* of our Lord as the cause. The people are "hearing" the noiseless "cry of incitement," and are bestirring themselves.

"The Dead in Christ Shall Rise First"

It is not expected that the human bodies of the overcomers will be raised from death, because the joint heirs of Christ are not to be human beings. Did not the Apostle teach that we have a house eternal in the heavens, not made with hands, to take the place of our earthly tabernacles? The resurrection of the "dead in Christ" would not mean their appearance on earth. It would mean their exaltation to be with and like the Lord—heavenly beings, born of the Spirit, and therefore spirit beings, no longer flesh.—2 Cor. 5: 1; John 3: 6, 8.

"Caught Up"

"Then [*epeita*—"thereafter"] we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together [*hama*—meaning close association, either in respect of time or conditions. The same word is translated "together" in 1 Thes. 5: 10, where it refers to association in like conditions] with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thes. 4: 17.) Bearing in mind that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Cor. 15: 50), and that all who are to be forever with the Lord and see Him as He is must be made "like Him," we at once see that when the Apostle said "caught up," he did not mean that the fleshly bodies of the overcomers who remain until the *presence* of the Lord (1 Thes. 4: 15) are to be taken up into the atmospheric clouds, to meet the Lord in the circumambient air. He meant, rather, that in the gathering clouds of the approaching time of trouble, the faithful who had not finished their course before His *parousia* began would, each as he completed his journey and finished his sacrifice in death, be instantaneously caught up, without having to remain in death for a period, to meet the Lord in the "air"—the region of spiritual influence. Satan is now the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2: 2), but our Lord Jesus is to occupy that position, and will have with Him His joint heirs—"ever with the Lord."

"Not All Sleep"

This is the force of the Apostle's words in 1 Cor. 15: 51, 52, "We shall not *all* sleep, but we shall all be changed." Most of the overcomers have slept; but if the "day of visitation" be now upon us, and the *parousia* (presence) of the Lord be begun, the time has passed when those who finish their course with the Lord's approval must be laid away to remain unconscious for a while. Doubtless the overcomers will die. But since the moment of death will witness their change into His likeness, there will be no sleep for them. Of such it is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." The laborious conditions past, the activities of these blessed ones do not cease; they continue. (Rev. 14: 13, 14.) "From henceforth" indicates a certain point of time, indicated in verse 14 as being the harvest period. Before the harvest time, which we believe is now upon us, the dead who died in the Lord had to sleep; since the harvest has begun, they who die in the Lord, as followers in His footsteps, faithful unto death, are specially blessed in that their work does not cease; they are "caught up" at the moment of death to meet the Lord in the ruling position and to join in the work on the other side of the vail.

Do we clearly realise the times in which we are living? Do conditions in Christendom appeal to us so that the *parousia* of our Lord in this harvest time shines into our hearts and minds as the risen sun? Does the Master Himself furnish our table with the bountiful provision of "meat in due season" such as His saints have never before been privileged to enjoy? Do we realise not only our privileges, but also our responsibilities in this harvest time? Let us be up and doing, as angels or messengers of the harvest, giving the good tidings to others, that they may be separated from conditions unfavourable to spiritual welfare, as wheat is separated from tares. Remember that "he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."—Luke 12: 37; Matt. 20: 2; 13: 30, 39; John 4: 35, 36.

Why is Evil Allowed?

CONTEMPLATION of the Divine Purpose presented in the foregoing Talks has, it is hoped, almost, if not quite, answered this momentous question, which enters into every one's life; yet a few thoughts directly bearing on the subject may not be amiss.

There are three kinds of evil in the world—moral, physical, and calamitous—all of which it is the lot of every man, woman and child to experience, which youth meets with surprise, but to which middle life and old age become more or less resigned. A few earnest souls battle against evil in the hope of eradi-

cating it and bringing in conditions of health, happiness, and general well-being for all mankind, but with only partial success, for it is not as yet God's time for perfection.

Calamities

Calamitous evils, the result of convulsions of nature, are evils only when men stand in their path; for the throwing up of mountain ranges, the altering of the contour of continents, and other phenomena, which from the earliest times have been in process, must be part of the scheme of the Creator, preparing the earth* for the habitation of man in the ages of perfection. (Isa. 45: 18.) The garden in which Adam and Eve found themselves had been specially "planted" in Eden, no doubt as a sheltered spot suitable to a perfect pair whose probation should be under the most favourable conditions. But outside the garden, difficulties of all kinds were experienced —thorns and thistles being some of the smallest and yet the most persistent.

Calamities in Israel

The land of Canaan was subsequently made a fit abode for God's people, the nation of Israel, and under His blessing Nature fulfilled her obligations in sunshine and periodical rains, producing a "land flowing with milk and honey," a land of corn and wine, of the olive and of the fig tree, with none of the disastrous storms common to the rest of the world. As long as they loved God and walked in harmony with the covenant He made with them at Sinai, they prospered; but, as provided for in the same covenant, when they walked contrary to Him, He walked contrary to them, allowing the storm, the blight, and the pestilence to work havoc among them. When they repented of their sins, and cried unto the Lord, He heard them, removed the plagues, and restored unto them His favour. (Psalm 106.) This rebelling against God, and returning to Him again, would have worn out the patience of any but a most long-suffering God. (Psa. 103: 8; 2 Pet. 3: 15; Rom. 9: 22.) Eventually their persistence in wrong doing brought upon them as a nation the finality of punishment in their complete removal from the land of promise.

It was in connection with these experiences of the Children of Israel that the Prophet said (Amos 3: 1-8; Isa. 45: 7), "Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." God did not so deal with the cities of other nations, for in the same connection it is stated, "*You only* have I known of all the families of the earth: *therefore* I will *punish you* for all your iniquities"—that is, the Israelites were the only nation he "knew" in the sense of entering into a covenant with them. The Lord did not "create evil" in the sense of sin; nor did He hold Himself responsible for their iniquities; on the contrary, He held Himself in readiness to punish them when their sins multiplied and their necks were hardened against Him. (Jer. 16: 10-15.) The evil He produced was in the form of disciplinary punishment. He sought through the law and the prophets and these frequent disciplines to teach them the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the benefits of righteousness, and thus to develop a nation superior to those about them, and ready in due time for a higher purpose under Messiah's leadership.—Luke 1: 17.

Wars as Calamities

Nations were sometimes used by God to inflict punishment upon other nations. In this way more suffering and death resulted than from the calamities of nature. The journeyings of the children of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land were made the occasion of reckoning with several nations. (Gen. 15: 16; Deut. 20: 16, 17.) The Philistines, the Syrians, the Assyrians, and others, were used at different times to chastise the children of Israel. (Judges 10: 7; 2 Kings 13: 3; 17: 6, 23; 24: 1-4; Jer. 43: 10.) Those nations which took pleasure in warring against and oppressing Israel (though they apparently did not know they were being used for a purpose) were in turn overthrown, lest they should in their pride imagine themselves more worthy of perpetuation than Israel had been. (Isa. 13: 1, 17, 19; Jer. 51: 11; Obadiah 11-15; Jer. 25: 12; 46: 1, 2, 13; 47: 1; 48: 1; 49: 1, 7, 23, 28, 34; 50: 1, 18.) These and others, even all the nations of the earth, are mentioned as requiring punishment. (Jer. 25: 15-33.) In at least one instance the threatened overthrow of a Gentile nation was averted by the prompt introduction of reform measures by the King, with the hearty co-operation of the people. (Jonah 3: 5-10.) To what extent wars other than those mentioned in Scripture have been used by the Lord to inflict retribution upon wicked nations is conjectural. (Jer. 18: 2-10.) It is certain, however, that he foresaw, if he did not design, the succession of universal empires described by the prophet Daniel (Chap. 2), and that the increase of knowledge concerning liberty and the rights of man which he brought about at the "time of the end" (Dan. 12: 4) would result in many changes in the standings of the nations. And, while saddened by the suffering these conflicts impose on countless innocent people, the lover of righteousness can yet trace with gladness every instance where right has triumphed over might, where sentiments of peace and goodwill have displaced hatred, and where arbitration has been substituted for physical violence. It is also positively declared that He will accomplish the complete overthrow of all "these kingdoms" by the power of the Kingdom of His dear Son. (Dan. 2: 44, 45.) Viewed from the standpoint of human pride, ambition, and love of power, this will be the greatest of all political calamities. But it will be vain to protest; He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; and when all the tumult is over the people will be glad. They will say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths."—Psa. 2: 6; Isa. 2: 3.

*General comment on the San Francisean, Sicilian, and Japanese earthquakes has been that if people persist in living in what are known to be earthquake zones, and in building villages on overhanging ledges of rock, or on the slopes of volcanoes, they must suffer loss of life and property when the expected happens. Nevertheless, accidents and calamities are constantly occurring where all due precautions have been taken, and testify both to the unsuitableness in many respects of man's environment, and to his imperfection and inability to grapple with the superior forces of nature. God has promised and will subdue these under him in due time.—Psa. 8: 6-8; Heb. 2: 6-8.

The flood* which removed the antediluvians and the fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah are described by the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 2: 5-9) as examples of God's power to "deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto a day of judgment to be punished." He reasons from the certainty and severity of these punishments that God is able to punish the apparently prosperous teachers of "pernicious ways" which should intrude themselves into the Church of the Gospel age, and to deliver His people from their influence. But he does not say that every calamity occurring in any part of the earth is a direct visitation of divine wrath; nor does he explain the exact nature of the punishment to be meted out to these evil teachers, except that they shall lose whatever light they may have had, and that their last state shall be worse than their first. (Vss. 17-20.) Should they be of those upon whom the penalty of the Second Death is to be inflicted, that fate might be theirs dying peacefully in their beds. The violent end overtaking some sinners does not prove them to be worse than others who escape such calamity, said our Lord —"Or those eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13: 1-5.) In the days of Sodom and Gomorrah there were other cities probably just as wicked which were not visited; hence, it is likely that the special visitation was to give an example and warning to others rather than to indicate finality in God's dealing with them; for, as we have seen, the Scriptures show that Israel, when subsequently in a worse condition, was not destroyed by literal fire; and that all these nations, returned to their "former estate," are to be dealt with in the Kingdom age with a view to their reclamation and establishment in righteousness.—Ezek. 16: 55-63; Jer. 12: 14-17.

Physical Evil

Under this head may be embraced disease in all its forms, culminating in death, the final catastrophe; for, as has been demonstrated in the preceding pages, death is not a blessing, but a curse—not an entrance into more wonderful life, but the cessation of existence. The imperfections of mind and body, under which the whole creation groans, have been handed down from parents to children from the beginning, and are a natural consequence of the sin introduced by our first parents and the penalty attached thereto. From the cradle to the grave man's life is one long battle with disease and death; even those who are so fortunate as to be born without serious constitutional weakness, and who could pass through life in comfort, are in constant danger of accident or pestilence. Man's inhumanity to man also inflicts untold suffering, not only in war, but in times of peace and comparative security.

*Some scientists regard the flood as the breaking of an envelope of vapour encircling the earth, which previous to that time was watered by mist, and not by rain, as now. If this be correct, it would appear that its breaking was timed to the hour when it was expedient to destroy an unauthorised race, and to begin afresh the peopling of the earth with pure Adamic stock.

Moral Evil

Moral Evil or Sin is so closely allied with Physical or Constitutional Evil that it is impossible to consider one without the other. Not only is the penalty for sin Death, in that Death* claims the sinner, but also in that disease and suffering, which are the consequence, and even the accompaniment, of sin are part and parcel of Death. In the beginning it was said that disobedience to the divine command would incur the penalty of death, and in order that the penalty might be executed the transgressors were driven from the garden. This was by direct divine command and interposition. Since then, however, it has not been necessary separately to convict and to condemn each sinner of the race, for God has so arranged that just as Sin would perpetuate itself by the natural laws of heredity, the children inheriting the imperfections of their parents, and their predisposition to sin, so would Death be inherited by successive generations.

Death is God's prescribed penalty for Sin, but it is left to the laws of nature to carry out His sentence. By this it will appear that God is not the author of Sin, and that He did not Himself introduce it to mankind. But He did so constitute man and the laws of nature that sin automatically results in injury to the person practising it. This is more apparent in some kinds of wrongdoing, which bring their slaves to an early, miserable death, than in others, which cause only a slight temporary indisposition; but the same principle is involved. While Death is inevitable in the case of every child of Adam, it is possible, by indulging sin, to hasten its work, or, on the other hand, by practising righteousness, to retard it. It is generally admitted that disease may be prevented, and healthy minds and bodies developed, by the practice of righteousness, and by the observance of sanitation and of the laws of health. Modern medical science has done much to show the relation between filth and disease and pestilence, thus making manifest the close connection between sin and disease; for the indolence and indifference which tolerate filth are but phases of imperfection and sin.

God's Attitude towards Sin

That God is not the author of sin is shown by His attitude towards it, as well as by the historical account of its introduction. (Gen. 1: 31; 3: 1-7, 14-19; 6: 5-8; 18: 20, etc., etc.) Throughout the world's history God's displeasure toward sin has been manifested, though all men have not been sufficiently enlightened to perceive it. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of other wicked nations, evidenced His attitude (2 Pet. 2: 6), and the children of Israel were specially set apart to be instructed in the benefits of righteousness and the baneful effects of sin, that they might understand God's abhorrence of sin. "God is angry with the wicked every day." (Deut. 9: 8; 2 Kings 17: 16-18; Psa. 7: 11; 50: 16-23.) The Law given to the Jews set up a standard of righteousness to which they were instructed to

*The Second Death, as the penalty for sin, operates only when evil doing is wilfully persisted in after enlightenment and despite warnings and disciplines, and is not to be confounded with the Adamic death which came upon all by one man's disobedience.—Rom. 5: 12, 18; 1 Cor. 15: 21; Heb. 6: 4-8; 10: 26-31; 1 John 5: 16; Rev. 20: 14, 15.

attain; and their inability to do so made plain their imperfection, and the exceeding sinfulness of sin. (Rom. 7: 13.) The stiff-necked and hard-hearted were not able to appreciate the situation, but the Lord pointed it out to them (John 8: 33-36; 15: 22; 9: 39-41), and the Apostle Paul by his letter to the Romans makes it clear for the sincere inquirer since his day. Those who accuse God of being the Author and Instigator of sin accuse Him of inconsistency and untruth, since He nowhere expresses sympathy with it, but places the responsibility for it on others. (John 8: 42-44; 2 Cor. 4: 4; Eph. 2: 2.) On the contrary, we are directly informed that "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. . . . Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1: 13-17.) No fountain sends forth both bitter water and sweet. (Jas. 3: 11; Matt. 7: 15-20.) To send good things to men (Matt. 5: 45), and to work blessing out of the evil conditions into which man fell (Ezek. 16: 60-63; Jer. 12: 14-17; Eph. 1: 9, 10; Isa. 25: 6-9; Rev. 22: 17) is God's good pleasure; and all who know His glorious purpose delight themselves in meditations on His loving generosity, on the magnitude of His operations, and on the success ultimately to be attained, as forecasted in His Holy Word.—Rev. 4: 11; 5: 13; 21: 3, 4.

In inquiring, What good purpose has been served by the permission of evil in its varied forms for thousands of years? one is asking for an explanation of the divine plan of salvation. The following facts, which perhaps could not be demonstrated so well without the temporary permission of evil, and which will ultimately be understood by all men, are suggested as justifying God's plan of involving the entire race in death—with its accompanying calamitous evils—on account of one man's sin. These facts constitute a complete vindication of the divine character.

1. "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like Me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."—Isa. 46: 9, 10; 55: 8-11.

2. Man's finiteness, and the uselessness of contending with his Maker; yet, when enlightened, his absolute freedom of choice, having been made in God's own image, and free to choose either righteousness and life, or sin and death.—Isa. 40: 12-17; Gen. 1: 26, 27; 4: 6, 7; Deut. 30: 15-20; 2 Cor. 5: 20, 21; Acts 3: 19-23; Isa. 55: 1, 2; Rev. 22: 14-17.

3. The reasonableness of God's requirements, conserving man's highest interests.—Gen. 1: 27-31; Lev. 25; Prov. 14: 34; Ezek. 18: 31, 32; Isa. 25: 6-8; Matt. 7: 24-27; 2 Pet. 1: 10; Rev. 21: 3-8.

4. His wisdom and power, in devising a plan covering ages of time, and involving millions of persons, angels and men, and in bringing it to a successful issue.—Eph. 1: 9, 10; 3: 9-11; Isa. 45: 18; Gen. 1: 31; 12: 1-3; 15: 5; Jude 6; Rev. 20: 4; 21: 3, 4.

5. His foresight in providing, thousands of years in advance, an Instrument useful in accomplishing His purposes.—Eph. 3: 11; John 8: 56; Rev. 13: 8.

6. His wise economy, whereby the condemnation of the entire race in one man permitted the redemption of that race by the sacrifice of only one man corresponding to the first-named.—Rom. 5: 12-19; 1 Cor. 15: 21; Matt. 20: 28; 1 Tim. 2: 4-6.

7. His love, in giving as that corresponding price One near and dear to Him, rather than in arranging a plan which would have involved no sacrifice on His own part.—John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 9, 10; Matt. 17: 5.

8. His justice and incorruptibility, whereby absolute confidence in His Word and judgment is invited and confirmed.—Psa. 89: 14; Num. 23: 19; Rom. 3: 19-26; Heb. 6: 13-18; James 1: 13-17; Psa. 5: 4

9. His long suffering toward evil doers, in order to give time for repentance—"not willing that any should perish."—2 Pet. 3: 9, 15; Rom. 10: 21; Rom. 9: 22; Ezek. 16: 48-63; Isa. 25: 6-9; Rev. 22: 1, 17.

10. His capacity to sympathise with and comfort such members of the fallen race as turn to Him, notwithstanding that for their good they must for a time continue to suffer under stress of present imperfect conditions.—2 Cor. 1: 3-5; Rom. 15: 4; 2 Cor. 13: 11.

11. The impossibility of indulging in sin without bringing down deserved penalties.—Ezek. 18; Gen. 2: 17; Rom. 6: 23.

12. The benefits of righteousness—love, joy, peace, spiritually helpful fellowship with the righteous, and blessed communion with God.—Gal. 5: 22, 23; 1 John 1: 3, 7; 1 Cor. 12: 13.

13. God's extraordinary magnanimity, shared by His dear Son, in extending to a few members of the human family the honours and emoluments of the spirit nature, and the privilege of sharing in the rulership of the Kingdom.—Eph. 2: 1-8; Luke 12: 32; John 14: 3; Rev. 3: 21.

14. The establishment in righteousness of a race of perfect beings, capable of appreciating it most deeply on account of their experience with evil, and with ability to understand God's viewpoint, character and methods, to endorse His plan, and to serve Him without compulsion or fear for all eternity on earth, their divinely ordained home and dominion.—Gen. 1: 28; Psa. 8: 4-9; Matt. 25: 34; Dan. 2: 44; Rev. 21: 1-8.



"If Ye Do These Things"

HOW fully satisfying to Mind and Heart is the glorious Purpose of God, the preceding pages have attempted to set forth. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime," said the Apostle, in his letter to the Romans (15: 4), "were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." This is as true of the New Testament as of the Old, concerning which these words were written; for the N.T. not only explains and enlarges upon the things foretold in the O.T., as may be seen by reference to the many quotations from the O.T. made by our Lord and the

Apostles (*e.g.*, Luke 4: 18-21; Acts 2: 16-21; 3: 22-26; Rom. 10), but it also brings to light, through the Gospel, precious truths concerning the High Calling and the Hope of Incorruptibility and of everlasting life. (2 Tim. 1: 10; Eph. 3: 3-7; 1 Thes. 4: 15-17; 1 Cor. 15: 51-52.) These are indeed conducive to patience and comfort while the reproaches of Christ are being endured; and they stimulate to hope that by the grace of God we may finally be sharers of the glory to be revealed in the Kingdom.—Rom. 8: 16-18.

But how may we have assurance that these precious promises and hopes are legitimately ours, who are in ourselves not only unworthy of the glorious inheritance, but also unequal to the conflict by which it is to be gained? If our minds are satisfied by the revelation of God's holy character, as manifest in the perfect co-operation of all His attributes for the deliverance of mankind from Sin and Death; if the affection of our hearts has been won by the sublime gift of love, in that our blessed Lord Jesus came into the world to "give his life a ransom for many;" and if we have gratefully entered into the New Covenant with God over the Sacrifice once offered on behalf of sinners (Psa. 50: 5; Heb. 9: 14, 15, 18-20; 10: 14-20), what more remains to be done, that we may know we are acceptable, and may have full assurance of the final reward?

Our Lord forewarned us against too great assurance on insufficient grounds; saying, "Not every one that saith unto Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom;" and we are told that some, zealous in doing "wonderful works" in His name, will not be approved. But if His warning is unmistakable, equally clear are His directions and encouragements. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, *and doeth them*, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; 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." (Matt. 7: 21-29; Luke 6: 46.) It is necessary first to hear His sayings; then upon whomsoever heareth is placed the obligation to obey them, if he would stand unmoved when the disciplines of life, or the larger dispensational changes and calamities, put his faith to the test. For those who desire no responsibility, who do not wish to hear His sayings, much less to do them, these pages are not written. But to those who do, in sincerity and truth, acknowledge Him as Lord; who are hungering and thirsting to hear His sayings, and who, hearing them, are genuinely desirous of doing them, we give a message of consolation and hope.

The Vine and the Branches

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." As the branches of the vine partake of the life of the vine, and are nourished by the sap, so each consecrated believer is united to Christ, receiving life and sustenance from Him. The same Holy Spirit which was in Him is in them, and they are expected to bring forth the same desirable fruit. (John 15: 1-8.) The fruit of the Spirit is described as "Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance (Gal. 5: 22), and our dear Redeemer's life and character reveal these traits in all their beauty and consistency. Of ourselves we could not successfully imitate His virtues; but in this we are not left to struggle alone; for our Lord said, "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The Heavenly Father Himself will assist each of His children (children by Christ Jesus—Gal. 3: 26; Eph. 1: 5) in this important work of fruit-bearing. Indeed, he who receives not chastening is not a son; for "Whom the Father loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. 12: 5-11.) If, when the chastening hand is upon us, we recognise it as the hand of the great Husbandman pruning away the excrescences and useless leaves and tendrils, let us acquiesce heartily in the process; and, like the pruned branch, the more energy and vitality from the Vine, the more of the Holy Spirit, will flow into and through us, to bring forth "more fruit." To the careful Husbandman, and to the flourishing Vine, belong the credit for the resulting effects in the dependent branches, as demonstrated by the quick withering of any branch cut off from the Vine.

The Parable of the Vine shows the branches merely responsive to the operations of the Husbandman and to the nourishment of the Vine. In 2 Pet. 1: 2-11 is shown the part that must be performed by each individual believer in the development of the fruit of the Spirit. He must not only be quiescent in allowing the Holy Spirit to operate in him, but as an efficient artisan he must also be active in building up a structure of character, according to well-defined plans and specifications. Having by the grace of God been forgiven his iniquities through faith in the finished work of Christ, and having been endowed with a regenerated will, and being considered a "new creature," to whom all things have become new (2 Cor. 5: 14-17), it is incumbent on him, as an intelligent, active being, to undertake energetically the task of eradicating the habits and tendencies of the old nature (2 Cor. 7: 1; 1 Cor. 11: 31; Col. 3: 5-10), and of bringing every thought and act into captivity to the obedience of Christ.—Col. 3: 10; Eph. 4: 17-24; 2 Cor. 10: 5.

The Exhortation is addressed to those who "have obtained like precious faith with us in (R.V.) the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 1: 1), and the Greeting is that grace and peace may be multiplied unto them through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. No doubt every Christian reader of these lines can testify to the fulfilment of this prayer in his own experience. The more he has come to know of God and of Jesus Christ, their character, and the wonderful plan of salvation, the deeper are his peace and joy in the realisation that every detail of the gracious plan will be worked out in due time, and that in the meantime all things work together for good to those who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. (Rom. 8: 28.) This is indeed a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, and which keeps the hearts of His "little ones" in all times of stress and trial.—John 14: 27; 16: 33; Phil. 4: 6, 7.

"All things that pertain to life and godliness" are given us "through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (Vs. 3.) "This is

life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom thou hast sent." (Jno. 17: 3.) Knowledge of the first principles is necessary before the first steps can be taken in the Christian life, but that is not all the knowledge required to run successfully the race for the prize of the High Calling. "His own glory and virtue," held out before us for admiration and imitation, and the "exceeding great and precious promises," glowingly set forth in His Word, operate in us as incentives to persevering effort. Having by His grace in Christ "escaped from the corruption that is in the world through desire" (vs. 4), there still remains the important work of thorough transformation into the divine likeness. "Be not fashioned according to this age, but be ye *transformed* by the *renewing of your mind*, that ye may prove [by practice] what is the will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Am. R.V. margin, Rom. 12: 2.) "So then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God Who worketh in you [when the Apostles' instructions are obeyed, even through difficulty], both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Phil. 2: 12, 13, Am. R.V.) "Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, be sober, and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as *children of obedience*, not fashioning yourselves according to your former desires in the time of your ignorance; but like as He which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy." (1 Pet. 1: 13-16.) These and other similar passages of the Scriptures exhibit the broad outlines of the character-structure to be built up.

But we are not left to fill in the details according to our own inclination or fancy: our minds are incompetent even for that task. Many specific exhortations and commands are given for the guidance of the weakest "babe in Christ," lest he, through ignorance or carelessness, fall into one or another of the numerous snares set for the feet of the unwary.—Matt. 5: 3-9; 16: 24; Rom. 6: 11; 12: 9-21; 8: 28-32; 11: 11-18; 13: 13, 14: 1 Cor. 6: 5-10; 10: 20, 21; Gal. 5: 19-21; Eph. 5: 3-7; James 3: 1-16; 4: 1-17.

The Apostle proceeds with the enumeration of the requirements to successful entrance into the Kingdom. "And beside this"—that is, having obtained "like precious faith," having experienced grace and peace through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord; having realised ourselves called to glory and virtue; having feasted on the precious promises; and having acknowledged that all these have been instrumental in assisting escape from the corruption that is in the world—after all this, "giving all diligence,

Superadd to Your Faith

Fortitude; and to Fortitude Knowledge; and to Knowledge Self Control; and to Self Control Patience; and to Patience Godliness; and to Godliness Brotherly Kindness; and to Brotherly Kindness Love." In other words, Do not be satisfied with first attainments in any of the graces of the Spirit, but add and superadd of each and all, daily and hourly. No single grace may be cultivated to the exclusion of the others; none may be neglected without detriment.

Faith is the foundation; but it, like the other graces, is capable of expansion, of being superadded to itself. It is developed by the trials and testings of the Christian life, and by the repeated experiences of God's love and care in time of need. When the disciples said, "Lord, increase our faith," he gave them a parable, to the effect that if when they were weary and discouraged they continued to serve Him, not wishing to rest until He had been served, their faith would increase by reason of the waiting, watching and serving under difficulties. (Luke 12: 35-38; 17: 5-10.) So while all the graces named are added to faith, their practice in turn tends to the development of more faith—more faith in a faithful God, in the love of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the precious promises, in the eternal glory.

To Faith Superadd Fortitude

Immediately succeeding, if not accompanying, the earliest experiences of Faith, come tests of Fidelity. It may be a jeering word, or a harsh criticism, or a temptation to indulge some weakness, or even the sense of loneliness which often comes after the first joy in the realisation of sins forgiven. But if Fortitude be ready to prop the weakening Faith, Faith immediately brightens. Fortitude is added as a living experience, the test is borne successfully, and Faith and Fortitude rejoice together in the victory.

And to Fortitude Knowledge

Knowledge of first principles has already been described as a pre-requisite to Faith. The knowledge to be added to Faith and Fortitude is not only increased intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures and of God's purposes generally, but that experimental knowledge which results from the practice of righteousness and from intimate acquaintance with God and His methods of dealing with His children. "All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" are hid in Christ, and it is only those who possess the Spirit of God, and who seek perfect conformity to His holy will, who may search out the "deep things." (Col. 2: 2, 3, 9, 10; 1 Cor. 2: 10, 12.) To study the character of Christ brings increased knowledge of God, because Jesus was a perfect manifestation of God in the flesh (1 Tim. 3: 15, 16); and to practice His virtues means to comprehend the motive of purity and love underlying His acts, and to develop the same unselfish disposition. It becomes a habit to trust God, and to be loyal to Him, because increased knowledge demonstrates this as the only reasonable conduct in one so graciously enlightened by the divine goodness; to doubt and to waver grow daily more unreasonable.

And to Knowledge Self Control

Self Control is necessary from the very beginning of Christian experience; indeed, a large part of Christian experience consists in learning its value, from the first efforts to put away sin and disagreeable habits, to the last triumph of the new mind over the old on the day of death. To "let one's self go," to indulge the passing fancy, whether others are thereby injured or inconvenienced or not, is the way of the "natural man." To consider first, and to do to others as he would be done by; to "seek first the

kingdom," and to make all other desires subservient, is the way of the "spiritual man." The liberty which is in Christ (Gal. 5: 1, 13; James 1: 25) is not license to selfishness, but deliverance from the power of Sin and Death (and in the case of the converted Israelite freedom from the bondage of the law—Rom. 7: 4-6), and the privilege of exercising all one's powers to the glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. (2 Cor. 5: 14, 15; 1 Cor. 6: 20; Matt. 6: 33; Col. 3: 23; 1 Cor. 10: 31; Rom. 14: 17-19.) No man who strives for the mastery in sport is successful unless he be trained and strive according to the rules of the game. No man can be a soldier unless he be willing to undergo severe discipline. Neither can anyone endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ unless he have his mind and body in full control, and in complete subjection to the commands of the Captain of his salvation. Such an one needs not to wait for the glories of the Kingdom for his reward. He already experiences it here in the unspeakable joys of a holy life; for the husbandman who labours is first to partake of the fruits of his own toil.—2 Tim. 2: 3-6.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—Gal. 6: 7, 8; Rom. 8: 5-14; 6: 11-14, 16-23.

Self Control assists Faith in time of trial, holding back the onslaughts of doubt and fear, brings forward the reserves to strengthen Fortitude, recalls to Knowledge the well nigh stampeded promises and recollections of former victories, and rallies every other grace to perform its part fearlessly and nobly.

And to Self Control Patience

Patience, or Patient Endurance, is found to be the outcome of the continued exercise of Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, and Self Control. The "babe in Christ" (if at the same time young in years, and lacking experience of life) is usually restive under restraint, and more or less self-opinionated. He is free in his criticisms of others, zealous to be up and doing in the Lord's vineyard according to his own notions, and anxious to demonstrate that if certain power and authority were in his hands all things could be worked according to the counsel of his own will, to the astonishment and praise of his elders. That certain moral laws are as regular and sure in their action as the movement of the earth around the sun, and that to attempt to interfere with them is likely to be as disastrous in the one case as in the other, is a lesson dearly bought in the school of experience.

That the Psalmist had learned this by his experience is shown in his advice to the godly. "Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart on your bed, and be still." (Psa. 4: 4; Eph. 4: 26.) Well may we stand with bared heads before the marvellous outworkings of retributive justice, unmoved by the apparent temporary triumph of evil and evil doers. If we sin not ourselves, while enduring injustice and affliction, but wait patiently on the Lord, we shall experience the blessing and approval of God. —1 Pet. 2: 21-23; Psa. 91.

Indifference and torpidity are often mistaken for Patience, because their outward appearances of placidness are akin. But true Patience is exercised only when the sufferer is keenly alive to the wrong or trial inflicted upon him, and yet endures it without malice, or desire for revenge, and without seeking his own vindication at the expense of others.

The patience shown by non-Christians differs from that here described, since it is not a product, as in the Christian, of faith, but is usually the expression of a natural optimism or a phlegmatic temperament. The Patience now under consideration is that which is developed in the school of Christ. Says the Apostle (Rom. 5: 3-5), after describing the experience of justification and hope of the glory of God enjoyed by the Christian, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that *tribulation worketh patience;* and patience experience, and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which is given unto us." The Patience that counts is therefore that which is manifested by reason of the shedding abroad in the heart of the love of God, and because the tribulations are recognised as part of God's method for the perfecting of the saints for glory.

A mistake is often made in expecting to possess or develop this wonderful grace without tribulation. Christians are heard lamenting their crosses and trials, as though they expected the Lord to make the way of salvation easy for them. But, often, the more they lament, the heavier the cross; partly, no doubt, because their state of mind tends to magnify the difficulties, whereas a spirit of submission to the will of God, and making the best of things, would soon relieve the irritation, and bring instead sweet peace in the Lord. The Kingdom of Heaven is not set before us as easy of attainment. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "Verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (2 Tim. 3: 12; 1 Thes. 3: 4.) The attitude of Faith and Patience is—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."—2 Cor. 4: 17.

Patient Endurance serves to manifest the genuineness of Faith; it makes Fortitude dignified and sincere, rather than sensational and boastful; it utilises Knowledge to philosophize on the weakness of human nature, and on the long-suffering of God, which it seeks to imitate; it stimulates Self Control, that a tight rein may be kept on the tongue or other members which might under pressure be led into sin (James 3: 3-10, 13-18), and it gives opportunity for the flourishing of every other grace, since all are called into requisition to achieve the one great end—to glorify God through and in every experience, even unto death.

And to Patience Godliness

Godliness, or Piety, means reverence toward God, and living for God. It means devotion to holiness, and separation from the world and its spirit, from self, and from vanity and ambition. It was by reason of His Piety that our blessed Lord Jesus was heard, when with strong crying and tears He offered

Himself to God on our behalf, and was acceptable. (Heb. 5: 7-10.) Great is the mystery of godliness or piety, because its principles are unknown to the world at large. Its standard is that of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose presence and mission were ignored by the outward professors of holiness, and whose work is yet but imperfectly understood by many of his followers. The true Church is the bulwark of this Piety, because it is the repository of the Word of God, and is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being chief Corner Stone. (1 Tim. 3: 15, 16; Eph. 2: 19-22.) Jesus, whose piety and faithfulness were openly attested by the voice from Heaven, is indeed qualified to impart the same to all who obey Him.

Piety is an outgrowth of faith and obedience, and indicates a character well established in righteousness. Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, Self Control, and Patience, and every other grace, are essential to true Piety, and Piety makes the manifestation of each an act of worship and praise.

And to Godliness Brotherly Kindness

These words remind us of—"Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful." "He is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil." (Luke 6: 33-36.) Godlikeness therefore does not limit its kindness to the brethren, though its kindness is of a brotherly sort. It is not the kindness of the stranger, nor the kindness of ostentation and show, nor the kindness of patronage, nor the kindness which gives, hoping to receive again; but it is free, generous, and hearty, with that goodwill which is so pleasant to see in a brother showering gifts upon the younger members of the family. It is love and unselfishness in action, in imitation of God, and in pursuance of the example set by our great Elder Brother, who freely gave Himself and all He had to redeem a fallen race.

Brotherly Kindness is the outward manifestation of "unfeigned love of the brethren" (1 Pet. 1: 22), and it requires the unceasing co-operation of Faith, Fortitude, Knowledge, Self Control, Patience, and Godliness, as well as of Love, to secure its unfailing operation. And, like these graces, it is reciprocatory. It enlarges the heart, and causes Faith to expand in recognition of others of like precious faith; it permits Fortitude, while incorruptible, to be kind and benevolent; it makes Knowledge less bookish and more spiritual, less self-centred and more communicative; it rouses Self-Control from the single role of self-suppression to the equally important work of developing and using latent talent and ability, time and means, in the interest of others; it enables Patience to be kind to those whose wrong doing is being endured; it recommends Godliness as more than a mere profession; it is the legitimate outworking of Love in the heart.

And to Brotherly Kindness Love

Love is defined as—"A strong complex emotion or feeling, causing one to appreciate, delight in, and crave the presence or possession of the object, and to please or promote the welfare of that object; devoted affection or attachment."

The Love of God was manifested in the giving of His dear Son to be the Redeemer of mankind, more than in His creative or other work, because it indicated (1) deep personal interest in the welfare of the race, (2) self-sacrifice in giving one dearly beloved by Himself to die on their behalf, (3) desire that men might live to enjoy His favour, and He the evidences of their happiness. The love of Jesus manifested the same sentiments; He said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself, that where I am there ye may be also." And the command is given to the brethren—"Love one another, as I have loved you."—John 15: 12, 13; 14: 3; 1 John 3: 14, 16, 23, 24; 4: 7-13.

Love means respect, admiration, and desire to serve; and where respect and admiration are undeserved, it still means desire to serve and benefit. Love is genuine affection for others, and interest in their welfare, and enables the possessor to utilise to advantage all other qualities and virtues. So the Apostle explains—"Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."—1 Cor. 13: 4-7.

Adding and Superadding

It should not be supposed that any of these graces must await development until the others have been perfected. The result of such a method would be to produce among the Lord's people an assortment of monstrosities. Knowledge without Love would become sounding brass and tinkling cymbal; Self Control without Faith and Brotherly Kindness would become designing tyranny; Fortitude without Knowledge would become fanaticism; Love without Self Control becomes weakness, in spiritual things as well as in temporal affairs. Of all growths, character development is the most complicated and wonderful. It is like the weaving of a beautiful tapestry—each colour and shade has its appropriate place in relation to each, and to the whole design, and is repeated again and again to produce the symmetrical colour scheme. Knowledge is not the whole, Brotherly Kindness is not the exclusive requirement. Love is not all comprehensive; but each, like a part of a complicated machine, is ready to respond to the touch of the lever, and to perform its allotted work in every affair and circumstance required to be dealt with by the Believer.

And which of all the graces of the Spirit is more quickly and often requisitioned in the development of a Christlike character than this beautiful one—Love? When the blessings of Faith are first realised, how quickly Love responds in gratitude to Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light; and in affection towards those "who have obtained like precious Faith with us!" When Fortitude is put to the proof, how spontaneously Love fills the heart, with pity and consideration for the opponents, and with added devotion to Him Who likewise endured "great contradiction of sinners against Himself"! When Knowledge increases, how ready is Love to suggest, Use it not selfishly, for self-aggrandisement, but to edification; shine as a true light in the world, speak as the oracles of God! When Self Control is called upon to repress outbursts of the old

nature, what comfort is brought by Love pervading the heart, and stimulating the exercise instead of all good thoughts and acts! When Patience is found to mean not patient endurance for one hour, or one day, or one year, but for a lifetime, what can revive the weary spirit like the realisation of the Love of God, and constrain to the manifestation of like tenderness and long suffering toward the erring? As Godliness or Piety is sought to be attained, what makes it genuine holiness, but the sincerity of the Love toward God and fellowmen which prompts the sacrifice of Self in His service? When the opportunity comes to show Brotherly Kindness, what makes it sweet to the recipient but the knowledge of the true, sympathetic Love behind it?

The New Covenant

This showing forth of the divine virtues by those to whom God has been merciful in the forgiveness of their iniquities, and in forgetting their sins, is a result of Gospel Age operation of the New Covenant. These are the "Israelites indeed" (Rom. 2: 28, 29; 11: 17), God is their God, and they are His people; they need not tell each other to "know the Lord," for they all know Him, from the least to the greatest; and He is fulfilling to them His promise, to write His law on their minds and hearts, by the power of the Holy Spirit, transforming them into the same image from glory to glory.—1 Pet. 2: 9, 10; Heb. 8: 7-13; Eph. 3: 6; 2 Cor. 3: 3, 17, 18.

If Ye Do These Things

Knowledge of the Lord Jesus is increased by the doing of these things, because He did them, and suffered in the doing of them. We thus have fellowship with Him in His sufferings, and understand the purity and beauty of His life in a way those who do not practise His virtues are unable to do. We are made, even now, "partakers of the divine nature" or disposition, and for that reason may anticipate with confidence His approval at the end of our course. (2 Pet. 1: 4; 1 John 3: 18-21; 4: 13-17.) To fail to do these things, is to forget that the old sins were once forgiven (2 Pet. 1: 9; 2: 20-22), and to relapse into indulgence of the same. As the Scripture plainly declares, it is a serious matter to fall away from the faith, and once having known the way of righteousness to depart from it.

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for 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 Pet. 1: 10, 11.

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other *Countries* 5/-; $1.25
By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The *1260, 1290, 1335,* and *2300* "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—*An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on* Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your liking and postpaid Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

SPECIAL GIFT OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal. **Bible Talks for Heart and Mind, The Parables of our Lord, and The Christian's Comforter,** to one address, postpaid in Australia, 9/6; elsewhere, 11/- ($2.75). Any book listed above at 1/- (25 cents) may be substituted for **The Christian's Comforter,** if desired.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal, and one copy of each of the above books in the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 26/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

N.B.—The above books will be loaned free (one at a time) to any interested person unable to purchase.

Communications to Address all NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP
YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET,
MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

The Divine Weaving

See the mystic Weaver sitting
High in heaven—His loom below.
Up and down the treadles go.
Takes, for web, the world's dark ages,
Takes, for woof, the kings and sages.
Takes the nobles and their pages,
Takes all stations and all stages.
Thrones are bobbins in His shuttle;
Web into the woof must flow.
Up and down the nations go:
At the Weaver's will they go!

Calmly see the mystic Weaver
Throw His shuttle to and fro;
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,
Well the Weaver seems to know
What each motion, and commotion,
What each fusion, and confusion,
In the grand result will show!

Glorious wonder! What a weaving!
To the dull, beyond believing.
Such no fabled ages know.
Only faith can see the mystery,
How along the aisles of history,
Where the feet of sages go,
Loveliest to the fairest eyes,
Grand the mystic tapet lies!
Soft and smooth, and ever spreading,
As if made for angels' treading—
Tufted circles touching ever:
Every figure has its plaidings,
Brighter forms and softer shadings.
Each illumined—what a riddle!—
From a cross that gems the middle.

'Tis a saying—some reject it—
That its light is all reflected;
That the tapet's lines are given
By a Sun that shines in heaven!
'Tis believed—by all believing—
That great God Himself is weaving,
Bringing out the world's dark mystery,
In the light of faith and history;
And, as web and woof diminish,
Comes the grand and glorious finish,
When begin the Golden Ages,
Long foretold by seers and sages.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

EASTER CONFERENCE

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, MAY 1, 1929 No. 2

The Everlasting Gospel

CONFERENCE TEXTS—"Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."—Luke 2: 10; Revelation 14: 6, 7.

THAT THE GOSPEL is good news has been questioned by many who find difficulty in accepting prevailing teachings thus named, the majority of which hold out no hope for multi-millions of our race who have lived in this world a short time and passed out of it again. That the Gospel is in truth such GOOD news as to give joy and gladness to every heart that receives it was proved beyond peradventure by the brethren and sisters in the Lord who took part in the Eastertide Conference held in South Yarra Hall, opposite Darling St., South Yarra, Melbourne, Australia, on Good Friday, March 29, and Easter Sunday, March 31. Their united testimony based on the Word of God itself was a most hopeful message, and was greatly enjoyed by a number who heard these things for the first time as well as by those more familiar with them but never tired of hearing and of telling the glad tidings of the Saviour and God's wonderful purpose centred in Him. Following are the Addresses—

Gospel Good News

IN EVERY HEART of man there is a longing to hear of something better than the individual has or knows. The poor yearn for riches, and envy the comfort and luxury of the wealthy, and hope from year to year that something will come along which will raise them out of their indigent condition.

The inquiring mind longs for knowledge, the perplexity of many problems creates a desire to understand them, but the ability to do so does not always belong to them, or the explanation is not forthcoming, and the ardent curiosity fails to be satisfied. Nevertheless the desire is strong, and they too hope that one day the truth will be made manifest. The sick or ailing crave for health, contrasting their limitations and inabilities with those physically strong, and in most cases exhibiting a hopeful frame of mind, looking to the possibility of improvement if not cure at some future time. The ambitious have an earnest desire for greatness, they seek to be lifted out of the usual groove of humanity, and aspire to position, and perchance titles, above the heads of their associates, always in the expectation of something better, striving with all their hearts and minds in the endeavour to attain their goal.

In all these cases the fact of hearing that the consummation of all their hopes was to be accomplished would be good news, and never by any chance would tidings that they would never be elevated from their present condition of bad health, poverty, etc., be considered anything but bad news.

The message of the angel in our Conference Text concerned the longing of the Jews for the Deliverer and King promised them in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms. The promises made by God in the Old Testament point to the fact that He stood in a special relationship to the chosen people, and that He manifested His will through the agency of individual men.

In divers manners, at times and in seasons of His own appointment, He has revealed His purpose, preparing them for the message which was finally disclosed in His Son. Israel's teachers and leaders were for the most part organs of the Almighty, who guided them to see further and think more deeply than their contemporaries, and revealed to them (as they were able to bear it) visions of things to come.—Daniel 8: 1.

The life of the Hebrews under the covenant ratified at Sinai was a progressive preparation for a better state of affairs, and the Law was a discipline of mind and character, and a typical presentation of truth yet to be disclosed. The course of their history brought to light the spiritual and moral needs of Israel, and the voice of prophecy kept alive the hope that those needs would be supplied. Their history bore unfailing witness to the purpose and providence of the God of Israel, and the prophecy served like "a lamp shining in a dark place" to sustain faith during the long ages of preparation for the good news of the advent of the Deliverer or Messiah.

The task assigned to this Deliverer was variously conceived by the Jews. Some thought He would in the first place overthrow the Romans, the ungodly power whose yoke pressed so heavily upon Israel, and thereby liberate the chosen people from their oppressors, bring back all who were captive or dispersed among the heathen, set up once more the throne of David, and restore the kingdom to Israel; or, in other words, give them the victory and domination over their enemies. The sceptre had long since departed from Israel, and they had been for many years subservient to the Roman Empire, the "dreadful and terrible" fourth universal kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. So that the people of God who had once the great privilege of having the Almighty for their King, were now under the bondage of a Gentile power, which indeed ruled with an iron hand. Consequently every Jew looked for a welcome release from this state of affairs.

Unto You is Born a Saviour

But the very fact of the jurisdiction of the Roman Power over the land of Judea was used by God to fulfil the prophecy of Micah. In accordance with a decree issued by the Roman Emperor Cæsar Augustus, that all that land should be enrolled in a census, Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee into the city of David which is called Bethlehem, and there took up their abode for a time; where, as predicted by the ancient prophet, the Messiah was born.—Luke 2: 4; Micah 5: 2.

About this time shepherds watching their flocks by night saw a wonderful sight. These were pious men, who had kept alight their lamps of hope, looking for this day. The "glory of the Lord shone round about them," and an angel of the Lord spoke to them. "And they were sore afraid." But what did the angel say? He said—

> Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, 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.—Luke 2: 10, 11.

Good tidings! Good news of a Saviour! The shepherds lived in expectation of an ultimate freeing from bondage. There were others too of like faith, for we have this proof in Simeon, who "waited for the consolation of Israel," and Anna the prophetess, who "gave thanks to the Lord," when the Babe was presented at the temple in Jerusalem. Furthermore, Simeon was inspired by the Holy Spirit to say that this salvation or deliverance would indeed extend to all people, both Jews and Gentiles—"a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." (Luke 2: 32.) To these faithful and sincere people the angelic message was indeed the very best of news.

The great announcement, the mightiest, most wonderful word for God's creatures that had been said by angels is characterised as "great joy" to all the people; in which designation two things can be noted,—the nature and the limitation of the message. Although the glad tidings of the birth of the Saviour or Deliverer was to these shepherds the best news they could wish to hear, still in how many ways the birth of Christ was to be the fountain of purest gladness was but little discerned by them at the time. The faithful ones in this the Gospel age have been coming to an understanding of it by the grace of God, but not until the next or Kingdom Age will the great majority of mankind learn and benefit by its wonderful, far-reaching, and eternal results.

"Saviour" means far more than the shepherds knew, for it declares the Child to be the deliverer from all evil, sin, sorrow, pain, and death, and the endower of all righteousness and blessedness.

He is the fulfiller of prophecy, perfectly endowed with Divine anointing for His office of Prophet, Priest, and King; greater than Moses the Law-giver, than Solomon the King, and Jonah the Prophet.

There would be few, if any, other children of a day old in a little village like Bethlehem, and none but one lying in a manger. The fact of the birth which could be verified by sight would confirm the message in its outward aspect, and thereby lead to belief in the angel's disclosure of its inward character.

It is written in vs. 12, "this shall be a sign unto you." The fact of the lack of proper accommodation in the house, and the necessity for the use of a manger, which was probably a coarse hair bag suspended from some part of the wall as is customary in the East, exerted an unusual mark of identification, and this "sign" indeed attested the veracity of the messenger, and therefore the truth of all his word—both of that part of it capable of verification by sight, and that part apprehensible by faith.

What a wonderful scene to visualise that night on the verdant hills just outside the little town of Bethlehem—the pious and faithful shepherds tending their sheep, the appearance of the heavenly messenger accompanied later with the innumerable heavenly host, the great music of their praise to God, and the overcoming with amazement and joy of the shepherds.

The birth of the Saviour evoked praise from the angels, for it brought glory to God there, and by it new aspects of His nature are revealed when we behold that depth of condescending love in the giving of His only Son.

On Earth Peace

The angels sang of "peace," in contemplation of the subsequent results upon earth. What a scene of strife, discord, and unrest earth must seem to those angels, and how vain the petty struggles must look. Part of the work of the great Deliverer is to bring peace into all relations, between God and men, and between men themselves. Every one of man's relations is impaired by the presence of the great taskmaster Sin, and the consequence death, and nothing less than a power which removes Sin can rectify matters. That birth was the coming of one, and the only one, who is capable and possesses the authority to do this.

The shepherds went "in haste," late as was the hour. They would not have much difficulty in finding the inn and the manger. Note they do not tell their story until the sight had confirmed the angelic message. Their silence was not due to doubt, because they said before they saw the child, "this thing is come to pass," and were sure that the Lord had told it to them. But they waited for the evidence which should assure others of their truthfulness.

The conduct of the shepherds is typical of the natural impulse and imperative duty of all believers in the truth. Such a story as they had to tell would burn its way to utterance in the most reticent and shyest, and they therefore became messengers of the glad tidings, to tell others of what they had seen and heard, and of the great Gift which had been conferred by God on all men.

We still have that wonderful message to deliver, and if the spectators of the cradle could not be silent, it is still less possible that we should be as witnesses of the cross.

The hearers of the message from the shepherds did what a lot do: they "wondered," and stopped there. A feeble ripple of astonishment ruffled them for a moment, but the depths were unaffected by it. The antithesis to this is the demeanour of the virgin: she "kept all these sayings and pondered them in her heart."—Luke 2: 19, 51.

Good Will toward Men

The shepherds realised the importance and the comprehensiveness of the words, "unto you is born," and "shall be to all people." The glad tidings were to affect the whole creation of mankind; and why should they not manifest gladness and run speedily to tell others of such news? And are not we glad and do not we rejoice that the day is coming when all men shall come to know the same joyful message, the same gospel which by the grace of God we as believers in this age have been privileged to enjoy?

"Unto You is Born—Christ the Lord"

One of the most notable messages of the Old Testament is that God Himself is the author of salvation, and that He would establish His own kingdom by His Son, overcome evil, and bring in everlasting righteousness.

This aspect was seen by some of the faithful under the Law who tried to serve God by leading righteous lives, and the earnest longing for an effectual remission of sins, and for grace to fulfil the commands of God, led them to seek more profound conceptions of the deliverance, realising as they did that the curse of the Law was death, and that the yoke which pressed upon Israel was not so much that of heathen conquerors as that of sin; that was the hostile power which hindered them, and marred all their efforts to fulfil righteousness. They could see that a new measure was necessary to meet their need, an arrangement under which the heart would be purified and renewed unto holiness. For, though the Law itself was perfect, no Jew, however good his environment, could fulfil a perfect ideal. Nor could any member of Adam's race fulfil it. It is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one."—Psalm 14: 3; Romans 3: 10.

For sixteen centuries the Jews were allowed to endeavour to prove themselves capable of fulfilling the Law, and gain the ultimate reward of everlasting life, but hard experience proved their inability so to do, together with the fact that the Law, "ordained to life," was really a ministration of condemnation to them, and could not have been anything else, as they were not suited to it, nor was it suited to them.—Romans 7: 10.

They, as well as the whole race, on account of the original transgression in Eden, had been "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," and they had thereby been constituted sinners, and out of harmony with God. The race

as a whole is at enmity with God, as is every individual member of the race by nature. The constitutional tendency toward sin affects both the bodies and minds of men, women, and children, so that the race is not only "enemies by wicked works," but "enemies in their minds," *fulfilling* in their course of evil the desires both of the flesh and of the mind. This was as true of those who became Christians as of those who continue in the sinful state.—Colossians 1: 21; Ephesians 2: 3; Romans 5: 6, 8.

All unrighteousness is sin, says John (1 John 5: 17), *and sin is lawlessness, the breach of God's law by man's* will. If the Jews had been favoured with an arrangement whereby the sinful tendencies of the fallen flesh could have been set aside, and not counted to them, things would have been more to their advantage, but there was *no such promise in their covenant; it was merely "if a* man do, he shall live."—Leviticus 18: 5.

Though with their minds the more pious Jews delighted in the Law, they could not bring the flesh fully into subjection, and therefore they realised the position as one of *despair, as did Paul when he said (of himself as a Jew)*—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7: 24.) Paul's allusion was to the fact that in ancient times the custom was to bind to a criminal a dead body of another, until the contamination from it eventually brought about disease and death in the former. Such was the seriousness of the position under the Law Covenant: the people were bound to it in the same way, but the flesh was a constant and insurmountable obstacle to their efforts, and it brought death to all.

An arrangement which would be satisfactory to the Jew would be of necessity an act of grace in which God would take upon Himself the fulfilment of Israel's obligation to write the Law in their hearts. Therefore the faithful ones looked for a deliverance from the Law by God, and when that deliverance did come, although these thoughts had faded from the minds of the Jews generally, yet the faithful remnant were ready to respond to the preaching of repentance, and to welcome with joy the advent of One who should save them from their sins, and relieve them from the curse of the Law. This is an important part of the Gospel message—"Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."—Matthew 1: 21.

The Law which they were subject to was in fact, as Paul expresses it "added because of transgressions," that is, in order that it might reveal offences and develop the consciousness of guilt, and the longing for a more satisfactory arrangement. It had the effect of impressing on those sincere Jews we are speaking of the estrangement from God produced by sin, and indicated in outline the conditions under which fellowship with God might be attained.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

The first use of the word "gospel" in the New Testament is found in Matthew 4: 23—"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people." It is so rendered from the Greek word "euangelion," meaning "good message" or "good tidings." This Greek word has been translated into our language as "evangel," meaning "gospel" or "good news"; to evangelise means to preach or *publish the good news, and an evangelist is a preacher or* publisher of such news.

The English word "gospel" is a contraction of the Anglo-Saxon god-spel, which was formed by a compounding of the two words, God and spel, the latter meaning "story." *Hence the gospel of Christ is God's story of Christ.*

The word Christ is an adaptation of the Greek word **Christos**, meaning "anointed." In the New Testament this word in almost every case refers to Jesus, the Son of God, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. (Acts 10: 38.) The word Christ is sometimes applied to Jesus as a descriptive title, but is more often used as His proper name, either alone or associated with His prophetic name "Jesus," either one of these two appellations occupying the first position in the compound name.

The name Jesus (or, as the Hebrews pronounce it, Joshua) signifies the Saviour, "for He shall save his people from their sins."—Matthew 1: 21.

It is manifest that the angel used these titles of Saviour, Christ, in anticipation, since the Babe of Bethlehem had saved no one, nor had He Lordship over anyone on the day of His birth; for it is recorded that He was subject to his mother and Joseph during the years of His minority.—Luke 2: 51.

Nevertheless, these titles are so important in the Gospel message that their significance must be understood by all who wish to understand fully the Divine story.

It was after Christ's resurrection that all these titles attained their highest significance, but I will leave to other speakers the task of examining this portion of the subject. We have, however, seen from the foregoing that the Gospel is good news, God's story of His love as exhibited in His Son, whom He sent to be the Saviour, Messiah, King, Lord, Owner of mankind. —H.H.F.



The Plight of the Human Race

WE HAVE HEARD from the first address how the angel of the Lord gave his message to the Jews, and have heard something of what was in the Jewish mind concerning this long promised and long awaited event, the coming of their Messiah and King. We have also noticed that certain aspects of the good news pertained specially and solely to them. But in the 13th and 14th verses of Luke 2 we read—

> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
> Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

The Messiah and King the Jews looked for was not for them only, but to bring peace in the whole earth, and to demonstrate God's good will to all men. The good tidings of great joy centred in the Saviour; we read in Matthew 1: 21—"for he shall save his people from their sins."

Mankind's greatest need is salvation or deliverance from sin. Man was not always in his present unfortunate condition. Go back to Genesis 1: 26-31 and Genesis 2: 7-15, and read of the creation of man—how God planted a garden in Eden, and there He put man to dress it and keep it. Every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food was there. Man was given dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, over the cattle, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. God created the woman, and gave her to the man to be his helpmate. In the 31st verse of Genesis 1 we read—"And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good."

Inexperience, Deception, and Sin

Our first parents were created perfect physically and mentally—"a little lower than the angels," but of their kind, perfect. One thing only they did not have—experience. The Lord God had created man, and was therefore his Owner, and had the right to expect man's perfect obedience. In order to test his obedience, God placed one restriction on him, as stated in Genesis 2: 17—"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou *shalt not* eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

The thing was straight and plain, no complicated phrases that required a legal mind to unravel. God commanded him not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree growing in the garden, the penalty being death.

Very soon the tempter came, and the woman listened. God had said in the plainest possible language "thou shalt

surely die"; the tempter said (Genesis 3: 4) "Ye shall not surely die." The woman believed the tempter, ate of the fruit, and gave to her husband, and he did eat. The point of the test was obedience to God's command "thou shalt not eat of it."

The Plight of Death

God's command was disobeyed; nothing now remained but to pronounce the penalty and set in motion the machinery for carrying it out. Genesis 3: 14-19 gives the account of the punishments inflicted. A curse was placed upon the serpent, to the woman sorrow and suffering, and to the man was said (verse 17-19)—

Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Man was driven out of the garden into the wilderness, and there he tilled the ground as best he could. Man had lost his opportunity to live in the garden and all the benefits pertaining to that position. All the benefits of *being at peace with God were gone, all sense of security* was gone. Satan rapidly made headway in implanting wicked thoughts and desires in man, for Adam and Eve's first child in anger murdered his brother. In Genesis 5: 5 we read of the close of Adam's life—"And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years: and he died." And so the penalty was carried out: "Thou shalt surely die."

As soon as the death penalty came into operation decay set in. Man commenced to decay physically and mentally. Adam finished his course in 930 years. The average these days is 30 to 40 years. As man degenerated, it became the easier for Satan to control him, twist and turn him as he willed. Satan is the mighty one of this world, and the whole world is under his influence.—Ephesians 2: 1-3; 2 Corinthians 4: 4.

Far Reaching Effect of Sin

Sin is disobedience to God, and death is the punishment of sin. We see how sin and death entered into the world, and in Romans 5: 12 the Apostle Paul tells us its far-reaching consequences—"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." And again in 1 Corinthians 15: 21—"For since by man came death," and in the 22nd verse—"For as in Adam all die." Romans 5: 19 says—"By one man's disobedience many (or, the many) were made sinners." These passages show us the far-reaching effect of our first parents' sin. It involved the whole of the race. The whole world are sinners before God. Paul says (Romans 3: 9)—"for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin"; and in the 10th verse and onward we read—

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:
14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:
15 Their feet are swift to shed blood:
16 Destruction and misery are in their ways:
17 And the way of peace have they not known:
18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

Strife and Turmoil

This is a true description of man down to our present day. It is a sorry state to be in. As a result of that yielding to the tempter in the garden man lost everything that was for his benefit, and received in its place Sin, Sorrow, Suffering, and finally Death. Man spends his few years on the earth subject to all kinds of aches and pains. By hard labour he struggles to earn his living under most unsuitable conditions. The whole world is a mass of unrest—a continual striving to obtain power by any means; and when one section of fallen man obtains power they use it to crush the remainder. All mankind are involved in some way in the turmoil, the strife, the bitterness, and suffering of the present sinful conditions. And finally *when man dies he is dead—really dead; for man* was to return to the dust from which he was taken, and he would then be no longer a conscious being; in that very day his thoughts perish.—Psalm 88: 10-12; 146: 4.

A Peculiar Plight

The Jews under the Law Covenant had further trouble. The Law Covenant promised them life, on condition that they obeyed it in all points. If they did not, Galatians 3: 10 says—"Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The Jews were not able to keep the Law. Paul says (Romans 7: 10)—"And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." Why? Because, as he further states in Romans 8: 3—"in that it was weak through the flesh." The weakness of the flesh was inherited from Adam, and no matter how hard the Jew tried it was impossible for him to keep the Law. So that in addition to being involved in Adam's transgression, the Jew was under the curse of the Law as well. The Law Covenant was a demonstration of man's inability to help himself out of his unfortunate condition.

A Ransom

Both Jew and Gentile required a Saviour—one who could save them from their sins. One who could restore them to God's favour and so make peace between them and God. One who could deliver them from death.

That would require a sacrifice—a corresponding price; a price equivalent to Adam and all his posterity together. Where could such a sacrifice be found? Since all the race was condemned, "none of them could by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him."—Psalm 49: 7.

A Powerful Deliverer

It would require a Saviour who could give the exact price; and, having given the exact price, one who had great power and authority. One who could demand death to give up its victims, and who had the power to see it was done. One who could bring peace to the distressed world. One who could command wars to cease. One who could cause men to live at peace with each other. To accomplish all this would require a greater King than earth has ever known. Men's attemps to bring peace to the world have all been miserable failures. The task is completely beyond man's ability.

But God had a remedy. Although man had sinned, and it was necessary for God to fulfil the penalty, that if man disobeyed he should die, God had not forsaken man. He had the remedy, and in His own time was ready to apply it. Go back to Genesis 3: 15 and read the promise God made to the woman—"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; **it shall bruise thy head**, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Here was a definite promise made, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. A ray of hope was given. It was perhaps very dim, and our first parents may not have understood very clearly how the serpent's head would be bruised. Nevertheless, they took hold of that promise: it was an assurance that God had not forsaken them. Though they were cast out of the garden, they worshipped God, and sought to bring up their children in obedience to Him.

And that promise has given hope and comfort to many since. God who knew the end from the beginning, who had foreseen that man would sin and would require a Saviour, had provided the means of deliverance from the foundation of the world. You can read it in Revelation 13: 8—"the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." So indeed the angel's message was "good tidings of great joy to all people" because it announced the birth of "the Saviour," "the Christ," "the Lord"—the One whom God had arranged to be the sacrifice for sin, the exact equivalent price, the Anointed, the great King who was to be given all power and authority in all the earth. The King who would be perfect, and who would be head of a perfect government. Who was to be given the power to bring back the dead from the land of the enemy, and bless them. Restore them to the position of being at peace with God. It was good tidings, the very best.

But we do not see much peace at the present time. How then are all these things to be brought about? God did not disclose all His purposes to our first parents, He gave to them the one faint ray of hope. But from time to time in succeeding years He disclosed more and more. And as this conference progresses I feel sure that the papers yet to be read will show quite clearly how God's great purpose is to be fulfilled. And when the great work is finished, it will indeed be "Glory to God in the highest."

—B.L.G.

The Gospel "Preached Before" to Abraham

FAITH in the promises of God is the privilege of all who have read or heard them from Adam and Eve onward.

Noah, a man of faith, was greatly privileged to commune with God and understand His mighty power. He believed there would be a flood—a great calamity which came and overtook the people on account of the universal wickedness. This would show the strong tendency even under the administration of angels to go contrary to God. Instead of lifting the fallen human race out of their plight, the angel administrators themselves became disobedient to God.—Jude 6; 2 Peter 2: 4.

But in Noah and his family an opportunity was afforded for a new beginning; and though many of their descendants wandered away from God (as stated in Romans 1), a few maintained faith in the promises. Of such were Nahor and others in the line of Shem, besides Terah, the father of Abram.

To Abram God made a promise that if he would go into a land which would be shown him, God would richly bless him. (Genesis 12: 1-3.) Abram accepted, and God changed his name to Abraham. In the New Testament Abraham's faith is spoken of as a model for all believers in God. And the Jews were told by the Lord and the apostles that the faith of Abraham was more desirable in God's sight than their works under the Law.

As set out in the epistle to the Galatians, some of the believers in Jesus were wandering from the faith, and the Apostle Paul combats the idea advanced by certain Judaizing teachers that it was necessary for Christians to keep the law of Moses in addition to believing in Christ. He refers to Abraham as having been justified by faith quite apart from the law; for the law was not given until 430 years after the promise made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. And he declares that the gospel or good news, in a brief form, was preached to Abraham in the words—"In thee shall all nations be blessed."

If all nations could be blessed in Abraham, who was not under the law, then the law was not a necessity as a means of blessing. Moreover, if Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could be blessed, and their faith counted to them for righteousness, then the law was not and is not necessary for the bringing in of righteousness. As the apostle says in Galatians 3: 18, 19—

> For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.

Abraham not only believed in the promises of God, but he obeyed Him, even to the sacrificing of his only son, and on account of his faith and obedience God again blessed Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 22: 17, 18.

Preached Before

Giving to Abraham these promises of a blessing was a preaching of the gospel "before" or in advance of its preaching by the Lord and the apostles.

Further, the Apostle Paul says in his epistle to the Hebrews (6: 13, 14)—"For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."

In Abraham's time the world was in a deplorable state, and there was great need for a blessing. God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because their sin was very grievous.

There were some who were godly—Lot, whom He delivered from Sodom, Melchizedek king of Salem and priest of the most high God, and those for whom he served; but they could not bring in the blessing of all nations as God intended to do, or Abraham's Seed would not have been chosen to be the Blesser.

When Abraham came near to the end of his life, he realized that the blessing of all nations would not be in his time. Yet he firmly believed that God would send someone to be the Blesser of all the families on the earth. And, although many people have died and will die before the time for the promise to be fulfilled, not one will miss the blessing.

The blessing of all the families does not mean just a few people.

Christ Jesus the Blesser

The apostle Paul tells us who the Seed of Abraham would be (Galatians 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 Jesus Christ came He was the promised Seed through whom all nations were to the blest. He redeemed the Jews from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, by dying on the cross, and also "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

The blessing did not begin before the Lord's day. It could not, because Jesus was the only One who could bring the blessing. Nevertheless, our Lord's message is the same gospel of good tidings which was spoken before to Abraham. Just when and how the promised blessing began to go to the Jews is clearly stated by the apostle Peter when he called upon them to repent (Acts 3: 25, 26).

> Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.
>
> Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.

Blessing Extended to the Gentiles

That was the first item of the blessing—turning them from their iniquities. Afterwards, as we have seen from Galatians, this same gospel or good news was given to the Gentiles. Peter was the first to carry the gospel to them—when he spoke in the house of Cornelius, as related in Acts 10: 34-43. We will read verses 42, 43—

> And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.
>
> To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

The apostle Paul's statement at Antioch also refers to the forgiveness of sins as the first part of the blessing after enlightenment (Acts 13: 38, 39)—

> Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:
>
> And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

The forgiveness of sins is through Jesus; He is the only way by which we can obtain forgiveness.

Hearing precedes Believing

Enlightenment is necessary before sin can be abandoned; and when the apostle states God's purpose to justify the heathen through faith, which God foresaw that He would do when He gave the promise to Abraham, their enlightenment is implied; for Romans 10: 13-15 says hearing necessarily precedes believing—

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things.

It is only by first hearing that we can know what to believe. The apostles and others went everywhere spreading the glad tidings and telling of the forgiveness of sins; so that those could believe when they heard the good tidings.

There are numbers of people who have died and have never heard about the blessing which demonstrates beyond a doubt the goodness of God and His great love for the world. These are still to be blessed. Jesus, who is Lord of the dead and living, will bring them back from the grave and they will have an opportunity of hearing the good news of the blessing which awaits them if they believe in Him, for He is the True Light. —J. McK.

"Wherefore Then Serveth the Law?"

LAWS are made and enforced the world over by various governing bodies. The rulers make the laws to the best of their ability; but, they themselves being imperfect, the laws do not always have the best results. Some of the laws are good, others are not so good. Nevertheless laws are very necessary for keeping peace and order in the different countries to which they pertain.

When a law is made there is always a penalty attached to it should anyone ignore the law and persist in taking a contrary course.

A code of laws was given centuries ago by God to a nation of people; namely, the children of Israel, whom He took out of bondage in Egypt, and brought to a land flowing with milk and honey. Before entering the land the Jews were given these laws to be governed by, and severe penalties were attached should they be broken or set aside.

The law was holy, and just, and good (Romans 7: 12), and commanded (briefly) reverence to God, and taught the Israelites how to worship God acceptably. It explained in detail what their conduct should be toward one another, and it gave certain laws to promote cleanliness of mind and body.—Exodus 20: 2-17.

The children of Israel agreed to keep the law when they said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient."—Exodus 24: 6-8.

The covenant or agreement was then sealed with the blood of animals, and became binding on the Jewish nation. God who proposed it was perfectly able to carry out His part of the agreement.

The Reason Why

We now come to the question which is our portion of the Conference topic—"Wherefore then serveth the law?" or, in other words, What was the reason for giving the law?

Galatians 3: 19 answers that the law covenant was "added because of transgressions," till the time the Lord Jesus came.

To what was the law "added"? It was not added to or made part of the covenant which had been made with Abraham on account of his faith in God, and which was sworn to with an oath in God's own name. (Hebrews 6: 13, 14.) That agreement could not be altered. Paul explains, if men make a covenant between themselves, after it is sealed no one can add thereto or take anything away from it. So then—"This I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."—Galatians 3: 17.

Purposes served by the Law

If not added to the Covenant made with Abraham, to what then was the law "added"? The law was added to the experience of the children of Israel. It was added to their experience because God purposed to deal with a whole nation instead of with only a few individuals of Abraham's family. And to deal effectively with a nation a code of laws was required for their guidance.

The law was designed to mould the Jewish nation into a peculiar people of God, an holy nation. By keeping the commands they would acquire a very high standard of living in contrast with the idolatrous nations round about them. By their righteous conduct they would be a light to the other nations and also serve as a reproof to them. These neighbours would soon realize that the God whom the Jews worshipped was a Mighty God, a Powerful God, who could and would protect His own people.

The covenant offered to the Jews life everlasting if they would keep all its requirements. It gave to them a land flowing with milk and honey. They were to have rain in its due season, which would produce abundance of food necessary for their sustenance. To them also was promised deliverance from their enemies, freedom from sickness, and altogether in every way they were to have peace and prosperity.

These promises showed the abundant mercy and willingness of God to give good gifts unto the children of men, and such a favored, prosperous people would have been a wonderful witness to the wise ruling and governing ability of their God.

If, on the other hand, in face of all God's goodness and favors, they were rebellious and disobedient, they were cursed by that same law. Famine, hardships, all kinds of sickness and loss of cattle and crops were imposed. Their ungrateful, unthankful conduct would be visited upon them by their being carried away captive into other lands.

Unfortunately for themselves, the Jews could not live up to their part of the agreement. So, instead of receiving blessings, there were brought on them the curses of the law, which involved additional condemnation to death.

The law shows by its righteous standard a clean-cut division between right and wrong; how exceedingly bad and repulsive sin is. It shows God's attitude toward sin, that He cannot and will not tolerate it. (Romans 7: 13.) Because the Jews as a nation left the right course of service to God and instead sacrificed to idols, God punished them by allowing heathen nations to overcome them and take them away captive into foreign lands. Even these nations were made to realize the superior power of Jehovah whom the sincere Jews worshipped; as, for example, when Daniel with the rest of his countrymen was taken away to Babylon. While there, on account of his faithfulness to God, he was cast into the den of lions. God demonstrated His power by stopping the mouths of the lions, and Daniel remained unhurt. King Darius was brought to acknowledge Daniel's God to be a powerful living God, and sent a declaration all through his kingdom to that effect.—Daniel 6: 20-27.

Another purpose served by the Law was this: By the writings of the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms which were carefully preserved by the Jews throughout all their generations the true knowledge of God was kept alive in the earth. Paul asks (Romans 3: 1), "What advantage then hath the Jew?" And answers his own question—"Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." "To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises."—Romans 3: 2; 9: 5.

You Only Have I Known

The Jews as a nation were bound together by the terms of the law covenant; they were the only people whom

God recognized—"You only have I known of all the families of the earth."—Amos 3: 2.

The law did not permit them to associate with the other nations around them. So the Jews were kept a separate, distinct nation ready to receive their Messiah when He came. When our Lord did come He went only to the Jews; He went to no other nation, saying, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matthew 15: 24.

The promises given by the Prophets were to show the earnest Jew a means or way by which to escape from the bondage and condemnation of the law. They gave hope of something better to come. Another covenant was to be made, containing the glad tidings of the Everlasting Gospel by which God could be merciful to their unrighteousness and remember their sins and iniquities no more.—Jeremiah 31: 34.

Another precious promise was given through the prophet Isaiah. A redeemer was coming to Zion. (Isaiah 59: 20.) How the zealous Jews would long for and look forward to that time! The One was coming to whom so many of the types under the law pointed.

The oft repeated sacrifices would impress on the people that without the shedding of blood there was no remission of sins, and this knowledge was of great advantage when by the Gospel they learned that it was not possible to take away sin by the sacrifice of bulls and goats.—Hebrews 10: 1-4.

The giving of the law, with Moses as its mediator, the sealing of it with the blood of animals, the many sacrifices offered on the altar, the priest who offered the sacrifices, and the manner in which they were offered, were all typical of our Lord. John the Baptist pointed Him out as the Lamb of God, which taketh away [beareth away] the sin of the world.—John 1: 29.

The Law a Witness of Christ's Perfection

Our Lord was a Jew. He was the promised Seed of Abraham who should bless all the families of the earth. He was perfect. Never at any time did He sin; He alone of all the nation of Israel kept the law; He alone was entitled to live under it.

Our Lord's character, being attested by the perfect Law, proved Him to be the only one fit to offer a satisfactory sacrifice to God, and so He qualified to fulfil the position of being the One to bless mankind.

Until the Seed Should Come

One of the main purposes of the law covenant was to demonstrate the perfection of our Lord as the "Seed of Abraham" to bless all the families of the earth. This it did, and when that was accomplished its work was finished; it came to an end.

Paul goes into this subject in detail in Galatians 3. He says that the law was added "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." The law was a schoolmaster to bring the Jews to Christ; they were kept under it in a state of servitude until Jesus released them.

Now, instead of having to practice the works of the law, they are given the privilege of entering into a covenant requiring belief in Jesus as the one satisfactory offering for sins, and the opportunity of gaining everlasting life through faith.—John 3: 16.

This way of obtaining life is vastly better than the arrangements under the law which they could not keep, and under which they could never hope for anything else than death. (Romans 7: 10.) Their experiences prove that fallen sinful men cannot attain to righteousness by their own efforts. But the law did prepare the Jews (a "remnant") to receive Christ. When He came those who were rightly exercised by it gladly accepted the message proclaimed by the Saviour.—John 1: 11, 12; Romans 11: 5.

Written for Our Learning

Some people have the idea that they cannot learn anything from the law because it applied only to the Jews and was taken away at Christ's death. Such a line of reasoning is opposed to the teaching of the apostles—"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."—Romans 15: 4.

While we realize we are not under the law now, we have profited in times past by comparing the law covenant and its types with the New Covenant and the one great Antitype. Such consideration has assisted us to a deeper knowledge of God's plan of salvation. Knowing the blessings we have received, we should in the future give the greater heed to the study of the Word of God, as contained in both the Old and New Testaments.

—A.L.W.

The Gospel of the Kingdom

— As it concerned the Children of Israel —

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."—Mark 1: 14, 15.

IT IS WITH the words, the gospel of the kingdom, and with the question How the gospel of the kingdom concerned the Jews, that this portion of our Conference Topic has to deal.

As can be seen from Mark's account of our Lord's ministry, these words apply to the inauguration of His public mission, and indeed this was the theme which our Lord proclaimed throughout the whole of His ministry.

Up to this time the Jews had been under the Law; in fact, they still were, and the influence of the Law upon them should have prepared the nation to receive the gospel of the kingdom when it was preached to them. When our Lord came, the nation was in a state of expectancy; they were looking for their promised Messiah. John the Baptist had been preaching for six months that the kingdom was at hand, that soon One would come greater than he. Hence they should repent and make ready to receive Him.—Matthew 3: 1-12.

The Jews were at this time, and had been for many years, a tributary people, paying taxes to Cæsar; and above this tax they were also paying for the upkeep of a magnificent temple, although not so glorious as in the days of Solomon. The priests, by the great help of tradition they had added to the law, made the burden of taxes doubly heavy, so that with financial obligations to both Cæsar, whom they hated, and the High Priest, whom they blindly followed, the burden pressed hardly on the greater part of the people.

We in our day dislike taxes imposed upon us, yet at least the taxes we pay are arranged on a certain scale. In those days the Jews were not so fortunate, if that be the right word to use, in having a scale of taxes to refer to for their own convenience. The tax-gatherers or publicans as a rule seem to have adopted all sorts of unjust and cruel means to collect the taxes, as well as a large profit for themselves.

For relief from this tribute paying the Jews were seeking; and they expected that when their King came He would lead a great army against Rome and deliver them from their subjection to a Gentile nation. But they misunderstood many prophecies contained in their ancient writings or Scriptures, and expected their King to come in great pomp and military splendour. With this idea firmly grounded in their minds, is it any wonder that when the lowly Nazarene came preaching the gospel—this term being applied to our Lord in contempt—they failed to

observe the prophecies that were being fulfilled before their eyes?

Jesus the Son of David

The Jews knew well that their promised King would be of the lineage of David, so that if anyone came along and said that he was their king, he would of necessity have to establish his claim by proving that he was of the line of David.

If we refer to the genealogy of our Lord as given in the gospel of Luke (3: 23-38) we find it stated that "Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli." On consulting the genealogy given by Matthew we are immediately confronted with an apparent discrepancy; for Matthew 1: 16 says that "Jacob begat Joseph," Heli not being mentioned as in Luke's account. This difficulty is not so real as apparent, especially when we consider the custom of the time of calling sons-in-law sons; so that it comes to this: Luke gives the lineage of Jesus through His mother Mary, who was the daughter of Heli, while Matthew gives Joseph's lineage—not Mary's, and not Jesus'. Matthew is particular not to say Joseph the father of Jesus, but "Joseph the husband of Mary."—Matthew 1: 16.

It will be seen that both these family trees go back to David. Because of this many people think they support the theory that Joseph was the father of our Lord. If we had no proof other than the Scripture statements that Jesus was the Son of God born of a virgin, therefore not the son of Joseph, we would have to say the Joseph theory is wrong. But there is other proof that our Lord's Father was God himself. The Old Testament contains several statements throwing light on this fact, and the Jews had this record constantly before them.

Solomon's Heirs Disqualified

First we will mention the reasons why Joseph could not possibly have been the father of Jesus. In Matthew's list of the forefathers of Joseph are the names of two kings who come in for special mention in the Old Testament. (Matthew 1: 6, 11.) If we take these two names in chronological order, Solomon, one of the sons of David, will be the first to be mentioned. In 2 Samuel 7: 4-17 we read of a promise that God made to David through the prophet Nathan. This promise said that if David would be faithful to the Lord God, the promised king—one who would sit on the throne for ever—would come through him. This promise was repeated to Solomon by David when David was a very old man and about to die, as we read in 1 Kings 2: 4—

> That the Lord may continue his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel.

This promise is again mentioned by Solomon, when he prayed to the Lord that He would remember His word to David his father.—1 Kings 8: 25.

Unfortunately, Solomon did not remain faithful to his father David's instructions, and in 1 Kings 11: 9-13 we find the Lord's displeasure stated in no uncertain terms—

> And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice,
>
> And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the Lord commanded.
>
> Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.
>
> Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.
>
> Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.

And so it happened: exactly as here written. For after Solomon's death ten tribes revolted from Rehoboam, Solomon's son and successor.

Jehoiachin or Coniah

The second king to whom special reference is made in connection with the succession to the throne of Israel is Jehoiachin, also called Jeconiah and Coniah. (1 Chronicles 3: 16; Jeremiah 24: 1; 22: 24, 28.) Concerning Jehoiachin or Coniah we read (Jeremiah 22: 24-30)—

> As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;
>
> And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hands of the Chaldeans.
>
> And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die.
>
> But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.
>
> Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not?
>
> O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.
>
> Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

This prophecy also was fulfilled. After Coniah had reigned three months and ten days as king of Judah, he surrendered himself to Nebuchadnezzar, who carried him to Babylon, where he was actually confined in a prison and compelled to wear prison garments, for thirty-six years.—2 Chronicles 36: 9, 10; 2 Kings 25: 27-30.

Zedekiah the Last on the Throne

After Coniah, Nebuchadnezzar placed on the throne Coniah's uncle Mattaniah, whose name he changed to Zedekiah.

When Zedekiah broke his pledge and rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, he also, after having his sons slain before him and having his eyes put out, was carried captive to Babylon. All the people who had remained in the land fled, and the land became desolate for seventy years. Thus was brought about the complete overthrow of David's throne. (2 Chronicles 36: 11-21; 2 Kings 25: 1-26.) And thus were the words of the prophet Ezekiel (21: 27) fulfilled—"I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him."

How the last portion of this prophecy concerning "him whose right it is" was fulfilled will be explained later on. What these three scriptures establish is that the promised king who would sit on David's throne could not come through the line of Solomon. Joseph, the husband of Mary, being a descendant of Solomon, our Lord Jesus could not have been his son. Had He been Joseph's son He could not possibly have been David's heir. Let us believe the words uttered by God from heaven when our Lord came up out of the waters of Jordan after His baptism—"This is MY beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And again on the mount of transfiguration—"This is MY beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."—Matthew 3: 17; 17: 5.

Our Lord's Birth a Miracle

Let it then be recognized that Joseph was not our Lord's father, but that Jesus was indeed the Son of God by miraculous birth of the virgin Mary. It is only supposition to think otherwise, as was done by some in that day. Luke 3: 23 says—"And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph." Some people, Luke declares, supposed Jesus to be the son of Joseph, but that was their mistake.

Jesus was in very truth the Son of God. If it were not so, there could have been no "glad tidings" told and sung by angels at His birth. The first essential of the gospel is that Jesus was the Son of God; for when we consider the great work to accomplish which our Lord came in human flesh—His great redemption work—then we are confronted with the unassailable reason for believing in His virgin birth. Had He been the son of Joseph, then He would have been a condemned sinner like all of Adam's race, and He would have needed that someone should die for Him. And then all that the holy prophets have spoken concerning the great work He was to accomplish on behalf of the Jews would be untrue, and God himself proved a liar.

This is the alternative every one is faced with who rejects our Lord's miraculous birth, as did the Jewish nation as a whole. Their rejection of Jesus Christ as the Son of God was a rejection of God himself and of all the holy prophets who testified of Him and His Work. For

this rejection of the Son of God the Jews themselves were rejected as God's chosen people, and their "house" became desolate.—Matthew 23: 37, 38; 1 Thessalonians 2: 15, 16.

The Gospel and the Law

The gospel of the kingdom concerned the children of Israel not only in its setting forth of the signs by which their true King could be recognized, but in its declaration of their undone condition under the law and their need of a Deliverer. What the Jews required was some way or means by which they could be delivered from the curse under which that law had placed them. Many of the Jews —all the pious ones—realized their position under the law as really desperate. So the apostle Paul said in his letter to the Romans, making himself an illustration of the homelessness of the Jew under the law—"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" But then he announces how he had found a way of escape—"I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 7: 24, 25, margin.) Here was the way, and the only way, in which the Jews could have hope—through Jesus Christ their Lord.

So Paul claimed with gladness in his heart, when writing to the Galatians—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."—Galatians 3: 13.

This is the bondage from which the Jews should most have desired relief—not the bondage of being subject to Rome, but relief from a burden which affected their eternal life, not their brief span of years in the land of Palestine; and it was only by His position as a perfect man, as witnessed by the same law which condemned the whole Jewish nation, that our Lord could accomplish such a great deliverance for the Jews. Pilate's words to the elders of the people, just prior to our Lord's crucifixion—"Behold the man!" were possibly taken by the multitude as sarcasm. There was the One who had claimed to be a king—clad in a purple robe and a crown of thorns upon His head. What a sight! King of the Jews! No, they would not have Him. But those who were rightly exercised in their minds, those who had not been carried away by the desire to get rid of this "fellow," would see the beauty of these words, and they would read them in this manner—"Behold THE man!"—the only perfect man the world had ever seen since the days of Adam, and now the Jews were seeking to destroy His life. This sort of conduct is still seen in our day, so that it was not peculiar to the Jewish nation. Often when worldly persons are brought into contact with a true Christian they feel themselves reproved by his conduct. Sometimes they will avoid that Christian, or may be—and I think this is more often the case—they will try and make it more uncomfortable for the Christian than the Christian made it for them; and as a rule this sort of people are not very particular regarding the means they use to accomplish their desire.

The Leaders of Judaism

The leaders of Judaism had felt themselves reproved by what our Lord had said on more than one occasion, and yet, if they had been keeping the law, as they loudly professed to be doing, there would have been no need for our Lord's criticism. But the scribes and Pharisees were blind, and refused to be convinced that they were sinners and in this case as in any other when men have the truth presented to them, they must either accept the truth and order their lives accordingly, or they must find some way if possible of getting rid of the truth. So the chief priests together with the rest of the Jewish hierarchy took the latter course—they committed murder. Is it any wonder that our Lord called the scribes and Pharisees vipers?—"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation [condemnation] of hell [Gehenna]?"—Matthew 23: 33.

It was in the form of a serpent that Satan had originally seduced Eve, and so can be seen the force of these words; but they only raised the Jews' ire the more. The high priest, the chief priests, the doctors of the law, the scribes, the Pharisees—most of those that had high positions amongst the Jews—only saw in our Lord a serious rival. They had misused their authority over the people for their own personal gain, and personal gain only. But their Messiah was giving the people many benefits and teaching a new doctrine—not a law which required a large temple on earth, not a law which required burnt offerings and sacrifices of animals, not a law which had been perverted by the traditions of men —"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."—Luke 16: 16.

Here was a division in God's plan clearly marked out, as had been foretold in the law and the prophets. When Moses said, "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you" (Acts 3: 22; Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18, 19), he clearly pointed out that the law would have a termination. So then, if the Jews had been rightly exercised in their hearts and minds by Moses' words, they would have been able to understand the Gospel of the Kingdom; but their hearts were hard and their necks were stiff. While the pious Jews were in despair as to a way by which they could be relieved from the curse of the law, the scribes and Pharisees were in despair as to what to do with this "fellow"—this perverter of the nation. We read (John 11: 47, 48)—"Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation." Then (vs. 53) their despair was brought to an end, at least as far as they could see—"Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death."

The exponents of the law plotting to commit murder. How best they could disguise it? was the question.

He Whose Right It Is

Christ had preached the gospel, had opened His mission with the announcement that the kingdom was "at hand." The people throughout the whole length and breadth of the land of Palestine had heard this message and were under obligation to heed it—"Him shall ye hear." Our Lord showed that there must be subjects in a kingdom, and so the call for subjects was given out by Him and the twelve disciples chosen, to them it being said that they should "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 18: 28.) But even the disciples mistook the time when this promise would be fulfilled; for after His resurrection they asked their Master—"Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"—Acts 1: 6.

A great many more subjects of the kingdom were to be chosen other than those first twelve, as they learned a little later on, but the fact that they had been disappointed in the time when the kingdom would be set up did not prevent them from seeing their King, as did also the multitudes.

Just here it would be well to refer to a portion of Ezekiel's prophecy already quoted (Ezekiel 21: 27)—"I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him"—together with another prophecy which has not yet been mentioned. This prophecy is found in Zechariah 9: 9—

> Behold, thy king cometh unto thee: . . . lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

The fulfilment of this prophecy is spoken of by our Lord himself, and is recorded in Matthew 21: 1-5—

> And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,
> Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.
> And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.
> All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,
> Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

Then is described the entry into Jerusalem with the cry that went up: "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest."—Verse 9.

On an earlier occasion, after the miracle in Galilee of feeding five thousand on five loaves and two fishes (John 6: 1-14), the people would have taken Him by force and made Him king. But He departed from them into a mountain alone, for that was neither the time nor the place foretold in the prophets for His public acknowledgment as their King. (John 6: 15.) But just prior to His crucifixion the Lord did not refuse the acclamations of the people who welcomed Him to Jerusalem as their King and cast palm branches before Him. Notwithstanding His rejection by the chief priests and scribes, there were some loyal ones who acknowledged Him as the Son of David sent by the Lord to occupy the throne of Israel. It was these who fulfilled the prophecy by their shouts of Hosanna and praise to God.

Do we wonder why, if He were truly King of the Jews, He was not enthroned? The answer is that He renounced His rights as a man to sit on David's throne. Only by His death could the Jews be blessed, since the law was to be nailed to His cross, and His blood was to be the sacrifice for their sins to effect a reconciliation with God. Hence, though He had every legal right to sit on the throne and rule at Jerusalem then and there, He relinquished that right with all other earthly honour in order that He might carry out the Father's will and ultimately receive the throne in a much larger sense—the throne of rulership over the whole earth—King of kings and Lord of lords, to bless all the families of the earth, not the Jews only.

In answer to Pilate's questions Jesus still asserted His claim as King of the Jews, but assured Pilate that His kingdom was "not of this world" or order of things. If it had been, His servants would have fought, as the servants of David and other great Kings had done to establish themselves in Mount Zion. "But now," He said, "is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18: 33-37.) His kingdom is now in the hearts and minds of His people; but soon it will constitute the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, which shall be established in the whole world, and for which our Lord taught His disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come."—2 Peter 3: 13; Matthew 6: 10.

Jesus knew that He must first suffer before He could enter into His glory, and that is what His disciples had yet to learn. (Luke 24: 26.) They too were to have tribulation before they could inherit their twelve thrones.

In conclusion, let the title of this portion of our Conference Topic be put in question form: How did the Gospel of the Kingdom concern the Israelites in Palestine and scattered abroad?

It affected them in this way. The Jews had a great advantage—and an advantage means something that is favourable to success—a tremendous advantage in being God's people and in having the first invitation to become a royal family; for if they had accepted the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Gentiles (that includes you and me) would not have been included in the favourable "call" which we now enjoy. As Paul says in writing to the Romans, the Jews had much advantage in having the oracles of God given unto them, but the majority did not appreciate the advantage thus given them over the Gentiles. This advantage being despised, the Jews are in a position of greater culpability.

But let us turn from the Jews for a moment to point out the responsibility that rests upon those among the Gentiles who have heard this "call." It is a general principle that knowledge brings responsibility, and so it is in this case. We have to learn as the apostles had to learn that we are to "preach the Gospel" wherever and whenever we can. We have to follow in the footsteps of our Lord, and even if it should lead to death, there lies our responsibility. The Jews as a nation brought destruction upon themselves, and just as surely as that destruction fell upon the Jewish nation, so will it fall upon us if we be not obedient unto the commands of the gospel.

May the Lord give us strength that we may so do, and so may we pray: "Thy Kingdom come."

—P.C.G.



The Gospel of the Kingdom

— As it concerns the Gentiles —

MOST CHRISTIANS are aware that all the nations outside the Jewish nation were known as Gentiles; also that these Gentiles had no part in the Kingdom of God as constituted under the Law Covenant made at Sinai.

Before Sinai God had in His wisdom chosen out certain faithful men, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and others; and to them He committed His oracles until the time of Jacob. From Jacob's time on his dealings were almost exclusively with the children of Jacob's twelve sons. These, God recognized as His people for centuries, and they more or less worshipped Jehovah as their God.

But the Gentiles, having a desire for worship, set up for themselves graven images, known as idols. They worshipped the sun, moon, and stars. Also they built up a mythology of imaginary gods and godesses, such as Hercules the god of strength, Thor the god of thunder, and many others. To these they built altars and offered sacrifices.

When Paul was walking among such altars on Mars hill, he noticed one with the inscription "To the Unknown God." And he said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious [literally, religious or devoted to their gods]." (Acts 17: 22.) For, lest there might be another god that they did not know of, they thought that in this way they would still be worshipping him.

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, who were Gentiles, he said—"At that time [i.e. before becoming Christians] ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Ephesians 2: 12.) That is, they did not have any knowledge of the one and only true God, neither of His Son Jesus Christ; and not being Jews they had no authority to place any hope in the promises that were given to the Jews.

Peter's Vision

But now is the barrier broken down. The Jews as a nation showed themselves to be a rebellious people. Therefore God said, I will have a people for my name. And so He sent His gospel to the Gentiles and preached the kingdom of heaven to them. This certainly was good news to the Gentiles, but to the Jews it was an amazing mystery. They could not understand how it was that the gospel should go to these people, seeing that they considered themselves to be and indeed were at one time the chosen people of God. Even Peter, an apostle of the Lord, had to receive a vision to prepare him for the appointed work among the Gentiles. You will remember that our Lord gave Peter "the keys of the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 16: 19), and it was he that had opened the door to the Jews at Pentecost. Now he was to open the door to the Gentiles. Yet because he was a Jew it was necessary to convince him that it was the right thing to do. Therefore he received a vision, which is recorded in Acts 10: 11-17.

[The reader is requested to read the vision in Acts 10.]

"Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate."

The sheet which Peter saw in the vision let down from heaven contained all manner of beasts and creeping things, which according to the Jewish Law were unclean,

and therefore the Jews could not partake of them. Yet a voice from heaven said "Rise, Peter; kill, and eat." This was done three times, and left Peter wondering what it meant. But while he was yet wondering, the Holy Spirit told him that there were three men waiting to see him; and when he met them he found that they were men sent from Cornelius, a Gentile and centurion in the Roman army. Cornelius was a just man, one who had heard something about God, doubtless from the Jews, and reverenced Him. When Peter heard this, and also that he had received a vision from God to send for him, he went straightway on the morrow, and when he was at the house of Cornelius he opened his mouth, and said—

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Then he went on to expound the gospel to them, explaining how Jesus came to this earth, was "anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power," and preached the gospel of peace; that he was crucified, and raised again the third day; also that they (that is, his disciples) were appointed to preach and to testify that He was their Judge ready to grant remission of sins to those who would believe. (Acts 10: 36-43.) This was indeed good news to the Gentiles. But it had been preached to the Jews first, as recorded in Romans 1: 16—

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

When Christ came to this earth He was sent to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matthew 15: 24.) For the three-and-a-half years of His ministry He did not go outside of Palestine, but went up and down in the land, healing all manner of diseases among the Jews, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom of heaven. And when He sent out His disciples, He said (Matthew 10: 5-7)—

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.
And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Then for three-and-a-half years after Christ's resurrection the gospel was still kept within the bounds of Palestine (but included Samaria—Acts 8: 5-17). At the end of that time Peter went, as we have before seen, to the house of Cornelius, and preached the gospel to the Gentiles gathered there. Wherever the apostles went the opportunity to hear the gospel and to enter into the kingdom was preached first to the Jews—To the Jew first, then to the Gentile.—Acts 13: 16, 38, 46-48; Romans 1: 16.

The Mystery

This admission of the Gentiles on the same terms as the Jews is spoken of in Ephesians 3: 3-6 as a "mystery." —"How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ;) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." Also Colossians 1: 26, 27—"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you [or, among you], the hope of glory."

The word "mystery" has come to have the thought of something not understandable as well as not known, and perhaps as never to be known. But "mystery" in New Testament times meant something known only to the initiated. The "Emphatic Diaglott" uses the word "secret." There being two distinct bodies, namely, Jews and Gentiles, God had for ages and generations kept it a secret that the time would come when these two should be put on the same basis, and that God would take out of both a people for His name. As we read in Acts 15: 14—"God at the first [that is, when Peter opened the "door" to Cornelius] did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name."

It is this secret which Paul says is just revealed. God had formed a mighty plan and timetable, and He is working according to it; and this is the time when the plan concerning the Gentiles is revealed to the apostles, and through them to us. But one might ask the question—

What God Requires of Us

"Is God taking out a people for his name from the Gentiles without requiring something of them? The answer is NO: they must come in a certain specified way. Not through the Law, for that was done away with, it came to its end at Christ's death, so that the old covenant with all its works is no longer in force. Now the terms are: repentance, confession of sins, and acceptance of Christ.

To repent and turn away from wicked works means coming to a realisation that we have been at enmity with God, and that nothing we are or can do will make us acceptable to God. To repent includes heartfelt regret for all wrong thoughts, words, and acts. It is also necessary to confess this openly, and to accept Jesus Christ as the only efficacious sacrifice for sins. We must acknowledge that Jesus Christ paid the price of redemption from Adamic sin and its penalty. By Him we may obtain the forgiveness of all our shortcomings, if we are willing to confess them.

God is a great God, and has sent this call out throughout the whole length and breadth of the earth, calling on men everywhere to repent, and to respond to the Gospel call.—Acts 17: 30.

When the call went out on the day of Pentecost and after, people everywhere partook of its benefits. In fact, we read that as many as 3,000 were baptised on the same day.

These are the terms by which both Jew and Gentile are accepted, and not by the Mosaic law, for that was done away with, although some believers even to this day still have the idea that a certain part of the Mosaic law should be kept. But this is not so. The apostle Paul wrote to certain ones who had this idea to explain their mistake; also on another occasion he said, "And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."—Romans 7: 10.

The law with all its arrangements was perfect, but it could not give life, because it was working amongst an imperfect people; therefore a New Covenant was arranged, whereby men may come unto God by grace or favor. "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John 1: 16, 17.

The Offer of Life

The gospel call has gone out with definite promises of life to those who will accept it. The practice of godliness has promises of the life that now is, giving the realization of sins forgiven and many other blessings. And it promises a life to come. (1 Timothy 4: 8.) We are called by the gospel "to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."—2 Thessalonians 2: 14.

The life here offered is different from that offered to the Jews by obedience to the law. The Jew was offered life, or rather a continuance of life, on this earth. But the reward offered in this, the Gospel age, is to obtain the glory of our Lord.

The High Calling

This promise of obtaining the glory of our Lord is contained in many other Scriptures. Our Saviour Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1: 10.) An inheritance "incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Peter 1: 4.) "That where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14: 3.) "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." (1 Thessalonians 2: 12.)

This is a high calling—"the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3: 14); and in order to obtain it we must be changed; as we read in 1 John 3: 2—"we shall be like him"; we must be changed into his own image.

Now what image is that? Is Christ in heaven as a man? By no means, although some think so, seeing that His body disappeared from the tomb, also that He appeared in a fleshly body before His disciples. But the

Scriptures say that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kigdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15: 50.) They say, "True, but flesh and spirit can." But here again they are wrong, for the Lord said (Luke 24: 39), Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have [literally, "having"]." This was when Jesus appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, and they thought that they were looking at a spirit. Christ after His resurrection was a Spirit being, no longer flesh, but took upon himself the fleshly body to suit the occasion. At one time He appeared as a gardener and even Mary, who knew Him very well before His death, did not recognize Him.

This body with which He showed himself was what might be called a demonstration body, shown to convince His disciples that He was really alive from the dead. But since His resurrection His nature is spirit, as Peter states —"put to death in the flesh, but quickened [or, made alive] in the Spirit." (1 Peter 3: 18.) Now He is sitting on the right hand of the Father in heaven, and to Him is given all power and authority—Hebrews 10: 12; Matthew 28: 18.

This is indeed the highest pinnacle of glory. And yet it is to this position that we are called; for we are to partake of His glory, we are to be "joint heirs" with him in His kingdom, and live and reign with Him the thousand years. (Romans 8: 17; Revelation 20: 4, 6.) The apostle John says—"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and 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.

Although John had seen Jesus after His resurrection, yet he says, "it doth not yet appear what we shall be"; the glorious spirit body had been hidden from the apostles' eyes; and still he goes on to say, "we shall be like him." It follows that we must be changed in order to have the same spirit body, because, as we have seen before, we are to be joint heirs with Him in His kingdom.

When Christ prayed to His Father just before His death He said—"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17: 5.) His desire was that God should raise Him up and glorify Him with the same position He had with the Father before the world was.

Before our Lord descended to this earth He was the arch or chief angel known as Michael; but after His resurrection He received even greater glory of His Father; for we read that "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "And let all the angels of God worship him." "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." "Far above all principality, and power, 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."—Philippians 2: 9-11; Hebrews 1: 6; 1 Peter 3: 22; Ephesians 1: 21, 22.

God gave our Lord Jesus His present position, including headship over the church, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Colossians 1: 18), the Father alone excepted. (1 Corinthians 15: 27.) This pre-eminence also includes rulership over the Kingdom of God which will be set up on earth. That it is God's kingdom is seen by Christ's own words, when He taught His disciples to pray—"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come." (Matthew 6: 9, 10.) It is God's kingdom that is to come, and Christ is to be king over it.

This is indeed part of "the gospel (or good news) of the kingdom"; namely, that it should be set up on this earth and all nations be blessed by it. But it is something larger than the Jews expected. They were of the opinion that when Christ came he would deliver them from the Gentiles, and would make them a nation far above all the surrounding nations. These ideas were obtained from such places as Isaiah 1: 24-27—

Therefore saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty One of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies: And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.

Also Isaiah 33: 20-22—Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.

The Jews were rightly expecting Christ to be a mighty lawgiver after the pattern of Moses, but they forgot the places where it says that Christ must first suffer, and then be glorified. They also forgot that then all the families of the earth will be blessed, and not the Jews only as they expected. And they forgot that God's kingdom would extend over the whole earth and not be confined to the land of Palestine and the city of Jerusalem.

But before that would be accomplished the call was sent out among the Gentiles to "take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15: 14.) And it is something for us to be grateful for, seeing that we, as Gentiles, have had the great favor of having the call extended to us, so that now we may rejoice in the hope of the promise of joint-heirship in that kingdom; for if we are faithful we shall be given a Spirit nature like His, and we shall live and reign with Him the thousand years. May He give us the needed grace and strength. —W.S.

The Good News Incorporated in the New Covenant

WHENEVER GOD entered into relations with men and gave them promises He did so by means of a covenant. The word "covenant" means an agreement; and an agreement implies at least two parties and some object upon which they agree. A builder agrees to build a house, and usually such an agreement is called a contract, and is in writing, with plans and specifications on which the two parties to the contract have come to an understanding. Such a contract, agreement, or covenant is binding upon both parties. Anything that is of much consequence is signed and sealed.

Now it is desired that we look into three great outstanding covenants mentioned in the Scriptures, to see how they were agreements between two parties.

The Covenant with Noah

The first of these three covenants for consideration is the one God made with Noah. This was after the flood of waters had subsided, and when Noah and his family had left the ark. In Genesis 8: 20 we read—

And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; . . . and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

And the Lord smelled a sweet savour [which means they were acceptable]; and the Lord said in his heart [i.e. the Lord made a promise from the heart which reads], I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Noah then received his instructions as to how the re-established social order should be conducted. (Genesis 9.) God said—"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth"; and verse 3 states what is given to him to eat, while in verse 4 he is commanded not to eat blood, which is the life of the flesh. The Lord then established His covenant or agreement with Noah and his seed after him, and further reiterated His promise.—Verses 9-11.

A token of this covenant is mentioned in verses 12, 13, which the Lord gives to Noah, by way of a bow in the cloud for perpetual generations. And I trust when we see this bow in the cloud it will help to remind us of God and His promises.

The Covenant with Abraham

The second of these covenants is the Abrahamic, which is also an agreement. If we read the promise made to Abram, which is set out in Genesis 12: 1-3, we shall see that this is so. It reads—"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 show thee." Abram departed, as verse 4 tells us. Verses 2 and 3 state what the Lord would do when he obeyed; and it was this—"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 the families of the earth be blessed."

In the negotiations further on which God had with Abraham, related in chapters 15, 17, 18, 21, and particularly chapter 22 (verses 16 to 18), we read that this covenant is sworn to on account of Abraham's obedience—"**because thou hast obeyed my voice.**" This agreement was later confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob, and is also referred to by the apostle Paul in Hebrews 6: 16-18 as made unchangeable by two immutable things, the promise and the oath.

The Covenant with Israel

Now the third of these great covenants is known as the Law Covenant, and that this covenant also was an agreement between two parties is very apparent when reading Exodus 19. In verse 2 we read that the children of Israel were come to Mount Sinai. Verse 3: God speaks through Moses out of the mount. Verses 5, 6: "If ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." What a lovely promise, friends. Think over it, because we are interested in it. However, we see that it was offered to the children of Israel first, as stated in Exodus 19, and was an agreement or covenant entered into between God and the Hebrews, Moses being the go-between—between God and the children of Israel. He told them what God had said and what was required, and that was **exactly what was expected of Father Abraham; namely, faith and obedience.** From verse 8 we see that even before the covenant was formally made they understood that obedience was required. "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." Chapter 19 then goes on to describe the giving of the law, and all the demonstrations on Mount Sinai that accompanied the voice that spoke from heaven to Moses.

Moses then received additional commandments, as recorded in Exodus, chapters 20 to 23. Chapter 24 relates how the people were called upon to agree to these additional commands, which they did, as related in verse 3—

> And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do.—Exodus 24: 3.

Then came the ratification of the covenant between God and the children of Israel. Twelve pillars were erected, one for each tribe, and sacrifices were made of burnt offerings and peace offerings and offerings of oxen. Then Moses took half the blood (of these sacrifices) and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant which he had written, and read it in the audience of the people. A third time the people said, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." (Verse 7.) Now came the ceremony of ratification which made the covenant binding on the children of Israel, as sprinkling the blood on the altar made it officially binding upon God. "And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words."—Exodus 24: 8.

This ceremony whereby the law covenant was sealed with blood is referred to in Hebrews 9: 19, 20, where it is stated that Moses "sprinkled both the book and all the people." Thereafter the law was binding on both parties to the covenant—God on the one hand and the children of Israel on the other. And we must note that none were bound by this covenant except the two parties who there, as it were, affixed their seal to the agreement.

The Need of a Sacrifice

We have now examined three covenants that God himself proposed in the form of a contract or agreement, the first with Noah, the second with Abraham, and the third with the children of Israel. The first provided for the preservation of the earth, the second promised a blessing to all the families of the earth, and the third arranged statutes and laws by which a nation was separated from other nations, and an offer made of life by obedience to the law. All of these covenants showed God's interest in the welfare of mankind, but none provided a means of successfully resisting death or of completely taking away sin. Sin and Death continued to reign over all.

The offering of sacrifices was required from the first, when God made coats of skins from an animal slain to provide them, and accepted sacrifices at the hands of His worshippers. (Genesis 3: 21, 24; 4: 4, 26; 8: 20; 12: 8; 26: 25; etc.) Under the law covenant the offering of sacrifices was systematized, and all offerings had to be made, as the apostle says, "according to the law." (Hebrews 8: 4.) Yet none of these offerings could take away Adamic sin, being only for transgressions under the law, these being brought again to remembrance on the yearly day of atonement. Neither did these sacrifices apply to the Gentiles, they never having been placed under the law. The apostle says (Hebrews 10: 1-4)—

> For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.
>
> For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins.
>
> But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year.
>
> For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

The Gospel concerning the One Offering

Since those offerings under the law could not take away sins or make the worshippers perfect, and since the Gentiles were outside with no means whatever of drawing nigh to God, it was therefore necessary that a sufficient sacrifice be offered up for all men, in order that all might receive truly **Good News**, "for all have sinned."—Romans 3: 9, 10; 5: 12.

That sacrifice is spoken of in Hebrews 10: 5 to 23, which we must read.

[The reader is requested to read this passage in his own Bible.]

Here we see that the One Sacrifice was the sinless human body of Jesus Christ offered on the cross—"the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (vs. 10), "one sacrifice for sins for ever." (vs. 12.) This One Sacrifice for sin was sufficient for the sins of the whole world—both Jew and Gentile. The high priest under the law made continually repeated offerings for sins, and yet these never took away sin. The fact that the sacrifice of Jesus did take away sin indicates a new High Priest as well as a different sacrifice.

A New High Priest

We have an High Priest not according to the Aaronic order, but according to the Melchisedec order, as stated in Hebrews 7: 11-17. [The reader is requested to read this passage.]

Verse 11 recalls that the Israelites received the law under the Levitical priesthood. That is true, as may be seen in Exodus, where Moses and Aaron of the tribe of Levi as Judge and High Priest were the rulers of the people and administered the law. None could be a priest except of the tribe of Levi and family of Aaron. Jesus, being of the tribe of Judah, could not be a priest in Israel; nor could He offer a sacrifice under the law, since only

priests were permitted to offer them. How then can Jesus be a High Priest? How could He offer an acceptable sacrifice? Verse 17 supplies the answer. It is a quotation from Psalm 110: 4—"The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." The apostle quotes this and applies it to Jesus; and says (verse 12), "the priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change also of the law"—literally, "of law." Not changes or alterations in the law given to Israel, but a complete change of law—from that law to another, new law. This new law is entirely different from the Mosaic law, and is called in Romans 8: 2 "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus." And the new covenant is the formal setting forth of this law in a few words—first recorded in the promise given through the prophet Jeremiah (31: 31-34). This new covenant was brought in because the old or law covenant had been found unsatisfactory, and Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry or service than that of the Levitical priests, as we read in Hebrews 8: 4-7. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second [that is, the New Covenant]." Then the apostle quotes the terms of the New Covenant (Hebrews 8: 8-12), and shows (vs. 13) that the law covenant was decayed or waxed old at the time Jeremiah prophesied, the very fact of promising a new covenant being an indication that the old was to be done away.

Accordingly we find that the law covenant was nailed to the cross, and that Christ sealed the New Covenant, and thus made it operative, by the blood of His cross. (Colossians 2: 14; Hebrews 9: 14, 15.) This He typified when He gave His disciples the cup at the Last Supper, saying, "This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many" (Mark 14: 24); and Matthew (26: 28) adds—"for the remission of sins."

The Law of the Spirit of Life

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus does what the old law could not do. Paul says it "hath made me free from the law of sin and death," which the law given at Sinai proved to be. Instead of bringing life it brought death. But the New Covenant is a covenant of the Spirit and of life, and the life is in Christ Jesus. (1 John 5: 11, 12.) This ministration of the Spirit—to give life—is said in 2 Corinthians 3: 3 to be written "not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." And this agrees with the description of the merciful provisions of the New Covenant given in Hebrews 8: 10-12—

> 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:
> For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

And this is further confirmed by Hebrews 10: 15-18, which says that the Holy Spirit witnesses to us that we, believers in the Gospel age, now have this writing done in our minds and hearts and this forgiveness of sins. Since our sins can be forgiven the offering for sin must have been complete. "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."—Hebrews 10: 14. Compare Romans 3: 24-26.

Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant

Looking back to Sinai we see that Moses was the Mediator of the law covenant—standing between God and the children of Israel—carrying messages back and forth between them—and finally performing the sealing or ratification with the blood of sacrifice sprinkled on the altar, the book of the law, and the people. We might ask—Who is the mediator of the New Covenant?

The Mediator of the New Covenant is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. And the parties to the New Covenant are God on one part, and on the other part the repentant sinner who acknowledges his undone condition and accepts Jesus as his Saviour and His blood as the means of cleansing from sin. Is it not here, dear friends, we have the good news incorporated in the New Covenant? You will all say "Yes," I am sure.

Thus we agree with the apostle's statement in 1 Timothy 2: 5—"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." He is that Mediator now. In fact, without His mediation the Jews could never have been accepted into the high calling, as he says in Hebrews 9: 14, 15—

> How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works [i.e. the works of the law] to serve the living God!
> And FOR THIS CAUSE HE IS THE MEDIATOR of the new testament [covenant], that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament [covenant] they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

It might also be mentioned that anyone who has become a party to the New Covenant need have no fear that the party of the First Part will fail to perform His portion of the contract. If that is so, then let us remind ourselves of the word recorded in Philippians 1: 6—"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." That being so, dear friends, all the promises of God are in Him yea and Amen. (2 Corinthians 1: 20.) Also read Romans 8: 31-35. The apostle in Hebrews 4: 1, 2 reminds us of our part—after referring (chapter 3) to the children of Israel, who failed to do theirs. He says—

> 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.
> For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.
> A similar warning is given in Romans 11: 20, 21.

Faith then in God's Word is what we must not lose. On the other hand, there is no occasion for us to court failure. Because Grace in sufficiency is provided in Christ Jesus. Let us remember also the words of the apostle John (1 John 2: 1, 2)—

> My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not: And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:
> And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

If we abide in Him, we are "more than conquerors through him that loved us." Let us then who have entered into this covenant relation rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, devoting our time in telling others of the good news which shall be to all people.

The Church a Beneficiary under the New Covenant

From what has been said and the Scriptures cited there can be no question but that the Church in the Gospel age is a beneficiary of the New Covenant. Not only so, but the Church in its individual members has gladly and thankfully received the reconciliation through Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant. So says the apostle—"Therefore being justified by faith, **we have peace with God through** our Lord Jesus Christ." . . . **"We joy in** God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom **we** [the gospel age Church] **have now received the atonement [literally, reconciliation]**."—Romans 5: 1-11.

In conclusion: Let us not forget the work of our Mediator, being well assured of the meaning of the word—a "go-between," as Moses was between God and the children of Israel, so Jesus is between us and God. A mediator is also a reconciler—which is easily seen in our Lord Jesus Christ's administration. He is also Advocate—literally Helper or Comforter—to those under the New Covenant, who, having sinned, confess their sin. (1 John 2: 1.) The work of a comforter is to sympathize with those in any trouble or affliction. And an intercessor is one who intercedes on behalf of others. (Romans 8: 34; Hebrews 7: 25.) Let us then remember, dear friends, that Jesus fulfils all these positions. The Saviour of mankind was announced to "save his people from their sins" through the blood of the New Covenant, which is the only way to obtain eternal life.

Thanks be unto God for this, and that we are able to see that others in the future age will also be beneficiaries of the New Covenant, as will be fully explained by subsequent speakers at this Conference. —F. McK.

Redemption Through His Blood

AN EXCEEDINGLY destructive method of Bible study has attracted great attention in these latter years, and has attained widespread approval, sad to say, among many professing Christians. It is known as "Modernism" and "Higher Criticism." Its influence is widespread in nearly all Protestant denominations. Modernists do not feel themselves bound to be guided by the Bible; they decline to recognize it as the divinely inspired Word, in which God reveals much of His wonderful purposes towards mankind. Modernism seeks to explain everything according to the laws and processes of Nature as these are ascertained and understood by science. It accepts nothing as credible unless it can be so explained. The Almighty's plans and purposes are hacked and trimmed down until they fit in with the ideas of scientists; anything that cannot be so dealt with is disbelieved. One can well realize the demoralised spiritual condition of a Christian who has succumbed to these influences. His faith in God as Creator and Sustainer of all things must necessarily have died or at least been clouded over.

Among those who uphold the theory of evolution perhaps least of all is the idea of the redemption of a fallen human race by the blood of Jesus Christ pleasing to them, relying as they do on political reforms and social uplift movements for the salvation of mankind. Many earnest Christians are doubtless endeavouring to bring the Kingdom of God nearer by these means, desiring in all sincerity to serve God.

All such we would earnestly beseech to get back to the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Then they will realize that many of the present-day so-called advanced teachings are traditions of men, and not the gospel or "good news" as set forth by the Lord and the apostles. The Scriptures declare the redemption of a fallen race by the blood of the "man Christ Jesus" as an atoning sacrifice to be the very foundation stone of God's provision for human salvation. The apostle Paul says—"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Galatians 6: 14.

Looking back over God's dealings with His people Israel, we find an elaborate system of sacrifices and offerings and ceremonies under the Mosaic Law. The apostle speaks of these arrangements as "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." (Hebrews 10: 1.) These shadowy or typical sacrifices and offerings could not actually take away sin, but pointed to a "substance" or substantial fact in the future which would do so. That "body" or substance is of Christ.—Colossians 2: 17.

The Lord's sacrifice in its various aspects was represented in the typical sacrifices offered for Israel, the typical people. He was foreshadowed in the Passover lamb. The apostle says, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us."—1 Corinthians 5: 7.

The Atonement Sacrifice

His sacrifice was also foreshadowed by the atonement day offerings for sin. The sin offerings of the day of atonement are fully described in Leviticus 16. A bullock was slain, and some of its blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat, over which the Divine presence was represented by the supernatural light. This blood (the bullock's) was for the cleansing of the high priest and his "house" or tribe of Levi.

Two goats were presented before the Lord. One was chosen by lot, and was dealt with in precisely the same manner as the bullock, its blood being also sprinkled on the mercy seat—this being for the cleansing of the sin of the people; that is, the remaining eleven tribes.

The second goat was the "scapegoat," over which the high priest confessed all the sins of the children of Israel. It was then sent away by the hand of a "fit man" into the wilderness. "And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness."—Leviticus 16: 21, 22.

Thus were the whole of the typical people of God cleansed from sin, which was typically borne away by the scapegoat into the land of forgetfulness.

These sacrifices of the day of atonement were shadows or types of the one great Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ who is "the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2: 2.

Referring to the typical atonement sacrifices, the apostle Paul explains that Jesus our High Priest has not the continuous need "to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's"—as those high priests did annually—"for this he did once, when he offered up himself." (Hebrews 7: 26, 27.) Being without sin, the Lord did not require to be cleansed himself, neither did He need to be offered separately for several classes, as was the bullock for one tribe, and the goat for the eleven tribes. The text in Hebrews 7: 27 is very explicit, referring to the typical sacrifice in both its parts, and then in no uncertain terms describing their antitype; telling what was done, who did it, and when it was done, and what was represented by the bullock and the goat, namely, "**This he did once, when he offered up himself**"—one great and all-sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole human race, being the antitype of **all the sacrifices** offered up under the Mosaic covenant, He also being the scapegoat, as we read in 1 Peter 2: 24—"**Who his own self bare our sins** in his own body on [or, to] the tree," being **led away** by the Roman government, the power of capital punishment having been taken from the Jews.

He carrying our sins—the sins of all mankind, past, present, and future—was led into the wilderness of death, from which He could not find His way back; but God raised Him from the dead.—Acts 3: 15; 5: 30; Ephesians 1: 20.

The foundation for the forgiveness of sins being completed, the antitypical atonement sacrifice having been given, the apostle says (Romans 5: 10, 11)—"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we [i.e., believers] have now received the atonement [margin, reconciliation]."

A Propitiation

Referring again to Jesus, the apostle writes—"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, . . . that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans 3: 25, 26.) Jesus as the propitiation, or propitiatory offering on the mercy seat, is shown to have given the covering price, so making the forgiveness of sins possible. The English word "cover" and the Hebrew **kopher** carry the same meaning, as a covering for something; figuratively, a redemption price, as used in Exodus 30: 12-16—"When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom [**kopher**] for his soul unto the Lord, . . . to make an atonement [**kaphar**] for your souls."

The Ransom Type

The ransom [**kopher**] was the giving of something by each one for the deliverance of his soul from death. It was a strong way of teaching substitution, the price being given in exchange for the thing purchased. This ransom [**kopher**] or "covering price," is a grand type of the man Christ Jesus, the real ransom—the corresponding or covering price for all. The fact that each individual must for himself acknowledge the real ransom as having been offered for himself personally, if he would be free from death, was indicated in the type by each man having to pay the same money—the rich no more, the poor no less—"that there be no plague among them."

Other uses of the Hebrew **kopher** are Job 33: 24: "Deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a **ransom.**" Psalm 49: 7: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a **ransom** for him."

No member of Adam's race could offer himself as a **ransom or covering** price for his brother; all were alike condemned. Therefore in the Psalm our Lord is foreshadowed as the **kopher**—"covering price"—to come in

due time. In 1 Corinthians 6, the Apostle Paul exhorts the brethren not to practise sin, because (v. 19) ". . . ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price."

Bought with a Price

Now just how was this transaction fulfilled? Was the Lord Jesus as a sinless spirit being in heaven, and before He came to the earth, so valuable that His life was of sufficient worth to cover the whole human race? or so valuable as to be worth more than all the human race? Some Christians think along these lines. Yet this is not the way the Scriptures describe the transaction.

The Scriptures say that He "gave himself a ransom for all." Ransom means "corresponding price," or "a price to correspond." When we go into a shop to buy an article we are told the price. We hand over the counter just exactly the price demanded for the purchase of that article. The seller hands over the article, which now belongs to the purchaser. The article has changed hands at a price satisfactory to both parties. If the shopkeeper likes he may quite rightly and justly give you your money back, and you may justly retain the article also, receiving the price as a gift along with the purchase. Thus, you see, everything is quite in order, and each party to the transaction is still perfectly satisfied. Just so, along lines somewhat similar, was the ransom or corresponding price paid for the purchase of the human race, and himself, the price paid by Jesus the Purchaser, was returned to Him when He was raised from death by the Father, to whom He had offered himself without spot.

By One Man Came Death

In Romans 5: 12 we read—"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." Verse 18: "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Verse 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, . . ." From these statements we learn that it is on account of the one original transgression in Eden that all men die, not on account of their individual sins.

Father Adam before the transgression was not subject to death, and could have lived for ever had he never sinned.

The death sentence was passed upon him by his Creator—"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The death sentence being passed upon him, the fruits of the garden which contained the necessary elements to sustain his body for all time were now removed out of his reach. And being driven out from the garden, death immediately began to work in him, although he lived many years before death finally claimed him—the Hebrew expression "dying thou shalt die," being correctly rendered "thou shalt **surely die**"; death was a certainty.

It was during this (shall we say) process of death that Adam's children were born, they inheriting death from their parents; and so it has gone on for thousands of years. "All in Adam die." Thousands of millions of beings have been born inheriting the death sentence before ever they individually could sin. As David the Psalmist declares of himself (Psalm 51: 5)—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Also the apostle Paul affirms—"we all" (including himself and the brethren) "were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."—Ephesians 2: 3.

If every person who has ever lived had been tried under similar conditions to Adam, all doubtless would have sooner or later succumbed to Satan's devices, and disobeyed God. In that case thousands of millions of ransoms would have been required to redeem them all. When the Almighty, exercising His marvellous foresight, and knowing just what would happen, arranged matters so that only one transgression of one individual would condemn all, He displayed wonderful wisdom and economy. By this arrangement it would be necessary to find only one ransom or corresponding price to redeem Adam, and so redeem, by the one masterstroke, the whole of his posterity who were in him. The apostle makes this thought quite clear in Romans 5: 17-19—

For if **by one man's offence death reigned by one**; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall **reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.** . . . **by the offence of one judgment** came **upon all men** to condemnation; even so by the **righteousness of one** the free gift came **upon all men unto** justification of life. For as by **one man's disobedience** many were **made** sinners, so by the **obedience of one** shall many be **made righteous.**

That is to say, the sin of Adam led to many sinners and many offences, each sinner adding his quota to the number of offences and sins. But, though these offences were many, God arranged that by the righteousness of One an equivalent covering should be found for all the offences. Not that sinners are freed from their sins because Christ died. But by the Lord's obedience unto death and the sacrifice on the cross the "free gift" of "grace" came to all, as stated in verse 20—"grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." This reign of grace or favour means that favourable terms are now offered—terms more favourable than those offered the Jews by their law.

This reign of grace or favour depended not only on the death of Christ as the ransom-price, but also on His resurrection to be Mediator, Judge, and Lord. As the apostle says, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. . . . But now is Christ risen from the dead." Then he proceeds (1 Corinthians 15: 22)—"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." The **"all in Adam" were born sinners** without their knowledge or consent, or any fault on their part. But the **"all in Christ"** are not so born automatically, without their knowledge or consent. To be **in Christ** is a matter depending on **individual acceptance** of the blood of Christ as shed on their behalf—acceptance of Christ's work being required whenever the information comes to them, whether it be those who hear in the present life or those who will hear what has been done for them for the first time in the Kingdom age.

In contrasting Christ the Righteous One with Adam who sinned, perhaps it would be right for us to believe that Adam as a newly-created being, and not having any experience whatever of sin either personally or in others, did not realize the meaning of death and its accompanying sufferings and sorrows. On the other hand, the Lord Jesus in His pre-existent state in heaven with the Father had seen the downfall of man and his posterity, and would observe the dreadful consequences of Adam's transgression in mankind, who were continually sinking deeper and deeper in sin and becoming ever further estranged from God as time wore on. He had also seen sin among the angels in the days of Noah and the serious consequences to themselves.

So by reason of his experience of righteousness over a long period and His long observation of sin and the havoc it wrought, our Lord was fully aware of the wiles of the adversary, and therefore well fitted to withstand his temptations.

But because He came down from heaven we must not conclude that Jesus was a combination of natures. Jesus was not a God-man or a divine being living within a fleshy body as a mere shell. He **became** a man—**perfect and sinless and pure,** nevertheless a human being. He **had been** a heavenly being, but He **became** an earthly being. Hebrews 2: 6-9 is very important in this connection. The apostle quotes Psalm 8: 4-6, plainly referring to Adam before the fall. Then he speaks of Jesus in identical terms—

Vs. 6.—What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

— The first man Adam —	— The man Christ Jesus —
V. 7. THOU MADEST HIM [Adam] A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS: thou crownedst him with glory and honour, . . .	V. 9. But WE SEE JESUS, WHO WAS MADE A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS [Why?] FOR THE SUFFERING OF DEATH, . . . that he by the grace of God should TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN.

Romans 8: 3 . . . . God sending His own Son in the **likeness** of sinful flesh.

These several statements are precise and straightforward, and abundantly more evidence is forthcoming if we search the Scriptures further. Just to mention two more—Philippians 2: 7: "made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man."

John 1: 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

In this manner, that is, by becoming a perfect, sinless man, the Lord Jesus became the exact equivalent of Adam, who had sinned, and hence was able to buy the race by giving himself a ransom (corresponding price) for all; thus fulfilling the "ransom" type. He also by the same act fulfilled the atonement type, as we read—"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 Timothy 2: 6; 1 John 2: 2.) "Who gave himself for our sins," "the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me [Paul]." ". . . Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."—Galatians 1: 4; 2: 20; Ephesians 5: 25.

The blood sprinkled on the Mercy Seat in the Most Holy (both of the bullock and of the goat) was a shadow or type of the blood of the Lord Jesus, "whom God has set forth," the apostle writes, "to be a mercy seat, by his own blood, through the faith."—Romans 3: 25 (Diaglott). The Mercy Seat on which the atoning blood was sprinkled pointed to Christ. The "blood of sprinkling" was His own.

It is important to note the emphasis the apostles lay on the blood of Christ—

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.—Romans 5: 9.

In whom we have redemption through his blood.—Ephesians 1: 7.

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.—Ephesians 2: 13.

In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: . . . And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself . . . . Colossians 1: 14, 20.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.—1 John 1: 7.

Nothing could be clearer or more convincing than these Scripture texts. They show beyond a doubt that forgiveness of sins would be impossible without the blood of Christ shed as the antitype of the atonement day sacrifices under the law. Of this He himself gave testimony when, at the conclusion of the last passover partaken of with His disciples on the eve of His death, he said definitely that His blood about to be shed would be "for the remission of sins." Our Lord's blood having been shed on Calvary's Cross for that distinct purpose, it is manifest that remission of sins can be obtained in no other way.—Matthew 26: 28.

The Blood of the New Covenant

Under no other covenant than the New Covenant has God agreed to grant forgiveness of sins. That is why Jesus called His blood the blood of the New Covenant. One of the main features, we may say THE main feature, of the New Covenant is the promise it contains of forgiveness of sins. And to keep this grand fact continually before our minds the Lord instituted the Supper called by the apostle Paul "the Lord's Supper." (1 Corinthians 11: 20.) In Luke 22: 19, 20 we read—"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper [that is after the Passover supper had been concluded], saying, This cup is the new testament [covenant] in my blood, which is shed for you."

By these words our Lord showed that His blood was to be considered the antitype of the blood which sealed the law covenant. The blood of animals sealed the law covenant, but the blood of Jesus sealed the New Covenant. The apostle Paul refers to this type and antitype in writing to the Hebrews (9: 20).

When Moses had spoken every precept of the law to all the people, "he took the blood of calves and of goats, . . . and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament (Variorum footnote, "Covenant") which God hath enjoined unto you." The blood of our blessed Lord was undoubtedly the antitype of this blood also—not to place a fresh seal on the law covenant, but to seal the New Covenant with His own blood.

For this Cause the Mediator

Sin being the problem to be dealt with, and a New Covenant being required for the purpose, sealed by the blood of a satisfactory offering for sin, it follows that a Mediator is required to administer this New Covenant, just as in the type Moses was the Mediator of the law covenant which he sealed or ratified with the blood of animals. The need of the Jew, and also of the Gentile, is for a helper out of the tyranny of sin as well as for a sacrifice for his sins. The apostle points this out very clearly (Hebrews 9: 14, 15)—

"How much more shall the blood of Christ, . . . purge your conscience from dead works [i.e. the works of the law] to serve the living God?

"And FOR THIS CAUSE he IS the mediator of the new testament [covenant], that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament [i.e. the law covenant], they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

Our Lord's office of Mediator of the New Covenant is here linked with the shedding of His blood to deliver the Jews from the condemnation resting on them because of their sins under the old covenant, and from which the sacrifices of bulls and goats could not deliver them. For "this cause" He is Mediator, a cause then present and requiring to be dealt with, in order that the called (that is, first the condemned Jew) "might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." In other words, the high calling could not have been opened to the Jew without Jesus as Mediator to reconcile them to God under the terms of the New Covenant and in recognition of the blood which ratified that New Covenant.

The Throne of Grace

The blood of the New Covenant is that of Jesus alone. The Church was not in existence when Jesus died for our sins. Those Gentiles who afterward became the Church were sinners of the world and under condemnation, as described in Ephesians 2, while the Jews were sinners under the Law and hopeless, as shown in Hebrews 9 and many other places. Only Jesus could suffer as a sin offering, since He only was "unblemished." Those who take up their cross and follow Him have the privilege of suffering with Him as witnesses to the truth and as servants of righteousness, but their sufferings are in no sense sacrifices for sin. Theirs is a sacrifice of praise and thankfulness. Those who come unto God, being reconciled by the blood of His Son, through the mediatorship of Jesus are honored with a privilege and entrusted with a solemn duty, as His ambassadors, of extending the glorious message concerning the New Covenant and its Mediator. And the promise is that if we are faithful we shall have the privilege of sitting as joint heirs with Him in that wonderful throne of world dominion soon to be established. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—Hebrews 4: 16; Revelation 3: 12, 21; Romans 8: 17; Hebrews 7: 27; 13: 15; 7: 25; Matthew 28: 18, 19; 2 Corinthians 5: 17, 20.

Let all who realise that they have been purchased by the precious blood of the Lamb willingly and gladly render unto the Master all obedience. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12: 1.) "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1: 9.) "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." May it be so with us, by His grace! —A.K.

VARIORUM BIBLES

EVERYONE who has read thus far is a Bible reader who searches the Scriptures, we feel sure. To all such we desire to recommend the **Variorum Bible**, so named because on each page it shows the various renderings of many Versions, including the Revised, also the various readings of the most ancient manuscripts of the Bible now known, wherever these differ substantially from the Authorized Version. The Editor of this Journal considers the Variorum the most useful edition in existence. It is published by the King's Printers, and can be supplied by us, printed on Bible paper or on the special "Royal" India paper, very light and strong, in two sizes of type, in several splendid bindings, and with or without Teachers' Aids. Descriptive Price List showing sizes of type will be sent on application.

NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP
294 Little Collins st., Melbourne C.1, Australia
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England
676 Fulton st., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
Box 1762, Durban, South Africa

seek to sail against the stream of worldly desires, then we have to fight opposition both without and within. But this is well worth while, as the apostle says in the next verse (18)—"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

The Image of His Son

Let us now consider 1 Peter 1: 2—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." It will be seen from this passage that it is not the individuals who are foreordained, but it is the character they shall cultivate and exhibit that is pre-determined; namely, "unto obedience."

God who knows all things, and who is all wise, knew beforehand exactly the class of people who would be suitable companions for His well beloved Son. It would be entirely out of harmony with divine wisdom to have associated with His Son, in blessing all the families of the earth, a class of people who were prompted by selfishness. Therefore He predetermined that the people who would fill the office of joint heirs must be of such a character as would fulfil His requirements, a people who will be prompted, as He is, by justice and love. "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the PRAISE OF HIS GLORY." (Ephesians 1: 11.) Or, as we have it in Romans 8: 29—"whom he did foreknow, he also did **predestinate to be conformed to the IMAGE OF HIS SON.**" This, then, is what God predetermined, the character which His people should possess, a character of love, mercy, and goodness like that of His faithful Son, of whom we read (Hebrews 2: 10, 11)—"For it became him, . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."

Notice again the steps mentioned in Romans 8: 30—
Predestinated, called, justified, and glorified; all arranged beforehand.
Conformity with the character of His Son predetermined.
Called by the Gospel.
Justified by faith, and
Rewarded with eternal glory.

Not the individuals chosen out before they were born. But as an orchardist sorts over his crop in order to gather out the fruit which comes up to a required standard for a special purpose, so with God. He has predetermined the standard and will gather in the individuals who conform to that standard. They are elect or chosen for that express purpose, and they must make their calling and election sure by fulfilling the divine requirement, the first item of which is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. These constitute the Church of the Gospel age, and each member stands before God, who is their Judge. That is why the apostle proposes the question—**"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"** (Verse 33.) It does not mean to say that God's elect can do just as they like and not be called to account for it. No; it means rather that these people who are endeavouring to fulfil the divine requirement will not please themselves, but will endeavour to do only those things which will please Him. He is their Judge. It is God that justifieth; "who is he that condemneth?"

The Seal of the Elect

The "elect" have **the seal of God in their forehead,** as we read in Revelation 7: 3; and this is how they are recognized. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Romans 8: 14.) They are guided by a new mind, and have new desires, new interests. Old habits shut out, old conversation shunned: a new man in Christ Jesus. This is what it means to be "sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." (Ephesians 1: 13.) This is why we are able to appreciate spiritual things, and why we love to associate with others who are sealed with that same holy Spirit of promise.—1 John 1: 3, 7.

Thanks be to God for His perfect foreknowledge and unerring foreordination by which He has devised the wonderful purpose set forth in the Everlasting Gospel!

—H.S.

Times and Seasons

TIMES AND SEASONS are part of the Gospel, and it is important and profitable that this phase of God's revelation to mankind should receive earnest and serious consideration by all true believers in Jesus who are looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God.

Jesus in the days of His flesh rebuked the Jews, because, although they were able to discern the face of the sky and of the earth, they could not "discern (interpret—R.V.) this time"—the day of their visitation. (Luke 12: 56; 19: 44.) He pointed out to them the fact that "Abraham, your father, ardently desired that he might see my day, and he saw, and was glad."—John 8: 56, Diaglott.

Thus Christ announced himself as the Blesser foretold to Abraham, who was enabled to rejoice in anticipation of the glad tidings told more plainly and brought nearer of accomplishment.

"In Due Time"

The prophets foretold that the Messiah should come at a certain time, and accomplish a certain work, and so it was fulfilled. In the synagogue at Nazareth our Lord read Isaiah 61: 1—

> 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, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.—Compare Luke 4: 18, 19.

He declared to the people assembled: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears."—Luke 4: 21.

The apostles were afterwards told to warn the Jews that their age of the Law Covenant and God's exclusive favour to them, as a nation, was at an end; and that the Gospel call was to be sent out to all the nations. All who would respond to the call by repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus, and prove their sincerity, might become heirs to the promises.

Paul reminded the Romans that when they were yet without strength "in due time Christ died for the ungodly."—Romans 5: 6.

Peter preaching to Gentiles in the house of Cornelius told them that God "is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."—Acts 10: 34, 35.

Our Lord before He left His disciples after His resurrection gave them command—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations." (Matthew 28: 19, R.V.)

All this was foretold, as the apostle reminded the Jews when they refused to hear the Gospel; hence he turned to the Gentiles in fulfilment, saying—"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."—Acts 13: 44-48; Isaiah 42: 6.

The early disciples were instructed in the times and seasons connected with their previous history, as recorded in the Old Testament, the deluge bringing to an end one world or order of things—"There were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world

that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.—2 Peter 3: 5, 6, R.V.

Concerning the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their deliverance from Egypt, and long residence in Palestine: Stephen gives a detailed account of these things in his defence before the High Priest, as recorded in Acts 7. Also Hebrews 11 tells us how these ancient worthies received not the promise, but by faith they looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. Thus they also in advance had some inklings of the good news of the kingdom.

Exactness of Time Prophecy

We believe that it is right and profitable that we should study the time periods. God caused them to be recorded for the help and instruction of those who sincerely desire to understand the outworking of His great plan and purpose for this age and the ages to come. When we understand the exactness with which some of the time prophecies were fulfilled, we are convinced that only by the inspiration of God could the prophets have foretold the time and events so correctly.

One of the most remarkable of the Old Testament prophecies is recorded in the 9th chapter of Daniel.

This prophecy was evidently given to the Jews in order to aid them to recognize their Messiah when He should appear to them. And in the "fulness of the time" the Lord proved to them by word and works that the time was fulfilled and that He was the promised Messiah.—Galatians 4: 4; Mark 1: 15.

The Seventy Weeks

Daniel, in great distress of mind because of the shame and suffering of His people and the desolation of their city Jerusalem, as the result of God's judgment upon them because of their sin and disobedience, was praying and making supplication unto Jehovah his God. The angel Gabriel was therefore sent to instruct him, and give him skill to understand the vision concerning the future of his people—their deliverance from captivity and restoration to Jerusalem, the advent of the Messiah, their deliverance from the bondage of the Law Covenant, and their final overthrow as a nation. And an exact time period was given him (Daniel 9: 24)—"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city."

It is recognized by most students of prophecy that the key by which to interpret most prophetic time periods is to reckon a day for a year, as Ezekiel was instructed to do.—Ezekiel 4: 6.

In Daniel 9: 1, 2 we find it recorded that in the first year of the reign of Darius, Daniel ascertained from the records of Jeremiah's prophecy that the seventy years' captivity and desolation of Jerusalem were nearing their end.

Following his prayer for an understanding of the future of his people and for the Lord's mercy upon them, Daniel is shown that a long period of seventy weeks is determined upon Jerusalem, to date from the going forth of a commandment "to restore and to build Jerusalem." This command did not issue until the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, and was secured by Nehemiah in response to his petition. (Nehemiah 2: 1, 7, 8.) Of this decree Nehemiah availed himself at once, and on reaching Jerusalem immediately set about repairing the walls of the city.—Nehemiah, chapters 2 and 3.

Is the date on which they began to build known more definitely? Can we learn in what year B.C. Artaxerxes' 20th year fell, so that we may begin the calculation at the right time? Yes, we can.

Reliable Biblical chronologists give the first year of Artaxerxes as 474 B.C.; consequently his twentieth year would be 455 B.C. This then is the date on which Nehemiah was commissioned to restore the city and build the wall. Within the first seven weeks (49 years) this was accomplished.

Following on the 7 weeks (49 years) we have 62 weeks representing 434 years, and reaching to A.D. 29—to Messiah the Prince. (Daniel 9: 25.) We conclude that this signified the commencement of Christ's public ministry after His anointing at the Jordan.

Thus we have from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem to Messiah the Prince, 7 weeks and 62 weeks, total 69 weeks, representing 483 years and reaching the exact year in which the Messiah should commence the great work specified by the prophet (Daniel 9: 24)—"to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy [or, prophet], and to anoint the most Holy." These things the Lord accomplished during the 70th week (7 years).

We read further: that "in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." Our Lord did this when He died upon the cross, thus making a complete, full and efficacious atonement for sins—not only of the Jews, but of the whole world of mankind. The Law Covenant was set aside, and superseded by the New Covenant which opened the door of salvation to everyone who believed.

Verse 27—And he shall confirm the Covenant with many for one week (7 years). The covenant here referred to is the New Covenant to which the Jews had exclusive access for the full seven years. For 3½ years by our Lord before He was cut off, and for 3½ years by the apostles after His death, the Gospel "high calling" was offered to the Jews, as a nation; but they, having rejected their privilege, lost their opportunity, this gospel being sent to every individual of the nation.—Romans 10: 18-21.

The exactness as to time and detail in which these and other prophecies were fulfilled should have enabled the Jews to recognize their promised Messiah. This they failed to do through prejudice and lack of faith. Even the apostles were for a time nonplussed by His death. Christ's reproof was—"O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"—Luke 24: 25.

The understanding of such time prophecies should increase our faith and enable us to appreciate more fully the wisdom, foreknowledge, and power of God.

Hear Ye Him

Relevant to this subject is the incident of our Lord's Transfiguration on the mount. (Matthew 17: 1-6.) The important lesson of this wonderful vision is contained in the word from the cloud—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Moses and Elijah, representing the Law and the Prophets, were from thenceforth to be superseded by the Son. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." (Hebrews 1: 1, 2.) "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."—John 1: 17.

The recorded historic fact is that "in due time Christ died" (Romans 5: 6); (or margin), "according to time." Again—"When the fulness of the time came God sent forth his Son" (Galatians 4: 4, R.V.), should be a confirmation to our faith that Jesus was the long promised Messiah of the Jews and Saviour of the world. He was "born under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."—Galatians 4: 4, 5.

The Man of Sin Revealed in His Season

The New Testament refers to other events to occur "in due time." In regard to our Lord's second advent much has been written, and the Thessalonian brethren had been well informed of these things; as Paul stated in his first epistle (5: 1)—"Of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you." They knew that they were to keep awake, and be ever watchful to note the passing events which would confirm the words of the Lord and the testimony of the apostles.

Yet some misunderstood, expecting that the kingdom of God should immediately appear, that the day of the Lord was then present. This error Paul corrected in his second epistle, showing them that this could not be until there had been a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed. (2 Thessalonians 2: 2, 3.) Thus indicating that before the Lord's return a great evil system must arise, counterfeiting the kingdom of Christ, and opposing the truth as it is in Jesus. The great evil system referred to as the "man of sin" would be revealed "in his season" (verse 6), and eventually would be destroyed by

the presence and power of the Lord Jesus.—2 Thessalonians 2: 3-8.

Beyond this they were given to understand that Jehovah God had periods of time in which He would continue the outworking of His glorious purposes. The saints, the elect of God, are even now made "to sit together in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians 2: 6, 7, R.V.) "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him."—Ephesians 1: 10.

Let us then look forward with joyful anticipation to the completion of God's great and wonderful purposes for the human race, as described in 1 Corinthians 15: 24-26—"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 desroyed is death."

Your Redemption Draweth Nigh

But while the glorious consummation of God's purpose in the Kingdom age is of great interest to us, and we rejoice in all the blessings that will come to mankind, our chief interest as members of the Church and servants looking for their Lord is to keep awake and watching, so that the apostle's words may apply to us (1 Thessalonians 5: 4)—"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief." The "man of sin" has been revealed. (2 Thessalonians 2: 3.) We recognize it in the Papacy. We believe that the judgment spoken of in Daniel 7: 26 is in operation; that the 1260 years indicated in Daniel 7: 25 ended in 1789 to '99; and that at that time began the consumption of the Papacy. And we know by facts of history and world events of the present day that a great power which so long opposed the purposes of God in Jesus Christ is being overthrown, and along with all other opposing forces, whether religious, political, or social, will be consumed even to the end. "But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh."—Luke 21: 28, R.V.

May we not humbly and reverently repeat the joyful prayer of our Lord recorded in Luke 10: 21 (R.V.)—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding and didst reveal them unto babes." —J.P.H.

Impossible Things Made Possible

WITH THE LIMITATIONS of human nature upon us we are very prone to think anything impossible that lies outside the range of our own experience. Job (26: 7) says that God "stretches out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." We who need a nail or hook to hang things on might say "impossible." But God did it. God has done and is still doing many things we can not do.

Not Possible for God to Lie

But there is one thing God can not do, which we do well to recognize at the outset. God can not lie. When He told Adam and Eve that if they ate the forbidden fruit they should surely die, He meant it, and He carried it out. Adam died and all his race. When God said that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, He meant that, too. And so we can go right through the Bible, and find that God has never lied. To give strong consolation and confidence in His unchangeableness, God confirmed two of His promises with an oath—one to Abraham about the blessing, and one to our Lord about the Melchisedec priesthood. Hebrews 6: 8 calls His promise and oath to Abraham "two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie." He could not lie about the promise, therefore the oath was not really necessary. But because an oath in confirmation was a practice among men, God added the oath. And so when we consider the hope set before us (Hebrews 6: 18-20), that we shall be with our great forerunner Jesus, who was made a high priest after the order of Melchisedec, we may have confidence in that promise too, as we read in 2 Timothy 2: 11-13—

11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:
12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:
13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

What a blessing these words have been to us! How clear cut and plain! If we deny the Lord, He will deny us; but if we persevere in the narrow way, and lay aside every weight and the close girding sin, we may have every confidence that at the end of the course we shall find the crown laid up. God can not refuse to grant what He has promised. He is unchangeable, thoroughly reliable and dependable. Whether we keep or do not keep our promises will not alter God's purpose to grant the crown of life to the faithful and refuse it to the unfaithful.

With God All Things are Possible

Since to lie or deny himself is impossible with God, how comes it that our Lord Jesus said, "with God all things are possible?" Manifestly Jesus did not mean that God could commit crime, make false promises, swear falsely, or do injustice. We read that justice and righteousness are the very foundations of His throne, and there is no unrighteousness with God.—Psalm 97: 2; 92: 15.

Therefore, when we consider our topic—"Impossible things made Possible"—we may dismiss entirely any thought that God will ever lower His standard of righteousness, or countenance any form of evil. He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with the least approval. God does no sin, "cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man," are further assurances the Word gives us.—Habakkuk 1: 13; James 1: 13, 17.

When we read about the rich young man, and look into what was involved in his question and in our Lord's answer, we shall see that the impossible things made possible have to do with our Lord's invitation and command to follow Him. Let us now read Matthew 19: 16-26—

16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?
17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.
18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,
19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?
21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.
22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.
23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.
24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.
25 When the disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?
26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

The Rich Young Man

In this narrative we notice (first) that the young man approached Jesus from the standpoint of the Mosaic Law, and (second) that Jesus answered him as an upholder of the Law, which, if kept, would give eternal life. The

Law said, "The man that doeth them shall live in them." (Galatians 3: 12.) The young man was interested in doing, and Jesus answered accordingly.

A third thing we notice is that the young man did not address the Lord as the Messiah, but as a Teacher—"Good Teacher." Perhaps he had heard or heard of our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount, that He (Jesus) had not come to destroy the Law. The young man was well aware that the Law promised eternal life, but could not help noticing that none of the Jews had attained it—they all died. He would like to do better than they had done, and so gain the life.

Our Lord's reply (verse 17) is taken by some to mean that Jesus denied His own goodness, and thus admitted sinfulness. But our Lord's meaning was that if the young man recognized Him as "good," that was an admission that Jesus was a teacher sent from God, because God only is the Author and Fount of goodness. It was a gentle reminder that in the Law God had expressed His will so far as the Jews were concerned, and Jesus had nothing to say in opposition. So He said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

But the young man wanted particulars. Perhaps, like many others, he wanted a special recipe for himself alone; and he asked, "Which?" as though any Jew could be exempted from keeping any of the commandments. The Lord's answer was to quote the five commandments written on stone which relate to conduct towards one's fellows, and in addition a commandment written in the books—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Now a fourth thing very noticeable in this narrative is that the young man was "cocksure," as we would call it. Without hesitation he replied—"All these things have I kept from my youth up." He was not weighed down with a sense of his failure to do any of these things. He was quite certain that he loved his neighbour as himself.

A fifth thing very significant, and which shows that our Lord both knew what was in man and was skilful in showing up the weak spots, was that the Lord immediately pointed out to the young man that he did **not** love his neighbour as himself; he had **not** kept all those things from his youth up; he did **not** need a special recipe or prescription for himself alone. He was in reality just an ordinary young man—just such a young man as can be seen anywhere to-day, well supplied with this world's goods, going along a pleasant road, not doing anything very wrong as far as active evil is concerned, but with it all thoroughly selfish.

Poor young man! "What lack I yet?" he said. Why, my dear fellow, we might say, though the Lord called it "one thing," that one thing is very comprehensive, and you lack a-plenty! Read the Law, which instructs you to regard all Jews as your brothers and yourself as charged with the responsibility of helping any and all who may be in poverty, debt, slavery, sickness, or other adversity, as recorded in Leviticus 19: 9, 10, 13; 25: 25, 35-38; Psalm 41: 1; 82: 3, 4; and many other places.

And yet, for all that blindness and selfishness, the Lord loved the young man, and desired him for a disciple.

Go Sell that Thou Hast

This command—"go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor," is sometimes separated from the remainder of our Lord's command—"and come and follow me." It is wrongly taken as instruction to Christians to sell out their business, their homes, and all their possessions, give away every penny, and have nothing left for food, clothing, shelter, and other necessities. But this young man was not a Christian, and his question was not a Christian's question. As a Jew He may vaguely have felt a lack, but he did not examine himself sufficiently to discover how very far from keeping the Law he really was. Our Lord's instruction to him, since he wanted to know what "good thing" he could "do," was to do what the Law required, and show in a practical way that he did really love his neighbour as himself. Having then done his best under the Law, he would be to that extent more fitted to be the Lord's disciple, for love would fill his heart instead of the present self-satisfaction and selfishness. One of the designs of the Law was to prepare the Jews to receive the Messiah, and to enter into His Kingdom. John the Baptist preached repentance, and appealed to them to humble themselves in preparation for the Coming One. Let us trust that, though on this occasion the young man turned away sorrowful because he had great possessions and did not like the command to part with his wealth—let us trust he afterward thought it over, and really saw into the depths of his own heart. Then would he cry out—"all these things have I kept"? No; but "Oh, how blind and mean and callous I have been!"

Enter Hardly or with Difficulty

Verse 23—"*Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily* I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven of which our Lord spoke was the probationary kingdom which He was preaching, and into which the young man was invited to enter when the Lord said to him—"come and follow me." It was not only his material wealth that hindered the young man. What lay at the root was the wealth of his pride and self-conceit. He asked advice of the greatest Teacher the world has ever seen, whom he acknowledged to be "good," and hence able to give good advice, and yet he was too self-opinionated to take the advice when given.

Our Lord's call to follow Him was in fact a command, like an invitation to attend at Buckingham Palace. Woe betide the one who declines when the King sends for him. Nor did the Lord plead with the young man, so far as the narrative goes. Each one of us must realize that the invitation to enter the kingdom is a great honor, and we should therefore not be surprised when we learn that the gate is strait (or difficult) and the way narrow.—Matthew 7: 14.

On verse 24 the "Emphatic Diaglott" has the following note—

> Rabbins, as well as Arabs, were accustomed, in describing an impossibility, or a high degree of improbability, to say, "It will not happen before a camel, or an elephant, has crept through the eye of a needle."—Marsh's Translation of Michaelis.

Our Lord's saying was on the same line, and would not be misunderstood by His hearers so far as camels are concerned. But they were amazed to think that the rich—such fine people—would not enter into the kingdom because of the hard selfishness underneath. If they could not enter, who could?

True enough! The rich in worldly goods have not a monopoly of selfishness and hard-heartedness. Many of the poor of Judea rejected the Lord, joining in the cry, "Crucify him!" Why did they do this? Because their hearts were hard, perhaps the Lord's rebukes and criticisms often went home to them, and made them feel uncomfortable. And when they saw the chief priests and scribes triumphing over Him, they selfishly desired to be on the winning side. Pride and conceit are common failings regardless of wealth or poverty. It is only when this is recognized that the impossible is made possible.

All Things Made Possible

God gives His favours to the humble, the poor in spirit (whether rich or poor in pocket).

It was impossible for the Jew to gain righteousness by the works of the Law, it was impossible for him to obtain life by his most strenuous efforts. But God made these two impossible things possible by sending His beloved Son into the world, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3: 16.) To the Jew first this good news came, and then it went to the Gentiles. Salvation was impossible for the Gentiles while they retained the great riches of sin and idolatry, but God made it possible for them also by that most precious Gift of His Son. Looking at the Crucified, and having it brought home to us that He bore our sins in His own body, we turn not away sorrowful because we must give up these our greatest possessions; but we rejoice exceedingly that they can be lifted from our weary shoulders and laid upon Him.

And now, having by repentance and faith entered into the kingdom as a school to fit us for the glories of the future, when the kingdom will be set up in power and glory, let us ask ourselves concerning other seemingly impossible things that confront us. We still have faults

and failings, pride and unbelief, to contend with. Love of the world and the things of the world may prevent us from making the most of our privileges as probationers in the Kingdom. Like Lot's wife, we may look back at what we have forsaken; like the Israelites in the wilderness, we may yet long for the fleshpots of Egypt. And we do well to realize that in our own strength we are not *able to overcome all these drawbacks. Then let us ask* the Lord to make the impossible possible by the presence in us of His Holy Spirit helping us, granting us the kindness of His providence and the ministering of the heavenly angels. Let us also help one another in the bonds of love and fellowship. And so eventually we shall receive an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our *Lord and Saviour* Jesus Christ.—2 Peter 1: 8-11.

Forsaking All

Peter was quick to say, "Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee." We do not hear of the Lord telling Peter to sell out everything. Peter was married (probably with a family), and his wife's mother lived with them. (Matthew 8: 14.) He had responsibilities. In what sense had he forsaken all? John and James, the sons of Zebedee, were in a ship with their father mending their nets, and they left both and followed the Lord at His call. (Matthew 4: 21, 22.) Did they sell out their interest in the business (if any) and give away the proceeds? Did Matthew the publican, probably a man of wealth, sell everything when he became one of the apostles?

To these questions we might answer that these were men of a different stamp from the rich young man who sought advice on how to gain life by works of the Law, and was answered in accord with his blind and selfish state of mind. The apostles were pious Jews who had come to a realization of their needs, and were looking for the Messiah. And when they became His disciples they saw the importance of service. Gladly they left all to follow the Master and hear more of the wonderful words of life; being later sent out on a mission, two and two before His face. Peter and Andrew, James and John, were fishers, but not the poorest or most ignorant. Zebedee was an employer of labour, for Mark 1: 20 says he had hired servants. John and James were either in partnership with their father Zebedee or else employed by him. In either case their work would be entrusted to others in their absence. Comparing all the accounts of the comings and goings of the Lord on and around the sea of Galilee, it is seen that the boats of the disciples were still available when required, hence evi*dently still in use by their families or their servants.*

One must discriminate between the directions given to the rich young man without family, and hence free to come and go and endure the hardships of sleeping in the fields as our Lord and the apostles often did, and the suitable course for a married man with a young family dependent upon his wages for their daily food. Healthy young *men without families to support, and whose parents no* longer require their assistance, are greatly privileged to be freefooted and able to serve as pioneers of the cause in places where the "Everlasting Gospel" should be preached. The Scriptures nowhere advise them to tie themselves up with the affairs of this world. They are nowhere told that the Lord will be more pleased to have them in the world earning riches than out in the "field."

Timothy and Titus were as sons to the apostle Paul, and most useful in his work, laying aside for some years, if not for life, the ordinary aspirations of youth. Theirs was a great privilege: to serve one of the apostles of the Lamb, both in his mission and in regard to his personal comfort. —Acts 16: 1-5; 1 Timothy 1: 2; Titus 1: 4; Philippians 2: 19-22; 2 Timothy 4: 13; 1 Corinthians 16: 10.

Luke the physician travelled with Paul, evidently able to arrange his affairs to have his time free. This is the privilege of many married persons of means, or with grown families able to carry on while father or mother (or sometimes both) spend a portion or all their time in preaching the "Everlasting Gospel." What seems impossible often becomes possible when devoted hearts plan how they can arrange their affairs so as to give more time in God's service.

Though not under command to sell all and give away the proceeds, Christians with means are nevertheless *warned that they will miss the eternal life if they put* their trust in riches, and fail to make the proper use of them. Paul wrote to Timothy—

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertainty of riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." —1 Timothy 6: 17-19.

Here again the state of the mind is referred to: highmindedness and selfishness will keep the rich, even though they are Christians, out of the kingdom. The way for them to lay up treasure in heaven is to part with treasures on earth in the Lord's interest. A selfish *Christian is displeasing in God's sight now, and it is easier* for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a selfish Christian to win the great prize of joint heirship in the kingdom.

Wonderful Possibilities

Contrast our Lord's answer to the rich young man with His answer to the scribe who had listened to His reply to the Sadducees. Perceiving that the Lord had answered them well, the scribe presented a question of his own—"Which is the first commandment of all?" The Lord's answer was commended, with the comment that to love God "with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."

Here was a Jew more thoughtful than the rich young man, a scribe whose chief business was no doubt to make copies of the Law, and who thereby became familiar with it. *Though still a Jew*, he was "not far from the kingdom" because he perceived what eluded the young man; namely, that unselfish love is what God expects toward himself and toward others if we would be acceptable. (Mark 12: 28-34.) Others not far from the kingdom, ordinary Jews, chief rulers, and priests, are mentioned in John 11: 45; 12: 42; Acts 6: 7.

Zaccheus also saw more deeply into the Law than did the young man; and the Lord knew what was in his heart even before Zaccheus explained—"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation [i.e., a false assessment of a tax], I restore him fourfold." Did Jesus say to him, Sell all, and give away the proceeds? No: *the Lord was satisfied that Zaccheus had learned the* lesson of the Law—to be just, and also to be generous. And having done so under the Law Covenant he would do the same and even better voluntarily under the New Covenant. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham." He had genuine faith like that of Abraham, the love of God in his heart, and a disposition to bless his neighbour, notwithstanding that he was one of the despised tax gatherers. So the seemingly impossible was made possible for Zaccheus, and he became a follower of the Lamb in preference to the self-righteous Pharisees.—Luke 19: 1-10.

When Paul looked on Corinth, its wickedness appalled him. But there too the seemingly impossible was made possible. The Lord told him by vision, "I have much people in this city." (Acts 18: 9, 10.) The great city Ephesus, dedicated to the goddess Diana, received the gospel, and books of magic to the value of 50,000 pieces of silver were publicly burned in the streets. (Acts 19: 17-20.) And so on in other Gentile centres of idolatry.—1 Thessalonians 1: 5-10.

Let us be cheered by these reflections to undertake much for the Lord. As we look out over the vast field, and consider the scarcity of labourers and the shortness of the time, let us not say, "Impossible." Trials and tribulations, even intense opposition, are no indication that the "door of opportunity" for the gospel is closed. Of Ephesus Paul wrote (1 Corinthians 16: 9)—"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." The "many adversaries" did not discourage Paul, nor did they constitute a closed door, and they must not at any time be allowed to discourage

us. Just as in Paul's case, the door of opportunity opens as we make the effort to reach the people, and the joy of service becomes our portion, as is testified by a dear sister in New Zealand, who writes*—

Just a line to let you know that I received safely the tracts you sent for distribution. I am getting on slowly with the work, as I have very little spare time, and live two miles out of the township, so it means a good walk before I get to where most of the houses are. It has given me such joy to feel that I am doing something to serve the Master, and I have felt a greater contentment than I ever felt before.

Let us then do heartily the work nearest our hand, and as far as we can reach, both by personal effort and by the printed page. Let us remember our Lord's word as recorded in Luke 18: 27—"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

—Mrs. E.C.H.

*Received March 27, just after these closing words were written—a beautiful testimony. The door opened as she walked toward it.

The Gospel Concerning The Non-Elect

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST is clearly described in the Scriptures as a message containing "good tidings"—good news to all mankind. When we consider the terrible condition into which the whole human race has been plunged, through sin and disobedience, we can fully realize the great need that God, the great Creator, should exert His mighty power on their behalf, to free them from the dominance of sin and evil, and re-establish the fallen race in that condition of perfection, righteousness, and communion enjoyed by our first parents before they fell from that high estate in which they were placed by their loving Creator. The Scriptures are very definite in their declarations concerning God's purpose on behalf of poor fallen humanity: that God so loved the world that He gave His beloved Son to die on their behalf; that it is not His pleasure "that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3: 9); that He "will have all men to be saved [or preserved], and to come to the knowledge of the truth."—1 Timothy 2: 4.

In view of the emphatic statements of the Scriptures respecting God's love for the whole world and Christ's death as a ransom sacrifice for them, and in view of the fact that only a small portion of mankind has been reached by the gospel message, together with the clear statements that God is choosing or electing a comparatively small number (Romans 8: 29, 30)—the elect—while many are, and have been for a time, at least, disowned of God, and yet their ignorance and superstitions were "winked at" (Acts 17: 30)—in view of all this, the question might well be asked, whether God has made any provision for the non-elect?

The Scriptures give a reasonable and satisfying answer to that query; but the answer to the same question has been given by the creeds in quite a variety of ways, some of which we shall mention; but all more or less unsatisfactory and misleading, and involving the believers in these creeds in darkness and confusion of mind respecting the Truth as set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

Teaching of Calvin on the Non-Elect

The most prominent creed of Protestant Christendom is the Calvinistic doctrine. That teaching declares that the salvation of the non-elect was not desired by God; that they were pre-destined to live for a few years of this life in darkness and sin, and then live endlessly in unspeakable torments and misery. This teaching that God has decreed that only a few—the elect—were to be saved, and the vast majority—the non-elect—consigned to eternal torment, "not for any good or evil they might do, but for His own will and pleasure," not only seriously conflicts with the Scriptures respecting God's love for mankind in the gift of His dear Son, but it also casts aspersions upon God's character as a God of Wisdom, Justice, and Mercy. It gives the lie direct to the apostle's statement, that "God will have all men to be saved [preserved], and to come to an accurate knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2: 4, Diaglott.) It contradicts our Lord's words, that "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 unbiassed person would say: "Surely if God so loved mankind at such a tremendous cost to himself, He who has all power and wisdom, backed by justice and love, would arrange that all for whom Christ died should be given an opportunity to benefit by that great sacrifice."

Such a creed of endless misery nullifies God's promise to Abraham, that in his seed "shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 12: 3; 22: 16-18.) Surely the heathen—who for thousands of years have been swept into the grave at the rate of 100,000 a day—so many millions of them—belong to the "families of the earth." One of the early fathers, Justin, said—"I cannot think so hardly of God's mercy that they shall be damned for not believing in a Saviour of whom they have never heard; the laws of God requiring that the gospel must first be preached, and then he that believes shall be saved, and he that believes not shall be damned." The apostle Paul asks—"How shall they hear without a preacher?"—Romans 10: 14.

Later we will point out how God's promise of a blessing to all the families of the earth will be fulfilled, but enough has now been said to show that the Calvinistic view of election is seriously at variance with the Scriptures, and therefore cannot be true.

Teaching of Arminius

Another theory which has many adherents, originally set forth by Arminius, a Dutch reformer, is to the effect that God did not predestinate the individuals who should be lost; but, the limit of opportunity being this life, and death ending all probation, the majority will be lost, and condemned to eternal torment. This Arminian theory has since had many modifications, including the idea that some, though unbelievers, will be saved on account of ignorance, providing they do what they think is right. This theory, which ignores, even denies, the doctrine of election, very seriously impugns God's wisdom, justice, and power, in an endeavour to show His love to mankind. It represents God as willing, even anxious, to save mankind, but because Satan has succeeded in deceiving the vast majority into a condition of ignorance and spiritual blindness, so that they neither can hear nor appreciate the gospel, therefore the great mass of mankind will be lost—not because God was not willing to save them, but because God was not able, on account of adverse influences and conditions, to save them.

The view that God will overcome this difficulty by saving some on account of ignorance is quite opposed by the entire Scriptures, which point out that the only ground of acceptance with God is faith in Christ and in that great Ransom-Sacrifice on Calvary. There is no other ground of justification before God. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even as we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ." (Galatians 2: 16.) "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14: 6.) A vast array of Scriptures could be given to prove that there is no salvation in any name except the name of Christ, but these will suffice for the present.

If any could be saved through ignorance, there would be no need to preach Christ as the Saviour; the better way would be to leave all in ignorance, and in that way all might be saved, as none would then know enough to reject Christ. The matter only needs to be stated thus, in order to reveal the absurdity of this unscriptural teaching. The Arminian teaching is on a par with Cal-

vinism; for whereas Calvinism exalts God's power to the detriment of His wisdom, mercy, love and justice, Arminianism exalts God's love and mercy, while ignoring His justice, power, and wisdom. Every reasonable mind enlightened by the Scriptures of truth must therefore reject the teaching as set forth by Arminius and his followers, as not only unscriptural and unreasonable, but derogatory to God's gracious character, as a God of love, mercy, justice, wisdom and power.

Error of Universalism

Another theory which has been set forth for centuries by various teachers, but which has received special emphasis during the past century, is Universalism.

This theory sets forth the view that God will save all men ultimately. It teaches that God willed that mankind should fall into sin and disobedience; even so, when God shall will that they be restored and brought back into harmony with Him, no one will be able to resist the will of God.

This view of the plan of Salvation is a complete denial of the Scripture teaching that God made man in His own image; i.e., with powers of mind, reason and will; perfect in his mental and moral qualities, able to choose between good and evil, and altogether a free moral agent. All through the Scriptures, God, through His prophets and apostles, appeals to mankind to exercise these mental and moral qualities which are part of man's nature —somewhat blurred and distorted by the fall into sin, it is true; but still part of man's being.

Except in the case of idiots, the insane, and infants, this quality of being able to choose between good and evil pertains to every human being, in a greater or less degree, according to upbringing and environment. Therefore God through His Word "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent," and believe the Gospel (Acts 17: 30; Mark 1: 15), with the assurance that grace will be supplied in their every need to sustain them in overcoming the evil in and around them; and great and precious promises are given to all the faithful and obedient. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2: 10.) This implies that the unfaithful will not receive the crown of life: "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." (Revelation 3: 11.) Even of the Millennium or Kingdom age we read that some will wilfully persist in sin—"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." (Revelation 21: 8.) We may be sure that none will incur the dread penalty of Second Death, unless he wilfully resists the will of God and prefers the evil; in that case it is the will of God that he should be simply blotted out, and cease to exist.

The notion that God will coerce and compel the will of man, and that man will be unable to resist God, is totally opposed to reason and to the Scriptures; and such a course of action on God's part would degrade man from his position as a reasonable and free agent to a condition even lower than the brute creation, who certainly have wills of their own. The Universalist teaching may be summed up briefly thus—God by his will and decree ordained that man should fall into sin and disobedience. Man could not resist the will of God, and thus by the will and purpose of God sin has reigned over the entire human race since the creation. The human family as a whole have been learning some lessons of the terrible results of sin and evil during these thousands of years. When the purpose of God has been accomplished in allowing the reign of sin and evil for a time, then God will bring the entire human race under discipline. None being able to resist His will (any more than at the first), the result is that eventually in the course of ages all mankind will be reconciled and brought into a condition of perfection and harmony with their Creator, as our first parents were at the beginning. The above is a fair outline of the Universalist teaching. But this theory comes into serious conflict with many plain statements of Scripture, which show clearly that "The Lord preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy."—Psalm 145: 20. See also John 3: 36; 1 John 5: 12.

The Divine Word is True

We can, therefore, easily discern that all these theories of men are in violent opposition against the Scriptures, and necessarily must be erroneous. The Scriptures, we believe, reveal a clear and concise view of the plan of Redemption, which is full of love, mercy, justice, wisdom, and power, harmonious in every particular, satisfying to the heart and mind, and enables the earnest student of God's Word to appreciate the Apostle's words—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God."—1 Corinthians 2: 9, 10.

The Word of God shows how God in the beginning created our first parents perfect ("very good"), placed them in ideal surroundings, with every blessing they could desire. The tempter came in the form of a serpent, and instilled into their minds that their Creator was for a selfish reason depriving them of some blessing—the ability to know good and evil. As a consequence of listening to that evil suggestion they fell into sin, and disobeyed God. As a result the sentence of death was passed upon them—"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Genesis 3: 19.) A vague promise was given to them of a future deliverance through the "seed" of the woman, that it would bruise the serpent's head. (Genesis 3: 15.) But nothing definite is recorded concerning the manner of fulfilment of this promise of the Seed, until we come down to the time of Abraham. Abraham received the promise that in him and in his seed would come a blessing to "all the families of the earth." —Genesis 12: 3; 18: 18.

The question may be asked, Why the long delay? Why did God wait so long before declaring more definitely through whom the seed of the woman would come—in what line of descent? The answer is that God has a "due time" for every feature of His plan. What men count slackness is not slackness with God. He has arranged the times and seasons for every feature of the Divine purpose.

The Punishment of Sin

Many have imbibed the idea that God placed on the human race the alternative of "eternal torment," but nothing of that kind is even hinted at in the penalty. The penalty pronounced in Eden was death—"in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2: 17.) Neither Adam nor his immediate descendants knew anything of the terrible dogma of "eternal torment." Life everlasting is promised by God only to the obedient. Life is the gift of God, and death, the opposite of life, is the penalty He prescribes. Only a few statements in the Old and New Testaments can be misconstrued so as to appear to support the endless torment theory; and these are found mostly in the symbols of Revelation, and in the parables and dark sayings of our Lord, which very few comprehend even to this day. The Scriptures definitely tell us in plain language—"the wages of sin is death." (Romans 6: 23.) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."—Ezekiel 18: 4.

There was no injustice in God's arranging that Adam's condemnation should include his posterity, because He had also arranged redemption through Christ. Our Lord Jesus, as the perfect man, approved of God, redeemed Adam and the human race, by giving himself as the full ransom price for Adam, including all in Adam. Having thus given himself a "ransom for all," our Lord Jesus bought the whole race with His own precious blood, and as Owner or Lord of all now stands ready to offer life to all who will accept it under the gracious terms of the New Covenant.

The Possibilities of Life

Thus all in Adam (all mankind) are assured of a full opportunity (under the most favorable conditions) to attain everlasting life through faith in and obedience to Him who so loved them as to give himself for them. And so it is written—"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15: 22.) All possibilities of life are now in Christ, and in order to obtain

life all must come into Christ by faith and obedience. As we have already heard, some, called the "elect," have believed in the present age and are called to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall live and reign with Him the thousand years. But the possibilities of life are not limited to those who hear and believe in the present age and who become joint-heirs. God has a purpose for the remainder of mankind, and this purpose is also in His Son, as we read in John 5: 28, 29—". . . all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation"—literally, "judgment." The "elect" come forth to life, while the non-elect come forth to the judgment of the thousand years and to the possibilities of life then to be offered.

Those who do not receive full knowledge and enlightenment during the present gospel age, and such are the great majority, including children and heathen—will have these privileges granted to them in the next age—the Kingdom Age or "world to come"—which is to follow this present age.

These unenlightened ones, who constitute the vast majority of mankind, will then be blessed with a knowledge of the truth; and, the great Adversary being bound for the thousand years, "that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled" (Revelation 20: 2, 3), there will then be nothing to hinder them from making progress towards the attainment of full perfection. It will be necessary then, as now, for each one to render obedience to Christ, who is Lord (or Owner) of all, and under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, their sins shall be forgiven and remember no more. This is what we understand the Scriptures to teach concerning the non-elect—the great mass of mankind, forming the vast majority of the human race.

The Ancient Worthies

The question might be asked—Are the elect, the Church of the Gospel age, the only ones referred to by our Lord when He said "they that have done good," or are others included? In reply we would say that God had special dealings with certain individuals in the ages previous to the present gospel age. The Ancient Worthies were tried and tested in various ways, and they attested by their lives their faith in God and in His promises. A brief summary of the trials of these ancient people of God is given in Hebrews 11th chapter. After describing the sufferings of those ancient worthies, the Apostle thus states the matter—"And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Hebrews 11: 39, 40.) These ancient worthies, having been proved faithful, "obtained a good report," and will be brought forth as perfect human beings in the resurrection, and given prominent ruling positions in the earth during the kingdom age. Meanwhile, they have been asleep in the tomb, waiting for the elect class—the church of the Gospel Age—to be completed and associated with Christ in the heavenly kingdom. When that time comes they will be resurrected and receive the promised reward of their faith—the "better resurrection."—Hebrews 11: 35.

This class will receive an earthly reward—perfection of life on the human plane; they shall be "princes in all the earth." "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou [Christ] mayest make princes in all the earth." (Psalm 45: 16.) These ancient "fathers" will then become the "children" of Christ. The name "Everlasting Father" is one of the titles our Lord received at His resurrection, as foretold in Isaiah 9: 6. To Him God gave authority to give life, and it is His voice that calls us and will call them from the grave. Also Romans 14: 9 tells us that "to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." In this we find the answer to the Lord's question the Pharisees could not solve—"If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matthew 22: 42-46.) In the resurrection David, who was His father (i.e. one of His ancestors on His mother's side), will be Christ's son. Then will Abraham also be Christ's son by the resurrection, and receive the fulfilment of God's promise to him, made nearly 4,000 years ago, the promise of the land of Caanan as an everlasting possession. (Genesis 13: 14, 15.) Our Lord Jesus informed the sceptical Pharisees that they would "see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out."—Luke 13: 28.

During this present Gospel Age, since Pentecost, a special class is in process of being selected. This class, as we have already heard, is called the "elect." The gospel call has been going forth for nearly 1900 years, to "take out" from the Gentiles this "people for his name." (Acts 15: 14.) A great many hear the call, but very few accept the conditions and requirements embodied in that call. Therefore our Lord said, "Many are called, but few are chosen."—Matthew 22: 14.

Many hear the call who do not respond to the call or accept the conditions laid down by the Lord and consequently are not accepted by Him to be of the elect. Others accept the call and "run well" for a time, but through lack of faith fail to so run as to win the great prize held out to those who overcome. (Galatians 5: 7; 1 Corinthians 10: 24-26; Hebrews 12: 1; Philippians 3: 14.) The Apostle Peter, after enumerating the various graces and virtues which each one must add, or put on, says—"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for 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: 10, 11.

Thus the Scriptures clearly teach that God foreordained an elect class, but there is nothing in the Word of God that would lead us to think that he predetermined or preordained who should be the individuals of that elect class. The predetermination was with regard to the character of this class. "Because those whom he foreknew, he also predetermined to be copies of the likeness of his Son, for him to be a firstborn among many brethren." (Romans 8: 29, Diaglott.) The Apostle herein states clearly that each one of the foreknown class must by faith and obedience submit to God's requirements, and thus allow the transforming influences of the Spirit of the truth to change them into a character likeness of their Elder Brother—the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is very evident to the earnest student of the Bible, in view of the selection of these two classes during the past ages and present gospel age, all of them together constituting but a small minority of earth's myriads, that a great work yet remains to be done before it can be said that the blessing of "all the families of the earth" has been accomplished.

All unknown to the great mass of mankind God has been quietly preparing the means and instrumentalities to complete His gracious design of blessing all mankind through the Seed of Abraham, which is Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3: 16.) His elect Church having first been blessed will, as His joint heirs, have a share in the great kingdom age work of uplifting the masses of humanity as yet unenlightened and most of them in the silence and igorance of death.

More Tolerable in the Day of Judgment

The nations of the past who sinned against God and were destroyed on account of their wickedness will all participate in the blessings of the future kingdom age. Our Lord's own words in Matthew 11: 20-24; 12: 41, 42 prove this fully—

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.

The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

How clearly our Lord in these words sets forth the greater guilt of the cities and people of Israel in comparison with Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Nineveh, and declares that if these same works had been done in those pagan cities THEY WOULD HAVE REPENTED. He assures them that the judgment of those cities and peoples will be more tolerable, in comparison with the tolerable judgment to be meted out to the more enlightened people of Israel. The Jewish people sinned against greater light and knowledge than those heathen nations of the past, and consequently became more hardened in character than the others, who were comparatively in darkness, and consequently less responsible towards God.

Many more Scripture citations could be given setting forth these great truths concerning God's gracious provision for the non-elect. All the holy prophets have testified concerning the "times of restitution" or reconstitution (Acts 3: 21), so we can truly say that the Bible is full of it. The Apostle Paul (Romans 8: 19-21, Diaglott) tells us that—

> Indeed, the earnest expectation of the creation longs for the revelation of the sons of God. For the Creation was made subject to frailty, (not voluntarily, but by him who placed it under;) in hope that even the Creation itself will be emancipated from the slavery of corruption, into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Mankind as a whole are buoyed up with an undefined hope that in some way, some how, and some time, brighter days are in store for them. They are ignorantly longing for that glorious time to come when the elect Church—the sons of God—will be associated with the Lord Jesus in Kingdom power and glory, when the work of the whole kingdom age will consist in delivering mankind from their fallen condition, establishing the willing and obedient in righteousness and truth, enabling all such to attain everlasting life under the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, which will be in operation during the entire Kingdom Age, completing its work of salvation begun in the Gospel age and anticipated in the earlier ages.

In view of all this we can surely thank and praise the Lord in the words of the Psalmist—"**The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.** All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power; to **make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.** Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations." (Psalm 145: 9-13.) Amen.

—A. M. A.

The Everlasting Gospel

EVERLASTING GOSPEL! A topic more pleasing than this can hardly be conceived. It is good news that will continue for ever. The basis of the gospel or good news is that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15: 3.) This foundation was laid by God himself, and will ever be recognised as the necessary first step in human salvation. To hear and accept the good news gives us great joy and peace in believing.—Romans 5: 6-11; 15: 13; Acts 13: 52.

We have to note, as already pointed out at this Conference, that the Gospel given out by our Saviour was truly good news; and rightly to bear the description "everlasting," the Gospel must be unchangeable, not subject to change or decay. Though not in all detail, the Gospel has been from the very beginning the story of God's love for man, and no better news than that can be imagined—the Deliverer to bruise the serpent's head, the Seed of Abraham to bless all the families of the earth, the King to reign in Zion and triumph over all enemies, the Messiah bearing the glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

And now we come to the "Everlasting Gospel" spoken of by the angel to John the Revelator. Does it differ from God's good news of previous times? Is it an easier gospel, or a harder gospel, or a plainer gospel? If our Lord's message while on earth was "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," can this "everlasting gospel" be bad tidings to them? Let us see. But first we must place the vision containing the words "everlasting gospel"; we must, if we can, locate historically the time covered by the message.

John saw the vision at the beginning of the Gospel age, and it has been on record for God's children to read at all times since then. But what we want to know is the time when the message actually went forth in fulfilment of the vision, and what it meant to the people who heard it.

Times and Seasons in the Apocalypse

That the early church might not find themselves on a vast sea of uncertainty needlessly trying to faith, and leaving them more or less at the mercy of false prophets, the Lord showed His kindness by sending outlines of what to expect. These outlines were in turn divided into sections, and to each section descriptions of events were attached. Thus God's people through the long Gospel age—already covering more than eighteen centuries—have been enabled to discern with some exactness their position in the age, and what was expected of them.

Division into Sevens

In order that coming events might be sensed not only in a general way as to time, but also in their various aspects and in their relation to each other, the Gospel age was divided into seven periods, each given the name of one of the early congregations as a further means of identification by reason of the figurative nature of the names. Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea—each indicated new movements, or fresh persecutions, or altering conditions, and each message contained appropriate warnings and exhortations for the guidance of the faithful.—Revelation, chapters 2 and 3.

Seven Seals and Seven Trumpets represented other divisions of time, each with its own identifying marks in the way of events to be expected, including the Thousand Years of the glorious reign of Christ and the Church, during which Satan should be bound that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years were finished. The Church has been given also a revelation of what will take place at the end of the thousand years, when the incorrigible are to be finally dealt with, and the righteous established for ever in the dominion of earth and the enjoyment of its fruitage and beauty.

Failure to distinguish the plan of the Revelation has been the cause of confusion among commentators. Some, for instance, take the numerical order of the chapters to be their chronological order, and attempt to interpret the visions on that basis, as though each vision in fulfilment followed the preceding vision. Some who adhere to this practice begin the Trumpets at the conclusion of the Seals and distort both in the effort to make them fit such an arrangement.

The preventive of falling into such error is to recognise the Revelation as a series of visions employing many symbols or figures of speech. These visions may be compared to pictures in a gallery. All the pictures are hanging there, each with its own story, but the visitor examines them only one at a time and in a certain order according to the rules of admission and progress through the gallery. John could not receive a dozen visions at once; he could receive them only one at a time, one

after the other. But this sequence did not in every case indicate the order of fulfilment; merely the order in which he saw them.

Take for instance chapter 13, in which the rise of the Papacy is depicted as a beast coming up out of the sea. It would be confusing to locate this rise after the end of chapter 7, where the "great multitude" (the mass of mankind) is shown receiving enlightenment and blessing during the thousand years.

Other commentators cause confusion by placing the "war in heaven" (chapter 12) before the creation of man. Whereas the opening words of the book of Revelation show it to be a prophecy of events subsequent to our Lord's exaltation to His Father's right hand, which exaltation took place after He had finished His work as the Sacrifice for sins. Thus the "war in heaven" could not have occurred before the beginning of the Gospel age.

The text containing the title of our Conference Topic is also misplaced by commentators, and for that reason much of its value is lost to them and their followers. While, as we have said, visions that followed one another as they were given to John do not necessarily follow one another chronologically in fulfilment, still it is necessary to observe that there is often a sequence of events in the visions themselves which must be considered if we desire to obtain their true interpretation. Let us now read Revelation 14: 6, 7—

> And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,
>
> Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

To place the fulfilment of the vision we have to notice the words—"for the hour of his judgment is come." This reminds us of Daniel 7: 9-11, where a great judgment is foretold. The prophet said—

> I beheld till the thrones were cast down [or, literally, "set" or "placed"], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.
>
> A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.
>
> I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

This is a judgment on the fourth beast, described in verses 7 and 8; a judgment that was to come after the "horn" had developed and was "speaking great things." The beast represented the Roman or fourth universal empire, and the "horn" which rooted up three of its fellows was the Papacy. The "hour of his judgment" mentioned by the angel in Revelation 14: 7 refers to this judgment on the beast.

A just judgment requires a proper standard of judgment. The preaching of the everlasting gospel was ordered because the hour of His judgment had come upon the beast, and it was God's will that His people should understand the basis of judgment. It was preached in order that, when measures were taken against the beast, the peoples released from bondage to it might be enlightened on the true gospel, which had been hid from them by the "beast" system.

In the days of the great Reformation and immediately following there were judgments against the Papacy, or "horn" which spoke great things, and in Revelation 10 these adversities are seen to result from a great proclamation of the truth. But at that time the "judgment" referred to by Daniel had not been "set." That is, the time was not ripe in the Reformation period for the final dealings with the Papacy, which had still to continue its tyranny over the saints to the end of the 1260 years. And history shows there was a Roman Catholic "Counter Reformation" to undo the effects of the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. This so-called "Counter Reformation" succeeded to a large extent.* So that at the end of the 1260 years the Papal influence was strong, and there arose the necessity of a fresh command to God's people to go forth and preach the "everlasting gospel unto all them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

The need was for the same "everlasting gospel" that our Lord and the apostles had taught, the same good news of a Deliverer and King, the same good news of a Great One to bless all the families of the earth, fully matching and even surpassing the capacity of the "beast" to domineer over and oppress the nations and peoples.

The symbol or picture of the angel flying in the midst of heaven represents God's people (His earthly messengers) who publicly and in no unmistakable way have published abroad the gospel right "in the midst" of the ecclesiastical systems and institutions and governmental authorities symbolised by "heaven." The 1260 years ended at the time of the French Revolution and Napoleonic wars (A.D. 1789-99), this date being 1260 years from the time the "abomination of desolation" was "set up" (529-39).* Never before had the populace so violently and desperately turned on the ruling classes and the religious power that backed up the aristocracy and shared their privileges. Never before had political freedom and equality been so fervently demanded by a whole nation and then by a whole group of nations, for Napoleon's armies spread the revolutionary ideas over all Europe. Yet above all the confusion there could be seen and heard the Gospel messengers proclaiming the glad tidings as far more potent to heal the wounds of the social order than all the panaceas of men. Revolution with Atheism could never accomplish it. But the Word of God would judge the social order and gather to Him the remaining members to make up the required 144,000, who are seen represented in Revelation 14: 1-5 singing "as it were" a new song, and yet the old, old story of Jesus and His love.

Fear God

The force and beauty of the message of Revelation 14: 6, 7 are destroyed by many Christians, who give a wrong interpretation of both the time of fulfilment and the nature of the message. They place it at the extreme end of the age, and declare it to be a message of judgment (which they say means only condemnation), and say that the "gospel" given out is one of fear. Its message to fear God and worship Him as Creator is said to mean that the people will be incapable of understanding anything but a command to bow down to a vengeful God. How different is the true interpretation—a message of deliverance from the tyranny of the "Beast," a revival of the true "everlasting gospel," and its wide preaching over the whole earth, counteracting everywhere false teachings of both "the beast" and his "image" (referred to in Revelation 13).

The exhortation "Fear God" was most appropriate in the closing years of the eighteenth century and all through the nineteenth and up to the present, and it will still be so in the future. Fear is one of the most deeply seated of human emotions. Both Papal and Protestant ecclesiastical systems have played on the fears of the people, fear of eternal torment and of purgatory being one of their most powerful weapons to keep the people in bondage. But now comes the message—No longer fear them, but fear God. God is the Supreme Power—all those are but pigmies in comparison.

All the light and knowledge come from God. Daniel predicted it. It came at the appointed time—"the time of the end." That time of the end is not a mere moment, but the full period from the close of the 1260 years to the complete overthrow of the evil systems of this world and the establishment of the Kingdom of God as the governing power.

Fear God, therefore; fear not what man can do unto you. (Hebrews 13: 6; Matthew 10: 28.) Be not afraid of their faces. (Jeremiah 1: 8.) Faithfully give out the full measure of truth, the everlasting gospel, and the due season's announcement also: that "the hour of his judgment is come."

The Hour of His Judgment

We have seen how "times and seasons" are part of the gospel or good tidings. Jesus at His first advent came

*On this point please see "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," pp. 358, 367, 380, 494-496.

*For evidence on this point please see "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," pages 173, 187; and "Christ's Prophecy on Olivet," page 52.

at the appointed time, as foretold by Daniel, in his prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. (Daniel 9: 24, 25.) Also how the time of visitation came upon Israel by reason of their rejection of the Lord. (Matthew 23: 35, 36; Luke 19: 44.) There was a judgment of the Jews which resulted in the destruction of their city and the scattering of the Jews among the nations.—1 Thessalonians 2: 15, 16.

So there is an "hour" (that is, a definite, fixed time) for a judgment on Christendom, and it is important for God's people to know when that hour will arrive; or, if in the past, how it operated, and with what results. As already said, this hour of judgment on Christendom was foretold in vision to Daniel. (7: 9, 10.) The judgment was "set" at the end of the 1260 "days" (fulfilled as years) for the purpose (first) of consuming the "beast." The language employed shows the consumption to be gradual—"*slain*," "*body destroyed*," "*given to the burning flame*." This consumption is also described in 2 Thessalonians 2: 8 as being accomplished by the Lord Jesus at the beginning of His *second "presence"*—"*whom the Lord shall* consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming [literally, presence]."

Another prophecy (Daniel 12: 1) refers to this same time. It also associates a great judgment on the world powers with the presence of the Lord, here called "*Michael*," a *name used of our Lord in His prehuman life*, sometimes called "Michael the archangel," or chief angel, and also spoken of by Daniel as the angel given special care over the Jews during the Jewish age. (Jude 9; Daniel 10: 13, 21.) "Then shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble." A time of trouble necessarily follows the standing up or exercise of kingly authority by the Lord Jesus, since the principles of His Kingdom are so different from those governing the present evil world. This passage (Daniel 12: 1), placed beside Daniel 7: 8, is an additional aid in finding the date when the "hour" of His judgment began; for since the end of the 1260 "days," there has been "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." And we to-day are witnesses of the fact that the time of trouble is still with us, and hence the Lord's people must still persevere in the preaching of the everlasting gospel.

The Everlasting Gospel and the Judgment

At the end of the Jewish age the "everlasting gospel" was the instrument by which the Jewish people were judged. The words that the Lord and the apostles spoke brought conviction to the sincere and pious among the nation, and demonstrated who were the hypocritical self-seekers *and selfrighteous in the nation*. So now: Babylon is judged by "the spirit of the Lord's mouth"; largely by the truth testified to by the "two witnesses," the *written Word of God and the Church of believers*. Both of these are living witnesses. (1 Peter 1: 23; 1 Thessalonians 5: 23.) And if we try to think how this witness *to the everlasting gospel could best be given*, we can think of no better way than that which the Lord has actually used, and which is described as the angel flying *in the midst of heaven and proclaiming the good news* "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."—Revelation 14: 6.

God is just, and neither nations nor individuals are condemned for ever by Him for what they do not know. But the sending of light makes both nations and individuals *responsible. Those who love the light will come to* the light, and those who love the darkness will hate the light and refuse to come to it, thereby accomplishing their own condemnation.

How was it during the last years of the 1260 during which God had allowed the Papacy to domineer over and persecute His people? We see the Wesleys for 53 years taking the people of England and her colonies to task for their worldliness and hypocrisy, and calling on all to repent, and fear or serve God. Baptists and other nonconformists were active in preaching a consistent and holy life as a necessary part of gospel teaching. Revived interest in the Bible with the scarcity and high cost of existing copies called for more and cheaper Bibles. As a result Bible Societies were formed in London, in New York, and on the Continent to supply this demand. From that time on the Bible has been translated into every known language and into hundreds of dialects, and these Bibles have been widely distributed by missionaries, colporteurs, and others. Right "in the midst of heaven," in the presence of all the state-endowed churches that had become formal and dead, the messengers symbolised by the angel carried the "everlasting gospel"—the same gospel given out at the beginning being conveyed in the Bibles and Testaments, if not always in the sermons that sometimes accompanied their distribution. It is certainly worthy of note that in the formation of the Bible Societies it was expressly provided that their purpose was to circulate the Word of God "without note or comment." This made it possible for persons of all denominations and of all nations to use and circulate these Bibles.

Judging the Ecclesiastical Systems

Obviously the circulation of Bibles without note or comment increased rather than diminished the demand for explanations of the Word of God, that people might understand what they read. Evangelistic and tract societies sprang up; Methodist and other local preachers went everywhere supplementing the work of ordained ministers; home missions as well as foreign missions were organised in all denominations to carry the gospel everywhere.

Most of the "gospels" preached at that period naturally reflected the creeds of the churches, and fell far short of the true gospel or good news. But all along there had been some Christians who disowned one or another of the errors of the creeds, and sought by personal study of the Scriptures to arrive at a better understanding of the truth. And it is certainly remarkable that just at this time, when the vision portrays a cry that "the hour of his judgment is come," all over the world Christian people began to notice how much the Bible had to say about our Lord's return and the events accompanying and to follow. Thus arose what is now known as "the Advent Movement," or Pre-Millennarianism—Christ coming before the Millennium and ushering it in.

The awakening of interest in the Lord's return was chronologically due, and just as the Lord said on the occasion of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, that if the people had not shouted "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," the very stones would have cried out (Matthew 21: 9), so when the Second Presence was due the cry had to go forth: "Behold the bridegroom." This announcement corresponds well with the hint given in Daniel's prophecy that something special or remarkable was to be expected at the end of the 1290 days, fulfilled as years. (Daniel 12: 11.) If the 1260 years ended A.D. 1799, the 1290 years reached to 1829. The angel gave no idea to Daniel regarding what was to be expected at the end of the 1290 years, but now can be seen what actually occurred; namely, the beginning of a world-wide revival of interest in the Lord's second *Advent and the setting up of His kingdom on the earth*.

Yet here again tradition interfered with clear perception; the clouds of obscurity as well as of trouble hid His *presence from His people, and their thoughts were influ*enced by the unauthorized word "cometh" in Matthew 25: 6, also by the mistaken idea that He would return in the *flesh, and be at once optically manifest to the eyesight of a* wondering world. Coupled with this idea was the erroneous view that His "judgment" meant the burning up of the *earth and the condemnation to everlasting death of all* who were not "ready" to be received by Him at the "crisis" hour; while those who held the eternal torment theory *preached that everlasting misery in literal flames awaited* the unprepared.

Hence the necessity of sending two other "angels" or messengers to fly "in the midst of heaven" and clarify the Scripture teaching in men's minds and show where and how the "judgment" would operate.

Another Angel

This we find in Revelation 14: 8—

And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

The announcement that "Babylon is fallen" is also part of the "due time" message for our day. In the Reformation Movement of the 16th century Luther and Zuingli, Calvin and Knox, and others gave a call to "come out" of Babylon. Babylon was indeed fallen at that time into a condition very far from that befitting God's Church. And it was needful to come out. With more or less distinctness that call has been given ever since. But in Revelation 14: 8 that call is given following and in connection with the announcement of the "judgment" at the close of the 1260 years. Babylon in the meantime had not altered, but continued to make the nations drunk with the wine of the wrath of her fornication. This is the more readily seen when we remember that fornication as a symbol means the church united to earthly governments. And looking back we see that notwithstanding the Reformation most of the Reformed nations repeated this error of the Papacy and became Church-States; that is, States with an established religion. Such was, and still is, the Church of England. Such was the Lutheran Church in Prussia and in Scandinavia until recently, and the Presbyterian Church was from the days of Knox established as the State Church of Scotland.

The call of the angel of Revelation 14: 8 is therefore more comprehensive than the call of the Great Reformation to come out of the Papacy. Now the call is distinct and mandatory to come out not only from the Papacy, but also from those Protestant organizations which duplicated the Papal fornication by becoming united to the State, and in most instances recognizing the civil ruler as the head of the Church; though wherever possible seeking to rule the State. This was shown recently when the Anglican Church was forced by law to submit the suggested new prayer book to Parliament for endorsement. When rejected, many church ecclesiastics insisted that they had the right to use the new prayer book notwithstanding Parliamentary rejection, thus practically claiming for themselves the law making and law executing prerogatives of Britain.

In States having no religion established by law, where all denominations are free to flourish as best they can, many Protestants think the Church should exercise an influence over the State by means of the ballot box, deputations, petitions, etc. In some countries Councils of Churches have been established, consisting of representatives of Protestant denominations, for the purpose of exercising political influence. Thus they drink officially of the "wine of the wrath of her fornication," and many of them are so drunk they see nothing wrong in it.

The Third Angel's Message

Hence arises the necessity of the third angel's message. The contents of this message fix its application (first) to the time since the formation of the image of the beast, which would be after the establishment of Protestant State Churches in imitation of the Papacy, and (second) to "the hour of his judgment," consequently after the "everlasting gospel" was sent out with renewed power at the end of the 1260 days, when the consumption of the "beast" was due to begin. Let us read the message in Revelation 14, verses 9 to 12—

> 9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,
> 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:
> 11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.
> 12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Wherever the worship of the beast and his image has gone, this message of warning has gone, or will yet go. Revelation 13: 7 declares that to the beast with seven heads and ten horns it was given "to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." Equally wide is the commission given to God's people at this time. They are to preach the everlasting gospel "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." So: wherever the Papacy and the Protestant associations constituting the "image of the beast" have gone, there must not only the everlasting gospel as genuine good news of liberation and blessing be preached in Jesus' name, but there also must the call to "come out" be given, with the warning of the consequences that will follow upon those who refuse to come out, and persist in the worship of the beast and his image.

The Beast and His Image

To those Protestants of various denominations who valiantly oppose the Papacy it will come as a surprise to read "worship the beast and his image"—not or his image, but "and his image," suggesting that as members of the "image" they are worshippers of the Roman "beast" as well. This is exactly the position; because, as said before, Protestantism has imitated the unscriptural methods of the Beast. It has also imitated the unscriptural doctrines of the Beast. Although Protestants claim to go further back than the Papacy for their doctrines, they have drawn them from the same sources; namely, the great Church Councils, all of which endorsed rank error and penalized those who held to the truth. The erroneous doctrines of the immortal soul, eternal torment, the divine trinity, and others are held in common, as well as the false idea that the Church should govern or control the world now.

The "mark" of the beast and his image is distinguished from the "mark" which the Lord imprints on the foreheads of His true servants. Revelation 7: 1-8 declares that the work of the Gospel age has been to impress the Holy Spirit in the minds of God's people. Ephesians 1: 13 declares that the Holy Spirit is the "seal" given to believers when they become such by faith in Christ and obedience to His command, "Follow me." This is the Spirit "of love, and of power, and of a sound mind," and the Guide into all truth.—2 Timothy 1: 7; John 14: 16-26; 16: 7-13.

Contrariwise, the mark which the beast and his image place on their followers is a "seal" of error, selfishness, weakness, and unsound mind, in the sense that they are swayed by tradition and superstition, and by fear of the threats of these great ecclesiastical organisations. Babylon (including both Papacy and Protestantism, beast and image) has mixed a cup of wrath for all her worshippers to drink—wrath that will befall them if they declare their purpose to study the Scripture and follow its teachings rather than Babylon's creeds. Those who refuse to worship the beast and his image often experience persecution in the present life, combined with threats of a horrible fate to overtake them in the future life: nothing less than an eternity of torture in fire and brimstone.

Often this very message of the third angel is taken as proof that the unsaved will be tormented for ever in fire and brimstone in some place under the control of Satan. But what does the angel's message say? It is the worshippers of the Beast—the adherents of the Papacy and of its Protestant counterpart—who are to be tormented! The wrath of God is said to be against them, nothing being said about the heathen and the nominally unsaved. And this wrath of God is administered in the presence of the Lamb and of His holy angels.

It should not be difficult to realize that the whole of the events described in the messages of these three angels take place on this earth: (1) The everlasting gospel is preached "unto them that dwell on the earth." (2) The Beast and his Image are the great ecclesiastical systems of Christendom—right here on the earth. (3) The wine of their wrath has been partaken of by all nations—right here on the earth. (4) The judgment of God against them is poured out on them—**right here on the earth.** (5) They "have no rest day nor night" is the condition of these worshippers—**right here on the earth.**

But ah! some one may say, we've got you now! the torment "with fire and brimstone" can not be "right here on the earth."

Can it not? Let us see.

Fire and Brimstone

Many scriptures tell us that in death men know nothing and can feel nothing. (Psalm 6: 5; Ecclesiastes 9: 10.) The Hebrew word "sheol" and the Greek word "hades" mean the grave, which is described as a place of silence and darkness. (Psalm 88: 10-12.) Nowhere are men described as being in torment or suffering of any kind after death; their sufferings are in this life on their way to the grave.

Exceptions are the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31), and the prophecies of Isaiah 14: 9-11 and Ezekiel 32: 21, in all of which places speech is ascribed figuratively to those in the grave. The parable was prophetic of the changed conditions about to come on the scribes and Pharisees (the rich) and publicans and sinners (the beggar). The former would be cast out of their place of favour into troubled conditions, while the publicans would be received as heirs of Abraham. The Jews have suffered all this "torment" right here on the earth by the loss of their land and by the scattering of their people among the nations. Both Isaiah and Ezekiel were prophets inspired to use parables and figures of speech to enforce their warnings and predictions.

This figurative usage should not, however, be taken as contradictory of the many plain statements of Scripture concerning the state of the dead. We will not stop now to give detailed explanations of the parable or of these prophecies, but refer all interested in further consideration of these points to books on the bookstall and in the New Covenant Book List.

Fire and brimstone are used in Scripture as symbols of destruction. Fire destroys things put into it. Brimstone fumes destroy life, and for that reason brimstone was used in the valley of Hinnom outside Jerusalem to destroy pests that would collect in such a place. Our Lord used "Gehenna"—the Greek form of the name—as a figure or symbol of the everlasting destruction (not torment) that awaits wilfully perverse sinners,* for nothing alive was cast into the Gehenna outside Jerusalem.

Now, if we consider well the position of the worshippers of the "beast" and his "image," we will see that the destruction of their religious institutions in which they have prided themselves will give them great pain. The institutions, organisations, societies, churches, schools, and convents do not, as such, suffer torment while being destroyed, for they have no nervous systems with which to feel pain. The fire and brimstone of the Lord's wrath destroy them as systems, but it is their worshippers who suffer the pain through seeing their beloved "beast and his image" gradually being consumed. Many have given the zealous labour of a lifetime to build up these organizations; they have lavished time and money on them. Yet here is the third angel's message to tell us that all such efforts are in vain. Looking round us we can see the disintegrating and destructive forces at work everywhere, and we can also see the "torment" of the people who have the "mark" of these systems in their forehead or in their hand. The mark in the forehead represents the spirit these systems have impressed in their minds; while the mark in their hands represents how their activities are mortgaged by these systems. The 'fire and brimstone," representing the destructive forces put into operation by the Lord to destroy the systems, incidentally give torment to their adherents, who do not fully understand the meaning of it all.

The Church of England has been in torment for some years by reason of the Prayer Book controversy; the question of disestablishment agitates many members; the Romeward trend is deplored by the evangelical section of the Church. They are deluded by the slogan that the Church of England is comprehensive enough to hold all shades of belief, and they are afraid to come out for fear they will lose caste, since the Church of England is the church of the Court and of the aristocracy. Others fear the wrath of the church expressed in contempt, social ostracism, etc., as well as by threats of eternal loss. They are in "torment," mental perplexity, with spiritual doubts and misgivings, and they fail to see that so long as they remain in these systems they must also "drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation."

Other sects of Christendom are in exactly the same case, each according to its own peculiar circumstances and conditions, and they also must drink of this cup of God's indignation.

The Cup of His Indignation

God is indignant; God is angry, and He has a right to be. For these great systems of religion bear the name of His Son, calling themselves Christians; and yet in their teachings they deny Him. The mark they put on their members is not the Holy Spirit but some other; the teachings they give them are not in accord with the divine Word; their attitude toward the world is not consistent with the command to be separate from the world. And many who see the Babylonish condition of the churches refuse to obey the call to "Come out," giving the excuse that they wish to let their light shine there. With them, too, God is indignant, and they also shall drink of this cup of indignation.

A cup is a drinking vessel used for convenience. Many drinks are diluted to make them pleasant to the taste—as tea and coffee, lemon drinks, etc. But God's wrath against the beast and his image (which extends to those who receive their mark) is not diluted to make it tasty and pleasant. It is drastic. And they cannot get away from it, because it is placed to their lips, and they must drink.

Thus it will be seen that the torment by fire and brimstone is just another symbol explanatory of the distress accompanying the drinking of the wine of God's wrath. God's wrath is destructive. He is long suffering and patient, but He foresaw Babylon's perversity and fall, and warned His children against it as the object of His displeasure. When God's anger destroys Babylon those in her suffer, as we read in Revelation 18: 4, 5—"Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." The wise will come out, and escape the plagues.

Ascending For Ever and Ever

The smoke of their torment ascending for ever and ever (verse 11) may be compared with Isaiah 34: 10. The desolation of Edom is described under the symbols of fire and brimstone, and "the smoke thereof shall go up for ever." The land of Edom or Idumea is still desolated—has been for centuries; but no literal pitch is seen, nor any smoke ascending endlessly. These symbols—fire, brimstone, pitch—indicate the destruction of the people of Edom as a nation and the desolation of their land; while the smoke ascending for ever indicates the continuance for a long period of the desolate condition. But Isaiah 35 assures us that the desolate wilderness shall yet be gladdened by springs and streams, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Similarly in Revelation 14: 11 the continuous rise of the smoke represents how God will not be satisfied until great Babylon is completely destroyed, and how the desolation of their ecclesiastical systems which meant so much to the people will be everlastingly remembered. Those great institutions, the Papal beast and his Protestant image, will never rise again. Their exact fate is described in another vision—Great Babylon shall go down as a millstone into the sea, "and be found no more at all."—Revelation 18: 21.

The Patience of the Saints

And what of the people"—the people liberated from the bonds of fear and superstition with which great Babylon bound them? We answer—Those who "come out" soon enough under the preaching of the "everlasting gospel" sent forth for their enlightenment will thereby be fitted (if they stand fast in the faith) to take a place among the 144,000 mentioned in verses 1-5. As verse 12 states—

> Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

Although some of the worst features of the Papacy's persecuting power over the saints terminated with the end of the 1260 years mentioned in Daniel 7: 25, since when its political power has been greatly curtailed, this by no means relieved the saints of all persecution and suffering. Persecution continued in many subtle forms, both by the Papacy and by fellow Protestants and by governments. So there was still need of "patience" on the part of the saints. By "saints" we understand sanctified ones, genuine believers, who have consecrated themselves to the Lord.

During this period the "saints" have also had great need of patience in connection with the Lord's "second coming." They who looked for the Lord to come in the flesh were of two schools—those who expected him "any time," "soon," "at any moment," and those who set a date for His appear-

* See "Everlasting Punishment," mentioned in Book List.

ing, as was done by William Miller. What seemed like a long delay and disappointment at various dates set by different branches of Adventism called for much patience. Some were tempted to wrong manipulation of dates, some gave up hope altogether, and concluded the Lord would never come, or that every death was a coming of the Lord.

But notice what the angel says—"they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Loyalty to God, obedience to His Word, steadfastness in the faith were still required. Even here some introduced false teaching, saying that the commandments of God here spoken of were the ten commandments written on tables of stone and given to Moses. Thus fresh trials were brought upon God's people, but also fresh incentives to study His Word in order to combat the errors. And the fact that God's commandments come to us through Jesus Christ the Mediator of the New Covenant, and not through Moses, was emphasized afresh by the "saints."

Tests of the faith and patience of the saints have come through the setting of wrong dates for the end of Gentile Times and the setting up of the Kingdom. Many succumbed when their dates were found to be contrary to Scripture and to facts. They had not the patient endurance or the faith required to believe that God's commandments in regard to Gentile Times and the setting up of His kingdom must succeed, and that any error must be in their own calculations and expectations. We "keep" God's commandments when we obey those which relate to our personal conduct. We also "keep" them when we reverently guard and hold to such as relate to affairs in general. We know that those who worship [i.e., serve] the beast and his image sometimes appear to prosper, but with patience we wait for the time when the true saints will be made manifest. Standing outside great Babylon, but secure in God, we watch the progress of that great work of demolition, and we see the smoke ascending and the fire and brimstone doing their work.

As for the great majority who remain in Babylon and suffer the plagues, thank God they will yet be liberated. As portrayed in chapter 18, they will bewail the burning of that great city until the everlasting gospel at last penetrates their minds, and it is brought home to them how they had been deceived, but Christ Jesus had broken their chains. That day has not yet come.

"From Henceforth"—What Follows

To die for and in the faith has been the ambition of every true saint who recognized that following Jesus means even unto death. In Revelation 6: 9-11 we have under the fifth "seal" a vision concerning those who were "slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held." The time for their resurrection and reward had not then arrived. They "should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." This is in harmony with 1 Thessalonians 4: 14-16, that those who were alive and remain unto the presence of the Lord should not precede those who were asleep. One of the first acts of our Lord on His return is to call them forth and receive them into glory. And Revelation 2: 26, 27 says that they shall have a part in breaking "to shivers" the governments and institutions of this present evil world.

The "henceforth" time of Revelation 14: 13 would seem to correspond with or soon follow that calling forth of the sleeping saints to their eternal inheritance. And its lesson is that the saints who live on during the final dealings with the beast and his image shall not "sleep." "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." They die, but the blessedness they receive is that at the instant of death they are "changed" into the Lord's likeness. Thus they are able at once to continue their faithful service begun on earth, and take part in the great activities of the kingdom on the other side the veil. They rest from the fatigue of earthly labour to engage without fatigue in the Kingdom age work.

This "henceforth" time is in all probability what is referred to in Daniel 12: 12—"Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days"—1335 days. Fulfilled as years after the same manner as the 1260 and 1290 days, the 1335 days reach 45 years beyond 1829, and bring us to the year 1874. The prophet was not inspired to write what the blessedness would consist in, but in the book "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days" the suggestion is made that except for the 2300 days of chapter 8, the 1335 days are the limit of dates definitely announced. And verse 13 contrasts Daniel's position with that of the saints who experience the special blessedness—"But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." The date for the resurrection of Daniel and other faithful ones of Old Testament times seems thus to be left unrevealed.

These blessed "dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth," with their predecessors of the same calling in the Gospel age, will be the kingdom of priests, of whom and whose work we are to hear more fully from subsequent speakers. We shall therefore conclude the consideration of this part of the subject by briefly summarizing what has been seen—

1. In a vision of three angels flying in the midst of heaven the Lord's people are shown what messages would be given at a certain time.—Revelation 14: 6-13.

2. The time for these messages is indicated by the first angel, who announces that "the hour of his judgment is come."

3. By comparison with instruction given through Daniel (chapters 7 and 12), this "hour" is found to begin at the end of the 1260 days, during which the saints had been given into the hands of the "beast."

4. The judgment is a judgment on the "beast" and "his image," both of which together form mystic "Babylon." The "judgment" also involves the world powers and other institutions which have incurred the Lord's wrath by entering into alliances contrary to His will, whereby the truth was suppressed and His people were kept in bondage.

5. In the same "hour" God's children, the Church, represented by the first angel flying in the midst of heaven, began a fresh proclamation of the gospel—the same "everlasting gospel" previously preached by the Lord and the apostles, and foreshadowed in the Old Testament promises of a blessing.

6. The command goes forth to "Fear God, and give glory to him" by worshipping Him instead of the false systems of "Babylon." This involves receiving some knowledge of the truth, and of God's will concerning their attitude toward the prevailing errors of doctrine and practice.

7. From the end of the 1260 years this message has gone forth, as is shown by the formation of Bible Societies for the circulation of the Bible cheaply and abundantly, thus making it accessible to all.

8. At this time also there was an awakening to the fact that "Babylon"—presented in various aspects by other visions of Revelation—meant more than the Papacy; it included the "image" of the beast described in chapter 13. This "image" was Protestantism, which had fallen into the error of linking Church and State, very much as the Papacy had done.

9. Increased use of Bibles brought many to the conviction that popular creeds contained errors on the state of the dead and the nature of punishment of the unsaved, and led to a world-wide protest against the teaching of eternal torment, together with a world-wide preaching of "life in Christ only," and death—cessation of life—as the punishment for sin.

10. The second angel represents God's children who were His messengers in declaring His truth, and their message was to announce the fall of Babylon because of its association with earthly kings and governments contrary to God's command that His children should be separate from the world, and because she had persecuted the true saints —"In her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."—Revelation 18: 24.

11. Under the second angel's message recognition of Protestantism as portion of Babylon further encouraged study of the Scriptures, and at the end of the 1290 "days." i.e from the year 1829, the "Advent" movement began, in many instances embracing the teaching of life in Christ only and death as the punishment for sin.

12. The third angel represents God's children delivering

a message of warning to those who worship the beast and his image and receive their mark in forehead (mind) and hand (activities). While other visions show God's wrath on Babylon as a system (e.g., chapter 18), this message declares that God holds His professed people **individually responsible.** They must choose whether they will worship God or continue to serve "the beast and his image." The preaching of the "everlasting gospel" to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people"—all who had been deceived by the Papal beast and the Protestant "false prophet" (Revelation 13: 7-18; 19: 20)—places responsibility upon all who hear the message to choose whether they will worship God or serve Babylon.

13. All who have the spirit of Babylon and use their powers in its behalf will be forced to drink out of the cup of God's indignation poured for them. They will suffer "torment" (that is, distress) when they see Babylon disintegrating and going to destruction, this process of consumption being symbolized by fire and brimstone.

14. Fire and brimstone are used figuratively in many parts of Scripture to indicate complete destruction. These great religious systems are to be destroyed. To be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, utter destruction, will be the ultimate fate of all the kingdoms and ecclesiastical systems of this world. But in this vision the people are not cast into the lake, or second death. They are in great mental distress because these systems are being cast into it.

15. Many of the worshippers of the beast "have no rest day nor night" trying to uphold what God ordains should fall.

16. The patience of the saints is exhibited by their long suffering attitude toward their persecutors. They are loyal to God and His Word, and they are true to the faith once delivered to the saints.

17. The great institutions of this world must go down. All the sufferings of their supporters depicted in this vision are experienced in this life, and are caused by the operation of God's power and the kingly prerogative of our Lord Jesus, whose presence is made manifest by these "signs." But through it all God's people, the messengers, carry on the work committed to them. In the midst of all they fearlessly declare the message God has given them.

18. The overcomers shall live and reign with Christ. The dead saints shall rise to take part in the final dealings with great Babylon, and those saints who remain on earth during the closing scenes shall "from henceforth," while still having the privilege of being faithful unto death, not "sleep," that is, remain in death, but will be immediately resurrected to join the other faithful in the glory of the heavenly kingdom.

Let us who recognize the time in which we live realize that although the first angel's message did not cease when the second began, and the first and the second did not cease when the third angel began, our privilege, our duty, our obligation before the Lord, is to emphasize the message pertaining to our time—to the glory of God, to honour His Son, and to comfort His people. —E.C.H.

A Kingdom and Priesthood

THE NECESSITY for Salvation has always been recognised by Christians, and in order to get a clear view of this problem it is necessary that we realise that God has arranged a wonderful plan of the ages (Ephesians 3: 11), and that during each age He has been dealing with or has called certain persons while others have been excluded, so that some have been called by God and others have not. During the age of the Patriarchs God dealt with a few individuals, while during the Jewish age His dealings by the Law were with a whole nation —the Jews only; the surrounding nations were not so dealt with, but this fact does not prejudice the future of those who have not been called.

During the gospel age the good news is being sent to all nations instead of to the Jews only, and God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." (Acts 17: 30.) The gospel is being sent out for a purpose, a very special purpose, and it is essential that we properly understand this, otherwise the result will be confusion.

It is a well known fact that the preaching of the gospel during the past 19 centuries has not converted the whole world, neither has it even enlightened the whole world; for millions have died and are still dying without so much as hearing one word of the gospel. Therefore we conclude that it was not God's purpose that the gospel should enlighten, much less convert, the whole world in this age. But its purpose is stated in Acts 15: 14—"God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." So that God has been selecting or choosing some here and some there to become a people for His name. In order to be called one must hear the call, for it is obvious that no one can believe something of which he has never heard. Says the Apostle Paul—"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10: 13, 14.) This is a reasonable argument, and it shows that no one in ignorance can be a believer, therefore he cannot call on the name of the Lord, the only name whereby he must be saved—Acts 4: 12.

We are told in John 1: 9 that Jesus was that "true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," and yet millions have never seen that Light, nor have they heard that Name. Does it seem just that God has seen fit to enlighten some few and to leave the great majority of the human race in darkness? If this gospel age were the only time in which Salvation were possible, then this arrangement would be most decidedly unfair. But it is not God's purpose that these shall for ever remain in darkness, because it is His will that all shall come to an accurate knowledge of the truth; therefore there must come a time in which all who have died in ignorance will be enlightened. There is plenty of Scriptural evidence to show this. (1 Timothy 2: 4-6; Acts 24: 15; Ezekiel 16.) The Apostle Paul tells us that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust, for the very purpose of bringing them to the true light which is essential to their salvation.

When we properly grasp this orderly arrangement of God's plan, the problem of salvation is not difficult to understand, and it explains satisfactorily why so many millions are allowed to die in total ignorance of the gospel, so that we need have no fear regarding the future of all who have died unsaved. God has set apart a period of a thousand years, which we call the Kingdom Age, for the very purpose of enlightening them.

The High Calling

Those who are being called in this present age are invited to a very high honor; namely, to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, to share His glory, to sit with Him in His throne, and to rule with Him over the world. (Romans 8: 17-23; 2 Timothy 2: 12; Revelation 20: 6; 1 Peter 1: 3-5.) This great privilege is known as "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3: 14), and the purpose of the gospel in this age is to call out these people and separate them from the world unto God; so that although they are in the world they are not to be "of the world."—John 15: 19; Romans 12: 2.

This is a marvellous privilege; the most stupendous invitation ever offered to men. It is all so plainly set forth in the Scriptures and yet many Christians know nothing about it. The Apostle Peter says—"Blessed be the God

and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."—1 Peter 1: 3-5; 2 Thessalonians 2: 14; 1 Thessalonians 2: 12; Romans 5: 2; Hebrews 11: 40; Ephesians 3: 6; Revelation 3: 21.

This call commenced at Pentecost, and it is still open; but few heed the call, and those who are endeavoring to follow in the footsteps of their Master are still fewer in number. Our Lord said they would be a "little flock," so that though many are called yet few are chosen. All these favors and promises were offered exclusively to the Jews at the close of the Jewish age, and if they had been faithful and obedient they would have become the people for God's name; but God cast them off as a nation because of their unbelief and their disobedience. But a few of the Jews were faithful, and they were accepted as sons, as stated in John 1: 11, 12—"He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

In the opening of the gospel age the Jews were given preference for a period (Acts 13: 45-47), and then the opportunity was given to the Gentiles to hear the call, and God is taking out of them a people for His name. These, along with the few faithful Jews, are to be "a royal priesthood and an holy nation," to which the Jewish nation might have attained, but which they lost through their unbelief; and now the inheritance is offered to us—the gospel-age church—which stands out conspicuously as the most highly favored of all God's people.

Training for Our Inheritance

This inheritance to which we are called is in heaven, as previously read from Peter's epistle. This kingdom is to endure for ever, and those who are to take positions in it require an unselfish disposition. Those who become joint-heirs cannot hold such a position in a selfish spirit; in fact, one of the very first requirements is a childlike humility; a spirit of selflessness, a love for others, and a desire to help and uplift them.

In answer to the disciples' question as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord said—"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18: 3.) Unless we have this spirit of humility and the disposition to learn as a little child we shall not even enter the kingdom: so we could not expect to be great in it.

In order to gain this marvellous reward it is necessary that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ follow in His footsteps; and this entails much suffering for righteousness' sake and for the sake of the gospel; but the hope held out to faithful overcomers is so exceedingly great that we count our present discomfort as but a "light affliction" The road is hard, and we should surely fall, but for the grace and strength which the Lord supplies.

The present life is a training ground; a severe school in which we must learn to put off the "old man" with the deeds of the flesh, and to put on the "new man," which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. (Ephesians 4: 22-24.) We must cultivate the spirit of Christ, who was meek and lowly of heart; who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again;" and if this spirit is not in us we are none of His.—Romans 8: 9; Matthew 11: 29; 1 Peter 2: 21--23.

In this age we are being trained and our characters are being developed and established in righteousness. Those who are being so dealt with are being prepared for their mission in the Kingdom, which will be under Christ to bless all the families of the earth. This is all contrary to the spirit of the world: it is far more pleasant to row with the stream than to battle against it. But we are exhorted to carry on this continuous struggle against the ways of the world and to fight against popular errors. and this is why so few will be selected for this very high honor—because not many care to take on such a battle which would make them unpopular with their friends.

The Priesthood

We must now consider another aspect of the Gospel, and this concerns the priesthood. Under the Law Covenant there was a long line of priests who ministered to God's people, and they also assisted the High Priest in his duties at the tabernacle. When the Law Covenant came to an end the priesthood likewise ended, because under the New Covenant, which superseded the Law Covenant, there was a change of priesthood (Hebrews 7: 12)—the High Priest of the New Covenant being our Lord Jesus Christ, who is a priest "after the order of Melchisedec," who was a priest of the most high God long before the law was given or existed.—Genesis 14: 18.

Melchisedec was greater than Abraham, because he took tithes from him; whereas under the Levitical priesthood the priests had authority to take tithes only from the other eleven tribes. Abraham was great on account of the promises God had made to him; but Melchisedec was greater; for in addition to taking tithes from him, Melchisedec blessed Abraham; and as Levi was born of Abraham and from him came the Aaronic priesthood it follows that the priesthood of Melchisedec was a greater than that of Aaron. And so the apostle tells us that our Lord Jesus Christ was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, in fulfilment of Psalm 110: 4, which says—" Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec "—Hebrews 5: 6 10; 6: 20; 7: 1-21.

Melchisedec was a king as well as a priest, and so is our Lord. Under this new priesthood there is one High Priest only, but there are underpriests, and these are they who are now being called in this age to become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ; this is the gospel age church, which is called the "church of the first born," and their names are enrolled in heaven. (Hebrews 12: 23.) All this was announced by the apostles as they went about preaching the gospel.

Think of what it all means—that we who hear this gospel message are invited to become underpriests in this wonderful priesthood after the order of Melchisedec, because our Lord's priesthood is after that order, and He is High Priest "after the power of an endless life."—Hebrews 7: 16.

The Apostle and High Priest of Our Confession

Let us give heed to this absorbing question The apostle said—"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus." (Hebrews 3: 1.) Consider our High Priest in His present glorious state, a Spirit Being of the Father's substance, and at the right hand of the Father. (Hebrews 1: 3.) Consider what we are—a helpless dying race. Consider that wonderful invitation given to the dying race to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive life. Consider that He has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light to a priesthood after the power of an endless life. When we earnestly consider these things, we are constrained to say—"What is man, that thou are mindful of him?"

For these underpriests a kingdom is prepared, as shown in Revelation 1: 6 according to "Diaglott" reading, which says that Christ "hath made for us a kingdom, priests for his God and Father." Also in Revelation 5: 10 (Variorum Bible footnote)—"and hast made them unto our God a kingdom and priests: and they shall reign on the earth" In this kingdom they will not be subjects but rulers; whereas in the present age they are subject to the rule of imperfect kings.

Reigning Priests

The fact of a priest reigning as a king was in great contrast to the arrangement in the Jewish age, because kings were a separate class from the priests; the former came from the tribe of Judah, while the latter came from the tribe of Levi, so that the two offices were separate and distinct. Christ was a king of the tribe of Judah. (Isaiah 11: 1; Revelation 5: 5; Matthew 1: 2; Hebrews 7: 14.) At the same time He was a priest, but not of the tribe of Levi; as before stated, He was of the order of Melchisedec, in whom was the combined office of king and priest; and this combined office of king and priest is what is offered as a hope and prospect to believers in this present age.

The Purpose of Our Priesthood

In this present life we are called to this priesthood; and having given heed to the call we are now on probation

as sons of God and prospective heirs of the kingdom. (2 Peter 1: 10, 11; Romans 8. 29, 30; Ephesians 1: 5, 11, 12.) But we cannot sit down, and be idle, waiting for the time to come when we are to be changed into the likeness of our Lord; there is plenty to be done now to occupy our thoughts, our time, and our resources.

The chief aim of our priesthood in the present life is pointed out by the apostle Peter when he says—"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises [or virtues] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (1 Peter 2: 9.) Having received such a wonderful invitation from God, does it not seem logical that we should want to tell everyone about it? Most people when they receive some good news are very keen on letting others know of their good fortune; and so it is our privilege and duty as the Lord's priests to give out the truth as far and as wide as our ability allows. We are to be "ambassadors for Christ," beseeching men to become reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5: 19.) Realising that we ourselves were once in darkness but are now called into the light, we can see that the world is still in that dark state, and we must let our light shine for their benefit. We must proclaim the gospel or good news of the Saviour who "gave himself a ransom for all," and that all who believe in Him shall not perish but may have everlasting life if they fulfil the necessary conditions.

Work of this nature is expected of us as priests under Christ, and we shall find in it plenty to occupy all our time. Being separated from this world, its spirit and its influences, we are not to seek to assert our power trying to readjust the world just because we are members of a priesthood, for we must remember that the affairs of the world do not concern us just now; we must be content to submit to the powers that be in the hope of occupying a reigning position later.—Revelation 2: 26; 2 Timothy 2: 12.

Not Ruling Now

That Christians are commanded to be separate from the affairs of the world was not clearly understood by the Corinthian brethren, who considered that they ought to be ruling the world for Christ without waiting for His return, and for this the apostle Paul had to admonish them. He said that he wished they were reigning then, for if that had been the case, the long promised kingdom would then have been in operation. (1 Corinthians 4: 8.) A parallel of this attitude is to be seen in our own time in all the ecclesiastical systems of the world, which are ever thirsting for position and power in the world's affairs. In seeking to occupy such a position in the present age they lose sight of the fact that the true church is to be separate from the world; so that on this subject these systems of religion have not the spirit of Christ in them. Therefore all the efforts and the desires and expectations of the nominal church to occupy a place of power in the world are quite out of harmony with God's present work in the church of believers who understand their position in the present age, the true church being composed of all genuine believers in Jesus. The Church is being used AS A WITNESS FOR THE TRUTH throughout the whole world, and every believer is expected to take part in the publishing abroad of the Gospel.

Besides this, their characters are being prepared, their dispositions are being trained in the way of love and righteousness, and God takes each heart and each mind and handles it with the loving care of a skilled artist; but it is necessary that we submit to this treatment and allow our heavenly Father to write His laws on our hearts and in our minds, that thus our characters may grow in the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 8: 10; 2 Peter 3: 18.) Each son receives severe training, and it is necessary that it should be severe in order that he may be fitted for the reigning position of the future.—Hebrews 12: 6.

The Anointing

When our sins have been forgiven and we have become reconciled to God through the mediatorship of His Son, there is another important feature to be considered: it is the anointing. Anointing with oil was practised under the Law when kings, priests, and sometimes prophets were placed in their official positions. This applied more especially to the kingly position; this is why the kings were referred to as "the Lord's anointed."—1 Samuel 24: 6; 26: 9.

Our Lord said that He was anointed to preach the gospel, and His words may be found in Luke 4: 18, 19—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This was said in fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61: 1.

It is also to be noted that "anointing" signified cheerfulness and joy. This spiritual anointing is spoken of in Psalm 45: 7 and Hebrews 1: 9 as "the oil of gladness." Our Lord Jesus Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit both as our King and as our High Priest. (John 1: 32, 33; Acts 4: 27; 10: 38.) We as His underpriests are also anointed, and our anointing comes through Christ, as shown in Acts 2, and is in fulfilment of Joel's prophecy. We are anointed with the Holy Spirit, and if we allow it to rule our minds it will transform our lives; it will uplift us, and set us on the right paths; it will stimulate us to better service and more loyal devotion to our Lord and Master. Being anointed with the Holy Spirit, we are said to "have an unction from the Holy One," by which we know all things, i.e., all things in the Scriptures, and need not the men of verse 26 to teach us. (1 John 2: 20, 27.) In Revelation 3: 18 backslidden Christian believers are counselled to obtain the eye salve of the Holy Spirit, that their spiritual eyes may see and understand.

Energised by the Spirit

Paul says in Romans 8: 11—"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

If this Spirit dwells in us it will sanctify us; it will change our whole attitude in life, because by its operation we are renewed in the spirit of the mind from day to day. (Ephesians 4: 23; Romans 12: 2) This is no mere theory; all who have been anointed by the Holy Spirit can testify of its sanctifying power, and that it does really and truly change one's whole attitude in life. We are given the Holy Spirit as a seal of acceptance and forgiveness, and we must pray that the Holy Spirit may dwell with us, and that we may be filled with it so that it may work within us as a quickening or live-giving power. By its sanctifying influence we become separated from the world and its spirit, and instead of wasting time in useless pursuits all our faculties are retrained in the service of God; and so the apostle says—"Be not conformed [or fashioned] to this world [or age]." (Romans 12: 2.) As priests of Christ we are anointed with the Spirit of truth so that we are guarded from falling into error, providing that we submit our wills to our Heavenly Father so that He may engrave His laws in our hearts; consequently we are animated with a deeper love for the truth, for our Master, and for our fellow-believers, also for others whom we desire to assist in becoming reconciled to God. Our words will be with power and authority because they are not our own, because we speak forth the truth as anointed sons of God, because His Holy Spirit is in us and therefore we have the Spirit of a sound mind.—2 Timothy 1: 7.

All this is to prepare us, so that we may eventually be established in the throne with Christ as kings and priests in power and authority and perfection. But while in the present life we still have our many imperfections to contend with, and even our preaching of the gospel is imperfect, so that we cannot expect many to listen to us for oratorical reasons. Nevertheless, the powers social and ecclesiastical would crush us if they could, because our witnessing for the truth is against them.

Apathy Must Be Contended With

Although in present times we do not have to suffer persecution of exactly the same kind as did believers in the dark ages, yet we have to withstand many taunts and rebukes, we may suffer as social outcasts, and men still

separate us from their company. But what we principally have to withstand at the present time is the appalling state of apathy towards the truth which exists all over the world. Even among enthusiastic church-goers many are quite apathetic towards systematic Bible study. They think that to know a few things in a general way is quite sufficient, and that if they live a good life they are sure of heaven. They do not see any necessity for keeping aloof from the world, but rather that they should come together and be sociable, be on good terms with everybody, and not to take things too seriously, and that God does not expect us to forego the pleasures of the world and to make our lives gloomy by constantly studying the Bible. All this may sound very plausible, but it would make one apathetic towards the truth, and this state of apathy is very contagious. Therefore it is very necessary that we make every effort to be separate from the world, and to do this we must take on the whole armour of God in order that we may withstand all these evils.—2 Timothy 3: 12; Ephesians 6: 10-14; Luke 6: 22; 1 Peter 4: 14.

Besides benefitting ourselves, our present training is to fit us for our future positions in the kingdom which is to be set up in the whole earth, so that we shall eventually benefit others. For in that kingdom, with Christ as King and High Priest, we are to be His assistants, and our work will consist in helping in the uplifting and the blessing of all the families of the earth. This kingdom is to be a very real one, and those who are in the graves are to be raised in order that they may receive the gospel. This kingdom will be a powerful one, able to execute righteous judgment throughout the earth. This kingdom will be a just one; absolute justice will be meted out to all the subjects in that kingdom.

Christendom's View of the Priesthood

Having examined the Scriptural teaching concerning the priesthood, who are called to that priesthood, and what their duties are, we can see a great contrast in Christendom's view. In the great Babylonish systems of religion which are honored throughout the world on account of their influence, their splendour, and their magnitude, a body of men is set apart as a priestly class and known as the clergy. These men are trained in "holy orders," with special rights and privileges which are not granted to laymen. After studying a prescribed course at a university, these men are ordained as priests, and are styled "reverend"; and in many cases they adopt a special mode of apparel in order to be distinguished from their fellow men. The clergy claim the sole authority to preach the gospel and to expound God's Word; and anyone daring to oppose their teachings is denounced as a usurper, a heretic, and a very dangerous person.

Then again, even among this priestly class—the clergy—there are great distinctions: from the humble curate to the lordly bishop and archbishop, the latter two being styled "right reverend" and "most reverend" respectively; and they are addressed as "my lord," and "your grace," not only by laymen, but also by members of their own priestly class who are on a lower scale in the same priesthood.

Does not all this remind us of our Lord's rebuke to His disciples when they strove amongst themselves who should be the greatest? Christendom's view is entirely wrong: our Lord founded no "holy orders"; therefore the position of the clergy in appropriating the priesthood exclusively to themselves is a false one. The Scriptures show that **every member of the true church is a priest, irrespective of age or sex, social standing or nationality.** So that all believers are priests, male and female, and no one has any more rights and privileges than another; for we are all brethren, and we have one Lord and Master.—Matthew 23: 8-12.

Underpriests Are Not High Priests

Seeing that we are underpriests in the service of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must be careful that we do not overstep the mark and think more highly of ourselves than we ought; we must not try to occupy a position never intended for us. Jesus alone is the High Priest, we are His underpriests, therefore we are not High Priests. We do not perform any of the duties of the High Priest. Under the Law there were many assistant priests, but only one high priest; and it was he alone who entered the most holy to present the atoning blood.—Hebrews 9: 6, 7; Exodus 30: 10.

In the Day of Atonement sacrifices the distinction between priests and people was shown by separate offerings—first for the High Priest and his house, and then for the people. In the New Covenant Christ is the High Priest, but He did not have to offer any sacrifice for His sins, for He never had any, but His sacrifice "once for all" atones for the sins of the whole world, sweeping away all distinctions, so that all who come to God are on one level, and they can come only through the mediatorship of Christ.

Christ was the antitype of all the sacrifices for sin under the Law; and not by the blood of animals, but by His own precious blood—His alone—He "entered in once into the holy place"—not the earthly tabernacle, but heaven. (Hebrews 9: 12.) So the sacrifice was complete when our Lord died on the cross, His own words being, "It is finished." (John 19: 30.) We, His underpriests, have no part in that work at all: it is our Lord's exclusively; and although we are called upon to present our bodies living sacrifices in the service of God (Romans 12: 1), yet we are not to consider ourselves as part of the sin offering, for our Lord alone gave the one complete and satisfactory sacrifice, as stated in Hebrews 7: 27—"this he did once, when he offered up himself." Also in Hebrews 10: 12—"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God." Our part as underpriests is to proclaim the gospel or good news to others concerning this great truth that Jesus Christ in that one offering gave Himself a sacrifice for the sins of all, which was accepted by the Father as on behalf of all. It is our duty and privilege to tell of so great a love Christ had for the world that He divested himself of His glory and became a man, "that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—Philippians 2: 5-11; Hebrews 2: 9.

We must act as ambassadors for Christ, beseeching others to become reconciled to God through Christ by accepting that one offering for their sins. It is also our privilege to assist our fellow believers in the truth, and thus build up one another in the faith—2 Corinthians 5: 19, 20.

Do we realise how important our calling is as underpriests in this gospel age? But we must not be puffed up with pride, thinking that we have virtues in us superior to our fellow men that led God to call us to this priesthood. Nor can we imagine that we are indispensable to God, that He cannot get along without our services. We must ever bear in mind that we are highly privileged and favored by our heavenly Father in being allowed to occupy such a position as underpriests to His dear Son, and that God is not in any way dependent upon our services, but that He has condescended to call us and to use us as instruments in certain phases of His great plan: to make known now, and in the Kingdom age, that Christ Jesus is the one Foundation upon which rests the salvation of mankind from sin and death.

Let us always remember that we are underpriests and not high priests, and that to seek to usurp the functions of our High Priest would be the greatest presumption possible on our part, as though the blood shed by our Lord on Calvary were common to all the underpriests and to the High Priest. Thus the blood of the covenant would not be Christ's alone, and we should be considering ourselves as part of the sin offering: we should be claiming that we were part of the "lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and by such an attitude we would do despite to the spirit of grace. (Hebrews 10: 29.) For any of Christ's underpriests so to act would be a very serious matter; instead of learning of Christ in meekness and humility such would be taking a superior attitude as judges of their own deeds, as though they knew as well as Christ what is right and what is wrong, virtually placing themselves on a level with Christ. Anyone adopting this attitude would be virtually considering the blood of the covenant whereby he was sealed not that of Christ alone, but that he shared the honor of giving part

of that blood, and by this blood the covenant would be sealed at some future time. It seems almost unbelievable that any professing Christians should fall into such a grievous error, but some have done this very thing. Under the Law Covenant rebels were punished with death, but this would not cut them off from the hope of a future resurrection. Aaron's two sons were slain for their presumption by fire from heaven. But the apostle says that a sorer punishment awaits such a sin as this of presumption in claiming to be part of the sacrifice for sin. And this sorer punishment can refer to nothing else but everlasting death from which there is no resurrection. —*Leviticus 10: 1-3; Hebrews 10: 26-31.*

So again let us be warned that we must not overstep the mark; and while grateful to God that He has called us to be underpriests, let us never presume to usurp the functions of our High Priest. Let us earnestly pray that we may fully appreciate God's favor towards us in calling us to this priesthood, not considering ourselves as in any way part of the great Sacrifice for the sins of the world, but fully realising and thankfully acknowledging that this unique office belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ exclusively. Let us pray that those who have unintentionally fallen into this serious error may be enabled by the grace of God to see their false position.

May the God of grace in the riches of His mercy strengthen us and guide us to a full appreciation of this great feature of the Gospel—our priesthood; and may we *be ever willing to submit ourselves to Him, so that* we might be prepared for the glorious position of Kings and Priests in the Kingdom promised to faithful overcomers.

—E.V.C.

The Gospel from the Great White Throne

EVERLASTING is a word with a long range. God is everlasting, and His name is inseparably bound up with Truth. Truth therefore will last. Whatever is untrue or false can hold no permanent place in the *universe.—Psalm 106: 48.*

As regards the Gospel of Glad Tidings, God has given out the true one—properly, therefore, styled the Everlasting Gospel. Whatever of false gospels there may be, they are all necessarily doomed to destruction; for what is false cannot continue to exist indefinitely.

We are assured that the words of the gospel making up the Scriptures were all inspired by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1: 21.) That then is the truth about the words of the Scriptures. The modern popular idea is that they were not all inspired. That therefore is the false gospel.

To teach that the Scriptures are not inspired is to place oneself in the category of things that are false, and ultimately to suffer the heavy condemnation due to false teachers.—James 3: 1, E.D.; Matthew 7: 22, 23.

Not only will it be thus with the individuals. The systems of religion which stand for these errors—no matter how great, powerful, and rich they may be—are doomed. (Revelation 19: 20.) It is by opposing the truth that they are making "war with the Lamb"; but without the slightest hope of success, for "the Lamb shall overcome them."—Revelation 17: 14.

Now there has never at any time been any real reason for falsehoods to have flourished in the church. This is proven by the fact that there have always been some who have separated themselves from errors and lived and taught the truth. If that has been possible for some, it might also have been for the many. And now we come to a consideration of a subject around which the most persistent misconception exists. It concerns "The Gospel and the Great White Throne" mentioned in Revelation 20: 11-15. *[Please read these verses.]*

Wrong Ideas About the Throne

In this passage, as we hope to see, is some real good news—gospel. But the idea of anything in the nature of good news coming from the "great white throne" sounds absurd in many people's ears. In the minds of the whole of Christendom that throne is associated with the very worst of bad tidings. They picture the whole human race as standing before this throne in fear and trembling, awaiting only the final words in which is pronounced their everlasting doom. For the most of them that doom is nothing less than an eternity of torments—so they say.

This is a gross error. The foundation of it is owing (first) to a misconception of God's purposes, and (second) to a failure to recognise the order of events as given in Revelation 20. Some do indeed see that the first three verses cover one description of the whole thousand years. They describe what will be done with Satan during that period. [Please read verses 1-3.] They see also that vss. 4-6 describe the reign of the Saints for the whole thousand years. [Please read.] And they further see that verses 7-10 relate to an experience at the end of the thousand years. *[Please read.]*

But instead of realizing that verses 11 to 15 constitute another picture covering the whole of the 1000 years also, they think that the subject matter of the verses **only begins at the end** of the 1000 years.

In this view the whole work of the Great White Throne *must be accomplished in a very brief space of time.* It must be a summary work of destruction, or rather the condemnation afresh of the majority of mankind and sending them back to an eternity of torments from whence they have been brought out for the purpose of passing before the throne only to hear their final condemnation.

Inconsistency of the Error

With regard to this gross misconception of the passage we have first to remark how inconsistent it is with the previous sections of the chapter, each of which covers the thousand year period. It is also inconsistent with the *known character of God and of Christ; inconsistent with* the statement that it is a priestly throne, a throne of mercy, because He who sits upon it is no other than the great Melchisedec High Priest, to whom the promise was made that He should sit upon the throne for the purpose of blessing all the families of the earth.—Heb. 5: 9, 10.

Inconsistent also is this common view with our Lord's statement already quoted in this conference that it shall be "more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." (Matthew 11: 24.) As Sodom and Gomorrah are among the myriad dead called forth to appear before this Great White Throne, a proper interpretation must allow time for the outworking of His purposes concerning these and other nations not now found on the earth, who died in ignorance of the Only Name.

Why Great and White

The work of the Great White Throne should be considered in conjunction with other pictures of the thousand years; notably Revelation 21: 1-27; 7: 9-17. If we are careful to do this we shall see that these pictures all illustrate different aspects of the thousand years, yet they are all in perfect agreement as to the facts and conditions to obtain then, under the reign of the King of kings and His joint heirs. In all of these pictures there is first the "throne," indicating that there is to be a ruling authority. In each it is the same "great" throne and "white" throne. It is great because the greatest of rulers sits upon it, and it is universal in its scope. It is white because founded on purity, justice, and truth.—1 Timothy 6: 15, 16; Hebrews 1: 8.

Which Heaven and Earth Flee Away?

As to the time when the rulership of the Great White Throne will begin, this is indicated in Revelation 20: 11 and 21: 1. In these passages the throne is seen to be closely associated with the fleeing away of the first heaven and the first earth. This gives us a wide view without detail of the setting up of the kingdom of God in the place of the kingdoms of this world as they now exist with their social order and ruling powers—political and ecclesiastical—all of which are represented in the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream —Daniel 2. These all "fled" from before His face, as a conquered foe flees before the face of the conquerer. It is not to be understood that the literal heavens and earth are here meant as fleeing away, for the heavenly Jerusalem is seen coming down to the earth, to bring joy and blessing to its inhabitants. The earth must therefore remain and have dwellers on its surface.

Judged out of the Books

Revelation 7 pictures a great multitude of all nations, peoples, and tongues as having stood before the throne, and as gaining the victory by the blood of the Lamb. Revelation 20: 12 represents this same great multitude as standing before the throne, to be judged out of the books, showing that the thousand years' reign is a day of judgment. Altogether too hastily some Christians have concluded that the judgment is only concerning the deeds of their previous life on earth, and that the "books" out of which they are judged are merely records (which had been kept by the angels) of their good and bad deeds.

Now there is no hint anywhere in the Scriptures that such books are kept, and that all the deeds good and bad will be read out in the hearing of the whole universe on the judgment day. Every person's character is a book open at all times to the eyes of God. But that is not the book referred to in the text. The books to be opened and out of which men will be judged during the thousand years are the Scriptures, the word of Truth—in other words, the GOSPEL, the Everlasting Gospel, or good news of salvation from sin through the blood of the Lamb.

The great multitude mentioned by the apostle (Revelation 7) as standing before the throne will consist for the greater part of those who have been in the grave but have been brought out by a wonderful resurrection. The Scriptures tell us in the plainest possible words that the dead are neither better nor worse in character for their period in the grave, for they know nothing. (Psalm 146: 4; Ecclesiastes 9: 10.) We may take it therefore that when they are called forth by the Lord they will arise as they were before they died—with imperfect bodies and imperfect brains and defective characters.

The church who are to reign with Christ are resurrected perfect spirit beings in His likeness. (1 John 3: 2; 4: 24; Hebrews 1: 3.) This can be done because in this life they became "new creatures" in Christ, and developed the Christ-like character suitable to be "clothed upon" with the "house from heaven." (2 Corinthians 5: 17, 1-4.) But the unenlightened of humanity have had no such opportunity to receive a new mind and to cultivate a character in harmony with God's. When resurrected they must be themselves, or it would be useless to speak of them coming forth in a resurrection. They must be able to recognise themselves as sinners of the Adamic race called from the grave to have the benefit of enlightenment and the opportunity to accept the death of Jesus on the cross as having been for their sins.

Since the New Covenant will be in operation during the thousand years, with its promise that those who come under it will receive forgiveness of sins, it is clear that men must acknowledge their imperfect mental, moral, and physical condition, and also their need of the New Covenant provisions and the Lord's services as Mediator to reconcile them to God on their repentance from the evil deeds, thoughts, and words of their past life.

The Gospel nowhere offers salvation in sin; it nowhere says men can be saved without repentance and confession. Those who refuse to make such reprentance and confession after enlightment will be demonstrating their characters as set in perversity and disobedience.

The Standard and Method of Judgment

The standard of righteousness then required will be the same as that now demanded as set forth in the Scriptures God's own righteousness is that standard, and at first that righteouness will be imputed on account of faith. (Romans 3: 21-26.) But as the resurrected multitudes advance in knowledge and obedience they will also improve in their physical being; mind, body, and character all developing symmetrically toward perfection.

Sick and Hungry Cared For

The method of this character development during the Kingdom age is set forth in the parable of "The Sheep and the Goats." In Matthew 25: 31 we have a record of this.

The teaching of the parable begins—"When the Son of man shall come in his glory." As this will occur at His Second Advent, it is obvious that the parable does not apply now. It is really a picture indicating some of the conditions which will obtain during the Kingdom age.

The parable represents the good and obedient members of the human race then under judgment on the earth as "sheep." It represents the perverse and hard-hearted as "goats." The sheep are on His right hand of favor; the goats on the left hand of disapproval. But this difference between them will not be discernible immediately. Time will be required to demonstrate who are the "good" and "obedient," as well as who are the "perverse" and "selfish." And the demonstration will be exceedingly practical.

The whole human race brought back by the resurrection in a state of ignorance and imperfection will require the exercise of kindness and generosity from each individual to every other. There must be a genuine spirit of helpfulness prevailing, for, as the parable shows, there will be sick, hungry, thirsty, naked, and poor amongst them. Here will be the opportunity to show the genuineness of their sympathies with "my brethren," by rendering such aid and comfort as they are able to give. Those who do this will thereby show a loving disposition, which will of course receive the approval and commendation of the Lord Jesus, the great Judge. Others not lovingly inclined nor entering willingly, enthusiastically, into the work of that age, but manifesting the opposite disposition of selfishness and hardness of heart, will have a judgment against them. Thus the two classes will become discernible always and clearly in the eyes of the great Judge, and more or less so in the eyes of the people.

The Books Opened

But there is absolutely no good reason why any should be on His "left hand." For in that age the knowledge of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11: 9.) That is what is meant by the "books" being opened. (Revelation 20: 12.) And after that knowledge has been grasped and fully understood, what excuse could there be for sin? What the people will learn in that age is that God is benevolent: He is kind; and abundance of evidence of this will be all around them. Why then be perverse and hard-hearted in the face of such blessings? There will be no excuse.

That no one may justly advance the plea of ignorance as an excuse for sin of any description is evident in view of 1 Timothy 2: 4-6. The apostle there declares that it is God's will that all men shall come to an exact knowledge of the truth. (See literal rendering.) When that has been brought to them they cannot be ignorant, and hence they are left without excuse for perversity and a rebellious mind.

The apostle in this passage goes so far as to tell us the chief feature of that truth, and it turns out to be something of which most people are woefully ignorant to-day; viz., that "there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." Much earlier than the time at which the apostle wrote these words, the Lord Jesus had been recognised as "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." (John 1: 9.) It is obvious therefore that this prophecy will be fulfilled when the exact knowledge of the truth reaches every individual in the Kingdom age.

This separation then, of the sheep and the goats, is in order that the Lord may deal definitely and finally with them at the end of their period of judgment. The obedient, who are on His right hand (that is, in the place of favour), enter into life, and "inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Verse 34.) That is, they are to be given everlasting life as human beings on the earth—which will by then have been made beautiful, and perfected in every way.

But as for the others, the disobedient on the left hand of disfavour, they are to go into "everlasting fire" (verse 41, or verse 46), "go away into everlasting punishment"; i.e. a punishment that will last forever. (Matthew 25: 46.) The meaning of the original word here recorded "punishment" is a "cutting off." It signifies endless death; and thus this passage agrees with many others regarding the punishment of the wilfully wicked.—2 Thessalonians 1: 9; Psalm 69: 28; Acts 3: 23; Psalm 9: 17, R.V.

In other passages they are represented as being cast into the "lake of fire," which other passages again inform us is **Gehenna**. (Matthew 18: 8, 9; Mark 9: 43.) Both these terms refer to the fires which were kept continually burning in the valley of Hinnom outside the walls of Jerusalem to destroy the refuse of the city. Anything cast into the fires was destroyed utterly, and that is the lesson of the "lake of fire"—the utter destruction of the wilfully wicked.

Already we know of one who is to receive that fearful doom, viz., the devil. But all his angels are to be with him also. (Matthew 25: 41.) These angels or messengers are human and spirit beings who remain, with Satan, recalcitrant—perverse and rebellious—to the last.

There is nothing alive then in the "lake of fire" or **Gehenna**. The Gospel contains no such thing as everlasting suffering—neither mental nor physical suffering. The punishment of Adamic sin is **death**. (Romans 5: 12; 6: 23.) This the whole race has experienced up to the present. The punishment of wilful sin is also death; but because it is connected with the second great judgment it is the **Second** death. From this no release has been arranged; it is everlasting.

But the overthrow of Satan with his minions will not be accomplished until about 1000 years from now; for although he is to be bound for that period, at the end of it he is to be loosed for a "little season." This is for a specific purpose in the Divine arrangements, and, that being done, he is to be finally destroyed with all who follow him.

I am sure it must be clear to all of us that God could not for reasons of His love and justice consign the wilfully wicked—not even Satan—to an eternity of suffering. Neither could He allow them to live or exert influence on the earth to mar the happiness and peace of His obedient people and to be a constant menace to their holiness of life. There is therefore but the one thing for them—destruction.

The River of Water of Life

Passing now from these somewhat gloomy considerations, we feast our eyes on something really beautiful, all of which might easily have been the happy portion of even the incorrigibles.

Out of the Great White Throne there flows a river clear as crystal. Its water is the water of life. Anyone drinking that water shall live. On either side of the river were trees, and these were deriving their life from its waters. Every month they brought forth a crop of fruit, and the leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations. (Revelation 22: 1, 2.) All this is very simple and very beautiful as a picture; but what does it mean?

From a careful reading of many parts of the Scriptures it may be seen that "water" is frequently used to signify Truth. That is precisely what will flow out from the Throne. The world is excessively ignorant of God's true purposes towards it and of the part played in those purposes by His well-beloved Son. But Satan, who is interested in maintaining this ignorance, when he is bound will be unable to deceive the nations, and Truth will flow freely in the world from the Great White Throne.

As for the trees planted by the river, the Psalmist helps us to understand their significance. They represent Righteous Men. Please read Psalm 1: 1-3.

No other personalities but the faithful of ancient times will fit this description; for these, we know, are to be brought back perfected, and are to hold a high place in Christ's government on the earth and to exercise princely authority over the rest of men. (Hebrews 11: 35, 40; Psalm 45: 16.) They were faithful to the Truth in their day, and are represented as in a flourishing condition in the kingdom.

The rest of the world will note that they are as closely as possible attached to the Throne by the outflowing Truth and in full enjoyment of its specific and wonderful advantages, and they will be encouraged to be the same. As many as will do this will be as fruits of these "trees," and every month there will be a great crop. Taking the thirty days of the month to signify thirty years (Ezekiel 4: 6), we may understand that many men will have "ripened," or come to a state of perfection by the powers and processes of the kingdom, within that time, and perhaps will thus also themselves become trees planted by the rivers of water—righteous men.

The leaves of the trees were for the healing of the nations. From this it is evident that the nations when raised from the dead will be in an imperfect state, even as the parable just considered shows, and will be in need of healing. In nature the leaves of a tree are the breathing organs, and are essential in fruit production. Every orchardist knows that if the leaves are destroyed by disease or pests the fruit withers or does not even form. What the ancient worthies will have to say to the world and the example of holiness they will show will be as important and necessary to the decrepit world as the leaves of the tree are to the production of fruit. Also we may say that their example and their words will be as the leaves of the tree—a testimony or a profession.

A World Wide Invitation

In Revelation 22: 17 we are told that the Spirit and the bride will then say, "Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Others then beside the "Spirit and the bride" will be issuing this wonderful world-wide invitation. And who so prominent amongst the "others" in this as those righteous men the ancient worthies—so closely connected with the throne from the first?

This is the Everlasting Gospel that will come from the throne in that day—Forgiveness, Reconciliation, Life for evermore.

Paul said that even in his day the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men had appeared. (Titus 2: 11.) That was the good news that appeared, and its benefits were open to Jews as well as Gentiles then. But God's purpose to have all men enlightened that this gospel might "appear" to every individual for whom Christ died is clearly implied in the statement. In this age it has "appeared" to only a few; but in the 1000 years it will appear as the River of Life to all peoples, nations, and tongues—to "all the dead small and great" standing as subjects before the Great White Throne.

If they do not drink of this water they shall not live. It is God's gift to the human race.

I ask you, my friends, to consider—Is there anything on the earth quite as good as the Everlasting Gospel? Your answer is a most emphatic NO! Then let us declare it to the fullest extent of our powers. And although the whole of Christendom has reason to be thoroughly ashamed of the gospel they preach, we have no reason to be ashamed of this, for it is indeed—"The power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."—Romans 1: 16.

—F.S.

Back to the Bible! **You are cordially invited to the Bible Talks given every Sunday Evening at 6.45. in the South Yarra Hall, opposite South Yarra Station, Melbourne. These addresses are undenominational, and they take you "Back to the Bible." The Editor of this journal is usually the speaker. COME, and WELCOME.**

Special Notice

NEARLY ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to The New Covenant Advocate expire with the March issue. This reminder is therefore given so that all Readers may co-operate by sending their renewals promptly. The price per year in Australia and New Zealand is 4/-, elsewhere 5/- ($1.25); and it will be a great help if all will give early attention.

Those who receive the N.C.A. free on special terms on account of inability to pay are as welcome as ever.

Trial Subscriptions

Send four addresses of friends whom you desire to interest in the Good Tidings along with the price of a year's subscription. The N.C.A. will be sent for three months to each of the addresses. You are not limited to four addresses.

Revision of List

The List of N.C.A. Readers is about to be revised, and those who have not arranged for continuance, either by—

(1) Cash payment,
(2) Promise to pay later, or
(3) Request on special terms,

are in great danger of missing their paper.

This revision of the List is not made because of a wish on our part that any who desire the N.C.A. monthly visits should be deprived of them, but because the Post Office department requires it of publications posted at the special newspaper rates. The conditions are easy, but they must be observed. Therefore write us AT ONCE in terms of No. 1, 2, or 3, as above, and everything will go on as before.

New and Renewal and Trial Subscriptions, orders for single copies, and requests for N.C.A. on special terms, also orders for books and tracts, and remittances for all purposes may be sent to Melbourne, Nottingham, Brooklyn, or Durban, which ever is most convenient.

Thanksgiving Fund

DONATIONS to the Thanksgiving Fund are applied in reduction of the eventual price of the special April 1929 number of N.C.A., issued in celebration of the beginning of the 21st year of publication. Please see N.C.A. for March 1929, page 208, for full particulars. This Fund will soon be closed, and the price of April number will be determined according to the then state of affairs. For the present, until further notice, the price of the April Thanksgiving number is one shilling (25 cents) per single copy; six shillings ($1.50) per dozen postpaid to one address; seven shillings ($1.75) per dozen posted to various addresses. Since last report the following donations have been received—

27, 2/-; 28, 5/-; 29, 11/2; 30, £1:12:0; 31, £5; 32, 16/-; 33, £5:19:0; 34, 6/-; 35, 8/-; 36, 15/-; 37, 4/-; 38, £1; 39, £1:6:0; received at Nottingham, 190, 5/-; total for 2 months, £18:9:2 ($89.70); previously reported, £73:11:10 ($357.65); total to date, £92:5:0 ($447.35).

Library Supply Fund

8, £3:7:6; 9, £30; 10, £4:17:6; 11, £1:13:4; received at Nottingham, 185, 10/-; total for 2 months, £40:8:4 ($196.42); previously reported, £47:19:4 ($233.11); total for 4 months, £88:7:8 ($429.53); the amount received in the last two months enabling us to send 323 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 3432 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

28, 14/8; 29, £2; 30, 2/-; 31, 12/-; 32, 8/-; 33, 10/-; 34, £1; 35, £1; 36, 6/-; 37, 6/-; 38, £10; 39, 4/-; 40, 5/6; 41, £3:15; 42, £6; 43, 16/-; 44, £3; 45, £3:5:0; 46, 3/8; 47, 1/8; received at Nottingham, 180, 15/-; 181, 5/-; 182, £2:15:0; 183, 3/-; 184, 10/-; 187, 9/9; 188, £2; 189, 15/-; 191, 1/3; 192, 4/8; 193, £2:13:0; 194, 16/-; total for 2 months, £45:17:2 ($202.87); previously reported, £67:14:5 ($329.11); total for 4 months, £113:11:7 ($531.98); reducing the adverse balance to £28 ($140).

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!

41, 6/-; 42, 2/-; 43, £2:10:0; 44, £1; 45, £2; 46, 2/-; 47, 5/-; 48, £1:5:0; 49, £3:5:0; 50, £2; 51, 4/-; 52, 2/-; 53, £1; 54, £1; 55, 2/-; 56, £3:15:0; 57, 2/-; 58, 3/-; 59, £1:16:0; received at Nottingham, 186, 10/-; total for 2 months, £21:9:0 ($104.25); previously reported, £52:19:4 ($257.42); total for 4 months, £74:8:4 ($361.67); reducing the adverse balance to £10 ($50).

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/8 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($8); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Covenant Advocate and . . . . Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other Countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Communications to Address all NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP
YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA. JUNE 1, 1929 No. 3

All Nations of Men of One Blood

FROM THE ATHENIAN inscription "to the Unknown God" the apostle Paul drew a sermon on the true God, Lord of heaven and earth, who made the world and all things therein, and gave life, breath, and all necessary things to His animate creation, including man. Not difficult then is it to believe that this mighty God controls the destinies of men; that He "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17: 23-26.) In the Scripture account of Creation and in all references thereto in the New Testament, we learn that God made man as a direct creation, and that all nations of men, however varied in race, language, color, and degree of civilisation, are descended from that one. Nor is it surprising that God should have regard to His handiwork, and desire "that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him."

The descendants of Noah had every opportunity to retain God in their knowledge, but many failed to do this, as stated in Romans 1. Others, like Abraham, believed in the true God, and God took them into His confidence, revealing Himself to them by covenants of promise and providential guidance of their affairs. When Paul visited Athens and other cities of Macedonia (Acts 16: 9, 10) the time had come to recall the wanderers to the true God whom they had forsaken, yet who had never ceased to provide for them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons. (Acts 14: 15-17.) All men everywhere were under obligation to render worship to this bountiful Provider, especially in view of the fact that He had sent His Son—His well-beloved and only begotten Son—as Reconciler, through the blood of His cross.

All men, being of one blood, were under the same condemnation in Adam. All were redeemed by the one great sacrifice on Calvary. All might—must if they want to come at all—come in the one way, through the One Mediator; and all—even the most degraded—were capable of understanding so simple a matter as reconciliation with the Great God from whom their ancestors had wandered away. That all are of "one blood"—as Paul said they were—is an important article of the Christian faith.

Migration of Nations

Infidels and skeptics have long ridiculed the Bible account of creation and have asserted that peoples named in the Bible never existed. But monuments and tombs, clay tablets and rock inscriptions have testified to the truth of the Bible. At the present time it is fashionable in some quarters to claim descent—or ascent—from the ape as more befitting human dignity, while rejecting the Bible statement that all nations came of one blood; yet science has at least proved this much, that the blood of the ape, on analysis, is not at all like the blood of man. Perhaps it has been flattering to the white races to think that the coloured races are nearer their ape ancestors, and this view has to their minds justified exploiting them—giving them less kindness and consideration than they do their beasts of burden.

Genesis 10 tells something of the migrations of nations after the flood, and chapter 11 tells of the building of the tower of Babel and how the Lord scattered the peoples abroad. By some this history is waved aside as unreliable tradition. For ourselves, we see no reason to doubt its truth. Who can prove that the ark did not rest on Ararat? Who can deny that Noah and his family settled in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, including what afterward became known as the Chaldean plains? Some would like to shift the "cradle of the race" to Central Asia, and are looking there for evidence; but, whatever they might find, the result would only be their surmise versus the Bible witness. And the veracity and accuracy of the Bible have been too well established to be lightly cast aside.

Well, if it be granted that all nations are descended from Noah and his family, how do we account for the black man and the brown man and the yellow man and the South Sea islanders? As to the latter, here is what purports to be a carefully studied out theory of their origin based on some

facts and much tradition, which recently appeared in the Melbourne "Herald"—

THE POLYNESIAN RACE

The area occupied by the Polynesian race in the Pacific is not less than 2,000,000 square miles, yet the land surface within this area is relatively small and varies from New Zealand, with its 100,000 square miles, to little atolls barely large enough to resist the waves. The race is scattered from Hawaii in the north to New Zealand in the south, from the New Hebrides in the west to Easter Island in the east, and their homogeneity is a remarkable feature. Nobody who has studied their customs, their language, and their legends can doubt that they have a common origin. Whence, then, came they?

A person who did much to supply the answer to that question was Stephenson P. Smith. His conclusion, reached after half a century of study and investigation, was that the Polynesians came from India, and are a branch of the Aryan race, from which sprang the white European races. He put forward this opinion after studying the question in Polynesia, without much knowledge of the evidence that could be gathered in India. Other men have continued the work further afield, and the language links they have been able to trace go far toward making the Indian origin of the Polynesians an established fact.

The Maoris are the most numerous and most important branch of the Polynesians, and they provided Mr. Smith with the starting point of his studies. His results are presented in a book published several years ago under the caption of "Hawaii: The Original Home of the Maori." Like other authorities, Mr. Smith has attached great importance to the traditions and genealogies of the Polynesian peoples. The natives of these wonderful islands in our midst had no written language and they had no system of reckoning time by decades or centuries. They connected the events of the past with the lives of individuals.

But, on the other hand, their verbal traditions were preserved with extraordinary care. The priests or tohungas taught their people that the omission or the substitution of a word was a sin against the gods, likely to be visited with summary vengeance, the ceremonial chanting of the old songs and invocations being surrounded with solemnity. The genealogical tables were kept even more scrupulously than the traditions. They were considered to be sacred, being always recited on ceremonial occasions. The man of birth was expected to be able to recite his pedigree for at least twenty generations, and the notion of kinship was carried to degrees of relationship that would scarcely be recognised by European peoples.

The Maori genealogies show that the great migration to New Zealand took place twenty-one or twenty-two generations back from the year 1900, or roughly in the year 1350! How very exact tradition can be is illustrated by the fact that common ancestors of the Maoris, Raratongans and Hawaiians, two brothers named Hua and Hiro, can be traced through genealogies that could not have been compared for hundreds of years before the white man undertook the task. Hiro and Hua flourished in the period 1250-1275 A.D., and it is amazing to know that at that time, more than 200 years before Columbus made his epoch-making voyages across the Atlantic, the Polynesians in their open canoes were proving themselves to be hardier and more daring navigators than Europe was able to produce before or after.

A close comparison of genealogies and other evidence has led the investigators to believe that the ancestors of the Polynesians left China about 2400 years ago. Here a curious fragment of evidence—or coincidence—may be mentioned. If the Polynesians left India about the period indicated they might be expected to have known something of the Buddhist teacher Gotama who began his work about 2450 years ago. There is no trace of Buddhism to be found in Polynesian history or mythology: but the word "Buddha" in the Polynesian dialect would become "Puta" and one of the most ancient of the Maori traditions, translated long before the theory of Indian origin was evolved, relates that "Puta was the name of the man who was commissioned to call on all the people of the world to believe in God." The tradition proceeds to tell that the tribes were rebellious, and that Puta in vengeance brought about a vast natural disturbance that caused everyone to perish. May this be a dim recollection of some great ethnic upheaval that drove the original Polynesians eastward?

A word more about the Polynesian navigators. One of the most famous of them was Hawaii-loa, who flourished in Hawaii about 1600 years ago when the Christian religion was not more than 300 years old. Hawaii-loa made one of his voyages into Indonesia, and there is a tradition that he brought back to his home two white men who married into the native race. A white strain obviously runs through the Polynesians, for in all the branches there are to be found people with quite light hair and fair complexions. With the Maoris this strain frequently runs in families for generations. What a story of adventure was lost with those two unknown white men!

Then there was Ui-te-Rangiora, surely one of the greatest sailors of all time. In the seventh century, A.D., we find that this man went south "into the space beyond Rapa," an island with strange needle-like peaks lying 1100 miles south-east of Rarotonga. And he and his men, according to the old belief, saw "the monstrous seas; the female who dwells in those mountainous waves, whose tresses wave about in the waters and on the surface of the sea; and the frozen sea of Pia with the deceitful animal of that sea who dives to great depths—a foggy, misty and dark place not seen by the sun. Other things are like rocks, whose summits pierce the skies, and are completely bare and without any vegetation on them."

Pia, it should be noted, is the native word for arrowroot which, when scraped, is as white as snow. The "things like rocks" presumably were the icebergs, and "the deceiful animal" the seal or sea-elephant. The waving tresses are explained by the presence of bull-kelp, a sea-plant whose leaves are often more than 50 feet long and is quite a feature of the coastal waters of the gaunt and lonely sub-Antarctic islands.

The fascinating story, bearing as it does every essence of truth, can only mean that Ui-te-Rangiora actually sent his open canoe into the Antarctic regions, forestalling Magellan's first voyage by 900 years.

This theory goes no further back than the possibility or probability that the Polynesians were originally white, and came from India some time within the Christian era. Yet the "taboo" of the South Sea Islanders is the "Orunda" of certain West Coast African tribes. Are they related also? The old theory was that most of the Islanders came across from the Malay peninsula and belong to the brown race. If now the conclusion is that the Polynesians were originally white, why not also the Malays (brown) and the Chinese (yellow)?

The Black Man

A greater problem is that of the black man. How did he get into Africa? and was he black when he went there? or did he become black and his hair crinkly as a result of centuries in the torrid zone? It is worth while to note that many of their laws and customs resemble ordinances under the Jewish law; and that they have both a code of laws and a conception of civility superior to that of many whites who go amongst them. Says the Rev. Robert Hamill Nassau, in "Fetichism in West Africa" (page 1)—

That strain of the Negro race which is known ethnologically as "Bantu," occupies all of the southern portion of the African continent below the fourth degree of north latitude. It is divided into a multitude of tribes, each with its own peculiar dialect. All these dialects are cognate in their grammar. Some of them vary only slightly in their vocabulary. In others the vocabulary is so distinctly different that it is not undertood by tribes only one hundred miles apart, while that of others a thousand miles away may be intelligible.

In their migrations the tribes have been like a river, with its windings, currents swift or slow; there have been even, in places, back currents; and elsewhere quiet, almost stagnant pools. But they all—from the Divala at Kamerun on the

West Coast across to the Kiswahile at Zanzibar on the East, and from Buganda by the Victoria Nyanza at the north down to Zulu in the south at the Cape—have a uniformity in language, tribal organisation, family customs, judicial rules and regulations, marriage ceremonies, funeral rites, and religious beliefs and practice. Dissimilarities have crept in with mixture among themselves by intermarriage, the example of foreigners, with some forms of foreign civilization and education, degradation by foreign vice, elevation by Christianity, and compulsion by foreign governents.

P. 3.—Before foreign slave-trade was introduced, and subsequently the ivory, rubber, palm-oil, and mahogany trades, the occupations of the natives were hunting, fishing, and agriculture. They subsisted on wild meats, fish, forest fruits and nuts, and the cultivated plantains, cassava, maize, groundnuts, yams, eddoes, sweet potatoes, and a few other vegetables.

After naming several interior tribes, Dr. Nassau says—"These tribes all have traditions of their having come from the far North-east." After forty years' missionary work among the natives, during which time he engaged many of them in private conversation and questionings, with a view to finding out if behind all their superstition they believed in a Supreme Being, Dr. Nassau is convinced that they did, though under pressure from unsympathetic travellers they did not always acknowledge it. But to Dr. Nassau many confessed a belief in a great Creator who made all things, themselves included, and even called Him their Father. But they feared the evil spirits which they supposed inhabited trees, stones, etc. Dr. Nassau points out that in this they differed little from the Grecians who erected idols to their gods or spirits whom they propitiated with gifts, and to whom Paul preached the gospel of the true God and His love. This is not surprising when it is remembered that the Greek and Roman civilizations endured for centuries, and the whole Gentile world was given over to idolatry and superstition for many centuries before their time.—Pages 36-41, 44-46.

Not only did Dr. Nassau find Jewish and pre-Jewish customs (e.g. circumcision, and the right of sanctuary) practised by the African native tribes, but also what are now recognised as Christian ethics. On this point he says (pp. 37, 38)—

I believe that the knowledge of their Anzam or Anyambe [native names for the Creator] has come down—clouded though it be and fearfully obscured and marred, but still a revelation—from Jehovah Himself. Most of the same virtues which we in our enlightened Christianity commend, and many of the vices which we denounce, they respectively praise and denounce. No one of them praises to me theft or falsehood or murder; They speak of certain virtues as "good," and of other things which are "bad," though, just as do the depraved of Christian lands, they follow the vices they condemn.

While all this is true, their knowledge of God is almost simply a theory. It is an accepted belief, but it does not often influence their life.

The difficulty with the African black, as with other native races, has been the tyranny of the evil spirits operating through wizards and fetiches.* Dr. Nassau found success by appealing to their conception of a Supreme Being and urging them to obedience to that Being, just as did Paul on Mars Hill. It is also true that among blacks, as among whites, some are brainier than others, and a soundly converted native of the more intelligent class responds well to higher forms of education.

*To this difficulty professedly Christian nations have added the drink evil. In a speech made last April, the Rev. James Barr, Labor member of the House of Commons, "dealt with the evils arising from the importation of liquor for the Gold Coast natives of Africa. Mr. Barr said that in 1913, the importation of spirits reached 1,759,492 gallons. During the war there had been a great decrease, but importation was now increasing rapidly. The Secretary of State admitted that the liquor evil among the natives was a great problem, which called for the co-operation of Government and people to combat."—*Melbourne "Herald," June 13, '29.*

The Australian Aboriginal

"Similarity in witchcraft practices is one of the several grounds held by ethnologists, as proving identity in origin of the African Negro and the Australian black," says Dr. Nassau (p. 119), and quotes as follows from Dr. Carl Lumholtz's book, "Among Cannibals," as follows—

In the various [Australian] tribes are so-called wizards, who pretend to communicate with the spirits of the dead and get information from them. They are able to produce sickness or death whenever they please, and they can produce or stop rain and many other things. Hence these wizards are greatly feared. Attention is called to the influence of this fear of witchcraft upon the character and customs of the natives.

If, as here suggested, the Australian aboriginal and the African negro derived their beliefs and practices from a common ancestry, and if their degraded state in many respects is due to the prevalence of witchcraft, we have a further reason for confidence in the Scripture statements that Satan is the "god [or ruler] of this world," that it is not color of skin that degrades but the thoughts of the heart, and that neither superstition nor color is proper ground on which to deny that other statement, namely, that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

It has been customary to speak of the Australian aboriginal as the lowest in intelligence of all human beings. Professor Sir Baldwin Spencer, who has made a special study of the Central and Northern Australian tribes, has published photographs, including that of a "medicine-man" whom he describes as an almost perfect specimen of manhood, who would justify the description of the natives of the Western district [State of Victoria] given in the letter of a pioneer pastoralist written in the 40's. "They have the finest physiques," he says, "of any people in the world, and on the bodies of Greek gods they carry the heads of Greek philosophers."

The "heads of Greek philosophers" might well have carried the Grecian and pre-Grecian superstitions to Australia. Some suggestions of Hindooism have also been found among the superstitious beliefs of some of the Australian tribes.

Under the title, "We Owe a Duty to Our Aborigines," published in the Melbourne "Herald," Dec. 22, '28, the Rev. Dr. John Mathew, qualified to speak authoritatively by a long life in close touch with the aborigines, says—

To me the blacks are of absorbing interest. On the whole, I would say that they are a good-natured, kind and gentle people. But their untrained minds are easily disturbed. When roused to passion they can be very cruel. They are, as a rule, very indulgent to children, and just as kind to their dogs. The greatest defect in their character is instability. Their want of outlook, their fickleness and weakness of will, are largely the occasion of their giving way so easily

to intemperance and other vices. A fact that shows out with remarkable prominence is the greater vitality of the half-caste compared with the pure blacks. The half-caste lives longer, is stronger, and more prolific.

The Australian race is doomed to perish rapidly by contact with European civilisation and vice, and unless there can be secured practically complete detachment from Europeans—an experiment that ought to be attempted—no power on earth can prevent its extinction.

The blacks have assisted in their own dispossession and extermination: guiding the white aliens through their forests, giving them much of their own strength at a beggarly rate of recompense, submitting contentedly to indignity and oppression, and rewarding injuries and insults with gentleness and service. True they have committed robbery, and murder, and perpetrated several massacres. But they have often been trained to such offences by the lawless, brutal, indecent, and tyrannical behaviour of the white man with whom they have come into contact.

For as a matter of fact the outskirts of civilisation have a strong admixture of barbarism. The natives have received much cruel and unjust treatment from those who have taken their heritage away from them, and if the weaker side has retaliated, is it to be wondered at?

The cruelties perpetrated by the native police upon their own kindred in the name of the law, although excessive and often unwarrantable, may be passed over, because, granted the right to colonise and dispossess, a certain degree of conflict was inevitable, and it has been alleged by humane and competent judges that where the native police, well-officered, patrolled a district, not only was property secure, but the blacks were exempted from vengeful and bloody attack by the settlers.

But woe for the atrocious conduct of individual white men, who, feeling secure from legal penalties and native reprisals, outraged and oppressed and hunted at their will.

It used to be a common saying among bushmen, "It's no use to hit a blackfellow with your fist, he won't feel it," and the corollary was that a heavy boot, or a stout stick, or an iron bolt or a stockwhip, were legitimate and suitable instruments of persuasion or punishment. A powerful, heavy bullock-driver would maul a blackboy as an elephant might a baboon. To kick the offender, trample on him, and kneel on and pommel his chest and stomach, were usual courses of procedure, and the brute who could do these things deftly, and inspire a wholesome awe in the outraged blackfellow, would be entitled to respect. "I would as soon shoot a blackfellow as a dog," was no uncommon saying, which some carried into practice.

Terrorising and murder, both by poison and bullet, were once plentiful enough on the back stations, and used to be spoken about freely where not practised. At the bar of God the souls of the aborigines will have a heavy indictment to present against men of our blood who have wronged and brutalised them.

While acknowledging and deploring the excesses of which the colonists have been guilty, it would be unjust to overlook the manifold instances of habitual humane treatment at the hands of some of the station owners and their employees. But nothing deserving the name of an equivalent has ever been rendered, whether by individual favor or associated effort in civilising and Christianising, to the weak, peaceful, kindly people from whom Australia's glorious golden land has been wrested so speedily and at so trifling a cost.

Wanted: A Fair Deal

To show what an Australian aboriginal with no admixture whatever of white blood can become, we quote the following, also from the Melbourne "Herald"—

Mr. Shadrach Livingston James, a full-blooded aborigine, attended the conference to-day called by the Minister for Home Affairs (Mr. Abbott) to discuss the Bleakley report on native problems. Mr. James represented the aborigine.

Mr. S. L. James is a full-blooded aborigine with the poise and cultured speech of the educated white man. Though still quite a young man he is profound in his reflections on the problem of emancipating his people. He wants them to take their share in the development of the country of which he feels they are the rightful owners.

His father was for some years a grazier in the Cummergunja district of N.S.W., but has now retired and is living in Melbourne. Mr. James, senr., is noticeably proud of his clever son, and hopes to see him accomplish great things for the cause to which they are both whole-heartedly devoted.

Missionaries Praised

"The missionaries are the best help my people have," said Mr. S. L. James to-day. "It is to their efforts that we owe what opportunities we have to raise the standard of our civilisation, and take our place in the modern world.

"Many of us are as intelligent and as well educated as lots of white men, but we cannot get the chance to prove our ability. Even Government departments discriminate against us.

"What we want is an aboriginal representative in Parliament, and a native administrator working for us under the direction of the Minister.

"The hearts of many of my people are burning with ambition, but the only way they can rise is with the aid and encouragement of the Government.

Civil Reforms Wanted

"Our lands have been taken, and for lack of opportunity we are a backward people. The missionaries have tried to train as many of us as possible. Now we ask for proper scope to develop.

"I think that the spiritual leadership of the churches is of the greatest value, but it should be supplemented by reforms in the civil administration."

A photo of "Crooked Arm Charlie" recently appeared in a Melbourne daily, the name being applied because he is left handed. In native warfare he throws a sixteen-foot spear some 150 yards with his wommera (spear thrower) in a different direction to that expected by his opponents, who are used to right-hand throwers. Another well known figure at the Port George (North-West Australia) mission is "Samson," a name bestowed by the beach-combers on account of his physical development. Samson is "six foot ten in height, and has a chest development in proportion. At the present time he is engaged in hauling flour from the Broome-George mission boat. He has had his locks shorn, and his warlike propensities are now suppressed."

If physique and a well-shaped head count for anything, we may refer to a photo. of a native king in the Niger Delta, contained in Dr. Nassau's book. Not only the observing but also the reasoning faculties are well developed.

The theory that man evolved from a lower form of life has never been accepted by all scientists, though its growing popularity and its adoption in many Christian pulpits might appear to indicate that it was. The strong resistance to its being taught in the public schools of some of the American States has the approval of many scientific men who assert that evolution is a theory and nothing but a theory; an hypothesis, and not a proved fact, and that the parents are within their rights when they refuse to allow their children to be taught a mere theory as though it were a proven fact.

The professor of anatomy in London University gave an interview to a press correspondent recently. Professor Elliott Smith, he says, is known throughout the world for his anthropological researches. While still using the term "primitive man," the Professor asserts that he was not the cruel savage usually depicted under the title "cave man." From his study of primitive peoples now living he concludes that—"Natural man was probably a merry and good natured fellow, honest and considerate, chaste and peaceful, with a rich imagination and a fine sense of pictorial art and craftsmanship. Con-

trary to popular opinion, our primitive ancestors were not notoriously loose-moralled and promiscuous. Monogamy was the rule, and they were faithful in their marital relationships."

The responsibility for the fall into war, greed, etc., the Professor lays upon civilization, with its competition to outdress and otherwise outdo the neighbour. There is evidence, he says, that civilization made him a savage. He mentions "the remarkable impression made in the 18th century, when reports that the American Indians and other savages were decent people came to Europe." The Bible teaching that God made man perfect, in His own mental and moral image, is rejected by the Professor, but at least he admits that man has not improved in disposition, but declined. Possibly he will yet go further and acknowledge that God made man originally *very* good.

The professor seems concerned for the moral laxity which in many cases accompanies belief that man originally was a beast and that there is no personal God to care whether individuals of the race become beastlike again. He seems to put forth the thought that if men were good and kind and unselfish once, they can be so again. This may help some. But how much better to get back to the Bible teaching that God made all men of all nations of one blood, and that their great Creator started them in life in the persons of one perfect pair endowed with perfect bodies and perfectly equipped brains; and not only so, but with a moral sense able to apprehend righteousness as God lives it and defines it?

No matter how low peoples have sunk into superstition and ignorance, that moral sense is there; and the transformation the Gospel works in those who accept Christ is proof all over the world that they are still basically in the image of God.

William Penn, the Quaker, and others showed how just and honest and trustworthy the American Indian was, at the very time conscienceless traders and invading armies were denouncing them in order to justify robbery and other crimes against them. The red man often kept his word when the white man broke his. As for brain capacity, events have proven that much of Indian perversity and degradation was due to drink and vice introduced by the whites, very much as has been done among African negroes and Australian blacks. The American Government has in recent years tried to make up to their deseendants some of the injustices suffered by their ancestors in the early days of settlement. Fine upstanding pure-blooded Indians are having college education at their own Carlisle, and are proving their ability to fill many responsible positions—given only the opportunity. The present Vice-President of the United States is proud of the Indian blood in his veins.

But we have not yet answered the question, Whence the black man's skin? Certain foods and drinks affect the colour of the skin, and it is conceivable that many generations under the same climatic conditions with the same food and habits may make a race, e.g., the Chinese or Japanese, yellow or brown. And the torrid sun, with exposure of the body for generations, may account for increased pigmentation of the skin as a protective measure, and so constitute a black race. Some have suggested that the black skin was the curse placed on Canaan. (Genesis 9.) Yet there is no evidence, so far as we know, that the Canaanites were black. The curse mentioned in Genesis was servitude, and that was fulfilled in later times in Palestine and surrounding districts, if not immediately.—Genesis 12: 5, 7; 15: 16-21; Deuteronomy 9: 4-6; Joshua 9: 22-27; 16: 10; Judges 1: 9, 17, 27-36.

In the absence of any Scripture information on how the black man became black, especially in view of the fact that the Lord and the apostles who knew of their existence did not single them out for comment, we may take it that the black race was included with the white in the denouncement of Gentile sin and superstition, and that the Gospel would and did work among them as among the whites, by the preaching of repentance and faith and a reformed life. Men of Egypt and Cyrene (North Africa) were among the first converts from the Gentiles, unless one of the latter at Antioch was a Jew formerly resident there. And there was at Antioch a prophet and teacher named "Simeon that was called Niger." *Niger* means "black," and it may be a fair inference that Simeon therefore was a black man. But he might have received the surname because of black hair and beard, or because of a dark complexion; or he might have had at one time trade relations with the blacks on the Niger river. But whatever the reason for the surname Niger, it was no hindrance to his receiving the gospel and becoming a teacher of it.

So far as we can find, the curse earned by Ham was visited on Canaan, not on his other sons. The suggestion of some that Cush was black because some Cushites appear to have emigrated to Egypt assumes too much. How and why the blacks became black is a question that still requires a conclusive answer.

The Whole Creation Groaneth

The inspired apostles taught that all nations were of one blood. They taught that "there is none righteous, no, not one," that all are "under sin," that all are slaves of the taskmaster Sin, that the whole world lieth in wickedness, that death passed upon all. Secondly, they taught that Jesus Christ tasted death "for every man," without exception; that He "gave himself a ransom for all," and that "whosoever" calls upon the name of the Lord may be saved—no distinction being made as to color, language, race, or degree of culture or ignorance. They taught also (third) that in another respect the whole of mankind are similarly placed; namely, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now."—Romans 8: 22.

Our brief survey of Polynesia, Africa, and Australia and their native races and superstitions confirms the truth of the apostle's statement; it is a groaning creation. The same conclusion must follow any survey of the white, brown, and yellow races: all groan and travail together in pain. A few have been enlightened with the gospel—a mere handful compared to the vast bulk of humanity. These are called in harmony with God's purpose to "take out" a people for His name. All men every-

where are called to repent; there are no exceptions, as Paul told his audience, not even the cultured Athenians. Repentance is the only proper thing, once the knowledge of the true God is brought to anyone. Yet it is an undeniable fact that this knowledge when so nebulous as was that of the Athenian and of many races and peoples all the way down to the Australian and African black of to-day is insufficient, else Paul need not have preached to the Athenians. Honour to the missionaries who preached Christ truly to the peoples and nations and pointed to them the way of salvation. But unless we see that the work of this age has been to "take out" a people, we may well wonder why God did not enlighten all and give to all sufficient knowledge and help to break away from their fetiches and wizards and the evil spirits behind them. Instead He has allowed them to groan for centuries under these oppressors.

Waiting For—What?

The apostle Paul, who knew the world well, and who was inspired to give the answer concerning the groaning creation, anticipates our questionings. He says—"For the earnest expectation of the creature [or, creation, mankind] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. . . . Because the creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Here is the solution! Here all our sorrows for the unenlightened "heathen" dying at the rate of millions per day find their solace. The God they blindly feel after, the great Spirit, Power, Creator—whatever they call the Being they sense must be up and beyond all other powers—is not passing them by indifferently, neither on the other hand is He saving them in their ignorance. But when the "sons of God" being called out during this gospel age are all gathered to the Lord, with whom they shall live and reign, *then* the deliverance will come to those groaning myriads still waiting in the bondage of corruption.

That bondage of corruption includes the fearful conditions of the present life. From that there will be deliverance. That bondage of corruption includes also the death state. From that also there will be deliverance. The passing into death of the great masses of mankind unenlightened is no barrier to God's mercy. His gracious purpose is to enlighten every man for whom Christ died. Let us who are the called of this age rejoice that ere long the kingdom of God set up on earth will bring this wonderful deliverance, and that we who sympathize with the groaning creation—for we ourselves also groan (Romans 8: 23)—will have the privilege of assisting in their enlightenment concerning the great love of the true God through Jesus Christ His beloved Son our Lord.

♣ ♣ ♣

The Triumph of the King

There's a light upon the mountains and the day is at the spring,
When our eyes shall see the beauty and the glory of the King.
Weary was our heart with waiting and the night-watch seemed so long,
But His triumph-day is breaking and we hail it with a song.

In the fading of the starlight we may see the coming morn,
And the lights of men are paling in the splendours of the dawn;
For the eastern skies are glowing as with light of hidden fire,
And the hearts of men are stirring with the throbs of deep desire.

Hark! We hear a distant music, and it comes with fuller swell:
'Tis the triumph-song of Jesus, of our King, Immanuel.
Zion, go ye forth to meet Him; and, my soul, be swift to bring
All thy sweetest and thy dearest for the triumph of the King.

—*Selected.*

♣ ♣ ♣

For the Children

Saying Good-bye

I wonder do all my little friends know what "Good-bye" means? It is a short way of saying "God be with ye" (or you). So they are very nice words, are they not?

Every day we say good-bye to father before he goes to work, and again to mother as we leave for school. These are glad good-byes, because we shall see father and mother again in the evening. But when we are at the train or the big ship seeing some dear ones away, our good-byes are not usually glad: they are sad, for it may be many days or years before we shall see them again. But whichever it may be—glad or sad—a short while or a long while—the wish in our good-bye is that God may always *be with them*.

And now here's another little thing. We do not say good-bye to *people* only, but sometimes to *things* as well; and then of course it must have a different meaning. A boy or girl may say to father or mother, "I have said good-bye to school to-day." That means that he or she has left school and is never going back. There are still other kinds of good-byes, but we do not wish just now to talk about them.

What we want is to tell of a man who once said good-bye—not to school, of course; he was too old for that, but to his old business. And a business is

not a person, is it? it is a *thing*. And as you may say good-bye to your old school and will never go back again, so this man said good-bye to his business and he never went back.

You may be saying to me that he must have found something very much better than he was doing before; and that is true; he did. Someone passing by his office one day said to him, "Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him." And to "Follow me" is the very best thing that anyone could possibly do. The man who did it was Matthew.

Matthew was so glad to say good-bye to his old occupation that he invited all his former friends to his home to tell them about it, and also that they might see and talk with the wonderful Person who had said to him, "Follow me"; for He was going to be present too. Matthew had also prepared many kinds of good things for all of them to eat and drink at this "great feast," and all seemed to have looked forward to a happy and enjoyable time.

We do not know what things Jesus the wonderful One said at the feast to the "publicans and sinners" who were invited by Matthew, but we do know what He said to some others—the scribes and Pharisees—who were there too, though they had not been invited. Do not think it was rude of them to go to the feast not being invited; that was nothing in those days. For if a feast was on anyone passing might enter the courtyard and join in the enjoyment.

These scribes and Pharisees did not go to see Matthew and his old friends the publicans and sinners, for they despised them and always kept apart from them. This, of course, was only their foolish pride and their wrong idea that they were so much better than everybody else. But they came because they knew Jesus would be there and they wanted to see what He did, and to find fault if they could.

And what did they see? They saw Him and His disciples eating and drinking with those despised publicans and sinners, and they thought it was awful; for by so doing they considered that He was making Himself one with them. They wondered why Jesus did not despise and even hate them and keep Himself separate as they did. So they said to His disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" And Jesus heard it and He answered them. Please find the answer in Matthew 9, reading from verse 9 to verse 13.

The answer is a real little puzzle, is it not? But the Pharisees knew what it meant, and they could not answer back; so they kept silent.

But the feast ended: everybody went to their own homes, and Matthew had said good-bye never to go back again, but forever after to follow Jesus. Was this a sad good-bye? or a glad one?

It was a glad one, and a long one. For, although Matthew would never have the large sums of money that his old business brought him, he knew that, besides the great happiness of having Jesus for his Master, he would one day get wealth of another sort thousands of times better than money could ever be.

Boys and girls, can we learn to gladly follow Jesus as Matthew did, and in any and every way let our friends know about it? If we do, and we can, we shall receive just exactly what the Hebrew name, called *Matthaios*, or Matthew, in the New Testament, means; viz., a "gift of God." Please read Matthew 19: 27-29.

—UNCLE FRANK.



The Child Immanuel

AMONG modern critics are some who openly reject the Bible as an inspired Book, asserting that the gospel story of the birth and ministry of Jesus Christ is pure invention. Others, who recognize that the evidence (both internal and external) for the genuineness of the gospels is too great to be thus casually brushed aside, contend that while Matthew, for instance, truthfully recorded facts of which he had knowledge, his quotations of Old Testament prophecy as corroboration were not inspired, but simply his own selection of what seemed to him appropriate passages from the prophets. Thus in a less brusque, but none the less damaging, way his authority is undermined; and those who accept that position are easily led to question all quotations from the Old Testament made use of in the New to convince the Jews that the coming of Jesus as their Messiah had been definitely foretold.

Again, some critics, while forced to admit by the genealogical records that most if not all the prophets were of good family and had pious parents, seem to take pleasure in declaring that Jesus, the greatest prophet of all, was not the Son of God as the Scriptures claim, but the son of Joseph by an unmarried young woman. This is a foolish contention, if only on the ground that the Jews had high ideals of marriage and were particular to keep their genealogical trees free of taint if possible. Besides, John the Baptist, our Lord's forerunner, was well born; his father Zacharias being a priest of the course of Abia, and his mother also a member of the priestly tribe of Aaron. "And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1: 5, 6.) The Messiah, a far greater personage than John the Baptist, could not be thought of as less legitimately born, except on very positive statements to that effect, and there are no such statements. No scripture gives the slightest support to the theory that Jesus was the son of Joseph, or to that further attempt at debasement, that He was Joseph's illegitimate son.

In support of the illegitimacy theory the critics bring forth Isaiah 7: 14, claiming that the word *'almah* there used, and rendered "virgin" in our English Bibles, simply means "young woman";

hence not necessarily one, they say, who has not known a man. In this statement they not only convey a wrong impression concerning the meaning of the word *'almah*, but they also deny the truth of Mary's own statement to the angel, "seeing I know not a man."

That Jesus was born of the virgin Mary was the accepted belief and teaching of the apostles. Luke, who also gives a full account of the circumstances, quotes no Old Testament passage in support, as Matthew does, but in Luke's case this was unnecessary. Luke's gospel was written some time after Matthew's, when the facts of Matthew's gospel were well known and generally accepted. Matthew made a point of quoting Old Testament prophecies because that was necessary to establish our Lord's position as the Messiah the Jews were looking for. When Luke wrote this had been well established, and Luke takes Matthew for granted. Besides which, Luke's treatise was prepared for the special benefit of a Greek named Theophilus, who must have been a man of learning or he could not have read Luke's treatise, and yet not being a Jew would not require the same proofs that the Jews would demand out of their own law. In the introduction to his gospel, Luke says—

"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things *which are most surely believed among us*,

"Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word."

Theophilus had already been instructed, probably by the apostle Paul, whose companion and helper Luke had been on his missionary journeys. But now he proceeds to tell Theophilus his object in writing—

"It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

"That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed."—Luke 1: 3, 4.

Thus Luke asserts that the virgin birth of Christ was one of the CERTAINTIES "most surely believed among us." Hence when Peter and the other disciples confessed "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," there was not a shadow of doubt in their minds that Jesus was born of the virgin miraculously, being the veritable Son of God. They tell us He is the One who had been with the Father before the world was, and was God's *Logos* in the creation of all things. They fully believed it, and they industriously taught it, as our Lord commanded them to do.

The Lord Himself Promised a Sign

The sign promised is recorded in Isaiah 7: 14. On the circumstances under which the vision was given to Isaiah, and on the meaning of the word *'almah*, we find several informative paragraphs in the book "The Virgin Birth of Christ," by the Rev. James Orr, M.A., D.D., Professor of apologetics and systematic theology in the United Free Church College, Glasgow, Scotland, which we quote below—

The throne of Ahaz was threatened by a coalition of the kings of Ephraim and Syria, which had for its object to depose Ahaz, and set up a creature of their own, a certain son of Tabeel, in his stead. Isaiah was sent to Ahaz to assure him that the conspiracy would not succeed. A sign was offered to the king "either in the depth (sheol), or in the height above." But Ahaz, who had designs of his own of an alliance with Assyria, in mock humility declined the sign. Who was he, that he should "tempt the Lord"? The indignation of the prophet then broke forth upon him. "Hear ye now, O house of David, is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also?" The Lord Himself, the prophet announced, would give Ahaz a sign; and, after the king's refusal of a sign in the depths of sheol and the heights of heaven, we are justified in expecting that the sign the Lord would give would be no ordinary one. What was the sign? I quote from the R.V.: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," etc. How are we to understand these words?

The first point relates to the word rendered "virgin"—the word *'almah*. This word, Hebrew authorities tell us, no doubt *correctly, does not strictly mean* "virgin," but *simply* a young woman of marriageable age. There is another word—*bethulah*—which does express virginity in the strict sense. Even this word, it is worth noticing, is once used (in Joel 1: 8) of a bride lamenting over a bridegroom. The objection from the meaning of *'almah* was, as we learn from Justin Martyr, Origen, and other fathers, one urged by the Jews against the Christian interpretation of the passage from the earliest times. But it may fairly be replied now, as it was then, that if the word does not necessarily bear this meaning of "virgin," it may, and indeed usually does, bear it. In fact, in all the six places in which, besides this passage, the word occurs in the Old Testament, it may be contended that this *is* its meaning. The passages are, Gen. 24: 43 (LXX translates *parthenos*); Exod. 2: 8; Ps. 58: 26; Song of Sol. 1: 3; 6: 8; Prov. 30: 19. Cf. Hengstenberg, *Christology II.*, pp. 45-47. *Prof. Willis Beecher says:* "There is no trace of its use to denote any other than a Virgin" (Prophets and Promise, p. 334). The Septuagint renders it here by *parthenos*, and even the R.V. retains the translation "virgin," while giving in the margin "maiden." It is true that the word means, as stated, a marriageable young woman; but it is not less true that in its use in the Old Testament it *means an unmarried young woman; and we may repeat the* challenge of Luther: "If a Jew or Christian can prove to me that in any passage of Scripture *'almah* means 'a married woman,' I will give him 100 florins, although God alone knows where I may find them."—Cf. Hengstenberg II., p. 45.

This maiden, then, in the prophet's oracle, is figured (the tenses are present) as conceiving, as bearing a son, and as giving Him the name Immanuel, "God with us." Here is a sign indeed, and with it agrees the scope of the prophecy as a whole. For observe carefully, next, that the Immanuel prophecy does not end with these verses. Its refrain is heard through the next chapter in connection with the Assyrian invasions: "He shall overflow and pass through; he shall reach even to the neck: and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." (Isa. 8: 8.) "Take counsel together, and it shall be brought to nought; speak the word, and it *shall not stand: for immanu El, God is with* us" (vs. 10); till it culminates in ch. 9: 6, 7, in that magnificent prediction: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it," etc.

The import of the prophecy can now be readily grasped. The thing at stake was the perpetuity of the house and throne of David. Ahaz had refused a sign, and God now takes the matter into His own hands. And the guarantee He gives for the perpetuity of the house of David is this child Immanuel. The vision of the prophet sweeps far beyond present events—beyond the defeat of Syria and Ephraim; beyond even the devastations of the Asyrian invasion; and he beholds in this Son that should be born, this child that should be given—who can be no other than the Messianic King—the security for the fulfilment of the promises to David, and the hope for the future of the world.

The other elements of the prophecy fall naturally into their places on this interpretation—even the time-elements, provided allowance is made for the character of prophetic vision. To the prophet's view the maiden's child is already there; is already conceived; is about to be born; he can speak as if the period of its arrival at the discernment of good and evil

defined the limit of this confederacy of Syria and Ephraim (vs. 14). But again his vision stretches far beyond that limit into the time of the Assyrian invasions, then, leaving even these behind, sees this child of David's line, of the wonderful names, firmly established on His throne.

Taking the prophecy in this light, we cannot, I think, but see that Matthew's use of it is entirely justified. The whole character of the prophecy leads us to expect an exceptional and wonderful origin for the child that should be born. All theories which see in this "maiden" a person already married —e.g., Isaiah's own wife—or one who is first to marry, then become a mother, break on the meaning of the words and force of the context. The idea of a peculiar birth for the Messiah does not stand quite alone in Isaiah; it seems hinted at in Isaiah's contemporary, Micah, in the prophecy about the ruler from Bethlehem—"until the time came when she that travaileth hath brought forth." (Micah 5: 3.)—pp. 132-136.

Prof. Orr concludes that the Immanuel prophecy never received its fulfilment till, as Matthew narrates, Jesus was born of the Virgin in Bethlehem of Judea. The prophecy of Micah 5: 3 he also regards as "Messianic and directly prophetic," and adds—"There is no doubt that this passage was accepted as Messianic by the Jews. We know this from Jewish sources themselves, and we see it in the Gospels. The scribes at once put their finger on this passage when asked by the wise men where Christ should be born; and John 8: 42 shows that it was a current belief that Christ should come out of Bethlehem."

It is refreshing indeed to know that there are still, *in this day of higher criticism and modernism*, some voices raised in the universities and theological colleges in defence of the Bible teaching on the Virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only by His leaving His place with the Father in heaven and coming down to the estate of a human servant—albeit a perfect one—and then humbling himself still more—unto death, even the death of the cross, could the redemption of mankind from the bondage of sin and death have been accomplished. He died for our sins, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Peter 3: 18.) "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him," "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject to him."—Philippians 2: 7-11; 1 Peter 3: 22.

Let us ever give honor to His name, and to the Father through Him. Immanuel! God with us!

♣ ♣ ♣

The Thanksgiving Issue

THANKSGIVING was the motive prompting the publication of the special number of N.C.A. for April, 1929, and Thanksgiving fills our hearts in contemplation of the consequences thus far manifest. Simply publishing would have been good, but would not have gone further than regular readers. The thanksgiving of all of us was expressed in uniting to give wide circulation to the Thanksgiving number, in harmony with our Lord's words to His disciples when He sent them out—"Freely ye have received, freely give." (Matthew 10: 8.) Appreciating the Lord's goodness in enlightening our minds, and in bringing us to the twenty-first year of publication, we have made this special effort, as a token of gratitude, and already more than half the issue of 20,000 copies has been sent out.

The proposal put forth in our issue of January 1 was that brethren might assist to defray the extra expense involved in the printing of the whole of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" in this Special Issue, and according to the amount of the donations the eventual price would be determined, was well responded to. The total amount of donations will be found below.

A brother's suggestion, which appeared in February issue, that if 100 brethren took 200 copies each, the whole of the Thanksgiving issue would be absorbed at once, also met considerable response, as was indicated by letters published in March, and containing yet more helpful suggestions. Some brethren and sisters who purchased 200 copies or more have had them posted to addresses of ministers, missionaries, Christian workers, and others who they thought would read them and be more or less open to accept the teachings. Several thousand copies have been sent out that way, with several immediate inquiries for more information. Here is a good letter from one who enjoys serving the truth in every possible way, and is now taking advantage of postal facilities to spread the good news in the Thanksgiving Issue.

Beloved Brother and Sister Henninges:

The papers read at the Conference were most inspiring! Beautiful! I am sure you all must have had a delightful day in the Lord's service, the brothers and sisters doing their very best. What a privilege is theirs. We will hope to see it all in print—the next best.

It is very encouraging to read the good suggestions of the brothers and sisters for the Coming of Age of the N.C.A. How full of hope and enthusiasm they are! I hope we will learn a lesson and take courage and be up and doing, and pray this coming year may be the best spiritually we have ever had, with the means supplied to do greater things in the service than ever before.

What a beautiful spirit was in the aged couple with limited means to spare, yet doing what they could. I enclose £5 from our little group for 200 copies (and postage) of the Thanksgiving number of the N.C.A., which we wish posted to that number of addresses, for which purpose we will send you a list of names, and ask you to find other names of persons likely to be interested.

And now, praying our loving heavenly Father's blessing on all the beloved brethren and on you both, strengthening and helping you in your arduous work, and at last bringing us all into His everlasting kingdom, I remain, Yours in the love and service of our King. ————, *Australia.*

Following is a cheering letter we desire to share —from a dear friend who recalls old times of precious memory to us as well.

Dear Brother Henninges. Please find enclosed a cheque for £6. 0. 0 for Thanksgiving—a small return for many mercies and blessings received. My mind goes back about twenty-one years, when we first heard you preaching in Sydney. Your subject was, I think, "God's Provision for those who have died not knowing Christ." My dear Husband and self were greatly blessed at that time, and many times since in listening to your sermons and reading N.C.A. and other works; and many loving acts besides from you and your dear wife. My prayer for both is, May God bless and keep you faithful unto death.—Psalm 116: 12, 13.

With much love, ———— *New South Wales.*

In door to door work the Thanksgiving Issue is being found very useful, especially in view of the winter season and unusual degree of unemployment, because of the low price (1/-) at which it is sold. Many who would like the "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" in the cloth bound volume, but cannot afford it at present, are pleased to know the full contents are available in this cheap form. Some of the purchasers of 200 copies are taking this means of disposing of their copies, the slight margin sufficing to assist in travelling expenses; and some not able to go themselves have found happiness in supplying both whole-time and part-time colporteurs free of cost, by way of encouraging them. One such sent the following letter, and has felt more than repaid at the thought of happiness extended which, like the circles from the pebble, extends ever further and further—

You will be pleased to know (and I hope derive some of that happiness you spoke of, which by the way is a threefold happiness, first on your part, second on my part, and third on the part of those with hearing ears, and above all if we could include God and His Son, the circle of happiness is complete) that the work done in the spare time given to it has left 25 Thanksgiving numbers in the hands of others, a few of whom appeared to have a goodly interest in the work.

Although the number is small, yet it is good to have God's support in that much, and perchance coming days, under divine providence, may show better results. In any case it is a privilege to be permitted thus far, and the experiences, with the observations and reflections on the work which they afford, reveal the pressing need of truth being circulated as far as possible.

God bless, and provide all things for you both in your labours. Yours in the faith,

————, *Victoria.*

Undoubtedly door to door work reveals the immensity of the need for divine truth, and shows how God's truth-hungry children are scattered here and there in the cities and suburbs, in towns and villages, and in the country. This is the day in which God is "taking out a people for His name," and they are found in all classes of society, some poor, some better circumstanced; but truth-hunger is the same wherever found—the desire to know God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent, and to understand why evil, poverty, and suffering are allowed, and what will be the outcome of it all. Then, too, some are afflicted with a great fear—a fear to intrude into things not revealed; and the colporteur has a good opportunity to show the difference between prying into what God reserves to himself and sincere searching into what He chooses to reveal, remembering the Saviour's encouraging words—"He that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened," and the apostle's words also—"God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

Another door-to-door-in-spare-time worker sends the following account of recent experience—

Dear Bro. Henninges: While engaging in colporteuring work recently a little out of Melbourne, I was so impressed with the state of the "field," that I am moved to write you these few lines in brief explanation of what was found.

Truly there are many wondering minds, acquaintance being made with sincere people who are not satisfied with the existing state of affairs, or with the orthodox teachings, and think there must be something better in the mind of God for the whole creation than what they have heard up to now, although they know not what it is. One lady I met spoke on these lines—

"We have the wireless here, and what sermons we have heard cannot but strike us as being empty and void in their content, and show the apathetic condition of the nominal Church, and how the members thereof profess Christianity, but they do not know righteousness." Continuing, she said, "Surely the great God who loved the world to the extent of sending his own Son to die for them, and Whose thoughtfulness and love are exhibited in the things He has made, would not turn round and place some of His creatures in eternal misery: also He is not going to deny the infants, the heathen, and those unfortunates who have lived in an unfavorable environment the privilege of hearing of Christ. No, we cannot believe these things, they are irreconcilable with His character."

Other folk met were dissatisfied with their position in their several churches, and had had enough. One man in particular grasped eagerly the book offered (the N.C.A. Thanksgiving number), and said he would take it across to his church to see what they had to say about it, and his family endorsed his words.

Now these are the people we have to seek in the great harvest field. To the lady mentioned the Thanksgiving number she purchased should be a wonderful comfort and help in enlightening her in the wonderful plan of God, which gracious purpose the nominal Christian knows nothing of; and as for the man who was going to take it across to his church, this shows a mind not satisfied, and requiring more knowledge.

The main thing to be realized is that there are inquiring minds to be found, and it is our responsibility to seek these people, and satisfy them with the great and precious promises that we have been

privileged to enjoy. The news is the Lord's, and we are handling His business. Let us be up and doing, and not be found slack in His sight.

Yours in the Lord's service, ————.

The idea of a Thanksgiving Year has appealed to brethren farther afield, and we are sure they will reap a blessing in pursuance of it, as we in Australia have done. Our South African friends have been busy with tracts and books and Bible gatherings for some time. They now write—

Dear Bro. Henninges: We, the class here, have decided to get 200 of our anniversary number of the N.C.A., and shall be glad if you would kindly send them at your convenience. We feel honoured to share with you the "majority" celebration, the "coming of age," as it were, of the "Advocate," and we pray that with the aid of this grand publication, and through personal effort, we may be able to shine as lights more and more until the End, or the end of our race, whichever God wills.

Brothers B—— and G—— will in the next ten days return to this town to take up the work from this point. We feel very privileged that D.V. these two lovable brothers will join with us in celebrating the Lord's Supper, and that for a little time at least we will have them with us here. They are a pair of earnest and zealous Christians, who did what the rich young ruler refused to do, i.e., give all, and follow Jesus Christ.

As we are getting a few more strangers to attend our meetings, we are arranging for our Sunday evening special addresses to be given on instructional lines, a sequence on a particular topic. This is felt necessary for their benefit. [Yes; and will no doubt be beneficial to all.—ED.] It is very heartening to see just one occasionally stand up for Jesus and the fulness of His Word. We do not look for great results, but one does get encouragement if even only one person is drawn out from the world into His glorious light.

The time is not long now, and not much more enduring will be required of us, but we earnestly pray that all our brethren of like precious faith will be found worthy of the great reward.

All the brethren send to you, Sister Henninges, and the class at Melbourne our Christian greetings and love, and pray that our Heavenly Father will continue to pour out His blessings upon you all. To find favour in God's sight is a great and wonderful thing, and in this endeavour we are all united, through the love of Jesus Christ. Yours in the one great hope,

———— *South Africa.*

Yes, it is a wonderful thought that all over the world the Lord is gathering His Church into oneness with Himself, and with one another. The truth is both the drawing and the sanctifying force, the Holy spirit is the indwelling power, and love is the bond of perfectness.

May the Lord's blessing dwell richly upon each of the writers of these letters; upon the meetings with which they are associated, and upon those dear ones who have undertaken personal service in carrying about the good news in spite of opposition and many more or less discouraging experiences. Did all go smoothly we might wonder if the world had changed. But no, the world is still the same in its opposition to the truth, and many who profess to love it are being drawn into the world and worldly methods and schemes. The conditions of our time are only what the Scriptures lead us to expect, and it is in persevering in God's service in spite of these conditions that our calibre as Christians and worthy successors to a long line of faithful martyrs and witnesses is demonstrated. It is still true that he that will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life, for Christ's sake and the gospel's, will find it. And now with one more brief, but highly appreciated, word of encouragement from an old friend we must conclude for this time—

Dear Brother Henninges: I have to thank you for Thanksgiving number of N.C.A., containing "Bible Talks," received this morning. I bought a copy of the first (1909) edition nearly twenty years ago, and have been reading it ever since. I go through it again and again, *and it does not weary me.* I always find something refreshing in it.

With kind regards, yours faithfully, ————.

Since last report we have received the following donations to the Thanksgiving Fund.

40, 11/-; 41, £1: 13: 0; 42, 6/-; 43, £2: 44, £1: 10: 0; 45, £1; received at Brooklyn, 1, $10; 2, $10; total at Brooklyn, $20 (£4: 2: 4); total for month, £11: 2: 4 ($54.02); previously reported, £92: 5: 0 ($447.35); total to date, £103: 7: 4 ($499.37).

The price of the Thanksgiving Number still remains as announced last month; viz., one shilling (25 cents) per single copy; six shillings ($1.50) per dozen postpaid to one address; seven shillings ($1.75) per dozen posted to various addresses.

The Advocate Sustaining Fund

At the beginning of the year it was thought that, in order to celebrate this our "coming of age" year by the printing and circulation of the special Thanksgiving number (April 1), it might be necessary to let other Funds lie in abeyance for a few months. We are now pleased to report that at this writing, notwithstanding the "celebration," the arrears on the "Advocate Sustaining Fund" and the "Cheerful Givers' Fund" carried over from last year have very nearly been covered. Following are the amounts received since last report—

60, 2/-; 61, 9/9; 62, 2/-; 63, £1; 64, £2: 10: 0; 65, 2/-; 66, £5; 67, 2/-; 68, 2/-; received at Brooklyn, 373, $10; 374, $5; 375, $10; 376, $1.25; 377, $1.75; 378, $25; 379, $5; 380, $5; 381, $15; 382, $1; 383, $11.20; 384, $25; total at Brooklyn, $115.20 (£23: 14: 1); total for month, £33: 3: 10 ($161.31); previously reported, £74: 8: 4 ($361.67); total for 5 months, £107: 12: 2 ($522.98); clearing off the adverse balance of 1928, and giving a start of about £23 on the requirements of 1929.

Cheerful Givers' Fund

48, 16/-; 49, 10/-; 50, 14/-; 51, £5; 52, 7/-; 53, £4; 54, 10/-; received at Brooklyn, 275, $8.36; 276, $1.25; 277, 75 cents; 278, $22.50; 279, $3.75; 280, $25; total at Brooklyn, $63.26 (£13: 0: 4); total for month, £24: 17: 4 ($120.85); previously reported, £113: 11: 7 ($531.98); total for 5 months, £138: 8: 11 ($652.83); reducing the adverse balance to £2 ($10).

The Library Supply Fund

Although little has been said during the last five months concerning the progress of the good ship L.S.F., we have now, as it were, gone up in an airplane, to see how many miles of the ten thousand mile voyage have been left behind, and what the prospects are from the weather point of view for the remainder of the voyage. You see, our ship is a sailing ship, and more dependent on the weather than a steam or oil-burning vessel would be. A very good Skipper is in command, and if He wanted to He could fill the sails with a mere word and send L.S.F. bounding over the ocean wave in real clipper style. But we His children have recognized that He gives us the privilege of "raising the wind," and we have set about doing it in the best way we know. And that is, by letting everyone hear about the venture: so they can, if they will, have part in it. The wind is the motive power in a sailing ship. Corresponding to the wind in our venture is the financial aid each of us and all combined can render to post copies of the cloth bound volume—Bible Talks for Heart and Mind—to every Public Library in English speaking countries of the world. Australia and New Zealand, Africa, the British Isles, and Canada have already been supplied, and the present "voyage" is for the purpose of supplying the Public Libraries of the United States of America. This voyage is nearing the three-quarter mark, and what is now needed is a good stiff breeze to cover the remaining "miles."

It is a fine sight to see a ship in full sail, with a good breeze from the right quarter, every inch of canvas proud of its part in the general ensemble. But when every stitch of sail must be put on, the breeze is light and progress slow. We confess (perhaps with a landlubber's ignorance of all that might be involved) we would dearly love a good gale that would send the sailors aloft to furl the skysails and the royals, and the t'gallants, and take in the staysails—we hope we are getting this right—while the good ship speeds along and makes port in a hurry, all hands glad to arrive safe. And having arrived, someone might think of another good voyage, and charter a steam freighter if not an up-to-date motor ship for that.

Since last report there has been received for the Library Supply Fund the following amounts.

12. £4: 1: 0; received at Brooklyn, 21, $10: 22, $15: 23, $10: total at Brooklyn, $35 (£7: 4: 0): total for month, £11: 5: 0 ($54.66): previously reported, £88: 7: 8 ($429.53): total for 5 months, £99: 12: 8 ($484.19): the amount received in the last month enabling us to send 90 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 3342 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from March issue)

Under the Law Covenant God was pleased to receive gifts from His chosen people the children of Israel, when they brought the prescribed offerings in the spirit of worship and gratitude. Under those circumstances God was their Friend, prepared to shower blessings upon them. But if they brought the halt, lame, and blind, or if the gifts were right enough in themselves but the donor's heart was far from the altar and all it meant, then the Lord was displeased; and instead of being their Friend became their Adversary. No blessing came to them from a propitiated God, but rather the curses of the law fell upon them, and God as it were hid His face from them.

As we have seen, the Lord had told them in His sermon, thus far, many things of importance. John the Baptist, as forerunner, had attempted to turn the hearts of the Jews to repentance, and had warned them that One was coming "whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor." (Matthew 3: 12.) Hence the multitude in the mount should have been in a measure at least prepared for our Lord's discourse—prepared to take in what He had just said about their state of heart and mind when they brought gifts to the altar. If they had wronged any one—by falsehood, misrepresentation, theft, or other crimes condemned by the law—God would not care to receive their gifts on His altar until they had confessed to the wronged one and made things right. Restitution of stolen property (if that were the offence) should be made before bringing a gift to God. In the meantime they should realize that it was not only their fellow Jew that they had wronged, but God. They had wronged God by their act of disobedience to (in this case) the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." And God's attitude toward them was that of an offended God requiring to be propitiated for the sin committed, before any thought of voluntary "gift" could be entertained. Under the law this would require the bringing to the priest of a sin offering, as well as making amends to the wronged one.—Leviticus 6: 1-7.

In other words, the Lord sought to show them that the trouble was in their own hearts, and that so long as they retained that practice of disobedience and that attitude of self-will, just so long would God be their "adversary." Then He says—"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him."

The necessity of getting right with God He then illustrates by the usual procedure against a criminal or a debtor. The creditor lodges a complaint, the accused "has not a leg to stand on," and the next thing is the prison doors close on him. And so Jesus would have them understand that God was not to be trifled with. His patience and longsuffering have been marvellous, but there is a limit. Make friends quickly, do the right thing toward your brethren, cleanse your hands of all your sins and defilements. Then come, and Jehovah your God will receive and bless you. All this applied to the Jews who were God's covenant people under the law, and not to Gentiles who were not under the law, "with-

out God, and having no hope in the world."—Ephesians 2.

Jesus an Adversary under the New Covenant

By espousing the cause of God, Jesus also became an "adversary" to the Jewish people. The "fan" He was wielding was, by God's appointment, to separate the wheat from the chaff. Necessarily then He was adversary to the chaff—under which term might be included all Jews who failed to do their best to render obedience. And while in nature we do not see chaff turning into wheat, yet our Lord's teaching is that God is willing to forgive and to receive back the penitents, no matter how seriously they have erred.—Ezekiel 18: 21-23, 30-32.

But now the Lord Jesus had come as their Messiah, as the Prophet greater than Moses, whom they were commanded to hear "in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear [i.e. obey] that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." The love of Jesus is a most precious truth, as is also the love of God in sending Him, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3: 16.) But our Lord did not permit the Jews to forget the sterner side of His mission. He who "loved righteousness and hated iniquity" did not come into the world to pander to man's depraved tastes, to encourage the hypocrite and excuse the wrongdoer. The law had to an extent shown up the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and now the Son of God shows up sin as even more to be despised and shunned. We do not want to hug our sins as the bankrupt hugs his bad debts, and goes to prison rather than come to terms, and after all has to pay the "uttermost farthing." Far better is it to fall at His feet and cry for mercy, and ask His help to get us out of all our troubles. And to receive that help from Him we must make up our minds to take His will instead of our own blunderings. Then He will not be our adversary, to be ashamed of us before God, but He will be our Mediator to reconcile us to God, and to keep us reconciled so long as we are faithful and obedient. And then we shall not be "destroyed from among the people," the same responsibility of obedience resting upon us after we hear the Gospel as upon the Jews, for we, as well as they, must obey the voice of that Great Prophet.

Upon the Jewish nation fell a severe punishment for their perversity in refusing to mend their ways and accept the teachings of the Messiah, as we read in 1 Thessalonians 2: 16—"the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost." Upon us wrath will also fall if we reject the Lord and refuse to do His will, as shown in Revelation 6: 16, 17. God and Christ are harmonious in their love for fallen humanity and in granting the New Covenant provisions of mercy; but they are also in harmony in their wrath against wilful sinners, as shown in Revelation 19: 11-16. Compare Hebrews 2: 2-4; 10: 29. Further comment on this similitude, the adversary and the debtor, will be found in "The Parables of our Lord," pp. 356-358.

Plucking out the Eye

27 *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*

28 *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman, to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

29 *And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell* [*literally, Gehenna*].

In these words our Lord further elucidates the standard of judgment under the New Covenant. The condemnation of the Mosaic law rested on those who broke the seventh commandment. This involved actually doing what was forbidden. The law dealt with acts, not thoughts. But under the New Covenant the Lord takes notice of the thought which precedes the act, even though the act for one reason or another never takes place.

Is this fair? some one may ask.

Yes, it is fair when we consider the other side of the proposition; namely, that often the Lord, seeing an earnest desire for righteousness in our heart, accepts that longing as though it were actually carried out in practice. For example, we read that faith is "counted for righteousness," "Being justified by faith," etc. Faith is belief and involves an earnest desire of the mind to serve and please God. (Hebrews 11: 1, 2; Romans 3: 24-26; 4: 3, 22-25; 5: 1.) To please God absolutely would require a perfect mind and a perfect manner of life, such as our Lord led while on earth. But such perfection is impossible in our fallen state. Hence God graciously accepts our faith and counts it for righteousness. This of course implies that we will at the same time work righteousness to the extent of ability, and not presume on God's mercy.

If this is so, there is nothing unjust or unfair in God's regarding our perversely wrong thoughts as sin, and counting them for unrighteousness. The principle works both ways. The Lord plainly tells us so. Hence we have no just ground for complaint when we find ourselves condemned for cherishing thoughts of hatred, vengeance, and lust.

But lest anyone should be unduly cast down and discouraged by the position, it should be observed that in the sin under consideration, or any other, the merely passing thought is not taken as sin. Thoughts of all kinds arise, incited sometimes by outside influences, but often merely indications of physical vigor, with no one in particular, or anybody at all, in mind. The line of thought which our Lord counted as sin was *persistent thought* and craving for the wife or husband (as the case may be) belonging to another. Adultery is a form of theft. It desires what belongs to another; and if the desire is not put down all sense of honor and justice is lost, and all regard for consequences either to the persons immediately concerned or the family dependents.

We can think of nothing more conducive to an honourable, upright life than putting in practice our Lord's sermon on the mount, by the exercise of control over the thoughts. If they stray wrongly, nip them in the bud. And in their place cultivate

thoughts of unselfishness, love, and kindness toward all.

This is not easy to do if the wrong thoughts have been harboured for a time and have become precious—seemingly as necessary to comfort and happiness as a right eye. Then something drastic must be done. We have heard of persons so far misunderstanding our Lord's prescription as to literally cut out the offending member. The reference to the right eye is a parabolic way of showing the importance of getting rid of the wrong thought, for it is the thought behind the eye that is responsible.

Gehenna was the name of the valley outside Jerusalem in which rubbish was burned, and into which the (dead) bodies of criminals were cast after execution. It is used here and elsewhere in the New Testament as a symbol of the second death. The second death is the punishment reserved for the wilfully perverse, who are here shown to be those who persistently cultivate evil thoughts and refuse to dig them up and cast them away. Manifestly no other end could be expected or would be just in the case of one who persistently flouts the Lord, even if he never goes the full length of an open criminal life.

It is certainly better to enter into life (in this age the high calling) minus some of the experiences we see others indulging in all around us, and which may at times present a certain amount of attractiveness to us, than to indulge the flesh, and lose not only the high calling but all hope of life on any plane; for Gehenna, the second death, means utter destruction for ever and ever, without hope of recovery. How foolish to indulge sinful thoughts now at such a cost in the future, not to mention the shame and anxiety inflicted on parents and friends. It is indeed "profitable for thee," as our Lord said, to lose the use of one member now, than of all members in the second death.

Cutting off the Hand

30 *And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell* [*Gehenna*].

What the apostle John calls "the lust of the eye" extends to other things than the one mentioned by our Lord (vss. 27, 28). Anything we see—homes, furniture, motor cars, fine clothes, attractively displayed in show rooms or owned by friends and neighbours, may invite a craving for those things destructive to the contented mind. Or it may be other people's big bank accounts, stocks and bonds, that incite our mental eye to covetousness. And what the mind covets the hand reaches out to grasp. In some cases simple theft follows. Whether it be a few peaches on a tree or something of greater intrinsic value, to take what belongs to another is theft. Should not a Christian rather cut off his right hand than allow his or her mind to be so filled with greed as to wrongly use that hand to get and hold? The hand merely carries out the desire of the mind; therefore to curb the mind is equivalent to all intents and purposes to cutting off the right hand.

But do not be satisfied with simply cutting it off. The Lord said, "cut it off, and cast it from thee." Cast the selfish greed so far away that it will never come back. And remember that so long as you wilfully indulge this evil propensity you are hardening your heart against the Lord, and until you have made amends for your wrongdoing He will not hear your prayers. So hasten, and cut off that right hand, and cast it from you, lest you have not only two hands but "thy whole body" to be cast into Gehenna,* the second death.

The deeds of the flesh are many and varied. The apostles supplement our Lord's teaching by similar instruction to make a clean sweep of the evil thoughts of the mind. We are to die to sin, to crucify the flesh with its affections and desires, to put off the old man with his evil deeds and deceit. Then our minds must be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must put on the new man renewed in holiness, let Christ's beautiful character be formed in us, be transformed by the renewing of our minds. A great work, and worthy of our best efforts. And those best efforts the Lord will appreciate and will supplement with His abounding grace.

Christ's Standard Higher than the Law

31 *It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:*

32 *But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.*

In announcing that under the New Covenant the Lord takes account of the thoughts and intents of the heart, as was not done by the eighth commandment of the law, so that persistent desire for a prohibited thing becomes in God's eyes a sin, even though the wrong act be never committed, our Lord showed that His commands, or the commands God gave through Him, were higher and finer than those given through Moses, even higher than those written on the tables of stone, and preserved in the ark. In the two verses now to be considered He sets a higher standard of marriage relations than Moses allowed for, as may be seen by reading Deuteronomy 24: 1. But even Moses did not give out this ordinance as representative of God's conception of marriage. On another occasion the Lord said that Moses "because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19: 8.) Incidentally, this is an endorsement of the accuracy of the Genesis account of creation, which critics do well to heed.

There had been a time when men put away their wives whenever they pleased, without so much as giving them a bill of divorcement. The bill of divorcement was provided as a protection to the wife, that she might have tangible evidence that she had been married and had not voluntarily run away, hence was not an immoral or outlawed person, but entitled to marry another man. And in view of the capriciousness of some men it was pro-

*For full explanation on the meaning of Gehenna, the lake of fire, Adamic death and how it differs from second death, please see book, "Everlasting Punishment," mentioned in Book List.

vided that the husband who had put her away should never have her back, even if her second husband were dead and she were free. The Jewish husband putting away his wife would think he was doing a fine thing to give her a bill of divorcement. But here the Lord comes and says that husband was nevertheless hard hearted, for he should not have put her away at all!

Divorcement was not "from the beginning." God made no such institution, gave no such commandment to the first pair. As our Lord said in answer to the Pharisees who came tempting Him, "Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Matthew 19: 3-6.) This is the standard of marriage our Lord reinstituted, and which His disciples are expected to observe. It does not necessarily follow that a marriage which for a year or two appears to be a misfit is really so, or that either or both would be better off if separated. As a life-long contract, marriage requires some adjustment, or rather the two individuals concerned require some adjustment, for it is an entirely new experience to both, and both have to get used to it. Patience and good nature on both sides will oil the wheels, besides which if they are Christians they will have recourse to prayer and will seek the Lord's aid in all their affairs. And even when differences arise in later life, time and the grace of God will heal the wounds, and the love of the last years may be the deepest of all.

The Lord allowed but one reason for divorce—infidelity. All other differences can be lived through if the married will only be true to each other. The intrusion of a third party may even be put up with so long as it remains short of fornication. But we have known cases where even that was borne with on the ground that the erring one had been carried away by infatuation and would eventually be sorry for the wrong done.

Growing Divorce Rate

As the Mosaic Law made allowance on the man's side for disappointment in marriage, so have the nations of Christendom made concession after concession, until now in some parts of the world divorce can be obtained on comparatively slight grounds. The hope is that after divorce the parties will marry others more congenial, and so a moral state of society be preserved. But the ratio of divorce to marriage at present is often highly exaggerated, apparently for the purpose of making marriage appear a failure. This is done by comparing the number of marriages in a year with the number of divorces in that same year. The casual reader of such figures may not reflect that the proper comparison is the number of divorces compared with the whole number of successful marriages. Many divorced persons marry again and are satisfied, while a proportion of them are soon divorced a second, and even a third, time, and thus the statistics of divorce show an increase that must be to an extent discounted when reviewing the subject.

Young people observing the way some husbands and wives exchange unpleasant criticisms sometimes take that as evidence that marriage is a failure. They forget that chaff and criticism are found equally (if not more so) among the unmarried, and in all ranks of society. People bring into their married life what they have been accustomed to, and in many cases what seems like quarrelling is but a form of nervous irritability, which, if recognized for what it is, would do no permanent damage to either party. Still, those who serve the Lord can receive help in time of need, and by patient effort succeed in making family jars less and less frequent and violent.

Again, a common saying that has led many young people astray, leading them to dispense with a marriage ceremony, is that "true love never dies" and requires no such aid to permanence. But this is like Satan's flattering words to Eve, that to do wrong is more satisfactory than doing what God tells us to do. God ordained a formal marriage ceremony by taking Eve to Adam and formally uniting them as one, and ever since nations and peoples, however savage, have recognized the wisdom of a ceremony before witnesses by which the contracting parties take on certain responsibilities toward each other. In some countries now, and almost invariably in ancient times, parents were the sponsors in the formalities, but the obligations of the newly wedded were understood. All modern theories which discountenance marriage as God ordained it are a snare, regardless of the poetry with which their advocates attempt to clothe them.

Monogamic marriage is what all nominally Christian States stand for, and many non-Christian peoples practice it even where polygamy is allowed. And it is safe to say that if children from infancy were taught to respect the property rights of brothers and sisters, and as they grow older of their playmates, and were diligently instructed in honesty and thought for others, there would be less marital trouble, as well as fewer young people going morally astray. The whole thing lodges, as our Lord said, in the mind, and the state of mind of an adult is usually the result of training or lack of training. To control the thoughts of the mind, to be willing to pluck out the eye, or cut off and cast away the hand, rather than injure or lead another into sin, is the Lord's recipe for social unrest. All the world will not try it, but His people will, if they be properly imbued with His spirit. Marriage is not the bondage some moderns seem to think it is. It is an estate of development of character in both parents and children, a centre of attraction making possible the joys of home life, and conducive to the practice of hospitality and other Christian virtues. On the other hand, free love and frequent divorce are a bondage, a bondage to sin and selfishness, with no home life, no proper training of children, or development of character. When we hear supposedly learned men recommending any other form of marriage than marriage for life, we may be sure their learning has decayed and they are only exhibiting their ignorance. The Lord has spoken—"What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder," except for the one reason He allows for—and His wisdom and knowledge are unquestionably greater than that of present-day social

experimenters, some of whom possibly have reasons of their own for discrediting marriage, especially Protestant marriage.

Divorce for any other reason than the one mentioned in Matthew 19: 9 is condemned by the Master as giving occasion for sin. In divorce on the ground of incompatability, for instance, neither party has committed the sin in question; but after being separated they are likely to wish to marry another. Such a marriage the Lord says would be a sin. But when the sin has been committed during marriage and made a ground for divorce, the innocent party is free to marry again. However, the Lord's people are not given the duty of legislating for mankind on this and other matters on which they require guidance. Our time for legislating will be the Kingdom age. But each Christian has the duty of following the Lord's instructions himself, and has the privilege of exerting an influence for morality among those with whom he comes in contact. Purity of heart and mind is what the Lord looks for in His children. He sets a great prize before those who follow in His footsteps; and "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—1 John 3: 3; 2 Timothy 2: 19-22; 1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8.

(To be continued)

Final Notice

NEARLY ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to The New Covenant Advocate expire with the March issue. This reminder is therefore given so that all Readers may co-operate by sending their renewals promptly. The price per year in Australia and New Zealand is 4/-, elsewhere 5/- ($1.25); and it will be a great help if all will give early attention.

Those who receive the N.C.A. free on special terms on account of inability to pay are as welcome as ever.

Trial Subscriptions

Send four addresses of friends whom you desire to interest in the Good Tidings along with the price of a year's subscription. The N.C.A. will be sent for three months to each of the addresses. You are not limited to four addresses.

Revision of List

The List of N.C.A. Readers is about to be revised, and those who have not arranged for continuance, either by—

(1) Cash payment,
(2) Promise to pay later, or
(3) Request on special terms,

are in great danger of missing their paper.

This revision of the List is not made because of a wish on our part that any who desire the N.C.A. monthly visits should be deprived of them, but because the Post Office department requires it of publications posted at the special newspaper rates. The conditions are easy, but they must be observed. Therefore write us AT ONCE in terms of No. 1, 2, or 3, as above, and everything will go on as before.

WHY SHOULD YOUR VALUED NAME DISAPPEAR FROM THE N.C.A. LIST?

New and Renewal and Trial Subscriptions, orders for single copies, and requests for N.C.A. on special terms, also orders for books and tracts, and remittances for all purposes may be sent to Melbourne, Nottingham, Brooklyn, or Durban, which ever is most convenient.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Covenant Advocate and . . . . **Kingdom Herald**

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other Countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP
Address all
YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET,
MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, JULY 1, 1929 No. 1

Laying Aside All Guile

IT IS A TRUE SAYING that "A man is known by the company he keeps." In business, in workshop or factory, one may be obliged to work alongside undesirable characters for the sake of a living, and without realizing what is happening one may fall into their ways. But this need not be. There is no necessity to make companions of them. One need not walk in their counsels, nor stand on the street corners gossiping with them, nor sit with them while they engage in scornful remarks about God and religion. (Psalm 1.) It is equally true that "Birds of a feather flock together." When they are not looking for victims, these "birds" may hunt separately, and appear not even to know each other, but they flock together while they lay their plans, and afterwards to discuss their success or failure and to enjoy recreation. No commands in the Scriptures—both Old and New Testaments—are more insistent than that those who are truly God's people shall not company with, or make friends and companions of, the ungodly. Our Lord said to His disciples—"Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world."—John 15: 19.

The disciples were once "of the world" or it could not be said that they had been chosen out of it. The world out of which the Lord chose the disciples was the Jewish world or order of things, and also the Roman world to which Judea was tributary. All who would follow Jesus are called out of the world or order of things as an institution largely run by "the god of this world," in whom the whole world is said to lie. (2 Corinthians 4: 4; 1 John 5: 19.) Believers in Jesus are translated or set over from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. There are two distinct kingdoms or empires, and we must not think we can successfully belong to both.—Colossians 1: 12-14; Matthew 6: 24; 1 Corinthians 10: 14-21.

Dead to Sin, Alive to God

The true believer accepts Jesus Christ as his Master and begins a new life. This means of necessity death to the old manner of life under Satan the god of this world. In Romans 6 this transfer of allegiance is spoken of as baptism into Jesus Christ to walk in newness of life, and dying to the old taskmaster Sin. We should reckon ourselves to be "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." This is easier said than done. So the apostle shows effort must be put forth to avoid coming under the influence of Sin from whom Christ has liberated us. Conscious effort and constant striving are necessary. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, . . . neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God."—Romans 6: 1-13.

Starting the new life in Christ is like adventuring on an unknown sea—charts, compass and other instruments, also motive power are required. Still having with us our flesh with its deceitful desires, we should be hopelessly lost if we allowed them to direct our course. God's Word is the Guide He has given us, that we may steer a straight course, and this involves study, so that we may distinguish properly between our own undisciplined and deceptive hearts and God's will. Let us all candidly admit at once that in our flesh (i.e., our human nature corrupted by sin) "dwelleth no good thing." If we do this, we shall be able to start "from scratch," and learn from God all we need to know of the way of righteousness.—Romans 7: 5, 18.

As Newborn Babes

The necessity of making an entirely new beginning when we become Christians is illustrated by the apostle Peter in the statement that we are begotten by the divine Word, and then that we should look upon ourselves (at first) as "newborn babes." A newborn babe essays to lead its own life, but finds itself absolutely helpless. Its first requirement is cleansing; and its next is nourishment, that it may keep alive and grow. The newborn babe in Christ finds this nourishment in the Word of God—the same Word by which its life was begun. Too often the newborn babes look everywhere but to the Word for

this nourishment; hence they are puny and weak when they should be well developed and strong.

But there is a little difference between the natural babe and the newborn Christian. The former has no discretion but to take what is given to it; but the latter is usually an adult or an intelligent child in its teens, in whom certain traits of character have become ingrained and continually call for gratification. The naturally wilful and stubborn child wants to feed on maxims and teachings which will permit it to continue wilful and stubborn. The bad tempered man or woman wants texts that will show it is a good thing to have "plenty of spirit," and "not take things lying down." The selfish young man or young woman, accustomed to being waited on and pampered, likes philosophies which tell them "God is in his heaven, all's right in the world," thus saving themselves the trouble of doing anything for anybody. And, unfortunately, some of the newborn babes are ushered into an environment ostensibly Christian in which decidedly unchristian conduct is practised and they, knowing no better, imbibe the thought that religion is a cloak underneath which they may be and say and do as they please. Oh, the shock, the heartache of the newborn babe desiring the sincere milk of the Word!

The Lord in His goodness anticipated the perplexity of the newborn babes, and by His Holy Spirit caused the apostle Peter to give a lengthy sermon on the kinds of food to be abstained from, as well as the kind of food to crave. By the living Word, God is father to these babes, and by that same Word He is mother to them, supplying them with the proper nourishment. That Word, as their Guide, warns them against continuing the practices of their former life. Who can say they have never been guilty of the things mentioned, for instance, in 1 Peter 2: 1, and have not sought to justify themselves in them until brought to realize that those things must be laid aside?—

"Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings."

The Companions of Guile

These things are characteristic of the world generally and of Christians who have not been soundly converted; and the Lord tells us what to do about them: lay them aside; refuse to have them, decline to touch or "eat" them. Much of interest might be said about each of these. At present we shall concern ourselves only with guile—"laying aside all guile."

If we can tell something of a man's character by the company he keeps, perhaps by noticing the kind of company "guile" is found in we may be impressed more than we have been in the past with the imperativeness of laying aside *all* of it, as the apostle exhorts.

The word "guile" is used 11 times in the Authorized Version. In Exodus 21: 14 it is a friend and co-worker of "murder"—"But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, *to slay him with guile;* thou shalt take him from mine altar [where he sought refuge], that he may die." In Psalm 55: 11 guile is a companion of "wickedness" and of "deceit"—"Wickedness is in the midst thereof: deceit and guile depart not from her streets."

In 1 Thessalonians 2: 3 guile is mentioned as in the same class with deceit and uncleanness and (vs. 5) covetousness. Rather bad company, but just what one might expect after a little perception of the meaning of guile. Guile (Greek, *dolos*) comes from a verb meaning to decoy. It means, according to Strong, "a trick (bait), i.e. figuratively wile." *Dolos* is translated craft, deceit, guile, subtilty.

In 1 Peter 2: 1 guile has four very ugly companions—malice, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings.

In 1 Peter 2: 22 guile is companion of sin, reviling, and threatening.

Seeing the evil meaning and wrong associations of guile, we feel no surprise that the Lord tells us to have nothing to do with it. Note the preciseness of language in the following—

In Psalm 32: 1, 2 that man is called blessed who is forgiven, and "in whose spirit there is no guile."

In Psalm 34: 13 God's people are told—"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." Both tongue and lips are necessary in the production of sounds. Guile here is used as a complementary explanation of "evil" in the first clause of the verse.

In John 1: 47 Nathanael is spoken of with approval because of absence of guile—"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" If we desire the Lord's approval, we also should live as nearly as possible without guile. That is one respect in which we should strive to copy Him, for in 1 Peter 2: 21, 22 we read of the example He set us—

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again: when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

We see from this that if we want to be in the best of company—that of our dear Lord himself—we must lay aside the guile, cast it out. *No* guile was found in His mouth—not the least little bit. Let us set that before our minds as the standard of our life and speech.

Can there Be a Good Kind of Guile?

But hold, some one may say. Isn't there a good kind of guile? Didn't the apostle Paul say he caught some of the Corinthians with guile? and if he did, it must have been a good kind or he would not have used it.

Answer: The latter remark is well made. Paul would not have caught the Corinthians or any one else with deliberate deception, which is the meaning of guile. There must be some explanation, for guile of any kind is in absolute conflict with the life, character, and conduct of the apostle Paul as the Bible shows him to us. In his first epistle to these same Corinthians (11: 1) he wrote, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Since Paul knew that Christ was free from guile, he could not recommend guile as a practice either for himself or others. On the contrary, he was at great pains to explain and protest that he was absolutely sincere in all his words and actions, open and aboveboard.

Let us read some of his heart revealing utterances on this subject—

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, *not walking* in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully: but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Corinthians 4: 2.

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, *not with fleshly wisdom*, we have had our conversation [life or conduct] in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."—2 Corinthians 1: 12.

"For we are not as many, which corrupt [margin, deal deceitfully with] the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."—2 Corinthians 2: 17.

Is there a Good Kind of Craft?

These references dispose of craft and craftiness as decisively as the others rejected guile as part of the apostle's method. But the word craft is used for a man's trade, and a skilled worker is called a craftsman. Does "being crafty," in 2 Corinthians 12: 16, mean being skilful or expert in a good sense?

To this we must reply No: in that passage "crafty" (*panourgos*) means cunning, adroit (in a bad sense). The noun *panourgia* is rendered in the Authorized Version "(cunning) craftiness," "subtilty," and occurs in the following texts—

Luke 20: 23—"But he perceived their *craftiness*, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?"

1 Corinthians 3: 19—"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own *craftiness*."

2 Corinthians 4: 2—"not walking in *craftiness*."

Ephesians 4: 14—"That we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and *cunning craftiness*, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

2 Corinthians 11: 3—"But I fear, lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his *subtilty*, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

What then about craft and craftsman as used in Acts 18: 3—Paul abode with Aquila and Priscilla "*because he was of the same craft*"; and Acts 19: 24, 25, 27—"brought no small gain unto the craftsmen . . . by this craft we have our wealth. . . . this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; . . . *the craftsmen that are with him.*" In these places it is obvious a trade or occupation is meant. In fact, "occupation" in Acts 18: 3 and 19: 25 is *techne*, rendered craft in the same connection, and art in Acts 17: 29. In the Greek an entirely different word is used from the one meaning trickery; a word with which nearly every one is familiar in its anglicized forms "technique," "technical." Strong defines the Greek *techne* as meaning "art (as production) i.e. specifically a trade, or (genitive case) skill." The Greek word *technites* means an artisan, figuratively a founder, and is rendered craftsman in the above texts, and builder in Hebrews 11: 10—"whose builder and maker is God." For God as a Builder or Craftsman see also Ephesians 2: 10, "we are his workmanship," and 1 Corinthians 3: 9, "ye are God's building."

In regard to craft, the whole difficulty lies in the two meanings given to the English word craft; and this difficulty is dispelled when we find that the Greek has two words with distinct meanings. A capable workman has technique, technical skill, expertness in handling tools, but all honourable and praiseworthy. Paul as a craftsman was honourable in his life at Corinth, working 18 months at his trade as tentmaker. There was no craft, guile, or deceit in either word or act. His private life was an open book, and his ministry of the truth was carried on openly in the synagogue, as we read—"And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks." (Acts 19: 4.) How did he persuade them? By telling them of the Lord Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins, and showing them in the Scriptures that the prophets had foretold His coming and work. Acts 18: 13 shows the Jews understood the purport of his preaching, for they said to Gallio—"This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law." And the Gentiles saw his teaching was against great Diana of Ephesus. One must admire Paul's courage in declaring the truth openly regardless of all opposition and misrepresentation.

But "crafty," even in English, is confined to a bad sense. We would never call a good honest workman crafty. But if millionaire or beggar were deceitful, many people truthfully would call him a "crafty old fellow," and everybody would know what was meant.

False Accusations

Part of the craftiness of evil persons consists in giving a bad name to the honest and upright. Being crafty themselves, out for gain for themselves, they divert attention from their own deceit by false accusations against the righteous. Like the Lord before him (John 15: 20), the apostle Paul suffered much from such crafty opponents. They could find no real fault in his life or his teachings, and they envied his success in making converts to the gospel. Moreover, they were annoyed by his plain speaking against sin in every shape and form. Hence they sought to break his influence and destroy the gospel truth which he represented as an apostle of the Lamb.

That is why Paul was constantly defending his motives. Had the only consideration been himself, he might have ignored his accusers. But the honour of the Gospel was at stake. If he were all the things they falsely accused him of being, he would not be fit to handle the pure and holy teaching. Paul defended his reputation in order to preserve the believers, particularly the new and inexperienced, from falling into the snares laid for them by these false teachers, some of whom even laid claim to be apostles, though in reality they were the agents of Satan transformed as angels of light. (2 Corinthians 11: 4, 5, 13-15.) They were the "crafty" ones, not Paul.

In these facts, and in the Scriptures already cited, we find the explanation of Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 12: 16, which are often taken as an endorsement of craftiness and guile, and which we shall now see were a quotation of a false statement made against him by his adversaries. It was they who said Paul was crafty and caught the Corinthians with guile. Paul did not say it; he quotes their words in order to disprove them. The context bears out this explanation—

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; *though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.*
16 But be it so, I [literally, I myself] did not burden you: nevertheless, [you say] being crafty, I caught you with guile.
17 Did I make a gain of you by any of them whom I sent unto you?
18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a [literally, the] brother. Did Titus make a gain of you? Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?
19 *Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you?* We speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.—2 Corinthians 12: 15-19.

The Variorum Bible gives a paraphrase of verse 16 by the Rev. Dr. Stanley: "But no, you will say, . . . though I personally received nothing from you I was cunning enough to get your money by means of my emissaries. Can you really believe this?" This paraphrase takes the whole verse as a statement of how Paul's opponents misrepresented him. Rotherham's rendering of verses 15 and 16 is interesting—"but I most gladly will spend and be spent in behalf of your souls; though, while much more abundantly loving you, [the] less I am loved. Let it be! however: I did not burden you. But, being a knave to begin with, with guile I took you!" and verse 19—"Long ago ye are supposing that unto you we are making apology! . . . Before God, in Christ, we are speaking; but all things, beloved, in behalf of your upbuilding."

So even Paul's lengthy explanation and protest, he realizes, will be twisted by his opponents, as though he were making an apology to them. But Paul had said and done nothing that required apology. All he wrote was true, as before God, and all for their benefit. Verse 20 shows how all kinds of people had come into the church at Corinth. If he went to see them the unruly element would stir up "strife, envy, ebullitions of wrath, factions, evil speakings, whisperings, swellings, seditions" (Rotherham). And verse 21 shows that one reason at least for all this disturbance would be that the immoral faction among them had not repented of their wrongdoing.

Besides the immoral element still clinging to the practices of the natives, there was a factious element along the lines of leadership, as referred to in the first epistle—some saying, I am of Paul, I of Apollos, I of Christ, etc. With all this ferment it is easy to see they resented Paul's clear-cut reproofs and learned expositions of the Scriptures, and preferred leaders less honourable in their lives and less keen on the correct understanding of the Word of truth.

Use of Quotation Marks

In modern languages, since the introduction of punctuation, it is customary when quoting the words of another person to place the quoted words between inverted commas. By this means they are recognized as no part of either the introductory statement or the comment following. In Greek of New Testament times no punctuation was known; the words not even having spaces between them. When translating into a modern language, punctuation is inserted according to the sense as understood by the translator. And we must say that on the whole the punctuation of the Authorized Version is remarkably good. This is the anwer to those who say that if Paul was quoting the words of his accusers they would have been placed in quotation marks.

It will be observed that quotation marks are not found anywhere in the Authorized Version, although in many places the words "he said," "they say," etc., show the next words to be a quotation. Even the Emphatic Diaglott, which inserts quotation marks in 2 Corinthians 12: 16 and elsewhere, does not employ them as fully as might be according to present usage. The Diaglott rendering is—Be it so then, I did not burden you; but, [it is said,] "being cunning, I took you by artifice."

Paul's Answers to Corinthian Proverbs

Paul not only replied to misrepresentations which he quoted for rebuttal, but also to the sentiments and proverbs and arguments of the Corinthians and others, and these not being enclosed in quotation marks are sometimes mistaken for Paul's own sentiments. It is as well to know this, lest in our own minds we falsely accuse the apostle of ideas he neither possessed nor endorsed. The following three texts contain proverbs, all of which show on their face that they are not of Christian origin, being on the line of self indulgence and self gratification rather than on the line of God's will and what will please Him. We insert the proverbs in quotation marks to distinguish them from Paul's comment—

1 Corinthians 6: 12—"All things are lawful unto me," but all things are not expedient: "all things are lawful for me," but I will not be brought under the power of any.
1 Corinthians 6: 13—"Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats": but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body.
1 Corinthians 10: 23—"All things are lawful for me," but all things are not expedient: "all things are lawful for me," but all things edify not.

The words "for me" (twice) in the last quotations are not found in the most ancient Greek manuscripts. The Corinthians were so sunk in moral corruption that they claimed that anything, however wicked or injurious, was "lawful." There was indeed no law against self indulgence; it was rather encouraged by the festivals held in the idol temples.

The apostle had often told them those things were wrong in the sight of God. In these references to their proverbs he merely comments that a thing not forbidden by law is not necessarily the most sensible or edifying or profitable thing to do. For instance, there is no law in Australia forbidding a man to be immoral or a drunkard. Should he for that reason become immoral and drink-sodden? Certainly not.

We have known Christians who argued from these passages that it was lawful in God's sight for them to do "all things," and they refrained only because some of the things were not "convenient." A strange conception, surely, but hung on these words. Christian living is not a matter of expediency, but of obedience to God's commands in His Word, which are given to the followers of Christ. Nevertheless, even from a natural and worldly standpoint, excesses should be avoided. True liberty consists not in license to do wrong, but in freedom to do whatever is pure and good and beneficial and helpful to others as well as self.

Instances in which Paul quotes Greek sayings, and there is no question about their being quotations, are found in Acts 17: 28—as certain of your own poets have said, *For we also are his offspring.* From this statement of the poets Paul proceeds to reason that the "offspring of God" are superior to blocks of stone, hence God their creator must be greater than themselves and not less, as are stones and graven images. In Titus 1: 12, he quotes from a heathen prophet—"The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies," and (vs. 13) with this he agrees as a true description of the character of these people. Another of their sayings he quotes in verse 15—"Unto the pure all things are pure," used by the heathen to justify immorality, and Paul shows its falsity. Titus should rebuke the brethren there *sharply, and show them such conduct is inconsistent* with their profession to know God; in fact, their lives demonstrated that they did not really know God, because they denied him in their works.—Verse 16.

Paul Accused of Lying and Fleshly-mindedness

Paul had many things to put up with: hunger, thirst, shipwreck, weariness; but probably what he felt most was the unkind accusations of fellow Jews, and especially of Christian brethren. In Romans 3: 4-8 he refers to an accusation that he was a liar (vs. 7), and (v. 8) that he preached "Let us *do evil, that good may come.*" In this case he explains—"as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say." No one therefore has a right to think that the apostle Paul favoured doing evil that good may come. And yet how many Christians to-day are adopting that very attitude toward worldly amusements, thus doing evil, in order to gain members and adherents to their particular denomination?

In 2 Corinthians 10: 2 Paul says he must be bold against some because they were casting aspersions on his character—"some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh." This accusation he denies. Certainly he was still human, and in that sense in the flesh. But he proceeds to say he did *not* "war after the flesh:" he used no carnal weapons, only the truth, which is indeed more powerful than any two-edged sword.—Verses 3-5; Hebrews 4: 12.

"For his letters, say they [or, he says], are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." (2 Corinthians 10: 10.) This was a most unkind and untrue statement to make concerning Paul, and shows to what lengths people will go when they want to "down" one of the Lord's servants. The insertion of "they say," or "he says," forbids anyone thinking Paul thought this of his own personal appearance. He quotes the words as an illustration of their method of discrediting him.

From here he goes on to warn them against the evil, seductive teachers whose object was to beguile them as Satan beguiled Eve by his subtilties (2 Corinthians 11: 1-4, 12-15), and then, after further defence of himself, quotes their masterpiece of iniquity which accuses the apostle himself of craftiness and guile, their own favourite weapons.

Yet for all that the apostle was willing to visit the Corinthians again, if only he could help them up out of their deplorable state, and convince them that those to whom they had listened were false, but the apostle was true.

Keep thy Lips from Speaking Guile

Having now shown that the apostle Paul was falsely accused of being crafty, and that he successfully defended himself from the charge of catching the Corinthians or anyone else with guile, we trust that if any of our readers have excused themselves for craftiness and guile on the ground that the apostle practised them—we trust any such will begin at once to discontinue wrongdoing, and endeavour to lead an open and straightforward life. The apostle himself sets us a good example in sincerity and truthfulness, honesty in word and act, purity of mind and the consecration of himself and his organs of speech to God's service.

Although many scribes and Pharisees and others of the nation of Israel indulged in lying and deceit, it was not because their law endorsed such conduct. The law forbade false witness and deceit; and Prophets and Psalms continually informed them that God's approval rested upon the upright and truthful. We have already quoted some passages from the Old Testament against "guile." Here are a few more—levelled at "deceit," which is very closely related to guile—

Psalm 10: 7—His [the wicked's] mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity [or iniquity].

Psalm 36: 3—The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good.

Psalm 50: 19—Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.

Proverbs 12: 5—the counsels of the wicked are deceit.

Proverbs 26: 24—He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him.

Using the same word as occurs in these texts from Psalms and Proverbs, the prophet (Isaiah 53: 9) says of the Lord Jesus—"he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." One of the chief characteristics of the wicked is deceit. Contrast with this our righteous Lord Jesus in whose mouth was no deceit or no guile, as 1 Peter 2: 22 quotes this statement of Isaiah's.

Our heavenly Father cannot tolerate lying and deceit, as Psalm 101: 7 declares—"He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house; he that telleth lies shall not tarry [or be established] in my sight." Hence those in Israel who would be wise with the true wisdom would be guided by Psalm 34: 12-22, and similar warnings against deceit and guile.

That God's attitude toward lying, deceit, and guile is the same in the Gospel age as under the law is shown by the apostle Peter who tells the righteous to rejoice when reproached for the name of Christ. He quotes Psalm 34: 12-16 as a good rule of life for the Christian—

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."—1 Peter 3: 10-12.

In verse 9 he says we are called that we may "inherit a blessing," and this is how to obtain it. Note the clear-cut division in God's sight between those who practise deceit and those in whose life there is no guile. The first are classed as "evil" and "wicked," and God is against them. The others are called righteous, the Lord's eye (loving care) is over them, and His ears are open to their prayers. We cannot be on both sides of this question. We cannot be deceitful and righteous at the same time. We cannot speak guile to our fellow men, and expect the Lord to hear our prayers. The dividing line is there; it is for us to choose on which side we will take our stand. "For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." (1 Peter 2: 17.) Better to suffer for living a sincere, upright life, free from guile and deceit, and so follow our Lord's example, in whose mouth was no guile. Then we shall be in the company of the much maligned but absolutely sincere and guileless apostle, and be able to say with him—

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry [of the New Covenant], as we have received mercy [under that covenant], we faint not;

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Corinthians 4: 1, 2.

Those who begin young to lay aside "all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking," have a great advantage in an early start. But the grace of God is such that even those who became Christians late in life may be successful in laying aside those evil traits. To them as newborn babes desiring the sincere milk of the Word, the Lord himself will render aid; for, as Peter assures us, His ear is ever open to their prayers. Furthermore, the Lord Jesus is to us a living stone on whom and in whom we are built up as living stones. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious"—precious not only because He died for us, but because of the sincerity, purity, and goodness of His life, a daily inspiration to every one of us to be like Him.

Courage

"There are who, bending supple knees,
Live for no end except to please,
Rising to fame by mean degrees:
But creep not thou with these.

"They have their due reward; they bend
Their lives to an unworthy end—
On empty aims the toil expend
Which had procured a friend.

"Be not thou as these, whose mind
Is to the passing hour confined:
Let no ignoble fetters bind
Thy soul, as free as wind.

"Stand upright, speak thy thought, declare
The truth thou hast that all may share;
Be bold, proclaim it everywhere:
They only live who dare."

—*Selected.*

For the Children

Bread and Fish for Hungry People

As Jesus was teaching great multitudes of people by the shores of the sea of Galilee, suddenly there came to Him some men with an urgent and sad message. These men were disciples of John the Baptist, and their sad message was that John was dead.

A most dreadful thing had been done to him by Herod the king. Herod had imprisoned John in a horrible dungeon—a kind of dark, damp cellar. But Herod's birthday had come round, and in a palace not far from where John was in the dungeon Herod gave a great party to all his friends. Awful as it may seem to you, just about the last thing Herod did on his birthday was to put John to death. And now his disciples had come full of grief to tell Jesus.

When Jesus heard that He got into a ship with His disciples and quietly sailed away to the other side. Both Jesus and His disciples were very tired and wanted to rest themselves away over in a desert place. But some people saw them going, and they started off around the shore, walking quickly, so as to be there when the ship arrived. As the marching people passed through the cities and villages on the way, the people there wanted to know what it was all about, and as soon as they were told they too joined the happy throng in search of Jesus. So at last there was a great crowd of more than 5000 people—all hurrying along the shores of the sea.

So quickly did they go, that they arrived at the landing place before the ship came in. So when Jesus and His disciples arrived they found a bigger crowd than ever awaiting them even in that desert place, and all their hopes of having a brief rest were gone.

Was Jesus annoyed about this? Did He look cross at them and say—What are you doing here! We have been trying to get away from you to have a little rest, and here you are, more of you than ever! You can all go back again and wait until I am ready to see you! Did He say anything like that? No,

indeed! Nobody ever heard anything like that from the loving, tender-hearted Jesus.

And just *now I am wondering whether all my* little relatives or their uncle would be able to keep good-tempered if they were promised a holiday and then did not get one. Suppose we were very tired and someone took us across the sea, promising us a good rest on the other side, but we found we had to work harder than ever when we got there; would we be loving and good about it, or would we be cross? Jesus did not get cross, and we shall try not to be when we are disappointed.

The Compassionate Shepherd

Well, what did happen when Jesus got out of the ship and saw them? He was "moved with compassion toward them"; that is, He took pity on them, because "they were as sheep not having a shepherd." And in those days if sheep did not have a shepherd *to look after them they soon got lost and wild ani*mals got them and killed them.

Every good shepherd is kind to his sheep, and loves them. So notice what Jesus did for all these people who, He said, were like sheep. The first thing He did was to "teach them many things"; that is, as He was their Good Shepherd, He was teaching them how to follow Him. When that was done, He looked around to find all those who were sick, and *He healed all of them. He only had to say the word.* or to touch them, and at once they were perfectly well. Was it not lovely of Jesus the Good Shepherd to do all these things for "the sheep"? It showed His kindness and love for them.

It took until nearly sundown to teach them and to heal them, and by that time they were all very hungry—especially the children; and before it got very dark they would have to be going home. Would Jesus send them all away hungry? Not if He was a kind and good Shepherd, and we know that He is both kind and good. So by some means He was going to feed them as a good shepherd feeds his sheep.

But *how were they to get food enough for* 5000 people away out in a desert place where there were no shops? The disciples wondered how it was to be done, too, but they thought they had a good plan, and they came to Jesus. They said to Him—"Send them away, that they may go into the country [to the farms] round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread." But if Jesus had allowed that, the little children as well as the others *would have had long walks, perhaps in the* dark, and gone hungry after all. No; that way would not do.

So Jesus said, "They need not depart [hungry]; give ye them [something] to eat." Then the disciples thought of another plan. They said, "Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread for them?" No, that would not do either; for the people would have had to wait hungry while they went perhaps a long way, and even then they might not be able to get enough for all. So what was to be done? Oh, it was a fix to be in!

But I am sure all my little friends know that while Jesus is present all is well, and "fixes" are nothing to Him. And what people cannot do for themselves Jesus can do easily. So He first asked His disciples—"How many loaves have ye? . . . they say, Five, and two fishes." Then Jesus told them to make all the people sit down. And when He had taken the loaves and the fishes—what; did He forget something very important first of all? Oh, no; and neither must we ever forget before we eat. He gave thanks to God for the bread and fishes. To each of the disciples He then gave a piece of the bread and a piece of the fish, and sent them to give it out to the people.

And then a most wonderful thing began to happen. You all know that when mother cuts pieces of bread off the loaf it gets smaller and smaller; and after she has distributed it all around there is no more left on the bread board. But when the disciples broke pieces off the bread and off the fish to give to the hungry people there was just as much in their hands as before! It did not get less. So they were *able to go on giving out and giving out bread and* fish, bread and fish, all the time, until more than 5000 people had all they needed.

That five loaves and two fishes could be made to feed 5000 people was a most wonderful thing; and yet there is another little wonder to come. When Jesus told His disciples to gather up the pieces that were on the ground they filled twelve baskets full!

How wise and profitable it is to seek Jesus until we find Him! For now we see what good things these people got for their trouble. He first told them wonderful things about God, then He healed all the sick ones, and lastly He miraculously fed them. Wonderful Good Shepherd! So if we seek we shall find Him too, and He will teach, heal, and feed in a way even more wonderful than He did then.

Please read Mark 6: 30-44, and then read Matthew 7: 7, 8; John 6: 51. —UNCLE FRANK.



The Letter and the Spirit

THE EXPRESSION, "the letter and the spirit," is often used in connection with secular affairs, its most frequent use being in criticism of laws of the land and the manner of their enforcement. The "letter" of a law is understood to mean its exact wording, and what those words, literally interpreted, mean; the "spirit" of a law is what its interpreters consider to be its intent, irrespective of its exact phraseology.

Thus, some years ago the United States government brought suit against *certain trusts, on the* ground that they were combinations in restraint of

trade, and therefore violating the act forbidding such combinations. But when the first of these cases came up to the Supreme Court, the judges ruled that the intention (or spirit) of the act was not to make *all* combinations illegal; therefore they interpreted the act as though it sanctioned all "reasonable" business alliances, and the suit was dismissed. This decision, and the use of the word "reasonable," caused much comment and some jocularity at the time.

If an act or code be loosely worded various interpretations cannot be avoided. In this way also the ends of justice are often defeated through the manipulations of clever lawyers who assume an "intent" favorable to their side of the controversy.

Again, it may be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine, to block the street traffic with a vehicle; but if a horse prove fractious, and the traffic thus become blocked, the driver will not be arrested. He will be excused on the ground that it is contrary to the spirit of the law to punish when the misdemeanor is unavoidable and unintentional.

This every-day use of the phrase, "the letter and the spirit," may be permissible, especially in view of the fact that laws are made by fallible men, who find difficulty in expressing their ideas, and who often fail to provide in their code for all the contingencies likely to arise under any given section of an Act. But the ends of justice would no doubt be better and more uniformly served if the "intent" of the law were adequately expressed, and all possible contingencies duly allowed for.

Interpretation of the Mosaic Law

But whatever latitude may be allowable in the interpretation and enforcement of man-made laws, there is no such latitude in considering the laws of God. Were the Jews justified in modifying their Law or its penalties to suit their conceptions of what the Law should be in any given case? No, they were not. Were they allowed to say, "The 'letter' of the Law says thus and so, but in the present case the operation of the Law would prove harsh, and therefore we will take what we consider to be the 'spirit' of it, and allow the culprit to go free"? No; they had no permission to divide the law in this way. For example, the son of an Israelitish woman, whose father was an Egyptian, blasphemed the name of the Lord, and it was thought that, not being wholly of Israelitish blood, the law condemning to death for that offence would not apply; therefore the mind of the Lord was sought. The Lord's answer was that there were to be no exceptions, and no mercy, in the infliction of the penalties prescribed—"Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country: for I am the Lord your God." They therefore brought out the young man, and stoned him with stones till he died. (Leviticus 24: 10-23.) It is clearly to be seen that the letter of the law was the spirit of it and the spirit of the law was the letter of it, using these terms as they are often applied to secular codes.

When Saul and the children of Israel saved the best of the cattle and flocks taken from the Amalekites, they assumed to find an "intent" in the law which did not exist, and considered themselves hardly dealt with when the Lord would not accept the sacrifices offered. But the Lord's firmness was necessary, in order to show His disapproval of the habit of evasion, which led them finally to "interpret" His Law out of existence; for this is exactly what the Lord accused the Pharisees and scribes of doing: they made void the Law by their traditions. (Matthew 15: 3-9; Mark 7: 5-13.) As for Saul, he was severely punished for his disobedience.—1 Samuel 15: 8-23.

The effect of such incidents as these would be to teach the children of Israel that they were to be *doers* of the Law, and not critics or tinkers of it. Whatsoever the Lord said unto them through Moses, that they must *do*. And, furthermore, they were given to understand that *the Lord was able to express in words* exactly what He wanted done. The God of heaven and earth, the Creator of the Universe, who gave man the gift of speech and the brain of comprehension, would have them realize that He knows how to use words in their true sense, and in such a manner as to convey His true meaning. So then the Jews were not to disregard the words of the Law in a vain endeavour to discover the "spirit" of it to be something totally different from what the words implied, and more to their liking, but were rather to seek to understand God's meaning, and obey it.

God's Law was perfect—holy, and just, and good; it was simply expressed; an endless number of possibilities and contingencies were arranged for, and provision was made for the High Priest to learn by the Urim and Thummim the will of God concerning any matter of doubt or perplexity. The people were therefore without excuse in their repeated disobediences.

Love the Fulfilling of the Law

It is sometimes said that the "letter" of the Jewish Law was the commandments as written by Moses on the tables of stone and the parchments, but that the "spirit" of that Law was "love." That this is a mis-statement is easily proven by an examination of the Law, where we find that "love" was one of the commandments written on the parchment, and therefore *as much a part of the "letter"* as any other portion of the Law.—Deuteronomy 6: 1, 5; 10: 12, 13, etc.; Leviticus 19: 18; Matthew 5: 43; 19: 19; Romans 13: 9.

Our Lord's words on the subject, recorded in Matthew 22: 34-40, are often misunderstood. When asked, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus answered the question as put; namely, "the great commandment *in the law*." The lawyer did not ask what is the great commandment which you (Jesus) are formulating; he asked which of all commandments in the law given at Sinai do you consider to be *the* "great" one. Our Lord replied by a quotation from the Law itself, "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," and unhesitatingly described it as the first and greatest of all the commandments—greater even than any which were written on the tables of stone.

The Master followed this up by another quotation from the Law, which He described as "the second" great commandment—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Then He said, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Some have thought that because Jesus said that all the Law and the prophets hang on these two commandments they could not be a part of the Law. But this is not a justifiable conclusion, since He has just said that they were a part of that Law. The lawyer had asked, which commandment *in the law*, and reference to the Old Testament shows that these two commandments were actually a part of the Law. The fact is that our Lord had the inspired wisdom, when answering the designing lawyer, to pick out these two at their true valuation, and to declare that any Jew who fulfilled these two would in fulfilling them be obliged to conform to all the other commandments. Love to God would compel obedience to all commandments relating to the worship and service of God and to all God's commands concerning his neighbour; and love to his neighbour would require him to do all the Law enjoined as neighbourly and considerate acts, for the Law enjoined no other.

Thus failed the lawyer's attempt to inveigle the Master into a criticism of the Law, or any part of it, and thus have we received an illuminating and authoritative comment on that Law. The lawyer found his question completely and satisfactorily answered, and so do we.—Matthew 22: 46.

The Law Covenant "The Letter"

The expression "the letter" occurs several times in the apostle Paul's writings. In each case the context indicates that by it He means the Law Covenant. The Greek word is *gramma*, and means, according to Strong, "a writing, i.e. a letter, note, epistle, book, etc." It is rendered "writings" and "scriptures" in the following two passages—John 5: 47—But if ye believe not his [Moses'] *writings*, how shall ye believe my words? 2 Timothy 3: 15—thou hast known the holy *scriptures*.

In the following *gramma* is rendered "the letter" —Romans 2: 27—And shall not circumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by *the letter* and circumcision dost transgress the law?

Romans 2: 29—But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in *the letter*; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Romans 7: 5, 6—For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of *the letter*.

It is obvious that in these statements the apostle is using *gramma* to mean the writings of the law. He is contrasting the condition of Jews under the law with Gentiles who were not under the law, and with Jews who had been delivered from the law. In each case "the letter" stands for the law, and had *gramma* in these cases been translated writing, the meaning would have been still more easily seen. The Jews were judged by the letter, that is by their holy writings, and condemned. And having been delivered from the law they should serve according to the new arrangement, which is called in 2 Corinthians 3 the administration of the spirit. To wish to continue serving God "in the oldness of the letter" was a mistake. For they had died to that old covenant, and the old writings were not now of the same force.

In 2 Corinthians 3: 6 *gramma* is twice rendered "the letter"—

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament [covenant]; not of *the letter*, but of the spirit: for *the letter* killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Undoubtedly the reference here, as in Romans, is to the law covenant, which is contrasted with the new covenant, of which Paul had been made a minister. Through Christ and the Holy Spirit, under the new covenant, He preached life, but "the letter," or the writing on stone, that is, the law covenant, had brought only death. Hence the law covenant, or letter, is called "the ministration of death," while the new covenant is called "the ministration of the spirit," which "giveth life."

In Colossians 2: 14 the law is called "the *handwriting* of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

It is a rule of grammar that a part may at times stand for the whole. Thus a ship at sea is sometimes called a "sail," the sail being a prominent feature of the ship. And everyone knows that by sail we mean the ship and not a sail standing alone in the water. So in the apostle's comparison of the law covenant and the new covenant in 2 Corinthians 3 he uses a number of characteristics of the Law Covenant as titles for that Covenant, and several prominent characteristics of the New Covenant as titles for that New Covenant. These characteristics and titles may be tabulated and contrasted as follows:—

LAW COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
1. The letter (Title) (vs. 6.)	1. The Spirit (Title) (vss. 3, 6).
2. Ministration of Death (Title). "the letter killeth" (vss. 6, 7).	2. Ministration of the Spirit (Title). "giveth life" (vss. 6, 8).
3. Ministration of Condemnation (Title) (vs. 9).	3. Ministration of Righteousness (Title) (vs. 9).
4. Written with ink (vs. 3).	4. Written with the Spirit of the living God (vs. 3).
5. Written in tables of stone (vss. 3, 7).	5. Written in fleshy tables of the heart (vss. 3, 18).
6. Glorious, yet no glory (vss. 7, 9, 10, 11).	6. The Glory that Excelleth (vss. 8, 9, 10, 11).
7. Vail when reading Old Testament (vss. 14, 15).	7. No Vail—Open Face—in Christ (vss. 16, 18).
8. Bondage, Blinded (vss. 13, 14).	8. Liberty, Beholding (vss. 17, 18).
9. "Done away" (vs. 11).	9. "That which remaineth" (vs. 11).

The "Letter," that is, the Law Covenant, did kill; it was a Ministration of Condemnation and Death. All who were under the Law were cursed because unable to keep it, and hence were under condemnation to death. The Law Covenant was written in tables of stone and with ink, and also in books, and it is well called "the Letter," or, the Writings.

because of the number and variety of its requirements, the recording of which filled several books, which had to be copied again and again on fresh parchments, in order to be handed down from generation to generation. Zealous Jews wrote portions of the Law on their doorposts and bound them on their foreheads, and sanctimonious Pharisees wore broadened phylacteries on their foreheads, to be seen of men. (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9; Matthew 23: 5.) But none could fulfil them all, and to fail in one point was to be guilty of all.—James 2: 10.

The "Spirit," that is, the New Covenant, quite to the contrary, gives life; it is a Ministration of Righteousness and Divine Power. All who are under it are so dealt with that their characters are transformed to holiness; they are able to keep its simple requirements because they are adapted to their needs. The Commandments of the New Covenant are being written in the hearts and minds of God's people. It is a Covenant of Mercy and Forgiveness, and while any given lesson is being learned and the requisite character developed, the mercy and forgiveness of the Covenant are available. The Spirit gives liberty to the New Covenant believer from the bondage of the Law Covenant and the slavery of Sin, and thus we are the better able to submit to the transforming influences of the Lord, whose face we behold as in a glass, that we may copy His glorious virtues.—Verses 17, 18.

We to whom the saving and satisfying advantages of the New Covenant have come: shall we not each day, and day by day, submit to the sanctifying power of the truth, that we may indeed become "epistles of Christ," known and read of all men, because the divine characteristics of love, peace and good will have been written in our hearts!

When Light Shines

WHEN LIGHT shines the opportunity is given for those who are aware of it to come to it. When one is wandering on a dark country road, not quite sure of the direction, how the step quickens at sight of a light. Someone is carrying a lantern, or perhaps it comes through a window. Let us hurry and see if we can find where we are, how we can get to the next town, or where we can get a shakedown for the night.

In South Africa it has been both. A steady light has shone out from the window of Durban, and the two colporteur brethren have been going around in the dark with a lantern, and coming upon wayfarers glad of a little guidance. We are sure all brethren will rejoice while reading the following letters, showing how some have come to the light, and so have manifested that they love the light. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."—John 3: 21.

As we all rejoice in these indications of divine favor, let us also pray the Lord to send more laborers into His vineyard, and to grant further encouragements—not only in South Africa, but also in Britain, in America, and in all other parts of the great field. The letters follow—

Dear Brother Henninges: I have news for you, good news, wonderful news. Truly God is with us! What unmistakable evidences we are getting of His love and goodness to the dear brethren in their field of labour, also to ourselves who are co-labouring with them. So great is my joy I hardly know where to start telling you all about the good things that have happened in the last few weeks. I think I will let the letters that have passed between us tell their own story so that you and the dear friends may know just how the Truth reached Johannesburg, and has been the cause of so much rejoicing all around. The first is an extract from a letter dated 27/5/29.

New Covenant Fellowship, Durban. Dear Brethren:

Last week I had the pleasure of meeting your two loving Brothers, who are out here with your books. I was indeed pleased to meet them, the more so finding them showing the traits of the Master's Spirit. I had an interesting (to me) talk with them, and was promised some back papers on a certain truth we were discussing, which I hope I will receive in due time. They were also kind enough to leave me one of your books—"Bible Talks," which I found most interesting. They also promised that I will know of their return here, and so will again see them.

Will you be good enough to forward me per book post "Daniel the Prophet"? I also intend subscribing for your "Advocate and Kingdom Herald." . . . I was an Elder in the Johannesburg I.B.S.A. Class, but the dear people and myself not seeing eye to eye in reference to Galatians 5: 1, I at the Annual Election was not elected Elder. . . . Some three years back, at our study, I said that the "Watch Tower" was not in harmony with Scripture, and, after pointing out, the class agreed, and there came the final break with the W.T. . . . So now about 10 or so are going on on our own.

Praying the Lord's richest blessings on your labours of love for Him, With warmest love, etc.

Reply by Brother W. G. Mathieson, manager South African Branch, dated 28/5/29.

Dear Brother ———:

How pleased we were to receive your letter of the 27th inst., which I can assure you will be read by all the Brethren on Thursday evening (our study night) with great interest and much joy. The colporteurs mentioned your name in one of their first letters to us and referred to the pleasant chat that you had together, promising full details on their return. But how great our joy to receive a letter from you this morning, which I am losing no time in answering, for I see we have much in common,

particularly a love and zeal for the Master and His precious Truth. I am glad you met the brethren, such zeal and devotion to the Master are but rarely seen. May God abundantly bless them in their efforts to shed forth the light of the Gospel. Perchance there may be some yet to be called from the field in which they labour, to be among the FEW to whom it is going to be the Father's good pleasure to grant the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now, friend, it is with great interest we have read of your ups and downs. Truly the Lord's ways are not our ways. Our experience (at least the majority of us is very similar to your own. We too up to about three years ago were associated with the I.B.S.A., having been attracted there by the light of Pastor Russell's teaching. But the breaking point came with the knowledge that he taught that the Church had part in the Sin Offering, to our minds a dishonouring doctrine; also, that the New Covenant for the forgiveness of sins was not now in operation, hence our dear Lord was not our Mediator, and finally that the Atonement work did not finish at Calvary, but it was left to the Church to fill up His sufferings—reading something into the text which the Apostle never intended. (See "Advocate" sent under separate cover, and pointing out these errors in Pastor Russell's teaching.) But this was not all. The Scripture tells us that "by their fruits ye shall know them." I hardly need to add more; from your own personal experience you will agree with me that "the fruits of the Spirit" were more often absent than present among a people who claimed to be God's children, begotten of the Spirit, and nourished and fed through what they called the one and only "channel."

I was led to the Light, in which I now rejoice, through a copy of "Bible Talks" obtained in the Durban Library. This put me in touch with Bro. Henninges, at one time in charge of the work for the Watch Tower in England and Australia.

An article in the Advocate, "Light in Darkest Africa," will, I feel sure, prove interesting reading to you. I am also enclosing two "Advocates" dealing with the Pyramid in the Light of Scripture. I think the colporteurs mentioned to me in their letter that you were interested in this study. . . . If such is the case, Brother, I want you to read these articles carefully and prayerfully, in the light of Galatians 5: 1 (a text which I, like yourself, stand for firmly). No one could have been more enthusiastic over the Pyramid and its significance, as to dates, etc., than I was. But in the light of the Word I had to let it go. Davidson, Edgar, Smyth, etc., with their innumerable calculations, what have they proved? What have they given us? Friend, when I look back at the time spent on this study I now see only so much time wasted. If the Times and Seasons are not found in the Word, surely they are not to be found in Egypt. Surely the last attempt (May, 1928), should shake its most ardent advocate. With love from all, etc. W. G. Mathieson.

Letter in reply to above, dated at Johannesburg, 1 6 29.

Dear Brethren, I am writing you more fully with regard to your letter, for which I must thank you. . . . It is with pleasure I read your little suggestion with a view to spreading the truth. I will be very pleased to receive the few books you were kind enough to offer. I will of course look through them, and if I find I am not in harmony with their teaching, I would not feel free to give them out. However, I may state as I mentioned in my P.C., "Bible Talks" is really Heart and Mind Talks. The only exception I take is on page 185, End of the Law Covenant, referring to Ezekiel 37: 14. I take it that at the resurrection of Israel and when brought back into their land, from out of the grave, they will have no connection with the Law Covenant. But perhaps I do not see it quite clearly. I also had a long look through "Daniel," and as far as I have read it is certainly most beautiful. The Parables are to me better than I had realised before. . . . The "Advocates" you were kind enough to send are all splendid, but as I am more occupied with the "Ransom" and "The Pyramid," I have given them more thought. If you could send me several copies of "Whence Cometh Our Help" and "The Living Stone and Living Stones" I shall be pleased.

I sent a copy to a Brother, along with myself in the classes. We had been Elders together for a good many years. So, although he seems still to be in harmony with the Watch Tower, we love each other very much. I simply sent him the copy, making no comment. I also asked him to let me know what his thoughts are in connection with the Sin Offering. I had thought of going to Durban for a visit, but in any case the way was not opened for me. Should the way be opened now, it will be a great delight to do so. One of my reasons for desiring to go some time back was I wanted to try and find out (which I certainly would have done had I gone) the Brethren who left the I.B.S.A., as I wanted very much to know the Whys and Wherefores; in fact, I wanted to find whatever TRUTH I could.

Hoping I have not been wearisome, etc., I am, etc.,

P.S.—I went to our little class to-day, Sunday, and explained the whole position to them. I gave our Brother the "Ransom" and "Living Stones," and after the meeting to my surprise he told me that he is going to Durban during the week. He immediately asked for your address. He is also writing you. We have been through thick and thin together. You will find him a dear Brother indeed. It seems remarkable that he should go to Durban just this week. How I wish I were with you in your talks. He will, of course, want to know a lot of things. He, like myself, is out for truth. See what he thinks of things. Personally, I believe the whole class is with you. May the Lord guide.

Bro. W. G. Mathieson's reply, Durban 6/6/29. Extracts.

I am now taking this opportunity of answering your letter of the 1st inst. First of all I must express the great joy we experienced in partaking of the richness of its contents. I trust the small box of literature reached you safely, and that in it you found much of a helpful nature, both for yourself and those of a seeking mind, with whom you may, from time to time, come into contact. . . . I am sending you under separate cover the Advocate, The Few and the Many, also The Wake Ups. After

you are finished with the latter kindly return, for they are the only set I have. We are all looking forward to Brother ———'s visit. We will have much to talk about, and we pray that it will be the means of bringing us all closer together, united in the love of the Master and His truth, and also in the love and fellowship of one another. . . . Now dear Brother, if after careful perusal of the literature of the New Covenant Fellowship, you and the friends with you see in it the Light of Truth, I would like you to stand with us that we may all be one. (John 17: 21.) If you feel, as I do, that there has been an unmistakable evidence of God's guiding hand in all this, put it to the class, that we may know what God's will is in this matter. With Christian love, etc., W. G. Mathieson.

Extracts from letter dated 4/6/29, received by the Colporteurs.

Dear Brethren, . . . You say you would be pleased to have my thoughts on the Pyramid. In that connection I enclose you a P.C. just received from a Brother who is a Deacon in our little Class, of which I am Elder. Well, I think he has expressed my own thoughts too, and I quite agree with dear Brother Mathieson, for like him I have wasted too much time over the inches, cubits, angles, dates and symbols, and what not, so that I heartily endorse your scriptures sent me. Although the Pyramid is such an enormous structure, as far as I am concerned it is buried in oblivion. I had been and am reading "Daniel the Prophet" with great joy, and certainly see Daniel now in a very different light. The little book "Bible Talks" is certainly the best treatment of the subject I have ever read. . . . I am looking forward to our meeting again, but if possible let me know in good time.

The Postcard referred to above, dated 3/6/29—

Greetings in His Name. Have just gone hastily through "The Living Stone and Living Stones," and this article is scriptural truth. Must now reject Great Pyramid as of Divine origin. It is the most wonderful article I have ever seen, and the truth is so clearly established that all who love it (truth) must see. Will try and arrange to see you later on in the week. Gal. 6: 4.

Extract from letter to W. G. Mathieson from Johannesburg, 6/6/29.

Thanks for yours just to hand. I have just received yesterday the enclosed letter. I thought it better to send it to you, so that you may have an idea of the Brother you will meet, and I think that, like myself, it will give you joy to read the contents of the letter. I will just say AMEN, AMEN. I trust all the dear Brethren will enjoy the letter enclosed. I could commend him to your warmest love. Henceforth we labour as one people—one in mind, one in truth, one in love.

Copy of letter referred to in the foregoing, dated 4/6/29.

Dear Brother: Greetings loving and sincere in our dear Redeemer's name.—1 John 2: 2.

Well, since getting the little packet from you on Sunday, including the letter you had written enclosed, it has been a week of joyful surprises. I thought we had the truth in the supposed great Pyramid Message, but the article in the N.C. Advocate, entitled "The Living Stone and Living Stones," soon convinced me that we were mixing whatever truth we had with idol worship. I cannot now in the light which so beautifully and clearly shines from above mentioned article accept the Great Pyramid of Gizeh as being of Divine origin. My greatest joy of all, doubtless, is centred in the little book "What say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, and Scapegoat." My word, dear Brother, what a feast! Why, this is the first time in all my life that I have really heard and understood the Truth. How beautiful, how sweet to know that Jesus was the Scapegoat upon whom the sins of the whole world were laid. I cannot find words to express my praise and thankfulness to our dear Heavenly Father for such a perfect understanding of this matter. I turned up Tabernacle Shadows, March 1899 edition, from p. 68 on, which dealing with the Scapegoat, amongst other things, says—"As before expressed, we understand that this scapegoat which was presented for sacrifice, with the other, but failed to sacrifice, and to follow the example of the bullock, represented a class of God's people who have made the covenant to become dead to the world, to sacrifice their justified human nature, but fail to perform the sacrifice covenanted." These eventually became, according to the I.B.S.A. teaching, "the Great Company (Scapegoat) Class." The little book aforementioned by the New Covenant Fellowship has forever settled all these unscriptural theories for me, and I am rejoicing in the Truth on that matter too.

Another source of exceeding great joy to me has been an intelligent understanding of the Covenants, including the Law Covenant and the New Covenant. What a joy for the first time in my life to understand the Covenants! It reminds me that just re-recently I turned up the Bible Students' Manual (I.B.S.A.) at the place dealing with the Law Covenant, and there read that Jesus took away the curse of the Law, nailing it to His cross, whilst on the next page, or it may be the same page of said Manual, it announces that "the Jew is still under the Law." At the time I never so much as thought on such an utter impossibility, but now I do. How could the Jew be under the Law Covenant when Jesus took it out of the way? Shortly before He hung on the cross Jesus wept over Jerusalem, saying—"Your house is left unto you desolate."

I fancy, dear Brother, that we have been feeling after God, and that He has graciously opened our understanding to see and appreciate His plans and wonderful truths. I don't know how you feel about it, but I am quite sure the Lord sent those two brethren from Durban to Johannesburg, and that you should meet them. I shall certainly make a special point when in Durban to meet the Brethren. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. Well, dear Brother, we are just beginning to understand something about John 17: 3. Greetings.

. . . .

The foregoing will give you some idea of what fine Brothers we shall have in the work in the Transvaal.

This Sunday evening proved to be a happy one for us all. Our hearts were full of love and thanks-

giving to God for this manifestation of His goodness towards us, and those dear ones who now rejoice with us in the glorious light of Truth. There will be more to tell you, D.V.

I have just received a letter from Brother ———, enclosing one from a friend in Capetown, which also raises our hopes. Truly the light is shining brightly. Time does not permit now of my quoting his letter. More anon. The Memorial was kept by the little class as usual. On this occasion we had the colporteurs with us, and all were richly blessed.

We are having a little Conference on Handicap Day, the 7th July. The colporteurs will be taking part, and we also hope to have with us our "new" Brother from Johannesburg. We are all eagerly looking forward to this happy meeting. We are taking for our subject matter the 12th chapter of Romans.

Now, dear Brother, I will have to close for the present. Pray for us, that the Lord's blessing may continue to rest upon us, and that we will always be found worthy to be used of Him.

With Christian Love from us all to all the dear friends, I am, Dear Brother, Yours in that blessed Hope. W.G.M.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from June Issue)

When the disciples heard our Lord's pronouncement on marriage, as recorded in Matthew 19, they thought it would be most difficult, if not impossible, to carry out. The same question is raised in connection with all our Lord's commands in the Sermon on the Mount: they sound good, but can they be lived up to? Are they not counsels of perfection—far beyond possible attainment?

In answer we might say that with our imperfect minds and bodies we could not hope to carry them all out *perfectly*. But at least we must *sincerely* strive to do so, and with the striving will come greater ease of accomplishment. Zaccheus the tax collector found no difficulty in fulfilling the requirement of the law which imposed a return of wrongful gain with twenty per cent. added. But so zealous was he, so conscientious, so desirous of being wholly right in his conduct, that he voluntarily imposed upon himself the payment of *fourfold*.

Zaccheus was a man of faith, and faith is always ready, if possible, to do more rather than less than required. "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything by false accusation [that is, if he by error exacted more tax than was fair and just], I restore him fourfold." And Jesus said to him in approval, "This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham." If Zaccheus could do this in deference to the law and in order to keep his conscience clear, surely the way is open to us to do heartily and gladly what our Lord asks us to do in recompensing those we have injured. (Luke 19: 1-10.) The same is true in regard to the marriage relation.

Given a warm heart and a genuine desire to make a success of marriage, one will if possible do more rather than less of his or her half, to bridge over any difficulties that may arise, and so not require what the law allows through its divorce courts.

And now we come to another custom among the Jews which the Lord admonishes them to dispense with, as serving no useful purpose.

Swear Not At All

33 *Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by [or, to] them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:*

34 *But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:*

35 *Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.*

36 *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.*

37 *But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.*

Not only does swearing serve no useful purpose, but our Lord says its origin is evil. If its origin is evil, why did the law compel the Jews to perform what they had sworn to do? We read in Deuteronomy 23: 21-23—

"When shou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee.

"But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee.

"That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth."

Here is a description of the kind of vows Jehovah their God was willing to accept. It was a promise to give a freewill offering unto the Lord by the hand of the priest at the altar. God never said that He would accept any and every kind of promise or pledge an Israelite might choose to present. But even while recognizing offerings of animal sacrifices in fulfilment of such vows or pledges, the law intimates they were not necessary, for if anyone "forbear to vow," that is, did not pledge himself to bring a gift to the Lord, there was no sin in not bringing it. Under the law many sacrifices were compulsory, and vow-offerings were permitted as expressions of gratitude and zeal, but the Jew was at liberty to present offerings without the formality of first making a vow. The 30th chapter of Numbers contains some of these regulations. In the well known case of Jephthah's vow, it is evident such a vow as he made was unnecessary; but having made it it was compulsory to carry it out. Jephthah's daughter was not burned to death, as some think.

The Almighty never accepted human sacrifices. But the daughter became devoted to the Lord's service rather than let her father suffer through his rash act.—Judges 11: 29-40.

The Lord in His Sermon, which is a statement of New Covenant principles, instructs His disciples not to make vows and take oaths, even though the law allowed them. Thus He showed the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old. Under the New Covenant we bring ourselves to the Lord, and that is a distinct act, not mere words promising to do so at some future time. And that one act of complete consecration embraces all we are and have and all we will ever have and be—completely "buried with him by baptism into death." From time to time we may arrange our affairs so as to carry out certain work systematically and provide for financing with regular payments, but this adherence to business methods is not a form of vow or a case of swearing, but merely the use of one's freedom in a systematic manner—always asking the Lord's will, and saying, "If the Lord will," we shall do this or that.—James 4: 13-15.

By Heaven, by Earth, by Jerusalem

Another form of swearing indulged in by the Jews, which appears to have been a common practice among all nations of those days, was to swear "by" something; but this form of oath was not noticed in their law. The reasons our Lord gives why His disciples should not swear in this way are good and sufficient. They had no right to swear by heaven, earth, or Jerusalem, because these things were God's property, and to appropriate them even to the extent of swearing by them would be presumption. By so doing they were virtually robbing God and assuming to bind God by their oath, in which He had no part and with the sentiments of which He might not agree.

As for swearing by their head, that would guarantee nothing, because they could not so much as control the color of their hair. To swear by their own head was even more foolish than to swear by the other things mentioned.

The Evil in Vows and Oaths

Our Lord's command, "Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay," is sufficient for all His obedient disciples. If yes and no are the extent to which we should go in affirmation or denial, let us adhere to that rule. The command is not given for the sake of commanding; it is given for our good, and He gives us the reason; namely, "whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil [or the evil one]." (Vs. 37.) Evil, or the evil one, is the origin of the custom our Lord condemns.

(1.) It was common among the Gentiles, who swore by their gods, their idols, and their temples. From them the Jews adopted it, although they were forbidden to imitate the ways of the nations. In doing the same things—with the mere alteration of the names by which they swore, they were brought into fellowship with these Gentiles, with the demons behind Gentile idolatry, and with Satan himself.

(2.) Its use tended to extravagant language—always seeking some other object or person to invoke in their oaths, and the oaths themselves becoming more and more complicated. If considered binding, the person brought himself into bondage.

(3.) If not considered binding, the person practically made himself a perjurer—a man upon whose word no reliance could be placed.

(4.) Its effect was to draw them away from God—to the idolizing of their own thoughts and schemes, involving them in many promises they could not fulfil.

The evil may be illustrated in this way. A man finds a boy in his orchard and says to him, "By heaven, if I catch you in here again I will thrash you within an inch of your life." Next day he finds another boy calmly eating an apple, and cries out, "By earth, if I find you here again I will duck you in the river." To a third boy he shouts, "By Jerusalem, the next time I find you here I will knock you silly." Evil 1, he works himself up into a fit of exasperation; evil 2, he pledges himself to three actions in the future which he may never fulfil, but which if he does carry out will involve him in assault and battery and possible murder; evil 3, he has taken the name of heaven, earth and Jerusalem in vain—that is, to no purpose and without authority; evil 4, he has cultivated a habit of anger and threatening, of no profit to himself or anyone else; evil 5, small boys continue to steal apples, and they heap ridicule upon his impotence.

But there is another evil associated with swearing, and the taking of vows and oaths—a very serious evil, and referred to by our Lord in his reproof of the "scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (Matthew 23: 16, 18)—

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor [i.e. bound by his oath]."

"And, whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing: but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty [i.e., bound by his oath]."

Naturally, the habit of taking oaths leads to evasion, as when the children of Israel failed to bring to the Lord the offering pledged, or, resenting compulsion, brought an inferior offering.

It also leads to the form of evasion spoken of; namely, the oath-taker provides himself with a secret code, a mental reservation whereby some of his oaths publicly spoken are repudiated the moment they are made, by the subterfuge of employing a name or object which he has beforehand selected as of no binding force upon himself. Thus the person who hears the oath is deceived and perhaps performs some act in expectation of a reward, out of which he is cheated, while the deceiver becomes more and more expert in the art of getting services free on false pretences.

But there is still another evil to which our Lord refers. (Matthew 23: 17, 19.) By these practices they blinded themselves to true values, and became blind leaders of the blind—

"Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth [or, hath sanctified] the gold?"

"Ye blind [Ancient MSS. and R.V. omit "fools and"]: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?"

By drawing fanciful distinctions for the purpose of deception, oaths by the temple and the altar being

only pretences, the scribes and Pharisees placed a slight upon God. They made of no value that which God considered of paramount value, as our Lord went on to say (verses 20-22)—

"Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

"And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

"And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon."

Here is a definite statement that the temple at Jerusalem was the dwelling place of God, that the altar was consecrated to God's service and sanctified the offerings placed upon it, and that heaven is God's throne. To invoke any of these would involve swearing by God, the One who established the mode of worship through the temple and its sacrifices. It was *therefore sacrilege for the scribes and Pharisees* to make such distinctions as were exemplified in the oaths our Lord cited in His exposure of their blindness and sophistry.

But the temple worship has been superseded. How can these words of our Lord's apply to us in the Gospel age? We reply, we have not the temple building, but we have the realities for which the temple stood. We have God, and we have a regular form of worship through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Intercessor. The lesson for us is: not to discredit *the holy things, but to recognize and acknowledge* the true meaning of every part of divine worship as our Lord has given it to us.

Furthermore, we should not make selfish use of the sacred things, or degrade them as the Pharisees did the altar and temple to their immoral code of swearing. We should not on the basis of our religious profession make promises or other statements with mental reservations. Not only should we avoid public oaths but we should avoid secret disavowal of our spoken words. "Let your yea be yea," means that when you say yes you mean yes. "Let your nay be nay," means that when you say no you mean no. We might illustrate how one may break our Lord's commandment in this matter by an incident that came under our notice. A professedly Christian woman promised an old lady that she would perform a certain request. On the strength of this promise the old lady in her simplicity performed certain services. But the one who made the promise afterward spoke of it to a third party, acknowledging that she had made the promise, and added—"Of course, I had no intention whatever of doing it." The old lady trusted her pharisaical friend's profession as a Christian, as any Jew would the word of a Pharisee who swore by the temple, not knowing that the Pharisee secretly disavowed any binding quality in the oath. The old lady was ignorant of the mental reservation her supposed friend had made, or she would not so eagerly have performed the services. The whole thing was evil from beginning to end—obtaining free service by false pretences.

One can only marvel that anyone professing to be a follower of Christ could be so false to moral principle, and so lacking in the spirit of love as to take advantage of a confiding aged person. Yet the world is full of self-seeking Christians, even as Judaism was crowded with hypocritical priests, scribes, Pharisees, and doctors of the law. To-day there is quite as much need as then for His professing people to obey our Lord's command, and let our yea be yea, our nay, nay. If we cannot make a promise with the full intention of keeping it, let us make no promise at all.

Carelessness in keeping promises made to our fellow-men will make us careless in keeping our promises to God. We will fall into the deplorable habit of saying one thing and meaning another, and this dishonesty will be noted by those around us and so the Lord's name be brought into disrepute.

Oaths in Law Courts

Most nations have a form of oath for legal transactions. Our Lord's words are sometimes taken as against the taking of an oath in a court of law. Many States make allowance for such conscientious objectors, and permit them to "affirm." But such affirmation when accepted is given all the effect of an oath in the testimony of the witness. Following is a description of odd ways of being sworn, which recently appeared in the Press—

The Whole Truth

In the Coroner's Court yesterday a Chinese said that he had no religion, but that he was prepared to be sworn by any method, relying on "his sense of honour." This recalls many odd ways of taking the oath in the courts.

There are three accepted forms of swearing in a Chinese. These are blowing out a match, breaking a plate, and cutting off the head of a live rooster.

In one Australian police court the sergeant-in-charge insisted that the only oath binding on a Chinese was the decapitation of a rooster, and this formality was carried out for many years. In some instances, when as many as six Chinese witnesses had to be sworn, the demand for live roosters was excessive. It was noticed, too, that the sergeant-in-charge always had poultry for dinner when fan-tan cases were heard in his court. Then the authorities suddenly decided that the blowing out of a match was just as effective—and much cheaper.

In a Melbourne police court on one occasion there was much *legal* cross-firing as to which Chinese form of oath-taking was the most binding. The celestial in the witness-box evidently thought that his veracity was being questioned, for he suddenly waved the court Bible in the air and excitedly exclaimed: "Me no tellum lie, me no tellum lie! No feah!"

The Hindoo witness prefers to be sworn on the water of the Ganges, but as no Ganges water is kept on tap in Victoria occasions have arisen when a dispensation has been obtained from the head gooroo, ulema, or priest, making Yan Yean water "Ganges" within the meaning of the Act.

The Persian witness has a picturesque form of oath-taking in the court. He lights a small pyramid of camphor, and when its incense has filled the room, mitigating the usual police court aroma, he bows his head three times into the ascending smoke, at the same time smiting his forehead and muttering his own form of oath.

The kissing of the court Bible is a thing of the unhygienic past. Nowadays the witness merely holds the Book in his right hand and repeats the prescribed oath. This has been the custom in Scotland from time immemorial.

An Oath for Confirmation

The Scripture states that an oath for confirmation is to men an end of all strife. For this reason God swore with an oath to fulfil the promise to Abraham. Although His word or promise was as good and as binding as an oath, still the oath gave a certain solemnity to it. This oath was made over a sacrifice, as described in Genesis 22: 16-18.

Isaac and Abimelech entered into an oath and covenant over a sacrifice, as related in Genesis 26:

26-31. This was a treaty of peace, and fittingly confirmed by an oath, as was the covenant between Abraham and Abimelech made some years previously.—Genesis 21: 22-32.

The covenant between David and Jonathan was called "the Lord's oath that was between them." (1 Samuel 18: 3; 20: 1-17; 2 Samuel 21: 7.) Legal documents, such as land transfers, have from time immemorial been sworn to by witnesses as well as by the contracting parties. (Jeremiah 32: 6-16.) Nehemiah took an oath of the nobles and rulers, per medium of the priests, that they would no longer oppress and despoil the people. (Nehemiah 5: 6-13.) Later on he arranged for the taking of another oath, binding themselves to return to a more strict observance of the law.—Nehemiah 10: 29-39.

In our day Justices of the Peace are a feature of every civilized land, for convenience in making out documents requiring an attested signature—a form of oath not forbidden in the Bible, to which no person can reasonably object. Heads of nations and other office bearers are required to take an oath of office—a solemn agreement to discharge their official duties faithfully,

Against oaths like these our Lord's words in the Sermon on the Mount are not directed. A solemn promise to fulfil one's duty to the best of one's ability, and an equally solemn promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in a law court, are only reasonable arrangements for the orderly conduct of civil government.

The epistle of James repeats our Lord's command against swearing. After exhorting the brethren to long patience, knowing that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, he says—

"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

In other words, patience in affliction is the prescription for God's people, as contrasted with the worldly practice of swearing to do or not to do this or that which may involve one in entanglements and compromises. We are to take the prophets for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience, and they indulged in no fantastic utterances, nor yet in mental reservations to save them from the obligations of ill-considered or deceitful oaths. To pray and to sing Psalms is far better.—James 5: 10-13.

(To be continued)

The New Covenant Advocate and .... **Kingdom Herald**

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-

In other Countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.

23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Thanksgiving Fund

DONATIONS to the Thanksgiving Fund are applied in reduction of the eventual price of the special April 1929 number of N.C.A., issued in celebration of the beginning of the 21st year of publication. Please see N.C.A. for March 1929, page 208, for full particulars.

Since last report the following donations have been received—

46, £1; 47, 10/-; 48, £3:10:0; total for month, £5 ($24.30); previously reported, £103:7:4 ($499.37); total to date, £108:7:4 ($523.67).

This Fund is now closed, and the price of the April Thanksgiving number is fixed at one shilling (25 cents) per single copy; six shillings ($1.50) per dozen postpaid to one address; seven shillings ($1.75) per dozen posted to various addresses in Australasia. Seven shillings ($1.75) per dozen to one address, eight shillings ($2) to various addresses, elsewhere. The co-operation of all friends thus far is deeply appreciated.

Library Supply Fund

13, £4:18:0; 14, £30; total for month, £34:18:0 ($169.62); previously reported, £99:12:8 ($484.19); total for 6 months, £134:10:8 ($653.81); the amount received in the last month enabling us to send 279 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 3063 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

55, £1:18:9; 56, £3; 57, 5/6; 58, £1; 59, 5/-; 60, 8/-; 61, £3:5:0; 62, £2:16:0; total for month, £12:18:6 ($62.82); previously reported, £138:8:11 ($652.83); total for 6 months, £151:7:5 ($715.65); clearing off the adverse balance, and giving a start of £11 ($55) on the work for 1929

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!

69, 10/6; 70, 2/-; 71, 2/-; 72, £1:5:0; 73, £3:2:6; 74, 2/-; 75, 2/-; 76, £3:5:0; total for month, £8:11:0 ($41.55); previously reported, £107:12:2 ($522.98); total for 6 months, £116:3:2 ($564.53); only about £32 ($160) of which is available for this year's account, the remainder having been applied to clear the deficit in the account for 1928.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled, which are now being fulfilled, and which are yet to be fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d. elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, AUGUST 1, 1929 No. 5

Can the Leopard change his Spots?

THIS QUESTION the Lord asked of Judah through the prophet Jeremiah (13: 23). If it can, "then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." The Children of Judah had so far departed from the law of their God that instead of being sheep, as God was pleased to call them in the 23rd Psalm, they were ravenous beasts. And while they continued to defy God the marks of sin were as ineradicable as the spots on the leopard. Describing a full-grown Indian panther or leopard, Lt.-Col. Gordon Casserley, in one of his articles on jungle inhabitants, says—

He was a graceful, smooth-coated animal, more than seven feet long from his nose to the tip of his tail, his short yellow fur dappled with circular clusters of black dots. As the noise continued, and he rose sulkily to discover its cause, it could be seen that he was lightly built, and agile and catlike in his movements as in his shape. He was a good specimen of the Indian panther or leopard, smaller and less tawny in colouring than those of his breed that live in the dense jungle; *for he inhabited low, scrub-clad hills in fairly open country*, and haunted the villages of the neighbourhood, preying on their domesticated beasts. . . .

Two small cubs, so young that their eyes were not yet open, . . . were pretty kittenlike little animals, differing as yet from their parents in that their spots were almost merged *and indistinct. As they grew bigger, and their skins stretched*, the markings would draw farther apart and group into the rosettes typical of the panther race.

The leopard's spots are with him from birth; markings on his fur crowded close together and stretching out into full size and grouping with the animal's growth. They are there, and no pretence could ever make the leopard anything else.

Daniel the prophet was inspired to describe Alexander the Great and his conquest of Medo-Persia as a leopard with four wings—an expressive symbol of a predatory ruler who attacked swiftly and spread his conquest far in a very short time. (Daniel 7: 6.) With the world at his feet, Alexander could not change his spots; his sinful life was his undoing and brought an early death.

The Composite Beast

In Revelation 12: 3 pagan Rome is described under the symbol of a "great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads." In chapter 13: 1-3, he is seen—in John's vision—*standing upon the sand of the sea, and he gives* "his power, and his seat, and great authority" to another beast, which rises up out of the sea. Sea as a symbol stands for the restless masses of humanity, for a condition of unsettlement and lawlessness. Out of such conditions Papal Rome arose, and is here described in figurative language to show its genesis and character. It made great claims to be the head of the Christian Church, and gradually it usurped the prerogatives of the Roman emperor and became ruler over much of the territory held by the former "universal empires," described in Daniel 2 as constituting a great world image, and in Daniel 7 as four beasts succeeding one another, while the Papacy is represented by a "little horn" which uprooted three of the horns of the fourth beast.

The description of the Papacy given by the Revelator (13: 2) is that of an animal unknown in nature, and can be understood only as its figurative terms *are recognized. By comparison with Daniel 7: 4-8* it will be seen that this is a composite beast, made up of th body of the leopard (Greece), the feet of the bear (Medo-Persia), the mouth of the lion (the Babylonian Empire, which was the first of the four kingdoms, but particularly the head of that empire—Nebuchadnezzar, called in Daniel 2: 37, 38, the "head *of gold," an absolute sovereign, with world dominion*). As shown in "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days" (see Book List), the universality of these four empires consisted in their successive dominion over Jerusalem, the centre of God's kingdom of Israel, and more or less over the surrounding countries—from Persia on the east to Rome on the west, and from Egypt in the south to the borders of what is now Russia. The Roman empire never reached as far east as Persia, but it extended itself much farther westward than did any of the preceding empires. However, in every case Jerusalem and the Jews were *subject—first to the Babylonians, then to the Medes* and Persians, then to the Macedonians (Greeks), then to the Romans (Imperial pagan), then to the

Christian emperors of Rome, of whom Constantine first proclaimed Christianity as the religion of the empire. The Mohammedans in A.D. 637 took Jerusalem, and held it for centuries, but the Papacy has always claimed the right to it. In the Crusades the Popes sought to take possession of the holy land, and they have endeavoured all along to overthrow the influence of the Greek Orthodox and Armenian Christians whom the Mohammedans tolerated to a degree. By the expulsion of Greeks and Armenians from Turkey (characterized by the slaughter of thousands by long marches and actual murder), both before and following the creation of the Turkish Republic, the field so far as Christianity is concerned is more open for the march of Romanism—particularly since France is in occupation of Syria, and recently has come to an understanding with the Pope concerning the education of missionaries and the reinstatement of religious orders in France; which of course means increased influence of the clergy and the Jesuits and other monastic orders in the French colonies and possessions and mandated territories.

The Bear and Lion Characteristics of Rome

Rome stands on the feet of the bear; it has the sturdy staying-power of the bear, whose powerful paws are death dealing, and whose hug is fatal. It tries to imitate the Medes and Persians, who prided themselves that a decree of the king was unalterable.—Daniel 6: 7-9, 12, 15; Esther 1: 19; 8: 8.

The Papacy has the mouth of the lion. Nebuchadnezzar the first and chief ruler of the Babylonian empire was given to boasting. He said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" (Daniel 4: 29, 30.) Not long before this Nebuchadnezzar showed his tyrannical power by demanding that all his governors and counsellors and rulers of provinces, and all "people, nations, and languages," should bow down before an image which he had set up. And whoso would not fall down and worship it at the sound of the music should be cast into a furnace of fire. (Daniel 3: 1-7.) Is not the Papacy like that? Has it not set up itself as an image, and does it not threaten with eternal damnation all who will not bow the knee and acknowledge the Pope as vicegerent of Jesus Christ and therefore entitled to receive homage of all mankind? For 1260 years the Papacy carried out its threats (so far as possible) against all who would not submit to its authority, and we have it clearly stated in God's Word that the Lord himself has had to intervene to prevent the complete obliteration of the true faith from the earth.—Daniel 7: 21, 25, 26; Matthew 24: 21, 22; Revelation 18: 5; 19: 19, 20.

But the Papacy's great swelling words have not ceased since the close of the 1260 days. The more it is exposed as "the mystery of iniquity," the larger and louder are its claims; the dogma of papal infallibility having been decreed by the Council assembled at Rome, 1869-70, the very time the last shreds of the Pope's temporal power were being taken away by the Italian forces under Garibaldi and Victor Emmanuel II. Yet, notwithstanding all its reverses, the Papacy still speaks as from a lion's mouth, and the more so since its recently acquired sovereignty over the newly created kingdom called Vatican City. Although his territory consists of only a few acres, the Pope again voices his demand that the greatest kingdoms and nations of the earth should acknowledge him as their superior—as the arbiter and judge of all nations. Could pride and boastfulness go further?

The Leopard Characteristics

But the beast itself—its body—is "like unto a leopard." As we have seen, the leopard's body is catlike—lithe and agile. Like all members of the cat family, the leopard patiently stalks its prey, and at the right moment leaps upon it. It hunts chiefly by night under cover of darkness; but whether by day or by night, it cannot change its spots.

Papal diplomacy has long been noted for its stealth. Its secret societies are pledged to carry out the Papal program, and to operate as directed in any part of the world to which their members may be sent. Its teaching and charitable orders give it an appearance of goodness, as the beautiful tawny fur of the leopard shines like gold and attracts the admiration of beholders. Nevertheless, the spots are there, and they are black and very numerous.

The Treaty with Italy

By the first Roman Catholic acclamations of the Treaty and Concordat recently concluded between the Roman Hierarchy and the Government of Italy the impression was given that the leopard had leaped to the highest pinnacle of earthly authority. The documents were signed Feb. 11, 1929, subject to the approval of the Italian Parliament. This Parliament, elected on a new basis, and convoked April 20, adopted the Treaty and Protocol, which were then signed by King Victor Emmanuel III. (May 27). The exchange of ratifications took place June 7. But even before they were thus made operative it was seen that after all the Treaty and Concordat are but human instruments, susceptible to various interpretations.

In some quarters the benefits to accrue to the Pope as a reigning sovereign have been exaggerated; whereas the disadvantages of his accession to even the small kingdom created for him by the Italian Government have not been fully analysed. What impresses us as most noteworthy is that by accepting sovereignty over Vatican City the Pope placed himself outside Italy and consequently became a foreigner, with all that that implies of exclusion from the internal affairs of the country.

We have said above "pinnacle of earthly authority." How can this be when the Pope disclaims any wish to interfere in the political affairs of Italy? The Pope's desire for earthly, political power is expressed in the statement that, being now an independent Sovereign, subject to no State, he is in a better position to secure representation on the League of Nations. Again, the Pope, even though now head of a sovereign State, sees disadvantages in becoming a member of the League of Nations, since two of the largest nations—the United States and Russia—are outside the League, and his membership in the League might be prejudicial to his influence in those coun-

tries. What he suggests is that in his present position—independent of the League—he would gladly serve if called upon by the nations to act as arbitrator between them. This, too, is a "great swelling word," suggesting himself as world dictator, with his whole church organization and its world-wide ramifications to exert pressure upon the parties to any controversy brought before him. That political ambition is behind the Pope's frequent reiterations that he desires to exercise only spiritual influence is indicated by a sermon preached on Feb. 10 by Cardinal O'Connell, dean of the Catholic hierarchy in the United States. He said, as reported in the Press—

"His [the Pope's] office was universal, and by the very nature of things had to be independent of civil or political control. Just what form that position of independence might take was secondary, so long as the fact of independence and headship was clear to all the world, so that no one could say that the Pope favored Italy or France or any other country or nation or kingdom in his decisions and declarations governing the spiritual conduct of his church throughout the world."

It is absurd to say that the Pope could not govern the Roman Catholic organization without sovereignty over an independent state, for he has exercised authority over his own church while without political independence—less over those sections which deny his infallibility and disapprove of his interference in politics than over the section which endorses that doctrine. For the cardinal to suggest that the Pope might be thought to favor one nation more than another if not independent is to admit what all the world knows, that one of the Pope's favorite methods has been to pit one nation against another in order to gain his own ends. France and Germany have been pitted against each other by the Papacy for centuries. And these negotiations with Mussolini demonstrate that the Vatican will be friendly with Italy or otherwise in proportion to the gains accruing from the present Treaty and Concordat.

That world wide political power is in the minds of Roman Catholics is indicated also by a prominent Roman Catholic contributor to "Current History" (April, '29), who says—

"But it is conceivable that he who now rules a spiritual kingdom of over 300,000,000 hearts will in time be considered as the ideal mediator in international disputes. Now that the temporal possessions have practically been surrendered [hardly that, for he had none to surrender, being allowed the continued occupancy of the Vatican by grace of the Italian State, and now receiving the present status practically as a gift from Italy.—Editor N.C.A.], his position as arbiter would exclude all idea of hostility, rivalry, domination or conquest. His very humbleness should make his mediation acceptable."

The Italian State Free and United

The freedom and unity of Italy have been the objectives of the patriots from the time Napoleon carried the slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" across Europe. The Fascist Press and Mussolini's own speeches are outspoken in their statements that the agreement with the Vatican is a step forward in the march of progress, and that now the Vatican is an outside power to be dealt with as such. As translated for the "Literary Digest," the Rome "Tribuna" says among other things—

"The second necessity with which Benito Mussolini complied was that of not yielding an inch of Italian soil. The national flag was not taken to or from any point. . . .

"Benito Mussolini has proved absolutely that no abdication or diminution of the sovereignty of the Italian State took place by the stipulations of the treaty. In resuming her relations with the Church, Italy has no doubt declared herself a Catholic nation, but she remains an independent and sovereign State face to face with the Church as she is face to face with any other international or supernatural power."

The circumstances which doubtless had much to do with the Pope's acceptance of the present arrangement are described as follows in a letter published in "The Vigilant," Dec. 14, 1928—

When in Italy some fews years ago, says Rev. Wm. Goyen of Melbourne, I struck up an acquaintance with Dr. Alexander Robertson, of Venice, now well over 80 years of age, and still carrying on his work. Every now and then we exchange letters. I received one from him some few days ago, the contents of which I think would make good copy. The main allusion in his letter is to Mussolini, and this is what he writes:—

"Mussolini is a great Democrat and a great Reformer. He has closed 40,000 drink shops: the word compensation was never mentioned. He closes for a time all shops whose owners do dishonest things. Seven were closed last week for charging too high prices. An American girl in Rome bought a gold chain at a jeweller's, and had him send it to a friend in America. In acknowledging it, the friend said little, and she thought something was wrong. When she got to America her first enquiry was about the chain. She found that the jeweller had sent a string of glass beads, and she there and then wrote to Mussolini. She got no reply for a time, but later the gold chain arrived, and a letter from the jeweller which said: 'I have to thank you for shutting down my shop.' Any boy under sixteen smoking in public is arrested. Any boy entering a drink shop is arrested, and if supplied with drink the shop is closed. Anyone swearing in public is arrested.

"Then think of this—thousands of acres in England are going out of cultivation yearly. In Italy thousands of acres that were marsh land are drained and brought into cultivation annually. For four years Mussolini has carried on the 'Battle of the Grain,' and he has won. He sent agricultural professors throughout the country to examine the soil, and advise what manure to use and what grain to sow, so that each acre is yielding a larger quantity than formerly. In 1925 the wheat crop was six million tons: in 1926 it was seven million; last year it was eight million; and this year it is expected to be nine, which will mean that Italy is self-supporting. Mussolini was paying £1,500,000 annually for wheat and maize to foreign lands. This year not a penny.

"People are perfectly free. No Trade Union dare say to a man—'You won't work more than five days a week, or you won't lay more than 500 bricks a day.' Mussolini would banish such a man. All are free, all must work, all must obey the law, and all must be patriotic.

"We haven't a Roman Catholic School in the land. Not a priest or sister teacher. All lay teachers. Mussolini is a Christian. He has every teacher open his school with the Lord's Prayer. Pope and Vatican are utterly ignored. All the churches belong to the State, and the State pays the parish priests out of the great fund Cavour made by selling all church property. A year ago the Pope ordered the priests to organize Catholic Boy Scouts, which they did. Mussolini soon knew that the priests were teaching disloyalty, that the Pope was the legitimate King of Italy, Garibaldi a brigand Cavour a robber. Mussolini gave them thirty years [days?—Ed. N.C.A.] to dissolve everything on pain of arrest and banishment. The priests did not take thirty hours. There you are."

These Catholic Boy Scouts were dissolved by Mussolini in 1927 as an unnecessary rival to the Fascist Balilla. Mussolini insisted on retaining control of the education system.

The education question, the training and instruction of the youth of the land by the Fascist State appears to be what brought the Vatican to terms in the hope that Italy might not be totally lost to it

The Pope himself admitted this in an explanation before the pupils of a Jesuit school. He said—

"When it is a matter of saving souls or preventing greater harm to souls, we feel enough courage to negotiate with the devil himself. It was just to prevent greater harm, as every one knows, that we negotiated when our beloved Catholic Boy Scouts hung in the balance. We made sacrifices to prevent greater ills, but we made clear how deep was the pain we felt at being obliged to take such a step."

By the present understanding the religious instruction arranged for will give the Vatican the opportunity to retain its hold over the people as a religious institution. If more is attempted Mussoloni and the Fascist State will not be afraid to take action.

Marriage, Education, Housing, Taxes

Italy is now free to legislate on every question whether religious or secular, being bound only on such items as are contained in the Treaty, and these are expressly stated to be subject to further consideration as may be agreed upon by the contracting parties. The Vatican appears to have assumed that it was being granted a monopoly of church marriages. This misconception the Premier has cleared away by saying that, in recognizing marriages by religious ceremony on the condition that such marriages be registered within a certain time, he included all other churches and cults. The new Chamber of Deputies is now passing legislation legalizing such church marriages, thus bringing Italy into line with England, Australia, America, and other modern states, where the registry of the marriage by the officiating clergyman or pastor places such marriage in the same category as a civil marriage at a registry office or other secular place designated by law.

Mussolini's interpretations indicate a distinction between an established State religion and a religion generally accepted by the people of the State, and for that reason called the state religion. He protests that all other religious organisations have equal standing before the law, and have liberty to spread their teachings. No persecution of Protestants will be permitted. "Current History" (July, '29) says—

In presenting the bills to the Chamber, Premier Mussolini made a speech lasting nearly four hours, in which he reviewed the Roman Question as a problem which had confronted Italy from the time of the Caesars. The problem had been compared to that of squaring the circle and regarded as insoluble, but Fascism had nevertheless succeeded in solving it. But the formula "a free Church in a free State" was not accurate. "We may here," he said, "find ourselves in the presence of a misunderstanding; therefore it is well to make our ideas quite clear. This formula might lead to the belief that two sovereignties exist. These two sovereignties do not exist; they co-exist. The Vatican City is one thing, the Kingdom of Italy or the Italian State another thing. Every one must understand that between the Italian State and Vatican City there is a distance that we can compute at thousands of miles, even if it requires only five minutes to go to see this State and ten minutes to walk around its boundaries. The discussion has been described as one between a sovereign Church and a free sovereign State. But in this State the Church is neither sovereign nor free. Its sovereignty here would be a contradiction in terms, and it is not free because it is bound under the terms of the Concordat. The situation may be defined as a sovereign State within the Kingdom of Italy. The Catholic Church with certain special privileges is loyally and freely recognized and other cults are freely admitted."

In answer the Pope calls Mussolini's statement heretical, and practically denies that the Catholic Church in Italy is subject to the State. Evidently further discussions and legislation will be required to maintain the authority of the Italian State in its own affairs. Although religious instruction in the schools is compulsory, the right is reserved to fathers of families to ask for exemption for their children, and only where exemption is not asked will the religious instruction be obligatory. In another statement, as reported in "Current History" (May, '29), Mussolini said—

"One must not forget that the Italian State, which is the Fascist State, has not abandoned any part of its sovereignty. Neither must one fear that the Concordat revives in Italy the Middle Ages and all the old situations which modern times had and have eliminated. There are revived neither ecclesiastical courts nor right of asylum. Nor is liberty of conscience and sect suppressed.

"Other religions will not be touched by the accord. In the Concordat the Catholic Church is assured the free exercise of its spiritual power and receives a position of special prestige in consideration of the fact that the Catholic religion is the official religion of the State. But the full liberty in the exercise of other cults existing in the State, and the equality of citizens before the law, whatever religion they profess, is not and could not be touched in any way. We propose to set this fact forth with precise laws guaranteeing in a tangible manner the free exercise of every cult when it is not contrary to public order and the common good, reaffirming a lack of connection between religion and enjoyment of civil and political rights in the kingdom.

A few years ago Mussolini cleared the country about Naples of organized bandits, who had previously been given sanctuary by the monasteries, and whom it was difficult to convict in the courts. He has now another item to his credit. "For several years efforts have been made under Premier Mussolini's direction to stamp out that criminal organization which has flourished especially in Sicily, known as the Mafia [Black Hand]. In May nearly 1,000 arrests were made and 341 persons put on trial. Sentences ranging up to twenty-three years were inflicted." Members of this society have been active for years in America, and their suppression will be welcomed there.

On April 21 Labor Day was celebrated throughout Italy, that date being Rome's 2,682nd birthday, according to legend. "The ceremony was marked by the entry into the Fascist militia of about 100,000 young Avanguardisti, or Junior Fascisti. In Rome this ceremony was preceded by a review by Mussolini of the Fascist forces of the Roman province. There were also present some 15,000 Juvenile Fascisti, known as the Balilla. The ceremonies also included the opening of several public works, among them a new bridge over the Tiber and several schools."

Papal Gains and Losses

In Mexico the representatives of the State and of the Vatican have concluded an amicable arrangement following the late futile rebellion. Mexico has for a hundred years contended against the tyranny of the Roman Church, which kept the people in poverty and ignorance, and some observers blame the Church for the late rebellion, which led the Government to deport the archbishop and other church officials. But now an understanding has been reached, on the defeat of the insurgents, whereby the Church practically accedes to the terms of the Goverment which it had refused some months ago. And this for the sake of retaining religious influence.

The French saw they were losing political influence abroad, so they bargained with the Vatican. The Vatican saw it had lost and would lose still more religious influence with the Mexicans, so they bargained with the Mexican Government and practically accepted its terms to be subject to the State and the Constitution. The black spots of the leopard had been very manifest in Mexico. The ignorance of the peons was so dense, the darkness so great, that they did not realize the spots were black till the light shone in, and their eyes began to open under the Calles regime and the preaching of Protestant missionaries. How the Roman Catholic Church fosters and takes advantage of this blackness of ignorance is illustrated by the following notice which was found posted in a Roman Catholic church in Mexico, and was sent to the Christian Endeavour World by the Rev. F. S. Borton. The notice said—

Raffle for Souls

"At the last raffle for souls the following numbers obtained the prizes and the lucky holders may be assured that their loved ones are forever released from the pains of purgatory:—

"Ticket 841. The soul of the lawyer, James Vasquey, is released from purgatory, and ushered into heavenly joys.

"Ticket 41. The soul of Madam Calderon is made happy forever.

"Ticket 762. The soul of the aged widow, Francesca de Parras, is forever released from the flames of purgatory.

"Another Raffle for Souls will be held at this same blessed church of the Redeemer on January 1st, at which four bleeding and tortured souls will be released from purgatory."

One cannot but wonder how long this will continue in Mexico, and whether the same inducements are held out in English speaking countries to the supposedly more intelligent or at any rate better educated people? This sort of thing should open the eyes of intelligent Romanists to the cruelty involved in causing the people to believe that their dead loved ones are "bleeding and tortured" in a place from which the priests could release them but will not except for pay. Surely a very black "spot" is this!

Losing Thousands of Members

The "Gazette de Hollande" (The Hague, June 8, 1928) reports the figures given at a Roman Catholic Congress held at Maestricht by the representative of the whole of Holland, who called the figures "distressing." In Holland hundreds of Roman Catholics absent themselves from church and refuse to vote for Roman Catholic candidates, he said. In Amsterdam about 50,000 "do not perform their Easter duties, and one-fourth of the Roman Catholics vote non-Catholic." He added—"The figures stress our losses, or, speaking euphemistically, they mark our doom."

Czecho-Slovakia, the State created by the Peace Conference out of portion of Austria, the Slovaks being largely Roman Catholic, has been making progress both politically and commercially. Increased enlightenment is reflected in the religious trend of the population. The following we clip from "The Vigilant"—

Protestantism in Czecho-Slovakia

Writing to the "Glasgow Herald" on November 4, the Rev. Charles A. Smith, Chaplain of the United Free Church of Scotland in Prague, states that in 1921 nearly one and a half million people in Czecho-Slovakia formally disconnected themselves from the Church of Rome. He also says the Presbyterian Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren has increased by almost 100,000 since the War, while the new Czecho-Slovak Church has drawn its full membership from the Church of Rome, and now numbers 800,000 or 900,000 souls renouncing all connection with the Church of Rome.

"Help us build churches" is the initial plea of the Czechoslovakia Church Council, as reported by the survey for 1927-28 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

There are in Czechoslovakia thirty-three organised evangelical churches, of which twelve are fully self-supporting. Work in this mission also is being done in 150 outstations where churches have not yet been organised. "Tithing is widely practised, and the Church life is vigorous and devoted," says the annual survey.

In its plea the Church Council of Czechoslovakia states that, if only their work could be suitably housed, the churches could by 1933, just sixty years after the arrival of the first missionary, carry on an increasing programme of active evangelism. Eight such buildings are urgently needed at once. The total cost is estimated at £15,000, one-half of which amount the Czechoslovakian Christians will raise.

The spirit of that great reformer, John Huss, still lives in Czechoslovakia. Husinec, the birthplace of Huss, is one of the work centres of the American Board, and the little church there is at present engaged in repairing its building at a cost of £375. The name of the president of Czechoslovakia headed the list of contributors.

Austria, once the seat of the now extinct "Holy Roman Empire," and for centuries the mainstay of the Papacy, more and more resents the bondage imposed by Roman Catholicism. To quote from "The Vigilant"—

Austrians Leave Roman Catholic Church

The "Daily News" correspondent at Vienna on February 17 says that, chiefly as the result of an agitation by Socialists, who allege that the proletariat resents the Clerical Party's policy of coalition between the Church and capitalists, 43,000 persons have left the Roman Catholic Church in the past two years. A total of 103,500 have declared since the war that they belong to no church.

[The Clerical Party, officially known as the Christian Socialist Party, dominates the political life of Austria. It is supreme in the Cabinet, which is led by Dr. Ignaz Seipel, a Monsignor of the Roman Catholic Church and a Prince of the Church. Dr. Seipel, who is Chancellor, is also Minister for Foreign Affairs. The bulk of the Austrian people are Roman Catholics.]

[Since the above was published Dr. Seipel has resigned.—Ed. N.C.A.]

"According to official figures,

"120,000 Roman Catholics in Austria have left the Church in the nine years since the war, as compared with 2,200 between 1905 and 1913. Of the 120,000,

"30,000 changed their creed, while

"90,000 joined no other Church."—"The Times," 7/1/1929.

Do the Treaty and Concordat Restore Temporal Power?

Some have answered this question in the affirmative, but rather too hastily we think. It may suit the Vatican to speak of the present state of affairs as "temporal power," but it is not "temporal power" as that term was used when the Pope could command the allegiance of the kings of France, Germany, Austria, and Spain, as well as the rulers of Italian States. The Popes had temporal power then because they could direct these nations in their "temporal" affairs; that is, in their secular or civil government as distinguished from ecclesiastical or spiritual concerns. The meaning of "temporal power" is expressed in the doctrine of the "two swords." Concerning this see "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," page 340, where is given the following quotation from "The Papacy," by G. Kruger—

"The doctrine of the two swords which was first heard of in the eleventh century, and to which Bernard of Clairvaux gave its classical form, had in the meantime been included in the Pope's pretensions. Both swords, including the secular one, belong to the Church; for the Lord (Matthew 26: 52) did not say to the disciple, 'Put thy sword away from thee,' but 'Put up again thy sword into his place.' The Church therefore is not to discard the temporal sword, she is only not to use it; she has given the handling of it to the secular arm, which has to use it in her name, and therefore only in accordance with her views. Does not Constantine's Donation* prove, as Gregory IX. wrote, that he to whom God has given the direction of heavenly things shall also rule over earthly things?"

A Roman Catholic writer says, "the Papacy enjoyed from the year 1128 to the beginning of the fourteenth century, a kind of universal monarchy altogether free from imperial thraldom."

This, then, is what is meant by "temporal power," *namely, exercising civil authority over the kings and* nations as of divine right. And from this it should be easy to see that the Treaty between Italy and the Vatican restores none of that. The Treaty gives the Pope not a vestige of authority over any nation. In the first place only Italy is concerned in the Treaty, and neither Italy nor the Pope has authority to bind the kings and nations of the earth. Mussolini is careful to state that the Pope is given no authority in Italy. At most he may negotiate with Italy concerning ecclesiastical matters. From temporal matters, i.e., civil affairs, the Pope is altogether debarred.

A Civil Ruler in the Vatican State Alone

Before 1860 the Popes or Roman Pontiffs exercised civil authority in the so-called Papal States or "States of the Church," which stretched across Italy from sea to sea and comprised an area of some 16,000 square miles with a population of over 3,000,000 people. These States are not being restored to the Pope. The Treaty constitutes merely the Vatican buildings and immediate surroundings a sovereign State, and limits the Pope's sovereignty to that State.

Heretofore the principality of Monaco has been the smallest country in the world, having an area of only eight square miles. At the last census the population was 22,153. Monaco is on the Mediterranean, nine miles east of Nice. On its land side it is bounded by the French Department of Alpes Maritimes. It is a sort of kingdom within the boundaries of a republic. Now the Vatican City State is the smallest country in the world. Its entire area comprises only 105 acres, or slightly less than one-sixth of a square mile. The population of this papal State is estimated at 500. Somewhat similar to Monaco, the new Vatican City *is entirely surrounded by a great nation, only through* the courtesy of which may it have communication with the world.

Spiritual Power Declining

Not only is the Papacy thus restricted in its exercise of sovereignty, but its spiritual power of which so much is said is declining, as indicated by the large losses of adherents referred to above, in Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, Holland, and Mexico, besides many other lands which have found its tyranny intolerable. In some respects its influence is still very great, but we venture to say that many of the utterances of ecclesiastics—cardinals, archbishops, and even the Pope himself—in connection with the creation of the Papal State will serve to open the eyes of millions more to comprehend what the Papal system really is—the "mystery of iniquity." More and more peoples and nations are coming to see the spots on the leopard and to realize the impossibility of them being changed. Thank God, the leopard will soon perish, and all his spots with him.—Daniel 7: 26; 2 Thessalonians 2: 8.

*Afterwards proved to be a forgery, and so admitted by Roman Catholic writers.



For the Children

More Wonders on the Sea of Galilee

When Jesus fed the 5,000 people, using only five loaves and two fishes, they still lingered about, not wanting to leave Him. But the night was coming on and Jesus let them see that they must go to their homes without further delay. In order to show them that He meant this, He first sent His disciples away on the ship, and when they had gone it was easy to start the people homewards also. It was not long before Jesus was left alone on the land. And what was the next thing He did? He went up into a mountain to pray.

It was not the first time He had done this; nor was it the last. Jesus knew He had a great and good Father in heaven, and as He was a good Son He loved to talk to Him. He would ask His Father to give Him strength and wisdom to go on doing His will; and His Father always did. If you will please look at Matthew 6: 9 you will see that Jesus' Father is now also **our** Father "which art in heaven." Now, can you think what we may do also when we are alone? Please see 1 Thessalonians 5: 17, and then look at Philippians 4: 19, and see what God will do for you.

But while Jesus was on the mountain the wind began to blow fiercely. It swept over the Sea of Galilee down below, and then up the mountain side where He was, ever getting stronger. The disciples in the little ship could not get it to go forward, for the wind was blowing against them and the big waves held them back. Then they tried to help the ship along by rowing hard with the oars. For hours they struggled to get to land, but even after all their toil they were still far out on the rough sea.

Is it not likely that they would remember how Jesus had once before made the wind and the waves to cease on that same sea when they were all in peril of being drowned? How they must have wished that

He was with them then to do the same wonderful miracle again! But no; oh, no. He was far away on the land, and perhaps He did not even know of the trouble they were in.

So on they went, rowing and rowing through the night, with the wild winds blowing and blowing and the big waves rolling. Oh, what a lot of trouble the wind and the waves were causing them! But there was something even worse coming. The wind and the waves were bad enough, but what is this they now see? It was somewhere between three o'clock and six in the morning, when, looking about them, they saw something in the shape of a man coming along on the water! Nearer and nearer it came, and then seemed as if to go past them.

The sight of it filled them with terror. They knew that no one could walk on the water, so they supposed it must be a spirit. And that is what *frightened them: so much so that the wind, the* waves, and the rowing seem to have been forgotten. How they must have wished, more now than ever, that somehow Jesus would come and deliver them—not only from the storm, but from this strange thing now so near to them on the water!

Be Not Afraid

But before they had time to think very much, to their great delight they heard a voice saying, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Then they knew; it was no other than Jesus himself! Yes; He knew all about the trouble they were in; and coming down from the mountain, and setting His feet upon the sea, He walked on it as we do on dry land.

No one in all the world had ever done such a wonderful thing as that before, and only one person that we know of has done it since; and that person was Peter. As soon as he could he called out, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." And Jesus said, "Come!" Did Peter hesitate? No; he did not. He got over the ship's side, put his feet on the water, and walked along as though on dry land! He did not think of the danger, and nothing went wrong either, while he kept looking at Jesus. But presently he turned his eyes away and looked at the storm. At once he got fearful and afraid, and immediately began to sink. Now that is what always comes if we look away from Jesus and so get fearful and afraid when we are in a "storm": we begin to "sink."

The only way to save ourselves then is to look again to Jesus and call on Him; and that is what Peter did. Feeling himself going down into the deep stormy water, "he cried, saying, Lord, save me."

And what happened? "Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him." That *saved Peter. But he had to listen to these words of* gentle rebuke—"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Then perhaps Peter was sorry and a bit ashamed that he had doubted, as I am sure we would have been too.

But they both got into the ship and, wonderful to say, the wind immediately stopped! And yet another wonder; the ship and all of them in it were at once at the land where they were going! Are we not more and more amazed at the power of Jesus? And are we not quite sure that He was the Son of God?

Now it is quite likely that there were other ships and other sailors out on the stormy sea that night, and you might be asking why Jesus should do all these things for His disciples—for *them*, and not for others? If so, you will find the answer in Matthew 19: 27. And if my little friends (and I myself) can do that too, we also shall have—well, what shall we have?

—UNCLE FRANK.

Time and Parties of the New Covenant

WHEN God was ready to enter into a Covenant with Israel, He ordered all the preliminaries, appointed Moses as the Mediator of the Covenant, and arranged that all the people who were to enter into the Covenant should know of it, and should intelligently and willingly enter into it. Can we suppose that *less care* would be taken in the preliminaries and details of that "Better Covenant" which should supersede the Law Covenant? (Hebrews 8: 6.) Would not the *time* of making the Covenant be as definitely appointed and announced as was the time when the children of Israel were to gather at the foot of the mount while God manifested His presence in the fire and smoke? And would not the prospective parties to the Covenant be ready at the time appointed, and glad to say, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exodus 19: 8; 24: 3, 7)—as did the children of Israel in the wilderness? Yes, both the Time of making the New Covenant and the Parties to the New Covenant are plainly set forth in God's Word, so that the sincere inquirer need make no mistake.

Behold the Days Come

It was God's law that was broken in Eden; it was God that pronounced the penalty of death on our race; it was God who all along had interested Himself in the salvation of the race. It was God who entered into a Covenant with Abraham, that in His Seed all nations of the earth should be blessed; it was God who entered into a Covenant with the whole nation of Israel. And it was God who predetermined the time at which a New Covenant should go into effect, and who foretold the matter through the prophet Jeremiah, saying—"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant."—Jeremiah 31: 31.

The reason for arranging for a New Covenant to replace the old is also stated—"Which my covenant they brake, saith the Lord."—Jeremiah 31: 32.

God's plan was for a Covenant which would not be broken, and therefore it was necessary to formulate a covenant more suited to the imperfections and needs of a fallen race than the Law Covenant had been—one under which sins and iniquities could be forgiven, and His Law written on the heart and mind instead of on tables of stone. Thus, instead of sin, doing God's will would become part of their constitutional habit.

It was necessary also to allow the people under the Law Covenant sufficient experience to demonstrate to them the deficiencies of the arrangement, and to convince them of its futility as an instrument of life and blessing. Therefore we may gather from the prophecy that whenever God's long suffering with Israel and Judah would reach its limit, with the futility of the Law Covenant to bring in righteousness fully demonstrated, He would announce the time arrived for entering into the new arrangement, and would see to it that the people with whom it was to be made were duly informed, so that they might gladly take hold of their side of the compact, and say, intelligently and sincerely, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

The Announcement of the New Covenant

The preaching of Christ and the Apostles included an announcement to Israel and Judah that God had borne long and patiently with them, and that the time had come when a new arrangement would be entered into which would be more to the satisfaction of both parties. John the Baptist, as forerunner of the Messiah, sought to arouse the people to a realisation of their backslidden condition and the impending crisis—"Now also the axe is laid to the root of the tree." "Bring forth fruits meet for repentance." —Matthew 3: 7-13.

The Lord announced that He had not come to put new wine into old bottles, but that He provided new wine in new bottles. He had not come to patch up the Law Covenant arrangements, but to introduce an entirely new arrangement. (Mark 2: 15-22.) He was the Messenger of the Covenant foretold by Malachi, in whom many would delight, while the wickedness of others would be exposed. He called upon the people to accept Him as the way of approach to God, saying, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me," and He warned them of the consequences of refusing to acknowledge their sin and their need of His services on their behalf. Just before His crucifixion He declared, in unmistakable terms, that the time had come for the final rejection of Israel, as represented in Jerusalem, the place where God had set His name, and to His disciples He explained that His blood, soon to be shed, would ratify and make operative that New Covenant of which the prophet had spoken.—Matthew 23: 34-38; Deuteronomy 12: 5; 2 Chronicles 6: 6; Matthew 26: 26-28.

One of our Lord's first miracles was accompanied by the startling assurance—"Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." As a Jew, under the Law, and not a member of the priestly class, our Lord was not authorized to make such a pronouncement, for the Law itself contained provision for the forgiveness of sin, which it was the duty of every Jew to uphold. But He proved His authority to forgive sins by healing the sick man whose sins He had forgiven, thus showing that He was not in this matter acting under the Law but under the New Covenant, the principles of which He expounded in His Sermon on the Mount.

He further said, as showing the need of a better arrangement than the Law, and that His mission was to introduce it—"They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."—Mark 2: 17.

In the preaching of the Apostles, after Pentecost, as recorded in Acts, and in their epistles, they pointed out the inadequateness of the Law Covenant to take away sin, and that through Christ alone could permanent forgiveness and acceptance be obtained—

"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."—Acts 3: 26.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts 5: 31.

"Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and BY HIM all that believe are JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS, FROM WHICH YE COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED BY THE LAW OF MOSES."—Acts 13: 38, 39.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."—Romans 8: 3, 4.

All this goes to show that our Lord and the Apostles knew that the time for the opening up of the New Covenant had arrived in their day, and that they were messengers or servants announcing it, and gathering the people together to enter into the Covenant formally and sincerely. Paul acknowledged himself a *beneficiary* of the New Covenant, as well as a *servant* of it. He wrote—

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Covenant."—2 Corinthians 3: 6.

"Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, AS WE HAVE RECEIVED MERCY, we faint not."—2 Corinthians 4: 1.

"Who hath reconciled us to himself by Christ Jesus, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."—2 Corinthians 5: 18.

"Christ Jesus came into the world TO SAVE SINNERS, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I OBTAINED MERCY, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe in him to life everlasting."—1 Timothy 1: 15, 16.

The Parties to the New Covenant

A Covenant is an agreement between two or more parties, whereby each promises to fulfil certain obligations named in the contract. The Law Covenant was such a contract; the parties being God on the one side, and the people of Israel on the other, with Moses, the mutual friend, as intermediary.

The parties to the New Covenant are named in Jeremiah 31: 31—God on the one part; the house of Israel and the house of Judah on the other part. The Covenant which He would lay before them for their acceptance would not be like the one given under Moses; but a covenant of forgiveness and mercy, under which He would write His laws on their minds and hearts.

Those who place the New Covenant entirely in the Kingdom age say that the Covenant could not have been made at any time in the past, because, say they, the houses of Israel and Judah have been separated

since the dispersion of the ten tribes, and that while Judah is in evidence in the world to-day, the ten tribes are not to be found; furthermore, they say that the houses of Israel and Judah must be *united* before a covenant could be made with them jointly.

To this we reply, Have the Scriptures been examined for testimony concerning the union of the tribes of Israel? Have the pages of history been searched to see what evidence could be produced to show that the twelve tribes had the New Covenant placed before them, and that the promises of the New Covenant have been realised by Israelites, collectively or individually? Until this has been done, it is careless, to say the least, to put nineteen hundred years in the future, what has been fulfilled, according to prophecy and history, in the past.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE BE."—Genesis 49: 10.

"Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee SHALL RUN UNTO THEE."—Isaiah 55: 4, 5.

"And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zechariah 13: 7.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and THEY FOLLOW ME."—John 10: 27.

These Scriptures point to Jesus at His first advent as the Shiloh who was to come.

Mount Sinai and Mount Zion

When the Covenant was entered into between God and Israel, at Sinai, all the people were gathered to the foot of the mountain; and the people individually, as well as collectively, agreed to fulfil the conditions of the Covenant. But in considering the New Covenant, is it necessary to suppose that all the individuals entering into it must be gathered into one spot on the earth's surface? The Jews worshipped at Jerusalem at the temple, in one corner of the earth; but now those who worship in spirit and in truth gather around God's throne without necessity for long pilgrimages. They have but to come in Jesus' name, and find God accessible from any quarter of the earth. (John 4: 20-24; Hebrews 10: 19-22.) In the Kingdom age all the dead, small and great, are to stand before the throne, but this does not prove that they must all gather into an area of a few square miles.—Revelation 20: 12.

The gathering of the people to Mount Zion is therefore capable of accomplishment irrespective of the residence of the people to be gathered, and without their changing that residence.

In looking for the promulgation of the glorious New Covenant, we must not look for something *smaller* than what occurred at Sinai, nor *just like it*, but for something as much larger as the Covenant is better than the law covenant and its Mediator is greater than Moses.

Israel and Judah Receive the Message

That both Israel and Judah, or all twelve tribes, *had the New Covenant placed before them*, for their acceptance or rejection, is shown by the language of our Lord and the Apostles when referring to their mission and the Gospel message. The Lord said—"I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the *house of Israel*." (Matthew 15: 24.) After His resurrection, He said—"Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*."—Luke 24: 46, 47.

This message would ultimately reach all Israelites in Palestine, and scattered among the Gentile nations; whether descendants of the ten tribe or of the two tribe kingdom.

On the day of Pentecost Israelites from all nations were gathered together with the residents of Jerusalem—"Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews, and proselytes."—Acts 2: 9-11.

Peter addressed them—"YE MEN OF JUDEA, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem." "Ye MEN OF ISRAEL, hear these words." "Therefore LET ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL know assuredly."—Acts 2: 14, 22, 36.

On another occasion he said—"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to *Israel*, and forgiveness of sins."—Acts 5: 31.

It was men of "the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia." who disputed with Stephen, and who were responsible for His death. To these he recounted the history of the children of Israel, and cried—"As your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 6: 9; 7: 51.) When Paul preached at Antioch, in the synagogue, he said—"MEN OF ISRAEL, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel." "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."—Acts 13: 16, 17, 26.

Addressing King Agrippa, he said—"And now I stand, and am judged, for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise OUR TWELVE TRIBES, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come."—Acts 26: 6, 7.

In his plea for his brethren according to the flesh (Romans, chaps. 9, 10, 11), he knows no distinction between ten tribes and two tribes. To him all were Israelites, to whom pertained the promises, the covenants, etc. (Romans 9: 3, 4.) In writing to the Galatians, he knows not ten tribes nor two tribes, but "Them that were under the law."—Galatians 3: 23; 4: 5, 21.

The Apostle James addressed his letter of explanation, warning, and comfort to "The twelve tribes scattered abroad," indicating that among the Christian believers were found persons out of all the tribes. The fact that here and in Romans 11 and Galatians 6: 16, the Christian Church is addressed as "The Twelve Tribes." "All Israel," and "the Israel of God," confirms the teaching of the Apostles that *Jesus sat on the throne of David*, which was established over *all the tribes*; and that any descendant of the ten tribes or of the two tribes who did not recognize Him as their king, and join themselves to His Covenant, was unworthy the

name. Even as the Apostle said—"They are not all Israel, which are of Israel." "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly."—Romans 9: 6; 2: 28.

Israel and Judah Gathered to the Mount

But some might inquire, What assurance have we that all Israel worthy the name, whether descendants of the ten tribes or of the two, had the opportunity to become parties to the New Covenant? Remembering that the Law Covenant was entered into at the foot of the mount, by the people taking upon themselves its responsibilities, how was it possible to lay before the same people individually the terms of the New Covenant, into which God was willing to enter with them, when many of them were scattered among the nations?

To this we reply: It was a comparatively simple matter. It was not necessary to gather them all again to the foot of Mt. Sinai, nor yet to Jerusalem. What was necessary was that they should, regardless of their place of habitation, recognise the Mediator appointed by God, the principal Party of the Covenant, and should hear the terms of the Covenant; and should express in phrases which God could accept their willingness to take upon themselves the responsibilities of the Covenant.

But did Israel know? Were not some in distant lands overlooked? Had the messengers not had divine oversight, we might conceive such a possibility. But our questionings and doubts have been anticipated, and the Lord Himself has supplied the answer (Romans 10: 15-21)—"Have they not heard? YES VERILY, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." "Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you. . . . But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

The gospel (likened to the sun—Psalm 19: 1-6) penetrated everywhere, that the Jews might be left without excuse; and everywhere Gentiles were awakened and blessed, in order that they might provoke to emulation the professed people of Israel. (Romans 11: 13-15.) The Apostle Peter went as far east as Babylon (1 Peter 5: 13); others, according to tradition, reached India; while the Apostle Paul and others were directed westward to Rome and Spain. (Romans 15: 24.) The proclamation of the New Covenant has been world-wide, and here and there men out of every nation, kindred, and tongue are invited to enter into it; but of Israel after the flesh it may confidently be asserted that *every individual Israelite* living in apostolic days *had the testimony given him*, and had the opportunity of accepting or rejecting the offer. The fact that the majority rejected it, and that thus room was made for some to be called out from among the Gentiles, is another proof that all Israel heard the message, for God was faithful to His promises of blessing upon Israel, and in no case preferred a Gentile to a Jew. It was always "to the Jew first"; and only when the Jews rejected the gospel, with its Mediator and New Covenant blessings, did the ministers of the New Covenant turn to the Gentiles.—Luke 24: 47; Acts 3: 26; 5: 31; 8: 1, 4; 10: 36, 37; 13: 26-48; 18: 4-6; 26: 20; 28: 23-28; Romans 1: 16; 11: 17-23; 1 Corinthians 1: 22-24.

As set forth in Romans 11, all who rejected the New Covenant proved themselves to be not of Israel; and all who accepted the New Covenant (whether Jew or Gentile) were counted the true Israel of God, Israelites indeed. All the Israel of God are branches in the "olive tree," and the olive tree will not lack a single branch. All the Israel of God acknowledged the Deliverer who came out of Zion as their Lord, and as the Christ, their Redeemer, their Mediator, and their King.

That at the beginning of the Gospel age all fleshly Israel were gathered to the foot of Mount Zion, and had the opportunity of accepting the services of Jesus as their Mediator and spokesman in the formalities connected with the New Covenant, is shown in Hebrews 12: 18-29—

"For ye are NOT COME unto the mount that might be touched, . . . but ye ARE COME unto Mount Zion."—Vss. 18: 22, A.V. and R.V.

"YE HAVE NOT APPROACHED unto a searching and scorching fire, . . . but YE HAVE APPROACHED unto Zion's mountain."—Rotherham.

As God stood behind Moses, and by "blackness, and darkness, and tempest," and fire endorsed Moses as properly accredited to act for Him in the negotiations pending, so God spoke from Heaven concerning the greater Mediator, Christ Jesus—"This is my beloved Son, HEAR YE HIM." (Matthew 17: 5; 3: 17; John 7: 28, 29; 8: 28-32.) "God hath in these last days spoken unto us BY HIS SON." (Hebrews 1: 2.) "God also bearing witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His will." (Hebrews 2: 4.) "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh."—Hebrews 12: 25.

And as the messengers of Moses were sent throughout the camp to impart the necessary information concerning the Law Covenant about to be inaugurated, so were the messengers of our great Mediator Jesus sent throughout the earth, announcing the glad tidings of the New Covenant, and encouraging all the humble and contrite ones of Israel to acknowledge Him as their Mediator, and through Him enter into the glorious New Covenant with God.

Israel and Judah United

Ezekiel 37: 15-28 is often quoted as evidence that the ten tribes and the two tribes are still recognized by God as two separate kingdoms, that they will not be joined together until the Kingdom age, and that then the New Covenant will be proposed to them. But it must be borne in mind that Ezekiel prophesied during the Desolation, when Judah was captive in Babylon, that the Revolt of the Ten Tribes occurred nearly four hundred years before, and that the ten tribes had been in captivity in Assyria over one hundred years. Ezekiel's prophecy, therefore, had its fulfilment when under the decree of Cyrus and subsequently all so minded in his empire were allowed to return to the land and worship of their fathers.—Ezra 1: 1-3.

Those who returned to dwell in Palestine were principally of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. But, on the rebuilding of the temple, and the

re-establishment of the worship of God at Jerusalem, every Israelite who still retained residence in foreign lands would be able to express his faith in God, and his obedience to the Law, by attending the annual feasts, and by contributing to the upkeep of the service there.—Ezra 2: 64; 6: 16-22; Exodus 23: 17; Luke 2: 36; Acts 2: 9-11.

That this prophecy of Ezekiel was fulfilled in the past, and that we are not justified in looking forward to a fulfilment future from our day, is as evident as that the seventy years' desolation prophesied by Jeremiah was fulfilled in the past, and is not a calamity still to be looked for.

When a prophecy states that a certain event is "to come" we must not hastily conclude that it is to come after our day. The Shiloh promised was to come at some time future from Jacob's day. When Jeremiah said, "Behold, the days come," we should understand the days as future from Jeremiah's utterance of the prophecy, which took place 600 years before Christ.

Hosea prophesied concerning the ten-tribe Kingdom—*detailing its wickedness, its captivity, and afterward* its return to "seek the Lord their God, and David their King." (Hosea 3: 5.) From this it must not be gathered that all the individuals would return to the true worship of God, but that God was willing to receive all. He concludes—"For the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." (Hosea 14: 9; Cf. Ezekiel 11: 20, 21.) This prophecy contains the warning—"I . . . will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel." (1: 4.) "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away [margin—that I should altogether pardon them]."—1: 6.

As verse 10 is quoted in Romans 9: 25, to apply to the admission of the Gentiles into the gospel light, and hence into the New Covenant, the blessings promised to Israel in this book must be considered as indicative not of blessing in the Kingdom age, but of God's providential care over them, whereby a remnant might be preserved, whose descendants would manifest faith in the promises, and whose sympathy with Judah, as the tribe in which the promises of a Messiah centred, would result in their adherence to the worship of God at Jerusalem. Even though the children of Israel should be "wanderers among the nations" (Hosea 9: 17), yet God would be to the true-hearted for a "sanctuary," and would eventually give them the knowledge of the New Covenant, that they might be His people, and He their God.—Ezekiel 11: 13-19.

Israel and Judah the Olive Tree

Another passage which is frequently cited, as indicating that the New Covenant is to be made with Israel and Judah after the completion of the Church, is Romans 11: 25-27; but a careful study of the whole chapter gives no support to such a view. Chapter 10 closes with quotations showing that the Gospel message was fully witnessed to Israel, that the Gentiles were to be brought in, and that Israel were always a "disobedient and gainsaying people." Chapter 11 opens with the assertion that God has "not cast away his people whom he foreknew," as evidenced by the fact that the Apostle Paul, of the tribe of Benjamin, had not been cast off. God's promises to Israel were not to be repented of, but it was necessary for them to realise that God's agreement with Israel did not obligate Him to accept for the high calling the *individuals* of the twelve tribes then living, irrespective of their compliance with the conditions imposed. His purpose was to have the olive-tree full; and foreseeing that only a remnant of Israel would be acceptable (vss. 5-7), he arranged to accept as Israel those of other nations who manifested the true faith. (Vss. 11, 12.) He urges his countrymen to be rightly exercised by this exhibition of favour to the Gentiles, by emulating their example, and he urges the Gentiles to assist him in winning those Israelites who had not yet believed. (Vss. 13-24.) And he further urges the Gentiles not to be wise in their own conceits, but to realise that they were accepted, not as Gentiles, but as Israelites; and that though the majority of Israel rejected the Gospel, and thus proved themselves to be not of Israel, it was, after all, *Israel* that was to be "saved." "And *so* all Israel shall be *saved*;" *that is*, "*in this way*"—*by this method of including* Gentile believers—*all the Israel of God* should be found, in accordance with God's original purpose (Exodus 19: 5, 6), and in harmony with His predictions through the prophets. He then quotes as corroboration the promise of a Deliverer (Isaiah 59: 20), and of a New Covenant. (Jeremiah 31: 33.) An examination of the entire prophecy (Isaiah 59) shows that the Deliverer needed was a deliverer from sin. When there was no intercessor, and none to help, Jehovah brought salvation by raising up the Deliverer, even Jesus, who should "save His people from their sins."

"So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. For he shall come as a rushing stream, which the breath of the Lord driveth: but as a Redeemer shall he come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob."—Isaiah 59: 19, 20, Variorum.

It is therefore under the New Covenant terms that the Israel of God, the "olive tree," is being selected, and their salvation assured.

Revelation 7: 4-8 also represents all the "sealed" of the Gospel age as attached to one or another of the twelve tribes of Israel; making, in all, "an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."

Another evidence that Israel and Judah were united (the two staves made one) when the worship of God at Jerusalem was restored after the captivity, is found in Zechariah 11: 7-14. This prophecy contains a reference to Judas, and his thirty pieces of silver, thus placing the fulfilment of the prophecy in our Lord's day. Verse 14 says—"Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might BREAK THE BROTHERHOOD between Judah and Israel."

Zechariah prophesied after the children of Israel returned to their own land, after the two sticks had become one, and asserts the Lord's intention to separate them again, and to break the covenant He had made with them. This was to be done at the time of our Lord's first advent, when the New Covenant, elsewhere described, would be opened up. Then Israel and Judah after the flesh (whether in Palestine or out of

it) had first opportunity to enter into the New Covenant. The unbelieving were "broken off," and the true Jew and the "Israelite indeed" were accepted.

From that time out the "brotherhood" between Israel and Judah under the Law Covenant was broken. A new brotherhood was begun, under the New Covenant, for the Lord Jesus opened the way by which they might become the sons of God, and sustain a new relation to each other.—John 1: 9-13.

When the Law Covenant Waxed Old

The eighth chapter of Hebrews establishes the matter of both the Time and the Parties of the New Covenant beyond question. After showing in the first seven chapters the superiority of our Lord's priesthood over that of Aaron, it is further explained that our Lord's service as High Priest on behalf of His people is "more excellent" than that of Moses, because He is a Mediator of a Better Covenant, which was established upon better promises. These promises on God's part are defined in the New Covenant. They are more favourable to the people entering into the Covenant, than was the Law Covenant to the people of Israel. The inspired writer makes no distinction between Israel and Judah in his application of the prophecy. He shows that way back in Jeremiah's day the Law Covenant had been found defective, both Israel and Judah having repeatedly and persistently broken it, and that the promise of a New Covenant had made the Law Covenant old. (Hebrews 8: 7, 8, 13.) It was not, however, until more than five hundred years later that it was "*ready to vanish away.*" The days of which Jeremiah spoke came when the New Covenant was formally set forth, and Jesus Christ the Mediator came to introduce and administer it. And it was "after those days," i.e., after the inauguration of the New Covenant, that God's law could be written on the hearts and minds of His people, because their sins had been forgiven, and reconciliation made by the Mediator of the Covenant. That the New Covenant is a necessity in the work of selecting the church, and developing in them the character essential to their calling, is shown in Hebrews 9: 15—"For this cause he is the mediator of the 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."

The Evidence of History

Profane history, as well as the Biblical Record, establishes the fact that the Law Covenant existed as a binding agreement between God and the people of Israel. The history of the Church establishes the fact that the New Covenant has been in force throughout the Gospel age, the Apostles themselves being its first historians.

1. The ratification of the New Covenant is given as an historical fact, as credible as the ratification of the Law Covenant.—Hebrews 9: 16-20.

2. The New Covenant was proclaimed by Christ and His Apostles, and by all His true disciples through the age, each time sinners were called to repentance through Christ Jesus.

3. Every person who has had his sins forgiven "for Christ's sake" (Ephesians 4: 32) is a testimony to the fact that the New Covenant is in operation, inasmuch as the New Covenant is the only covenant under which forgiveness is granted.—Hebrews 8: 12; 1 Timothy 1: 11-16; Titus 3: 3.

4. Every proper celebration of the Memorial Supper is an acknowledgment of the operation of the New Covenant, of which the blood of Jesus is the seal, inasmuch as the celebration is done in memory of His death as the sacrifice for sin.—Luke 22: 20; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29.

5. Every one who has received the Holy Spirit is also such a testimony, because it was part of the work of the Holy Spirit, not only to convince of sin (John 16: 8, 9), but also to give assurance of sins forgiven.—Hebrews 10: 15-17; Acts 2: 38; 3: 19; 10: 43-45; Romans 8: 2.

6. Every prayer ascending to God in the name of Jesus is heard because of the New Covenant in His blood, He having by His blood opened a new way of access to God (different from that of the Jews through the temple sacrifices), and the believers may, in prayer, "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."—John 16: 23-27; Hebrews 4: 14-16; 10: 19-22.

7. Every transformation of character experienced by the believer (Romans 12: 1, 2) is proof of the operation of the New Covenant; for only to those entering into the New Covenant is the Holy Spirit given (see No. 5), and only under the New Covenant can forgiveness of past and present sins (see Nos. 2, 3), and help in time of need (see No. 6), be obtained. The writing of the law of God on mind and heart is an operation of the Spirit of God (2 Corinthians 3: 3, 18), for the Spirit wars against the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5: 16-21), and cultivates the "fruit of the Spirit," "love, joy, peace," etc., all of which are elements of God's own character. (Galatians 3: 22-24; Hebrews 12: 14; Ephesians 4: 20-24.) Every genuine believer in the Lord Jesus Christ during the Gospel age has experienced this blessing of the New Covenant in proportion to his fidelity to his promise to do the will of God.—Luke 6: 46-48; John 15: 14; Mark 3: 35; John 7: 17; Colossians 1: 9-14.

8. Every revelation of God made by Jesus Christ concerning God and His character is evidence that the New Covenant is in operation. He came to reveal the Father as the loving and merciful God, who puts our sins as far from us as the east is from the west, and who puts His Spirit into us, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father." (Matthew 11: 27; John 17: 3; Romans 8: 2, 3, 15; Galatians 4: 6, 7.) Of all under the New Covenant it has been true that they need not tell one another to know the Lord, for they all know Him.—John 14: 5, 6, 20, 23; 2 Corinthians 4: 6.

To deny that the New Covenant is now in operation is to deny not only the Word of God, but the history of His people as well as their present experience.

How long in Operation?

The New Covenant will be in operation as long as Jesus stands as its Mediator, reconciling men to God, and God to men. He who so loved our fallen race as to die for them, and who is interested in

every member of the human family, will not resign His office until the whole work is brought to a glorious completion. The whole of the Kingdom age will be required to make known to those who have died unenlightened the gracious invitation to accept this kind Friend and the reconciliation He is prepared to effect. The cross of Christ will be then, as now, "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Romans 1 : 16 ; Revelation 21 : 3, 4 ; 22 : 1.

How to Enter into the New Covenant

To any who have not yet taken advantage of the merciful provisions of the New Covenant, we recommend frequent reading of the Gospels and Epistles, in order to get a full appreciation of the heinousness of sin, the helplessness of mankind in the bonds of Sin and Death, the gracious gift of God's dear Son to be our Redeemer, Mediator, High Priest and Intercessor or Advocate. Then accept the services of this Friend, *that you may be reconciled to God, and that God may* forgive you, and accept you as one of His children. All the blessings of the New Covenant will then be yours.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from July issue)

NOW WE COME to the words of our Lord that have caused much discussion as to exactly what is implied by turning the other cheek. Some use it as a humorous expression, as though it were a great joke to turn the other cheek, and how many times shall we turn it, and what's the good—only to give the other person a chance to do the same thing over again, and as many times as you are fool enough to allow it!

But however much any may try to explain it away or joke it off, the fact remains that the Lord gave this as a rule of life under the New Covenant; and as all the rules He gives are given to be observed by those to whom given, it behooves us to consider well how we may apply this rule to our daily lives. Moreover, all the Lord's instructions are designed for our good—our ultimate good as His children, that we may be copies of God's dear Son. (Romans 8 : 29.) Let us now read these weighty words—

38 *Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:*

39 *But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

In Exodus chapters 21 and 22 sundry laws are given regulating the punishment to be inflicted for certain offences, in all of which the principle involved is to make the punishment fit the crime; to make the *offender feel in his own person or pocket the pain* or loss he inflicted on another. Our Lord quotes a portion of Exodus 21 : 24. The full list is—"life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." Similar directions are given in Leviticus 24 : 18-21—

"And he that killeth a beast shall make it good; beast for beast [or, as in margin, "life for life"]. And if a man cause a blemish in his neighbour; as he hath done, so shall it be done to him; breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a *blemish in a man, so shall it be done to* him again. And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death."

In Deuteronomy 19 : 15-21 the same law is repeated, with special reference to false witnesses. This passage *also makes it clear that the law did not authorize* private individuals to require "eye for eye, tooth for tooth," etc. The appropriate punishment was to be inflicted by authority of the priests and judges appointed to render justice between man and man, on hearing the testimony of witnesses. And the purpose to be served by this form of justice is stated in verses 19, 20—

"Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother [brother being the term used for a fellow-member of the nation]: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

"*And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall* henceforth commit no more any such evil among you.

"And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot."

Righteousness by Correction and Weeding Out

It is popular in these days to ridicule the Old Testament and to throw up the hands in horror at the *provisions for giving the offender exactly the same* pains and penalties as those suffered by his victim. They do not stop to consider the fact that God was King of Israel, or to inquire what purpose He sought to serve by such laws. The object in the separation of Israel from other nations and giving them these specific instructions for dealing with offenders was to develop a holy, righteous nation. As the last quoted passage shows, persons inclined to bear false witness would be deterred from doing so by the knowledge that if found out the penalty that would have been pronounced on the one they falsely accused would fall on them. To see a false witness so exposed before the judges and so punished would cause the beholders to "fear"; i.e., to be impressed by the folly of such conduct, and so refrain from doing the same. Had all Israel been properly impressed by seeing one person receive the equivalent of his transgression, not *another similar crime would have been perpetrated.* Once one man had his tooth knocked out as a punishment for inflicting that injury on another, not another tooth would have been lost in the whole of Israel.

But the lesson was not learned. Eyes, teeth, hands, *feet, continued to be injured and life taken by wicked* men; and the evil men were so numerous and their influence so great that they escaped punishment altogether. In other words, this deterrent legislation, good in itself—absolutely just and equal as between *man and man—did not work out in practice.* As a concrete example of exact justice the law was excellent; it was "holy, and just, and good." But it did

not work effectively to accomplish the development of a "holy nation," a "peculiar treasure" to God above all people.—Exodus 19: 5, 6.

One cannot but remark on the inconsistency of the critics of these provisions of the law, for these same persons are wont to find fault with the Lord for saying "turn the other cheek." They think to "turn the other cheek" is going to the opposite extreme and becoming a "doormat," as the saying is. Well, one can be a cheerful "doormat" as well as a cheerful "fighter." It is all a question of which the Lord prefers us to be, not what we want to be. And it would be well for the critics to make up their minds which is the better of the two since they cannot have both. Some, however, would be glad to have both, in this way—If anyone does anything to injure me, let him get as good again; but if I do anything to injure somebody else, let him "turn the other cheek."

What the Lord Did Not Mean

Let us consider first what the Lord did not mean, and by the process of elimination come to what He did mean. This we may do by comparing what He says in other discourses and what the apostles wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit and hence in harmony with our Lord's teaching. For He said to the disciples that the Holy Spirit "shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16: 13-15.) There is therefore no contradiction of the Lord's teaching by that of His apostles—commissioned by Him to "make disciples of all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

The first thing we notice is that God's people are to be subject to the "powers that be," because the powers have authority to maintain order in the earth. They "bear the sword," that is, exercise authority, including the prerogative of punishing crime. Hence our Lord's words, "turn the other cheek," do not mean that crime shall go unpunished and evil persons unrestrained. The good order of society requires a police force and courts of criminal jurisdiction as well as benevolent institutions for dealing with the mentally and morally deficient and perverse. Thus the Lord's followers are under more or less natural protection, in common with others.

Second, the Law Covenant with its penal code is no longer in existence. Compulsion to obey it was on the Jews only. The Gentiles were never under it. And since the Cross the Jews also are free from it. We see then that our Lord's words under consideration, far from saying there shall be no law and no punishment, foretell that the idea of exact retribution for wrongs done was to be nailed to the cross with all other features of the Law, and the administration of justice left in Gentile hands. While some laws in force in Gentile lands are modelled on Old Testament lines, the bulk of the laws are based on the Roman law. See reference to Justinian's and Napoleon's Codes in "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days," pp. 114, 425, 426. Britain and most of the continent of Europe inherited Roman law from the time of the Caesars. From this we see that most persons are prevented from striking us even on one cheek, and their unruly careers are checked by "the powers that be."

The civil power carries the right to deal with murderers. On these the desirability of the death sentence is stated in Genesis, long before there was a law covenant and Israelites under it. The code of Genesis 9: 4-7 applies to mankind generally, and many countries which through a mistaken sentimentalism have dispensed with capital punishment have been obliged to restore it in sheer self-protection. As for those who might murder us, the Lord says Fear them not; our lives are in His keeping. (Matthew 10: 28.) If we are murdered, and society is in a settled state, the law of the land will seek to apprehend the murderer. If the guilty one is not found and punished by the present powers, the Lord will recompense him in the Kingdom age, as the Scripture says—"God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Ecclesiastes 12: 14.) If it is a professing Christian who meditates such a crime, there is the judgment of Romans 14: 10 and 2 Corinthians 5: 10 to think of. They warn us that God takes note of our actions, and will punish us according to our deserts.

We see then that while every Jew was obliged to take part actively in securing the punishment of evil doers, Christians are largely relieved of such responsibility by their position of separateness from the world and its affairs.

The same applies to burglary, theft, assault, swindles, and many other smitings the Lord's people may be subjected to as they go through life. The big public offences the law of the land looks after more or less successfully. The lesser offences provide grand opportunities for the practice of patience and long suffering. These qualities our Heavenly Father possesses and manifests, and our Lord Jesus set us a noble example in the exhibition of these traits of character. There must be something in them worth while for us to gain. And of course patience and long suffering can be gained only by submitting to unpleasant, unkind, and often injurious conduct on the part of others toward us.—1 Peter 3: 8, 9.

Coals of Fire on His Head

Far from smiting in return when smitten on the one cheek, far from demanding a tooth for the tooth someone has deprived us of, or a beast for a beast, we are given another mode of procedure (Romans 12: 17-21)—

"Recompense to no man evil for evil. . . .

"*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you*, live peaceably with all men.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

Verse 20 above is a quotation from Proverbs 25: 21, 22, showing that through wisdom given to Solomon the Lord taught Israel to cultivate a forbearing spirit and generous heart.

Instead of smiting back, or calling in the law to do the punishing, Christians often find it more to their taste as sanctified followers of Christ to heap on the coals of fire if the enemy's necessities require it, and

who can say in this world of change how soon those who afflict and humiliate, swindle and rob us, will lose their proud position and their ill-gotten gains, and become amenable to better influences and be led to penitence and a changed life?

Admonishing and Rebuking Wrong Doers

Again, we have instructions concerning the disciplining of brethren in the church who do wrong. The brethren are to admonish a brother "overtaken in a fault," and seek to restore him by helpful advice. If one brother trespass against another, the case may, if a private interview proves to be inconclusive, be taken before brethren, and finally before the whole assembly of believers. And the brother proved wrong may be expelled from the congregation of believers. It is their bounden duty to discipline, reprove, rebuke, exhort, and not let the brethren think that being Christians they may do as they please, and all will be excused and covered up. Those who cause division in the Church should be withdrawn from. (Galatians 6: 1; Matthew 18: 15-18; 2 Thessalonians 3: 6-15; 2 Timothy 2: 24-26.) Those who are found to have "a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."—2 Timothy 3: 1-5.

From these Scriptures we receive the instruction that to turn the other cheek does not mean to continue on close terms of friendship with those who smite us, or whom we see smiting the brethren; to "turn the other cheek" does not necessarily mean that we shall not report the wrong to the brethren. In 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8 the apostle Paul refers to brethren who were defrauded by other brethren, and who took legal proceedings, "and that before the unbelievers." Here the apostle places before us a higher motive and purpose than recovering from those who have defrauded us; that is, the good name of the church before unbelievers. It is bad enough, Paul says in effect, for brethren to be defrauded, without publishing it to the world, which already has much to say against us on account of our faith. His advice is, Keep the matter among yourselves, and let the brethren decide whether a fraud has been perpetrated or not. If it has, the wrong should be righted. If the transgressor refuses to return the ill-gotten gains he should be dealt with.

We note that the apostle, who was a close follower of the Lord, says nothing about giving the transgressor more money, or trusting him in fresh transactions. Evidently the apostle did not understand the Lord to mean that on being robbed or defrauded or swindled the brother should give the robber or swindler a present and say, Here is my other cheek; come and smite it. Nothing of the kind. Having been defrauded, the victim is under no obligation to continue close friendship and business dealings with one whom he found unworthy of trust. We are still considering things the Lord did not mean in our quest for what He did mean when He said to turn the other cheek. The Lord certainly did not mean to encourage the wrongdoers to go on and on in their pilfering or defrauding and allow them to think that you regard their dishonesty as of no consequence and not worth mentioning.

The Judges in Israel

Under the Law Covenant judges were numerous, and scattered over the land. They were the principal men in any given community, who "sat in the gate" to hear all manner of disputes. The procedure was simple; there were no juries, the judges heard the witnesses, saw the evidence in the shape of "exhibits" if there were any, and passed judgment accordingly. From Exodus 22: 1-9 we can see the nature of many of the complaints brought before them, and the prescribed penalties. The penalty for a stolen ox or a sheep killed or sold was to restore five oxen or four sheep—500 and 400 per cent. Thieves of to-day would think this a heavy fine. But severe penalties were necessary among graziers whose living depended on the increase of their herds and flocks. The same conception of justice existed in the western prairies of the U.S.A. in the old days, when cattle "rustlers" were severely dealt with, and horse thieves were put to death—the horse being essential to the occupation of cowboy and an important asset on every cattle ranch and sheep station. A man who put a beast into another man's field or vineyard had to make the damage good; "of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vineyard shall he make restitution." —Exodus 22: 5.

It is not difficult to see that under this system, among people imperfect and sinful to begin with, revenge and greed and a litigating spirit would be fostered; also cruelty in inflicting on the offender exactly the same sort of wound or other physical injury that he had caused the innocent party. There is a certain amount of satisfaction in knowing that a wicked person has fallen into the trap he set for another, a most notable illustration of this being the rejoicing of the Jews when Haman was hanged on the gallows he had erected to destroy Mordecai. Every one who reads the history in the book of Esther thrills to the justice of it all, and to God's wonderful deliverance of His people the Jews from the extermination Haman had planned. All this because Haman was annoyed at Mordecai and sought to "get even" with him. (Psalm 7: 15, 16.) And he fully deserved his fate.

How to Turn the Other Cheek

But coming back to every-day affairs, we see that a community the members of which are bent on receiving compensation for every loss and satisfaction for every indignity will have its mind too much centred upon litigation and material gain. If we take "smite thee on the right cheek" literally, its implication is a personal affront or insult. The injury is to the feelings more than to the person. To "turn the other cheek" would mean not to answer back in kind—insult for insult, lie for lie—but let it pass, and seek no opportunity for revenge, and (in the case of the Jew) lodge no complaint before the judges in the gate. Under the New Covenant of mercy and forgiveness we have received much mercy and forgiveness for many offences with which God bore for a long time. As Christians we can let many personal insults pass, and think as kindly as possible of the offender.

Similarly with other offences, such as pilfering, borrowing and keeping (see Exodus 22: 14), trespass on one's property, causing destruction by fire, stealing, etc. To "turn the other cheek" would mean to take no steps to bring the offender to task for his evil deeds; or, if the matter be spoken of, to leave it at that. Thousands of people are being swindled every day of the

year by plausible persons, some of whom work under the cloak of religion when seeking to get something out of an honest-minded Christian. Some of these cases come before the courts and can be read about in the papers, others come under one's own observation, or are personally experienced. But, whichever it is, the world is so full of falsehood, deceit, dishonesty, etc., that if one attempted to obtain redress for every false weight, all misrepresented goods, money stolen and portable property removed, one would have little time for the spiritual side of life.

Of course, where the shoe pinches is that once it becomes known that we are one of those Christians who believe that the Sermon on the Mount is given to us to be put into practice every day of our lives, all the evil doers take advantage of our leniency and we become known as an "easy mark." Poor things! they apparently forget that the Lord is watching over His people, and though for His own reasons He sometimes allows them to fall victims to the evil doers, He is not unmindful of the wrong done, and in His own time will reckon with the wicked—whether professing saint or open sinner. That is the purport of Romans 12: 19 already quoted, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

This leaves us with a mind peaceful and free, kind and considerate, not looking for insults and not retaliating when they come, not severe on the weak and erring, but after the example of our Heavenly Father, giving time for repentance.

Resist Not Evil

What then is meant by our Lord's words—"that ye resist not evil," and how can we harmonize this command with "stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6: 11), "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4: 7), "Whom resist, stedfast in the faith" (1 Peter 5: 9), and other similar admonitions?

The idea seems to be, Do not take up the "chip on the shoulder" attitude. Do not feel that everything said to you must be fought off, or worried over, or answered back. Try to take the larger view. Try to remember that Satan is the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience, and that he would gladly retain you as one of his by stirring you up continually over trifles, as well as over more important worldly affairs. Try by throwing your influence on the side of frankness, openmindedness, and honesty to assist those who are otherwise inclined to see how much better it is to be absolutely truthful and straightforward. Help them to see that deceit and lying and stealing are forbidden by the Lord, and that if they would be pleasing to Him they must put off and dig out all those tendencies to evil which they find in themselves and see in others, and at any cost put on the virtues of the "new man," which is created anew in Christ Jesus.

Those who love God and are devoted to His Son do not make a practice of deliberate sin. We pray daily, "Lead us not into temptation," in the sense of yielding to it, and "Deliver us from evil," or the "evil one." Hence, when the Lord said "Resist not evil" He could not have meant that we should not resist temptation to do wrong. The evil we should not resist is such evil as opponents can bring against us, such unkindnesses and persecutions and adversities as the Lord permits to come upon us, and which try our patience and forbearance, and if we are not careful will lead us to unkindness in return. Consider our Lord, who endured much "contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (Hebrews 12: 3.) In every case He returned good for evil, and the apostle Peter says (1 Peter 2: 23), "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." So let us do.

(To be continued)

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- **(75 cents)**. Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, **4d. (8 cents)**. Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- **(50 cents)**; postage, extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- **(50 cents)**. Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 **(30 cents)**, postage extra as above, or 8/- **($2.00)** for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 **(85 cents)**. Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, **4d. (8 cents)**. Special price to "Advocate" readers 2/3 **(55 cents)**; postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 **(60 cents)**; special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 **(35 cents)**; postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 **($1.35)**; postage extra in Australia, 3d.; elsewhere, **6d. (12 cents)**. Paper covers, 4/- **($1)**; postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- **($1)**; paper covers, 3/- **(75 cents)**; postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 **(35 cents)**; paper covers, 1/- **(25 cents)**. Postage extra in Australia, **1d.**; elsewhere, **3d. (6 cents)**. Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- **($3)**; paper, 8/- **($2)**, postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 **(35 cents)**; paper covers, 1/- **(25 cents)**. Postage extra in Australia, **1d.**; elsewhere, **2d. (4 cents)**. Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- **($8)**; paper, 8/- **($2)**, postpaid.

Mar. 1st, 1940 VERICHROME V DEVELOP BEFORE Mar. 1st, 1940 VERICHROME V DEVELOP BEFORE Mar. 1st, 1940

The New Covenant Advocate and .... **Kingdom Herald**

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- **(75 cents)** elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C.1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.

23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, SEPTEMBER 1, 1929 No. 6

All Things to All Men

THE CLEARING of the apostle Paul's character from the charge of craftiness and guile levelled at him by false accusers has brought us the grateful thanks of readers of the July N.C.A. In the article "Laying Aside All Guile" we were privileged with the Lord's help to show that the apostle's words in 2 Corinthians 12: 16 had been greatly misunderstood by many Christians. The words "being crafty, I caught you with guile," have been made the foundation for the teaching that it is right to be "crafty" and to practice "guile" if thereby some can be brought into the Christian Church, or some other supposed good be accomplished.

But, considered with its context, the apostle's statement is seen to teach just the opposite.

The apostle was never crafty, and he never attempted to catch anyone with guile; but he had been falsely accused of doing these things, and he quoted the words merely for the sake of answering the false accusation. As a follower of the Lord's example, the apostle could not practice guile, because in the *Lord's mouth there was no guile; and to the extent* that we His followers keep to His example we also shall be free from guile and craft and deception of any and every kind.

Now we are asked to explain words found in 1 Corinthians 9: 22, which are often taken to mean that the apostle pretended for a time to think and feel as did his hearers, in the hope that by so doing *he would gain an opening for the presentation of* the truth. In this case also the whole of the connection should be read in order to see just what the apostle was endeavouring to show. It is common now among critics to belittle the apostle, as though he blundered along in his epistles and said anything that came into his mind whether pertaining to his subject or not; and so this statement, "I am made *all things to all men*" is taken as just another evidence that Paul was none too reliable in his assertions and actions.

These critics attribute to Paul the methods of the swindler. The swindler makes a point of agreeing with his intended victim—that is, in the early stages while manouvering the unsuspecting one into a trap. If the "prospect" likes a certain brand of soap he likes that kind. If the "prospect" is fond of horse racing he is also fond of it and can give worth-while "tips." If the "prospect" is a wireless enthusiast, a golfer, or a tennis player, the swindler is the same; or if quite the opposite the "prospect" dislikes sport and is of a religious turn, then the swindler talks eloquently of the waste of time involved in sport and is ready to get out a Bible and discuss any text or subject the intended victim is interested in. Beware of the plausible talker whose likes and dislikes exactly agree with yours. If you watch him (or her) long enough you will find that they want to extract a favor or take advantage of you in some way; perhaps they want you to make a donation to something or other, or they have a wonderful investment to show you, or a piece of land or a house to sell you, or some second-hand furniture. They tell you they never met anyone they liked so well or found so congenial, they enjoy your company, etc., etc. That is, until they get what they want, and then you wake up and find all the professions of love and friendship were not worth a row of pins.

That is the kind of person the apostle Paul is accused of having been, and it is well to know how to answer the accusation. The apostle Paul needs defenders now as he did then, for his detractors today stop at nothing in their effort to destroy his influence. We, on the other hand, accept his epistles as having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and hence as inculcating only that which is true and pure, holy, upright, and honest in both word and act.

Let us then read the whole of the passage involved in the question as to how Paul could be "all things *to all men*" *if he did not use pretence, artifice* (i.e., subtle or deceptive art), or sophistry (i.e., "subtly fallacious reasoning or disputation"; a fallacy is "anything that deceives the mind or eye; delusive reasoning"). To quote from 1 Corinthians 9—verses 18-23—

18 What is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ), that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak [or, according to Vatican MS., "became I weak"], that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

Three Classes of Persons

It will be observed that in these paragraphs the apostle Paul divides the persons whom He served with the Gospel into three classes—first, the Jews under the law given at Sinai; second, Gentiles who never had been under the law given at Sinai; and third, converts to the gospel who were as yet "weak." From all these he was free, under bondage to none save Christ, yet for the gospel's sake he made himself servant to them.

1. Having been born a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee, and well instructed in the law, it was not necessary for the apostle Paul to resort to pretence when conversing with Jews. When he says "unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews," he indicated that he put himself in their place; i.e. took up their questions and objections from the standpoint of one bound by the law. He was able in every case to show them from their own Scriptures that the Messiah was the hope of their nation, that they were condemned by their law, and that their animal sacrifices were inadequate to take away either their sins or the curse of the law. His own experience as a Jew, so eloquently set out in his epistle to the Romans, chapter 7, he could show them was the experience of every pious Jew, and that deliverance for them, as for himself, was available through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. No deception about any of this, openly told in the synagogues as well as privately as he had opportunity.

Paul's Mission to the Gentiles

2. But he was not born a Gentile; did he profess to be a Gentile in order to gain the more? Certainly not. In any event, such a course would have been useless, for doubtless his face was characteristic of his race and he would have been recognized as a Jew. Paul's success in reaching the Gentiles was due partly to the fact that in every city visited he went first to the synagogue, where proselytes from the Gentiles would hear his discourses on the law and the prophets and the mission of Jesus Christ. Having delivered his message first to the Jews, he would assist those Gentile proselytes from the standpoint of both their born state as non-Jews and their new standing as converts to Judaism.

"I made myself servant unto all," he says. He was humble minded, patient in considering their difficulties. In Romans 7: 9 he wrote, "I was alive without the law once." That is, going back in his origin as a Benjamite, he could show that the time was when there was no law covenant, when God accepted the fathers—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—on account of their faith. As a son of Abraham, Paul would have been accepted on the same terms of faith had not the law intervened and brought him under its bondage and curse. And so he could talk to the Gentile as a Gentile—as one who knew the advantages of freedom from the law, their advantage in never having been under that law, and yet how they also required a Saviour—a deliverer from Sin the great taskmaster and from Satan the devil, by whom they had been taken captive at his will.—Romans 6: 16-18; 2 Timothy 2: 26.

Paul's Method with the Weak

3. Among the converts to Christianity were some whom the apostle styled "weak." Paul's method with the weak was dictated by love, and was in imitation of our Lord's example, "For even Christ pleased not himself." (Romans 15: 1-3.) He said, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." (Romans 14: 1.) Some were converts from Judaism who had been accustomed to observe new moons and sabbath days, while some were converts from idolatry who had eaten in idols' temples meat first offered to idols. As the Jewish converts received more enlightenment they would see that the observance of these and other fast and feast days was unnecessary, and that meat which had been offered to an idol and was subsequently sold in the markets along with other meat not so offered was none the worse as meat, and if no religious questions were involved the one could be eaten as freely as the other.

The "weak" among Gentile converts would also have qualms on the subject of eating such meat. Having learned that to worship God consistently they must forsake the idol temples, they also would wonder whether they should eat the meat on sale which had been offered to an idol or go entirely without meat when no other was to be had. Such a one would show his imperfect knowledge of the faith or doctrines, and the weakness of his constitution as a Christian, by eating only "herbs," that is, vegetables, and would be horrified on seeing another Christian eat such meat.

Among these "weak" brethren the apostle "became weak." He did not willingly offend their sensibilities, and he advised all the brethren to consider the difficulties of these brethren, and help them to realize that it is better to go without meat rather than stumble a new beginner not fully informed on the subject. It is better to become a servant, a slave in self-abnegation to help the brethren, than to be a boaster of one's liberties and injure the weak brethren.

The same three divisions are mentioned by the *apostle in 1 Corinthians 10: 31-33*—

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved."

All Paul wrote on the subject makes profitable reading for us, and is still applicable in countries

where converts are being made from idolatry. As for ourselves, where the question of meats and idol-worship no longer arises, the spirit of love and forbearance and not pleasing self is still in order. It is still right to deny self and please our brethren for their good to edification.

But none of this involves deception, the denial of one's principles, or a covering up of the truth. Paul's letters are frankness itself, and there is no ground for supposing that he was less candid in his preaching and conversation.

A Safeguard Against Prejudice

On one occasion Paul withstood Peter to the face because he refrained from eating with the Gentiles in the presence of brethren from Jerusalem who were not far enough along in the truth to realize that this was right. No doubt Peter was over cautious and set a bad example to those Jewish brethren who saw their liberty, including Barnabas. But Paul explained and made it clear that it was useless to seek justification by the law; faith in Jesus justifies, and that privilege is open to Jew and Gentile on equal terms. Therefore do not destroy the good work done in calling out the Jews from under the law by building again the old barriers of prejudice against the Gentiles.—Galatians 2: 11-18.

One may ask then whether Paul's action in circumcising Timothy was consistent with his knowledge of the truth and his criticism of Peter. Paul called Peter's action dissimulation—which means "to conceal by feigning." And this incident teaches us that we should not dissimulate, or feign something different from what we really believe and are.

"Be true to your colors, my comrades, be true!"

Paul's action in circumcising Timothy might reasonably be called a safeguard against prejudice. Neither Paul nor Timothy considered it necessary to Timothy's salvation or to his standing with the Lord. As the son of a Gentile father he had not been circumcised, although, both his mother and grandmother being pious Jews, and he having been brought up in the Jewish faith, circumcision would have been appropriate at any time in his youth, thus giving him a better standing among the Jews with whom he associated. (2 Timothy 1: 5; 3: 15.) On hearing the gospel Timothy and his mother became believers in Jesus, and were active in proclaiming the glad tidings. This was some time before Paul knew of him.—Acts 16: 1, 2.

When he desired to take Timothy as travelling companion, Paul saw that the Jews among whom he would labour would be prejudiced against him because his father was a Greek. Hence we take it that the act of circumcision was a retrospective act, for the purpose of making a formal transfer of Timothy from his father's to his mother's side of the house. It was a belated performance of what might properly have been done when as a youth he definitely took his stand with his mother in the Jewish faith. By this technicality Paul made a concession to Jewish prejudice, making it easier for the Jews to accept Timothy as an instructor.

Possibly had he been longer in the faith and realized more clearly that God could and would use Gentile believers to instruct Jews, Paul would not have taken this step. But no deceit was practised: all knew Timothy's father was a Greek, and all knew he had been circumcised to show his standing with his mother and grandmother in the Jewish faith. Timothy became as a son to Paul, and his ministry was prospered by the Lord.

Paul circumcised no other believer so far as known; always he spoke and wrote against what had come to be a symbol of the law—"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." It was not permissible to pick out a few items of the law for observance while discarding others. The law must be considered as a whole. And those who become believers in Jesus are reckoned as having died to the law as a whole—to every part of the law, as he wrote to the Romans (7: 4)—"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be *married to another, even to him who is raised from* the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is the ground of acceptance, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ producing a new life, as he says—"For in Jesus Christ *neither circumcision availeth anything*, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love." "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth *anything, nor uncircumcision*, but a new creature." —Galatians 5: 6; 6: 12-16; Romans 2: 25-29.

When Paul took Titus with him to Jerusalem, circumcision was not suggested, or at any rate not insisted on. The elders at Jerusalem recognized that rite to be altogether inappropriate in his case because he was of purely Gentile extraction. (Galatians 2: 3.) Also Paul was very firm on the subject.

Paul and Aquila, and the Vow

Now we come to a portion of Scripture of admitted difficulty, for the question inevitably arises, Did Paul take a vow, as Acts 18: 8 seems to state, or was it Aquila who had taken the vow? If Paul, it is difficult to harmonize his action with his general outspokenness against Judaizing teachers and ritualistic tendencies. But if it was Aquila who had taken a vow and on the completion of the period of his vow had shorn his head at Cenchrea, that is quite understandable, as indicating that Aquila was at this time not as yet clear in regard to his freedom from the law.

That Aquila and his wife Priscilla were Jews is stated in Acts 18: 1. They came to Corinth because of the edict of Claudius expelling all Jews from Rome. When Paul came to Corinth he abode with them, the reason given being that he was of the same craft; a way of saying that Paul found employment at tent making, this enabling him to spend some time at Corinth, preaching in the synagogue on the sabbath days. Following the narrative of his experience we come to verses 18, 19, which state—

And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he

himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.

Aquila and Priscilla took up residence at Ephesus, which was a seaport on the west coast of Asia Minor, while Paul took a tour in the "upper coasts" or highlands of the interior of Asia Minor, subsequently returning to Ephesus.—Acts 19: 1.

For two years Paul disputed or conducted Scripture expositions in the lecture room of Tyrannus, with what result the remainder of the chapter shows. From there he went to Macedonia, and when he had "gone over those parts" he came to Greece, and there abode three months. Intending to sail for Syria, he returned again through Macedonia, accompanied by several brethren, and finally sailed from Philippi "after the days of unleavened bread," and came to Troas. (Acts 20: 1-6.) Other ports touched at are mentioned, and 20: 16 expresses Paul's wish on reaching Miletus—"for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost." Obviously the day of Pentecost here referred to would be more than two years after the voyage with Aquila and Priscilla from Corinth to Ephesus mentioned in chapter 18: 18, where the vow is spoken of.

From Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders and had an affecting parting, and then set sail for Syria, by stages, as described in chapter 21, finally arriving at Cæsarea, where they stayed awhile before making the final stage of the journey to Jerusalem.

So that a period of three years or more elapsed between the journey with Aquila to Ephesus and his meeting the apostles at Jerusalem. Yet those who think Paul had taken a vow believe his object in going to Jerusalem was to go into the temple and undergo some ceremony in relation to it. Many who hold this theory fail to notice the length of the period. They also fail to observe that nothing is said in Acts 21: 20-30 about Paul having a vow or requiring to make an offering and to shave his head.

Acts 18: 18 shows that whoever had a vow—whether Paul or Aquila, the period of the vow was passed, for the shaving of the head came at the conclusion of the period, not at the beginning. Cenchrea was "the eastern harbor of Corinth (i.e. its harbor on the Saronic Gulf), and the emporium of its trade with the Asiatic shores of the Mediterranean." (See Smith's Bible Dictionary.) Aquila therefore—for we believe it was Aquila who had taken the vow referred to—completed all the ceremonial connected with his vow before taking ship to go with Paul to Ephesus. And that was as it should be.

Many Bible readers have noticed that in events in which Priscilla and Aquila took part Priscilla's name is mentioned first, and have wondered why this was done. This priority does not always appear in the Authorized Version; e.g. Acts 18: 26. According to the oldest three Greek manuscripts, the Sinaitic, Vatican 1209, and Alexandrine, the name of Priscilla comes first as expounding to Apollos "the way of God more perfectly." The reason undoubtedly is that Priscilla was more advanced in the Christian faith. Possibly at this time Aquila was friendly and willing to have Apollos, as he had had Paul, for a guest, but had not definitely taken a stand as a Christian. The fact that he had been observing a ceremony of the law, or a ceremony prescribed by the doctors of the law who added many forms and ceremonies the law itself knew nothing of, would seem to indicate this. And since the ceremonial observance of his vow permitted him to conclude it by shaving his head at Cenchrea, this is further evidence that his vow was not one prescribed in the law; for the Nazarite vow required to be terminated at the tabernacle, later the temple at Jerusalem, as described in Numbers 6: 13-21.

We may be sure that the apostle Paul was pleased when Aquila's ceremonial observance was completed, and it is reasonable to suppose that Paul would not have had him as travelling companion until such time as Aquila was free of his vow. Paul was not in such haste as Acts 18: 21 seems to indicate, for the words, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but," are an interpolation, not being found in any of the oldest three Greek MSS.

Why Paul paid Charges for Four Men

When, on arrival, Paul was received by James and the other elders at Jerusalem, and he had informed them of "what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry," they rejoiced and glorified the Lord. But they immediately expressed fears as to the consequences of Paul's presence at Jerusalem, seeing that "many thousands" of Jews who believed in Jesus were still "zealous of the law" and going on with its ceremonial observances. News had reached Jerusalem that Paul discouraged observance of the law by Jews resident among the nations; "saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." This was true, and Paul did not deny it. Neither did the elders condemn Paul for so teaching. What troubled them was that they, the elders at Jerusalem, in their eagerness to have "many thousands" (instead of a "little flock") had not been similarly outspoken. Now they feared the consequences if one who had been outspoken were accepted and endorsed in his attitude and teaching. And practically what they asked Paul to do was to show himself in the temple as a sort of exhibit.

And Paul did so. Why? Out of deference to these older apostles who were in charge of the work at Jerusalem. For no other reason. They had a plan which they laid before him, which was simply to accompany four men who had vows, pay the charges for them, and inform the priest of the time these men would require sacrifices to be offered for them. This would require him to enter the temple and converse with the priests, and thus, the elders hoped, the populace would be satisfied that Paul was "not as black as he was painted."

Now we can well believe that the whole arrangement was exceedingly distasteful to Paul; yet he made the mistake of yielding to their request. None of the brethren then was perfect, any more than the brethren of the faith now are perfect. The elders at Jerusalem found it difficult to believe that absolutely all forms and ceremonies were to cease among the Jewish converts, though freely admitting the

exemption of the Gentile converts. Paul himself, being a Jew, and having in earlier years frequented the temple, probably assured himself that he could still worship God there (Acts 24: 11), and would only be doing what he as a Jew had a right to do, to enter the temple and mingle with his fellow worshippers. Fortunately for Paul and for the elders and for all of us the plan was upset before it could be carried out, and thus a wholesome lesson was given on the value of obedience to God rather than the maintenance of a religious system which he has declared null and void; a lesson of loyalty to principles of truth in preference to the pleasing of the multitude and even of those in authority when they suggest a lowering of the standard for prudential reasons.

The lesson comes home to us to-day when many in Babylon who hear the Lord's call, "Come out of her, my people," fail to do so, on the ground that by remaining in and associating with what the Lord condemns they can "do good" in one way or another. They like to associate with the thousands in their ritualism and their formalities rather than with the humble twos and threes who, rejecting these, seek to worship God "in spirit and in truth."

The Lord was merciful to Paul and to the elders of the church at Jerusalem, not casting them out of His favor, though the enraged multitude cast him out of their presence. God comforted Paul by sending an angel with words of cheer in the night (Acts 23: 11), and we may be sure the elders and other believers at Jerusalem were led to a clearer view of what it means to be free from the law and established in the liberty of the gospel. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."—Galatians 5: 1.

Having now shown that the apostle Paul's statement that he was made "all things to all men" has no application to deceit or guile, or to questionable methods or associations, all of which he repudiated, we shall in our future studies of his life and ministry be still further convinced of the purity of his motives and of the integrity of his character. And we may well imitate his humility in making himself "servant unto all" (1 Corinthians 9: 19)—unselfish, self-denying, patient, carefully instructing, and helping all out of their bondage of whatever sort into the true fellowship—the fellowship in the Light. —1 John 1: 3-7.



For the Children

How a Good Woman got a Blessing for her Little Girl

If my little friends will please read Mark 3: 8 it will be seen that when Jesus was once preaching near the seaside some people from Tyre and Sidon were there hearing Him and seeing many sick people healed by His power.

Tyre and Sidon were seaport towns, and were in a country next to Palestine, where the Jews lived. So the people in Tyre and Sidon were Gentiles and not Jews. And this we must know too that all the people in the world who are not Jews are called Gentiles.

These people from Tyre and Sidon who visited Galilee and saw Jesus were no doubt very much surprised at His wonderful miracles, as indeed everybody was. And we are quite sure that when they went home they told their neighbours and friends, and soon all would have heard of the wonder-working Teacher and Prophet down in Galilee.

We wanted to say all this because our story to-day is about a visit that Jesus (and His disciples with Him) paid to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon—when He wanted to be alone for awhile after the many long days of toil and trouble He had been having. Although He wanted to be alone, and to talk only to His disciples, His presence was soon found out by the people. Perhaps someone who had seen Him in Galilee and who knew Him again had spread the news around that the great Prophet had come to them. Instantly there would be a stir in the town—everybody wishing to see and hear Him whose words were wonderful and His miracles even more wonderful.

There was at that time living in the town a sad, sad woman. Her life was sad because she had a little girl who was "grievously vexed with a devil." We all know something of what that means. Those who are so "vexed" are sometimes made to take fits or to fall down or to scream and rage and foam at the mouth or to cut themselves with knives; and to do other dreadful things. Something of this sort was happening to this little girl, and the poor mother could not help her. No wonder she was sad.

But now she hears that Jesus has come to their land, and I think we can see her face lighting up with joy and hope at the good news. Her first thought is for her dear little girl. She will go to Jesus and beg a favour of Him for her. I am sure you know what she will ask; but, oh, there's a big trouble ahead. She knows something that perhaps you have not thought of. She knows that she has no right to expect Jesus to take any notice of her or to do anything for her daughter. Do you know the reason why? If not, please wait a little, and we shall see. But no matter whether it was right or wrong, whether she may expect anything or not, she was going to try, and perhaps Jesus might be kind enough to her, even her, and heal her little girl.

There was no time to be lost, for once the Prophet had gone she might never see Him again, and then her little girl would be left to be "grievously vexed with a devil" until she died. What anxious haste, then, the poor mother would make to find Jesus the

great One who could, if He would, make her little one well and herself happy. She found them; and, following behind, called out—"Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Just as we said, and as she partly expected, Jesus took no notice of her; "he answered her not a word."

Never before had Jesus been silent when anyone came to Him for help, and now for the first time in His ministry He does not answer this poor distressed woman. But that does not stop her. She continues to call out so—trying to make Him notice her—that the disciples got weary and said to Jesus, "Send her away; for she crieth after us."

Then Jesus told them something that His Father had said to Him before He came to this world—"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." So Jesus was not obliged to help this woman; because she was a Gentile, and not "of Israel." And this is what the woman knew, and which perhaps my little friends did not think of. It was her great trouble, and now Jesus had almost —but not quite—said, No, I will not help you!

Would she now go home again to look, as long as she lived, on the miseries of her little daughter? No; she still believed in the kindness of Jesus, and made another hard try. She came and "worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me."

Surely now, one would think, Jesus will say the word and heal the little girl! But not yet; instead, He gave her an answer which made it harder than ever for her. These are the words He said—"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." And is not that wonderfully true? Which of you children having a nice dinner prepared and served up to you would think it fair or proper if someone came along and threw it out to dogs? Not one of you! But you would not mind if a dog picked up the crumbs that fell on the floor, would you?

The "children" were the Jewish people; the "bread" was the miracles (and the teaching) Jesus was serving up to them; the "dogs" were the Gentiles (or the nations of people not Jews), of whom this woman was one. Jesus is telling her that the miracles were for the Jews only, and she should not expect any of that "bread."

Now, how many of us would have thought of the quick and clever answer the woman gave? She said to Jesus—"Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

She knew that Jesus was sent only to the Jewish people, and that she, being a Gentile, should not expect anything from Him. But as all the many miracles Jesus was doing for the Jews were like a great feast of which they were having abundance, might not she be like one of those dogs that get the crumbs? And she wanted only one "crumb"—and that not for herself, but for another. Then Jesus said the loving words she wanted to hear—"O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt": "the devil is gone out of thy daughter." Read about this in Matthew 15 and Mark 7.

What would the woman do then? We think she would first show her gratitude to Jesus and give Him her very best thanks; then hasten homeward; hasten to see her little girl; as we read—"And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed."

So the woman got the blessing she sought; and how did she get it? The answer is a word with twelve letters: by PERSEVERANCE. And if we want the blessings Jesus has to give, we shall have to do the same: we must *persevere.*

—UNCLE FRANK.



God's Interest in Men

"Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning."—James 1: 17.

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"—2 Cor. 9: 15.

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 know 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; Matthew 5: 45; Romans 1: 21; Hebrews 10: 10; Romans 6: 23; Hebrews 5: 9; 7: 25; 2 Peter 3: 13; Matthew 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 (Romans 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, and through faith in that sacrifice. (Romans 5: 18, 19; Galatians 3: 8.) 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 subject to 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 Corinthians 9: 15.) The kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men have 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 favour are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.—Titus 3: 4-7; Romans 5: 1, 2; Ephesians 1: 7.

The Extent of the Grace of God

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.—Romans 10: 13, 14.

But, as before stated, God's arrangements are complete, and His purpose in respect of those who 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" (Jeremiah 31: 15-17; Ecclesiastes 9: 4-6, 10), these shall be enlightened; for Christ died for them as much as for us. (John 1: 9; 1 Timothy 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.** (Hebrews 2: 9.) Can any one show cause why those who have died in ignorance of the only Name, and therefore unsaved, should not in due time be fully enlightened on the subject of salvation? 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 from the grave 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. (Jeremiah 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. (Isaiah 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.—Acts 24: 15.

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?

Enlightenment Necessary

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, who will be restrained for a thousand years. (Revelation 20: 1-3.) 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 (Jeremiah 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.

The Sons of God

As a matter of fact, certain other feaures 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 advent. (Philippians 1: 29; 2 Timothy 2: 12; Romans 8: 14-18; Colossians 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, honour, and immortality (1 Corinthians 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 Corinthians 15: 54; Isaiah 25: 6-9; Romans 8: 19-21; Isaiah 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 after 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. They will not, however, ever share the Lord's position as Mediator. That office, based upon the sacrifice of Himself as a ransom for all, and as

the sin offering for the sins of the whole world, is His exclusively. The joint heirs will then, as now, point the world to Him who alone is Mediator, that through Him they may be reconciled to God.—2 Corinthians 5: 19, 20.

Extraordinary honours are reserved for the overcoming Church, 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. (Hebrews 1: 13, 14; 1 Peter 1: 12.) 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; Matthew 18: 6, 10.) Even John the Baptist, most honoured 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. (Matthew 11: 11; John 3: 29-31.) This high position as joint-heirs in the Kingdom is reserved for those who follow in the Lord's footsteps, who suffer with Him by reason of faithfulness to God and the truth, and who will receive their reward when He comes to establish the Kingdom as the all-controlling political power in the earth. (Daniel 2: 44; 7: 27; Revelation 11: 15-18.) In the meantime they are living in a hostile world, and it is written that whoever would live godly shall suffer persecution.—2 Timothy 3: 12.

But they are not left without aids in running this great race. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself is deeply interested in them, and He has provided for their every need. He loves and cherishes the Church. He established the Church upon a sure foundation, so that the gates of Hades cannot prevail against it.—Ephesians 5: 29; Matthew 16: 18.

Future Prospects

The suffering of the church is not to endure forever—neither as individuals nor as a class. After the tests of discipline, self-denial, and persecution of the present life shall have purged out the unfit ones from the body, and also the dross of pride, self-will, etc., from the overcomers, the church shall be exalted to the promised position in the throne with her Lord, at His second advent. But how necessary the tests, in order that she may be prepared—collectively and individually—for the high position!

The Lord and the church will not reign with overbearing arrogance, to oppress and cast down the people; the absolute authority vested in Jesus (Matthew 28: 18; Romans 14: 9) is to be used for the blessing of all the people, which will include the destruction of the wilfully wicked, who will persist in being so after they shall have been fully enlightened. This is the grand work of blessing in which the glorified church is to have part.

The blessing then, as now, will be given through the extension of the New Covenant mercies to those nations, living and dead, who had not previously had the opportunity of hearing of them. This wider extension of the New Covenant is shown under the symbol of the "New Jerusalem," the "Holy City," "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

"Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God:

"And the nations shall walk by the light thereof; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory into it. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it."—Rev. 21: 9, 10, 24 (according to Sinaitic and Alexandrine MSS), 26.

For these grand times, now so near at hand, let us devoutly pray—"Thy Kingdom Come!"

From Far and Near

THIS IS THE DAY to which the prophet Daniel referred, when knowledge should be increased and many should run to and fro. Facilities for travel are constantly being improved and extended. Much of the travelling done is for business or pleasure, but, the facilities being there, the Lord's work may also be extended, by rail and steamer and latterly by air. The Lord said to His disciples, "Go . . . teach all nations." To do this has involved covering great distances. Yet very much of their work was done on foot. To-day the tram, the bus, and the motor car save much of the walking the disciples were forced to do to reach from one locality to another. Brethren who have cars find them very useful in tract distribution and colporteuring for reaching quickly suburban and nearby country areas.

But when it comes to the actual work of colporteuring and tract distribution we still find indispensable the provision with which nature has supplied us. Walking is for anyone in ordinary health one of the best forms of exercise, and it is the only way by which door to door work can be done. And that, as experience has shown, is the best way of reaching the people now, as it was nineteen centuries ago. We, like the early disciples, can say "Peace to this house," for we bring a message of peace and good will from God and from our Lord Jesus Christ; though perhaps that identical form of words might not be the most appropriate, since customary forms of greeting are now different. However, if they will purchase and read a book or accept and read a tract they will receive the message of peace in printed form—God's way of peace, so wonderfully conceived, and so marvellously carried out through Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Door to door work is sometimes wearisome; but what form of labour is not? The weariness is cheerfully borne, however; the Lord's servants delight to grow weary in His service. But spiritually the meeting and conversing with all sorts and conditions of men is most instructive; one learns much of the problems and difficulties that beset mankind, and how to sympathize with and help those willing to be helped by a better acquaintance with the Word of God. A spiritual uplift comes also when results are seen. In a few cases the truth finds an immediate response; in other cases the book or tract may pass through many hands before falling in the way of a keen truth seeker. Some years ago New Zealand was colporteured by two dear Sisters in Christ, with the result that some whom they met became regular readers of the N.C.A. But some of the fruits of their labours are appearing only now. So workers have to remember that the reading matter circulated is not lost or valueless because little result is seen at the time. It is still there in the homes of the people for some one or other to pick up and peruse with thankfulness for the light shining from the pages into their minds and hearts. And the second-hand book shop plays its part too. Let us continue

our labours undaunted, that we may receive yet more letters like the following—

After Many Days

Dear Sirs and Brethren: A week or two ago whilst looking at some books in a local auction mart, I came across a copy of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind." After perusing it carefully I procured the book for 6d. I took it home and have read it very carefully and consider it to be a very splendid exposition of Truth, with every word of which I agree.

I have been for a great many years connected with Church life as an active worker, but during the past five years or so the Modernist trend in the pulpit has very considerably unsettled me. For some time I attended the meetings of the Plymouth Brethren, but their insistent belief in eternal conscious punishment of the wicked does not in any way accord with my idea of things and the plain teaching of Scripture. But your book has now come into my life and I feel thankful to God that I have something that is going to be very helpful, and the profundity of Scriptural quotations so excellently arranged makes the volume a valuable one to me; and I desire to learn more and more, and if possible to take some active part in the dissemination of the truth.

I shall have excellent opportunities for doing some real missionary work in this country, and I am anxious to do something, being firmly convinced that we are in "the last days." Truly the harvest is plenteous, and the labourers are few. There is little desire for God, and multitudes are heading to they know not where; and I am convinced that the truths promulgated in your works will be well received by many.

I place myself at your service, and if you have no actual representative in this Dominion, I shall be only too happy to serve in that capacity.

Praying that God's richest blessing may rest upon you in the Gospel, I am,

Yours sincerely, ————, *New Zealand.*

This is indeed a very encouraging letter. "Cast thy seed corn upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." (Ecclesiastes 11: 1-6.) The seed will germinate and bring forth in due time. In response, copies of other publications were sent, also a quantity of Thanksgiving N.C.A.'s and a bundle of assorted tracts. Let us all join in prayer that further reading will confirm the Brother's appreciation of the things set forth as being indeed the truth for our time, and that his efforts to spread the same may be richly blessed.

The Holy Spirit Teaches through the Word

The following received at the Brooklyn Branch in charge of Brother Cumming show that there is a good field of labour in the United States and Canada, and that the circulation of the "Bible Talks" and other publications through Public Libraries and by personal effort is reaching the truth hungry. Let us rejoice more and more in the fellowship the truth brings with those of like mind in all parts of the earth. Though scattered far, yet we are one body in Christ; with one hope, one faith, one baptism, one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.—Ephesians 4: 1-6.

Dear Sir:—I am writing you a few lines to say that I have read your book called "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind." I got it in B—— Public Library, and I think it is wonderful on the different subjects it is composed of. I have read from 50 to 60 books out of the Library written by great Bible men from time to time. I have been studying the Bible for years, and when I read your book and the Scripture quotations contained in it, it is written (in my mind) through the Holy Spirit that teaches us. It is good to know God, and His Son, and what He is going to do for His people throughout the ages. I have been converted 46 years, and have enjoyed those years; so for the last few years have been going round in the winter, calling on all the people that I can privately in their own houses. I would like to preach the gospel as it is written, with the Holy Spirit to guide me. I like to talk to as many as possible, and I am writing this letter to ask if I can help you in this part of this country of Canada. We should try to help one another on the way to everlasting life, to a home of joy and happiness for evermore. My love to you and all the brethren who are in God and in His Son.

————, *Canada.*

Yes, those who have fellowship with God and with His beloved Son can have fellowship with one another. Love is of God, and if we abide in Him His love will enter our hearts and abide there, and fill us with love for our brethren. May the Lord bless this Brother also in His search for the whole truth, and use Him to help many others to clearer light.

Looking for the Glorious Kingdom

The following was also received at Brooklyn—

Dear Brethren: Another year has gone and a New Year is here. We are one more year nearer the Kingdom of our blessed Lord. May the time soon come when we shall see our Lord in His glory, and appear with Him in that glorious Kingdom soon to be revealed for the uplift of all the world of mankind. I verily believe the Kingdom is at hand, even at the door. (Matthew 24: 32, 33.) I ask an interest in your prayers that I may be found watching and ready when the dear Lord shall call for His own to come up higher to be with Him forever and see Him as He is in all His glory.

I have enjoyed the "New Covenant Advocate" very much during the past year. I wish you a Happy New Year and a prosperous 1929, both spiritually and temporally. May the dear Lord bless you in the work of telling His truth to all the world, and bless you with an abundant entrance into the Kingdom of our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Enclosed you will find $1.25 for renewal of my subscription to the N.C.A. for 1929.

Your brother in Christ, ————, *U.S.A.*

The prayers and benedictions of the Lord's people are most helpful to us. We know they ascend to a God whose ear is ever open to our reasonable requests. There is a fellowship in prayer as well as in knowledge. Let us continue to pray for one an-

other, and for our many brethren, as yet unknown, still bound in the bundles of error. While seeking to help them, let us stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, that when our Lord does call us higher we may be found watching and faithful, and may receive the Well done! Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!

Thanksgiving Fills All the Year

This is not to say that Thanksgiving ceases at the end of the year. The Christian enjoying the favor of God rejoices at all times, and seeks to follow the apostle's admonition "in everything give thanks." At all times and in all circumstances our hearts may be raised in thankfulness, for however difficult the present we know that all things are working together for good to those who love God and are of the called according to His purpose. But this year 1929 we are celebrating as an occasion for special thankfulness, because it is the coming of age year of the New Covenant Advocate and allied publications. The idea appealed to many brethren and sisters of like precious faith, and all are pleased with the appearance and contents of the special issue for April in celebration of the event. Some encouraging letters received on the subject have already been published. Here is another voicing the Thanksgiving spirit, with the sentiments of which we can no doubt all agree—

I am sorry to have kept you waiting for my renewal subscription, but I have been extending the time to see how much I could really send towards expenses for your grand Thanksgiving number which in such form I think is a most befitting manner of celebrating the 21st year of the great helps to unfolding the truth of God's Word for His hungry (for spiritual comforts) children. Thank you for same, which arrived safely this morning.

I have been longing for "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to read again, as I loaned my book some time ago, and I know it will be read by others before I receive it again, thank the Lord. But now I shall be able to go on reading the same, only in a more delightful manner, owing to its honor of the moment for the successful years of the past. Thanksgiving, truly yes!

May God's richest blessing remain with you all in the years to come, and many more be comforted through your labour of love for the Master. Enclosed find Postal Note. My only desire is that the amount were much larger, but thank the Lord the spirit is greater in which it comes along to you. [Balance after paying for subscription placed to Thanksgiving Fund, with many thanks. EDITOR.]

Yours by His dear love and grace, ———, *Victoria.*

Thankfulness, gratitude, implies service. And our Thanksgiving manifestation of gratitude was to produce the contents of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" in N.C.A. form, April 1 issue, at a low price for special circulation, and we are thankful for the way the service has been accepted and effort made to defray the expense of production, and also to circulate the Thanksgiving Issue freely. Many have been given away, many others sent through the post to likely readers, and hundreds have been sold in door to door work at 1/- per copy. Let us continue the activity, and see if we can have the whole edition of 20,000 in circulation by the end of the year, which will be March next. Co-operation and Perseverance are already producing good results and bringing in favourable responses from new readers.

The Thanksgiving Number

Some Experiences and Observations

AS ONE of those who adopted the 200 plan in connection with the Thanksgiving number of the "Advocate," I would like to give some of my experiences as a part-time colporteur in its distribution as well as sundry other observations.

I have always thought from the very first, or at least after I had got down to it a bit, that it is the best move the Office has made for many a day. Considered first as value for money the "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" is now about fifty per cent. cheaper than ever. When the expected better conditions arrive on the earth, I can quite conceive of such works as our great little book being distributed free. So even now the present production at the price comes just about as near as it is possible to that ideal.

I am sure its low price has been of value and assistance to me many times. For when so many now think that they have to be so careful in expenditure on things other than physical necessities it has greatly eased the situation to be able to ask no more than a merely nominal sum for the work. There has been reason to believe also that the prospective purchaser has often thought the same about it, and its wider distribution has resulted.

Perhaps one could hardly wish for anything better than its low price and consequent wider distribution—except only that Christians could be persuaded to carefully and prayerfully read its presentations. Altogether I am well satisfied with the Thanksgiving number, and for the above given reasons am the more encouraged in the work of colporteuring.

The chart on the inside cover page I find a great aid in explaining in a few words God's gracious plans. As I have had more success with this number than any other, perhaps you would like to know in what way the chart and its explanation help to bring people quickly face to face with the Truth as it immediately concerns all of us. My first words are—"We are calling on the Christian people in this district in connection with a work we are showing

on the Word of God. The Bible tells us that we are all under Sin and Death—every one of us; we can see that every day. But the Bible also tells us that God has arranged a most wonderful plan for deliver*ance from sin and death; and that includes you and* me and all our beloved dead." Having said that much, I have several times been impressed with the softening influence of these introductory words. I well remember a young wife coming to the door. My first few words (down to "Word of God" above) sent her flying back. In a minute or so her husband—coming with great firmness of step and a fine determination in his set face—met me with a curt "Yes?" At the outset it all looked hopeless; but I saw the changes coming in his face and demeanour as I proceeded with the above words, showed him the chart, explained it briefly, and alluded to the contents of the various chapters. I then asked him if he did not think all this was really good tidings. He admitted it was. Well, I said, you may be the happy proprietor of the little book for 1/-. And a moment later he was.

Others again not so ready to become "proprietors" will talk plentifully on these subjects. I am never in a hurry to leave these, as at least words of truth can be got in and sometimes in the end a sale is effected. We all know that there is an immediate prejudice against any stranger coming to the door with a book, but the lovely words we have to tell them often break it down, and I have personally had, *in the end, expressions of thankfulness for my* visit. There is no lack of sufficient encouragement in this work, and even though it may so happen that we have occasional hard days, the knowledge that something has been attempted, something done, brings joy and peace to the laborer.

But later I met another sort. I was associated with him many years ago in Sunday School work. We were then quite young men, and both of us poor; but I held him in high esteem on account of his spirituality of life. Learning of his whereabouts I called on him one evening to see what measure of progress he had made in the intervening thirty years. It required but a few moments to see that his former spirituality had gone to shreds, and a gross materialism had consumed him. Wealth had come his way in these years and, as I have often observed, many who would have the Lord aid them when they are poor find they do not need Him when they are rich. It was here I felt that I could not mention spiritual things—so gross was the environment; so I composed myself as well as possible and longed for the conventional hour to pass when I might retire.

Throwing Ourselves Out

That is what seems to have been done. Physically this is not possible: someone else has to do that to us. But in spiritual matters we can by our own foolishness or lack of attention to the Lord's commands to labour in the Truth we are privileged to know get to the same place as though someone did "throw us out." "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand"; but we can pluck ourselves out; and the process may be very insidious. (John 10: 29.) Paul exhorted Timothy to "stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1: 6), and although such miraculous gifts have ceased to be given we have the more excellent gift of much light concerning which the apostle's words may well apply to us. *Light is our heritage, and it is with this that we are* to "trade" as faithful servants, and demonstrate our worthiness of the good thing God has given. Otherwise it does seem to me from what I have been able to observe, a feeling of satisfaction with less service than is possible and taking an easier view of our responsibilities are but steps in becoming unworthy of the Light given and possibly and ultimately "throwing ourselves out."

These cogitations are the outcome of a visit to a neighbouring city, which visit I enjoyed very much. The climatic warmth was most congenial; so also was the company of the friends of the Truth with whom I had the pleasure of associating. But in filling in my time by calling on the householders and speaking to them of the "Good News" it was the best of all joy to find some who were really glad to hear of it *and to receive the Thanksgiving number for read*ing. How better may these "poor and starving" people be found? It is a wonderful commission the Lord left us, in which He is able to uphold us, and faithfulness will eventually bring us the "wages" He promised. How grand to be able to say if not now perhaps on the other side of the vail—"Ye are my joy and crown," because I was instrumental in bringing you to a knowledge of the truth!

———, *Australia.*

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from August issue)

AS A PRONOUNCEMENT of New Covenant truth the Sermon on the Mount requires the careful study of all who desire to be in harmony with God through Jesus Christ, who is the Prophet and Mediator of that New Covenant. Our Lord Jesus came to give the Jews a better covenant than the one they had received at Sinai. And Gentiles are invited to enjoy the benefits also, for in Christ the middle wall of partition was broken down, and now both Jew and Gentile are acceptable through Jesus, because His blood sprinkled on the Mercy Seat speaks reconciliation and peace with God. When therefore the Lord places before us in this Sermon of sermons a set of rules for daily living, let us give close attention and make every effort to obey His commands. In Matthew 5 the record continues—

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also.

In our consideration of verses 38 and 39, we saw that, put into practice, the principle of cheerful bearing of wrongs such as those mentioned in the

law for which exact retribution could be demanded tends to the development of a patient disposition and the elimination of vengeful and grasping traits of character, so natural to the fallen man. Verses 40, 41 show how a disposition pleasing to God may be cultivated in connection with two other circumstances that may arise in one's life.

For one man to sue another at the law was recognized as a proper procedure both under the Jewish law and under the Roman law. It was a method of redressing wrongs, and is to this day among all nations, civilized and savage. The lesson of verses 38, 39 was to avoid the contentious and litigious spirit. And the question may well arise—I might avoid suing some one who injured me, but what if some one sues me?

The Lord's answer is, In that case let the law take its course, and whatever the finding is accept it. Do not feel that you must carry it to the highest courts, even though you may regard the verdict as unjust. Verse 40 assumes that the "coat" is taken by due process of law, and therefore must be handed over. But it may be handed over in either of two ways—in a grudging, hateful, revengeful spirit, or in a good-natured, generous spirit. Which shall it be? The Lord's words, "let him have thy cloke also," indicate that it should be in a generous spirit. The verdict may be unjust, but the loss of a coat or a cloak, or even of both, is not such a terrible thing. Go and earn the price of another, and you will ere long forget the injustice done.

Of course, if you were in the wrong the creditor should have no need to sue you, and take either your coat or your cloak. You could give every indication of effort to pay the debt, and failing to secure more time in which to pay it, you could go into liquidation and meet your indebtedness out of the whole of your assets.

But the Lord seems to be referring to one of His disciples being unjustly deprived, and hence in danger of yielding to hateful, spiteful thoughts and of being tempted to revengeful actions. Probably no good would result from more litigation, only waste of time and energy and the creation of still more bitterness.

The clothing worn in our Lord's day was much the same as that of present-day Arabs. There was a close-fitting undergarment reaching from neck to knee, and sometimes longer, with or without sleeves, and resembling what is now called a "shirt." Over it was worn a tunic, and sometimes over that another tunic, and an outer mantle or wrap. One deprived of the tunic was called "naked," though he still had on the close-fitting inner shirt, sometimes called a coat. (Mark 14: 51, 52; compare 2 Corinthians 11: 27.) The wealth of the time consisted partly of clothing stored away, to be brought out on special occasions for use of the guests, as for example at a feast. (Matthew 22: 11, 12.) Concerning this riches our Lord said the moth doth corrupt. (Matthew 6: 17, 20.) In view of this, lay up treasure in heaven, and dispense with a multitude of garments to be seen of men.

Luke 6: 29 reads—"and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also." Here "coat" refers to an outer tunic and not to the body garment, while "cloke" refers to the extra wrap worn over the tunic when required.

One may have only a small supply of clothing, and still be willing to let the cloke follow the coat into the hands of the one who takes advantage of the law to oppress the Lord's disciples; yet it is a fact that the poor are less likely to be sued than the wealthy, and less likely therefore to be put to the test of our Lord's command.

A Willingness to Help Others

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

The compulsion here alluded to is that practised by legal right. To the rendering—"And if a man press thee to go one mile with him, go two," the Emphatic Diaglott appends the following note—

"An allusion to the *Angari*, or couriers of the Persians, who had authority to impress into their service men, horses and ships, or anything which came in their way, and which might serve to accelerate their journey. From the Persians this custom passed to the Romans, and it is still retained in the East. The Roman *milion*, or mile, measured a thousand paces."

A Christian living where this custom prevails is directed by our Lord to be willing to oblige by rendering any assistance required; and not only so but to be willing to do more than asked to do if thereby a kindness can be done.

In English speaking countries there is no legal compulsion to render service in the carriage of mails, except in time of war. In country districts this work is let by contract, and the contractor is held responsible for the prompt and safe conveyance of mail matter. But in case of accident to saddlehorse, mailcart, or motorvan, any farmer resident or passing driver appealed to for assistance is expected to render whatever service he can as a matter of course. Whether the ancients were compensated for services rendered we cannot say, but present day usage is for the government to compensate where any considerable expense or loss of time is involved. However, the lesson the Lord gives us is not to be too grasping. Do voluntarily and freely even more than you are asked to do when those in difficulty call on you for aid.

Generosity to the Poor

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

Here is another rule by which a kind and unselfish disposition may be substituted for the selfish, close-fisted, unsympathetic nature which the apostle Paul calls "the flesh," because characteristic of unrepentant humanity in general. (Romans 8: 7, 8.) It was a rule eminently in order for the Jews, whom the Lord addressed, because of the proneness to turn a deaf ear to the poor, and if they did lend to demand usury, i.e. an excessively high rate of interest. The law contained many ordinances forbidding usury; yet the prophets were frequently obliged to chide the Israelites for their indulgence in that sin. "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to

pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: For that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I am gracious."

This was the first rule, as recorded in Exodus 22: 25-27. And a queer rule too, some one might hastily say, that would permit a poor man's only garment to be taken as a pledge. But notice the law was not for the purpose of making compulsory the taking of a pledge. The Jew was at liberty to lend without taking a pledge. But *if he did* take raiment in pledge he must restore it before nightfall. And this could often be done, for labourers were paid daily. But if by any chance the borrower could not redeem the pledge that day, the lender must nevertheless grant him the use of the garment for the night. This was a humane regulation in great contrast to the natural instincts of creditors generally, who as a rule care little for the discomforts of their debtors, being concerned only with the regularity or payments of interest and ultimate payment of principal. But the Lord had a care over the poor among the nation He had chosen for His own people, and in this law He not only provided for the comfort of the poor debtor, but also threatened reprisals on the heartless money-lender.

The next rules were equally considerate for the poor, and designed to encourage mercy in the lender. Neither usury (interest) nor increase might be demanded for money or victuals given the absolutely needy (Leviticus 25: 35-38), but there is nothing against receiving repayment of the loan when better circumstances make a return possible. Another rule permitted lending at interest to the foreigner, but not to "thy brother"; i.e., an Israelite. (Deuteronomy 23: 19, 20.) A blessing is pronounced on "He that putteth not out his money to usury." (Psalm 15: 5.) Yet on the return to their own land from the Babylonian captivity, after their many chastisements for their sins, the Jews were still covetous and exacted usury of their brethren.—Nehemiah 5: 7, 10.

If centuries under the commandments of the law could not cure the Jew of covetousness, acquisitiveness, usuriousness, how can verse 42 heal him? The cure is effected by imbibing the New Covenant spirit, of which Jesus spoke later on in His discourse (7: 11) —". . . how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" and more specifically recorded in Luke 11: 13—"give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The Holy Spirit of God shed abroad in the heart will accomplish what the law could not do. And verse 42 is an expression of the Spirit of God—a spirit of liberality and kindliness.

Who are They that Ask?

"Give to him that asketh thee"—not necessarily anyone and everyone for any cause whatsoever, but the poor (relations, friends, neighbours, even strangers brought to our notice) who are in genuine distress and in need of sustenance. Give employment where possible to the out-of-work who are glad to accept it and willing to apply for it either personally or through a recognised bureau.

It will be noticed that our Lord refers to personal giving—"him that asketh thee."

Not Walking Disorderly, but Honestly

In the early church some who received the gospel evidently thought they need not work for their living. If such asked for help, the apostle Paul teaches it should not be given; for they were in a different class from those to whom the Lord referred who through illness or other adverse circumstances were out of work or unable to work, and in need of help to tide them over a trying time. Those who will not work are said to be walking "disorderly," and such should be admonished to mend their ways. (2 Thessalonians 3: 6-11.) We have heard of persons even in our own time who instead of looking for work have sat at home and prayed to the Lord to send them food. Now no doubt it is right to pray when in distress, for in the Lord's prayer He included the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread." But it is not right to presume upon the Lord and expect Him to send what we are able to obtain by our own daily exertions. Our daily bread comes none the less from Him when we have earned it, for He gives the health and strength and often opens up avenues of employment in marvellous ways.

The above quotation shows that it is "disorderly" not to work to earn one's bread if able to do so. Another command of the apostle's along similar lines is found in 1 Thessalonians 4: 11, 12—

> "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

The Scripture teaching therefore is that all who can work should work to supply their own needs, and so not require help from others. Again we read in Ephesians 4: 28—"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The hand was the instrument to steal, to take from others; now let that same hand be exercised in giving to others, and in order to do this work and earn that ability.

Now these commands of the apostle are as obligatory on us as they were on the early Church, and they inculcate a desire for independence, a determination to help oneself and avoid asking assistance except where urgently required. And here we see also that when one has earned one should take pleasure in giving to those in need; thus interpreting for us our Lord's words—"give to him that asketh" —as meaning give to him that is in real need and asks for that reason. The person who asks for help when not required is dishonest, as is also the one who receives aid for supposed needs and squanders what is given on extravagances. One of the most deplorable aspects of modern life is the large number of persons earning good wages who spend all without providing for the "rainy day," and then when out of employment or ill expect their mates who have denied themselves and saved to come forward and help them out of their financial difficulties. Those who study the Scriptures and model their lives on apostolic advice are usually thrifty and willing

to take lessons even from the ant.—Proverbs 6: 6-11; 30: 25.

The Needy in the Church

That the early Church had been instructed to care for the needy among themselves is indicated by such passages as 1 Timothy 5: 4-16. In those days there were no widows' or old age pensions, no insurance companies whereby an income after the death of the husband could be assured to the widow. Nor were there the same opportunities for an elderly widow to earn a living. It was the duty of relatives to support her; but if there were none to do this, the Church gave relief. From the apostle's language this relief was not given until an examination had been made by the elders of the Church into her affairs and the relatives approached. Too often children and other relations shirk such responsibilities and are glad if some church organization will relieve them of their duty by supporting their relative. Children and other relatives should not be thus excused of their responsibility without being visited and apprised of their duty. As to the believers who have poor widows, the apostle says—"let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." Thus the Church's duty as a church to relieve poor widows of the congregation of believers is clearly defined, while verses 9 to 11 confine the relief to widows over 60, the understanding being that younger widows should not be kept in idleness, but should work for their living.

Famine Conditions

These Scriptures relate to such cases of need as might arise among widows and invalids in the congregation at any time. For the method of conducting relief on a larger scale we have the example of the apostle Paul when directing the relief of the famine sufferers at Jerusalem. The elders of the church at Jerusalem had the matter in hand, and were glad to receive assistance from brethren elsewhere, the first contributions being sent from Antioch by the hand of Barnabas and Saul, who had been serving the Church as apostles and elders for a full year and whose trustworthiness was established.—Acts 11: 27-30; 12: 25.

Again, some years after the famine Paul wrote to the brethren at Rome—"But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem." (Romans 15: 25-28.) His careful instructions regarding the manner in which this fund was to be gathered show that systematic giving was to be practised by the brethren.—1 Corinthians 16: 1-4.

Treatment of the Borrower

Having seen that our Lord's command—"Give to him that asketh thee"—refers to relieving distress among those suffering for the necessities of life who appeal to us for assistance, we shall now see that a similar class is referred to in the next clause of Matthew 5: 42—"and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." In considering how this commandment is applicable in our daily lives, as a rule of life under the New Covenant, we still do well to remember that the Lord addressed Jews who were familiar with the rules under the law covenant, or who should have been familiar with them through faithfully studying the Scriptures.

The Seventh Year Release

Definite regulations as between lender and borrower are found in Deuteronomy 15: 1-11, and are distinct from those which relate to feeding the hungry and clothing the needy. A borrower, in the true meaning of the term, is one who asks a loan of money in the full expectation of repaying the loan. If he has no intention of repaying he is not, strictly speaking, a borrower, but a trickster securing or attempting to secure money on false pretences. The object of these regulations is stated in verse 4, marginal reading—"To the end that there be no poor among you." The promised land was to be a land of plenty for all, and it was not the will of God that a creditor class should arise, holding a portion of their brethren in perpetual debt, as is done to this day in many lands.

The Jews were to realize that the land was the Lord's, and that they were tenants of His, and that each tribe had boundaries to its inheritance beyond which it should not go. The Sabbath and Jubilee system provided for the return every fiftieth year of inheritances mortgaged for debt, thus preventing large aggregations of land in the hands of a few and the creation of a class of homeless wanderers. (See also Isaiah 5: 8; Micah 2: 1, 2.) In Leviticus 25: 8-55 will be found the rules concerning the purchase and sale of properties, and the redemption of mortgaged houses and land in relation to the Jubilee. All of this was protective legislation.

The release every seven years mentioned in Deuteronomy 15 was part of the Sabbath and Jubilee system; seven of these "releases" occurring in each Jubilee period of 49 years, as stated in Leviticus 25: 1-8. This seventh year, or Sabbath of rest for the land, when the fields were not to be sown, and that which grew of itself should remain ungathered, provided free food for whoever required it. Deuteronomy 14: 28, 29 and 26: 12-15 show how at the end of every three years the accumulation of tithes should be placed at the disposal of the Levite, the widow, the fatherless, and the stranger that they might eat and be satisfied. All these and other provisions for free relief of the poor and needy were distinct from the regulations pertaining to borrowers contained in chapter 15. As said before, a borrower is one who asks for a loan of money with the promise and full intention of repaying it.

It was provided that such loans remaining unpaid at the end of the seventh year would be released; i.e., the debtor would be legally freed from the obligation to repay. The lender would be fully aware of this contingency and would make the loan in full view of it, no doubt with some allowance for the known character of the applicant. Such loans might be for the purchase of necessities, but more likely would be for developmental purposes, since the majority of Jews were agriculturists, and the poorer would be handicapped by lack of capital.

(To be continued)

Variorum Bible Price List

THE Authorized Version with footnotes on each page exhibiting (1) the Various Renderings of many other Versions, including the Revised Version, where they differ substantially from the Authorized Version, and (2) the Various Readings of the most ancient manuscripts of both Old and New Testaments. This information is always interesting, and often very valuable and important, to the diligent Bible reader. The Editor of "The New Covenant Advocate" has had a Variorum Bible as his constant companion for many years, and would not wish to be deprived of it.

Bound with *Variorum Aids to Bible Study*, and 172 Illustrations, with Autotypes of Antiquities and of important Biblical Sites and Cities, Dictionary, Concordance, Maps, etc.

This shows the Emerald Type used in Variorum Bibles, also the central column references and Various Renderings and Readings in footnotes.

it, ᵝrepented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 ¶ Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, ᶜwhich planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and ᵈwent into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, ᵉthat they might receive [10]the fruits of it.

ᵖ Lk. 14. 16. Rev. 19. 9.
ᶜ ch. 3. 1. &c.
ᵉ Lk. 3. 12.
ᵈ Pro. 9. 2.
ᶜ Ps. 80. 9. Cant. 8. 11. Is. 5. 1. Jer. 2. 21. Mk. 12. 1. Lk. 20. 9.
ᵈ ch. 25. 14.
ᵉ Cant. 8. 11.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: ᵇmy oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the [1]marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to [2]his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* [3]spitefully, and slew *them*.

VAR. REND.—[9] *V. 19. i.e. immediately (soon in v. 20 is the same word)*.——[10] *V. 34.* his fruits, R.——[11] *V. 41.* miserable.——[12] *V. 44.* scatter him as dust, R.——CHAP. 22. [1] *Vs. 3, 4, 9.* marriage feast.——[2] *V. 5.* his own.——[3] *V. 6. Rather,* shamefully.

VAR. READ.—*V. 29. β Note that the affirmative answer is placed first* (he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I go, sir, and went not) *by* B, *Memph., Mel. We. WH.; the common order is retained by* ℵ C D L Z, *Cur. Pesh. OL. Vulg., Orig. Eus., La. Tr. Tw.* R.——*V. 31. β So* ℵ C L Δ, *Cur. Pesh., Al. Tr.*; The latter, B, *La. Tr. We. WH. (Tr. however takes this reading to mean* he who afterwards repented); The last, D, *OL. (most MSS.) Vulg., Mel.*——*V. 32. β So* ℵ C L, *Tr.*; did not even repent. B, *OL. Vulg. Cur. Pesh. Memph., La. Tr. Mel. We. WH.* R.——*V. 38. β* take, ℵ B D L, *Edd.* R.——*V. 44. β So* ℵ B C Z, *Vulg. Cur. Pesh. Memph., Al. La.*[1] *Tr.*[1] *Mel. We. WH.*[1]; *omit,* D, *OL. (leading MSS.) Orig. Eus., La.*[2] *Tr. WH.*[2] R *marg. Cf.* Luke 20. 18.

Emerald Type Variorum Bibles with Aids

7⅞ x 5¼ x 1½ inches

		s.	d.	
ET2371	French Morocco, *Yapp flexible binding*, round corners, red under gold edges	20	0	$5.
ET1773	Persian Morocco, Yapp, leather lined, etc., as above	29	0	7.25

Postage extra on the above 2, 1/- (25 cents) each.

Emerald Type Variorum Bibles with Aids

Printed upon "Royal" India Paper.

7⅞ x 5⅝ x 1¼ inches

		s.	d.	
ET1901x	Egyptian Seal, Yapp, leather lined, etc.	29	0	$7.25
ET1903x	Best Morocco, Yapp, calf lined, silk sewn, etc.	55	6	13.75

Postage extra on the above 2, 8d. (16 cents) each.

Emerald Type Variorum Reference Bible

Without Aids

7⅞ x 5⅝ x 1 inches

		s.	d.	
ER2371	French Morocco, *Yapp, flexible binding*, etc	16	6	$4.15

Postage extra, 8d. (16 cents).

Emerald Type Variorum Reference Bibles

Without Aids

Printed upon "Royal" India Paper

7⅞ x 5⅝ x ⅞ inches

		s.	d.	
ER2371x	Bound as above	19	0	$4.75
ER1773x	Persian Morocco, Yapp, leather lined, etc.	31	6	$7.90

Postage extra on the above 2, 6d. (12 cents) each.

ER1773xi The same interleaved with hand made fine ruled writing paper for notes. This style is bound to order as required, and price will be quoted on request.

---

[1] Tim. 2. 6. Tit. 2. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19.
ᵃ ch. 26. 28. Rom. 5. 15, 19. Heb. 9. 28.
ᵃ Mark 10. 46. Luke 18. 35.
ᵇch. 9. 27.

30 ¶ And, behold, ᵇtwo blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, [9]because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

ing, [4]ᵍ Hosanna to the son of David: ʰ Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; [4]Hosanna in the highest.

10 [4]And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus ʰthe prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 ¶ [4]ⁱ And Jesus went into the [5]temple β of God β, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the

ᵍ Ps. 118. 26.
ʰ Ps. 118. 26. ch. 23. 39.
ⁱ Mark 11. 15. Luke 19. 45. John 2. 13, 15.
ʰ ch. 2. 23. Luke 7. 16. John 6. 14. & 7. 40. & 9. 17.
ⁱ Mark 11. 11. Luke 19. 45. John 2. 15.

VAR. REND.—[5] *V. 20.* sons.——[6] *V. 23. So Me. De W. Da., and similarly* (it is for them) R; save to them, *Wo. Mel.*——[7] *V. 24. Lit.* abou.——[8] *V. 26. i.e. desires to be.*——[9] *V. 31.* that.

VAR. REND.—CHAP. 21. [1] *V. 4.* is come to pass *Li.* R.——[2] *More strictly,* through.——[3] *V. 8.* the most part of the multitude, *Al. D. W.* R; the exceeding great multitude, *Be.*——[4] *V. 9. i.e.* O save now.——

This shows the Bourgeois Type used in Variorum Bibles, also the marginal references and Various Renderings and Readings in footnotes.

Bourgeois Type Variorum Bibles with Aids

Printed upon "Royal" India Paper.

9¼ x 6½ x 1¾ inches

		s.	d.	
BT1773x	Persian Morocco, Yapp, leather lined, etc.	54	0	$16.
BT1903x	Best Morocco, Yapp, calf lined, etc.	82	6	20.60

Postage extra on the above 2, 1/3 (30 cents) each.

Bourgeois Type Variorum Reference Bibles

Without Aids

Printed upon "Royal" India Paper.

9¼ x 6½ x 1¾ inches

		s.	d.	
BR1773x	Persian Morocco, Yapp, leather lined, etc.	46	6	$11.60
BR1903x	Morocco, Yapp, leather lined, silk sewn, etc.	66	6	$16.60

Postage extra on the above 2, 11d (22 cents) each.

BR1903xi The same interleaved with hand made fine ruled writing paper for notes. This style is bound to order as required, and price will be quoted on request

Address all orders to—

New Covenant Fellowship

294 Little Collins st., Melbourne C1, Australia
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England
676 Fulton st., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa

Revision of N.C.A. Subscription List

TWO MONTHS ago there appeared in this column a notice to inform all N.C.A. Readers that the List of Subscribers was about to be revised, as required by the Postal Department, and exhorting all whose subscriptions were in arrears to arrange for retention of their names on the List and continuance of N.C.A. monthly visits in one of the following ways—

1. Cash payment of subscription;
2. Request for continuance, with promise to pay later;
3. Request for continuance free on special terms accorded those unable to pay.

It is a pleasure to say that the publication of this notice served as a good and efficient reminder to some from whom nothing had been heard for a while.

But there are still some to whom the N.C.A. has been sent beyond the time arranged for, who have not communicated with us in any of the above three ways.

To such we now are obliged to intimate that the present issue is the last to be sent them, unless they shall yet indicate a desire to have their names reinstated in the List of N.C.A. Readers.

TO ALL we would intimate that those whose names are on the List at the end of this year (1929)—including reinstatements, also new names that may come in between now and then—will be in line for something good that is expected to be ready about New Year. We will not now say what it is to be, but we feel satisfied it will make you all glad. Therefore, let all delinquents hasten to get their names reinstated, and let as many new subscribers as possible be obtained. Those outside Australasia will need to act *promptly* in order to qualify before New Year.

There will be no further announcement about this until the time comes.

Library Supply Fund

15, £1; 16, £3:11:3; 17, £10; 18, £5:10:0; 19, £5:6:6; 20, £1; 21, £3:13:5; 22, £1; 23, £5; 24, £8; 25, £3; 26, £9; total for 2 months, £56:1:2 ($272.44); previously reported, £134:10:8 ($653.81); total for 8 months, £190:11:10 ($926.25); the amount received in the last 2 months enabling us to send 448 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries leaving 2615 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

63, £4:16:0; 64, £6:5:0; 65, 7/6; 66, £1; 67, £1; 68, £1; received at Brooklyn, 280, 75 cents (3/1); total for 2 months, £14:11:7 ($70.85); previously reported, £151:7:5 ($735.65); total for 8 months, £165:19:0 ($806.50). As there was an adverse balance at the end of last year, the donations so far received will only cover that and leave £25 for this year's work thus far.

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!

77, £1; 78, 2/-; 79, 7/3; 80, £1; 81, 2/-; 82, £2:10:0; 83, £4; 84, 2/-; 85, £1; 86, 2/-; 87, £1; 88, 2/-; 89, £2; 90, 2/-; 91, £1; 92, £2:10:0; 93, £1; 94, 12/-; received at Brooklyn, 385, $26.25; 386, $2.50; 387, $2.75; total at Brooklyn, $31.50 (£6:9:7); total for 2 months, £25:0:10 ($121.70); previously reported, £116:3:2 ($564.53); total for 8 months, £141:4:0 ($686.23). On account of last year's deficit only £57 of this amount is available for this year's work. Nearly £300 ($1500) more will be required for this fund by December 15 to avoid another deficit.

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other countries 5/-; $1.25
By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET,
MELBOURNE, C.1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage, extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d.; elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your liking and postpaid Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal, and one copy of each of the above books in the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 28/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

N.B.—The above books will be loaned free (one at a time) to any interested person unable to purchase.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C. 1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, OCTOBER 1, 1929 No. 7

This Treasure in Earthen Vessels

THE VAIL which Moses put over his face when he came down from Sinai after communing with God is used by the apostle Paul as a symbol or figure of the darkness which covered the minds of the Jews when reading the law. They could not see the brightness; they could not realize that God might have something better than the law. Yet if any Jew would attentively "turn to the Lord"; that is, if any Jew would consider the claims of Jesus as their Messiah, the vail of darkness would be taken away, and they would see that the great glory, "the glory that excelleth," is found in the New Covenant, which our Lord Jesus made operative when the law covenant was nailed to the cross. The "ministration of the Spirit" is vested in Christ Jesus, as the ministration of the law had been vested in Moses. These thoughts are set forth in the third chapter of Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians.

He then (chapter 4) makes a more comprehensive statement, showing that darkness of mind was not limited to the Jews. He shows also who is responsible for this general state of darkness. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." Satan is the "god" or "mighty one" referred to, and the reason is given why he was interested in blinding their minds—"*lest* the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4: 4.) Ignorance, prejudice, and superstition are to Satan's advantage, his kingdom being over the minds of men, as we read in Ephesians 2: 2—"the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." This rulership or kingdom over the minds of men is also referred to in Colossians 1: 13, "the power of darkness" being contrasted with the kingdom of God's dear Son. Satan's every effort is to prevent the light penetrating the thick darkness of men's minds.

God causes the Light to Penetrate

But this effort of Satan's is bound to end in failure. It has, in fact, failed in respect to many. Paul was one, as he says in verses 1 and 2. He had received mercy under the New Covenant terms of forgiveness of sins through faith in the precious blood of Christ, and had renounced the hidden things of darkness. Moreover, he had become a servant of Christ, and of the Corinthians and others, for Jesus' sake. Satan did not succeed in keeping Paul in the dark, though he built a great wall of prejudice around him. And why? Because God penetrated that thick, dense wall; as he says—

"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 Corinthians 4: 6.

Jesus came to reveal the Father. In His face, as it were, we see the glory of God. (Compare 2 Corinthians 3: 18.) We see God's glory in Jesus' face because God sent Him forth as the sacrifice for sin, and on His resurrection God made Him our Mediator and Intercessor. All God's work is done through Christ. So when we read that "God hath shined in our hearts," we understand—through Jesus Christ His Son.

Now, this light having shone into our hearts, and we having accepted and rejoiced in the knowledge it gives us, something else follows—"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." (2 Corinthians 4: 7.) Illuminating though the light has been, the vessels are still earthen; we still have the same human bodies as before enlightenment, only now, instead of being ruled by the "god of this world," Satan, we have the Lord as our King, and His truth as the light in our hearts.

A New Creature

But this is not all. The light entering our hearts, and giving "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," does not remain as mere knowledge or information concerning God and His purposes. Such knowledge may fade out and disappear, as our Lord showed in the parable of the seed sower. (Matthew 13: 18-22.) But the knowledge of God *properly accepted* becomes in the believer a vital force. The apostle Peter says that the Word of God is the vitalizing power, and that it begins a new life, so

that the true Christian believers are spoken of as being "born again," as "newborn babes," and as desiring the "sincere milk of the word" for development and growth. (1 Peter 1: 23; 2: 1, 2.) And James (1: 18) states—"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth."

Evidently the apostle Paul had this same thought of the recreative effect of the entrance of the light into the heart; for while in 2 Corinthians 4: 7 "this treasure" is "the light of the knowledge" mentioned in verse 6, he develops the thought that a new life is begun—a life which in verse 16 he calls "the inward man," and contrasts with it "the outward man." The "outward man" is the "earthen vessel" spoken of in verse 7, and refers to our existence as human beings, of which our human body is the outward and visible manifestation. But the power of the truth in us is such that new desires, new aspirations, new standards of living are formed. (Compare Galatians 4: 19.) The holy life of Jesus becomes our ideal, and we seek to be like Him, as Paul says in verses 10, 11—"that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (vs. 10), "in our mortal flesh" (vs. 11).

But we must not make the mistake of supposing that each Christian believer is now two distinct persons. That is not the case. But each of us, while still having our fleshly body, now has a new mind to control that body, the old mind being reckoned dead. (Romans 6: 11-19.) And so he goes on in 2 Corinthians 5 to speak of our human body as a "tabernacle" or "tent" in which the new mind dwells, having taken it over from the old mind reckoned dead. The new mind or "inward man" is at variance with the imperfections of the body or "outward man," hence groans with regret when these imperfections manifest themselves. The trials and tribulations, the sufferings he endured while preaching the gospel, also caused the apostle to "groan, being burdened."

The Natural Man and the Spiritual

In 1 Corinthians 2: 14 the term "natural man" is used of one who is ignorant of the wisdom of God, hence lives his life with such natural discretion as may have come down to him through his ancestors from our first parents. Contrasted with the "natural man" is the one who has become a believer in Jesus and has received the Holy Spirit, and whom the apostle calls "he that is spiritual." And this again he defines for us by saying "we have the mind of Christ." Having been given the Holy Spirit when first accepting Christ, the believer is favoured with the mind or capacity to understand spiritual things.

Spiritually Minded versus Carnally Minded

In Romans 8: 4-14 a contrast is drawn between the "carnal" or fleshly mind and the spiritual mind, the latter corresponding to the "new creature" of 2 Corinthians 5: 17. This confirms the teaching in 2 Corinthians 4 that the "new creature" is not a whole being with a body of its own, but a new mind which for the time makes use of the body formerly in subjection to the old mind which was blinded by the god of this world.

Carnal is the English rendering of a Greek word which means "pertaining to the flesh." Because all mankind are sinful, the word carnal or fleshly has come to mean sinful. The carnal or fleshly mind is the mind untouched by the grace of God and going on in its own way to gratify its own desires, whether those desires be good or bad in themselves. The spiritual mind, on the other hand, is a mind that has resulted from the entrance of the light and the acceptance of Christ. Of those who have truly devoted themselves to the Lord it may be said (Romans 8: 9, 11)—"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. . . . But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

This passage makes it clear that "in the flesh" and "in the Spirit" are two opposing states of mind, each of which desires to control the body, without which neither can manifest itself. It is our duty then, as Christians, to see that our bodies be used only in accordance with the will of God as we find it expressed in His Word and revealed by His Holy Spirit. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body."—1 Corinthians 6: 20. The words "and in your spirit, which are God's" are not found in the three most ancient Greek manuscripts, and are omitted from the Revised and other modern versions.

In an Earthen Vessel

Treasures such as jewels are usually kept in a gold or silver casket lined with rich satin or velvet. A diamond necklace would not be kept in a common earthenware jar. Fine presents are put up in fine wrappings. Our Lord Jesus, perfect in every sense of the word, was endowed with a perfect body to express adequately and faithfully the workings of His perfect mind. With the members of the fallen race the imperfect body expresses the workings of the imperfect fleshly mind; and when the new spiritual mind is given, the imperfect body is as an earthen jar—unsuited to the proper housing of the "treasure."

A jewel is inert, whether in a golden casket or a jar of clay. Not so the "treasure," the new mind in the "earthen vessel." As said before, the new mind is spoken of as a "new creature," as though it were a whole person, whereas it has only the imperfect and weak body of the Christian for its instrument. Hence the difficulties the most sincere and faithful brethren experience when striving to live the new life, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."—Ephesians 4: 24.

Brain in Relation to Mind

When the apostle speaks of the body as the dwelling place of the new mind, "body" includes the whole of the person, head and brain as well as shoulders and feet. Although we give different names to different parts of our body—head, hands, feet, etc., it is all one organism, constituting one fleshly human being. Normally the body functions or works as a unit, each organ and member perform-

ing its part for the good of the whole. Because the ancient philosophers did not understand the function of the brain, they imagined that thought was the product of another intelligence either resident as a separate entity in the person or communicating from outside sources, such as demons or gods. From these philosophers, rather than from the Word of God, Christianity adopted the theory of the soul as the real person, inhabiting and using the body, which they often speak of as the "prison of the soul." Whereas we know from Scripture that the entire person is the soul or being, as may be seen by its account of the creation of man and all subsequent references to soul, life, etc.

Science in striving to discover to what extent the brain is responsible for thought has found that a blow on the head, for instance, injuring particular parts of the brain, alters the patient's capacity to think along certain lines. The shape and size of the skull and the measures of development over the eyes, the top of the forehead, the base of the brain, etc., have been found to indicate the degree of development of certain faculties and aptitudes. Some have ridiculed the idea that the brain could produce thought, and those who assert that it does have been called heretical. Without endorsing all that science may say about the brain as the organ of thought, we believe that the Scriptures uphold that view; in fact, taught it long before modern science was born. Psalm 146: 4 says of a person dying—"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Evidently the teaching here is that his thoughts perish because the brain has ceased to function by reason of the death of the cells which compose the brain substance. In some things modern science contradicts the Bible. But if a scientist makes observations and discoveries in harmony with the Bible it is cause for rejoicing. It is certainly interesting to find that no less an authority than Professor R. J. A. Berry, for many years dean of the faculty of medicine at Melbourne University, and recently retired, has come to conclusions concerning brain and mind in harmony with Scripture, supporting the teaching of the apostles on how the "treasure" in the "earthen vessel" can make use of the brain (as of other organs) of the human body, and yet not be a separate and distinct individual. In "Current History" (New York) Professor Berry writes—

> The human brain is the instrument of mind, and when fully developed it is nature's greatest masterpiece and one of the most intricate pieces of mechanism in the whole wide world. So intricate, indeed, is this wonderful bit of machinery that it is only within comparatively recent years that it has begun to yield the secrets of its structure and functions to the able minds of those scholars and scientists who have spent the best years of their lives in its study.

The Professor states that man has "somewhere about twenty or twenty-five senses," and "these numerous 'senses' divide themselves into two great groups—those which tell us of the state of our own bodies and those which put us into relationship with the external world around us."

> In the former group come the visceral senses, which inform us of the state of our internal organs. That is to say, these visceral senses keep us fully informed as to whether we are hungry, thirsty, suffering from pain, flatulence, indigestion or the like. Then from our organs of locomotion—bones, tendons, muscles and joints—come sensory impulses which inform us of the position of our limbs in space and as to our particular attitude at the moment.
>
> In the second group come those senses which place us in relationship with the external world around us—sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. Smell is of but little service to man [the Professor apparently ignores its value to the housewife and the cook, and as a warning of escaping gas and unhealthy miasms as well as in the appreciation of food, the enjoyment of flowers, etc.], but of touch there are several varieties and all are located in the skin, which is thus not only a great sense organ but also a very important one. Put into the hand of a blindfolded person some common object, such as a matchbox. He cannot see, smell, hear or taste this matchbox; yet, provided he has previously seen such an object, he will instantly recognise it by previous memories and that special sense of touch termed "stereognostic." Further experiments will reveal the fact that this same blindfolded person may be able to tell you whether he is being touched with one or two points and whether heat or cold is applied. . . .
>
> All these twenty-five senses of man are perpetually transmitting impulses centrally to the human brain, and this bombardment of the human brain goes on without cessation from birth to death and during sleep as well as during wakeful hours. Every electrician knows that if current is to be constantly generated there must be some sort of apparatus for its storage; myriads of smaller brain cells form this storage mechanism in the human being, and it is this storage of incoming impulses from all those sources provided by man's twenty-odd senses which collectively form the phenomena of mind. Mind, therefore, depends on two important factors: First, a sufficiency of storage cells in the human brain; and, second, a sufficiency of incoming impulses.
>
> Many human beings are born and grow up into manhood without a sufficiency of storage cells in the brain. The worst forms of these are interned in our mental asylums as small-headed idiots, imbeciles, congenital idiots and the like.
>
> But given a sufficiency of storage batteries in the human brain, they must surely be charged if they are to be effective; otherwise they remain empty and useless, and the mind is correspondingly impaired. In the technical jargon of the brain expert, the neurons, or brain cells, remain in their undeveloped "neuroblastic" condition and constitute so many "duds." Supposing it were possible to place a newborn human child in the middle of the nearest desert and leave him alone, untended, and remote from any human voice, a foolish king of the moron type once asked what language would it speak, and his equally foolish sycophants and courtiers were unable to tell him—none. And so with the deaf-mute. Having heard no spoken word, the appropriate brain cells do not become "charged," and the individual remains dumb, with a necessarily impaired intelligence and a corresponding lack of ideas.

What has come to be known as psychoanalysis the Professor regards as "false science." It has not "advanced in any way our knowledge of the structure, functions or diseases of the human brain," nor "diminished in any way the number of lunatics, potential or actual, in our midst." Freudianism he declares has done much harm by untrue assertions concerning the possible evils of self-control. Whether Professor Berry is a believer in the Bible or not, he has certainly taken his stand with the Bible in declaring that self-control is beneficial, and that man is provided with the necessary mental machinery for exercising self-control. Freudianism he regards as "but another example of the many devastating doctrines of mind which divert attention from the essential instrument itself—the brain." He goes on to say—

At the moment there is an almost universal ignorance of the construction of the human brain, but when its marvellous truths do become more widely known these false sciences of psycho-analysis, Freudianism and much of what passes for psychology and mental philosophy will suffer the same fate as did their many predecessors and will die the death they so richly deserve, for the very simple reason that they are not founded on the great truths of nature.

"Though our Outward Man Perish"

The apostle Paul had no illusions regarding the end of the "outward man," the body and brain which constitute us human beings. In his ardent zeal the apostle used up his energy day by day, besides which persecutions and privations told on his physical frame. So it is with all men, whether God's accepted children or not. As the years pass it is evident that sooner or later all follow their ancestors into the grave. Some go in infancy, some in youth, others in middle age; still others live to a ripe old age. Concerning persons of average longevity Professor Berry says—

Nature tells us that death does not normally overtake a human being suddenly and all at once. The reproductive cells die first. . . . Next go the minute cells of the brain in which are stored up all those incoming impulses from the many senses of man, and he commences to lose his memory, his reason, his logic, and, at times, even his speech. In short, he becomes a changed personality. Lastly, his bodily cells fail him and he dies, but it has been a lingering death. . . .

Nature's reply, therefore, to Osler's classical query as to "too old at forty" is that all depends on the nature and nurture of the individual's brain. Many a moron is a hopeless mental wreck, or, at least, a changed personality at forty years of age, and even before it, whereas those who have been well endowed by nature with a multiplicity of brain cells can carry on into an honorable old age. With a like expenditure, the man of small means will obviously become bankrupt before the millionaire, and the man of pronounced mental ability is a millionaire in brain cells and can stay the mental course long after the age of forty, or even the Psalmist's three score years and ten, though it is to be particularly noted that the latter is extremely rare. Neither psychoanalysis, Freudianism, nor any other "ism" can stay this mental deterioration, because it has a purely physical origin and cause, nor can they add one cubit to the patient's mental stature.

Notwithstanding their undoubted marvels of construction the cells of the human brain, which run into thousands of millions, all developed from one minute ovum, are but kittle cattle ["Kittle" is of Scottish origin and means hard to manage, skittish.—Editor N.C.A.] and not infrequently deceive us, particularly when we ill-treat them with alcohol, drugs, lack of oxygen, the viruses of disease, and many others.

Those singularly credulous folk who believe and assert, in defiance of all evidence, that man has but five senses will find it impossible to believe the truth, which is that we do not see and hear with the eye and the ear. These are but ingenious pieces of apparatus, like the camera and the microphone, which lead to the brain. We see and hear with the cells of the brain. In old age we become increasingly deaf, because the hearing cells of the brain are slowly dying, and we run, first to the doctor and then to the quack, and become steadily worse, because neither one nor the other can galvanize the dying cells into life. After all, there is a higher power than man, and His ways are inscrutable and unchallengeable.

As we hear and see with the cells of the brain, it is surely obvious that these same cells may at times, especially under aberrant conditions ["Aberrant" means wandering, abnormal.—Editor N.C.A.], become too active and we think we see sights and hear sounds which have no foundation or physical basis outside our own bodies and brains, and exactly here is the source of many a legend, . . . delusion and hallucination; but no person blind from birth will ever suffer from delusions of sight, nor will any congenital deaf mute ever exhibit hallucinations of sound. . .

That is to say, in a state of excitation, such as accompanies fevers or is caused by a rush of blood to the head, the overstimulated cells see and hear (or recall) sights and sounds, and not being under normal control of the will these mental excitations cause the patient to do and say peculiar things. On the other hand, other physical conditions cause unconsciousness, during which many of the brain cells are quiescent; also in sound sleep the brain is at rest except those portions concerned with the maintenance of the more mechanical functions of the body.

In old age there may be increasing lack of control over the functions of the body and the thoughts of the mind. Sometimes this lack of control is manifested by periods of great mental excitement, with delusions, and sometimes it is exhibited in exhaustion and paralysis. The latter condition, while deplored by relatives and friends, presents to them no particular difficulty. But the former condition is often felt to be a disgrace, particularly if the patient refers to subjects which in ordinary life are not topics of conversation, or when the kind attentions of relatives and friends are received in a different spirit than would at one time have been the case.

We are glad that so widely circulated a publication as "Current History" has published Professor Berry's presentations for the information of the general public, for there are many families where the mental weakness of loved ones has brought unkind reflections on the character of the afflicted one. Particularly is this the case if the afflicted has led an exemplary life and during the closing months or years seems to have grown irritable and stubborn. Professor Berry enables us all to see that these things have a purely physical basis, and are in no wise to be taken as revelations of the real person, or as discounting the mind and character of that person as they were manifested during health. As he says, "So far from being a disgrace, the study of the brain, a most delicate and complex organ, reveals the undoubted fact that some form of mental disorder is the ultimate fate of every person who lives long enough to outlive the life of his own brain cells." His conclusion is that "mind is the product of brain, and the better the brain the better the mind. Remove that brain, even in its present perhaps imperfect state, and the soul of man is as the dust of the fields."

Our Earthly House Dissolved

Thus the Professor comes, possibly without realizing it, to the Bible teaching that "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" adequately describes the state of death. From a physiological point of view he has come to the teaching of Genesis that the man himself is the soul—not some separate entity inhabiting the body and directing it but no real part of it. The mind which expresses the character of the person being due to activity of the brain cells, the progressive failure of these cells means death of the mind and ultimately of the entire person. Hence we have an endorsement of the

apostle's statement that the "outward man" perishes —the outward man being the individual himself, apart from the "inward man," which is something found only in those into whose hearts the light has shined, as stated by the apostle in 2 Corinthians 4: 6, 7, 16.

What Professor Berry has found corroborates also the apostle's statement that at death the human being is "dissolved." There is nothing to fly away and lead a separate existence elsewhere. The term dissolution is often heard in referring to the deceased, but in most cases the users of the word refer only to the body, and think an immortal, indestructible soul, spirit, or essence has escaped and must live somewhere in either happiness or misery. But the Scriptures countenance no such belief. The dissolution applies to the entire man. However, the reader must not hastily conclude that by this we mean that death ends all hope. Far from it. Death certainly ends the present existence. What the Scriptures promise is life in future by a *resurrection*, or standing up again.

Still referring to Christians who can be said to have as their new self an "inward man," or "new creature," begotten by the Word of truth, the apostle refers to these new creatures as "we," and calls our human bodies our earthly "tabernacle"—

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle [or tent] were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

"If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.

"For we that are in this tabernacle [or tent] do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." —2 Corinthians 5: 1-4.

A tent is a temporary structure, good in its way for a time, but not to be compared in stability and comfort with a house. So our human frame serves its purpose to carry us through the present life and to give shelter and the use of its powers to the new mind or "new creature." But in it we groan, and desire that more satisfactory existence which God has promised. This old "tent" is not to be taken to heaven when we die, nor will it be raised to encumber us in the future, as so many suppose. The Scriptures nowhere declare that the identical particles that composed our physical bodies in this life will be given us in the future. On the contrary, the apostle assures us "thou sowest not that body that shall be," and that the new body which will be associated with the new mind in the resurrection is "a building of God, eternal in the heavens"—not coming out of the earth. Our Lord Jesus at His resurrection was given a glorious spiritual body in the very image of the Father's "substance," which is not flesh, but spirit. (Hebrews 1: 3; 1 Timothy 6: 15, 16.) And the promise to the overcomers is that we shall be "like him." (1 John 3: 2.) God will give to each "a body as it hath pleased him" —such as He promised and arranged for. Hence we need feel no regrets when our earthly "tent" is "dissolved." Its complete return to dust is the only reasonable thing to expect, since it will not be required.—1 Corinthians 15: 35-38, 49, 50.

That "house from heaven" will be given at the Lord's return, as He promised when He left His disciples—"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.) The apostle Paul expected to have on decease a period described as an "unclothed" condition, here using the figure of "clothing" as he had previously used the figures of "tent" and "house." The human body or "clothing" is laid aside at death, and there is a period of waiting until the Lord is ready to give the new "clothing" or "house from heaven."—2 Timothy 4: 6-8.

But toward the end of the age the Lord's people do not need to "sleep" thus in the unclothed state of dissolution waiting for the "house" or covering from heaven. According to 1 Corinthians 15: 51-53 and 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-17, when the time of resurrection comes the dead in Christ shall rise first, to receive their glorious house from heaven; and then we which are alive and remain need not at death continue in the state of "sleep," but are changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" into the Lord's likeness. In other words, the "new creature" receives at once its new "house" or permanent abode, for we shall be like Him, our dear Saviour who has assisted us all through. (1 John 3: 2.) We think there is reason to believe that we are now in this time when those who die in the Lord are specially "blessed" in being given rest from their labors without a moment's dissociation from their works for the Lord.—Revelation 14: 13.

Renewed Day by Day

Having seen that the human organism, including the brain, is made up of living cells, the various functions of which were determined by Almighty God in creation, we must not overlook the fact that God committed to man to a large extent the care of that organism. This care included the utilization of food, an abundant supply of which God provided for man's use. Proper food and drink are as necessary to the growth and wellbeing of the brain cells as to the cells of other parts of the body; all the cells being in a process of continual renewal by the elimination of waste and the building up of fresh material by means of the digestion, circulation, etc., it being the province of food to supply the elements necessary for the powers of the body to deal with, in addition to the fresh air continually taken in by the lungs for the purification of the blood. A proper supply of blood to the brain is as necessary to health as a proper supply to any other organ of the body, and the blood supply must carry those substances, organic, inorganic, and aqueous, which are suited to the renewing of the various cells of which the brain is composed.

But the supply of physical food is not all that is necessary for the brain. As Professor Berry points out, the brain is so constituted that for proper functioning it requires a continual intake of sights, sounds, and other impressions which it uses in the production of thought. In perfection, with the brain properly formed and of correct size and weight, etc., all the faculties would be of proportions suited to produce a perfectly balanced whole. For example,

one of the faculties of the mind is constructiveness, and another is destructiveness. The former enables man to build up—from bridges and houses to arguments and theories. The latter tears down, destroys dilapidated structures, evils; and when misdirected it destroys good things, even to promoting murder. There should be in every one a proper balance between these two faculties—constructiveness and destructiveness, and both should be subordinated to the faculty of benevolence, and regulated by the faculties of size, color, mathematical value, moral worth, etc., etc.

Granted that there should be a sufficiency of brain cells to begin with, distributed in fairly well balanced proportions to the various faculties, exercise will develop these faculties as surely as exercise develops the muscles of the arm and other parts of the physical frame. Exercise for the brain consists in using it, and the value of interested parents and a good education system is that the child is encouraged to use its brains as well as its hands and other members. Imitation is one of the faculties of the brain. Some have this faculty so large naturally that they are what is called "a born mimic." But all have the instinct to imitate more or less what they see and hear around them. Hence language is learned by constantly hearing it, and striving to imitate the sounds heard. Some persons have greater natural facility in learning languages than others have, but many individuals know only one language, because no serious attempt has ever been made by the persons concerned to learn another tongue. The learning of more than one language is advocated in schools and colleges for the mental exercise involved, as well as for other reasons not necessary to go into here.

There are also moral faculties in the brain, conscientiousness, more or less developed in most individuals, also hope, reverence, benevolence. These also need exercise and development.

When therefore we read in Professor Berry's article about cells dying, we must not overlook the fact that in the greater part of life brain cells are being renewed, even increased by exercise and use, and the power of the will is increased also where moral training is given, the will being the sum of all one's faculties and having each under more or less control.

Neither must we conclude, when relatives and friends and others around us act (as we think) strangely—we must not conclude that their brain cells are dying and that they are becoming what is called "mental." What seems a peculiar action to the outside observer is often found to be perfectly rational when all circumstances are taken into account. The apostle Paul was called "mad" because he gave up an honorable position among the Jews to become a persecuted missionary of the gospel. Though Festus did him the honour of saying it was on account of "much learning," still many probably tapped their foreheads and shrugged their shoulders just as people do nowadays when anyone stands fast on his principles and suffers loss for his conscience' sake and the sake of the gospel. If a Gentile left idolatry, says the apostle Peter, it was thought "strange" by former associates. The Lord's faithful children now are often thought "strange" by their friends and relations because they prefer attending a Bible class to a picture show.

Again, a person of an economical bent of mind is "strange" to a spendthrift; a person fond of argument is "strange" to one who dislikes it, and so on. Fellow students of the young Corsican, Napoleon Bonaparte, at the military school in France thought him most peculiar because he spent his evenings studying strategy instead of at the wineshops with them. The woman who does not care to spend hours gossiping over the back fence is peculiar in the eyes of those who waste their time in that way. The Lord Jesus was considered "no class" because He preferred the company of a few humble "Israelites indeed" to that of the rich and proud Pharisees; yet in His case both brain and mind were perfect, and in exact accord with the will of God. Some of His hearers had so little discernment that they said, "we know that this man is a sinner"; "He casteth out devils by the prince of the devils." —John 9: 24; Matthew 9: 34.

Selective Memory

In regard to memory, it is an open question whether the Lord desires the brain to record and remember every trifling word and circumstance of life. It is not generally known, but it is a fact that memory is not a single separate faculty of the brain, but a part of each separate "faculty," or, as Professor Berry calls them, "sense." This he illustrated in regard to the sense of touch. The same is true in regard to the faculty or sense of numbers called mathematics. Well developed, its owner is "good at figures" and a wonder at "remembering dates." Whereas some one else with less of this sense and more of another will not remember dates so well, but will be better at remembering geography or narrative. One person, partly through training and experience, is an adept at judging size and weight, while another in some other line of business never troubles himself along those lines, but is an expert at some other trade, and both judges accurately and remembers well what is essential in his vocation. These variations of skill and memory should not be taken as indicative of dying cells, mental collapse, delusion, or anything of that kind. What they demonstrate is that mankind have fallen from the perfection and perfect balance of all their mental faculties, some inheriting more largely one sort of faculty (such as the inquisitive) and others more of another sort (such as the reflective).

It has been the endeavour of educators to develop and train all the faculties of a child's mind, and thus produce a well rounded out intellect; while at the same time any decided leaning or special talent will be discovered in the process. A general education is considered a proper foundation for any special branch of learning, profession, or business.

In more recent times there is a tendency to let a child choose what it prefers to learn, and thus avoid what is considered waste time spent on subjects not so interesting to him. But this practice tends to one-sided development, besides which it is a re-

versal of the Scriptural injunction to train up a child in the way he should go, and instead lets the infantile mind choose its own way, with only an infant's judgment. Children being imitative, they wish to be whatever is exhibited before them, and sometimes being obstinate do not wish to be anything their parents recommend.

In regard to remembering, besides having memory for the technique of one's trade or profession, it is necessary to have memory on moral and religious questions, or the person cannot be said to be properly trained for the duties of life. The knowledge of agriculture came from God (Isaiah 28: 23-29), and all other knowledge comes from Him, since the works of nature are man's constant teachers. Steam as a natural phenomenon led to certain inventions. Study of the flight of birds has led to other inventions. Man foolishly prides himself on the aeroplane, but fails to give glory to God for the bird that suggested the idea and became his model. Man should not feel averse from learning things of God pertaining to moral and spiritual things, particularly since it is God who made man with brain cells arranged in groups for receiving religious impressions and engaging those faculties in divine worship and the attainment of moral stability.

As Professor Berry points out, the brain is constantly receiving impressions of all kinds, and it is within man's power to control to a large extent the nature of those impressions. For example, when God called Israel out of Egypt, He gave them a law which should constantly engage their attention. Elaborate ceremonials and supernatural communications were provided to impress their minds with the nearness of God and His care over them, and also with the necessity of obedience if they desired a continuance of these favors. Unprofitable impressions were barred out by forbidding intercourse with the idolatrous nations around them, and God who is holy was continually held before them as their pattern of righteous living. Their memories for the good and true were cultivated by the obligation to constantly read and ponder over the precepts of the law. The will of God was to be enshrined in their hearts and worn as frontlets between their eyes. The prophets were sent to them to keep their minds on the right lines and focussed on the Deliverer who was to come. And it was their duty to begin with the earliest years of their children that instruction which would impress their forming minds with right ideas of God and of righteousness.—Exodus 13: 8, 9, 16; 24: 10-14; Deuteronomy 6: 3-9; Proverbs 3: 1-4; 6: 20-23; Psalm 119.

The New Mind and the Old Brain

If we carefully review what God did for the Jews after 430 years in Egypt, much of the time in slavery under cruel taskmasters who at the last compelled them to make bricks without straw, we see that what kept them from complete degradation was faith in the promises of God to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that God would be their God and finally deliver them. We see also that with no physical operation on their brains they became the brainiest people of their time by reason of the struggles for righteousness their law required of them, obedience to an elaborate code of laws being a means of constantly impressing and improving their minds. Daniel and his companions were models because of their faithfulness to the Lord their God, with qualities the great King Nebuchadnezzar and his successors recognized by giving them the highest posts in the empire. The Persians also appreciated the mental calibre of the Jews. In our own day, notwithstanding centuries of persecution, Jews are prominent not only in business and governmental affairs, but in philanthropy and idealism of every kind.

How much more has the Lord God a right to expect from the Christian! how much more in the way of brain development, retentive memory, moral stability. Some put the cart before the horse and say the Lord picks for enlightenment with the gospel those who are better endowed naturally with brains, mental capacity, and love of righteousness. Whereas if we look into the history of Christianity and into the lives and characters of Christians, we see it is the other way about. As human beings Christians are on an average in mental capacity with their unbelieving neighbours. The main difference is that when the gospel light came and shined into their hearts they were humbleminded enough to acknowledge their sinful state and to grasp the helping hand the Lord held out to them. And they have had the discernment to see the value of submitting themselves to the Lord for instruction. God does not accept us as His children because we are naturally brainy or naturally good, because millions of such in the world are untouched by the Gospel. We are "accepted in the beloved," because of our faith, and a properly taught and trained Christian refrains from congratulating himself on his good points, whether of body, brain, or mind. And so the apostle says—"we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."—2 Corinthians 4: 7.

The Excellency of the Power

The light of the glorious gospel of Christ shining into the heart of the as yet unconverted sinner makes its appeal in the same way that other information does; namely, it is received through the eyes and ears and makes its due impression on the brain. This is shown by 1 Corinthians 1: 21. After saying that the world by its own wisdom knew not God, the positive statement is made that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." That is to say, the Gospel might appear to many to be foolish, yet the preaching of that Gospel is the means God uses to save those who will accept it. We also have Romans 10: 14, which declares that men cannot believe something of which they have not heard, neither can they hear unless someone be sent to preach to them. This preaching can be done orally or by the written or printed page, but in any case the information reaches the brain in the same manner as other information read or heard. And having entered the mind in this way, it remains for the person to deal with it, with such powers of mind as he may possess. Some

accept the good tidings, while others pass it by as of no importance, or deliberately oppose themselves to it. The light comes from God, and we can take no credit to ourselves for it. But if we properly take a view of our own fallen state and appreciate as we should the love of God in sending His beloved Son to die for us, we will believe the Gospel. And thus, as before stated, the new life of faith will be begun, and God by the Holy Spirit gives the new mind; that is, the new bent to the mind.

Additional information is received from hearing and reading the Word of God, for the development of the new mind, but all comes first as impressions upon the brain cells—the same brain cells that receive impressions on other subjects. God undertakes to train the believer in righteousness; to develop the spiritual mind as the controlling agency over brain and body formerly used by the old unregenerate and selfish mind. In order to do this the Lord requires our implicit obedience, else we might continue in the old undesirable habits and mode of life. But by giving close attention to all the commandments given to us in His Word our characters are gradually transformed into the likeness of His glorious character. The precious promises given us act as spurs to the development of the new character, as we read—

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature [or disposition], having escaped the corruption that is in the world through desire. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue," etc.—2 Peter 1: 2-11.

All these considerations confirm the statement of the apostle that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. The Greek word here rendered "excellency" means "a throwing beyond others, that is (figuratively) supereminence," and "power" here means strength. It is God's power that accomplishes all this, and not ours, and the means used is the truth, as our Lord prayed—"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

We have said that the Jew was developed in brain and mind by obedience to the law and faith in the promises which God gave to them, and some became great as kings and counsellors in the affairs of the world. But God's will for His people being called out in the present age is that they shall be separate from the affairs of the world. Instead of being a statesman or other great one in the present evil regime or order of things, the Christian is being trained for the position of king and priest in God's kingdom in the future age. It becomes necessary to submit to many indignities and persecutions now as preparation for the glories to be enjoyed then.

Our Present Duty

The duty of the Christian then is to use the fleshly body and its wonderful brain in the acquisition of more and more of the knowledge of God by the study of His Word, by obedience to Him, and by the cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, faith, meekness and temperance. (Galatians 5: 22, 23.) This means that the unlovely traits of character (out of harmony with God and contrary to the holy example set us by God's own Son), which may manifest themselves through our imperfect flesh, must be cut off, crucified. (Galatians 5: 16-21; Romans 8: 12, 13; Ephesians 4: 17-32.) It means that day by day and every day we must seek to live as becomes those who have received the new mind, and it means also that we must let our light shine so that others too may be brought to the Lord, even as we were by the light shining into our hearts.

It should be the earnest effort of every one of us so to speak and act as to bring honour to the Lord by manifestation of His Spirit. But having this treasure in earthen vessels, we need constantly to pray to the Lord for help. God's will for us is that we be "overcomers," and we cannot be overcomers in our own strength. Furthermore, realizing that all our brethren of like precious faith are similarly placed, each having his "treasure" in an "earthen vessel," we need sympathy for one another and a spirit of helpfulness. We need patience and longsuffering and a willingness to bear and forbear when on occasion the new mind fails to keep control of the brain and one is overtaken in a fault. James shows how the same tongue which praises God may speak unkindly of the brethren if not kept well in hand (as a horse is held by the bridle) by the new mind He has given us. (James 3: 1-18.) And while doing our best in this line, we must have patience with those who are perhaps "babes" in overcoming, and who will grow stronger as they proceed in the path of obedience and faith.

And while exercising this patience and forbearance, let us not dwell too much on the slips and weaknesses of our fellow believers. Let us try to see the "new creature" in them, and encourage them by letting them see the "new creature" in us. Peculiarities due to nationality, upbringing, natural imperfection, environment, and variations in health should not be confused with the dying brain cells mentioned by Professor Berry, but remember he refers particularly to the aged. The brain cells of the Christian daily striving to overcome his deficiencies and build a character like the Lord's should be renewed and should gain in health; particularly if attention be given to the feeding of body and brain with proper nourishing food. The Christian who declines to "illtreat them with alcohol, drugs, lack of oxygen, the viruses of disease, and many others," as mentioned by Professor Berry, has a great advantage over those who indulge in these things. And the Christian who refuses to receive through eyes and ears things detrimental to his spiritual health is also greatly advantaged. So that we should expect, and we do find, that many Christians live to a good age and retain their reason and other intellectual powers till close on—or even right up to—final dissolution, while their faith in God and their desire to serve Him are undimmed. Yet if and when through illness or just the drawing near of the end their mental powers fail to any extent, let us not blame them, but give them our love and

sympathy and care to the last. God has not left it to us to choose the manner of our passing—whether by accident or illness, swiftly or long drawn out. In this we can but say "Thy will, not mine, be done."

Clothed Upon

Failings, faults, and sins the Lord forgives day by day, if we go to Him in prayer confessing our lapses from the new mind and the temporary assertion of the old mind. All through life and no less so as we near its close, we must look to the mercy of God. (Jude 20, 21.) And we may be sure that our loving heavenly Father, who can bear with us notwithstanding the daily transgressions, will also bear with us in our declining years, and will make allowance even for delusions and fancies which our weakening grip on our mental faculties and physical state may make manifest. God still sees and loves the real person, His child, the "new creature" developed through the years of trial, and will at the end grant "the house from heaven" in which the new mind may dwell for evermore. Then will the overcomer possess a perfect spirit body in every respect suited to manifest the perfect disposition of the perfected mind.

The Higher Life

To play through life a perfect part,
  Unnoticed and unknown;
To seek no rest in any heart
  Save only God alone;
In little things to own no will,
  To have no share in great;
To find the labour ready still,
  And for the crown to wait:

Upon the brow to bear no trace
  Of more than common care;
To write no secret in the face
  For men to read it there;
The daily cross to clasp and bless
  With such familiar zeal
As hides from all that not the less
  The daily weight you feel;

In toils that praise will never pay,
  To see your life go past;
To meet in every coming day
  Twin sister of the last;

To hear of high heroic things,
  And yield them reverence due,
But feel life's daily sufferings
  Are far more fit for you;

To own no secret, soft disguise
  To which self-love is prone,
Unnoticed by all other eyes,
  Unworthy in your own;
To yield with such a happy art
  That no one thinks you care,
And say to your poor bleeding heart,
  "How little you can bear!"

Oh, 'tis a pathway hard to choose,
  A struggle hard to share;
For human pride would still refuse
  The nameless trials there.
But since we know the gate is low
  That leads to heavenly bliss,
What higher grace could God bestow
  Than such a life as this?

—*Adelaide Anne Procter.*

For the Children

SEEING THE GLORY OF JESUS AND HIS KINGDOM

All my little readers will no doubt remember how that for years back we have been telling much about some prophets, some kings, and some temples in these stories. We have told only about those kings who sat upon the throne of the Lord and ruled Israel, and about the great temple and its predecessor, the tabernacle, where God was worshipped by them. Most of these kings were very rich and very magnificent, and so was the temple. But for a good while we have been telling about the last of the Kings of Israel who, although He was the very greatest of all, was the poorest and most despised of any. You will know whom we mean—the Lord Jesus. Please read about this in Luke 1: 32, 33 and Matthew 28: 18. From these you will see that Jesus was promised (in Luke) and did receive (in Matthew) a kingdom, and that there was to be no end to it. What a wonderful and great kingdom that would be, covering all the heavens and all the earth! No other king of Israel had ever had so much; and there never could be a king as great as Jesus.

Of course it was God who made Him king. Jesus was "born king of the Jews." Look and see in Matthew 2: 1, 2; 21: 5. But He was so poor and was so often with poor people that the great ones amongst the Jews despised Him. It did not look as if He was much or ever would be much in their eyes.

Didn't they think they knew a lot! But the real trouble was they did not know *enough*, nor all that they might have known. What a good thing there was Someone in heaven who knew *all*, and who had the power to do for Jesus what He promised! Ah, that's what makes us glad; and since Jesus is our king too, we are delighted that God has given Him

so much and made Him so great. Please read Philippians 2: 9-11.

And what delights us still more is that God very kindly arranged that some of the poor people who followed Jesus should soon have just a little look into the glory that was to be His when He got His kingdom. And to-day **we** are going to look too, because we may.

One evening Jesus took three of His disciples—Peter, John, and James—with Him up the mountain. He went there to pray. And as He kneeled and prayed just a few yards away, the disciples saw a wonderful change come over the face of Jesus. He was "transfigured before them," Matthew says. His face began to shine like the splendour of the bright sun; and even the garment that He wore became white and dazzling.

Then another wonder happened. There came what appeared to be two men into the brilliant light and glory that were about Jesus. God had caused these to come from—well, from where? From nowhere; because they were only appearances. The Lord afterward called it a "vision." A "vision" is not a dream, but the two men were like the people you sometimes see in dreams which are not real people, as you know, but only appear to be. And these two who were with Jesus in this wonderful vision talked with Him.

These are the wonders that were there in the mountain, with the bright and glorious light shining round about. Peter in his eagerness wanted to erect three tabernacles or tents in honour of the three, but he was shown that the One to honour was Jesus the Son of God. For soon a bright cloud overshadowed them. It was night, and the bright cloud was part of the glory the disciples saw, as Peter afterward said—"we were eyewitnesses of his majesty." Out of the cloud there came a voice, not something they imagined or dreamed, but a real voice with a real message from God. The voice seems to have been terrible, and for very fear they fell with their faces on the earth. But the words the voice said were sweet and lovely—"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him." All this was very real, so that Peter could say, "we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming [or, presence] of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." An eye witness is one who actually sees a thing with his own eyes, and Peter tells us that they also heard the voice with their own ears. This was shown them to teach a great lesson. God here acknowledged Jesus as His own well-beloved Son, and told the disciples that now Jesus was the great Teacher, greater even than Moses and Elias had been.

Then, while they were hiding their faces on the ground, "Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid." And when they looked about, they saw no one but Jesus and themselves alone.

The vision was over. And the three poor disciples had seen what the great ones and the rich ones of the Jews never did see. God let them see how glorious and wonderful Jesus the king would be in His kingdom. And now *we* have seen it too (as well as we are able, by reading about it in their writings), and we are glad that Jesus is so glorious. But there is one thing left. Will all my little friends, and will I, *always* be His disciples? Then we must always "hear" Him; that is, listen to His teaching and obediently follow it.

—UNCLE FRANK.



Progress in Palestine

AT ONE TIME Palestine was a land of plenty—a land flowing with milk and honey, a land of the olive and the vine, of wheat and other cereals; a land in which a nation prospered for centuries, but which had periods of slackness and even famine as punishment for its sins. Since the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans A.D. 68-70, the fortunes of the land have varied according to the character of its rulers. Under the Saracens it prospered, but the Turks were ruthless in their dealings with its inhabitants, and the effect of this misgovernment was seen in the desolation of the land. The stone terraces formerly fruitful with vines were thrown down and the land was covered with stones. Other districts became marshlands and gradually lost their occupants. The following, which appeared in Melbourne "Argus," describes the wonderful transformation undergone by an extensive section of the country under the Zionist colonization scheme.

THE EMEK

A Zionist Colony

By Dr. M. A. Schalit

JERUSALEM, July 15.—Whoever visits Palestine, and is interested in what has been done by the Zionist movement, again and again encounters the word "Emek." Emek means valley or plain. It is the shortened term used for the Emek Jezreel, the Plain of Esdraelon, which extends from the slope of Mount Carmel to the hills of Lower Galilee and unites the Plain of Acre to the Jordan Valley. The boundary on the south is formed by Mount Carmel, the mountain chain of Ephraim and the mountains of Gilboa, and on the north by the hills of Galilee. On the west, the Emek begins some 14 kilometres (about 8¾ miles) distant from the Mediterranean, forming a gateway between the hills of Lower Galilee and the slopes of Mount Carmel through which the brook Kishon enters the Plain of Acre.

Why does the Plain of Esdraelon play such an important part in the new Jewish colonisation? It was here that the greatest Zionist colonisation effort began after the issue of the Balfour declaration and the taking over of the mandate for Palestine by Great Britain. Here such an

effort could for the first time proceed unhampered, previous attempts having had necessarily to be made under Turkish rule and difficult political conditions. In 1920 the Zionist organisation, through the Jewish national fund, its land-purchasing agency, acquired a large tract of the Emek Jezreel, at the same time obtaining an option over further land. Since then additional purchases have been made, and the colony now extends in an unbroken line practically across the whole width of Palestine. The land was bought from absentee Arab landlords, living mostly in Beyrouth. Infested by malarial swamps, the land had been neglected for centuries. It was almost unpopulated. Even the fellaheen had abandoned it and retired to the hills owing to the havoc wrought by malaria and other fevers. Jewish colonists began to drain the marshes, to plant trees, and to establish villages, thus reclaiming the soil for cultivation. The Emek Jezreel forms, therefore, the most striking example of the pioneer spirit infecting Zionist settlers. Wherever and whenever a testimony to Jewish achievements in Palestine is demanded the answer is given, "Go to the Emek and see what has been done with that swampy, desolate region in eight short years. See what has been achieved in cultivation, in economic results, and in new social forms permeated by a spirit of justice. See our youth striking root once more on the soil of their ancestors."

I started for the Emek with an open mind, erasing from my memory any lingering impressions based upon statistical information or hearsay evidence. I wanted to see for myself what the Jewish pioneers had accomplished in the Land of Israel. The result surpassed my most optimistic expectations. The Emek is a wonderful succession of beautiful and fertile valleys surrounded by hills. A marvellous panorama of nature unfolds itself. Mountains advance and recede like the undulating waves of the ocean. I saw the children of Kfar Yeladim (children's village), established some six years ago by the South African relief committee for Ukrainian children orphaned by pogroms. I saw them reading, talking, singing, and even quarrelling in Hebrew. I saw Chassidim (orthodox Jews) with their Kaftans and ear-locks, who have transferred their ecstatic vision of a mystical Judaism into the abiding reality of a tangible fatherland, who tackle the work of tilling the soil with a sublimated religious devotion, and whose whole ambition is to take root in the Land of Israel, to purify the soul that has become overlaid by the alluring distractions of the exile, and to become healthy, self-respecting, and self-supporting individuals. I saw the pupils of the Girls' Agricultural School at Nahalal, in the midst of the settlement of that name, preparing themseles to be wives and mothers in Israel. I saw young men, who had been physical and spiritual wanderers, transformed into free men. Everything in the settlement, every increase of stock, every successful crop, means for them creation, collective endeavour extending far beyond the bounds of individual enterprise, and every approximation to economic independence savours of the joy of the complete liberation of their individuality.

Nothing, however, impressed me more than the babies of Ain Harod. I think they are the most marvellous babies in the world. They are placed in communal cots in which five or six of them lie basking in the sun. In due course they are transferred to a little enclosure in which they learn to walk, and in which their comparative difficulties and progress are a never-ending source of joy. When they reach their third year they are allowed to play on dry sand with spade and shovel and pail under the benevolent supervision of a trained nurse. To see the Emek is to feel the very pulse of the new Jewish renaissance in the Land of Israel; to behold an area of malarial swamps miraculously transformed into a network of blossoming colonies; and to see the young generation permeated by a sort of instinctive Judaism, undergoing the most marvellous psychic transformation of modern times.

Abdul Hamid II, Sultan of Turkey from 1876 to 1909, was at times favourable to settlement of Jews in Palestine under the schemes of Moses Montefiore and Baron de Hirsch, following the Treaty of 1878, and later under the Zionist organisation (the first general Zionist congress being held at Basle, Switzerland, in 1897); but at intervals immigration was stopped, and hence until the British were given a mandate over the Holy Land development, though thorough, was patchy and slow. Since the Balfour Proclamation, in 1917, and the opening of the country to the later Zionist and other Jewish activities, more rapid advance has been made; nevertheless, as we have frequently pointed out in these columns, in reporting on Palestinian affairs it is necessary to stick to facts, no matter how eager one may be to see the Jews in full occupancy. For a review of the Palestinian settlement movement the reader is referred to our issues of July and October, 1921.

Arab Rights

Such eagerness is, however, rather out of place, in view of the large Arab population whose rights the British government feels bound to respect. And the recent Arab rising against the Jews at Jerusalem and elsewhere is evidence that trouble-makers are busy. The poor native fellaheen or peasants, though at first distrustful, became accustomed to the new settlers and profited by their example and the introduction of modern machinery, and were little if at all concerned in the late unpleasantness. It has been established that the rising was engineered by Syrian Arabs, some resident in Palestine, others in Syria itself; and there is more than a suspicion that the object of the riots was to discredit the British authorities and make an unfavourable contrast with the French administration of Syria, which heretofore has not been too successful. The main effect of the disturbance is to renew a strong military occupation and justify a considerable naval demonstration in the eastern Mediterranean.

A former officer of the A.I.F. in Palestine, referring to the trouble, says that based on his own experience the only good Arab is a dead one; but in this he refers to the tribes of Mesopotamia, who resent any settled state of affairs in either Palestine or the deserts in which they wander.

Every Man's Hand Against Him

Another prophecy which must not be overlooked when considering those which promise the land of Canaan to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is Genesis 16: 12, relating to Ishmael the son of Hagar—

> "And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

Genesis 21: 20, 21 states that Ishmael "grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran." Paran was the wilderness through which the Israelites passed on their way out of Egypt to the promised land. Later, Joseph was sold to an Ishmaelite, who sold him into Egypt. (Genesis 37: 28.) The twelve Ishmaelite princes or heads of tribes are named in Genesis 25: 12-16, and the territory over which they spread is mentioned in verse 18—"And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria." and if we consult a map in our Bibles we see that this is where the Arabs are to-day, though in the intervening centuries they have spread far northward both east and west of the Jordan. Mohammed drew his followers

from Arabia, whence they spread rapidly—principally northward and westward, occupying Jerusalem A.D. 637, and building there the great mosque which still stands on the site of Solomon's temple.

How to adjust matters as between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine in the next few years will require good statesmanship and possibly yet more show of military power. How much longer will the Arab be "against every man," and every man against him? Developments will be watched with great interest by Christians as well as Jews and Mohammedans the world over. But let us never forget, when reading of and talking over events, that the promise of the land was to *men of faith*, beginning with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and that they shall be raised from the dead to receive their inheritance. Just when that will take place is not in the power of man to foretell. Scripture is the only reliable authority, and it gives no date. In the meantime we may rejoice in all the signs of progress in the land of promise.

Trees of the Bible

THESE are not very numerous. Most of the arboreal growths which flourished in Bible days, says Mr. J. A. Carnegie-Cheales, in the "Journal of Horticulture," are familiar to us in our own country at the present time; yet some we have little or no knowledge of—at any rate, from personal experience. Thus, among larger trees, the oak, the poplar, the fir, and the cedar were then, as now, plenteously in evidence, while among smaller kinds the box, the almond, the willow, and the olive may be instanced. Several kinds are, as will be illustrated, wrongly translated; or, at least, representing a different tree from that understood nowadays.

The most typical tree in Palestine was the olive, while probably the most renowned one in the northern portion was the cedar of Lebanon. As to the former, it was one of the staple resources of the country, and afforded large results, either by its food and oil or the usefulness of its wood. It was synonymous with plenty and joy, hence the "oil of gladness." Abundance of oil was produced from the little black fruit, for which there was an extensive use among all classes, as among the Italians of to-day. Its wood, being tough and hard, was manufactured in various ways for buildings or making implements.

As we know from imported nicknacks in Oriental depots, it takes a smooth and beautiful polish. Palestine was well fitted for its growth, as well on the richer portions as on the rugged hill slopes, and even now they render a tolerable account of themselves, though the rich, chalky surface loam has been largely washed away, leaving not much else but the bare rock. They appear to live a great many hundred years, and it is not impossible some may be existent to-day that flourished in antiquity, especially those about the Garden of Gethsemane, hard against the Mount of Olives. Many appear at the present time rather an eyesore, or relic, like some of our own old oaks, of a more prosperous day long past, so gnarled and twisted and lifeless do they appear.

The cedars of the Lebanon, which grew in large numbers in this district, were specially used, for their durability and excellence, in the building of the Temple. They were the emblem of strength and majesty, and in this sense are employed figuratively more than once in the Psalms of David. Fine, spreading monarchs of their kind they undoubtedly were, and well endowed to be as kings over their fellows being, without question, the handsomest of all trees. Apropos of the Lebanon cedars, a well-known Melbourne merchant who visited these historic trees a few years ago, and who was anxious to procure seeds of them, purchased on the spot at a good price a parcel of seeds reputed to be from the very identical trees which he admired so much. On his return to Melbourne, he gave the seeds to his gardener, with instructions to take every care of them. The seeds grew, and soon formed nice little plants; but instead of developing into Lebanon cedars they turned out to be nothing more or less than the common stonepine. The gardener should have known that the plump, nutty seeds he sowed could not have been those of Cedrus Libani.

The elm spoken of by Hosea was not this tree, but the terebinth, or tell tree, and it is thought by some that it was the linden tree upon which Judas hung himself. It is scarcely known what is meant by the bay. Not unreasonably, it may be considered merely a general term, and as an emblem of luxuriance; some, however, deem it to be the oleander. Neither is it known what the gopher wood was, though, perhaps, the pine. Other misnomers are the hazel, which was presumably the almond, This was common enough throughout Palestine, and it may be remembered that Aaron's rod, which budded, was of the almond kind. The myrtle, too, was a frequent growth in many parts, and seems to have attained a considerable height, though the box, on the other hand, grew to no great dimensions.

The sycamore is mentioned more than once. This was a tree of the fig kind, which bore unpalatable fruit. Zacchens climbed up into one on an important occasion. The prophet Amos was a herdman, or gatherer of the wild fig, apparently for the swine or other cattle. Of firs there were large numbers, and of several varieties, the wood of which was used in building, and for other multitudinous purposes. Also the oak was represented by many species, perhaps the commonest being the ilex, or evergreen oak, which was very abundant in parts. The tree under

which Abraham reposed on the plains of Mamre, in connection with the birth promised to Sarai, is supposed to have been an oak, the very tree being pointed out to one at the present day at Hebron; though, indeed, it requires no pointing out, being a single magnificent specimen, carefully enclosed and evidently of hoary age, yet still flourishing in a remarkable manner. It was an oak which caused Absalom's tragic end, and Deborah, the nurse of Rebecca, we read, was buried underneath one.

The poplar is noticed once or twice, and this is probably the white species. The ash, from which idols and graven images were made, was not the ordinary ash tree—which does not grow in the Holy Land—but either the pine, or what is termed the manna ash. Two imported woods referred to on several occasions are the almug, which was brought in during Solomon's time for building purposes, and may be assumed to be the sandal wood of India; and ebony, which was a hard wood, brought also from India. The chestnut is again a misnomer, being the plane tree, which grew in profusion on the banks of the Jordan. The cypress, spoken of by Isaiah as a forest tree, and used for idols, was, doubtless, a juniper, which grew about Lebanon. Another bush, supposed to represent the "burning bush," was the acacia. A scant reference is made to the willow. This was the common Babylonian, or weeping willow. The sycamene, it is thought, was the common mulberry tree.

Very few fruits are mentioned in the Bible. The apple was really an apricot. The nut referred to in the Song of Solomon was the walnut. The pomegranate is referred to in many places. The fig and the date were extensively cultivated fruit-producing trees. The former was a very necessary food, being an article of daily consumption, both in Palestine and Syria. It was an emblem alike of security and prosperity. However flourishing the date palm was in the time of the Jews, it is now practically extinct in that country. To flourish like the palm was apparently an axiom of extreme well-being.—Selected.

From Far and Near

Not Remembered or Come into Mind

Dear Sir: I am writing you to express my thanks for your kindness in sending me the "New Covenant Advocate" during the past few months free of charge. I would gladly pay a year's subscription if I were able. If you will continue sending me a copy monthly, I will, when I am able, send you 4/-, or more if I can afford it.

[Sincere inquirers after truth whose finances do not permit payment of subscription are welcome to the N.C.A. free. The cost is met out of voluntary contributions to the N.C.A. Fund. Others who love the truth, but are better placed financially, are glad to help circulate the "good news" in this way. Having been blessed, they desire to extend the blessing; and so may all, whether rich or poor, by telling it out as we have opportunity. We know not where the truth hungry are, but we do know there are some, or the Lord would not commission His people to search for them. We were found by some who looked for us, or we would not know the truth. Hence it is reasonable to expect that if we look around we also shall find hungry and thirsty souls to whom to give spiritual food and drink. Let us remember that there is everywhere a famine for the Word of God.—EDITOR.]

I think your teachings on the Bible are the only ones that regard God as being better than men. The average sermon impresses me as being little more than a lecture on morals; there is no enlightenment regarding the future. I often think they are like a motorist driving in the dark with no lights.

In reading "God's Interest in Men" in September N.C.A., I notice (page 183) you say that our present experience with sin will help us by contrasting experiences before death and after resurrection. It seems very logical to me, but Isaiah 65: 17, 18, seems to be directly against this. I would be grateful if you would explain this apparent contradiction; it is the only one of your teachings that appears to be contrary to Scripture.

Yours sincerely, ————, *Australia.*

Explanation of Apparent Contradiction

The establishment of the New Heaven and New Earth promised in Isaiah 65: 17, 18, will *not immediately* do away with sin or with the recollection of what has been in the past. This may be seen by reading verse 20, which tells of sinners being condemned and dying under the promised new conditions or order of things. At the end of the Thousand Years of Christ's reign on the earth there will be a special test to determine who, after all the blessings of the Kingdom age, will be rebellious. Such rebels will be destroyed, after which there will remain only those who desire to be obedient, and then the time will soon come that the former evil conditions shall not be remembered or be an oppression on the minds of any of the blessed inhabitants of the earth.—Revelation 20: 7-9; 1 Corinthians 15: 24-28.

But the saints and chosen ones of the present Gospel age will not be among the multitudes requiring the enlightening influences of the Kingdom set up on earth, for in the present life they have received the enlightenment necessary to salvation. Their position will be with the Lord as joint heirs and administrators of the blessings to mankind raised from death.—Revelation 1: 18; 20: 6.

Not remembering refers to the sorrows and disappointments which afflict humanity at the present time, also the evil effects of sin, and the workings of death that afflict them. There is no reason to suppose that mankind when perfected and enjoying

the benefits of the everlasting ages will ever forget God or what they owe to the Son of God who came into the world and suffered on their behalf. That will be a treasured memory *always*.

The Water of Life

My dear Brethren: Greetings! I should have written you some time before this, but I am trying to accumulate enough to send to you for a copy of "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days" (75 cents) and something always comes in the way.

Seeing your final notice to subscribers and readers of the N.C.A., I am writing to secure your continued favours, as I do not like to be without them. They are messengers of much help and blessing to me and others. Inasmuch as I am thirsting to read "Daniel the Prophet," I can wait a little, perhaps another month hence. I have distributed all the tracts—"Gospel," and "Blessing of All Nations," and have received the "Thanksgiving" edition of "Bible Talks" in magazine form. The old, old story that is ever new, even to those who know it.

I can thank you only in words, but I am confident with full assurance that our Father has blessed you, is blessing you, and will bless you. He blesses for such a small thing as a cup of cold water; much more will He bless for dispensing the water of life.

May our Heavenly Father fill you more and more with His Holy Spirit.

Yours in the Beloved, ————, *West Indies.*

Greetings from so far are very cheering, and yet from near, for is not the Holy Spirit the bond, and is not the Spirit in all God's true children? We who drink the Water of Life from the Fountain He has provided are indeed a privileged people. Let us pray that many more in the large group of Islands between North and South America may yet be refreshed by it. Another encouraging letter from the same part of the vast field which is the world shows that no matter where God's children live He is with them and gives them discernment of mind, if only they will closely study the Word of truth and adhere to its inspired teaching.

Dear Brother Henninges: It is some time now since I first began to subscribe to the N.C.A., and I am writing this to express my deep gratitude for the light and comfort which it has brought to me. Since 1914 I have been a sincere Bible Student; "This one thing I do" has been my special motto. For years I belonged to the "Watch Tower," but never in full harmony with many of its teachings. At last they became so distasteful to me that I withdrew about three years ago. As we have each yet to stand or fall before our Judge during this life, I believe that we should strive in simplicity of heart for all Truth; and He who is ever more ready to give than to receive will send what is needful.

I follow with great interest the splendid work you are doing, particularly in furnishing the different Libraries with "Bible Talks," and although I have not been able to help you financially along these lines up to the present, I still hope to send a small donation later on.

With Christian love to both Sister Henninges and yourself, I remain, yours in the One Hope,

————————, *West Indies.*

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from September issue)

It was the privilege of those in better circumstances to lend to the struggling farmer or vineyardist with a view to the prosperity of the nation as a whole as well as the solvency of the individual land owner. Thus the Lord would be glorified in them.

But now, here is a detail, a possible case provided against. A loan made the first year would have over six years' time for repayment. Well and good; but here is another applicant in the fifth or sixth year, with only a short term till the time of "release"—perhaps not enough time for the borrower to raise the crops by the sale of which he would expect to secure the necessary cash. The prosperous one with money to spare looks dubious—hardly worth while lending it, for I will be sure to lose it, the end of the year of release being so near. But what does the rule say? Such a thought is described as wicked, and his eye evil toward his brother (fellow Jew). The prosperous should lend despite the uncertainty, and not grieve over it either, "because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto."—Deuteromony 15: 10.

Obedience to the law and the approval and blessing of God were to be first considerations. If the borrower through unforeseen circumstances was unable to repay, God could and would bless in other ways, so that the kindhearted and sympathetic lender would not after all lose by the transaction.

Turn Not Thou Away

Our Lord well knew that the law covenant arrangement would be soon at an end with this and other provisions for safeguarding the welfare of His people. The New Covenant in its simplicity would write the loving sympathy on the heart of those who came under it for the forgiveness of their sins and who received the Holy Spirit as an indwelling power. The Holy Spirit would take these and other words of the Lord and show them unto us in their full richness. (John 16: 14.) There are now no reckonings of every seventh year for the release of unfortunate debtors; neither on the other hand is there compulsion to lend as in those laws given to Israel. Nevertheless there is still need of the kind heart, the sympathetic interest, and the willingness to assist those who by a loan can be tided over a bad season

or other calamity. In this statement "turn not thou away" the Lord does not say definitely to lend in every case. What he does say is to hear the case and see what help can be rendered, with reasonable arrangements for the repayment of the loan.

In Nothing Despairing

Luke's account (6: 34) of this or a similar discourse puts it more broadly—"And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again." That is to say, lending as a mere commercial transaction is carried on the world over. There are, always have been, professional money lenders, who make it their business to accommodate the borrower who can give good security. Under our modern banking system money is usually made available for business people on short term loans, and in agricultural districts until harvest; Credit Foncier banks especially catering to those who require longer time for repayments. All this without religious motive.

One should notice the different setting in which Luke 6: 35 is found, which says "hoping for nothing again," as though one should lend money with no thought or expectation of receiving it again. But, as already said, a loan with no hope or expectation of repayment would not be a loan but a gift. The use of the words lending and loan implies the return of the money or thing lent. And to accept as a loan what the borrower has no intention of returning is not a borrowing but a theft. The Revised Version and Diaglott renderings are more consistent with the context. The latter reads—"in nothing despairing." In this passage the emphasis is not on lending but on being good to every one, including one's "enemies." Reading from verse 31—

> 31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.
> 32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.
> 33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.
> 34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again.
> 35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, *in nothing despairing.* [Diaglott, R.V. reads—"never despairing," and R.V. margin—"despairing of no man"]; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

The lesson conveyed in this passage is that in our good deeds we should go beyond what is practised as a matter of course by every one else. To love those who love us, to lend to them who lend to us, or make presents to those who will give us return presents of equivalent value, is not the highest standard. The law in many of its provisions drew a distinction between the Israelite and the foreigner. A loan to a foreigner was not entitled to "release" at the end of the seventh year, as was the unpaid loan of an Israelite. Hence a rich Jew might be tempted to prefer lending to a foreigner, thus being certain to receive as much again, and neglect the poor Jew who required a loan.

A Hebrew purchased as bondservant or slave must go free in the seventh year, and must not be sent away empty-handed. (Deuteronomy 15: 12-14; Exodus 21: 2, 3.) The Hebrew neighbour fallen on evil times and sold shall be treated not as a slave but as a hired servant, and for a limited time. But the foreigners bought as slaves shall remain such and be passed on as part of the family inheritance. —Leviticus 25: 39-46.

While in some cases the law for the stranger or foreigner was the same as the law for the Hebrew, yet there was always a barrier between, an implication that one was deserving of more consideration than the other. And since Luke brings in the treatment to be accorded to "enemies," it is apparent that to understand verse 35 correctly we must compare it with Matthew 5: 43, 44, where the Lord deals with the distinction imposed by the law between "neighbours" and "enemies." This we shall now proceed to do.

Misunderstandings of Our Lord's Teaching

But before taking up verse 43 we should deal with a situation which purports to arise out of Matthew 5: 42 and Luke 6: 30, 34, 35. One inquirer put it this way:

> I am in partnership with a man who is striving to live according to the sermon on the mount. His idea is that if any one wishes to borrow a tool or an implement we must not refuse, and we must not ask for its return. As a consequence, the neighbours are continually borrowing, and when we desire to use a tool it is not there because So-and-So has it. Yet we must not go and ask for it. It having become known that my partner does not ask their return (and will not allow his employes to go and fetch them), neighbours borrow with no intention of returning. This carelessness (as it seems to me), on my partner's part, might be all very well were he in business for himself, but I as partner am the loser, since we are forced to buy new tools continually to replace those the neighbours have kept. Is this in accordance with the sermon on the mount?

In reply we should say that the above situation arises from a misunderstanding of the texts cited. We have shown that the giving to those who ask refers to helping those who appeal to us for aid because they lack the necessities of life—food, clothing, shelter, and has no reference whatever to giving away tools or other articles to persons who ask because they are too mean or too lazy to purchase tools of their own. And in regard to borrowing, the very word "borrow" means that the use of the tool is only temporary and implies a promise that the tool or other article will be returned. As we have said, the person who asks for the "loan" of a thing with no intention of returning it, or who, having accepted it as a bona fide loan, is too mean or too lazy to return it, such a person is not a borrower in the true sense, but a trickster, a thief. There are cases where it is impossible to return a thing borrowed because it has been lost or destroyed in unforeseen circumstances; but in that case honesty requires confession of the fact, and that another must be returned in its place, or payment made to cover the loss.—Compare Leviticus 6: 1-5, specially noting (vs. 4) "the thing which he hath deceitfully gotten." See also Exodus 22: 7-15.

In the above partnership our Lord's teaching was not lived out in accordance with its true meaning. Such indifference and carelessness in regard to whether a thing lent is returned or not encourages dishonesty on the part of neighbours—which is far from what the Lord desires. Furthermore, the member of a partnership who displays such indifference, and thus brings unnecessary loss and expense on his partner, is not living in accord with those scriptures which teach faithfulness in stewardship—in any position of trust involving the rights or well-being of others. (1 Corinthians 4: 2; 6: 8; 1 Thessalonians 4: 6.) A wealthy partner is not justified in deliberate conduct which brings loss or needless expense on a partner, especially on a poor partner, less able to bear the strain.

Another form of so-called "borrowing" which was submitted to us for our opinion was as follows. The loan of a tool was asked, and gladly granted. The borrower, shortly after, in the dusk, handed back a tool with an expression of thanks. The lender, never suspecting a deception, did not carefully examine the tool to make certain it was his own; and it was found later that an inferior tool had been palmed off upon him under cover of darkness. But having accepted it, and being under some misapprehension as to the meaning of our Lord's directions, the lender said and did nothing to regain his proper tool.

(To be continued)

Library Supply Fund

27, £5; 28, £7; 29, £3; 30, £10; 31, £2:4:9; total for month, £27:4:9 ($132.37); previously reported, £190:11:10 ($926.25); total for 9 months, £217:16:7 ($1058.62); the amount received in the last month enabling us to send 218 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 2397 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

69, 16/-; 70, 4/-; 71, £3; 72, £6:5:0; 73, £1; 74, £1; 75, £3:5:0; 76, £1; 77, 4/-; total for month, £16:14:0 ($81.16); previously reported, £165:19:0 ($806.50); total for 9 months, £182:13:0 ($887.66); which, after clearing off last year's adverse balance, leaves about £41 ($205) to apply on this year's work so far.

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!

95, 2/-; 96, 2/-; 97, £2; 98, 2/6; 99, 2/-; 100, 2/-; 101, £3:5:0; 102, £1:5:0; 103, £1:17:6; 104, 16/-; 105, 17/-; total for month, £8:13:0 ($42.03); previously reported, £141:4:0 ($686.23); total for 9 months, £149:17:0 ($728.26); of which, on account of last year's deficit, only about £65 is available for this year's work. More than £250 will be needed for this Fund by December 15 to avoid another deficit.

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-

In other countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C.1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 *Fulton* St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage, extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 *(60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers,* 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d.; elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—*The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as* "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—*An exposition of Matthew 24 and* Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($8); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of *punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence* of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on *Miraculous Healings, showing their place* in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your *liking and postpaid* Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new *subscription or renewal, and one copy* of each of the above books in the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 26/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

***N.B.—The above books* will be loaned free (one at a time) to any interested person unable to purchase.**

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C. 1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, *Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.*

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, NOVEMBER 1, 1929 No. 8

The Prophecy of Zechariah

— The Future Foretold —

ZECHARIAH THE PROPHET was the grandson of Iddo, who is mentioned in Nehemiah 12: 4 in the list of priests who returned to the Holy Land under Zerubbabel and Joshua. This was in accordance with the decree issued by King Cyrus in the first year of his reign, and in fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 44: 26-28; 45: 1-4.

The rebuilding of the temple was laid upon the returned exiles as a privilege and a duty. Cyrus had given them the treasures of the temple which Nebuchadnezzar had carried away seventy years before —5,400 vessels of gold and silver, for use in the temple services. Upon arrival at Jerusalem the returned captives immediately set up an altar for the worship of God, but the foundations of the temple were not laid until "the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem." (Ezra 3: 1-11.) Proceedings were then interrupted by the opposition of the Gentiles living in the district, who later procured a decree from King Artaxerxes commanding that rebuilding work should cease.—Ezra 4: 1-24.

In Ezra 5: 1 Zechariah is called the son of Iddo, but this is not a contradiction of Zechariah 1: 1, where he is called "the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo." It was customary in those times to speak of generations beyond the first as sons, a custom not followed in our modern times. Not only grandsons, but remote generations were spoken of as sons; "the sons of Jacob," for example (Malachi 3: 6); "Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (Matthew 1: 1.) Mephibosheth is called the son of Saul (2 Samuel 19: 24), though he was the son of Jonathan, who was Saul's son (2 Samuel 9: 6).

Two kings named Darius are mentioned in connection with the overturn of Babylon and the rebuilding of the temple. The first of these two kings was the Mede who captured Babylon, and reigned for two years before Cyrus the Persian occupied the throne. It was in the first year of this Darius that Daniel was given the vision recorded in the ninth chapter of Daniel, in response to his prayer that he might understand what to expect, as he reckoned correctly that the seventy years of captivity were nearly at an end.

This Darius was followed by Cyrus, who was succeeded by Cambyses (the Ahasuerus of Ezra 4: 6) in 529 B.C. His successor was Pseudo-Smerdis (the Artaxerxes of Ezra 4: 7), who issued the decree commanding the work on the temple walls to cease. And he was followed by the second Darius, called Hystaspis. This was the Darius of Ezra 4: 24, and chapters 5 and 6, who issued a decree authorizing the resumption of work on the temple. And the work was completed in the sixth year of this Darius.

That troubled period between the cessation of rebuilding and the completion of the temple was the time during which Zechariah the prophet was used by the Lord to encourage, criticize, and admonish the Jews—both as to their manner of life and their duty to go on with the temple building as the Lord had commanded them. Zechariah in all probability came to Jerusalem with the first contingent, in company with his grandfather Iddo, thus demonstrating his faith in God and in the promises concerning the land. But it was not till the eighth month of the second year of Darius Hystaspis that the word of the Lord came to him, constituting him a special messenger or prophet to Judah.—Zechariah 1: 1; Ezra 5: 1.

Haggai the prophet prophesied during the same period, but began two months before Zechariah, being first sent direct to the two leaders, Zerubbabel the governor or captain of the returned host of Judah, and Joshua the high priest. The message and exhortation to restore the building operations found a ready response in the two leaders, who were no doubt waiting upon God for guidance in their perplexing situation. (Haggai 1: 1.) And in Ezra 5: 1, 2 the prophesyings (including reproaches, criticisms, exhortations, etc.) of Haggai and Zechariah are spoken of as help in the building, because by them the spirit of the people was stirred up to undertake the work. This being followed by a decree of Darius (Ezra 6: 1-12) upsetting the plans of their opponents, who were commanded to assist in various

ways, the building operations went forward expeditiously, as stated in Ezra 6: 13-15. In this connection also mention is made of the assistance rendered by the two prophets Haggai and Zechariah by their prophesyings and personal interest in the accomplishment of God's purpose that His house be rebuilt at that time.—Ezra 6: 14.

If the work of encouraging God's people in the carrying out of His work was worthy of the prophets of old, is it not a worthy occupation now for the Lord's people to encourage His servants by such assistance as they can render in the carrying forward of the work of the present time? is a question that we may well ask ourselves. Words of encouragement and exhortation, and also prayers, are a great help when given by those in heart sympathy with the great work of this age—the taking out of a people for His name.

Up to the present we have studied ten of the so-called "minor" prophets, the articles appearing as follows—

Hosea	April 1927	Micah . .	November, 1927
Joel	June, 1927	Nahum . . .	March, 1928
Amos . . .	September, 1927	Habakkuk . .	April, 1928
Obadiah . .	October, 1927	Zephaniah . . .	July, 1928
Jonah . . .	October, 1927	Haggai . . .	August, 1928

How ever the now general custom grew of calling these and the two following—Zechariah and Malachi—"minor" prophets, the term is hardly appropriate. Some of them are very short, it is true, but every one of them contains important messages sent by God to His ancient people. While portions of these messages pertained directly to the times and circumstances of the prophets themselves, all contained information and lessons of value to us, especially those portions prophetic of our Lord's birth and mission, the call of the Church, and the blessings to be showered on all mankind during the reign of His kingdom on earth.

And so with Zechariah, whose book we shall now take up, and with the Lord's help seek to understand: In it we find messages of direct import to the Jews engaged in building the temple and re-establishing the worship of God on the original site of Solomon's temple; messages pertaining to the subsequent history of the Jews; messages concerning our Lord's first advent and His mission and the work of the Gospel age in which we are now living, and messages relating to the establisment of His kingdom on earth in the Kingdom age now near at hand. A wonderful foretelling of events which God alone could foresee and declare for the information of His trusting people!—Isaiah 41: 21-23, 26; 45: 21-23.

Turn unto Me, and I will turn unto You

Zechariah's introduction to the Jews as the Lord's prophet had been with the same message that God sent them by the "former prophets." The persistent habit of the majority of the people to turn away from the Lord and divine worship was the cause of all the Lord's longsuffering and weariness. He had taken them to be His people and was determined to do His part, whether they did theirs or not. Hence the captivity in Babylon as a corrective. And now that they were back in their own land, many of them neglected their agricultural pursuits as well as the Lord's service to run after the idolatrous teachings of the nations. Hence it was necessary to give them the same message over again—"Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts."—Chapter 1, verses 2-4.

The fathers did not heed the "former prophets," and what became of them? They were dead; and what profit to the unfaithful was their false religion? God alone has control over the dead, and those who have any concern at all about a future life should consider this before they turn from God; for, after all, in the resurrection they will have to give an account of themselves. But one thing did remain alive and vindicated, and that was the Word of God through His prophets. Everything they had predicted came to pass. The fathers were punished for their sins just as the Lord said they would be. And those to whom Zechariah was now sent were bound to admit all this. Yet, notwithstanding, they were turning from God just as their fathers had done. They should have seen that the logical consequence of their action would be to bring down God's wrath on themselves, so that they too would be losers by their stiffneckedness and idolatry.—Verses 5, 6.

The Vision of the Horses

John the Revelator was given a vision of four horses,* but it does not follow that the interpretation of the symbols is the same in both visions. Every vision must be examined in the light of the time and circumstances under which given and the interpretation attached, if any. In the vision given to Zechariah of red, speckled (or bay), and white horses, and recorded in verses 8 to 17, the latter part of the vision (verses 12 to 17) contains the explanation.

This vision is retrospective; that is, instead of being a vision of things to come after the vision was given, it is a vision of things as they had been for a time previously. Not that horses of three different colors were walking about the earth, but this was a picturesque and arresting way of impressing upon the people that God's knowledge of the situation was as accurate as though He had sent men on horseback here and there throughout the Babylonian empire to report on the inhabitants and their doings and the state of peace or war. Proverbs 15: 3 says—"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." No one infers from this that the Lord's eyes are literally in every place. But the idea is thus strikingly conveyed that the Lord is well informed concerning all that goes on in the earth, and that He distinguishes the evil from the good. (Compare Psalm 34: 15; 1 Peter 3: 12.) In 2 Chronicles 16: 9 the eyes of the Lord are spoken of as running to and fro throughout the whole earth, and the object of this universal knowledge is "to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." Jehovah the God of Israel was well aware of all that Asa had done, and would punish him accordingly. A similar expression

*For explanation of the Four Horses of Revelation 6, please see N.C.A., July, 1928.

concerning "the eyes of the Lord" occurs in Zechariah 4: 10, which will be considered when studying that chapter.

The conversation between Zechariah, the angel of the Lord, and the man who stood among the myrtle trees is intended to bring out vividly the facts to be elicited, and in that way impress them more deeply upon the minds of the people. These facts are related in plain terms in verses 12 to 17; namely, that for seventy years the Lord had preserved Babylon from invasion by its enemies, because of His people settled therein, for whom He made the country a sanctuary. But as the seventy years were about expiring, when His people Judah should be delivered and returned to their own land, that state of peace and tranquillity would be brought to an end through the invasion by the Medes and Persians, as prophesied of by Isaiah. Not a Babylonian king, but Cyrus the Persian was marked out in God's providence as the one to liberate the Jews and send them back to their own land.

As shown in other prophecies, while Judah was in captivity in Babylon and their land lay desolate, the tribes in the vicinity took possession and did not allow the land to have the absolute rest the Lord desired it to have for 70 years, to fulfil its sabbaths. (Leviticus 26: 34, 35, 43; 2 Chronicles 36: 21.) In the sabbath years that which grew of itself was ordered not to be harvested or gathered. But the Moabites, Ammonites, and others went in and helped themselves when the land was without defence. Although the Lord was displeased with Judah for its covenant-breaking sins, and also displeased with the heathen in general for their sins, yet this action of making free with the land which in His own purpose still belonged to Judah increased His displeasure against those nations.—Ezekiel 25; 36: 1-7.

The Lord used the word "jealous" to express His attitude toward the land of Judah. While He had given it to Judah for a possession, He spoke of it as His own, to indicate that His will and the law given at Sinai were to be supreme therein. Hence the prearrangement that Judah should return after seventy years in Babylon. There was another reason: That Messiah should come to Judah and witness to the truth at the temple in Jerusalem, and find a people to become His disciples. But in this retrospect vision given to Zechariah His purpose to grant prosperity again to Judah is reiterated for the benefit of the children of Judah now returned in accordance with His promises, but only half awake to the fact that the Lord expected something from them in return for His goodness.

The Vision of the Four Horns

A horn is a symbol of power, it being one of the chief weapons of attack and defence of the animal world. Various beasts were used in Old Testament times to denote the Gentile powers. See "Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days" concerning the ten-horned beast, the two-horned ram and the one-horned he-goat. The four horns of Zechariah's vision represent all the powers who had a hand in destroying Judah and scattering its inhabitants.—Zechariah 1: 18, 19.

In verse 19 the name Israel is an interpolation; that is, it is no part of the prophecy, but was introduced later by some one who may have thought the name should be included. The ten-tribe kingdom of Israel had been dealt with many years before, and to it was given no promise of return to Palestine. Zechariah was a prophet to Judah, and his present prophecy concerns only Judah and Jerusalem its capital city.

The Vision of the Four Carpenters

More exactly, of the four "craftsmen." To fray horns is hardly a carpenter's work. Verse 21 contains the explanation of the vision of the four horns and the four craftsmen. The four horns represented the Gentile powers or governments, "which lifted up their horns [power, exalted themselves] over the land of Judah to scatter it." The craftsmen coming to "fray" them represent God's instruments to deprive these Gentile nations of their power over Judah. Retrospectively this is applicable to the great nations of the time, such as Babylon and Egypt, Moab, Ammon, etc.; and, less remotely, to the time of Zechariah's prophecy when the native governors were interfering with the rebuilding work, and succeeded for a time in stopping it altogether, as we have seen.

Vision of the Measuring Line

The vision of chapter 2: 1-9 is a message of encouragement to the people of Judah already returned to their land, and also to those yet remaining in Babylon. It tells them not to lose hope, but to realize that God is fulfilling previous promises "to restore and to build Jerusalem." (Daniel 9: 25.) The man with the measuring line would be a reminder to them that God had already instructed Ezekiel by a series of visions in regard to the restoration of city and temple. For particulars of Ezekiel's prophecy on this subject, the reader is referred to N.C.A. for November, 1918. The usual purpose of a measuring line is to lay out a plan of building operations, or to certify to the size of structures already erected. In this vision verse 4 shows the object is to impress upon the minds of the Jews that the city would be rebuilt, and that the Lord would be as a protecting wall of fire round about, completely safeguarding His people. Not only was the temple to be rebuilt, but the city also, and on a large scale, to accommodate a large population. As we look back over the annals of history we see that these prophecies have been fulfilled.

The Four Winds of Heaven

Like four winds the children of Judah had been scattered—an expressive symbol of being dispersed in all directions. As Babylon was an extensive empire at the time, even holding Egypt in tribute, the invitation of verse 6 is a very wide one. It is another illustration of the goodness of the Lord: that, whereas He had condemned and punished those who fled to Egypt and elsewhere in unbelief, or to indulge in idolatrous worship, nevertheless He allowed for those who might have fled in all directions in sheer bewilderment, and also for the descendants of fugitives who might not endorse the

action of their fathers, but might desire to return to the promised land. Nothing is more easily shifted than the wind. So the four winds which represent their scatterment, by the Lord's love and mercy might also represent their bringing home again.

Verse 7. "Deliver thyself, O Zion." The Lord opened the way, Zechariah and other prophets made plain the wideness of the invitation. What remained was for the individuals concerned to bestir themselves. For observe: with all His benefactions God still required the exertion of effort as well as the revival of faith. The Lord is very condescending, but His requirement is—Turn unto me, and I will turn unto you. No figure of speech could convey a more tender feeling than that contained in verse 8—"He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." So dear were His people, and so sensitive was He to their welfare. And in verse 9 the way of their return is made easier still, for the Lord sent commotion among the nations, and thus would make their escape more easy did they desire to trust to His guiding hand and leave the homes they had established among other nations.

Some people like to travel, but most people settled in a land, even though a foreign one with vicissitudes of various kinds, find it difficult to uproot themselves for a return to their native land; especially is this true of the older generation to whom movement of any kind is more difficult. The Lord who knows the natural fears and forebodings of the human heart therefore put the case before them in every possible light to awaken their interest and to secure their return to add to the population and the prosperity of their own land.

I Will Dwell in the Midst of Thee

That Jehovah their God would be completely reconciled to the faithful Jews who returned and rebuilt the temple, to those who returned later under Ezra the scribe (Ezra, chapters 7, 8) in the reign of Artaxerxes about 457 B.C., as well as to individuals returning from time to time, is shown in verse 10—"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord." In one of Ezekiel's visions he saw God departing from the temple and from Jerusalem, for the land was to be desolate for seventy years, and could hardly be that if the Lord remained there. Again, as God's dwelling place in the midst of Judah was in the Most Holy of the temple, His departure before its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar was appropriate. (Ezekiel 11: 22, 23.) We know that the Lord "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." "Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool." (Acts 7: 48-50.) No Jew supposed God was confined to the temple precincts. But in the temple, between the cherubim in the most holy apartment, His presence and favor were manifested by a light, and there also He made His will known to the High Priest when inquired of.

Ezekiel (also in vision) saw the Lord returning to His house at Jerusalem; indicating that at the close of the captivity and their return to their own land the Lord would once more dwell in their midst, and manifest His favor through the temple and the high priest as before.—Ezekiel 43: 4.

Seven Times More Severe

As far back as Moses' day the Lord gave promises of blessing if the people were obedient, and threats of punishment to be poured out on them if they were disobedient. By divine foresight God knew that they would sin; and as evidence that He would deal with their delinquency for a certain length of time He gave the warning recorded in Leviticus 26. Verses 3-13 detail the blessings they would enjoy if obedient, and verses 14 to 39 detail the punishments to be sent upon them if disobedient.

Verses 14 to 17 of Leviticus 26 mention certain things to befall them for their first period of transgressions. Verse 18 says that if these punishments do not suffice to bring them back to the right way, then "I will punish you seven times more for your sins." The sense of the Hebrew words rendered "seven times more" is seven times *more severely;* that is, the former punishment multiplied by seven. Verses 19, 20 explain in what way they will be principally affected by this more severe punishment.

Verse 21 states that in the event of these punishments not being sufficient, another "seven times" multiplied punishment will be sent upon them, including what is described in verse 22.

Verse 23 declares that if this second "seven times" multiplied punishment does not suffice to reform them, God will send a still heavier affliction, including (verses 25, 26) sword, pestilence, and hunger.

Verses 27, 28 warn them that if they do not respond to this correction, but still persist in their sins (principally the sin of idolatry), God's fury will be roused, and they will receive the fourth "seven times" multiplied punishment—the severest of all. Verses 29 to 33 contain a prophecy of the troubles culminating in the invasion by Nebuchadnezzar, the breaking down of their idols, the destruction of the worship carried on in the temple at Jerusalem, the desolation of their land, the ruin of their cities, and the scattering of the people among the nations.

Verses 34, 35 indicate clearly the time of this fourth "seven times" multiplied punishment, by referring to the compulsory sabbath of the land which its desolation would bring about, and this without doubt was fulfilled as above stated, because 2 Chronicles 36: 21 declares the seventy years' desolation was a keeping of sabbath, as Jeremiah also had foretold.—Jeremiah 25: 3-11.

Zechariah, as we have seen, prophesied at the close of the seventy years' desolation of the land, and hence the exhortation, "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord," was exactly what was to be expected, in view of the promise made in Leviticus 26: that if they called upon the Lord out of the enemies' lands, confessing their sins, He would hear them and deliver them.

This confession was made by Daniel (chapter 9) for the whole of the penitents in Babylon, and so the prophecy of Leviticus 26: 40-45, that their captivity was not forever, that they would not be destroyed utterly, but would be remembered, could be fulfilled by their bringing back to their own land and the return of God's favor, in remembrance of His cove-

nant with the fathers that He would be their God and accept them as His people.

Zechariah then prophesies of results to follow the restoration of the temple and of God's dwelling place therein. Those results were that in the seventy-year period of desolation Jews were born in all the countries round about, thus becoming nationals of those countries. Since then there have been Babylonian Jews, Persian Jews, Egyptian Jews, Greek Jews, Roman Jews, and so on, in addition to Palestinian Jews. Traces of an ancient Jewish colony have been found in China. All those who were of a pious mind, still clinging to the promises given to the fathers, would resume their thrice-yearly visits to the temple, as soon as they would hear of its restoration, in addition to those who actually made their residence there under the decrees of Cyrus and his successors.

These foreign residing Jews carried to the heathen lands a knowledge of the true God, of moral living, and of sanitation much to the advantage of the nations, or at least of the individuals of those nations who took notice and became believers in the true God, as well as those who became full proselytes to the Jewish faith. Acts 2: 9-11 shows how widely Jews were scattered some hundreds of years after the return following the Babylonian captivity, and that they still kept up their religion and their regular visits to Jerusalem for the set feasts. Those Hebrews present in Jerusalem at Pentecost, whom Peter addressed, represented only a small fraction of the Jews resident in Parthia and Media, Egypt and Cyrene, Mesopotamia and Arabia, Rome, etc. One has only to take a map and scan the wide extent of territory over which the Jews were scattered to realize how wonderfully God pre-arranged for the propagation of the Gospel in these foreign lands at a later day. For in every case the Gospel was sent "to the Jew first," and from them it went to the proselyte, the attentive "strangers" and the out-and-out Gentile idolaters.

The Lord returned to His temple at Jerusalem when it was completed and dedicated in the sixth year of Darius Hystaspis. The chronology contained in the Variorum Bible Appendix* gives 515 B.C. as the date when the temple was completed; 606 B.C. being the generally accepted date of Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion, and 536 B.C. the well established date of the return under Cyrus' decree.

This part of Zechariah's prophecy should have been, and no doubt was, a great incentive to the Jews to overcome all obstacles and continue the work on the temple. The prospect of the Lord in their midst as of old, and of a multitude of Israelites coming up to worship from the various countries where they had been scattered, would be most uplifting and energizing. Verses 12, 13 leave no doubt of the Lord's purpose to dwell in the temple so soon as it should be ready—"And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation." The idea in the last clause seems to be rather—"for he has raised up the habitation of his holiness"—i.e. the temple.

Some of the Lord's operations in carrying out His plans seem very leisurely. More than five hundred more years were given the Jews after the Return in which to become a holy nation ready to welcome the Messiah. Were "evolution" a true science, one would expect them to have made wonderful progress in that long period of time—five centuries! But the fact is, while they no longer resorted openly to the idolatry of the nations, their hearts were still prone to wander from God, as Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets, shows. And the interval between Malachi and John the Baptist was equally barren of improvement. Whether the Lord included the later call to the Gentiles in this prophecy of Zechariah's is open to question, since the cause of rejoicing is particularly stated to be the return of Jehovah to their midst after their return from Babylon. Nevertheless, it is a fact, as the New Testament shows, that many Gentiles have since been "joined to the Lord," though their worship is not at the temple in Jerusalem, as He desired it in Zechariah's day. Now, true worship of God is acceptable only through Jesus Christ, irrespective of that ancient temple. Now, the temple of God is the heart of the sincere believer, and the Church as a whole is called the temple of the Holy Spirit.—1 Corinthians 3: 16, 17; 2 Corinthians 6: 16; Ephesians 2: 20-22.

May the Lord direct our studies so that we may see in these prophecies what He purposed to convey, and not read into them unrelated matter which later prophecies and later developments of His plan and purpose have made known to us.

(To be continued)

*We have on hand a good stock of Variorum Bibles in different types and bindings at special prices, either with or without the Appendix of Students' Aids. Besides a topical index, Concordance of over 40,000 references, and maps, the Appendix of Students' Aids contains 175 illustrations of Biblical scenes, ancient monuments, clay and limestone tablets, ancient coins, rock drawings, etc., besides much other valuable information. The Appendix alone is well worth the price of the Book, the whole being well sewn and bound in genuine leather. For description and price, please see N.C.A., or send for Price List.

R 247

For the Children

How and Why Jesus Paid Tribute

In these stories, although we have so often spoken about the temple in Jerusalem, there is one thing particularly we have not yet mentioned; that is, where the money came from to pay all the expenses.

The temple was a very large as well as a wonderful building. It was the place where God was worshipped by the Jews. Animals and birds of various kinds—sheep, goats, cattle, doves, sparrows—were brought to the temple and were slain as part of the Jewish services.

The people who did this were the priests and Levites. There were quite a lot of these, and when all were counted, including "hewers of wood and drawers of water," the men employed in and about the temple would amount to some thousands, who took turns by course. The priests and Levites and servants, with their families, had to be supported, and there were many other expenses as well which amounted to a very large sum every year.

Voluntary Gifts to the Treasury

In one part of the temple there was a place called the treasury, and there the people cast in their contributions of money to meet the expenses.

Jesus one day stood near the treasury, and saw the people casting in their money. Rich people came and put in large sums; others not so rich put in less; but all put in as much as they seemed able to do. All that was very good and pleasing to God, for it was right that people should do this. But by and by there came along a woman whose husband had died and left her very, very poor. All the money she had was "two mites," equal to about one farthing of our money. These two mites she put into the treasury, and then she had nothing.

When Jesus saw that, He said that she had done better than any of them. For, although the others had cast in sums ever so much larger than hers, they still had plenty left; but this poor woman **gave all she had.** She was therefore the best giver, the Lord said.

The Poll Tax

But every year a special collection was made, and the money went to meet the expenses of the temple. Every man amongst the Jews who was over twenty years of age had to pay so much money. No matter whether they were rich or poor, they all had to pay the same amount, and in that way God showed them that they were all equal in His sight. Please read about this in Exodus 30: 11-16. The amount they had to pay was equal to about one shilling and threepence (thirty cents) of our money.

When Jesus was on the earth, there were about four hundred thousand Jewish men over twenty years of age in Palestine and the countries round about. So when 1/3 (30 c.) was collected from each one it would amount to a very large sum. Let my little friends work that out and see. It will show what a lot of money was needed every year for the temple services, and thus we can see what a lot can be done when a large number of people give a small amount, if only once a year.

In these ways, then, money was found for the services of the temple, and every year collectors were sent around to gather the 1/3 from the Jewish people.

When Jesus and His disciples were in Capernaum, one of the collectors came and asked Peter—"Doth not your master pay tribute?" By "tribute" he meant the 1/3 that all the Jews were required to pay. Peter at once said "Yes." And that was true. As a Jew, Jesus acknowledged the appropriateness of this regular contribution to the expenses of the temple by making the payments. And Jesus knew what had been said. Please read the story of this in Matthew 17: 24-27.

Now here is a strange thing. Of all the four hundred thousand who should pay the "tribute" money, there was One who had no need to, and that was Jesus Himself. If you ask why He should be exempted, you will find the answer in verses 25, 26. When you have read the verses, just think that Jesus was the only One of all the Jews who was the Son of God the great King; and under God Jesus was their King, and was "greater than the temple." (Matthew 12: 6.) All the rest were the "strangers"; and it is the strangers who have to pay tribute; not the sons, or children. So Jesus was free: He need not pay. But it was His wish to do so: and now you know the wonderful way in which He got the money; it was in the mouth of the fish that Peter caught. This Peter took and paid to the collectors, as the Lord said.

So although Jesus was poor, and had neither money nor a home, He had great power, and could arrange for a little fish to bring Him what He needed.

—UNCLE FRANK.

Proposal to Revive the Ancient Sanhedrin

FOR MANY YEARS Christian denominations have conducted missions to Jews, for the purpose of converting them to Christianity—with some success. Numbers of Jews have been convinced from the Old Testament, as interpreted by the New, that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, and their Messiah. Among these converts to Christianity have been some Jews who adopted premillennial views; that is, the teaching that the Lord would come again and set up a visible kingdom in the earth. Some have thought that Christian Jews would be taken to heaven, to be with the Lord, but that those Jews at present unbelieving would be returned to their own land as an everlasting inheritance, and be converted after their return. Others again believe that all Christians have an inheritance in the land of Palestine, that Jesus will come as a glorified Man, and that both Gentile and Hebrew Christians will form a welcoming body and become His emissaries throughout the earth.

For some time past Christian Jews have been discussing the formation of a modern Sanhedrin to reconsider the decision of that Sanhedrin which condemned our Lord Jesus. Christian Jews could not form such a Sanhedrin, since it was an all-Jewish institution. But the idea has been taken up by some orthodox Jews, who think that His condemnation to death was unnecessary, to say the least, since they regard Him as a teacher of social ideas far ahead of His time, and only now beginning to be properly appreciated. Hence that the Jews of to-day should in some way dissociate

themselves from the sentence passed on Jesus and the whole method of procedure leading up to that sentence.

From American sources we learn that the principal exponent of this proposition is an Orthodox Jew resident in Denver, Colorado. If he is at all a convert in heart to Jesus as the Saviour of the world and Redeemer of Israel, he is apparently not aware of it, and makes his appeal from a purely Jewish standpoint. By personal effort and publication of explanatory letters he is appealing to orthodox Jews to elect a new Sanhedrin, to meet in Jerusalem, and there deliberate over these matters. To further the purpose a Society was organised "for the promotion of the Divine Mission of Israel" which *society was to elect a representative to visit Jerusalem* and confer with Jews resident there. The organizer of the project himself visited Jerusalem, *and now considers the movement well launched.* The next step is to gain sufficient support from orthodox Jews the world over to make possible the selection of persons suitable to sit as members of so distinguished a Court of Review.

Only the future can show whether this movement will grow and prosper as the Zionist organizations have done, or whether it will fail through lack of support. As the question is up, it is well to know something about this ancient institution.

The Sanhedrim (accurately Sanhedrin), called also, in the Talmud, the great Sanhedrin, the supreme council of the Jewish people in the time of Christ, and earlier. According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, the origin of this assembly is traced in the Mishna to the seventy elders whom Moses was directed (Num. 11: 16, 17) to associate with him in the government of the Israelites.

But there is no direct authority for supposing that the 70 elders who proved useful to Moses were more than a temporary arrangement; besides which, they considered only the lesser cases; the more important went before Moses. Whereas the Sanhedrin was the highest court. The Variorum Bible Appendix, p. 124, has the following informative note on the Sanhedrin (R.V. Council)—

The word is a Hebraized form of the Greek *sunedrion, "council": in the Talmud it is called beth-din, "house of judgment."* The germ of this institution seems to have been in the appointment by Jehoshaphat of a court in Jerusalem, consisting of priests, Levites, and heads of families, "for the *judgment of Jehovah, and for controversies." Of this court* there were two presidents—the high priest in matters ecclesiastical, the head of the tribe of Judah in matters secular (2 Chronicles 19: 8-11). Nothing more of the court appears in the historical books; *and from the Greek name and other* circumstances, it may be judged that its complete organization belonged to the later Græco-Syrian period, being first explicitly mentioned in 2 Macc. 1: 10, and in the reign of Hyrcanus II.

The Greater Sanhedrin, or general council of the people, consisted, after the Mosaic precedent (Num. 11: 16), of seventy-one members, viz., the 24 *Chief Priests* or heads of courses, 24 *Elders*, representing the laity, and 22 *Scribes*, or *Lawyers*, together with the *High Priest*, who, if "endowed with wisdom," was the President (Nasi). It met in the hall of the Temple, called *Gazith* ("hewn stone"), sitting every day except Sabbaths and festivals. Twenty-three were a quorum, without whose presence no business could be transacted. The Sanhedrin is sometimes described by phrases such as "the chief priests and the elders of the people" (Matt. 27: 1), "their rulers and elders, and scribes" (Acts 4: 5), and, most generally, "chief priests, elders, and scribes" (Luke 20: 1, etc.). St. John appears to use the word "Pharisees" as a designation of the Sanhedrin (9: 13; 11: 46; etc.).

The chief function of the Sanhedrin was to watch over the religious life of the nation, taking special cognizance of the purity of the priesthood and their families, investigating alleged cases of departure from the faith. It also adjudicated in ecclesiastical and secular disputes, and acted even as a check upon the highest authorities in Church or State. Thus Herod himself in his younger days was summoned before the Sanhedrin to answer for his severities when governor of Galilee (*Jos. Ant.* 14: 9, 4), B.C. 69.

The Sanhedrin had power to punish by fine or imprisonment, stripes or death; but under the Romans the right of carrying out a capital sentence was taken away, or rigidly restricted (John 18: 31). St. Stephen's martyrdom was a tumultuary proceeding (Acts 7: 54-60).

A Lower Sanhedrin—of 23 where the adults exceeded 120, *and of 3 elsewhere*—*was organised in every town, subject to* the Greater Sanhedrin. In Matt. 5: 22, the *Judgment* and *Council* probably refer to the two classes.

Since the Jews have now no temple, no high priest, and no courses of priests, no Levites, and no heads of tribes, they could not constitute a body exactly like the Sanhedrin of our Lord's day. The Denver organizer of the movement and his organization committee have decided that the proposed Sanhedrin "shall be made up of twenty-three Rabbis of great learning and piety; twenty-four scientists and scholars of outstanding attainments; and twenty-four practical, hard-headed business men, possessed of keen analytical minds. All of these men are, of course, to be Jews of outstanding honor, integrity and righteousness, so that when their names are announced, *every class of people, throughout the world,* will concede that no finer, fairer, more intellectual and righteous body of men of like number has ever been assembled together for deliberation."

It will certainly be a matter of interest to see what Jews of known capacity and experience, as well as learning, will agree to become active members of such an organization. Perhaps again the Lord's words will become appropriate—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."—Matthew 11: 25, 26.

♣ ♣ ♣

The Raising of Lazarus

THE WORD "RESURRECTION" means "a standing up again." It implies a prone position—the prone position of death, with complete loss of power on the part of the individual so placed, and the need of an external power to bring about "a standing up again." In several instances in Old Testament times this was done: God's power being exercised through the prophets. —1 Kings 17: 17-24; 2 Kings 4: 18-37.

In these instances the identical dead bodies were re-animated, and the children resumed life as before. Similarly in the case of those whom the

Lord raised from death. None had gone to dust, and their resurrection was accomplished by the reanimation of the old body, as in the case of Lazarus. The account of this event is found in the eleventh chapter of John, and its history is interesting. It begins really in the tenth chapter.

Jesus told the unbelieving Jews that those who were following Him were His sheep, He being their Shepherd. That statement as it stood would not have hurt them in the least, for they had little or no respect for the claims He made as their Messiah. But when He said His Father, their Jehovah, had given these sheep to Him, and that He and the Father were necessarily one in this arrangement, thus implying that His followers were Jehovah's sheep, they took up stones to stone Him. They were angered. For in their opinion if anyone could lay claim to being the sheep of Jehovah's pasture it was themselves, and it was more than merely presumptuous on the part of One whom they regarded as a usurper and an impostor to associate Jehovah with Himself and His followers to the exclusion of themselves.

They do not appear to have thrown any stones, for Jesus immediately engaged them with a question. They had seen Him do many good works; for which of these were they stoning Him?

Their answer, as recorded in vs. 33, was a false accusation. Jesus had uttered no blasphemy; neither had He made Himself God. He had said God was His Father, and therefore He was God's Son. But they themselves in the Scriptures were called "gods"; how could they then accuse Him of blasphemy when He called himself "the son of God"? —John 10: 36; Psalm 82: 6.

Foiled thus in argument, they "sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand."

A Message from Bethany

All this happened in Jerusalem and at the temple. Leaving the city, He went eastward, and almost certainly passed through or near the town of Bethany, which was less than two miles from Jerusalem. Whether He visited the favoured family on this occasion or merely sent a messenger to the home is not recorded; but Martha and Mary at least knew of His whereabouts later. His destination at this time was "beyond Jordan . . . where John at first baptised; and there he abode." (John 10: 40.) There many people resorted unto Him, and many believed.

But He seems to have been not long in this region when there came a messenger from Martha and Mary who said, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." This was Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary. The object of the message obviously was that Jesus would either come and heal Lazarus or use His power to do so, although He was now about twenty-five miles away.

From what we have been able to learn of the happy family at Bethany, it seems clear that they were all believers on the Lord Jesus. The affectionate terms in which the message was couched could hardly bear any other significance, as far as Lazarus was concerned. If then this sick believer should die, it would be a most unfortunate circumstance. For there was presently to open up a new age, presenting the most wonderful possibilities, all involved in the Lord's first words to the Jews— "The kingdom of heaven is at hand"; "Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Matthew 4: 17; Mark 1: 15.) Men were not to attain to the great things offered in this message without first demonstrating by a life of faithfulness their acceptability. This could not be done in a day, nor could it really begin to be done until the foundations were laid for the new arrangements, and these were not laid until Christ died and rose again.

It would be quite a day's journey before the messenger would reach the Lord; and subsequent events show that by the time he had delivered his message Lazarus had died. Of this the Lord was fully aware, however much others with Him were in ignorance of it. That He knew Lazarus was dead appears from His answer to the message (verse 4)—

> "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby."

How little meaning there would be in the last half of these words had Lazarus been sick only, and, his sickness not terminating in death, he should make a recovery. There would be nothing unique in the circumstances, for such had happened in millions of cases before. Similarly, there would be nothing unique in a death termination, for that also had happened before. The words convey the meaning that God and His Son had knowledge of Lazarus' sickness, and that it was allowed to terminate in death for a particular reason, namely, "for the glory of God," and "that the Son of God [also] might be glorified thereby." The word "but" in this passage therefore bears the not unusual significance of "except," and when read with that understanding the Saviour's meaning is at once intelligible. Glory was subsequently given by many who witnessed the most marvellous exhibition of divine power ever presented.

There was no unkindness nor lack of regard on the Lord's part for the sorrow-stricken sisters in that He elected to remain beyond Jordan for two more full days before responding to their urgent message. The delay was necessary in order that the miracle He was to perform by the power of God might be the more wonderful.

We have now accounted for three days since the death of Lazarus, and on the fourth day—probably very early in the morning—Jesus left the region of the Jordan for Bethany. On hearing, by some means, of His coming, Martha "went and met him"; but Mary remained at home. It could hardly be that Martha only would learn of His coming, while Mary would be left in ignorance of it; and the effect of this news on the two sisters portrays with fine exactness the differences in the characters of the two sisters—the active, busy Martha; the meditative Mary. If on a previous occasion (Luke 10: 38-42) the active temperament of Martha called forth a mild rebuke from the Lord, it was on this occasion rewarded by her hearing some of the greatest words ever uttered and in gathering from the Saviour the first threads of hope in their deep sorrow.

The Depth of Martha's Faith

It was a wonderful little speech that Martha made on meeting Jesus. It is full of sorrow overflowing with faith in her Lord, wrapt in hope, and gently suggestive of her heart's wish regarding her brother—

"Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee."—John 11: 21, 22.

Gentle and modest as her words were, we should be dull indeed if we did not perceive in them her heart's desire to have her much loved brother back again. And in this she but expresses the ardent desire that has torn the souls of millions before and since in like circumstances. How intensely human, in surroundings of peace and happiness, to desire a continuance of life unbroken by the shafts of death. But if death should come, how welcome would He be who could cause the dead to "stand up again"! How eagerly did the Shunammite woman send for Elisha! Was Martha any the less eager?

With wonderful tact and consummate wisdom the Lord replied, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha knew that. She had been well instructed from the Old Testament scriptures that the dead must rise again. How else was father Abraham to inherit all the land that he saw? (Genesis 13: 14, 15.) How else were all the faithful from Abel to John to obtain that "better resurrection," and to be "princes in all the earth?" (Psalm 45: 16; Hebrews 11: 35.) It is also highly probable that during His many visits to the home of the happy family in Bethany our Lord would Himself have spoken much on this subject. Therefore Martha could reply with perfect certainty—"I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." But her heart does not appear to have been in this promise just then, nor was her grief assuaged by the prospect, certain though it was to her. The resurrection day was a long way off; the present is sweet, and had not Jesus raised up the widow's son and the daughter of Jairus? Why not my brother? Had she not almost said as much as this in her first words on meeting Jesus, "I know that *even now*," etc.—Luke 7: 11-15; 8: 41, 42, 49-56.

I am the Resurrection, and the Life

The answer that Jesus gave is amongst the greatest of all His utterances; and while it was probably intended in the first place to encourage Martha in her very natural hopes regarding her brother, it has come down to every believer in this age as an assurance that though they die they shall not thereby forever be deprived of life. Jesus said—"I am the resurrection, and the life: He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The Emphatic Diaglott rendering is, "I am the resurrection and the life; he believing into me, even though he die, shall live."—John 11: 25.

Martha might well have thought on hearing this much of the answer that the two conditions named in this wonderful statement were fulfilled in her brother; Lazarus was a believer, and Lazarus had died. It now needed but the exercise of His power to complete the cycle, in raising him from the dead. It seems clear, as we shall see, that Jesus had this in mind also. For, carrying her in thought a little further, He said—"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Vs. 26.) She confessed that she believed that He was "the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world": and, that being so, His words were the Truth from God Himself.

Lazarus, Come Forth

Mary is now informed of the Master's arrival, and coming to Him with Martha they and the whole company of followers go to the tomb. Jesus ordered the stone at the mouth of the tomb to be taken away; but immediately a mild protest came from Martha, for a reason which she named, and doubtless also because the now much decomposed body would be a sight too awful to behold.

The Lord's reply, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (vs. 40) was particularly directed to Martha, who had just before confessed to her belief that her brother would rise again (vs. 24); but all around were permitted to hear the words, "that they [also] may believe." (Vs. 42.) With the taking away of the stone it must suddenly have dawned upon the mind of Martha that all her cherished hopes were about to be realised, that there and then she was to see "the glory of God" in the raising up of her brother, for it was then that Jesus "cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth."—Verses 43, 44.

A miracle more stupendous than this can scarcely be imagined. In consequence of it, many believed on Him there, and from it we may freely reason that God is able to do all His will respecting the millions now lying in the dust of the earth. Lazarus had not returned to dust; but, corruption having set in, no human power could have prevented in his case the completion of the process whereby mankind have turned to dust. The miracle of arresting corruption after four days and restoring healthy living tissue was practically to create a new body for Lazarus, but in the exact likeness of the one which had died. So that Lazarus knew himself and was recognized by Martha and Mary as their brother. It was an act of resurrection, or "standing up again," but not a resurrection to perfection and everlasting life, for in the course of time Lazarus died again.

The miracle was not only wonderful, its value to Lazarus personally was inestimable. It enabled him to participate in the opportunities of the new age (beginning with Pentecost), in which God would select a limited number from the human race to be joint-heirs with His Son in His glorious kingdom.—Romans 8: 17, 18.

Shall Never Die

We have already intimated that verses 25 and 26 of John 11 contain the greatest message that could ever have been given to us mortals. If the Lord says (verse 25) that even though a believer in Him now should die, yet shall he live, He demonstrated the power of God to effect this purpose by the rais-

ing of Lazarus. But in vs. 26 He carries us further —"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The Lord would not forget the millions of unenlightened and consequently unbelieving dead who are to "stand up again," that they may be enlightened; and to these the words of this verse apply.

The fact that these thousands of millions have turned to dust offers no obstacle to the Lord's power to resurrect them, to cause them to stand up again—the identical individuals they were when they went down into death; for He said, "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth." (John 5: 28, 29.) There is no doubt that they shall come forth with the mentality and the character with which they went into death, and also with imperfect bodies such as they had had, and which expressed the limitations of their minds and characters. Were this not so, it could not be said that the persons coming forth were those who had died. As we see in Lazarus' case, when the Lord called, "Lazarus, come forth," Lazarus came forth as the man he had been before his fatal illness, so it will be in the resurrection of those whose fitness for everlasting life has yet to be established; for while they are unbelievers they cannot be said to have life in its full sense. The Lord is "the resurrection," to call them forth to the enlightening influences of the kingdom age; He says He is also "the life." For to the Lord Jesus is given the authority to grant "eternal salvation unto all them that obey him," and to none others.—Hebrews 5: 9.

The giving of eternal life to those who believe in that age will be a further exhibition of His power and benevolence for which all who see it and enjoy it will further and forever glorify Him.

Perhaps we now realise in some degree the far-reaching effect of the miracle of raising Lazarus. He was allowed to die of his sickness in order that God's name might be glorified. He would not have been allowed to die unless in some way God's glory would be manifested. This effect appeared at the time; especially in those who, having witnessed the event, became believers. Others believing since have gloried in this exhibition of divine power from that day to this. And what may be spoken of as its continuation in the age coming will call forth the glorying, the wonder, and the admiration of millions more. God's name will be acclaimed in thunder tones when the greater multitudes raised from death shall have been enlightened and join in glorifying God and the Lamb.—Revelation 5: 11-14.

But for the words which Martha was honoured to have first addressed to her with all the fullness of their meaning and significance we can even now heartily thank God; and with the eyes of faith see the day when "there shall be no more death" (Revelation 21: 4); for—

"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"

—F.S.

Christ Our Lord and Master

(Can be sung to Tunes Nos. 179 and 182 in Zion's Glad Songs)

With gladness look we to the day
When Christ shall o'er the world hold sway;
When kings and princes shall bow down,
And Christ as Lord and Master own;

When nations o'er the earth outspread
And myriads risen from the dead
Shall bow in homage at His throne,
And Christ as Lord and Master own.

But what of us, who now have heard
The Gospel call to serve the Lord?
Shall we, on whom The Light has shone,
Not Christ as Lord and Master own?

Ah, yes! He bought us with His blood,
The anointed holy Son of God.
No longer serfs of Sin we groan,
But Christ as Lord and Master own.

O Jesus, reigning in my heart,
Teach me in life my little part.
With Thee, I shall not walk alone,
But Christ as Lord and Master own. —R.B.H.

From Far and Near

Leaky Memories

Dear Brother Henninges: My "N.C. Advocate" was so interesting to me this month that I sent it to a neighbour, who had asked did I know ——, "who has some strange ideas on religion." And I also got out some points on the Holy Spirit to consider with her, and did the best I could.

Now I wish that I could write to you like those letters in the N.C.A.—about my life and the twenty-five years' learning, like a child—a little here and there all the way along, and not full grown yet.

Some parts of Scripture prophecy my mind never will keep so I can explain it to others. Do you understand my meaning—all these strange beasts, and history. Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchednezzar's dream is easy to go through, and the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." What strange creatures we would be, if we did not do our best to get others to see these things. How blessed we are, but we want more.

I hope you and Sister Henninges are well.

Yours in the one hope of our calling,

——————, *Australia.*

Leaky memories are not unusual. The Lord calls us new creatures in Christ, but the "new creature" must use the brain of the human organism, and that brain as we all know is defective. It is defective because we belong to a race fallen far below the original perfection in which it was created. No doubt there are some things in the Truth more easily remembered than others, such as those mentioned. The gospel of God's love in Christ is so simple a very young child can understand it. But even the simplest things we must continually go over or they grow dim. Peter wrote his second epistle to put the brethren "in remembrance" of things they already knew, though they were "established in them" as "present truth." Perhaps one reason the Lord has made us ambassadors is that telling it over and over again keeps it ever fresh in our own minds. And as we have known our dear Sister for twenty-five years we can say she is not so deficient as she fears in the telling of it, God bless her!

The apostle Paul tells of some "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3: 7), and the reason given is that their lives were not consistent. That of course is a different class from the child-like learners who recognise their own weakness and faulty memory, and are continually revitalizing their knowledge by study of the Word of truth and the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of"—that is, continue in the apostolic teaching. What the Lord and the apostles taught is "present truth" to-day as it was then.

So far as remembering history is concerned, no one—not even the brightest and most adept—can remember every detail. But if we can remember the broad outlines of the history of God's people from the beginning, and the principal events of the Gospel age relating to the preservation of God's people in the truth, and those great movements for reform which were necessary from time to time to deliver them out of error and other bondage to clearer and more Biblical knowledge, we shall do well. Knowing what our brethren have suffered for Christ's sake throughout the age will stimulate us to faithfulness and nerve as to endure the trials and testings that come upon us. Another thought given out by the apostle is, "in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men [or mature]."—1 Corinthians 14: 20.

Memory can be cultivated; nevertheless, there comes to all of us a time when our course is finished and memory fails completely. But, thanks be unto God, there is then a resurrection in the likeness of our Lord, and with the wonderful memory that attaches to spirit beings. God never forgets—except our sins, when we have confessed them in the name of Jesus. Even the very hairs of our heads are numbered. When we think that God remembers every human being that ever lived, and has arranged an opportunity for salvation for each one, we have some idea of what a really good memory is. Never let us doubt, or fear that God will forget us, His own children by Jesus Christ. (Galatians 3: 26; Colossians 2: 6, 7; 1 Thessalonians 1: 2-10; Hebrews 13: 5, 6.) And let us on our part not forget God.

A Pleasant Surprise

Dear Brother Henninges: Greetings in the Name we love. A short time ago a brother in Christ sent me the N.C.A., May 1st, 1928, with the Conference addresses. I enjoyed reading them very much, and sent to Nottingham asking if any back numbers were obtainable, and that if possible my name be put upon your free list, as owing to continued ill-health over six years my income is very small.

The friends at N. sent me nine copies, and I feel I must write and tell you how much I have enjoyed reading the same and how helpful some of the articles have been to me.

For over 25 years I was a member of the Primitive Methodist Church. Then it pleased the dear Lord to bring to my notice the volumes of the late Pastor Russell. The "Watch Tower" I could not get on with so well, as the viewpoint therein expressed seemed so often in conflict with the volumes, and I could not accept the "one channel" doctrine. Then for a short time I was in fellowship with the Associated Bible Students, but I could never understand how the Church could be called, developed, and perfected under the Abrahamic Covenant, as they assert.

Great was my surprise when this copy of the New Covenant Advocate came along, to know that there were in existence some brethren who were teaching that the Church is being dealt with under the New Covenant. The addresses in May issue were helpful, but the June issue puts the matter beyond doubt in my mind. "The Atonement in Type and Antitype" is very clear and illuminating, especially on the scapegoat type. That some unfaithful members of the Church could be the scapegoat I could never accept. "Present your Bodies" sermon is also very stimulating, and provocative to be up and doing all we can.

"One Body in Christ" is good. Some of the I.B.S.A. used to tell me, and the "Watch Tower" wanted me to believe, that we were a part of the Christ. Your splendid article put the matter very clearly, for which I am thankful. [In Scripture any congregation is likened to a whole body—including head, feet, and other members, for the apostle speaks of eye and ear members of the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 12).—Editor N.C.A.]

Another article that has helped me is the one on the Great Pyramid exposing the many theories that are now being given out as to the Pyramid being corroborative of the Bible, whereas it is a heathen monument.

"Baptism and its Significance" I enjoyed. In the denomination we attached no importance to baptism as immersion, and at the time I first understood its significance my illness commenced, so that it has been quite impossible for me to undergo immersion. It has often troubled me that I could not, but the dear Lord knows I am willing and have been so in spirit.

There are many more articles which have been a real spiritual treat these past few days, and in addition to thanking God I felt compelled to write and say Thank you, Brother, God bless you! I am sorry that I cannot send anything more, as I am very short of money, being confined to bed with internal trouble. But I have much to be thankful for; as, though my physical strength is small, my mental faculties remain perfectly good, and the dear Lord allows me sometimes to give the message to those who come to see me. I have a wife also, and three dear children. I would be glad of some of your books, but will have to wait until the dear Lord opens up the way for me, but I am thankful for what I have received. With warm love and prayers on your behalf, I remain, Your Brother in Christ,

———, *England.*

[This is good news indeed, another brought into the full glowing light which shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord; wherein we are able to see the distinction between what our Lord was as the atonement sacrifice—the one and only sacrifice for sins—and the position of the church, the church being in no sense an atonement, but a beneficiary of that sacrifice which He gave for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. The position the Lord has given us as members of the Church now involves us in suffering for His sake and in laying down our lives for the brethren, but none of this is or can be a propitiatory offering.

We take pleasure in sending the brother a full set of the books, and the N.C.A. will go monthly. And we are sure that the prayers of all fellow believers will rise on his behalf, that if it be the Lord's will his health may be sufficiently restored to permit of the baptism in water, in symbol of that burial into Christ which he has already experienced. And if it is the Lord's will that the invalidism continue, we know He will grant grace to bear it, and also provide all daily needs.

In some instances invalid brethren and sisters have been immersed by us in a bathtub filled with warmed water, and this has served very well, as it permits the complete immersion of the candidate in the water; making as accurate a representation of death, burial, and resurrection as could be made in a regular baptismal tank, or in the open river, lake, or sea. And no ill consequences followed to their health.

It occurs to us that other readers may like to see the numbers of N.C.A. containing the articles referred to in the above letter. If so, send in your requests. Look through the Index on the last page of March issue, and write for one or more of the special articles that you see there and desire to read. —Editor.]

Thankful Hearts

Dear Brother Henninges:—I regret to say that it is some time since I wrote you. I trust you have not forgotten me, for I assure you that I have not forgotten you, although I have been in poor health latterly. I am now in my 81st year and my wife also well advanced in age. The N.C.A. has been received regularly, for which we both thank you. But I regret to say that I am in poor financial circumstances, as we have only the pensions to keep us, and it is quite a struggle to get along. Nevertheless, we are quite happy and fully reconciled, for which we thank God. Our faith is strong in the Lord, who has protected us through the difficulties of a long life. We thank you for sending the N.C.A. and tracts, which we carefully read and much enjoy, and we request that you will continue to send it to the end. Yours in the Lord,

——— *Australia.*

With pleasure will the N.C.A. be continued to the dear brother and sister; it is a great privilege to be permitted thus to minister the Word to them and others in like circumstances, the expense of such free copies being defrayed by the Advocate Sustaining Fund of Voluntary Donations, to the monthly report of which on the last page of this issue all readers are requested to refer for the special information there set out. Those who are financially blessed will like to assist in overtaking the deficit. They can feel that in so doing they are giving joy to many. The only condition imposed upon those who receive the N.C.A. free is that they renew their request yearly (the month of March being the best time for this), so we may know they are still living and desiring to continue as readers.

The Sermon on the Mount

(Continued from October issue)

In regard to this, as we have said in regard to other instances, we should say the word "borrow" does not apply. This is trickery and theft, and should be repented of and made right by the person who kept the good tool and substituted the inferior one. The person wronged may be indulgent and "turn the other cheek," but this by no means makes right the wrong done.

How warped and twisted the ideas of many are on the subject of borrowing was shown by an item which appeared in the Woman's Column of a reputable Melbourne daily. Referring to the visit of an American millionaire, he was described as mean because he insisted that a pencil some one had borrowed from him should be returned. The dishonesty of the one who was favoured by the loan of the pencil, presumably for immediate use, was not reproved. Nor was it remarked that even a millionaire might be inconvenienced by another retaining his pencil; nor yet was consideration given to the possibility that there was some sentiment attached to that particular pencil which constrained

the millionaire to wish to keep it Had the millionaire desired to make a gift, that would have been another matter. One may cheerfully give away thousands voluntarily, and yet resent having things taken, or as it is called "borrowed," though more exactly described as stealing.

Our Lord's statement (Luke 6: 34)—"And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again," is not a reproof to a lender for expecting the return of the thing lent; neither does it justify the borrower in retaining or damaging the thing lent. The lesson in Luke 6: 32 to 34 is that there is no particular merit in lending where the lender receives back within a reasonable time the money loaned, or where by agreement he accepts something else of equivalent value, or where he makes a present confident that it will bring an equivalent return in some shape or form. Even under the law the Jew was taught that kindness, generosity, mercy were desirable traits of character, making the possessor of these qualities more highly approved in God's sight than the hard-hearted, even though the latter kept punctiliously the prescribed ceremonials.—Matthew 23: 23; 9: 13; Psalm 41: 1-3; etc.

What Thank: Graciousness

The expression "what thank have ye" needs a little explaining. The Greek word rendered "thank" is *charis*, and is elsewhere rendered "grace," "favour," "liberality," etc. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance defines it thus: "graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act," and includes the thought of gratitude and thankfulness, according to whether one be the giver or the receiver. The giver is gracious, while the recipient is thankful. *In ordinary lending and borrowing there is no necessity* for either graciousness on the one hand or for gratitude on the other. Each is profited by the transaction and thinks only of what he can get out of it for himself. But to give to the poor expecting nothing but gratitude in return (and not always receiving that), or to lend without pressing a poor debtor for the last farthing of interest and giving him time in which to pay the principal if circumstances are against him—in this there is some "*thank*," *some graciousness, something* above the sordid level of everyday affairs.

Endorsing a Note

Advantage is sometimes taken of Christians who misunderstand the Lord to mean never to refuse to lend money when asked to do so. More especially if the Christian be approached with the assurance that he is not asked to hand over any actual cash, but merely to endorse a promissory note. As a rule the request is made by some one in financial straits who is being pressed by his creditors, and who gives a note promising to pay at a certain date. But the debtor's promise to pay has no value without the signature of a solvent person or firm who thereby guarantees to pay the amount in the event of default. In some cases the applicant is a relative or friend whose distress is genuine, in other cases the applicant may be attempting a fraud, but in either case the one who "backs a bill," as they say in Australia, is liable to loss. Persons we have known have been ruined—losing their homes, and their families being brought to want. What is the right way of looking at this phase of the subject?

In answer we should say that endorsing a note for a sum one cannot afford to lose without imperilling the wellbeing of one's family is far from our Lord's meaning. Instead of backing a bill one could offer a loan of a smaller sum that one could safely risk losing in the event of the person later on refusing to pay or being unable to do so. Sad to say, human nature is such that some men have laid the basis of their fortunes on the unwise good-heartedness of some Christian whom they defrauded by means of an endorsed note; and even after wealth has come to them have not thought it worth while to make good their imposition, and lift their benefactors out of the poverty their wrong conduct brought upon them. No: the Lord was far from commanding His people to place themselves and their living in jeopardy by a too kindly grant of their signatures.

This brings us again to the consideration of Matthew 5: 43, as making clear what is involved in Luke 6: 32-35; a consideration of who are meant by "neighbours" and who are meant by "enemies," as defined in the Mosaic law and as used by our Lord in this wonderful sermon.

Dealings with Neighbours and with Enemies

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

The popular interpretation of verse 43 is that the "neighbour" is "the people next door," or "down the street"; while the "enemy" is anybody at all that tries to do us an injury. Now it must be apparent from what we have thus far studied that the law did not tell the Israelite to hate anybody and everybody who sought his injury, taking that as the definition of enemy, for sometimes the person next door or "neighbour" sought to do an injury. In that case the Israelite would have the impossible task of loving and hating at the same time.

Our Lord's words, "Ye have heard that it hath been said," are not applicable to rumour or to tales that might go about from one to another, or to someone's fancy or guess as to what might, could, would, or should be. His words refer to what was stated in the divine law, and given to Israel as commands they must obey. It was equally the command of God to hate their enemy as it was to love their neighbour. If any one be astonished that God should give such a commandment, let him not be carried away by his astonishment and say, "I don't believe it." The better plan is to look into the matter. Who were the enemies the Israelites were commanded to hate? Was it any one who did them "a bad turn," as we might express it to-day?

No: that is not it. If we read Leviticus 19: 18; Deuteronomy 23: 3-6; Ezra 9: 11-14, we shall see

that the whole twelve tribes of Israel were a people set apart, and that each member of the house of Israel was "neighbour" to every other member. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" was therefore a command so to regard a fellow Israelite. They were one nation, one large body politic with mutual interests; but, above all, they had one God, one law, one Mediator (Moses), one form of worship. All outside were without the law, without the true worship, and without God in covenant relationship. The majority of these outside peoples were enemies of Israel; in some cases enemies seeking their physical and political subjugation; in other cases, moral enemies, seeking to entrap them in idol worship and the accompanying abominations. These, and particularly the latter, were the enemies they were to hate. Fidelity to God and His covenant required Israel to destroy the Canaanites, for God looked upon the Canaanites as enemies, the cup of whose iniquity was full.—Genesis 15: 16; 1 Kings 21: 26.

But now, under the New Covenant, does the Lord require His people still to hate the idol-worshipping nations?

No, said Jesus in the Sermon on the mount. God's great purpose of the ages is to have another development in a new age—to which the name Gospel age has since been given. God will no longer operate under the law covenant with one nation, but will send out the gospel to do a work amongst all nations. As later shown to Peter by vision, as he explained to Cornelius—"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him"—the ground of acceptance being faith in the precious blood of Jesus shed on Calvary for the remission of sins.—Acts 10: 34-43.

Instead of hating and avoiding the former "enemy" nations, the Lord's disciples were to do them good. While still hating the idolatry and sin, for they were to follow in their Master's footsteps who "hated iniquity" (Hebrews 1: 9; 1 Peter 2: 21), they were to extend their love and their kindliness beyond the bounds of their own nationality and tell the whole world the blessed tidings of a Saviour and Lord.—Matthew 28: 19, 20; Luke 24: 46-48.

Who is My Neighbour?

This is the spirit of the New Covenant—love that pities and helps. The lawyer who tempted or tested Jesus, apparently with the purpose of entrapping Him, found himself so well answered that he could find no fault; for the Lord quoted the two great commandments—love to God, and love to neighbour. However, "willing to justify himself"—that is, willing to draw out Jesus further and so if possible prove Jesus in the wrong—he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbour?" Then the Lord gave the beautiful parable of the "Good Samaritan."—Luke 10: 25-37.

We have heard Christians try to wriggle out of the application of this parable, by a play on our Lord's question—"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?" But the lawyer, much as the answer was against him, answered truthfully, "He that showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said unto him, "Go, and do thou likewise."

By this parable, with its application of the term "neighbour" to a Samaritan, our Lord taught that the limited application of "neighbour," as representing love and kindness between Jew and Jew, was to be done away, and a larger application of the term begun; as when Peter the Jew was sent to do good to the Gentile Cornelius. But even larger and more important than that was His own love, by which he regarded the whole world of enemies with compassion, and for whom He would lay down His life. To all who would be like Jesus must come the spirit of compassion, kindness, helpfulness, mercy.

Who is my neighbour? Not necessarily those who look upon me as a neighbour and do kindness to me: that is their responsibility. As for me, my neighbours are any and all whom I may aid; but especially any whom I may help to a knowledge of the Saviour and His love, or whom I may assist to serve Him better.—Galatians 6: 9, 10.

Further comment on the Parable of the Good Samaritan will be found in "The Parables of our Lord," pp. 90-93, to which the reader is recommended.

Having now seen the sense in which the terms "neighbour" and "enemy" were used under the law, and how those who heard the Sermon on the Mount were accustomed to use them, we can see that Luke 6: 35—"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, in nothing despairing," was not dealing with personal enemies, but with persons outside the "neighbours" of their own nationality. It was a teaching that love, goodness, and benevolence should not be thus restricted, but allowed to flow out to all around.

"In nothing despairing." That is, not despairing of your kindness being appreciated, in some cases at least. Or, if we take the Revised Version marginal rendering, "despairing of no man," do not indulge the preconceived opinion that all Gentiles will be unappreciative of acts of kindness. Our Lord's experience with the leper showed that a "stranger" could be grateful, when nine Jews were not.—Luke 17: 11-19.

God's Enemies are our Enemies

But we must observe that under the New Covenant we do not cease to have enemies. And, like the Israelites under the Law, we find that our enemies are not those of our own choosing, but those whom God declares to be our enemies and commands us to regard as such. And the question comes to us: Shall we love them? or shall we hate them? This involves also coming to a decision as to how we shall treat—conduct ourselves toward—these enemies, in manifestation of our love or our hate as the case may be.

We have already seen that we are to "hate iniquity," and the same passage tells us that our Lord "loved righteousness," hence we too must love righteousness. We must be on good terms with

righteousness, and we must avoid iniquity—friends with righteousness, enemies of iniquity. Conversely, righteousness is our friend, and iniquity is our enemy. Other impersonal enemies named in Scripture are death and the grave. These two enemies Christ has conquered; and, having done so, He promises that we shall be delivered from their power and given everlasting life if we are obedient and faithful. We are not told to love death, and we do not need to be told to hate it, for all normal human beings fight death as well as they are able.

Enemies of the Cross of Christ

Having taken our stand on the side of Christ and righteousness, we find that all persons who are His enemies are our enemies. One of the most conspicuous of these is Satan, the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 2: 2, 3.) From his power we escape through faith in Christ (Colossians 1: 13, 14; Acts 26: 18), but he is ever striving to regain power over us. This enemy we must not love, but must continually fight against, as commanded in Ephesians 6: 10-18; 1 Peter 5: 8, 9. As "love" is an expression of the correct attitude of mind toward God, so "hate" adequately expresses the proper attitude of mind toward Satan. Love to God and to Christ compels us to regard with aversion this implacable enemy of our loving heavenly Father and our dear Lord Jesus.

As a sinner every member of the human race is an enemy of God and of Christ; but in view of the fact that most were enemies by being born into that condition, and not of free choice (as Satan is), God could love these enemies, and Christ could so love them as to die for them. (John 3: 16; 1 John 4: 9, 10; Matthew 20: 28.) But we must remember that this love and mercy were shown because many of the enemy race would on enlightenment become friends of God and of Christ, deeply appreciating what had been done for them. Yet some after enlightenment, and in spite of it, again become enemies of God and of Christ, preferring Satan and his rebellious methods to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Obviously it is important that we know what our attitude toward such enemies should be. Concerning this the apostle Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren—

> Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.
>
> Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.
>
> (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:
>
> Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" —Philippians 3: 16-19.

Thus Paul draws a distinct line of cleavage between those who are running for the prize (3: 13, 14), whose conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven (3: 20), and those who after knowing the truth still "mind earthly things." There are such in Christendom to-day, perhaps among our own friends, relations, and professing brethren in Christ. What should be our attitude Paul shows when he says to take him (Paul) as an example; and we know it was not his practise to condone the worldliness and deceitful words and works of the false brethren. He constantly warned the faithful brethren to avoid such, because they were beyond help and their influence was pernicious, if allowed to remain in the assemblies of believers; they "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."—Romans 16: 17, 18; Galatians 1: 6-9; 1 Timothy 6: 3-5.

Do Good to Them that Hate You

Observing this distinction, then, between those who are God's enemies and ours through ignorance and those who are God's enemies and ours because they are perverse (even if pleasant spoken) opposers of the truth, we can see once again that our Lord had the former in mind when He instructed us to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5: 44.) To brethren also who err through weakness and ignorance loving help should be given, and prayers should ascend on their behalf. (Galatians 6: 1, 2; James 5: 16.) But the wilful, who persistently "practise sin" in spite of all warnings, place themselves outside these, and the apostle John says the time comes when it is useless even to pray for them.—1 John 2: 5-9; 5: 15-17.

The Children of Your Father in Heaven

This training in a loving and benevolent disposition, which the Lord gives under the New Covenant —by writing the laws and principles of a loving God on our minds and hearts through the Holy Spirit and the divine Word—is necessary in order to transform the believer from his natural selfishness to a disposition suitable or becoming to a child of God.

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

Our Father in heaven is a generous Giver. The sun and the rain are universal blessings, shared by the Gentiles, who are reminded that these gifts come from God and are a reason for serving Him. (Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 25.) He sent His beloved Son to die for all, and He purposes that the knowledge of this great Gift of His love shall yet reach all, even those who have passed into their graves without hearing of it.

One of the reasons for our confidence that Jesus was the only begotten Son of God in a way that none of the condemned race of Adam ever were or ever will be is that He manifested throughout His life the same generous disposition to bless the needy. He "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil." (Acts 10: 38.) He was a perfect representation of the character of His Father—pure, holy, undefiled, separate from sinners.—Hebrews 7: 26; John 14: 9.

The gospel is a message of blessing, as preached before to Abraham—"In thy seed shall all nations be blessed." (Galatians 3: 8, 16.) Jesus Christ, the Seed, was a blesser while on earth, is still so in His glorious position in heaven, and will demonstrate the fact even more publicly in the Kingdom age. We to be accounted worthy to live and reign with Him must cultivate the same spirit of blessing, even to the extent of laying down our lives for the brethren.—John 15: 12, 13; 1 John 3: 14-16.

The Perfect Pattern

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

God is perfect in the absolute sense. In our imperfect flesh we cannot expect to be absolutely perfect. But "perfect" is sometimes used in regard to a lesson learned. In the school of Christ we are being taught this lesson of being blessers, of doing the kind, loving thing which is in our power to do to help those around us. To help some with temporal aid is undoubtedly our privilege and a manifestation that we are the children of a Father of blessing. But just as our Heavenly Father's greatest Gift was not the sun and the rain and the temporal food, so He has given to His children the privilege of giving out even greater blessings than temporal relief. He has made us "ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." He has given us the "word of reconciliation" to point men to Jesus as the Reconciler between God and men, on the simple requirement of faith.—2 Corinthians 5: 19, 20.

How blessed to be able to give out this message! How blessed not to need to pick and choose as to who shall hear it, and who not, but to tell it out—the world over—that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Romans 10: 9-14.) It is "good tidings of great joy" for all people, and we are glad we are not the only ones who shall have the opportunity of hearing the good news. For the day is coming when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, and then the love and mercy as well as the wisdom, justice, and power of God shall be fully demonstrated to all mankind. Then the glories of His perfection will be acclaimed in the best possible way—by the perfect putting on of His virtues by the saved of the Kingdom age (even as we now strive to do in our defective way by the power of His Spirit within), that God may be all and in all.

(To be continued)

The New Covenant Advocate and .... **Kingdom Herald**

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-
In other countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C.1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Library Supply Fund

32, £2:8:0 ($11.66); previously reported, £217:16:7 ($1058.62); total for 10 months, £220:4:7 ($1070.28); the amount received in the last month enabling us to send 19 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 2378 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

Receipts at Durban, 10/- ($2.43); previously reported, £182:13:0 ($887.66); total for 10 months, £183:3:0 ($890.09); which, after clearing off last year's adverse balance, leaves about £42 ($210) to apply on this year's work so far.

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!

106, £1; 107, £1; 108, £1; 109, 4/-; 110, £4; 111, 8/-; 112, £1; 113, 2/-; 114, £1; 115, 10/-; 116, £1; 117, 2/-; 118, £2:10:0; 119, £1:8:0; 120, £2:5:8; 121, 16/-; 122, £1:1:11; total for month, £19:7:7 ($94.18); previously reported, £149:17:0 ($728.26); total for 10 months, £169:4:7 ($822.44). Of this sum only about £85 is available for this year's work after clearing off last year's deficit. About £250 will be needed for this Fund by December 15 to avoid another deficit.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage, extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d.; elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C.1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

Registered at the G.P.O., Melbourne
for transmission by post as a Newspaper

The New Covenant Advocate
— and —
Kingdom Herald

Vol. 21 MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA, DECEMBER 1, 1929 No. 9

Hailstones

WHEN THE RAIN makes a rattling noise on the roof we look out to see if it is hail; or if we are out in it we are keen to get under shelter of a verandah or a tree. Drops of rain have crystallized into tiny grains of ice, and almost as soon as they touched the pavement or the ground they have melted, and we almost wonder if there has been a "shower of hail" or not. The drops of rain have passed through a stratum of air sufficiently cold to freeze them, but each has maintained its own individuality, and has done no damage when it fell. Very innocuous it seems, and some little child may say, wonderingly, it is so like rain—"Is that *hail?*"

But perhaps the day comes when the rain is heavier, when the hailstones developing in the downward rush are larger and become aggregations of ice. Perhaps they are as large as a pea, or a marble, or a bird's egg, and perhaps they come down thickly and destroy the fruit on the trees and the flowers in the garden. Perhaps spoutings are clogged and roofs leak, and everyone dashes out and picks up specimens, looking for the largest. Perhaps windows and skylights are shattered here and there, and people say, "That **was** a hailstorm; did you have any windows broken?" The price of fruit goes up, the windows are reglazed, the roofs repaired, the ice melts and runs away, and everything is practically as before.

A Double Cyclonic Hailstorm

We have been favored with clippings from the "Natal Advertiser" and the "Natal Mercury," containing graphic accounts of the terrific hailstorm that passed over Durban, South Africa, early in the evening of June 24 last. The "Mercury" thus describes the "furious bombardment of hailstones"—

Durban was struck by a tornado of hailstones early yesterday evening. For *nearly half an hour hail as big and as heavy as cricket balls rained* down on the town with a fury that was as awe-inspiring as it was destructive. The tiled roofs of commercial and residential buildings in the path of the tornado crumpled up under the fierce bombardment, and the occupants were flooded out.

The damage was unprecedented. It was impossible to obtain a reliable estimate last night, because the storm covered a big area, but it is calculated that the half-hour of cyclonic fury will cost Durban hundreds of thousands of pounds—probably half a million sterling.

So many windows and tiled roofs were smashed to smithereens that there will not be enough glass or tiles to repair the damage for weeks. In West Street most of Durban's magnificent shops were flooded by the rain that poured through fanlights and tiled roofs pierced by the hailstones. Damage to stocks was exceptionally heavy, and there will be record bargains for Durban shoppers during the next few days.

The hailstorm hit Durban like a bolt from the blue, just after 6 o'clock, when business men and workers had just returned to their homes.

Immediately the whole town was paralysed. Hailstones that descended with a force sufficient to stun people forced everyone to rush for shelter. Trams, trains and motor-cars had to be temporarily abandoned, and were rapidly "iced" under.

There was nothing but a few peals of thunder and spectacular flashes of lightning to herald this rush of hail. The first fall was comparatively light, but it was a phenomenon which set people talking. The oldest residents could not recall anything but the lightest fall of hail in Durban. But the wonderment at the first fall of hail gave way to amazement as the fury of the storm increased and rose to a cyclonic climax.

During the fiercest gusts it rivalled a trench bombardment. The stones struck the tiled roofs with a force that could not have been exceeded if they had been fired from a Gatling gun, while the lighter stones kept up a machine-gun tattoo.

Like a Waterspout

From the top of the Berea the sight was awesome. Peal after peal of thunder crashed, and blue streaks of lightning flashed out behind massive inky black clouds as if a great celestial battle was in fierce progress. Gradually Durban was obscured by a drifting pall that looked like heavy rain, and a sound was distinctly audible like the beating of heavy surf on rocks—a steady, continuous drumming as if millions of hands were beating giant tom-toms with a strange rhythmic cadence. Every time the lightning flashed there was clearly visible a tall, twisting spiral of blackness, blacker even than the rest of the surrounding sky that seemed to waver upwards like the smoke from a fire until it touched the sky. It was like a water-spout. When it had passed, and the lights showed again, Durban looked strangely dark.

The storm swept from a south-westerly direction, but the hail seems to have been concentrated on the Borough area, although Greyville and Stamford Hill escaped. In all the other districts of the town the streets were rapidly transformed into ice drifts. In West Street and Smith Street the hailstones made an icy mantle ankle deep, and for hours afterwards men and women were sliding and slipping in their desperate efforts to cross the streets.

In 25 minutes Durban was turned into a city of ice. It was at dusk that the heavy storm-clouds rolled up out of the west, and soon lightning was stabbing the growing darkness from behind them. The wind rose, and rain fell in torrents. Then, drumming like a cavalry troop at the gallop, came the hail across the roofs of Durban. At first the stones were small, and they rattled harmlessly on the windows. Suddenly, however, the fury of the storm broke. The din rose in a crescendo, and speech was impossible. As large as tennis-balls, the lumps of ice pelted down. To the crash and thunder of the storm was added the sound of breaking glass.

The streets were deserted. Hundreds of people huddled under verandahs, but even there they were not safe from the bruising hail. In an incredibly short space the whole of the streets were carpeted in white. Motorists abandoned their cars in the middle of the streets and ran into buildings for safety.

And the hail lashed down. Nothing could withstand the onslaught. Canvas blinds were ripped to ribbons, tiles were shattered, plate-glass nearly an inch thick might have been paper.

Deeper and deeper the hail grew until the streets were six inches deep in it. The gutters were filled, and Smith and West Streets presented an unbroken field of ice from side to side.

When the storm reached its height the din was inconceivable. Out from the top floor of the "Natal Mercury" building the storm was a scene of whirling white fury.

It was impossible to see nearby buildings save for odd glimpses, and the sky itself was a strange, eerie grey.

Then when the cannon-balling ice semed to have reached its limit there was a final swirl of white and battering hailstones, and with a last outburst the storm died. It had lasted 25 minutes, and had died in almost as many seconds.

Some Record Hailstones

The most amazing features of the storm were the gigantic size of the hailstones and the clear-cut path which it mowed through Durban.

At the height of the storm the majority of the stones were as large as cricket balls. Some were perfectly round, others were spiked with jaggy protuberances, and others were square. Millions of pounds weight of ice crashed on to the town, and from careful measurements made and weights taken at the end of the storm it is possible to give definite proof of the magnitude of the stones.

One weighed at the Post Office on accurate scales was 8½ ounces, and two others 5 ounces and 6 ounces respectively.

A stone picked up at Berea Road was 9 in. in circumference, and another weighed 4½ ounces.

An interesting photo. shows a hailstone alongside a tennis ball, and the ball is the smaller. Some of the hailstones measured 3½ inches in diameter, and others up to 11¼ inches in circumference.

One theory advanced is that two cyclonic storms met over the town, one from the west and one from the south-west.

In this storm an almost incredible amount of damage was done in twenty-five minutes. Yet there was at the same time a remarkable freedom from damage, the area of the storm being limited, and there was no loss of life. Appeals were made in the press for poorer sufferers; scores of motor cars damaged were covered by insurance, and the hotels, shopkeepers, householders and others effected repairs as rapidly as possible. Tram services interrupted by the storm were resumed immediately after, and brought crowds to places of amusement for the evening. Some damage, such as to art works, is irreparable, but at this distance one is struck by the calmness with which the disastrous visitation was viewed and the rapidity with which its marks were obliterated, and the life of the city continued as usual.

It takes more than twenty-five minutes of hailstones as large as tennis balls and cricket balls, and weighing from 4½ to 8½ ounces each, to destroy a city.

Hailstones Destroy an Army

But hailstones have been known to destroy an army. We may read about it in Joshua 10, how the Amorites fought against Israel, and how the Lord fought for Israel. Verse 11 reads—

"And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: there were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword."

These "great stones from heaven" were hailstones, as stated. A great hailstorm came up, probably with the thunder and lightning which usually accompany a hailstorm. Those raining down on the Amorites might have been the same size as those which fell at Durban, and which it is conceivable might have killed anyone out in the storm with no shelter of any kind. Or the hailstones which came down in Joshua's fight with the Amorites might have been larger than those at Durban. It is as easy for the Lord to decree that hailstones of double or triple the size and weight should fall. We do not mean to say that the Lord specially ordered this visitation upon Durban. Hail stones and hail storms are natural phenomena, and occur in all parts of the earth. But God can and does use storms of hail when they are convenient and appropriate implements to accomplish a decreed punishment and destruction.

The Plague of Hail and Thunder in Egypt.

Going still further back we find that hail played a part in the plagues upon Egypt, when God demanded that His people be freed, and Pharaoh refused to let them go. Exodus 9: 18-26 describes this—the seventh plague—as coming down "upon man, and upon beast, and upon every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt," and breaking every tree of the field—

"And the Lord sent thunder and hail, and the fire [probably lightning or balls of fire] ran along upon the ground; and the Lord rained hail upon the land of Egypt.

"So there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation."—Exodus 9: 23, 24.

The plague of locusts was brought upon Egypt by an east wind, which blew all day and all night. (Exodus 10: 12-15.) God could as easily bring up the hailstorm. He had but to speak to the winds and they obeyed Him, as did the winds of Galilee the voice of His beloved Son many centuries later, who claimed the power as from God and not His own.—Matthew 8: 24-26.

But even in the plague of hail upon Egypt, severe as it was, not absolutely everything was destroyed. Exodus 9: 31, 32 says—"And the flax and the barley was smitten; for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was bolled. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten; for they were not grown up." Exodus 10: 5, 15 mentions that some fruit had also escaped destruction by the hail. But beasts left in the field were to be destroyed. (Exodus 9: 19.) Both men and cattle being in danger, the hail must have been very large and heavy. Some of Pharaoh's servants

believed the word of Moses, and kept the servants and cattle under shelter. The Psalmist (78: 47. 48) wrote—

He destroyed their vines with hail,
And their sycomore trees with frost.
He gave up their cattle also to the hail,
And their flocks to hot thunderbolts.

"Great hailstones" (marginal reading) is preferred to "frost" by some commentators, though the intense cold of a hailstorm might permanently injure a tree. Or the trees may have been killed by the lightning accompanying the storm, corresponding with "hot thunderbolts" in verse 48.

He gave them hail for rain,
And flaming fire in their land.
He smote their vines also and their fig trees;
And brake the trees of their coasts.—Psalm 105: 32, 33.

In Goshen, where the children of Israel lived, there was no hailstorm. The hail fell where the lesson of God's omnipotence was required.

Hail to Enforce Obedience

Though Israel escaped the hail which smote Egypt, they received many visitations in their later experience.

The punishments and curses listed in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28: 15-68, 29: 20 do not include damage by hail, but the prophet Haggai mentions hail (with blasting and mildew) as having been sent upon the people as corrective punishment. Blasting (scorching heat) and mildew are mentioned in Deuteronomy 28: 22; and, according to the prophet, hail had also been inflicted upon them—"I smote you with blasting, and with mildew, and with hail, in all the labours of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord." (Haggai 2: 17.) Crop failures and destruction of growing crops by blight, drought, caterpillars and other insect pests, with destruction at other times by hail, were all intended to call a halt in their wickedness and make them again think seriously of their duty to their God.

Symbolic Language in Scripture

No attentive reader of Scripture can be long ignorant of the fact that in prophecy natural objects are often used figuratively. In the seventh plague upon Egypt, there is no doubt that literal hail crashed down—with literal thunder and lightning to add majesty and terror to the visitation of God's displeasure. Likewise in the destruction of the Amorites, and in the battering down of crops as punishment for sin in Israel. But it is readily seen by comparison that these natural phenomena are used in Scripture as very expressive *symbols* of God's displeasure and His purpose to punish, yet without the use of material hailstones, lightning, and thunder.

Hail and Shalmanezer's Invasion

Isaiah 28: 1-13 is a good illustration of the use of a hailstorm in a symbolic or figurative sense. That is to say, God's purpose to punish Ephraim (the Ten-Tribe Kingdom) in an exceedingly drastic manner is described under the figure of a severe hailstorm terminating in a destructive flood—the whole being a warning of the invasion by the Assyrians, which took place shortly after.

The Ten Tribes had rebelled, set up a false religion and kingdom, and instead of repenting when God sent His prophets to them they were filled with pride and drunk with power. Priests, people, and prophets dined at tables of false doctrine, instead of at God's table of truth, of which David wrote in the 23rd Psalm. Line upon line, precept upon precept, for 200 years the prophets sought to turn them back to the true God, a grand testimony to God's patience and long suffering. Finally, in B.C. 723, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, invaded Palestine, laid siege to Samaria, and in B.C. 721 carried away the Israelites to settle them in Assyria. These historical facts are related in 2 Kings 17: 3-6; 18: 9-11. More appropriate symbolism to describe Shalmaneser's invasion and the carrying away into captivity could hardly be found than a visitation of hard hitting hail and a subsequent flood—

"Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand."—Isaiah 28: 2.

Hail and the Destruction of Assyria

But Assyria itself was to be destroyed a few years later, and this also was foretold under the figure of a tempest of hail, with lightning and thunder. Isaiah 30: 30, 31, contains this prediction—

30 And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.
31 For through the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which smote with a rod.

Now observe with what discrimination these symbolic descriptions are used. Although this hailstorm is very tempestuous, nothing is said about a flood, as in Isaiah 28: 2. The Assyrians were beaten down, deprived of their power, but not carried away. Subjected first by the Medes, they afterward became an important part of the Babylonian empire, but never regained independence. Another prediction concerning Assyria is found in Isaiah 10: 5-34, its destruction being shown under the figure of cutting down a forest. Ezekiel 31: 3-17 represents Assyria as a cedar of Lebanon, proud and boastful as the tree above all trees, but afterwards cut down.

Hail and the Refuge of Lies

Isaiah gave messages from the Lord concerning Israel. As we have seen, the beating down and carrying away of the Ten-Tribe Kingdom were shown under the symbols of a hailstorm and flood or rushing stream. But Ephraim was not the only proud, boastful seceder from God. Judah also was offensive in God's sight. The Two-Tribe Kingdom was rapidly going the same way.

In 28: 14, 15, 18, 19 Judah and Jerusalem are taken to task. They congratulated themselves when the northern kingdom was devastated and themselves escaped. The words of verse 15 would not refer to statements literally made by the Jews, but would represent the facts of the case. A covenant with

death and an agreement with hell [i.e., *sheol*, the grave], is what their actions indicated, since they were so certain divine punishment in the form of invasion and defeat would not overtake them as it had Ephraim. They considered themselves quite safe in carrying on with idolatry, they too being drunk and blinded, deaf and dumb, to the inevitable judgment.

Verse 18 tells of the "overflowing scourge," but before that would come they would receive many lesser punishments, which would vex them, and which should have brought them to their senses. The history of Judah is a record of the fulfilment of these predictions, one invasion after another, and disasters of various kinds, finally culminating in the "overflowing scourge"—Nebuchadnezzar, head of the Babylonian Empire, to which Assyria (the hailstorm of verse 2) had become tributary, so that in a sense it was the same "tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing." Jerusalem was taken, the temple destroyed, the people scattered, and many taken captive to Babylon.

The lies the Jews made their refuge and the falsehoods under which they hid themselves were the teachings of their false prophets, to whom they gave ear in preference to Isaiah and Jeremiah the Lord's prophets. Jeremiah frequently warned them that these false prophets could not guarantee the safety and ease they predicted, that God alone controlled the future. Jeremiah 23: 9-32 is plain speaking—the false prophets "cause my people to err by their lies." The hailstorm would beat down this refuge of lies. In other words, the prophecies of the false prophets would be demonstrated to be lies by their failure to be fulfilled, and the prophecies of God's prophets would be demonstrated as truth by their fulfilment. So the people could no longer hide themselves under these false prophets and their deceitful messages.

And Ye, O Great Hailstones, Shall Fall

The telling of lies in the name of the Lord was not suppressed by Nebuchadnezzar's first visitation. While Judah paid tribute the false prophets were very busy. They openly opposed Jeremiah and Ezekiel. And later, after Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year, with the final carrying away into Babylon and the desolation of the land, they continued to prophesy falsely, and tried to make Ezekiel the true prophet appear ridiculous. (Ezekiel 20: 49.) And there were many, even then, who believed the false prophets rather than the true.—Ezekiel 10: 13-16; 13: 19, 22, 23; 14: 1-21; and chapter 34.

The "great hailstones" of Ezekiel 13: 11, 13, like those of Isaiah 28, are symbolic. They are part of the imagery showing the complete failure of the predictions of the false prophets. The false prophets built up a wall of lies, and others daubed it with more lies to make it hold together. Is it not always so? Does not one lie demand another to bind it? And here was a whole wall of lies. But the Lord destroyed the whole fabric by carrying out His own predictions and tearing their lies to pieces as a mighty storm of wind and hail rend a literal wall or building. And all who sheltered in that "refuge of lies," finding the walls falling about their ears, would rush out for safety, but find none: for the hailstones of God's truth would hit them square on the head, the slush under their feet would prevent their escape, and the rising torrent would carry them away.

A New Foundation

In Isaiah 28, it will be observed, verses 9-12, 16, 17, 20, 21 foretell a purpose on God's part to bring in a different arrangement from that into which He had entered with Israel at Sinai. The law covenant could not bring in righteousness; the people persisted in error and sin notwithstanding all God's mercy and goodness under the terms of that law. God would lay a new foundation in Zion, a tried stone, a precious stone, and the New Testament tells us that this Precious Stone is our Lord Jesus Christ. Those who come to Him and abide in Him will be established in righteousness. Thank God for the tried Stone, and that to us He is precious!—1 Peter 2: 4-10.

And so we may take the "hail" of verse 17 to refer to the beating down of the whole system of Judaism; and the "waters" to "overflow the hiding place" we may take to represent all those instrumentalities which God used to carry it away. (Colossians 2: 14, 15; 1 Thessalonians 2: 15, 16.) As we look back upon the events of our Lord's day we see that what hit the Jews hardest was the *truth* spoken by their Messiah. To Jesus God gave "the words of eternal life"—the message declaring the dismissal of the scribes and Pharisees, the priests and the doctors of the law, who had proven themselves to be false shepherds misleading the people, and the message announcing the setting up of a new arrangement, the New Covenant in His blood.

A Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence

Although this was a "tried stone," "a sure foundation," the Lord Jesus is spoken of elsewhere as "a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (1 Peter 2: 8.) Yet this Stone which the Jewish builders rejected was made the principal or head stone of the corner. God has "highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—1 Peter 2: 7; Psalm 118: 22, 23; Philippians 2: 9-11.

Out of their own mouths the scribes and Pharisees condemned themselves when our Lord gave them the parable of the householder who left his vineyard in the care of his servants. (Matthew 21: 33-46.) After quoting Psalm 118: 22, 23, He said to them—

> "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

Fire and Hail Fulfilling His Word

God's majesty is expressed in the mighty forces of nature, which are His to command, having been

created by Him. The Psalmist calls on all nature as well as all sentient creatures to praise Jehovah. Among the former he includes (Psalm 148: 8)—

> Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours;
> Stormy wind fulfilling his word.

These are God's inanimate servants, and are both a symbol of His majesty and of His ability to punish and to destroy.

In visions of God's power and providence given to the Revelator, lightning and thunder are used with similar significance, lightning being also symbolic of illumination of the mind, enlightenment, clear and brilliant revealings of truth, and the thunder reverberations of these truths. (Revelation 4: 5; 8: 5; 11: 19; 16: 18.) Lightning was associated with the vision of the glory of the Lord given to the prophet Ezekiel (1: 13, 14), indicating also the swiftness of His messengers.

Thunderings and lightnings accompanied the giving of the law. (Exodus 19: 16; 20:18.) At that time no hail fell, because it was not a time of punishment and destruction, but of founding a nation and entering into a covenant. The display of God's might was, however, necessary, that the people might be duly impressed with the fact that the covenant was of divine origin and would be backed up by divine power. David sang of his deliverance from the Philistines and other enemies, ascribing his victories to God's interventions, symbolically represented in lightning, thunder, dark clouds, etc.

> The Lord thundered from heaven,
> And the most High uttered his voice.
> And he sent out arrows, and scattered them;
> Lightning, and discomfited them.—2 Samuel 22; Psalm 18.

> Clouds and darkness are round about him:
> Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.
> A fire goeth before him,
> And burneth up his enemies round about.
> His lightnings enlightened the world:
> The earth saw, and trembled.—Psalm 97: 2-4.

Hailstones and Coals of Fire

But when hailstones are added to the thunder and lightning the most stubborn enemy must yield, and so in the imagery of Psalm 18 the picture of David's victory is incomplete without them. Think of the darkness that came over Durban, when reading Psalm 18: 11-13—

> He made darkness his secret place.
> His pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies.
> At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed.
> Hail stones and coals of fire.
> The Lord also thundered in the heavens.
> And the Highest gave his voice;
> Hail stones and coals of fire.

The Treasures of the Hail

Job maintained his integrity, though in some things he spoke ill-advisedly. At the close of his trial and humiliation the Lord answered him out of the whirlwind, as related in Job, chapters 38, 39. And this is what the Lord said about the hail (verses 22, 23)—

> Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?
> Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,
> Which I have reserved against the time of trouble,
> Against the day of battle and war?

Those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, and place Jehovah on the level of the gods of the heathen, fail to realize that the Creator of all things is able to make use of them when human beings with their superstitions and pretences can not. Yet it is recognized in purely human affairs that a man who owns and runs a business can do many things a day laborer can not. If he is an electrician, for instance, he can illuminate a whole square or a whole city, while the laborer can only blink his eyes at the light.

Lightning, thunder, snow, hail certainly do come down from heaven, and that God should use them to accomplish His purposes is only reasonable. Granted that "the weather" is produced by natural causes and combinations of causes, which the science of meteorology and the weather bureaux in every city have explained, so the simplest can understand how the air currents and the winds, and rising and falling temperatures operate, still there is ample room for the belief that God did actually send the hail in Egypt to impress Pharaoh, and upon the Amorites to save Israel; and to discipline the Israelites. To what extent these natural phenomena have been used by Him during the present age can hardly be answered with exactness, since the Lord and the apostles gave no pronouncement on the subject. In general "the weather" seems not to be made with special reference to the convenience of His people, since it often rains or snows at times not desired by them. Still, colporteurs going about with tracts and books have often had the weather clear up in a remarkable way. And they thank God for it, as they do for all His mercies.

The snow storm that blocked Napoleon's invasion of Russia might have been God's way of keeping the ideas of the French Revolution out of Russia at that time, also the Roman Catholic religion which would have entered with him or soon after. Russia was the stronghold of the Greek Orthodox Church and apparently it was not God's purpose to have it disestablished until more than a hundred years later. But if we take it that in this age—as was so often the case in past ages—hail, thunder, and lightning stood for God's punishments and disciplines administered by other agencies, of which these natural phenomena make most expressive symbols, then we must say that "hail" has performed a very prominent part in the history of the present age and will do so right up to its close. Right at the beginning of the age there was a severe hailstorm.

Refreshing Truth

Rain, wells, fountains of water, flowing streams are natural phenomena that bring blessing, refreshment, and life to mankind. Our Lord used water as a symbol of divine truth. He said to the woman at the well—

> Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

The effect of the truth the Lord gave out was to call His true sheep out of Judaism, and later on Il

called the Gentiles to become His sheep also, and be led by fountains of waters. Under the figure of rain the truth the Lord gave out was as refreshing showers to thirsty souls. It cleaned the air of the dust of tradition.

But, as said before, the truth our Lord gave out was as hard-hitting hail. It broke the windows of the glass houses in which the scribes and Pharisees lived. It battered down the monuments of tradition erected by the different sects that had developed in Judaism. For example, the Lord's encounter with the Sadducees forever shattered their teaching that there would be no resurrection. That God called himself the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob was proof that those faithful patriarchs would rise again. Matthew 23 was a tremendous storm of hail against the "scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites"!

Hailstones, Fire, and Brimstone on Gog and Magog

Gog and Magog are prophesied against by Ezekiel because while the Jews were absent in Babylon they brought bands of horsemen from the north, and added to the confusion in the land, pillage being their object. (Ezekiel, chapters 38, 39.) Concerning these tribes the reader is referred to the articles on Gog and Magog which appeared in the N.C.A. for November and December, 1915, and January, 1916. There we showed that the punishment spoken of in Ezekiel 38: 21, 22 was visited upon them when Darius and Cyrus conquered Babylon and brought the whole of Palestine with other parts of the Babylonian empire into subjugation to Medo-Persia. Thus these northern tribes were driven out and back to the north, but not until they had left many dead behind them; and from verse 21 it would appear that in the conflict there was also treachery to add to the slaughter. Verses 21, 22 read thus—

> And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother.
>
> And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

It stands to reason that in order to make Palestine suitable once more for occupation by the Jews it was necessary to disperse these roving bands from the north, as well as the nearer nations, who took advantage of the absence of the Jews to occupy their land. Literal hailstones, fire (lightning) and brimstone (sulphur) might have played a part in their expulsion, but more likely these terms are used in a symbolic sense, as indicating great trouble upon them, and the irresistible forces by which they were attacked. And God here indicates that these forces served His purpose. Not that God made men murderers and plunderers, but that, the nations being given up to wars of aggression, God so overruled their conquests that they accomplished His purposes in connection with the Holy Land. Fire is a symbol of trouble and destruction, and in verse 19 is called "the fire of my wrath."

In this prophecy pestilence and blood are also mentioned, as adding to the destruction on Gog and Magog and their confederates, at the end of the 70 years' captivity. Pestilence and blood are mentioned in Ezekiel 5: 17 as part of the punishment on Judah and Jerusalem, simultaneously with the invasion by Nebuchadnezzar and the beginning of the seventy years' captivity. Pestilence is a common occurrence in time of war, partly due to irregular and insufficient supplies of food. It will be recalled that enteric fever was a scourge during the Boer War in South Africa. Typhoid fever has carried away more than shot and shell, in many wars, until the World War of 1914-18, when special precautions were taken against it. But Servia had a severe experience with typhus fever, a pestilence widely spread by, if not due to, the bedbug. Modern sanitation has greatly reduced the number and extent of epidemics of typhus; but Servia was a backward country. As a symbol, blood fitly represents death, indicating the severity of the pestilence with which the term is associated, as in Ezekiel 5: 16, 17; 38: 22.

Hail, Fire, and Blood in the Gospel Age

This hail storm at the beginning of the Gospel age is pictured in Revelation 8: 7—

> The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: [The Sinaitic, Alexandrine, and Vatican MSS. add—"and the third part of the earth was burnt up."—See Revised Version.] and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

The book of Revelation being largely symbolic in character, the trees and grass may be taken as symbols, as well as the hail, fire, and blood. The trumpets are conveniently used to indicate the sequence of events during the Gospel age. The first striking event—apart from the rapid circulation of the Gospel under the ministry of the apostles (pictured in Revelation 6: 2)—was the suppression by the Roman authorities of the Jewish rebellion. The measures taken to accomplish this result, with the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, were well symbolized by a visitation of hail, fire, and blood.

The "third part of the earth" would represent the Jews as a nation, if we take the three parts to be (1) the Christians, (2) the Jews, and (3) the remainder of the "earth," or social order—not necessarily numerically equal thirds. Trees in symbolic language stand for men—especially prominent men. (Psalm 1: 1-3.) Men of faith are like trees planted by the waters, hence green and flourishing. The greenness of trees was used by our Lord to represent favourable conditions. When some of the women of Jerusalem were weeping for him, He said—"For if they do these things in a green tree [while He was with them, and conditions were favorable], what shall be done in the dry?" (Luke 23: 31.) The third part of trees burnt up would mean all the prominent men of Judaism, which was "one-third of the earth."

Grass represents men generally (1 Peter 1: 24), while those in the enjoyment of divine favor are well represented by green grass. All the green grass burnt up would represent the casting out from divine favor of those who had been His chosen people under the Law covenant.

Those Jews who accepted Jesus as their Messiah were not "burnt up." By becoming believers they

became that other third part designated Christians; hence did not share the calamities coming on the Jews for their rejection of the Messiah. The apostles in their preaching continually urged their hearers to separate themselves from the unbelieving upon whom wrath would come—"Save yourselves from this untoward generation."—Acts 2: 40; 3: 14-19.

As a nation the Jews ceased to exist; i.e., they ceased as a nation living in their own land, for they had not been for centuries an independent nation, and at this time were under tribute to Rome. Paul says—"Wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" (1 Thessalonians 2: 14, 15), including among the causes of God's wrath their persecution of the believers. They have since been scattered throughout the world more widely than ever before, but while still recognisable as a separate people are not a political entity. The various nations among whom the Jews have lived have for the most part persecuted them, and often destroyed whole communities of Jews to confiscate their wealth.

But even worse than this loss of nationality and homeland was the loss of the high calling. The Jews were the first to have this offered to them. They were rejected as unfaithful servants, as the Lord said they would be. "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matthew 21: 43; Luke 20: 18.) The stone which the builders rejected was made the head of the corner when our Lord was raised from death and set on His Father's right hand in heaven. Thence He has been in a position to send whatever of punishment as well as whatever of blessing His people deserve. The Holy Spirit was poured out on those who believed; while the others were rejected. As John the Baptist had predicted of Jesus—

". . . He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

By this process the whole of the members of the Jewish nation were disposed of so far as their spiritual relation to God was concerned. Those who accepted Christ became part of the "new nation" (1 Peter 2), and all others were like a drought-stricken country, without the water of life, without the refreshing showers of God's grace. The symbol of "blood" added to the symbols of hail and fire well represents their death to the special privileges of their nation bound up in Christ. Literally all did not die, but in respect of this loss of spiritual favor, they all died.

This is not to say that no Jews since have been acceptable to God. There have been conversions among them, but only when they saw the error of their fathers in rejecting the Messiah and came in humility confessing their sin.

The picture of Revelation 8: 7 is for that time—at the end of the Jewish age and beginning of the Gospel age; and should not be extended further.

The Great Hail of Revelation 11: 19

Some difficulty in understanding this passage has been experienced by God's people, partly because it is placed at the end of chapter 11. This makes it appear as though the temple were to be opened in heaven *after* the raising of the dead described in verse 18. But it should be remembered that the division into chapter and verse was not part of the original manuscripts. Those learned Christian men who divided the Scriptures into chapters, paragraphs and verses did surprisingly well; it is only here and there that a mistake has been made, as in this instance. Verse 18 is the proper conclusion of chapter 11, and verse 19 properly belongs to chapter 12.

The book of Revelation is not a continuous vision, but a series of visions. Some of the visions, though necessarily described separately, cover the same period of time as other of the visions. More than one vision is necessary to show different aspects of events. Chapter 11: 1-13 pictures certain events of the Gospel age, and chapter 12 (beginning with 11: 19) presents another picture of the same period. The trumpets which began in 8: 7 continue through chapters 9, 10 and 11 to and including verse 18. The trumpets cover the Gospel age and in a very condensed form the work of the kingdom age (11: 15-18). That series being finished, a new series of visions begins with verse 19, and takes us back to the beginning of the Gospel age.

The Temple of God Opened in Heaven

The temple of God opened in heaven, so that "the ark of his testament" (covenant) could be seen, represents what our Lord Jesus accomplished by His atoning work.

In Hebrews 9: 24 we read that Christ entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." In Hebrews 10 we are told that Christ made the satisfactory offering for sin "once for all," by which sins can be remitted (verses 5-14), and that we may enter to worship "by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us," and hence that we may "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." (Verses 19-22.) Under the Law the tables of stone and the book of the Covenant were kept in the ark in the Most Holy, and were not seen by the people, even the priests and Levites being denied admission to this sacred apartment. Into it went the high priest alone once every year. (Hebrews 9: 4-7.) But when our Lord Jesus opened up the way to God for us, He made plain the New Covenant, so that it is not hidden away from us, but is in full view, and all Christians may familiarize themselves with it. The Sermon on the Mount was a pronouncement on the New Covenant, and the Gospels and epistles make clear its terms* and the benefits to be derived from entering into it.

Hence "lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail," which in Revelation 11: 19 accompany the opening of the temple and the promulgation of the New Covenant, are the same voices, thunderings, lightnings, and earthquake, alluded to in Revelation 8: 5, as attending the casting to the earth of the censer filled

*For an explanation of the New Covenant and its relation to other covenants, the reader is referred to "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind," chapter on the Covenants.

with fire from the altar. In Revelation 8: 2-5 the teaching is that the prayers of God's people can now ascend as incense to God only when recognition is made of the sacrificial work of Christ, the antitype of the atonement sacrifice offered on the altar in the temple at Jerusalem.

Verse 5 (chapter 8) shows, under the symbol of coals from this altar cast into the earth, the effect of the preaching concerning Christ as that true sacrifice. The effect was the disruption of the social order of the Jews, symbolized by the earthquake, and that effect has followed the preaching of the gospel wherever it has gone, all through the age. Voices, thunderings, and lightnings represent the enlightenment of the masses of the people, and the Lord's judgments against sin, for enlightenment brings responsibility. Then, as already explained, verse 7, under another set of symbols, including hail, represents the complete destruction of the Jews as a nation.

The statement of Revelation 11: 19 therefore serves as a sort of landmark, or time mark, introducing the events of chapter 12. The "great wonder in heaven" appeared at the beginning of the Gospel age, the woman representing the church, which church came into existence because the Gospel age is the time set apart in God's purpose for the selection of a people for His name under the terms of the New Covenant seen in 11: 19. And the "great hail" here expresses the weight and force of the truths which issued forth to destroy. Not only was the Jewish nation destroyed, as pictured in chapter 8, but other opposing forces, as may be seen by reading the Acts of the Apostles, particularly Acts 17: 6; 19: 13-20, 23-27.

Hailstones the Weight of a Talent

Even larger hailstones are mentioned in Scripture than those as big as cricket balls which fell at Durban or than would be necessary to destroy the individual soldiers of an army. Revelation 16: 21 reads—

"And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

From the size of the hail one would gather that whatever is intended to be destroyed must be very firm and solid. Think of a hail storm with every hailstone weighing nearly a hundred pounds! According to "Smith's Bible Dictionary," the silver talent in use among the Jews weighed approximately 94 pounds, and the gold talent twice as much. Either talent would give the thought of a terrible bombardment. Falling thick and fast, nothing could stand up against it. All this is poured out upon men on account of their adherence to great Babylon—that great city described more fully in chapters 17 and 18. This terrific hailstorm is necessary to batter down and bring into subjection the minds of men who have been so enslaved by great Babylon that they weep and mourn over her when God reckons with her. (Revelation 18: 9-19.) At first they see only the end of their profitable investments. All classes of merchants and traders flourish through Babylon's established position, wealth, and influence; not only literal merchants and traders dealing in gold, silver, precious stones, vestments, and other commodities mentioned in chapter 18: 11-19, but merchants and traders in ecclesiastical positions and theological teachings, who even make merchandise of the people themselves, buying and selling their morals and their spirituality ("souls of men") for their own gain. (Revelation 18: 13; 2 Peter 2: 1-3.) So enamored are they of Great Babylon, so intent on their own selfish interests, that instead of being glad the iniquitous system is being destroyed they weep and mourn. It would seem then that nothing but a terrific storm of hail the weight of a talent will impress them, and then its effect is to cause them to blaspheme the God of heaven, instead of turning to Him.

With this final storm the Gospel age ends, and great Babylon goes down as a great millstone into the sea, to rise no more. And when men see the Kingdom of God set up, perhaps even those who blasphemed while the hailstones were coming down on their heads and they could find no shelter in the "city" will come at last to realize their wrong position and confess their sins. But at least we may be sure of this, the great masses of humanity long enslaved by great Babylon will be glad they have been set free.—Revelation 17: 15.

Let us not be of that obduracy that requires to be "plagued" with congealed truth, each hailstone weighing nearly 100 lbs. Let us rather be true citizens of the City of God. So shall we be blessed by Truth as a gently flowing stream—that river which makes glad.—Psalm 46: 4.



For the Children

Jesus and the Children

One of the many good and kind things Jesus did while on the earth happened one day near the river Jordan. Multitudes of people came around Him again, and Jesus taught them as in an open-air school. Then the little children were brought along for Him to "put his hands on them, and pray." Please read this in Matthew 19: 13. But when the disciples saw the parents all coming with their children it displeased them very much. They thought that this would greatly bother the Master, besides interrupting Him in His teaching; so they told the parents to take the children away. All this the disciples did without first asking Jesus whether or not He would like to have them.

Jesus saw all this, saw the disciples keeping the children back, and He was greatly displeased with them for doing so, because the children were not a bother to Him.

What Jesus did for the Children

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and

forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God," He said; then the parents brought them near to Him.

What Jesus did next shows that He loved the little ones as He loves the grown-ups: "He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." Please read Mark 10: 13-16. Isn't that a sign that Jesus loved the children? And He loves them because He is the children's Saviour, as well as the Saviour of the grown-up people. And He wants the children to love Him too, as He loves them; and we can begin to love Him when we are very young.

What the Children can do for Jesus

How can children show that they love Jesus? Oh, in many different ways: in trying to do what He wishes. All that Jesus wishes the children to do is told us in the Bible, and some of the children can read it for themselves; but others, too young to read, must be told by father and mother and the Sunday School teacher. But here are some of the things Jesus wishes children to do—To be obedient to father and mother. To be honest, and always to tell the truth; and to do all this because they wish to please Him.

Please look now in the Bible and find these places. Ephesians 6: 1-3—This means that children who are obedient have the promise that they will live longer on the earth than others. 1 Peter 2: 12—Conversation here does not mean talking only but the way we behave ourselves. We must be honest in all that we do and say. Ephesians 4: 25—Put story-telling away, and always say only what is true. In doing all this children will please the Lord Jesus, and will show that they love him.

This does not mean that when children grow up they may cheat, tell stories, and not be respectful to parents, for to please Jesus we must be honest, truthful, and proper to our parents as long as we live. As we grow older we shall learn of a lot more things that Jesus wishes us to do. Thus we shall be busy all the time in trying to please Him because we love Him.

So when we hear about these other things, let us all be ready to add them to the three we have just told you about, and do them too. In this way we shall indeed please the Lord Jesus, and He will give us more and more favours while we live on the earth, and at last will let us go into His wonderful kingdom. There we shall really see Him and God and all the angels. That will be a coming unto Him for His children in the best way possible, and they will never be separated from Him forever. All these things Jesus wishes for you children, for what did He say in John 14: 1-3?

—UNCLE FRANK.

Risen with Christ

—— Cup Day Conference, 1929 ——

Conference Text.—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God," and following verses, Colossians 3: 1-17.

One of the great events of the year in Australia is the race for the Melbourne Cup. This year, besides the Governor-General, Governors from all the States were in attendance, with their suites, and many other distinguished visitors, with the *elite* of Melbourne society. Though 110,000 persons attended, only one person could receive the Cup—the owner of the winning horse. We could not but reflect as we gathered in the morning to our all-day meeting, how much more favoured we were; for each of us had a cup, and when we held it out it was filled to the brim with the refreshing water of life. Notwithstanding the money that goes with it, the Melbourne Cup is an empty cup, whoever the winner, but each of ours was a full one. Instead of mourning over betting losses at the close of the day, we rejoiced exceedingly, for each of us had been a winner of favours from on high, and we were encouraged to press on in our race, for the great prize of the high calling and the hope of appearing with our Lord in glory.

The topic was divided into twelve sub-topics, presented by different brethren and sisters of like precious faith, the sub-titles being as follows—

1. Christ Sitteth on the Right Hand of God, 3: 1.
2. Who are the "YE" addressed? 3: 1.
3. What Does it Mean to be Risen with Christ? 3: 1.
4. Commands to Put Off. 3: 5-9.
5. Commands to Put On. 3: 10-13.
6. The Bond of Perfectness. 3: 14.
7. The Wrath of God. 3: 6.
8. Christ *All in All*. 3: 11.
9. The Rule of Divine Peace. 3: 15.
10. The Gift of Life. 3: 4.
11. Appearing with Christ. 3: 4.
12. The Hidden Life. 3: 3.

Christ Sitteth on the Right Hand of God

THE FAVORS AND BLESSINGS we enjoy are made possible to us by Christ sitting on the right hand of God, as the Conference text states—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."—Colossians 3: 1.

The "right hand" is a symbol of a favoured position. Those on the right hand of an earthly monarch are in a position of honor, and as a rule occupy it as a reward of merit.

A Scripture illustration of one sitting on the right hand of an earthly monarch would be Joseph at the court of Pharaoh. By divine favor he was able to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, which foretold the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine that would be in the land of Egypt. On account of his ability to interpret dreams Joseph was raised to a position of favor. Pharaoh made Joseph ruler over the land of Egypt; only in the throne would Pharaoh be greater than Joseph. *Joseph gathered all the corn during the years of* plenty, and when the time of famine came, he was able to help the people by supplying them with food.

Another example would be Daniel, who was able to save the wise men of Babylon, when Nebuchadnezzar issued a decree that they should all be destroyed, if they could not tell him his dream. They could not do so, but God revealed it to Daniel, who told the king. Then the king made Daniel a great man, and in Daniel 2: 49 we read—"Daniel sat in the gate of the king." This position in the king's favor was the equivalent to sitting on the right hand.

Earning the Title

The Lord Jesus obtained the position of sitting on the right hand of God through His obedience to the Father's will. "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Hebrews 5: 8.

He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." But God raised our Lord from death, and highly exalted Him. Philippians 2: 9-11 reads —

> Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name;
> That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;
> And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Those who are in trouble like to have a friend in a high position who can come to their assistance. Jacob and his family were saved out of their distress because Joseph at the right hand of Pharaoh was in a position to render assistance. The whole world since the sin in Eden has been in great distress, needing some influential friend to help them out of their trouble. This help God promised when He said that the seed of the woman shall bruise Satan's head.—Genesis 3: 15.

Some powerful person was needed to accomplish this. God provided this Deliverer by placing Christ on His right hand; therefore the whole of mankind have a powerful friend at court.

Purification of Sins

Now the great need of mankind was for deliverance from sin and death as well as from the serpent. The only way that cleansing from sin could be accomplished was by a sacrifice acceptable to God. This Christ gave. And Hebrews 1: 3 says that "when he had made purification of sins," He "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."—Revised Version rendering.

How could Christ make a purification of sins? The purging of sin was given to the priests under the law, by the offering of sacrifices of animals, but those priests with those sacrifices could not take away sin. (Hebrews 10: 1-4). Those Aaronic priests were a type of Jesus, but His priesthood was greater. He was made a high priest "after the order of Melchisedec," for the purpose of giving a sacrifice that could take away sin. This ever-efficacious sacrifice He gave on the cross.—Hebrews 5: 5-10; 7: 17; 10: 11-14.

Sin entered into the world and passed upon all through the disobedience of one man; but through the obedience of Christ, even to the death on the cross, our High Priest opened the way for cleansing us from sin. If we believe, and confess our sins, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."—1 John 1: 7.

Mediator and Intercessor at God's Right Hand

Another office Jesus occupies in connection with His position at the right hand of God is that of Mediator. 1 Timothy 2: 5 says—"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." This means that if we desire to approach God we are to come through Him, as Jesus said—"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Through Jesus holding this office, He is able to reconcile to God all who accept Him as Mediator.

Our Lord Jesus is also our Intercessor. (Romans 8: 34; Hebrews 7: 25.) Intercession is part of His work as Mediator. All who receive Jesus as their Mediator *need* Him as their Intercessor because of the weakness of the flesh. We often sin, even after we have been reconciled to God, but Jesus "ever liveth to make intercession for us." When we sin, if we repent and confess our sin, we also have Jesus as our Advocate or Comforter.—1 John 2: 1.

As King on God's Right Hand

Melchisedec, high priest of Salem, was a ruler as well as a priest appointed to offer sacrifices. Jesus is King as well as High Priest. Matthew 28: 18 states—"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." 1 Peter 3: 22—"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Having this all power and authority, Jesus is able to carry out all the Father's purpose of blessing the race for whom He died, and to grant us the things promised to us.

Advantages Extended to Us

We see that Jesus has the power, the ability, and the authority—everything that is required—to do great things; and those who appreciate these facts and make Him their friend by believing in Him have the advantage of His position, and are invited to "seek those things which are above." These are special promises to those who are "risen with Christ"; and there is no reason for failure in attaining, because Christ—who sits at the right hand of God—is not only our King, our High Priest, our Mediator, and our Intercessor, but also our Instructor, having given us the Holy Spirit as guide and comforter, as He said (John 14: 16, 17)—"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." And (John 15: 26) "when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

One of the functions of the high priest was to bless the people. We by faith in Christ have come into line to receive the blessings of our High Priest. The forgiveness of sin, reconciliation to God, the

Spirit of truth, and the eyes of our understanding opened, the hope of the high calling, being with the Lord at His appearing, are some of these blessings.

Now all these things are made possible to us because Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

—J. McK.

Who are the "Ye" Addressed?

"IF YE THEN be risen with Christ." Truly these are striking words, and we will learn as this Conference proceeds what a lot they mean to us as believers in the Lord Jesus. Reading through Colossians 3: 1-17 we find the message a personal one, full of valuable instruction and exhortation to the people directly concerned.

What particularly interests us just now is: Whom does the apostle mean by the "ye"? (Verse 1.) It is a small word, only two letters; yet if it is applicable to ourselves it introduces us to much instruction as to our manner of life as Christians. This makes us hasten to find out whom the apostle is addressing. If we turn to the beginning of the epistle we find that it is written to the Colossian brethren, and the writer establishes his position as one sent to preach the gospel—"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." Some years previous to the writing of this epistle the Lord Jesus specially and personally selected Paul to be His apostle, to bear His name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. (Acts 9: 15.) Paul was not sending this letter to anyone and everyone, not even to all those living in the city of Colosse; he was writing only to a special class of people whom he designated "saints and faithful brethren in Christ." —Colossians 1: 1, 2.

How They Became Saints and Faithful

How then did this company of people in Colosse become saints and faithful brethren? The word "saints" in some versions is translated "holy ones." So a saint is a holy person. In what way did these brethren become holy people? We know this same apostle writing elsewhere said, "There is none righteous, no, not one."—Romans 3: 10.

In Colossians 1: 12-14, Paul explains how they became holy people and faithful brethren. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

At one time then these people were in the power of darkness. Darkness is contrary to God. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1: 5.) Therefore these brethren must have been at one time contrary to God. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3: 23.) Satan is the power of darkness who blinds "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 Corinthians 4: 4.

We know that in actual physical darkness we cannot see what is ahead of us. Sight is necessary to guide our feet along the right path. Can we imagine how terrible it would be if for a week the sun did not shine, and there were no means of artificial lighting? Such a prospect would fill us with dismay, and how thoroughly tired and weary of it we would become, especially if there were no immediate prospect of relief. Yet such is the hopeless state spiritually of nearly all the human race: they grope along in spiritual darkness, not knowing where to turn or look for relief. Satan's kingdom is full of darkness—one long night of sin and sorrow—and finally brings its servants down into the blackness of death.

Now are Ye Light in the Lord

The Lord saw the great darkness into which the human race had been plunged, and had arranged a plan for their deliverance. This plan is briefly touched on by the apostle in Colossians 1: 12-14. He explains that God hath delivered them from the power of darkness, and hath translated them into the kingdom of His dear Son.* There are no exceptions, none can say they were never in the darkness of Satan's kingdom, or that they always walked in the light. All need the transfer *out* of darkness and *into* light. It is when this transfer had been made that the apostle wrote to the Ephesians (5: 8)—"*Now* are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

Light is opposite to darkness. If light comes, darkness must go. Our Lord's kingdom is opposite to Satan's kingdom: it holds out light, peace, joy, and everlasting life to all its subjects.

All who accept the Lord's sacrifice as made on their behalf may obtain forgiveness of their sins, and through faith in that sacrifice may become reconciled to God, "and you [or "YE"], that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."—Colossians 1: 21.

An Individual Matter

The apostle makes it an individual matter. Those whom he addresses as "ye" in Colossians 3: 1, who come to God under such conditions, accepting Jesus as their Redeemer and Mediator, are delivered from

*The word "translate" means set over, as from one language to another. In the present case it refers to being "set over" from one condition to another as a present experience of believers—delivered out of darkness and "set over" into the light, or as Acts 26: 18 expresses it—Turned "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

the power of darkness and changed over into the kingdom of God's dear Son; which radiates light to all believers, and through them is reflected upon others.

The gospel message was preached at Colosse, and some who heard the only way of salvation opened up accepted the call, and became believers in the Lord Jesus, rejoicing in the favor of God extended toward them. The same gospel message is still being preached; the way of salvation is still open, and the opportunity is here for all who will to accept Jesus' sacrifice on their behalf, and so be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of our Lord and Redeemer.

The Church as the Ye

All who come into Christ by this relationship—whether in the apostles' time or since—all through the age even down to our own time—are called in the Scriptures the church of God. These are the special class of people whom Paul calls "ye" in our Conference text.

The Lord Jesus is the head over the church, and (Matthew 16: 18) He set forth the foundation truth for all who would become members of it; saying—"Upon this rock [Peter's confession that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God] I will build my church." "He is the head of the body, the church."—Colossians 1: 18.

As Head of the church the Lord takes an active interest in the welfare of each member, trying and testing them, that they may be properly developed and prove worthy of their high calling. So we, as well as the Colossian brethren, having made that good confession, are being built up as members of the true church of God.—Ephesians 2: 19-22.

True believers are buried with Christ in baptism, Paul wrote to the Colossians (2: 12). They have consecrated themselves to serve the Lord. Jesus had no will of His own, but always submitted to God's will, and was without sin: it had no power over Him. So Paul wrote other members of the "Ye" class resident in Rome—"Likewise reckon YE also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Christ Jesus our Lord." If we are truly consecrated believers, this applies to us. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."—Romans 6: 11, 4.

The call is to forsake sin and wrongdoing and to manifest the fruits of the Spirit, thus showing that we are indeed members of the church of God, that we have the Lord Jesus as our Head, and are endeavouring to follow His perfect example of obedience to God.

Faith and Love at Colosse

Coming back to our Conference text, the word "if" in Colossians 3: 1 takes our attention—"If ye then be risen." The word "if" does not necessarily imply doubt on any matter. It is frequently used with the meaning of "inasmuch as": In regard to the Colossians it would be correct to say—"inasmuch as ye be risen." There is no doubt of their standing as risen with Christ because in the beginning of the epistle Paul calls them "saints and faithful brethren." They had demonstrated their faithfulness to God and showed beyond any manner of doubt that they had Jesus for their Redeemer and Lord, they had forsaken sin, and had been buried with Christ in baptism. Paul gave thanks to God when he heard of the faith and love of the saints at Colosse.

Each one of us may ask, Would Paul give God thanks on my account because of my faith and zeal in the Master's service? The message the apostle has in Colossians 3: 1-17 is for the church, that special class of people whom he calls "ye," saints and faithful brethren in Christ. Therefore all members of the church may take to themselves the instruction and blessing contained therein. May we, as members of the church of God, receive a blessing as we further study this message—

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

—A.L.W.

♠ ♠ ♠

What does it Mean to be Risen with Christ?

BEFORE going directly into this question let us consider for a moment the people of the world. The desire of the more intelligent of the human race is to attain to a higher level than that in which they find themselves. This is known as ambition; they have a desire within themselves, more or less, to reach a higher place in life. But we, as Christians, have "risen with Christ," and this, we believe, is the most favorable position indeed, for Christ is "far above principalities and powers." Therefore we must also believe that the position of one who is not risen with Christ is relatively unfavorable; for no matter what rank or station in life we may have had before we came to Christ, we have risen out of it, being "risen with Christ."

If we consider the position of those not so risen, we see that regardless of what earthly advantage or enjoyment they may have, they are still in an unfavorable position; for they are in the death state of trespasses and sins, as we once were. Ephesians 2: 1 states—"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"; and as a favorite old hymn says—"The whole world was lost in the darkness of sin."

Generally speaking whatever favorable position there may be in the eyes of this world it requires a great amount of time and work and devotion to be able to reach that objective. Men must study and put their whole heart and soul into the project they have set before them; in fact, they must actually

be slaves to their ambition. A good example of this was brought before us in the last general election. Those candidates who desired the coveted positions in Parliament rushed about from place to place making speeches and interviewing individuals with the endeavour to press upon the public their side of the case.

But, if elected, what did they really gain? At most to occupy office for a few years in one of the governments of this world which the Lord declares shall shortly be overthrown, and possibly be brought to realize more than before man's inability to cope with the sin and other unsatisfactory conditions of the social order. Yet they will have achieved no permanent gain for themselves if they are and remain slaves of that old taskmaster Sin—that old enemy which is about everywhere, exercising his influence in each and every human being, and which ultimately pays very poor wages; namely, the wages of death, as is recorded in Romans 6: 23—"For the wages of sin is death."

Righteousness by Imputation

And this is a hopeless position; for there is not one who has enough righteousness in himself or sufficient inherent power to deliver himself or any one else from this curse of death. (Compare Psalm 49.) But what do we read further on in that verse (Romans 6: 23)? "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." For any hope for the future we are entirely dependent upon the grace of God, and He has seen fit in his great plan of wisdom to impute righteousness to all those who have been and are seeking him in spirit and in truth. Even though on account of sin no one can be in and of himself righteous, yet because they have had faith in the promises God is willing to count them as righteous. This was true in past ages, as we have recorded in James 2: 23—"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God." So we see that God has raised them up to a higher position than that occupied by the highest of unbelieving men; namely, that of righteousness by imputation.

Justification by Faith

This great favor, of being lifted by the imputation of righteousness above the remainder of mankind, was granted because these ancient worthies believed what God told them. The same privilege of imputed righteousness is extended to those who believe now, but in this age they must believe more than Abraham was asked to believe. This is stated in Romans 4: 24, 25. What we have to believe now is that "God raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," acknowledging that He was "delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Then, having believed these things, Romans 5: 1 applies—"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we too are lifted up out of the condition of condemnation in which the whole world lies to a new standing with God—justified and at peace with Him, through our Lord Jesus Christ. But we have given to us an even greater favor—a favor not offered the ancients; namely, an invitation to "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

This great favor of being counted as "risen with Christ" has been preached more or less throughout the world by faithful ministers of God since Pentecost. But only a small number, comparatively speaking, have availed themselves of this wonderful offer, and have become members of the one and only true Church, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. To these are given all the exhortations that follow in our Conference text, Colossians 3: 1-17.

The first thing the apostle says is—"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Then he exhorts them not to give any anxious thought for the affairs of this earth, for ye are dead to all these, and you have started living a new life which is not recognised by the world in general, for it is hid with Christ in God. And that is where we should set our affections, in order that we may be like Him; so that, when He shall appear, we shall also appear with Him in glory. Then he goes on to say, Put away from yourselves all fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry, because these are the things which bring the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience—a position which we were all in at one time. Also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth, and do not tell lies, for we have to put off the "old man," or old nature, and therefore must put off his deeds with him.

Instead, these who are risen with Christ have put on a new man or new mind, which is constantly being "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him," and is being modelled after a new Pattern; namely, Jesus Christ. Therefore being—as a class in school—in that form, there can be no distinction between the members, even though they may be Greek or Jew, circumcision or uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free; English, German, French, or anything else; because Christ is all, and in all.

For this reason therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on "bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forebearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any." Remember that Christ has forgiven you, therefore forgive with a free will; and over and above all these put on charity or love, for it is the bond of perfectness. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." Also, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And, whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Christ Raised from Death

It truly does us good to keep these exhortations always before us—so much depends upon them. Yet none of these things would avail us, had Christ not been raised from death. All the evidence that we

have from the Scriptures points to the fact that Christ was raised from the dead by the power of the Father. Let us look at a few of the passages.

Acts 3: 14, 15.—But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

Acts 4: 10.—Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Luke 24: 4-7.—And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

Sitting in Heavenly Places

Now, the apostle says that the Church has risen with Him. This may appear to some as a mystery, for the apostle is not speaking of the resurrection to everlasting life, but of being "risen" while still being on earth. Those who are so "risen" are exhorted in our text to "*seek* those things which are above." When they are raised from the dead they will have no need to "seek" those things, for they will have attained to them. Then will be the realisation of the Christian promise to its fullest extent.

When Christ came to this earth, He came in the form of a perfect human being; and in that form he did not have the condemnation of death in His members, therefore He was capable of living forever, as Adam was before he sinned. But, as we know, Adam sinned, and therefore he was deprived of that prospect of living forever; and not only himself but all his posterity, who have inherited this condemnation, so that every member of the human race has come under the condemnation of death, for all have sin working in their members. Therefore by some means the church has risen out of it. This deliverance from the condemnation of the whole race we have already referred to as experienced by all who believe in Jesus. We are said to have passed from death unto life, and consequently should not be condemned with the world. (John 5: 24.) This new standing or condition is further explained in Romans 6: 1-4—

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

When we as Christians were baptised in water, it had a special significance, for it showed publicly what had already taken place in our hearts; namely, a baptism or burial into Christ. It testified that we had put off from us all our previous living when we were in the way of sin, and had set our feet to follow Him in the path of righteousness, so that sin and all its allurements were to us as good as dead. An illustration of our being dead to sin may be given by comparing our old sinful self to a dead body. Just as a dead body cannot respond to temptation, and therefore cannot sin, so we must be as good as dead to every temptation.

But even though we are dead to sin, yet we are still alive in the flesh, and must engage ourselves in some activity, and there is nothing left for us but righteousness. With this we must engage ourselves to the uttermost; and in doing this it can be said of us that we have "risen with Christ." This means that we are practicing in our daily lives the only thing which He ever knew—namely, righteousness, and by doing this we are walking "in newness of life."

In heaven, God's dwelling place, there is no wickedness, neither lying nor deceit, but all righteousness. God would not tolerate anything but righteousness; and those who practise it and are risen with Christ are spoken of as sitting together "in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." That is, they are the associates of Christ, and are always in His company; He has raised us up together out of death, and we are bound together by cords of love, and He has quickened us (that is, He has made us alive) unto righteousness. (Ephesians 2: 5, 6.) Thus our entire conduct is changed. Now it centres around our heavenly home. Our citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3: 20), and our King is Jesus Christ our Lord. Reference to Christ being king is found in His own words in John 18: 37—

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

Christ is King, Lord or Owner, over all for whom He died, though He is now acknowledged as King only by those who have risen with Him and are seeking His kingdom; and when they ultimately reach His kingdom they will be joint heirs with Him, and they themselves will also be kings and priests. So it is easily seen that if we are to be joint heirs with Him we must in this life do all to the glory of God. All thoughts and actions must be in accordance with the will of God. Thus we must live in an entirely new environment, and not associate ourselves with worldly goods or ambitions, seeing that Christ is not associated with them.

Therefore—"If ye be risen with Christ," and are associated with Him, it behooves us to do our very best to please Him; in fact, this is what is expected of us. It will be noticed that I said "to do our very best." This is necessary for, as we saw before, that old nature is only reckoned dead, and is always ready to try and get the better of us. It is just like a see-saw, either the old man is up and the new man down, or the new man is up and the old man down, this latter being the only correct position. But seeing that no one is perfect, it requires a constant fight to keep the new man in the upper position. And to help us in the fight we must be always on the *Watch*, and we must *pray* to God through Jesus Christ, who is always willing to render us assistance in the hour of trial.

Not only should we pray in times of distress, but, as we have seen in the text, the apostle says, "be

ye thankful." (Colossians 3: 15.) We must give thanks to God because His watchful eye is always over us and providing for our needs. One of our needs He has provided for is spiritual guidance, and this He has given in the Scriptures, which He has preserved for us through the ages. So let us take advantage of this great providence; and study to show ourselves "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2: 15.) Let us peruse and meditate upon the words of the Holy Scriptures, for they are profitable unto all those who have risen with Christ. —W.S.

Commands to Put Off

THE NEXT ASPECT of our subject for consideration is that concerning the putting off of the works of the flesh, and is of the utmost importance to the Christian. We have heard from a previous speaker how we are reckoned dead, and how we are considered as "risen with Christ." This new "risen" life requires that we adopt a definite attitude and practice toward the former life now reckoned dead. The apostle in the portion of the Conference Topic we are now to consider emphasizes this necessity in the following words—

5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

6. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

7 In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them.

8 *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice,* blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.

9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the *old man with his deeds.*

Mortify Your Members

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth." Though with the mind risen with Christ to a new life, to sit with Him in heavenly places, we are still "upon the earth," and consequently have our "members" still to deal with. To "mortify" means to "put to death." That is to say, we must subdue and deaden the desires of the flesh. Having by God's grace died to sin, the Christian pursues the new life with vigour, no longer according to the flesh, but in the way of the life of glory, of which he receives many pledges. He should grow in Christ, becoming stronger and stronger, more and more mature—his life more fortified and more nearly perfect.

The man of God ought to be no longer led by the flesh, but ought to fight against it, for the Holy Spirit has begun its rulership in his mind, and by its aid he should wage a ceaseless combat, as it is written—"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."—Romans 6: 12, 13.

After entrance into the new life the Christian is an infant in Christ; the fact of the re-birth is not a spontaneous transition to completed development as a Christian. It is a matter of progressive development. The apostle Peter exhorts—"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Peter 2: 2.) "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—2 Peter 3: 18.

Again (Romans 8: 13) Paul states—"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." The Emphatic Diaglott reads—"For if you *live according to the flesh, you are about to die,* but if, by the spirit, you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live."

Greater vividness of contrast could hardly be imagined; those Christians who continue in the *works of the flesh are stifling the new mind,* which will ultimately die; but those guided by the Holy Spirit, and subject to its action in their minds, are on the way to life.

That persistency of effort is needed to bring about this subjection and mortification is evident from the words of Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, when he compares the Christian life to the running in a race. The words are—

"I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."—1 Corinthians 9: 26, 27.

Just as mortification may set in and affect a part of the physical body, so must the effect be upon all the works and desires of that body to their ultimate destruction if the flesh is rigidly kept under and "mortified." If not so mortified and kept in subjection, the believer becomes a "castaway." He fails to win the "race"; indeed, may make but little progress in it, like a disqualified runner.

Reverting to verses 5, 7, the apostle then enumerates a number of exceedingly evil works of the flesh. These things must not be done, nor tolerated by the Christian; he must put them away, flee from them. At one time, he says, we walked in them when we pursued our own desires, but now that we have risen to newness of life, we should have no more part in such things.

[The reader is asked to read the list of sins in verse 5, which were common practices in Paul's day, and on which the world has made but little advance since. Part of the value of Christianity is its strict teaching on morals. The last mentioned—"covetousness, which is idolatry"—is at the bottom of many immoral as well as many other acts, in which the gratification of self is made a god, and all other considerations are thrown to the winds. All these wrong tendencies of the flesh the Christian is commanded to mortify—make dead.—EDITOR.]

Now follows a list of other "members" or deeds of the flesh offensive in God's sight (verse 8)—

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."

Put Off Anger

Anger is a feeling of intense displeasure, a violent passion of the mind, excited by the reception of an actual or supposed injury, usually accompanied by a desire to exact vengeance for what we regard as wrong toward ourselves or others. It is sometimes manifest even on trivial or on no provocation, breaking forth into outrageous actions, or, if not outwardly manifest, is sometimes concealed in an inward feeling of resentment.

There are many exhortations regarding anger which show that it is a hateful temper in the sight of God. Let us read Ecclesiastes 7: 9—

"Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." And Psalm 37: 8—"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."

So we see that it is strictly forbidden in the Holy Word, and is in every way inimical to the Christian spirit.

(Conference Addresses to be continued)

Library Supply Fund

33, £4:17:6 ($23.70); previously reported, £220:4:7 ($1070.28); total for 11 months, £225:2:1 ($1093.98); the amount received in the last month enabling us to send 39 copies of "Bible Talks for Heart and Mind" to American Public Libraries, leaving 2339 "miles" of our 10,000-mile "voyage" yet to be accomplished.

The Cheerful Givers

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.

78, £5; 79, 10/-; total for month, £5:10:0 ($26.73); previously reported, £183:3:0 ($890.09); total for 11 months, £188:13:0 ($916.82); which, after clearing off last year's adverse balance leaves about £47:10:0 ($238) to apply on this year's work so far.

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!

123, 10/-; 124, 2/-; 125, 15/-; 126, £3; 127, 2/-; 128, £1:12:0; 129, 2/-; 130, £1; 131, £2; 132, £30; 133, 2/-; 134, £1; 135, £2:10:0; total for month, £42:18:0 ($208.50); previously reported, £169:4:7 ($822.44); total for 11 months, £212:2:7 ($1030.94). Of this sum only about £128 is available for this year's work after clearing off last year's deficit. Approximately £200 ($1000) more will be needed for this Fund by December 15 to avoid another deficit.

The New Covenant Advocate and .... Kingdom Herald

A Monthly Paper for the Exposition of Bible Truths. E. C. HENNINGES, Editor.

Yearly Subscription Price (including postage)

In Australia and New Zealand 4/-

In other countries 5/-; $1.25

By the dozen of any issue—2/6 in Australasia; 3/- (75 cents) elsewhere. Free to the interested who are not able to pay.

Address all Communications to NEW COVENANT FELLOWSHIP

YORK HOUSE, 294-8 LITTLE COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE, C.1, AUSTRALIA.
Melbourne Telephone—Central 8941.
23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England.
676 Fulton St., Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.
P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.

New Covenant Book List

Bible Talks for Heart and Mind.—The Book of Comfort, showing the loving purpose of God toward our race, the blessings of the New Covenant, with the special privileges of the "High Calling." Explains the three "worlds" mentioned by the Apostle Peter, also what is meant by the promised "new heavens" and "new earth." Shows what God has been doing, and why, in past ages and dispensations; that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, how it will be introduced, and what the conditions will be under the new order following the "time of trouble." Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/- (75 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 2/- (50 cents); postage, extra as above. Paper covers, 2/- (50 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/3 (30 cents), postage extra as above, or 8/- ($2.00) for 6 to one address postpaid.

The Parables of Our Lord.—Forty large Parables and a large number of Similitudes are explained, or our Lord's own explanations called attention to. His wonderful words of life come to us with renewed power. Cloth bound, gilt lettering, 3/6 (85 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 2d.; elsewhere, 4d. (8 cents). Special price to "Advocate" readers 2/3 (55 cents); postage extra as above. Paper covers, 2/6 (60 cents); special price to "Advocate" readers, 1/6 (35 cents); postage extra as above.

Daniel the Prophet in the Latter Days.—An explanation of the whole of Daniel's wonderful Visions.—The Great Image and its Overthrow.—The Four Beasts.—Fight Between Ram and Goat.—The "Little Horn."—Cleansing the Sanctuary.—The Seventy "Weeks."—Messiah's Glory.—The 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 "Days."—Exposure of the Papacy.—Condemned out of his Own Mouth.—Great Mass of Historical Information covering more than 2,500 years, and proving Daniel to be a prophet for these Latter Days.—Showing which of Daniel's Prophecies have been fulfilled. Authorities are cited for Historical Statements, and the Information is made conveniently available by means of an Index. Cloth bound, gilt embossed, 5/6 ($1.35); postage extra in Australia, 3d.; elsewhere, 6d. (12 cents). Paper covers, 4/- ($1); postage extra as above. Special price to "Advocate" readers—Cloth bound, 4/- ($1); paper covers, 3/- (75 cents); postage extra in each case as above.

The Church and Its Ceremonies.—Part 1.—The Church and its Organisation. Part 2.—"The Doctrine of Baptisms." Part 3.—The Lord's Supper. Various difficult passages, such as "Baptised for the Dead," are explained. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 3d. (6 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

Christ's Prophecy on Olivet.—An exposition of Matthew 24 and Related Passages concerning Christ's Second Coming. Cloth bound, 1/6 (35 cents); paper covers, 1/- (25 cents). Postage extra in Australia, 1d.; elsewhere, 2d. (4 cents). Per dozen: Cloth, 12/- ($3); paper, 8/- ($2), postpaid.

The Dead—Where are They?—The Scriptural Evidence on this Question. Comfort for All who Mourn. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Everlasting Punishment.—A Scriptural examination of the philosophy of punishment for sin. Every Bible occurrence of Sheol, Hades, Gehenna, Lake of Fire, and related terms, also "The Rich Man and Lazarus" fully explained. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents) postpaid.

The Christian's Comforter.—The Holy Spirit; Various Manifestations; the Gift of the Spirit; as Comforter and Guide; as Convicter of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment; as Demonstrator of Sonship.—The Sin against the Holy Spirit.—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.—Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The New Era.—What is it? Why is it Expected? How is it to be brought about? Whom will it Benefit? Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

What Say the Scriptures about the Ransom, Sin Offering, Covenants, Mediator, Scapegoat?—An explanation in handy form of these most vital questions. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Divine Healer.—An Exposition of Scripture Teaching on Miraculous Healings, showing their place in the Divine Purpose. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Do the Dead Communicate?—Spiritualism Scripturally and Scientifically Exposed. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

Modernism, Fundamentalism, AND the Bible.—Showing the differences between the first two, and between them and the Bible. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

The Inspiration of the Bible.—Demonstrating and upholding the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Cloth bound, 1/- (25 cents); paper covers, 6d. (12 cents), postpaid.

QUANTITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION.—The foregoing nine books on special subjects are supplied by the dozen, assorted to your liking and postpaid Cloth bound, 8/- ($2); paper covers, 4/- ($1).

Christ's Promised Return.—A concise, plain review of the Scripture teaching. Cloth bound, 10d. (20 cents); 6/6 ($1.60) per dozen; paper covers, 4d. (8 cents); 2/9 (65 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

Sabbath Observance: An Answer to Seventh Day Adventism.—2d. (4 cents), postpaid; 1/6 (35 cents) per dozen, postpaid.

EXTRAORDINARY OFFER.

The New Covenant Advocate (monthly) for one year, new subscription or renewal, and one copy of each of the above books in the best binding in which they are published—the complete list—to one address, postpaid in Australia, 24/-; elsewhere, 26/6 ($6.50).

There could be no better way to introduce the Good Tidings to a friend than by sending him or her one of the above offers.

N.B.—The above books will be loaned free (one at a time) to any interested person unable to purchase.

Printed by the Specialty Press Pty. Ltd., 174 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, for New Covenant Fellowship, York House, 294-8 Little Collins Street, Melbourne, C.1, Australia (Telephone, Central 8941); 23 Hope Drive, The Park, Nottingham, England; 676 Fulton Street, Brooklyn, N.Y., U.S.A.; P.O. Box 1762, Durban, South Africa.