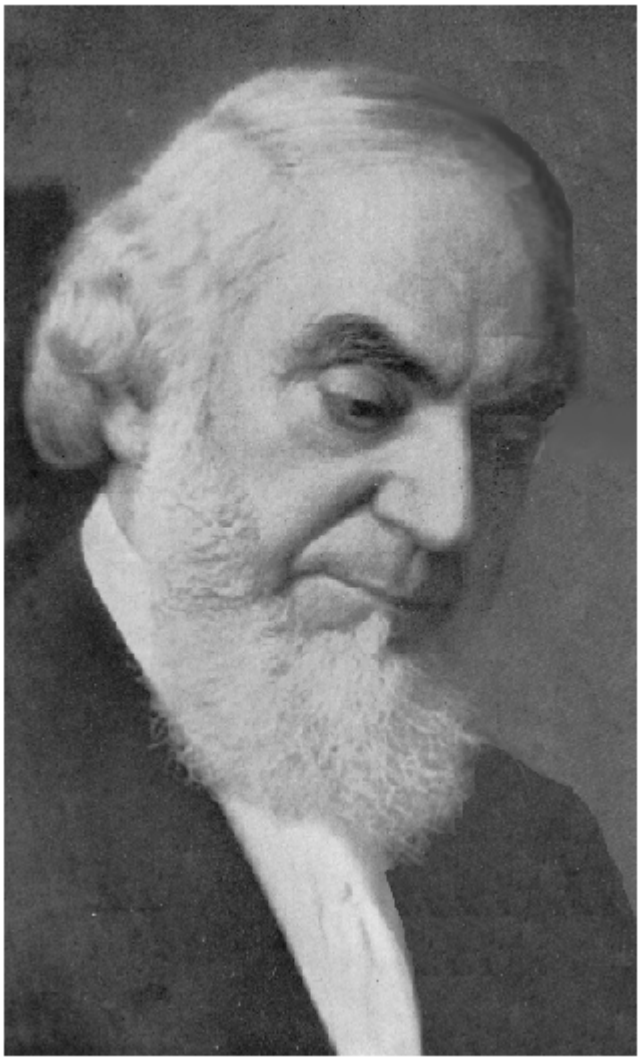
PASTOR RUSSELL'S SERMONS



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SM1

PASTOR RUSSELL'S SERMONS

A CHOICE COLLECTION OF HIS MOST IMPORTANT
DISCOURSES ON ALL PHASES OF CHRISTIAN
DOCTRINE AND PRACTISE

100,000 Edition

"Times of Refreshing Shall Come From the Presence of the
Lord; and He Shall Send Jesus Christ, Which Before Was
Preached Unto You, Whom the Heavens Must Retain until
THE TIMES OF RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS
Which God Hath Spoken by the Mouth of All His Holy Prophets
Since the World Began." "Ye, Brethren, Are Not in Darkness,
That That Day Should Overtake You as a Thief."--**Acts 3:19-21**;
1 Thessalonians 5:4.

International Bible Students Association
BROOKLYN, LONDON, MELBOURNE, BARMEN,
COPENHAGEN, OREBRO, GENEVA, CAPE TOWN

1917

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SM2

To the King of kings and Lord of lords

IN THE INTEREST OF

HIS CONSECRATED "SAINTS,"

WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION,

AND OF

"ALL THAT IN EVERY PLACE CALL UPON THE LORD"--

"THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH,"

AND OF

THE GROANING CREATION TRAVAILING AND WAITING FOR THE

MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD,

This Work is Dedicated.

"To make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things under Christ."--**Eph. 3:4,5,9**; **1:8-10**.

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BROOKLYN, N.Y., U.S.A.

SM3

PREFACE

PASTOR RUSSELL is known the world around as "the most celebrated preacher of modern times. When a young man of about twenty years of age he began to preach the Gospel of Christ Jesus, and continued faithfully to do so until his death, October 31, 1916. His explanatory writings on the Bible are far more extensive than the combined writings of St. Paul, St. John, Arius, Waldo, Wycliffe and Martin Luther--the six Messengers to the Church who preceded him. His sermons and other writings have been translated into many languages and are read appreciatively everywhere.

All Christian people will concede that St. Paul was the greatest of the Apostles of Jesus Christ. He was the Apostle who averred to the Church of his day, "I have not shunned to declare to you all the counsel of God." (**Acts 20:27**.) St. Paul's greatness was due to the fact that the Lord used him most wonderfully to enlighten others concerning God's great Plan of Salvation for mankind. Since the days of the Apostle Paul there have been other great reformers in the world, other great exponents of the Scriptures. But when the history of the Church of Christ is fully written, it will be found that the place next to St. Paul in the gallery of fame as an expounder of the Gospel of the great Master will be occupied by CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL.

In the **first three chapters of the Revelation** we are informed that to the Gospel Church have been sent seven special Messengers. Of these St. Paul was the first, and Pastor Russell the last. To him, as the Seventh Messenger, was granted the wonderful privilege of clearly presenting to the minds of the people the magnitude and the vital importance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ our Lord, and of explaining how that sacrifice will ultimately bring a blessing to every man. Through the Pastor's preaching multitudes have come to know that Jehovah God is not a fiend, as many of the creeds of Christendom imply, but a mighty God of Love.

For a period of forty-two years Pastor Russell preached the Glad Tidings of great joy--a Message which must yet be heard by all, from the least unto the greatest. Those who heard him and had their hearts made glad by his Message passed it to others; and in time a public demand was created for Pastor Russell's sermons. The public press furnished the medium through which this demand could be met. Then followed that which has never been duplicated in the history of the world--approximately three thousand newspapers published the Pastor's sermons weekly. Approximately ten million people were reached every week by these newspapers; and doubtless many thousands read the sermons. The good thus accomplished will never be fully known until all things are revealed.

For many centuries the world had been deprived of the opportunity of Bible study. That period has well been styled the Dark Ages, during which there prevailed great darkness in the world and gross darkness upon the people. The clergy of both Romish and Protestant churches had induced the laity to believe the God-dishonoring doctrine of eternal torment--that the soul of man is immortal, that therefore death does not mean death, but only a change of condition, and that all except a very few would spend eternity in a hell of fire and brimstone. The Lord has used Pastor Russell to remove from the minds of thousands this foul stain upon the name of Jehovah.

His discourses have made luminous many of the dark places of the Bible. They throw a flood of light upon the Word of God, making it a new Book to the faithful and prayerful student. In simple and beautiful

language these sermons disclose God's dealings with man from the dawn of creation to the blessed days of restoration of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets of Israel. They show why God has permitted evil in the world, how long evil will persist, and who will profit by experiencing it. They also show God's wise provision for the redemption, enlightenment and complete blessing of all who accept the Divine blessings upon the terms proffered. In these sermons the Pastor points out why this great Time of Trouble upon which we have entered has come upon the world, what its result will be, and what blessings will accrue to all peoples and nations that are properly exercised thereby. Thus they are indeed a balm for the broken-hearted and a comfort for those that mourn. Blessed is he who reads them with unbiased mind!

During the term of his ministry CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL was pastor of a large congregation at Allegheny, Pa.--now a part of Pittsburgh; London Tabernacle, London, Eng.; and of The New York City Temple; and was elected pastor of over 1200 other congregations. His reputation was international. His sermons were published in more than thirty languages. He was indeed the world's ubiquitous preacher.

On October 31, 1916, after a most eventful career, Pastor Russell finished his work on earth. Suddenly the order-loving peoples of the world learned that a great force for good had been removed from their midst. An aching void was left in many hearts, and thousands of people have continued to hunger for more of that precious mental and spiritual food which his discourses had supplied. To meet this demand, and as a lasting monument to the memory of Pastor Russell, we issue this selection of his sermons in book form. Some of these have never before been published.

St. Paul under inspiration wrote that at the end of the Age would come greater light. Pastor Russell was privileged to live in the close of the Gospel Age; and as a chosen vessel of the Lord he was permitted

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to point many thousands to the illuminated pages of the Divine Word. In fulfillment of St. Paul's prophetic statement, and as a result of Pastor Russell's preaching, thousands of people today are enabled to see that God has a great Plan which He is working out in an orderly manner, and which will culminate to His glory in the blessing of mankind.

In these sermons Pastor Russell gives clear proof from Scripture that the Secrets of the Lord can be understood by those who, trusting fully in the merit of Christ Jesus, have made a consecration to do the will of God, who have been accepted by the Heavenly Father and who then apply themselves studiously to understand the Divine Plan. Christian people have long been confused upon many questions; such as, What is the condition of the dead? Is there hope of salvation for any aside from the truly consecrated? What will be the office of the Church in the ages to come? The reader of these sermons will see that Pastor Russell makes these questions clear, answering them to the satisfaction of all honest minds. He magnifies the merit of Christ Jesus' sacrifice, and shows that in due time every man will receive the benefit accruing from the Ransom-price and will be given one fair, impartial trial for life.

Long before the great international war began, Pastor Russell fore-showed in his sermons the coming trouble upon the earth, made clear from the Scriptures the cause of the war, and pointed out what would he the result and what would follow after the trouble had subsided. Both Christians and those who have never claimed to be Christians will find much satisfaction in reading these sermons. Order-loving Christians will desire to leave a copy of these discourses as a heritage to their children, that they may better understand God's great Plan. It is our prayer that these sermons may prove a blessing to all who read them.

THE PUBLISHER.

SM5

WHO MAY KNOW GOD'S SECRETS

"None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."--**Dan. 12:10**.

In heathen lands as well as throughout Christendom secret societies include large proportions of the human family. Outsiders know something of their general motive and object, but their particular methods, hopes, endeavors, ambitions are kept secret. To effect this secrecy, to protect and conserve the interests of their association, obligations to profound secrecy are fastened and clinched with oaths, some of which are reputed to be almost blood-curdling, the endeavor being to fetter liberty of expression on such matters not only by the obligations of honor but also by those of fear. It is no part of my mission to attack any of these orders nor to inveigh against their procedures. I merely refer to them here; I merely call your attention to the fact that this is a common method amongst men which evidently has the sanction of many, because I wish to draw to your notice the fact that the Almighty God Himself is the

FOUNDER OF A SECRET SOCIETY

Moreover, while there are certain correspondencies between the human secret orders and the one of Divine origin, we shall find as we should expect that the latter is in every way superior to all others. Its aim and object are wider than all, embracing the entire human family, promising good, blessing and assistance to every member of the race--"in due time." (**1 Tim. 2:6**.) Again, although its methods of operation are secret, this is not because they are in any measure or degree sinful, disreputable, injurious or underhanded, but merely because secrecy is to the advantage not only of the members of the society; but also specially because present secrecy

SM6

as respects the work now being accomplished will be

beneficial ultimately to the masses of mankind. This is in full harmony with the Divine statement. "As the Heavens are higher than the earth so are My methods higher than your methods and My thoughts higher than your thoughts."--**Isa. 55:9**.

As in some secret societies there are different steps or grades--for instance, all Masons are familiar with the secrets pertaining to the first degree yet not all Masons are familiar with the secrets, etc., pertaining to the thirty-second degree, so in God's Secret Order there are first principles of the doctrines of Christ which must be known to all who belong to the order, and are also "deep things of God," which may be known only to those who have made advancement by growth in grace and knowledge and love. (**Heb. 6:1**; **1 Cor. 2:10**.) To some unfamiliar with the facts but having a knowledge of earthly secret societies it may seem strange to say that the secrets of the Divine Order of the Sons of God are so abstract, so impenetrable, that they may be discussed freely in the presence of others and not be comprehended at all. Indeed, so far from laying restrictions upon the members of this Order not to communicate its secrets they are authorized, yea, urged to make these known to all who may be able to comprehend, understand them, with many assurances that only the right class will be able to comprehend. Our text is one of these assurances, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." Another assurance is, "The natural man receiveth [understandeth] not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; and again, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His covenant." (**1 Cor. 2:14**; **Psa. 25:14**.) The only restrictions in respect to the telling of the secrets of this Order of the Melchizedek Priesthood are, "Cast not that which is holy before dogs," "Cast not your pearls before swine,

lest they turn again and injure you." (**Matt. 7:6**.) These secrets would be injurious to them; and, misunderstanding them, the swinish, the groveling, might be incited to violence through disappointment, recognizing no value in pearls nor appreciating anything that would not give earthly satisfaction.

THE FOUNDING OF THIS ORDER

The Scriptures assure us that our Creator purposed the founding of this Order of the Melchizedek Priesthood before the foundation of the world. In due time Melchizedek, a kingly priest, constituted its type in the days of Abraham--and then, too, a preparatory or Junior Order was inaugurated, Abraham being chosen of the Lord as its Grand Master. To him the whole secret of the Order was communicated in few words saying, "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The meaning of this was but partially grasped by Abraham himself and all of his posterity, the Jewish nation, who with him became members of that Junior Order during a period of two thousand years. They understood this to signify that at some time Messiah would come and establish a new order of things with the result that Abraham's posterity in particular and the nations of mankind in general would receive through Him a great blessing.

These hopes of the Junior Order proved very encouraging and helpful to such of them as properly entered into the spirit and designs of the Order and sought to appropriate the blessings and privileges of Divine relationship thus accorded them. In proportion as by faith they entered into this Order they took degrees of knowledge and of love and had more of the Divine approval. But as for the other nations of the world they were not admitted in any sense of the word to this Order. It was exclusively for Abraham and the Jews; and all others were strangers, aliens and foreigners from the Commonwealth of Israel, without God and having no hope.

SM8

It was at our Lord's First Advent, or more particularly at Pentecost following His redemptive work and ascension to the presence of the Father, there to appear on our behalf, as our Advocate, that the present Order of the Melchizedek Priesthood was organized--"the Church of the Living God, whose names are written in Heaven." (**Heb. 12:23**.) It is not an earthly organization,

but a Heavenly one, and hence properly it is not composed of those whose names have been written on earth, but those whose names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The earthly organization, called by various names, represents many misunderstandings of the Divine arrangement and unintentionally does violence to principles of the Order; and, whereas these sectarian lines separate some of the true members of the Melchizedek Priesthood, they also receive as members many whose names are not written in Heaven, many who have not the credentials of the true Order, who do not understand its secrets, because they have not been properly initiated by the Holy Spirit.

You will understand, therefore, dear friends, that in our view of the matter the division of the Church of Christ into various bands and companies under various banners--Wesley's, Calvin's, Luther's, the popes', etc., --represent so many mistaken ideas, represent so much of confusion and misunderstanding and bewilderment and contention and error. These organizations are not only not necessary but wrong, in that they tend to distract and divide the true members of the Divine Order who should know each other not by outward badges and names but by their acquaintance with the Lord and with His secret, which is with all those who fear Him.

The first principles of the doctrine of Christ should enable any of these who are truly the Lord's, to make themselves known and well acquainted with others without any earthly introduction or distinguishing name. Indeed, all these do know each other when they meet; but

SM9

the Adversary's effort has been to keep them apart and thus if possible to hinder the progress and growth of the Divine Order. But he has not really hindered it; instead, his methods have merely assisted in making the Order the more secret and unknown to the world, including those merely nominal Christians, not spirit-begotten. So great has been the deception that the Lord Jesus, the grand and everlasting Head and Master of this Order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, was crucified by some who belonged to the Junior Order and who were in one sense earnestly waiting for the establishment of the new Order and for an opportunity to enter it! They were not permitted

to enter because they were unworthy--except the few of whom we read (**John 1:11,12**): "He came unto His own and His own received Him not; but to so many as received Him, to them gave He liberty to become the sons of God"--to join the Order of Spiritual Sons, the Melchizedek Order of Priesthood.

"THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT"

Similarly all down through the Gospel Age there has been an outward Church of God and a true, the inward one. The world has seen the outward one, but not the inward. It has applauded and reprimanded the outward, but has uniformly disallowed the true and considered its members to be merely foolish. Thus the Apostle Paul assures us that himself and others, zealous in the service of the Lord and doing the work of this higher Priesthood, were counted fools all the day long for Christ's sake (**1 Cor. 4:10**); and St. John says, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew Him not." (**1 John 3:1**.) Similarly all who live godly in Christ Jesus have, as the Apostle advised, suffered more or less of persecution and ignominy because they were not recognized of the world--so impenetrable are the secrets of this Order and its message that others cannot know them. Nevertheless, the Order has been growing, increasing, and its fixed or limited

membership will soon be completed. Then no further additions will be accepted.

Let it be understood clearly that membership in this Order does not mean injury to those who are not members of it, but contrariwise it means ultimately a blessing to come to them all through the Melchizedek Priesthood, as it is written of this spiritual Seed of Abraham, of which Christ is the Head and the Church the Body, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (**Gal. 3:29**.) The selection of the members of the Order is accomplished under present conditions because they must all become over-comers, willing and able to count it all joy to be in tribulation and to suffer loss for the sake of the Order its interests, its present workings and membership and its future work. Whoever is not willing to

suffer for the cause is counted unworthy to be a member --in a word, every member of the Melchizedek Priesthood must sacrifice his life in the interest of the Order, in support of its glorious Lord and Head and His teachings and in serving in general the interests of the Order and its members--"We ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren." It will thus be seen that the gateway into this Order is a very narrow one and the pathway of membership in it a very narrow one--"Strait is the gate and narrow [difficult] the way, that leadeth unto life," the special immortality and associated glory which God has provided as the eternal portion of this elect Melchizedek Priesthood.--**Matt. 7:14**; **1 John 3:16**.

BONDAGE AND LAWS OF THE ORDER

Briefly I might say that in one sense every member of the Order is in bondage, and that in another sense every member is free. Let me explain this strange expression. Each is free to leave the Order, renounce it, denounce it and count the precious blood wherewith he was sanctified a common thing and to despite the spirit of favor which initiated him into this Order. In doing so he incurs no

threat of eternal torture. He merely brings himself under death sentence, similar to the one under which he was before he was reached with the grace of God through the precious blood, excepting that it means the Second Death, from which there is no remedy, no ransom, no recovery by resurrection or otherwise--an eternal death similar to that experienced by the entire brute creation. While, therefore, each member of this Royal Priesthood is at liberty to go back to wallowing in the mire, like the sow that was washed, yet if he choose to remain he is also at liberty to follow this course--none shall be able to pluck him out of his Father's hand nor to separate him from this grace.--**John 10:29**; **Rom. 8:38,39**.

However, as already stated, those who abide in Christ, who abide in this new Order of the Royal Priesthood, can have its blessings and privileges fully only upon the most exacting terms and conditions; namely, their full surrender to the Law of the Order so far as their intentions are concerned. "Ah!" I hear you say, "the laws of that Order

must be very voluminous. Doubtless many volumes of Divine statutes and regulations would need to be studied by the members of this Royal Priesthood." We answer, No! The entire law of the Order is briefly comprehended in one word--Love. It is demanded and required of every member of the Order that love shall be the test, not only of his deeds, but also of his words--yea, of his thoughts. Love is the fulfilling of the Law.

True, those initiated into this Order are persons of like passions with ourselves, as the Apostle said. (**Acts 14:15**.) Some of them naturally are more fallen than others, and have less of love and more of selfishness than others; but all who join the Order are required to make resolution in their hearts as respects this law of Love--and all the internal workings of the Order are with a view to the perfecting of its members in love. They must learn to love the great Founder of the Order supremely, and in turn to trust to His Love as well as to His Wisdom

and Power, so that in obedience to His will they consecrate to spend time, talent and influence, yea, all that they possess, in His service.

Secondly, He admonishes that to love those who love them is not the test which He will apply; but that they will be expected to sympathetically love all mankind, to do good to all men as they have opportunity, especially the Household of Faith. (**Gal. 6:10**.) It is required of them that they shall especially love the brethren, the members of the Order, and be ready and glad to lay down their lives for the brethren. Tests along this line are continually necessary to weed out of the Order all who are not approximating its standard of Love Divine, that all delinquents may be cast into the outer darkness, in which the whole world is, and have share with the world in its tribulations present, and especially in those which will come upon it in the closing of this Age and the inauguration of the new one, when the Melchizedek Order of Priests shall take possession of the empire of earth for its blessing and uplifting. It will be seen, then, that the statement that love is the bond of perfectness with this Royal Priesthood has a deep significance. The members of this Order need not be constrained by oaths of allegiance one toward another, as they have a stronger bond

by far, the bond of love--and if any man have not this spirit of Christ he is none of His.--**Rom. 8:9**.

THE WICKED SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND

It is at times really amazing to note how the unconsecrated mind, attempting to understand the Mystery of God, designed only for the members of this Order, falls into such egregious blunders and makes such peculiar misstatements respecting what we endeavor to set forth as plainly and as consistently as our abilities will permit.

Nor need we think that the fault is ours, since we find that the words of our Lord Himself and of His inspired Apostles were similarly misunderstood, and that they have explained to us that God hides these things from

others than His devoted ones. Mark our Lord Jesus' words in His prayer, "I thank Thee, Father, Lord of Heaven and earth, because Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."--**Matt. 11:25,26**.

But how absurd it would be to think that our Lord would thank the Father for hiding things from any, if we were to associate with that thought the one which the world and the nominal Christian associate with it; namely, that all from whom God thus hides these special things or secrets of the Lord are in consequence appointed to an eternity of torture! What a travesty it would be upon Divine Love and Justice and upon the character of the Father and our Redeemer! But this is not the thought. None of the wicked understand, because for them to understand would not only mean a greater measure of condemnation upon them but would also mean an endeavor on their part to oppose and circumvent the Divine arrangement.

As for the worldly-wise they may not understand; for not many great, not many wise, not many learned are chosen of the Lord as worthy of membership in this secret Order of Melchizedek. He explains to us elsewhere the reason for this; namely, that He is seeking only the meek, the humble-minded, those who will be

willing to learn of Him, and to have their minds transformed and conformed to the pattern most pleasing to the Lord. This, under present conditions, is impossible to the worldly-wise, who feel their own superiority, etc., and seek not the wisdom that cometh from Above and the Divine approval. In a word, then, our Lord's testimony shows us that the wise who will understand the things of God and be initiated into the mysteries of the kingdom of the Melchizedek Priesthood are not the worldly-wise or great--with few exceptions. They are chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith, who shall be heirs of the Kingdom

SM14

which God has promised and for which we still pray, "Thy Kingdom come."--**James 2:5**; **Luke 11:2**.

This is another reason why the world knoweth us not even as it knew Him not. Had our Lord been one of the worldly great and bright, haughty and domineering, wealthy and influential, yet possessed of His talents and powers, no doubt the very ones who crucified Him would have hailed Him King. It was His humility, His poverty, etc., that led to His rejection and His crucifixion as a false prophet. Much the same is true of all of His followers who are members of this Royal Priesthood Order. And they are to be content with such a rejection by the world--content because of their realization of acceptance with the Father and with the Grand Master; content with the assurances granted in the Scriptures and confirmed by the Holy Spirit in their experience. They are to wait patiently and the better to cultivate under these conditions the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit.

THE ORDER'S ULTIMATE PURPOSES

We are not hindered from telling the ultimate purposes of this grand Secret Order which our Lord organized and of which, I trust, many of you are members through faith in and consecration to the Lord. We may tell of these mysteries, knowing that none of you will be able to appreciate or thoroughly to comprehend all of these mysteries except such of you as have taken several degrees in the Order, passing from grace to grace and from knowledge to knowledge. We remind you here of

the Master's words when approached by the disciples who asked, "Lord, why speakest Thou unto the people in parables?" Jesus answered and said unto them, "To you it is given to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but unto all outsiders these things are spoken in parables and in dark sayings, that hearing they might hear and not understand." (**Luke 8:10**.) To our understanding the total number of members in this Order of the Melchizedek Priesthood will be 144,001, the one being

our Grand Master and Lord and Redeemer, the others being those of whom He says,"All ye are brethren," and of whom the Apostle declares they are members in particular of the Body of Christ, the Church of the Firstborns, whose names are written in Heaven. (**Heb. 12:23**.) Under another figure our Lord is spoken of as a Bridegroom, and these 144,000, now espoused to Him, covenanted to Him, are ultimately to be united to Him as His Bride, to become the Lamb's Wife and associates in His Throne and work of the future.--**Rev. 21:9**.

With the completion of this elect class, all shaped and polished as the Lord's Jewels by present trials, difficulties, etc., etc., the time will have come for the inauguration of the work of this Royal Priesthood. The Kingdom class will then all be in glory--Jesus their Head glorified nineteen centuries ago, the Church His Body glorified with Him by a share in His kind of resurrection, at His Second Coming. Then the Law shall go forth and the Word of the Lord; then Satan shall be bound; then every evil thing shall be plucked up by the root! What a turmoil this will mean at the beginning may be better imagined than described. But so far as the uprooting and upturning is concerned, the Lord has a peculiar way of accomplishing this; namely, by simply allowing present institutions to "run amuck," to overthrow themselves, to develop anarchy which will sweep the world as with a besom of destruction and produce a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation! It will be at the conclusion of this period of awful anarchy toward which the world is now heading rapidly and from which it cannot be held back by human wisdom and prudence because selfishness has blinded the minds of the masses. The Scriptures tell us that when that plowshare of trouble

shall have passed through the world and finally the new Order of things shall have developed, the poor world will begin to have saner ideas in respect to life, justice and righteousness; and we read that many nations shall

then say, "Come let us go up to the Kingdom of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we shall walk in His path." (**Micah 4:2**); and again, "The desire of all nations shall come." All nations will by that time be so thoroughly weary with the awful trouble that they will be glad to welcome the Reign of Righteousness then due to be inaugurated.

The reforms of that time will be thorough-going. Justice will be laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and the lies will all have been swept away, Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, his deceptions shall cease, and instead the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth. (**Isa. 28:17**; **Hab. 2:14**.) When thus the judgments of the Lord shall be abroad in the earth (rewards for well doing and stripes or punishment for evil doing), the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness. Then the wilful, persistent evil-doer shall be cut off in the Second Death.

Ultimately the blessing of the Lord through this Melchizedek Priesthood shall accomplish all that its Divine Founder outlined in the first statement of the good news to Abraham, namely, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." As a result we read that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God, and that Christ shall reign until He shall have put down every opposition and evil, the last enemy that shall be destroyed being death. (**Isa. 45:23**; **1 Cor. 15:25,26**.) The whole world shall thus be uplifted from the power of sin and death, and be brought back to allegiance to the Heavenly Father. And then, saith the Scriptures, The Christ, the Melchizedek Priesthood, shall deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father, that He may be all in all. (**1 Cor. 15:28**.) However, the Scriptures clearly indicate elsewhere that the great honor of God upon Christ, His beloved Son, and upon the Church, the Bride of Christ, will be an everlasting honor; but the details of the Father's purposes for the Church are still

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held as an unrevealed mystery, even to those who have the secret of the Lord and to whom He has shown the signification of His Covenant made to Abraham respecting the blessing of all the families of the earth.

In conclusion, dear friends, I exhort that we who have become members of this Secret Order of the Lord, including also those who under the leadings of the Lord's Spirit, may yet become members of it, shall appreciate more and more fully its wonderful privileges and gladly conform more and more to its requirements, that we may thus make our calling and election sure to the glorious fruition of our hopes in the Kingdom of God and its gracious work under the whole heavens! We shall best do this by studying our Manual, which our Lord has given us, His Word, and by developing the various fruits and graces of the Spirit, all of which are elements of the one general law of our Order, namely, love to God and to our fellows. I remind you of St. Peter's words, "If ye do these things ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--
2 Pet. 1:10,11; **Psa. 119:97-104**.

"A little while;" with patience, Lord,
I fain would ask, "How long?"
For how can I, with such a hope
Of glory and of Home,
With such a joy awaiting me,
Not wish the hour were come?
How can I keep the longing back,
And how suppress the groan?

SM18

WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

"Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day....For David is not ascended into the Heavens."--**Acts 2:29,34**.

Accepting the recognized fact that the whole world is rapidly going down into death and the estimate that twenty thousand millions of our neighbors and friends have already gone thither, our topic will be recognized by all as a most pertinent one. To be without thought on this subject or to discuss it lightly should be esteemed a mark of insanity, signifying as little reasoning capacity respecting it as that possessed by the brute creation. Whatever our previous thoughts on the subject have been, we are all inquirers for the truth, and as such endeavoring to have our minds as free as possible from superstition and error. More than this I trust that, living in this blessed land so highly favored of God, and having some acquaintance with His Blessed Book, the Bible, we have learned to appreciate it as a Divine Revelation, able to make us wise in the wisdom which cometh from Above.

We hope, dear friends, that the growing spirit of scepticism has not seriously attacked our faith in this Blessed Book. We are well aware, however, that today the intellectual world, under the lead of so-called Higher Critics, is rushing madly onward into infidelity, into disbelief of the Bible as an inspired revelation from God. True, this infidelity is not the foul-mouthed kind of Thomas Paine or Robert Ingersoll, but it is all the more forceful in its undermining of Christian faith because its advocates include some of the brightest members of the Christian ministry and nearly all the professors in nearly all the colleges and seminaries of all denominations. I hope that as I shall present to you the true Bible

SM19

teaching of "Where are the Dead?" you will see that this Blessed Book has been maligned and misrepresented even by its friends, and that rightly understood, reasonably

interpreted, it presents the only tolerable view of our subject, the only satisfactory explanation.

"DOCTRINES OF DEMONS"

The Apostle calls our attention to the fact that the heathen in his day labored under the delusion of "doctrines of demons." (**1 Tim. 4:1**.) We know what those doctrines were, for they are still prominent throughout heathendom. Plato, one of the philosophers whose teachings were widely accepted at that time and which Were set aside by the Apostle as vain philosophies, the wisdom of men as compared with the wisdom of God, taught the theory of human immortality. (**Col. 2:8**.) He claimed that man received from the gods a spark of Divine quality which could never be extinguished, and that hence his portion must be to live on and on throughout all eternity. The Grecians took hold of Plato's theories, and they--being the most intelligent people of that time aside from the Jews--spread this theory wherever their literature went. It is not surprising, therefore, that it not only tinctured the views of the heathen but also to some extent those of the Jews--though comparatively few, known as the Essenes. These in accepting Plato's philosophy really ceased to be Jews in the religious sense. This Platonic theory, starting before Christianity, was in many respects its competitor, until gradually in various parts the Christian faith became tinctured with it.

We wish you to notice that this theory is responsible for the world-wide opinion that a human life once begun can never be extinguished. With this theory the people of the East supported their view of the transmigration of souls--claiming that a human soul is separate and distinct from a human body, and that when the latter dies the soul passes out and in due time will be born again in another body--perhaps, again as a man, or a woman

or as a dog or a donkey or an elephant or a mouse. The labors, the privations, the difficulties of all the lower animals are thus looked forward to by these poor people as being their own future state. No wonder their faces, indexing their heart conditions, are woeful and sad! Others

of the heathen have beliefs nearer to those entertained by many in Christendom--that the tortures of the life they cannot get rid of will be with fire or ice or other torments at the hands of demons.

THE VIEWS OF CHRISTENDOM

Accepting the recognized fact that Christendom leads the world in thought today we note that the philosophy instituted by Plato--not by Moses, not by the Prophets of Israel, not by Jesus, not by His Apostles--has taken a firm hold upon Christian faith, and left its terrible impress upon nearly every item thereof. Practically all oft he larger denominations of Christendom hold to the Platonic theory, though the majority are quite unaware of the origin of the doctrine, many of them supposing that it is the Bible teaching--that it is supported by every writer on the Holy Scriptures. Quite the contrary of this is true, however; and, as we shall shortly show, the testimony of the Scriptures is radically in opposition to this theory from first to last, and without the exception of a single writer or a single text.

As the oldest of the denominations, Catholicism should be heard first as to its views on the subject--Where are the dead? Its answer is that it ignores the heathen theory of the transmigration of souls, but that it holds to the feature of Plato's philosophy which declares that the human soul is immortal--that a human existence once having started can never cease--hence that the twenty thousand millions of Adam's race who have died are not really dead, but more alive than ever before, and that notwithstanding the appearance of death they have been experiencing either joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain. In answer to our more particular inquiries it tells us that the

dead are in one of three places: (1) A very few saintly ones went to Heaven directly at death; (2) a comparatively small number who died outside the Roman Catholic faith, in wilful opposition thereto and hence called heretics, have since their death been enduring a hell of torture which will be never ending; (3) the great mass--all others than those enumerated above--they claim go to

Purgatory. Their claim is that nearly all of the heathen go there because they were not counted worthy of the blessing of knowledge before they died, and because on the other hand they had done nothing to merit either the eternal torture of hell or the eternal peace of Heaven. To Purgatory they assign practically all the members of their own Church also--including bishops, archbishops, cardinals and popes.

Dante was one of their prominent theologians, whose description of the Inferno gives the Roman Catholic view of Purgatory. The artist Dore, also a good Catholic, used his remarkable skill in the illustration of Dante's Epic. We advise you all to notice, in some public library or bookstore, this remarkable work--Dante's Inferno, illustrated by Dore. The artist has faithfully depicted the descriptions of the teacher, and his work would surely touch the most calloused heart with sympathy. Every conceivable form of torture is depicted, from roasting and boiling to freezing and mangling--horrible, terrible. No wonder our dear Catholic friends and neighbors, as they have these pictures before their mental vision as their prospect after death, have not only sad countenances but a terrible fear of death and thereafter.

Neither should any think that these Catholic doctrines of the past have in any degree changed at the present time. In this very day Catholics have tracts for their children which describe in vivid language the most excruciating tortures awaiting those who in any sense or degree are disrespectful or disobedient to the priests and the teachings of the Catholic Church. One of these brought

to our attention recently was published in Ireland, and described a little girl who had done wrong and whose fate after death was to be obliged to live in a room whose floor was red hot. In solemn language the tract exhorted other little boys and little girls to love and serve God lest such a fate should await them. It is not imaginable that any human being could love a God who would provide such tortures for any of His creatures.--**Isa. 29:13**.

It is no wonder, then, that Catholics make no pretensions to a love for God. They fear and dread. The hope held out to these is that any good deeds of theirs will be credited up and serve to shorten the period of their

sentence to suffering, the period of their stay in Purgatory, the period of their deliverance to Heaven. This doctrine of life in Purgatory is the basis for the many exhortations from Catholic pulpits and Catholic books that faithfulness be manifested by penances and masses. A certain number of attendances at Church in the Lenten season constitutes a penance to which is attached a blessing and the remission of so many years of purgatorial suffering. Those who have money are exhorted to set apart a good portion of it to defray the expenses of masses for their own soul or for those of others. The calculation seems to be that all the penances and all the masses imaginable would still leave long years or decades or centuries to be suffered before deliverance to Heaven. And this rule is applied indiscriminately to rich and poor alike, high and low.

To illustrate, when Pope Pius IX died, masses were said for the repose of his soul throughout all the Roman Catholic Churches of the world. Likewise when Pope Leo XIII died, the same command for masses for the repose of his soul went forth, and was executed in all Catholic Churches. This implied the belief that these men, while the highest functionaries of that Church, were not sufficiently holy or pure or good to be admitted to Heaven; for surely those gaining access to Heaven have no need

of masses for the repose of their souls. The expression "repose of the soul" implies the tortures of that soul in Purgatory, and supplication and endeavor to have God remit a measure of those sufferings and shorten the period of the tribulations.

We are not making light of those matters. We are merely stating them, not because they are unknown, but because they are not realized and appreciated. All Catholics then, we believe, will assent to our declaration that their faith is that the great mass of mankind are now in Purgatory, a comparatively small number in eternal torment, which they call Hell, and a small number, comparatively, in Heaven. It should be remembered, however, that on a Papal Jubilee it is the custom for the Pope to exercise a power he claims is his, of setting free from Purgatory certain thousands of its inmates who have not fulfilled all of their term of punishment, though it is to be

supposed that it is not his intention to admit them to Heaven insufficiently purged.

PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN VIEWS

Protestants claim to be much in advance of Roman Catholics in respect to their religious faith. They often, we know, speak of Roman Catholics as ignorant, superstitious and deluded. What shall we say then if we find that the Protestant view on the question of our discourse is much more unreasonable than that of Catholics? We at least would be obliged to say that they have no room for boasting.

Protestant creeds, almost without exception, agree to the Platonic theory that no human being can die-- that when men seem to die they really become more alive that same instant than they ever were before. We ask, Where, then, do they go? They reply that they cannot tolerate the Roman Catholic view of a Purgatory, that they have looked into the Bible sufficiently to find that there is no such teaching in the Scriptures. They tell us, therefore, that they believe that there are just two places

for the dead, Heaven or Hell. We inquire of them, Who go to Heaven? They answer, The saintly, the holy, the pure in heart, the Little Flock, the Elect, those who walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We inquire respecting the rest, and hear the Protestants (to their credit be it said) balk at the teaching of their creeds even while they affirm them, and declare that all not begotten again of the Holy Spirit, not sanctified in Christ, not saints, go to hell.

We inquire the kind of hell they have gone to, and get various replies. Some assert that it is a place of literal fire and excruciating pains at the hands of fire-proof demons, and that this will be the fate of all who enter there to all eternity, without any hope of escape. Others, without being able to give particular reasons, tell us that in their great wisdom they agree with all the foregoing except as to the kind of punishment, which they conclude must be a mental anguish or suffering. But lest we should think of them as being tender-hearted, they hasten to add

that this suffering will really be more intense, "worse" than that of the literal fire believed in by others. The whole race, we are told, was started on the broad road for this eternal torment by Father Adam's disobedience, and in consequence of that we are all born in sin, shapen in iniquity. Those who ever get to Heaven will get there because of Divine mercy and aid extended them to overcome the world, the flesh and the Adversary.

"COME, LET US REASON TOGETHER"

In the Bible the Lord appeals to our reason, saying, "Come, let us reason together." (**Isa. 1:18**.) He does not intimate that we should reason without Him and without His Word; but He distinctly implies that His Word should be reasoned upon, be considered by our minds. Whoever possesses any measure of reasoning faculty must conclude that the Catholic view of our question--Where are the Dead?--is in some respects worse than the heathen view; that the Protestant view of death is

still worse; that none of these views seem to be God-like, but that all of them condemn themselves as being devilish. Reasoning power on religious subjects seems to be a scarce commodity. Many Christian people seem to understand the invitation to reason with God to mean that He wishes them to tell Him just what are their preferences; and that if they remain obdurate, holding to their preferences, He will finally give in and say that their wills shall be done in Heaven and in earth.

Let none of us make this mistake. Let us on the other hand remember the greatness of God--His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Let us remember our own insignificance and lack of knowledge. Then, in harmony with the Master's precepts, let us become as little children, anxious to be and to do in harmony with the Divine Plan, as God has revealed it. So doing, dear friends, each one of us is assured of the Divine blessing--assured of a growth in grace, in knowledge, in love, toward God and toward our fellows.

Let us begin with our text. It declares that David is dead. Hence he is not alive in any sense. It declares

that he is not in Heaven, and we are not bound to accept either the Catholic or Protestant view that he is in hell or eternal torment. What does the inspired Apostle Peter say respecting David's present whereabouts? He says in our text,"His sepulchre is with us." It could be his sepulchre only in the sense that he was still in it, that it still represented him. If he had begun a new existence elsewhere that sepulchre in no sense of the word would be his. We are using the Apostle's words in the very sense in which he himself used them. Saint Peter had just quoted from the Psalms, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Hebrew, *sheol;* Greek, *hades]."* He points out that David spake not these words concerning himself, respecting his own soul, but respecting the soul of Christ--that Christ's soul would not be left in hell. The Apostle's argument is that David's soul

is still in hell, but that Christ's soul was delivered from hell--raised from the tomb, from the state of death, on the third day after His crucifixion.

CHRIST'S SOUL DELIVERED FROM HELL

Here, dear friends, we have a declaration sure enough that the dead go to hell--not to Purgatory. Furthermore it is a declaration that the Prophet David and Christ Jesus Himself went to hell--that the latter had been delivered from hell, but that the former was still there. Had we the time it would be an easy matter to bring evidence from the entire Scriptures proving that all who die, both good and bad, go to hell; and that the only means by which they can be delivered from Sheol, Hades, is through a resurrection of the dead. This Scriptural presentation not only differs from the heathen view but differs also from the Catholic and Protestant views. And with the ordinary idea of hell before our minds, it would seem more awful than any other theory that both good and bad alike should go down to Sheol, to Hades.

But wait a moment, dear friends; let us not too hastily decide that the Bible is unreasonable in its presentations. Let us not prove or test it by human theories. The poet has truly said:

"God is His own interpreter,
And He will make it plain."

Investigation shows that our difficulty arises from attaching a wrong meaning to these Scriptural terms Sheol and Hades (hell). The unreasonable view of the fire-and-torment hell which we all received with so much credulity came from the Dark Ages, not from the Bible. Dante's "Inferno" is as different from the hell of Scripture as darkness is from sunlight. We must not carry forward the demonology of the Dark Ages and attach it to our interpretations of the Bible. If we do, we shall be quite confused. We should remember, too, that these lurid pictures of the Dark Ages were painted by the very class of men who, with a devilish spirit, burned one another at

the stake or tortured one another with the rack, the thumbscrew or other devilish inventions. We do not approve the moral character of those men, and we should not expect their doctrinal teachings to be much superior to themselves, nor much in harmony with Divine truth and revelation. Let us then examine hell from the Scriptural standpoint. Let us hear what God has said.

As is well known, our Bible was not originally written in the English language. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek--ours is but a translation. Going to the Old Testament in the Hebrew we find that it contains more than twice as many mentions of hell, Sheol, as does the English translation. In the English the word occurs thirty-one times, in the Hebrew, sixty-six times. How has this Hebrew word *sheol* been translated in our English Bible? We answer that the thirty-one times the word hell occurs are from this word *sheol*, that it occurs twice more in our common version where it is rendered "pit," and that it occurs thirty-three times more in our common version and is rendered "grave." Furthermore, in two of the places where it is rendered hell in our common version, it is interpreted by the marginal reading, "Hebrew, the grave."

The fact, dear friends, is, as every Hebrew scholar knows, that the word *sheol* is never used to refer to a place of fire or of torture. In every instance, whether used literally or figuratively, it refers to a death state. Furthermore, as we have already stated, both good and

bad are reputed to go thither. David went to Sheol, our Lord Jesus went to Sheol, according to the Scriptures. We might quote you from the words of the patriarch David, also from the various other Prophets, how they all expected to go to Sheol--to the tomb, the state of death. Not only so, but they assure us also that Christ redeemed us and the world from Sheol. For instance, we read in the prophecy of Hosea, "I will ransom them from Sheol: O Death, I will be thy plagues; O Sheol,

SM28

I will be thy destruction." (**Hosea 13:14**.) Furthermore, we have the Scriptural declaration respecting Sheol that it contains no fire, no suffering. We read, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in Sheol, whither thou goest." (**Eccl. 9:10**.) In other words, we should be actively engaged in doing some good according to our talents and opportunities because we are all hastening to Sheol--to the tomb--to death, and there is no wisdom nor device nor knowledge there; we can neither help nor hinder, do good nor do harm, when we have reached the "land of forgetfulness." (**Psa. 88:12**.) Realizing this should make us all the more diligent in the present life.

REDEMPTION FROM SHEOL

We have already seen that through the Prophet the Lord declared that He would redeem our souls from Sheol, and that Sheol should be destroyed. What is meant by this? We answer that Father Adam by his disobedience involved himself and all of the race in what the Scriptures designate a "curse" or penalty--not an eternal torment penalty, but a death penalty. Not "Roasting thou shall roast," but"Dying thou shalt die," was the Divine statement of Adam's penalty. Again, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread until thou return unto the dust from whence thou wast taken. For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." It does not read, "unto eternal torture thou shalt be remanded." God has explained the matter expressly enough, but our poor heads were befogged with the doctrines of devils

handed down from the Dark Ages, often by very good and well-intentioned people, amongst others our parents.

Hear the Apostle's statement of the same matter, and let us notice how closely it corroborates the Old Testament pronouncement. He says, "As by one man's disobedience sin entered the world and death as a result of sin; and thus death passed upon all men, because all are

sinners." (**Rom. 5:12**.) How plain that is! Not a word about eternal torment as the penalty for our sins inherited from Father Adam. Quite to the contrary, it was a death penalty, a just, reasonable penalty. God, who gave the opportunity for life eternal, had the full right, the full power, to terminate that life when used contrary to His Divine injunction.

Had it not been for God's mercy the infidel's view of the matter would have been true--that a man's death is the same as that of the brute beast--that there would be no beyond, no future. But while telling us this (**Eccl. 3:20**), the Lord graciously informs us that He has found a Redeemer for Adam and his race. The Scriptures point us to Jesus and the work that He accomplished on our behalf. He died, the Just for the unjust, that He might reconcile us to God. (**1 Pet. 3:18**.) As we all came under death conditions through Father Adam, so when Jesus by His death paid Adam's penalty it was accounted as a sufficiency of price for the sins of the whole world. Thus the Apostle declares that Jesus"gave Himself a Ransom for all" and"tasted death for every man." (**1 Tim. 2:6**; **Heb. 2:9**.) Mark well he does not say that Jesus tasted eternal torment for every man. Eternal torment was not the penalty. The Bible has it right. Death is the penalty, and it is upon the whole race. But the whole race has been redeemed, and therefore when God's due time shall arrive a blessing of resuscitation, of awakening from death, shall come to every member of our race. It is thus that Sheol shall be destroyed--that is, that there will be no longer a tomb or death condition; for all will be taken out of that condition, awakened from the death sleep.

HADES TO BE DESTROYED

The equivalent of the Hebrew word *sheol,* as we have already stated, is the Greek word *hades,* which is found in the New Testament written in the Greek. In proof of this take our context and note the words of St. Peter that he quoted from **Psalm 16:10**--"Thou wilt not leave

SM30

My soul in Sheol," and in the Greek rendered it, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hades." (**Acts 2:31**.) In a word, the Old Testament says that Jesus went to Sheol, and that His soul was not left there, but raised from the dead; while the New Testament declares these things of Hades. What we are saying is new to the majority of the so-called laity, but not at all new to the educated of the clergy, who all know, if they would admit it, that Sheol and Hades contain no thought of fire or torment or trouble, but merely represent the state or condition of death--what we would express by the word "tomb."

This great underworld of the dead, the tomb, Sheol, Hades, has many cities of the dead called cemeteries. But according to the Scriptural symbolization it is a great prison-house. In it are estimated twenty thousand millions who have died. They are called in the Scriptures" prisoners of hope," because the Lord has promised that ultimately the great prison-house shall be broken up and all these prisoners shall be released, brought back to consciousness again under better conditions than now prevail. This assurance of resurrection the Apostle tells us is "both for the just and the unjust." Not all will have the same degree of blessing when they come forth from the tomb in the Millennial Morning; for the Scriptures declare that some shall come forth to the life-resurrection and others to the judgment-resurrection--to be subject to disciplines, corrections, that if rightly received will help them up, up, out of their degradation and back to a condition in which God will be pleased to permit them to live everlastingly.--**Zech. 9:12**; **1 Peter 3:18**.

The Scriptures are very clear in declaring that all this hope of a resurrection is based upon the fact that Christ died for the sins of the world, and that without His death there could be no resurrection--the prisoners would all remain in the great prison-house. Indeed, they would

not be said to be in a prison-house at all were it not fort
he Divine provision for their re-awakening. Hearken

to the Prophet telling of this coming blessing upon the
prisoners. Speaking of Christ and His work during the
Millennial Age, he declares that the Lord shall say to the
prisoners, "Go forth!" to them that are in darkness,
"Show yourselves!" (**Isa. 49:9**.) Their coming forth
will be that they may manifest their real sentiments
either for righteousness or for unrighteousness, when
they will have a full, complete opportunity for choice.
Those who choose righteousness will thereby be choosing
eternal life, according to God's provision, and they that
will choose unrighteousness will be choosing the Second
Death, extinction, from which there will be no hope of recovery
ever. "Christ dieth no more." (**Rom. 6:9**)--
there will be no resurrection from the Second Death.

All are redeemed from the first or Adamic death because
Christ took Adam's place and bought the whole
race, with a view to giving each member of the race an individual
opportunity for returning to God's favor. Mark
again the Prophet's declaration. (**Isa. 61:1**.) There
Christ's mission is declared to be to"bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening
of the prison to them that are bound."

How beautiful the picture! Twenty thousand millions
of prisoners, slaves of sin! The great Deliverer has
provided their ransom by going into death on their
behalf. Because of His faithfulness He was rewarded
with life on a still higher plane, and has thus become the
Author of salvation to all them that will obey Him. (**Heb. 5:9**.)
A few have the hearing ears in the present time,
and theirs is the great privilege of hearing the Redeemer's
voice and becoming His faithful Bride by suffering
with Him for righteousness' sake, that they may in the
Millennial period, with their Lord and Master, pour out
upon the whole human creation the Divine blessing of
forgiveness, restitution, reconciliation. Notice further
that Jesus applied this same figure to Himself, quoting
this very passage in the synagogue at Nazareth. We are

all witnesses that He did not open prison-doors of any kind at His First Advent, except as figuratively, he, through the awakening of Lazarus and a few others, showed forth His coming glory and His coming work, which will bless all. Hearken also to His words in his final message to the Church, "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive forevermore; and have the keys of death and of Hades"--the grave, the tomb. (**Rev. 1:18**.) Ah, yes, the keys are in good hands! They are rightfully His who has bought all the prisoners. In due time He will use the key and bring all forth from the great prison-house, that under the blessed conditions of His Kingdom they may all come to a knowledge of the Truth and, if they will, by obedience, come back into harmony with God and possess eternal life--or, acting otherwise, die the Second Death.

HELL IN THE REVISED VERSION BIBLE

There is an excuse for the rendering of the words Sheol and Hades by the English word hell. In old English literature we find that the words hell, pit and grave were used interchangeably; and that while grave and pit have maintained their original significance, the word hell has gradually changed, until now by that word is generally understood a place of torment. In old English a farmer writing to his friend says, "I intend to hell my house this fall, and we have already helled 150 bushels of potatoes." What does he mean? Simple and plain enough! He means that he is about to thatch his house with straw, covering it over, burying it after the old style almost down to the ground. He means that he has pitted or put away for winter and spring use the potatoes, which will keep better thus than otherwise. So, then, the translators of our Bible are not to be blamed for the indiscriminate translation referred to.

But how about the Revised Version? says one. Ah! we answer, the revisers were educated men, who knew well the significance of hell, Hades--who knew that in no

sense of the word did they refer to a place of torment, but that they do signify the death state. How then did they translate these words Sheol and Hades? We reply that they were too honest to translate them with the word hell, but not honest enough to give the English reader the truth on the subject; and hence they gave no translation at all, but merely introduced the Hebrew word *sheol* in the Old Testament and the Greek word *hades* in the New Testament without translating them. The public, thoroughly deluded on the subject, at once declared that their course was one of leniency, and that Sheol and Hades were just as hot as when translated hell. The fact is, dear friends, as we have already stated, that there is no fire connected with either of these words in any proper interpretation of them.

"ALL THAT ARE IN THE GRAVES"

We have set before you the Scriptural presentation on this subject. Where are the dead? It may be disappointing to some of your minds as you think of the saintly ones of your friends and relatives. But they surely have not been very many. On the contrary, the great mass of our friends and those who have died have given no evidence of being spirit-begotten, pure in heart, saintly. Hence if there be a measure of disappointment on the one hand there is a corresponding measure of relief on the other. However, no matter what our friends may have been, I hope you and I are amongst those who desire to know the Truth and to whom the Lord has promised that they shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make them free. Let us be free then from these awful dogmas of the past, free to love God, free to believe His Word, free to trust in and understand how Jesus tasted death for every man, free to believe that He who redeemed will restore, free to believe that the resurrection of the dead is the salvation which God has provided, and that "in death there is no remembrance of Thee," as the Prophet has declared--**Psa. 6:5**.

SM34

We remind you again of our dear Redeemer's words, speaking of the resurrection. He not only said, "I am the resurrection and the life," but He also declared, "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and shall come forth." (**John 11:25**; **5:28**.) Those of you who are Christians will not doubt the Redeemer knew where are the dead. And in this Scripture which we have just quoted it distinctly says that they are in their graves, not in Purgatory, not in a hell of torment, not in Heaven; they are in the tomb, in the death state, and from the death state He will call them forth in the Resurrection Morning. What more could we ask than this positive statement? Who dares to contradict Him, who spake as never man spake? What theologian would have the temerity? Note how complete is the harmony between His statement and that of our text. St. Peter, one of the chiefest Apostles, declares that David was still in his sepulchre, had not ascended into Heaven; Jesus Himself declares, "No man hath ascended into Heaven," and again, "All who are in their graves shall come forth." The next verse tells that in the coming forth there shall be two classes, the one perfect in life, glory, honor and immortality; the other still imperfect and to receive chastisements, judgments, disciplines, with a view to their ultimately attaining a full resurrection out of sin-and-death conditions if they will. With these clearer thoughts on this important subject, dear friends, I trust that you and myself will more and more seek to make our calling and election sure, that we may have a blessed part in the First Resurrection, of which it is declared"Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power; but they shall be kings and priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."--**Rev. 20:6**.

SM35

"LAZARUS, COME FORTH!"

"When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked."--**Acts 17:32**.

As some who heard St. Paul preach the resurrection of the dead mocked, so quite likely many have mocked as they read these sermons. Nevertheless, the Word of the Lord standeth sure:"There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." It was the great Teacher Himself who said, "All who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the son of Man and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life--"perfection"--they that have done evil unto the resurrection of judgment," crisis, trial.--**John 5:28,29**; **Acts 24:15**.

To those that believe that the *dead* are more alive now than when they *were* alive, the doctrine of the resurrection must, of necessity, be foolishness. And whoever logically believes in the resurrection of the *dead* must, of necessity, consider the popular views on man's condition in death absurd in the extreme. There is no middle ground. Either man is *dead* when he is dead, as the Bible declares, and can have no further knowledge or hope, pleasure or pain, until awakened from death; or else man does not die at all when he seems to die--a theory with which the Bible is at war and which we claim has no foundation in fact or reason. It is a mythology. The entire heathen world believes this theory today. The doctrine came into the Christian Church in opposition to the "resurrection" doctrine long centuries ago--about the fourth century, when hordes of heathen were baptized and called Christians, with but slight appreciation of "the faith once delivered to the saints."--**Jude 3**.

SM36

RESURRECTION A STUPENDOUS MIRACLE

Numerous objections to the resurrection are raised. It is claimed that it would be impossible for God to resurrect

the dead, if they were really *dead.* It is claimed that, if our Lord's words were fulfilled and all that are in their graves should come forth, the earth would be so densely populated that if stood on each other's heads several rows deep all over the earth, there would not be room for them. It is claimed that it would be impossible to provide food and raiment for so many. The resurrection is denounced as contrary to the laws of nature, according to all the history of the past.

The latter claim we admit. The resurrection of the dead will be something out of keeping with anything in man's experience. Only those who have an implicit faith in the Creator and in His promise will be able to receive this doctrine, which credits the Almighty with a Divine power exceeding anything else that could be imagined.

As to the other points, let us see: Many wise men in public positions are very unscientific, even when called scientists. They sometimes jump at conclusions in an astounding manner. For instance, we all know how some of these scientific gentlemen laugh at the Bible's records and declare that humanity has been upon the earth millions of years. If we ask for the proof they are astonished that their omniscience should be questioned. They knock a chip from a block of stone, look at it wisely, and declare it so many millions of years old. But a new school of geologists is arising which takes note of the fact that many of the rocks were evidently formed just as we today set our concrete blocks and turn them to stone within a few days.

Let us take the Bible as our authority. Let us believe what it says: that man was created about six thousand years ago. Let us note the gradual progress of the race. reasonable and, we believe, liberal estimate of the entire number of the race since Adam is twenty thousand

millions. Let us figure out how many square feet it would require to lay them each full length in graves. Then turn to the atlas. Look at the number of square miles in the State of Texas. Divide this into square feet, and what do we find? We find that more than twice the number of our large estimate of all who have ever lived could be buried in separate graves in Texas alone.

CAN THE AWAKENED BILLIONS BE PROVIDED FOR?

As for clothing, Mr. Edison tells us that new inventions are in progress which, ere long, will make clothing wonderfully cheap--"dirt cheap." "Mineral wool" is the first step in this direction. It sells cheaply by the ton. Further development is expected to make this fit for man's use as clothing. The supply is inexhaustible. The Scriptures declare respecting the Divine provision for the human family during the Messianic Reign that "the earth shall yield her increase" and "the wilderness shall blossom as the rose," etc.--**Psa. 67:6**; **Isa. 35:1**.

From every direction information is coming of new species of wheat and corn much more prolific than what we have been using. Additionally, there is recently an announcement of a method of magnetizing grains before they are planted, which will permit the raising of at least three crops a year in the temperate zones. Additionally, nitrogen is being extracted from the atmosphere and used to enrich the worn-out soils.

Furthermore, we may be sure that He who provided Eden for our first parents is abundantly able, as He has promised, to make of earth a Paradise, in which the blessing of the Lord will be upon humanity; and the earth, as the Divine footstool, shall be made glorious. Moreover, be it remembered that the Scriptures distinctly declare that the propagation of the species is intended merely for the present time and that those who will attain, in the New Age, to the resurrection will "neither marry nor be given in marriage." The propagation of the human race is intended to proceed only

until the earth shall be filled. But over and above all this, the great Creator, whose Plan is being worked out in man's creation, man's redemption and man's restitution, knows the end from the beginning and is fully able to do all that He has promised. If necessary, how easy it would be for Him to still further sink the bed of portions of the oceans and to raise up continents in the Atlantic and Pacific larger in extent than the present land surface!

However, we have nothing to say to those who "mock" at the Divine promise of a resurrection of the dead and who, because of a lack of faith in the Almighty, prefer the vain imaginations of the human mind to the positive promises of the Creator. We have merely thrown out some suggestions helpful to the faith of those who are really seeking Divine wisdom and who are in danger of being side-tracked by "science falsely so-called."

"SLEPT WITH HIS FATHERS"

It is in full accord with the promise of a resurrection that in the Bible teachings we read that "Solomon *slept* with his fathers," and similarly of other kings, good and bad; and of Prophets, Apostles and others. Thus St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr stoned to death, we are told, "fell asleep." St. Paul tells us that some will be alive and remain to the coming of Messiah; and he remarks, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." (**1 Cor. 15:51**.) Again he tells us that we may comfort ourselves and each other as respects our dead friends and neighbors, that they all "sleep in Jesus" and are to be brought forth from the dead by Him. The whole world sleeps in Jesus, in the sense that their resurrection hope--their hope of awakening in the Resurrection Morning, is based upon the work which Jesus accomplished as the world's Redeemer.

No one will dispute that the Bible declares that the dead are *asleep.* It is, therefore, a proper and pertinent question that every Bible student should be prepared

to answer: Where do the dead *sleep,* waiting for an *awakening?* Surely not in Heaven, where all is life and happiness! Surely not in the Purgatory which our Catholic friends feel so confident is *somewhere.* And surely not in the fiery hell of which Protestants generally tell us. Surely the dead *sleep* in the Bible hell--*sheol, hades,* the tomb, the state of death. Thus it is written, "Many *that sleep in the dust of the earth* shall awake."--**Dan. 12:2**; **Ezek. 37:12-14**.

Hearken to the Master. Mary, Martha and Lazarus of Bethany were His particular friends. Lazarus took

sick and the sisters sent word to the Master, "He whom Thou lovest is sick." Jesus gave no outward heed to the matter until the third day after, and then said to His disciples, "Our friend Lazarus *sleepeth."* They replied," Lord if he sleep he will do well." Then Jesus said plainly (coming down to *their* ordinary use of language), "Lazarus is dead." With His disciples He then went to Bethany.--**John 11:11-16**.

The sisters were greatly disappointed. They had not thought of the possibility of their brother's dying, because they so thoroughly believed in the power of Jesus. Mary did not even go to meet her dear friend, the Lord, when He came. Martha met Him with the chiding remark "If Thou hadst been here [if You had come when we informed You] our brother had not died." Jesus did not dispute that Lazarus was *dead,* nor tell her that he was more alive than ever. He merely promised that her brother should *rise again.*

Martha replied that she knew that Lazarus would rise in the resurrection, at the Last Day. Jesus assured her that *He* would be the One who would resurrect the dead, and that He was then present with her, intimating that she might ask even then for her brother to be revived. But Martha's faith was insufficient. When the Master asked, Where have ye laid him? she replied that it was now too late, because putrefaction had set in--it was

now the fourth day since his death. When Jesus finally went to Lazarus' tomb, He did not call him from Heaven, nor from Purgatory, nor from a fiery hell, but from the *tomb.* And the *dead one* came forth.

This wonderful exhibition of His power the Lord gave, to the intent that His disciples then and since might realize that in Him is vested the resurrection power, by Divine arrangement, and that there is to be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust; that all who are in their graves are to hear His voice and come forth. The Church class will come forth to perfection of life on the spirit plane. The world of mankind will come forth from the tomb imperfect, as they went into it, and will all have a test, to prove whether they are worthy or unworthy of restitution and eternal life in the earthly Paradise.

"WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?"

St. Paul held an imaginary discussion with doubters of the resurrection in his day. He has them inquire, With what body will the dead return? He replies that, as each kind of seed that is planted reproduces its own kind, so it will be in the resurrection of the dead. Whatever kind of seed is planted in death, of the same kind and nature will be the resurrection crop. The Apostle elaborates, showing that the whole world of mankind are of one kind of seed--human stock--and that therefore, in the resurrection time, they will come forth the same--*humans.* And they will come forth in practically the same condition in which they died.--**1 Cor. 15:35-41**.

But if we shall suppose *rye* to represent the human stock and can imagine a special treatment of some of that rye grain before sowing--changing it into wheat, then we would know that those *changed grains* would sprout and develop, not as rye, but as wheat. Thus the Apostle illustrates *the* resurrection of *the* dead--the Church. All are of Adamic stock, but some, a few--the spirit-begotten Church--experience a change of nature from earthly to

Heavenly. Hence they, in the resurrection, will come forth Heavenly or spirit beings. He says, Some, the world at large, will be members of the *earthly Adam;* others, a few, a "little flock," will be members of the second Adam --*the Heavenly* Lord. The standard to which the world may expect to be awakened and, later, raised, will be the earthly standard represented in the perfect Adam.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION DESCRIBED

It was not necessary that the Apostle should more particularly describe, at that time, the resurrection opportunity provided for the world of mankind, but it was very appropriate that he should give to the Church a more detailed explanation of the Divine provision for the resurrection of the Bride. Explaining this, St. Paul

says, "Thus is *the* resurrection of *the* dead: It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown an animal body; it is raised a spirit body. For there is an animal body and there is a spirit body. As it is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit."--**1 Cor. 15:42-52**.

The resurrection of the Church is called a "life-resurrection," because all those experiencing it will be *perfected in life*--will be instantly and completely lifted out of death conditions. The world in general, on the contrary, will not come forth to a life-resurrection, but will come forth still partly dead, as mankind in general are today. The coming forth or *awakening* to them will be merely the beginning of their resurrection, their *anastasis.* In the Divine appointment the thousand years of Messiah's reign are set apart for their resurrection--their gradual raising up to human perfection. The experiences of Messiah's Kingdom will all be helpful whether they be chastisements or rewards. They will all be reformatory. Only deliberate and wilful transgressors will be annihilated in the Second Death.

SM42

TWO DISTINCT SALVATIONS

"So great salvation, which began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by those who heard Him."--**Heb. 2:3**.

In the past many of us misunderstood these words--*"so great* salvation"--and have thought them to apply merely to an "elect" few of the saintly followers of our great Redeemer. Surely it should not be thought strange if a closer examination of God's Word would demonstrate to us that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways and plans higher than ours. (**Isa. 55:9**.) It should not surprise us to find that our forefathers were generally in considerable darkness in respect to "the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of Christ, which passeth all understanding." (**Eph. 3:18,19**.) It should not surprise us to find that our Savior will yet see the fruitage of the travail of His soul and be satisfied (**Isa. 53:11**), and that this satisfaction will result from the salvation of more than the "little flock," who walk in His steps and who, like Him, "present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God," in the service of Truth and righteousness. --**Rom. 12:1**.

There are several ways of treating this thought, that more than an"elect" few are eventually to reach eternal life through the Redeemer of mankind. One way, which many adopt, is to claim that our Lord and the Apostles did not really mean to establish so high a standard of saintship as their words imply, and then to conclude that the unsaintly will gain eternal life as well as the saintly--all except the degenerately wicked. This view of matters, which is the common one, is undoubtedly prompted by sympathy for friends, relatives, neighbors and the heathen; but it is wholly contrary to God's Word.

SM43

Another view still held by some is that everybody but the saintly will suffer torture eternally and hopelessly.

The third theory which I desire to present here is the one I believe to be in accord with every text of Scripture,

and in accord with Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power Divine, and in accord with sanctified common sense. I have time for only an outline of this Plan, which is most comprehensive, as follows:

THE SAINTLY NEW CREATION

Salvation in no sense began before the Redeemer's birth, forty-one hundred and twenty-eight years after the fall of our first parents. In all that long period nobody was saved. The Apostle declares in our text that salvation began to be preached by Jesus. Again we read that Jesus brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel. (**2 Tim. 1:10**.) So, then, life and immortality and the Gospel Message began to be preached by our Lord and was not preached before His day. Indeed we can see that if there is "none other Name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved," than the name of Jesus, then it could not have been preached; nothing could be preached previously except the Divine declaration that God purposed in due time to redeem mankind from sin and death through a Savior and a Great One--One able to save unto the uttermost all that would come unto the Father through Him.

This reasoning is surely true to the facts. Search all through the Old Testament, and you will find no promise of eternal life set forth except by the Law given to the one little nation of Israel. That Law declared that he that doeth these things shall live by his obedience thereto (**Rom. 10:5**); and the Apostle assures us that Jews died because none of them kept the Law--because no imperfect human being could possibly meet the requirements of God's perfect Law. "By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in His sight."--**Rom. 3:20**.

SM44

The Apostle, further explaining the matter, says, "Wherefore, then, serveth the Law?" He replies to his question, "It was added because of transgression until the promised Seed should come."--**Gal. 3:19**.

THE PROMISED SEED

The Apostle's words direct our thoughts back to Eden, when God declared that the Seed of the woman would at some future time bruise the Serpent's head. But that Seed did not exist for over four thousand years after, and has not yet crushed the Serpent's head--destroyed sin and the works of Satan.

The Apostle's words again remind us of God's promise to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (**Gen. 12:3**.) Abraham was not thus blessed, nor were any others thus blessed, however faithful they were. All the blessing was to come through Abraham's Seed and could not be dispensed before His coming. Hence the Apostle, referring to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the faithful of past time, declared, "All these died in faith, not having received the promise" (**Heb. 11:13**)--the blessing--reconciliation to God and eternal life.

And when Jesus came He did not attempt to bless the world, but on the contrary, in His prayer, declared, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me" (**John 17:9**)--the saintly, the "Very Elect." (**Matt. 24:24**.) These He called; these He taught--"Israelites indeed." These He directed to give the same message to others, not for the conversion of the world, but for the calling, instruction and edification of "the Church, which is the Body of Christ." The message to these from first to last was that they were called to suffer with Him, that they might also reign with Him.

"THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST"

In the past many of us have overlooked the fact that the Church is, figuratively, "the Body of Christ"--to be hereafter, as the Apostle declares, "The Church which

is His Body." And again, we are members in particular of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. (**1 Cor. 12:27**.) In a word, then, the entire Christ includes the members of the Body with the glorious Head of the Body. And this glorious Christ, which will be completed by the

close of this Gospel Age, will as a whole be the promised Seed of Abraham.--**Gal. 3:8,16,29**.

From this viewpoint we can see why God's long-promised blessing has not yet reached the world, but furthermore we can also see that He is merely selecting or electing the Church, the Seed of Abraham. The promise to Abraham is, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and, as we have seen, the Seed of Abraham is "Jesus the Head and the Church His Body." In a word, our previous view of the Divine Plan was too narrow. We saw the election of the Church, but did not see God's gracious purposes for "All the families of the earth." The Church, as the Scriptures declare, is merely a "first-fruits" unto God of His creatures and is not, by any means, the entire harvest. Let us here remember St. Paul's explanation of this matter. He declares, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise" (**Gal. 4:28**)--the heirs of the promise--through us all the families of the earth are to be blessed.--**Gen. 26:1-4**.

NO SECOND CHANCE IN THIS

It might indeed be said in *one sense* of the word that since Father Adam was placed on trial in Eden with a reward of eternal life before him or a penalty of death, and that since he lost his chance of eternal life by disobedience, therefore any chance of eternal life coming to him or to any member of this race would, of necessity, be a second chance. This is undoubtedly true. From *this standpoint* every member of the human family must eventually have a second chance for eternal life, because it was for this very purpose that our Redeemer left the Heavenly glory, was made flesh, dwelt amongst us and

"died, the Just for the unjust." Whoever enjoys this second chance must expect no more, because "Christ dieth no more." But, as we have already seen, nobody had a second chance for eternal life prior to the coming of our Redeemer into the world. "He brought life and immortality to light." He died, the Just for the unjust, to make reconciliation for iniquity--and this message of

so great salvation began to be spoken by our Lord.

The comparatively few who have heard the Gospel since Jesus' day--"Good Tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people"--these, the comparatively few who have heard of "the only name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved"--are the only ones who in any sense of the word have had their second chance. Indeed we might, Scripturally, limit the matter much further and say that the Gospel has been hidden from the majority of those who heard it; their mental eyes and ears being deaf and blind, they did not comprehend the Message, and therefore could not reject it.

The "high calling" and "so great salvation" which so few have really heard and seen is referred to by our great Redeemer saying, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned. ...But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." (**1 Cor. 2:14**.) In other words, only the spirit-begotten ones are now on trial for life everlasting or death everlasting. And only the faithful footstep followers will gain the glory, honor, immortality and joint-heirship with Him in His kingdom. These are the "Elect," the "Very Elect." These are such as make their calling and election sure by so running as to obtain this great prize of membership in the Body of Christ.

These elect ones experience a change of nature, and in the future will not be human beings, but partakers of the Divine nature. (**2 Pet. 1:4**.) They will be inducted into

the perfection of the Divine nature in the First Resurrection, the Chief Resurrection, in which they will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

HUMAN SALVATION IS RESTITUTION

We all gagged at the thought that the heathen and everybody except saints would be consigned to an eternity of torture, yet we all recognized that Heaven is not a place of development but a condition of perfection. We

were perplexed, mystified. We did not follow our Bibles with sufficient care. Many of us twisted the Scriptures, wrested them from their plainly obvious import, and always to our own injury. Some went in the direction of Universalism; others halfway, and still others abandoned the Holy Book. Now we see where we erred.

God has two salvations; one for the Church and a totally different one for the world. The salvation for the Church is to Heavenly nature, spirit bodies, and joint-heirship with the Master in His Kingdom, which flesh and blood cannot inherit, as we have already seen. The other salvation, for mankind, is an earthly one, called in the Scriptures "Restitution." Man was not an angel originally, not a spirit being, but, as the Scriptures declare, "The first man was of the earth earthy."

It was that earthy man, perfect, in the image of his Creator, for whose happiness Eden was specially prepared. By obedience to God he might have continued to enjoy his Eden home everlastingly. By disobedience he first lost his fellowship with God, then his Eden home, and after nine hundred and thirty years of toiling with thorns and thistles in sweat of face, the death penalty upon him reached completion--he died. Adam's race, sharing his weaknesses by laws of heredity, have also shared death with him.

"WORLD THROUGH HIM MIGHT BE SAVED"

The Scriptures tell us that God's real purpose in sending Jesus into the world was that "the world through

SM48

Him might be saved"--not the salvation of the Church; that was an incidental feature. The Church is selected that as the Bride or Queen during the Messianic Kingdom she may be associated with her Lord, the King, as the Seed of Abraham in the blessing, the saving, of Adam and his family, or so many of them as shall be willing, from sin and death conditions. We remember the Master's words to the effect that He "came to seek and to save [recover] that which was lost."--**Luke 19:10**.

We have just seen that it was a human life, human perfection and an earthly home that were lost. It is

these, then, that Jesus proposes in due time to recover for Adam and his family. The Messianic reign of Jesus and His Body--The Anointed, The Christ, The Messiah--will be for the purpose of blessing Adam and all of his race with glorious opportunities of an earthly salvation. The uplifting, restoring influences of Messiah's Kingdom will affect not only Adam and his race, but also the earth itself. Gradually *Paradise Lost*, as a little garden of Eden, will become *Paradise Regained*, as the world beautiful. Then the wilderness shall blossom as a rose and the solitary place shall be glad.

"TIMES OF RESTITUTION"

At our Lord's First Advent the "acceptable time" began--the time when God, having accepted the sacrifice of Christ Jesus, became willing through Him to accept the sacrifices of all who desire to become His disciples --to take up their cross and follow Him through evil report and good report even unto death. The entire Gospel Age antitypes Israel's Day of Atonement, and the sacrifices of our Lord and the Church, His Body, are the "better sacrifices," foreshadowed by the bullock and the goat offered typically by the Jews. This is the acceptable year of the Lord which Jesus declared. (**Isa. 61:2**; **Luke 4:19**.) God's faithful people of this acceptable day are glad to be invited to "present their bodies

living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God." (**Rom. 12:1**.) In the end of this acceptable day will come the end of all opportunity to thus sacrifice the human nature and become joint-heirs with Christ and partakers of the Heavenly nature.

Then will be introduced a new period styled, in the Scriptures, "Times [or years] of Restitution." The acceptable day for the Church's sacrifice has lasted for nearly nineteen centuries. And we know how long the "Times of Restitution" will last--nearly a thousand years. St. Peter tells us just when these "Restitution Times" will begin. They did not begin in his day. They have not begun yet. They will begin as a result of the Second Advent of Jesus, the Messiah, and the establishment of His Kingdom and righteousness, "Times of refreshing

shall come from the presence of the Lord and He shall send Jesus Christ, as before was preached unto you, whom the heavens must retain until the Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began. For Moses verily said unto the fathers, A Prophet like unto me [of whom I am but a type or figure] shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren. Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall speak unto you. And it shall come to pass that the soul that will not obey that Prophet shall be destroyed from amongst the people" (**Acts 3:19-23**)--in the Second Death, from which there is no recovery.

This great Prophet has been in process of raising up for now nearly nineteen centuries. And when the last member of His Body shall have passed beyond the veil, He will stand forth in the glories of His Kingdom to rule, judge, instruct, restore and bless all the families of the earth with opportunity for restoration to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed at Calvary.

SM50

MESSIAH'S SHARP ARROWS

"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee."--**Psa. 45:5**.

With a strange and unaccountable perversity we often find that the very people most given to figurative and symbolical language are the very ones who when they come to the Bible are disposed to take it literally, to ignore the beautiful figures of speech with which it abounds! So persistent is this habit that even when considering that book of symbols, the Apocalypse, they are disposed to take its statements literally--although in its very introduction the declaration is made that our Lord sent and signified--made signs or symbols to illustrate the things which would shortly come to pass. We are not urging such an interpretation of the Scriptures as would ignore their true significance and make them say the reverse of what they mean, as some are disposed to do; we merely urge that symbolical, metaphorical and hyperbolical language be given true and proper recognition, as we would be disposed to do were the same figures and symbols used in connection with the affairs of our daily life. Surely none can claim that this is an unreasonable position.

When friends tell us that certain words cut them to the heart or that certain experiences broke their hearts they are merely using metaphors in the same manner in which the Scriptures use them. (**Acts 2:37**; **Isa. 61:1**; **Luke 4:18**.) And similarly, when considering our text, we are not to think of literal arrows being shot forth by Messiah and that these will cause the world of mankind to fall wounded literally before Him with these arrows in their hearts. In another Scripture we read, "The wicked shoot out arrows, even bitter words," that they may

SM51

injure the righteous. (**Psa. 64:3,4**.) So here also the arrows of Messiah would represent the words of His mouth; but as a bitter fountain sends forth bitter water and a pure fountain sends forth sweet water, so the arrows of Messiah,

instead of being bitter words such as the wicked shoot forth, will be forceful words of truth and grace. The symbolism is analogous to that of Revelation, where Messiah, in His coming glory of the Millennial Age, is pictured as having a sword going forth from His mouth with which He smites the nations.--**Rev. 19:15**.

The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. (**Eph. 6:17**.) The Sword of Messiah's mouth will be the message which He will send: "My Word that goeth forth out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (**Isa. 55:11**.) Our Lord Jesus, as the Mouthpiece of Jehovah, was commissioned not only to redeem the world but to uplift it out of sin, degradation and death conditions and to restore the willing and the obedient to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ, by His obedience and sacrifice at Calvary. As the "Lamb of God" our Redeemer has already "tasted death for every man," dying "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (**John 1:29**; **Heb. 2:9**; **1 Pet. 3:18**.) But it is not enough that He thus prepares the way by bringing mankind back to God; it is not enough that God's Justice has been appeased now on our behalf. It is necessary further that the Redeemer should grant the required assistance to the redeemed for their deliverance from the chains of ignorance, superstition, sin and death into the liberty of the sons of God.

"NOW ARE WE THE SONS OF GOD"

This deliverance of humanity according to the Divine purpose is divided into two parts: First, a special class who hunger and thirst after righteousness and are out of harmony with sin, are being blessed during this Gospel Age through the appreciation of the good tidings of

God's love and favor in Christ. These are dealt with by faith, and include only such members of the race as have the hearing ear of faith--"He that hath an ear, let him hear"; for "without faith it is impossible to please God." This small company of the race, willing and able by the Redeemer's assistance to walk by faith and not by sight,

now receive special truth in the School of Christ and a special testing as respects their loyalty to righteousness, in advance of the world's blessing and trial. The faithful of these, at the close of this Gospel Age, by a share in the First Resurrection will be "changed" from human nature to Divine nature and be made sharers with the Redeemer as His "Bride," His "Body," in the great Millennial Age work of blessing, uplifting the world from sin to righteousness, of bringing them out of degradation and wrath up, up, up to human perfection and eternal life in an earthly paradise restored.

Our text does not refer to our Lord's dealings with the Church; for we are not His enemies. The enemy class will be dealt with after the Second Coming of our Lord. This He showed in one of His parables, saying, A young nobleman went into a far country to receive for Himself a Kingdom and returned and took possession of it. Before starting He called His own servants and delivered to them pounds and talents, saying, Occupy until I return. On His return, invested with the majesty, authority and power of a Kingdom, He first called His own servants (the Church class) and reckoned with them, rewarding the faithful saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"--have dominion over five cities. Then the King will say, "As for those Mine enemies, who would not have Me to reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before Me." (**Luke 19:12-27**.) The slaying of the enemies in the parable corresponds perfectly with the Revelation picture of the Sword of Messiah's

mouth, which will smite the nations; and it corresponds also with the expression in our text respecting the sharp arrows of Messiah which shall be in the hearts of His enemies and cause the people to fall before Him. Not literal arrows, not a literal sword, not literal carnage are here represented, but a great triumph of the Word of the Lord over all during the reign of the Millennial Kingdom, following our Lord's Second Coming.

Those who are now invited to become of the Lord's "Little Flock," the "Very Elect," the "Bride, the Lamb's Wife," the "Royal Priesthood," the "Body of

Christ," are not smitten down with the Sword of His mouth. Instead, they are those who through various experiences in life are already become heart weary, heavy laden, looking to the Lord in faith and desiring His assistance. The message of the Lord's lips at the present time is not arrows; not the sword to those who are invited to be His followers. On the contrary, inviting them, He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest!" Again He tells us that His Message is intended to bind up the broken-hearted, to give the oil of joy in exchange for the spirit of heaviness. --**Isa. 61:3**; **Matt. 11:28-30**.

The Apostle, speaking of the matter, declares that it has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who now believe. (**1 Cor. 1:21**.) Not that the Message is a foolish one; for on the contrary the Message of God's grace is the noblest, the grandest, the most wonderful one that could come to the ears of mankind. But from the worldly standpoint it seems foolish on God's part to address the world when He Himself declares that the vast majority are deaf, and that only here and there can any be found who have the hearing ear. Again, the Gospel Message of reward to the obedient seems foolish to the world; for it would say, "If God had all power why does He not enforce His commands and send forth judgments to compel obedience rather than send forth a message

of love and an invitation to obedience?" Our answer is that God is now seeking a peculiar people; and that after He shall have gathered this specially called, specially chosen, specially blessed, specially tried class, after He shall have glorified these, blessing them with the great reward of glory, honor and immortality, then will be His time for using force, compulsion.

MESSIAH SHALL BE CONQUEROR

The Apostle Paul, discussing the work of Christ during His Millennial reign following His Second Advent, declares, "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death." Again,..."Then cometh the end, when He shall

deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all [antagonistic] rule and all authority and all power....And when all things shall be subject unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject to Him that put all things under Him that God may be all in all." (**1 Cor. 15:24-28**.) The Apostle introduces this statement in his argument on the resurrection of the dead. He is proving that the resurrection is for all mankind, that as "all in Adam die, even all in Christ shall be made alive"--every man in his own order, "The Christ [Head and Body, Jesus and the Church] the first-fruits; afterward [during His presence at His Second Advent in the Millennium] they that are Christ's at His coming."

It will be during that Millennial period of Messiah's Reign that force will be used instead of preaching; that His rebuke will smite into the hearts of His enemies, and that all shall fall under Him. Every knee must bow, every tongue must confess. Happy will it be for the world when Messiah shall take unto Himself His great power and reigns. Blessed will it be for the people when His sharp arrows shall smite them and when His judgment as a hammer shall break the hard, stony hearts; for, as

the Scriptures declare, He wounds to heal. (**Hos. 6:1**.) The healing process will be coincidental to the wounding and breaking; for the great Messiah, Christ and the Church, will be not only the King, the Ruler, but also the Priest of that Millennial time to heal, to console, to forgive, and the great Prophet to instruct the thousands of millions of Adam's race who have gone into death during the reign of Sin and Death and under the blinding influences of the Adversary. No wonder the Scriptures speak in glowing terms of that glorious Millennial Day, when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth! No wonder they picture this symbolically as the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in its beams.--**Mal. 4:2**.

"IN THY MAJESTY RIDE ON"

Note our context: The **first verse** declares that the Message relates to the King, not to the Lord, not to Messiah

waiting to be invested with the authority of the Kingdom, but to Him after He shall have been thus invested, after He shall have taken to Himself His great power and begun His Reign of Righteousness. Hearken to the prophetic description of the King in His beauty, "Thou are fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into Thy lips." This well pictures our dear Master's condition of humiliation when the Man Christ Jesus was demonstrated to be pure in heart, absolutely loyal to the Father and in this respect fairer than all the children of men, all of whom were sinners and out of the way. The grace of our Lord's lips is manifest to us in the message which He left. "Never man spake like this man." "They all bare Him witness and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth."--**John 7:46**; **Luke 4:22**.

It is because of the faithfulness, the loyalty, the grace which our Lord demonstrated as the Man Christ Jesus that the Father glorified Him, raising Him from the dead to far more than the human nature and glory--to the highest

plane, the Divine nature and its glory, honor and immortality. As the Prophet declares, God blessed Him forever. (**Psa. 45:2**.) His exaltation is perpetual; far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. Our Lord's trial and exaltation have been followed by the call and testing of the "Little Flock," invited to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom; and soon these will be changed in the First Resurrection, that they may participate in His glorious work of the Millennial Kingdom.

Then the time having come for the establishment of the Kingdom, Messiah, Head and Body, will take to Himself His great power and His Millennial Reign will begin. This is represented in **Verses 3 and 4**, "Gird thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Mighty One, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness." What a noble, inspiring picture of Divine knowledge as it shall go forth in due time for the binding of Satan and the liberating of all the slaves of sin and death--not only those who have not gone down into the tomb, but the liberation of those who are in the great prison-house of death, the grave! Messiah shall not reign for the oppression

of the world nor for the enslavement of the people.
On the contrary the power of the Kingdom will be exercised
on behalf of truth, meekness and righteousness.
This however, will necessarily mean a reign of force, a
reign very different from the present dispensation and its
Gospel invitation to righteousness.

We read elsewhere that the "judgments of the Lord
will be abroad in the earth"--His righteous dealings. In
other words, His power exercised on behalf of the cause
of truth, meekness and righteousness, will mean His
forceful opposition to error, to pride and all inequity, all
unrighteousness. No longer will men be invited to abandon
sin. The judgments, the punishments for wrong
doing will be promptly and vigorously applied. The
world, deaf to the Lord's Message, blind to His goodness,

out of the way, degraded through sin, will learn righteousness
in another way--by being made to feel a judgment,
a punishment for every wrong deed and wrong word.
And by the end of the Millennial Age the testing will have
become so crucial that even the favorable entertainment
of a disloyal thought as respects the Almighty and His
rule of righteousness will lead to the Second Death.

We have no thought of suggesting that the Millennium
will be entirely a time of peace, joy and blessing.
It will be all of this all the time to all those who love
righteousness and hate iniquity and are in accord with
the Lord; but the Lord's indignation, even His fierce
anger, will from the very beginning of the Millennial Age
burn hotly against all unrighteousness, against all iniquity,
all falsehood, to the intent that these may be thoroughly
removed, completely eradicated, and that thus
mankind may be most truly and most absolutely blessed.
It is in harmony with this that the **fourth verse** of our
context declares, "Thy right hand [Thy Power] shall
teach terrible lessons," lessons for eternity to many, lessons
which will be most salutary to the race as a whole,
lessons which would be awful to humanity in some
respects at the beginning of the reign. For be it remembered
that the Scriptures everywhere declare that the
Millennial Kingdom, although a reign of peace, righteousness
and love, will be introduced by a Time of Trouble
such as was not since there was a nation, by which

trouble present institutions will be overthrown because they are all unrighteous, imperfect and built upon lines of selfishness contrary to the law of love, which shall be made to prevail in the interest of all. This is the same thought that is brought to our attention in connection with the symbolical picture of Revelation. The Sword of Messiah's mouth is there declared to smite the nations; and we are told that He will rule the nations with a rod of iron, and that as potters' vessels they shall be broken to shivers.--**Rev. 2:26-28**.

SM58

We are to differentiate, however, between the nations which are to be broken--the great systems of selfishness which are to fall and rise no more--and the people, into whose hearts the words of the Lord will enter and who will be smitten down before Him. They will acknowledge that they are sinners, and that His reproofs are just and His judgments upon systems of error and iniquity are true and righteous altogether. They will fall before Him; they will acknowledge the Divine power and its rightful control of human affairs; every knee must bow and every tongue must confess. As the Apostle Peter, referring to this time, declares, "It shall come to pass that the soul that will not hear [obey] that Prophet, shall be destroyed from amongst the people."--**Acts 3:23**.

The picture of the coming Time of Trouble and of the glorious epoch of blessing which will follow it is graphically depicted by the Prophet **Zephaniah (3:8**), through whom the Lord says, "Wait ye upon Me, saith the Lord, until that day when I rise up to the prey: for My determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, that I may pour upon them Mine indignation, even all My fierce anger: for the whole earth [social structure] shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy." So terrible will be the Time of Trouble, so sweeping the overthrow of present institutions, that the Lord here symbolically pictures it as a fire consuming everything of the present social order.

But that it is not a literal fire, and that it will not consume or destroy mankind but prepare for their greater blessing, is shown by the next statement of the Prophet: "Then will I turn unto the people a pure Message [in contrast with the confused message that is now being

promulgated by all the various sects of Christendom--Babylon] that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent." They will no longer call upon themselves the names of sects and parties, heathen or Christian. All will call upon the Lord, all will

recognize Him as the great Teacher; for the Lord shall be King over all the earth in that day. (**Zech. 14:9**.) And the Kingdom under the whole heavens shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.--**Dan. 7:27**.

"HIS MOUTH IS MOST SWEET"

In contrast with the sharp words of rebuke which will be administered to the world and which they will need and which will be most favorable to them, we have the gracious words of the Master in the present time speaking to all who have ears to hear. His Message is represented as one that binds up the broken hearts and administers the oil and wine of refreshment and joy and peace and consolation. What wonder, then, that we appreciate the statement, "Blessed are your ears, for they hear." Not only have we heard the Message of our Lord Jesus, of His love for us, and that He gave Himself a Ransom for our redemption, but we have heard the Father saying that He has spoken peace to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. He tells us also, "The Father Himself loveth you."

Hearkening we not only have heard the Message of God's love and favor for our race, and how a Ransom has been provided, and that in consequence a preparation is being made for the blessing of all the world, but we learn that we may appropriate this blessing to ourselves now by faith in advance of this general application, and that being justified by faith we may have peace with God. And, furthermore, after we had thus been accepted, we heard the voice of the Master inviting us to become His disciples, to walk in His steps, to share now in the cross and sacrifice with Him and by and by in the crown.

Ah, yes! He brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel--life everlasting, life which we now see is possible of attainment by all the families of the earth, and immortality is attainable by those who now

have the hearing ear of faith and the heart desire to
follow in the footsteps of their Redeemer.

SM60

"WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE!"

The character of Him who is to ride prosperously as the conqueror of the world assures us respecting His treatment of those who shall fall down before Him and accept His righteous Reign and Law. He who loved them so that He gave His life as their Redemption-price establishes His Reign, not for their injury, but for their blessing, for their uplifting, for the destruction of their real enemies. All the weaknesses and depravity of the fallen conditions are our enemies, if we love righteousness; and we are glad to have our Lord's co-operation in fighting a good fight against these. And so will all the right-minded of the Millennial Age be glad to have all the assistance He can render them. And the Church of this Gospel Age, now gaining experience through trials and disciplines, will also be fitted and prepared to co-operate with her Redeemer and King in the work of blessing our race, instructing them in the ways of the Lord and teaching them to go up on the Highway of Holiness, at whose further end, by perseverance, they may have eternal life.

Let us continue to pray, dear friends, for this Kingdom of Messiah, when His sharp arrows shall pierce many hearts and cause the masses to fall under Him and to confess Him and to adore Him. Let us continue to pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." Yes, let us be glad that in the consummation of the Plan of God all who rejoice to learn righteousness and to love it, and to hate iniquity, shall be utterly destroyed, so that God eventually will have a clean Universe.

He's come! Let all the earth adore Him!
The path His human nature trod
Spreads to a royal realm before Him,
The Life of life, the Word of God!

SM61

DIVINE JUSTICE IN THE DELUGE

"The Flood came, and took them all away."--
Matt. 24:39.

Heretofore we considered the physical causes which led up to the Deluge, and found them every way reasonable and in full harmony with history and geology. Today we consider the Deluge from a different standpoint. We will attempt to show from the Bible why God permitted the Deluge at all, and that He was fully justified in the arrangement which blotted out the human family, except eight persons--righteous Noah and his family.--**2 Peter 2:4-10**.

To begin with, we should remember that God's Covenant with Adam, granting everlasting life, was based upon the fact that he was perfect (an image of his Creator), and on condition that he would maintain this image and likeness by continued obedience to his Maker. When Satan obsessed the serpent and guided it to eat the very fruit of which our first parents were forbidden to eat, he produced thereby a temptation.

Mother Eve saw that so far from the serpent's being poisoned by that fruit, it was the wisest of animals. She reasoned that humanity was so far superior to the brute that the increased wisdom would make her husband and herself like gods. She thirsted for knowledge and power. Only the Divine command seemed to stand between her and the highest ideals. She partook of the fruit and recommended it to Adam--who was not so deceived, but who knew that death would surely follow disobedience. Nevertheless he disobeyed, thinking that he would rather perish with his wife than spend eternity without her.

SM62

The disobedience led to expulsion from Eden and the beginning of the gradual execution of the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die." Adam died within the thousand-year Day in which he ate "of the tree"--nine hundred thirty years old. His race inherited his dying conditions and tendencies. Thus all humanity are under the Divine curse, or sentence of death, and have been going down

to the tomb, Hades, for six thousand years. Whatever, therefore, may cut short human life is no injustice to humanity, because whatever life is enjoyed is just so much more than it has title to. Hence the Deluge was merely a quick means of executing against the race the death sentence already expressed sixteen centuries before.

THE DELUGE A DELIVERANCE

When the Bible account of the cause of the Deluge is properly comprehended, we see that it was indeed a blessing in disguise. The human family had gotten into slavery, and would shortly have been wiped out by a new race which most peculiarly had intruded upon humanity. The Bible tells us that this new race consisted exclusively of males, propagated through the human female. We read, *"The same* were mighty *men*... *men* of renown"--"giants."--**Gen. 6:1-4**.

The fallen race of Adam was unable to cope with the superior mental and physical strength of the intruders. Robbed of their wives and daughters, and compelled to do the drudgery of their new masters, their lives were a burden. Not only so, but the new race was vicious, brutal, violent, as well as immoral. The Bible account declares, "The earth was filled with violence." The general moral corruption went so far that we read, "Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart was only evil continually." What a terrible arraignment! What a mercy in the sight of all intelligent beings that such a terribly immoral, strifeful, and enslaved condition should be brought completely to an end! This description is found graphically recorded in **Genesis 6:1-11**.

SM63

WHENCE THE RACE OF GIANTS?

In the past we have not studied the Bible with sufficient care, and therefore have not appreciated properly its wonderful, harmonious story. The origin of the invading race of giants is clearly told. Satan, a glorious angelic being of a high order, named Lucifer, the Morning Star, deflected to sin, because of ambition. He had said

in his heart long before, "I will be as the Most High"--an independent sovereign. (**Isa. 14:12-14**.) Satan thought that he saw his opportunity to establish a separate empire in the earth. He thought that if he could become master of the first pair, all of their children would be his subjects. Knowing of his own undying nature, and that man was created for everlasting existence, he counted not on *death* as the Divine penalty for sin.

When Satan perceived his human subjects growing gradually weaker under the curse, a new plan was formulated. To the angels who were given permission to help and to instruct humanity, a temptation was presented. They possessed the power of materialization, and could appear as human, to help and instruct humanity. The Satanic suggestion was that they could help humanity best by begetting a new race, using the human females as mothers for that race, to which they would impart their own virility. Although this was recognized as being contrary to Divine Law, it was perceived that Satan had not been punished for his deflection. The inference was that God was unable to punish Satan for this rebellion. Thus by refraining from punishing Satan, God left open the door by which all the holy angels were exposed to temptations to disobedience and disloyalty.

Thus we may know that all the angels of Heaven in harmony with God are loyal to the core; for they withstood temptation--permitted for the very purpose of their testing. That this testing continued for centuries we know from the context, because the children of the illicit union were not babes, but men--giants--and renowned

at a time when manhood was rarely reached earlier than one century. The simple record of Genesis is, "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.... When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown."

In due time these bestial giants filled the earth with violence, oppressing and enslaving Adam's posterity. As for themselves, they had no right to existence, since they were born contrary to the Divine will, or Law. Nor can we suppose that in any sense of the word they would be

included in the redemptive work of Jesus, who died only for Adam and his posterity. "As all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive, every man in his own order"--the Church in the First Resurrection. --**1 Cor. 15:22**.

HOPE FOR THE ANTEDILUVIANS

There is the same hope for the antediluvians as for all the remainder of the human family--the hope of the resurrection of the dead. This means not merely a hope of being awakened from the sleep of death, but a resurrection hope, a hope of Restitution, a hope of return, if they will, to the full measure of human perfection, the image of God in the flesh. This hope, as we have seen on previous occasions, rests first of all on God's gracious promise that all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Abraham's Seed. Secondly, it rests in the Bible assurance that Jesus is the Head, and the Church the members of that Spiritual Seed of Abraham, which soon, as the Elect of God, will be completed and glorified.

In the Messianic Kingdom this great "Seed" will accomplish the blessings foreordained. St. Paul emphasized this, saying, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise" made to Abraham: "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 22:18**; **Gal. 3:29,16**.

SM65

DIVINE PATIENCE MANIFESTED

As we review the situation, we are amazed at the exhibition given us of Divine patience. We are reminded of St. Peter's words that God is not willing that any should perish. How easily He could have blotted out of existence our first parents and have created another pair! How easily He could have hindered Satan from presenting the temptation! How easily He could have warned the angels against a course of disobedience and, if necessary, have shown them His Power at any time!

These incidents illustrate to us a general principle of Divine Character and dealings. God wishes not to have

the heavens and the earth populated with evil beings. Creating angels and men in His own image and likeness, on different planes, He desires them to maintain their own station, and in loving loyalty to learn to trust His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. Moreover, He does not wish to have any children or servants in all His domain obedient merely because of fear, merely because of ignorance. Jesus' words give us the key to the Heavenly Father's Character in this respect. He says that God seeketh such to worship Him as worship Him in spirit and in truth.--**John 4:23**.

God had indeed a glorious Dominion before sin entered the world. And He could, of course, have hindered any spread of the disloyal ambition of Satan by destroying him, or He could have coerced him into obedience as a slave. But such He desires not. God most evidently has the very highest ideals in respect to His Government and all His subjects. All His work is perfect, and He will not allow it to get away from the perfection in which He created His intelligent creatures. Every variation from that perfection, therefore, must be the result of disobedience; and the unalterable Law is that the disobedient shall perish. Whoever does not learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity will be counted unworthy of life everlasting, will be cut off from among the people.

SM66

MAN'S EXPERIENCE A LESSON

We may say, then, that God not only foreknew that the conditions under which man was created would result in temptation, in sin; but without causing the temptation, and without giving any excuse for the disloyalty, He determined to permit it. Some suppose that the permission is to be everlasting, but the Scriptures assure us to the contrary. The reign of Sin and Death He purposed to permit for six thousand years. Then by bringing in the Messianic Kingdom, He purposes to abolish sin and death, lifting to human perfection the willing and obedient and destroying in the Second Death all the unwilling and disobedient.

The sending of His Son was a part of God's Plan. He put the death penalty upon humanity, knowing at the

time that it would require the death of an obedient Sacrifice for human redemption, and purposing in advance that He would provide such a Redeemer as would willingly, gladly, become man's Surety, man's Ransom-price. Thus the permission of evil has resulted in the manifestation of God's Love in a manner that otherwise would hardly have been revealed. The infliction of the death sentence for so long has, likewise, demonstrated the persistence of Divine Justice and its penalty.

The recovery of the dead by a resurrection will demonstrate, as nothing else could, the Power of God. And when the entire Plan of God shall have been outworked, and shall have been made known to angels and men, as a whole it will demonstrate the Wisdom of God as it never could have been known, had He not adopted the plan He did of temporarily permitting a reign of Sin and Death.

"MANY SONS TO GLORY"

Another thing made possible by the permission of sin has been the special call of an Elect Church during this Gospel Age. The Bible declares that the Elect Church are begotten of the Spirit throughout this Age, and must

be born of the Spirit in the Resurrection. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." The need of a Redeemer opened the way for the Logos to leave the Heavenly nature and become a man. This opened the way for Jesus to demonstrate His love and loyalty by obedience unto death, "even unto the death of the cross." (**Phil. 2:8**.) And this great sacrifice and the obedience constituted not only the Ransom-price for Adam and his race, but also the basis on which the Heavenly Father highly exalted His Son far above angels, principalities and powers, to His own right hand--to the Divine nature.--**John 5:26**.

Similarly the exaltation of the Church to be the Bride of Christ, His Joint-heir in the Kingdom, and partaker with Him of the Divine nature, was made possible by the permission of sin. The Heavenly Father could justly permit members of the fallen race, of the same disposition as Jesus, and justified and sanctified through Him,

to sacrificially lay down their lives as members of the Body of Christ, and by thus suffering with Him to be accounted worthy also of reigning with Him in glory, honor and immortality in His Kingdom.--**Rom. 8:17**; **2 Tim. 2:11,12**; **Rev. 20:6**.

"HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOR!"

"What a God! Infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power!" Surely, to know Him is life eternal!

Is it any wonder, in view of this work that God has outlined for His Son and the Church, that He should consider it necessary to give us lessons and tests in faith, in loyalty, in obedience! Is it any wonder, in view of the work which He has for us to do for mankind, that the Redeemer Himself was given experiences in suffering, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things of God in relation to humanity?

The better we understand the Bible, the more clearly we see that the redemption which God has provided

through Jesus' sacrifice is to be world-wide in its effect. The race was not condemned individually, but as a whole in one man, Father Adam, on account of sin. Similarly, the race has been redeemed as a whole by the "Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all."--**1 Tim. 2:5,6**; **Heb. 2:9**; **1 John 2:2**.

The fact that God did not deal with any of the human family except the Hebrews for four thousand years does not mean that He loved the Hebrews only, nor that the Hebrews only will ultimately receive the Divine blessing and a share in the redemptive work. It means that during that time God dealt with the Hebrews in a special way to select from amongst them some especially loyal characters to be sharers in His future work, when He would deal with the world in general.

The fact that all this work--of selecting one class of servants from Hebrews, and another class from all mankind during the Gospel Age--has required a long time--six thousand years--is no argument against God's purpose to bless all Adam's children ultimately. The fact that a long time has been consumed in getting ready the

instruments of Divine Mercy shows, on the contrary, the greatness and the thoroughness of the Divine Plan in respect to the race as a whole.

Let us avail ourselves of our glorious opportunities for Bible study and for growth in knowledge, grace and love. Let us walk worthy of the light, and rejoice in Him who bought us with His own precious blood!

The wrath of God is love's severity
In curing sin--the zeal of righteousness
In overcoming wrong--the remedy
Of justice for the world's redress.

The wrath of God is punishment for sin,
In measure unto all transgression due,
Discriminating well and just between
Presumptuous sins and sins of lighter hue.

SM69

BLOOD ATONEMENT WAS NECESSARY

"Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins."--**Heb. 9:22**.

When God called Israel as a nation out of Egypt, it was under the provision that He would make a covenant with them through Moses. That covenant was that if they would keep the Divine Law they should be released from all condemnation and have everlasting life. The alternative, failure, meant punishment with death. If they would obey the Law they should not only live everlastingly, but be qualified to be Abraham's specially promised Seed, through whom all nations would be inducted into the keeping of the Law and into the attainment of everlasting life.

But God foreknew that they could not keep His Law because they, like the remainder of the race, were imperfect through the fall and His Law is the measure of a perfect man's ability: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy strength, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Surely none but a perfect man could fully live up to this requirement! Hence the Israelites continued to die the same as other people, notwithstanding their Law Covenant.--**Matt. 22:36-40**.

But foreknowing their inability to keep this Law, God arranged for their continuance in His favor under that covenant by reviving it every year on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement. On that day the year of their relationship to God terminated.

Before looking for the antitype, let us understand the type. The sacrifice for sins occurred on the Day of Atonement, and consisted of two parts: first, a bullock was slain and its blood sprinkled in the Most Holy, and through it Atonement offered for the sins of the priestly

SM70

tribe only; then the high priest took his secondary offering, a consecrated goat, and treated it as he had treated the bullock. And its blood subsequently was sprinkled in the Most Holy, "on behalf of all the people," all the

remaining tribes of Israel.--**Lev. 16:15**.

Why were these animals killed? What is the thought which lies behind this death of an animal? What lesson did God wish to teach in type? The condemnation on the Israelites for the violation of the Mosaic Law was not a sentence to eternal torment, nor to Purgatory, but a death sentence. This is clearly stated. By Divine commandment the people were called up between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim and God's Law was read in their hearing. Certain blessings were read, which were to be the rewards of obedience. Contrariwise, curses were read, which were to be the penalty for violation of that Law. The curses related to death, sickness and disease.

These condemnations on Israel for failure to keep God's Law given at Sinai agree perfectly with the condemnation imposed upon Adam and, through him, upon his race, for failure to obey the Divine Law originally given, which was written in his heart, his character, when he was a perfect man in the image of God. Hence Israel under the Law Covenant was merely condemned afresh to death--not to eternal torment, nor to Purgatory.

Then, as Israel typified the world, the Atonement Day was arranged for them as it will be on a larger, grander scale applicable eventually to all of Adam's race. The death of the two animals, the bullock and the goat, specially consecrated by the priest, effected a covering for the sins of the people for another year, while they tried afresh to demonstrate their loyalty to God and His righteousness by obedience to the Law; but only failure could and did result: "By the deeds of the Law shall no man be justified in God's sight"; for all flesh is imperfect, weak, degenerate.--**Rom. 3:20**.

Thus year by year continuously for over sixteen hundred

years the Israelites kept up their attempt to gain Divine favor by obedience to the terms of their Law Covenant. And year by year they failed afresh, until Jesus came to be the antitypical Priest, in order that He might eventually become the antitypical King of Israel and the world. His priestly office was necessary to lay the foundation for His kingly office. As a King he could not uplift to perfection Adam and his multitudinous race contrary to the Divine sentence of death which rested

upon all, because all are sinners. It was necessary, therefore, that, in order to become the Messianic King, Jesus must first be the Redeemer of men. He must first provide the sacrifice for sins. Then, applying it to the satisfaction of Justice, afterward, by virtue of the right and authority thus secured, He could undertake the uplifting and blessing of all mankind.

THE ANTITYPICAL BLOOD ATONEMENT

The great lessons taught by Israel's experiences of more than sixteen centuries were:

(1) That all are sinners;

(2) That no sinner can justify himself;

(3) That an Atonement for Sin is necessary before Divine favor can be fully obtained for all mankind;

(4) That since the penalty is *death,* only by a sacrificial death can sinners be released from the death penalty.

We all know the arguments used by those who oppose the Bible doctrine of Blood Atonement for Sin. They claim that it is unnecessary, that God could just as easily as not cancel all sin without requiring the death of either a bullock or a goat, or of Jesus or anybody else.

But are not such arguments illogical? Is it not illogical to suppose that the great Supreme Judge of the Universe would make a law and a penalty for it, inflict the penalty justly, and afterwards set aside the penalty without a reason? Surely no earthly judge would do so, and surely a Heavenly Judge could not do so without infracting the principles of His own Government; for if it is

right to impose a death sentence as a penalty for sin, and to allow that sentence to be in effect for four thousand years before Christ, and to allow our entire race to suffer under it for that time, would it not be unjust to afterwards institute a change, set aside the Law, the Curse, the penalty for sin? Surely we all agree to this!

Some, however, will say, Surely God never made such a penalty. Why should He make a penalty which would cause the death of His Son, or the death of anybody, to eradicate it, to set it aside? We answer that God did make such a penalty; for it is manifest that our entire

race is a dying one, which has been under the Reign of Sin and Death for Six Great Days of a thousand years each. Moreover, the Bible declares that God pronounced the penalty--inflicted the death penalty as we have it--for the very purpose and object of the death of His Son, that thus He might *give evidence,* both to angels and to men, that *His Law is inviolable,* but that His *Justice* is fully equaled by His *Love.*

"CHRIST'S BETTER SACRIFICES"

If the Jewish Law gave a hint that a sacrificial death would be necessary for the cancellation of human sin, it also gave a hint that the death of bulls and of goats was not sufficient for the cancellation of human sin; because the sacrifices of the Jewish Atonement Day merely covered sin for one year, and did not actually cancel it at all.

The sacrifice was of a proper kind--a life--but the life was not of sufficient value. Why? Because the Law of Justice would not be satisfied to accept the death of a bullock and of a goat as the equivalent for the forfeited life of Father Adam. If an angel had sinned and been condemned to death, only the death of an angel of the same grade and state would have constituted a full offset or Ransom for his life; for the very meaning of the word *Ransom* is *antilutron--a corresponding price.*

So neither could an angel's death redeem a man, because it would not be the giving of a price to correspond.

SM73

Neither could our Redeemer, in His pre-human condition, as the Logos, the Word, have given His life for Father Adam and the race, because that would not have been a corresponding price--a Ransom-price (Greek--*antilutron*). To redeem Father Adam the death of a man was required; nothing more, nothing less, would do. Therefore it was that the Son of God left the glory which He had with the Father as the Logos and was made flesh, and became the Man Christ Jesus, "that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man."

In harmony with this, St. Paul writes to Timothy (**1 Tim. 2:5,6**) that the Man Christ Jesus gave Himself a Ransom for all. Thus the Apostle again declares, "As

by a man [Adam] came death [not eternal torment], by a man also [Christ] comes the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive."--**1 Cor. 15:21,22**.

In this last text notice carefully (and also everywhere else in the Scriptures) that the contrasts are not Heaven and hell, not joy and suffering, but *life* and *death*--resurrection life through Christ, death by Adam. Notice also that the penalty paid for Adam's sin by the Man Christ Jesus is not an eternal torment penalty, nor a purgatorial penalty, but a death penalty. "Christ *died* for our sins, according to the Scriptures."--**1 Cor. 15:3**.

We notice again that it was only the one man Adam who was tried, who sinned and who was sentenced to death; that all of our race suffered death and its degradation by heredity and not by virtue of a death sentence; hence it was possible that the death of the Man Christ Jesus should constitute a full offset to the demands of Justice against Father Adam, and would incidentally include all of Adam s race.

God arranged Israel's typical Atonement Day as a type of the real Atonement Day, which began at Jesus' baptism and has continued ever since, and will continue for another thousand years in the future. The killing

of the bullock on behalf of the priestly family found its antitype in the death of Jesus, which began with His consecration at Jordan and was completed at Calvary, three and a half years later. As a man, Jesus offered up sacrificially His human nature, the body which He had taken for the special purpose of sacrifice. That sacrifice was satisfactory to God, as was indicated by His raising up Jesus from the dead.

Moreover, we are assured that our Lord was not only raised up out of death, but raised up as a New Creature, to a still higher nature than that which He had before He undertook the Father's commission to be the world's Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King. His resurrection was (**Phil. 2:10**) to glory, honor and immortality, far above human nature, angelic nature, principalities and powers and every name that is named.--**Eph. 1:21**.

The risen Son of God remained forty days with His disciples, and when He had ascended on High He appeared

in the presence of God, and according to the type made application of the merit of His sacrifice for the Household of faith--the antitypical Levites. The acceptance of His Atonement Sacrifice, and incidentally the acceptance of His waiting followers, was manifested by the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

ADDING MEMBERS TO HIS BODY

As Aaron in the type, by Divine direction, accepted his sons to be members with him in the priesthood, under his headship, so in the antitype Christ Jesus during this Gospel Age has been accepting members to the Royal Priesthood, of which He is the Head. And these are taken from the Levites, for which class the Atonement was made by Aaron in type and by Jesus in antitype.

Aaron in the type, after sprinkling the blood of the bullock and making Atonement for the House of Levi, came forth and slew the goat. So Christ, having finished making Atonement for the sins of the antitypical Levites,

came forth at Pentecost to bless them and to accept them as joint-sacrificers and as joint-heirs. The goat, which Aaron slew as the second portion of his sin-offering, represented all the faithful footstep followers of Jesus in the nearly nineteen centuries that have elapsed since Pentecost. Respecting these Jesus prayed, saying, "I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me;...neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, and I are one."--"I in them and Thou in Me."--**John 17:9,20-23**.

Incidentally, Jesus as the High Priest in glory began at Pentecost the sacrificing of the goat class, His faithful followers. The work has continued ever since. The sufferings of Jesus have thus been prolonged for centuries. As St. Peter declares, the Prophets spake of the sufferings of Christ and of the glory that should follow. (**1 Peter 1:10,11**.) The sufferings have not yet been completed, and hence the glory has not come. When the full number foreordained of God shall have faithfully finished their course in death the sacrifices of the antitypical Day of Atonement will be at an end. The great High Priest with His Body will pass beyond the second veil into the

Heavenly glories, the First Resurrection completing the transfer. The blessing of the people will follow.

"I AM JESUS, WHOM THOU PERSECUTEST"

That Jesus thus recognizes His followers as His members is clearly attested by the Apostle. In their flesh they are counted as members of Jesus; as New Creatures spirit-begotten, they are counted as members of The Christ. Thus Jesus said to Saul of Tarsus, speaking of His followers, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." (**Acts 9:4,5**.) The same thing is true of any truly consecrated follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

SM76

While such are in the world and suffer, the sufferings of Jesus are not completed. And the glory of Christ can be fully attained only in proportion as the sufferings of Jesus are completed. In the type, all this was pictured in the things which happened to the Lord's goat, which typified the faithful, sacrificing members, the flesh of Jesus. As the goat passed through all the experiences of the bullock, so the footstep followers of Jesus are to have similar trials, difficulties, oppositions, persecutions, to those which came to the Master.

With the completion of the Priest of Glory at the end of the sufferings of the flesh will come the effusion of the blood on behalf of Israel and all of Adam's race of every nation. In the type Aaron took the blood of the goat, his secondary sacrifice, and sprinkled it on the Mercy Seat on behalf of all the people of Israel, representing all who will become the people of God of every nation. Forthwith Divine acceptance of these sacrifices spoke the forgiveness of the sins of all.

So in the antitype. When our Lord the second time sprinkles the blood in the Most Holy, the sins of all the people--the whole world--will be canceled. At the same instant the Redeemer will take them over as a purchased possession and, under the Divine arrangement, He will establish over them His Kingly power. He will reign for their blessing and uplifting. As the great Prince of Glory He will bind the Prince of Darkness, Satan, and

destroy all his works, of evil and lift poor humanity back into harmony with God--all the willing and obedient.

Oh, how this should thrill our hearts and cause us to appreciate the Wisdom as well as the Justice of God and His great Love manifested in the Plan which has required Ages for development, but which was in the Divine Purpose from before the foundation of the world!

SM77

GOD'S PLANS vs. MAN'S PLANS.

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called."--**Rom. 8:28,30**.

By every process of logic and human reasoning we should suppose that the Almighty God would be by far the superior of every human being, in that His sentiments and plans would be higher than ours. True, we are informed that man was created in his Maker's moral image, and that this enables him to reason and think on moral subjects on a higher plane than does the brute creation. But the same Scriptures inform us that the entrance of sin has wrought havoc with the likeness of God in the human race, blurring and in considerable measure obliterating it. While disagreeing with those who claim that "total depravity" has overtaken our race, we are all witnesses to the fact that the moral sense of the race is variant, that some have very little--idiots none--and that its brightest representatives have their limitations, which are recognized by themselves as well as by their friends. For the highest standards and conceptions of justice, love and wisdom we look beyond ourselves and all our fellow-creatures to that which is perfect, which believers are hoping to attain in the resurrection. That perfect condition of heart and mind will signify our renewal in our Creator's likeness, He being the perfect standard before our minds.

The Scriptures admonish us that Satan, moved by selfish ambition, rebelled against Jehovah and His Government; and that he has since sought to use his every

SM78

opportunity and ability to ensnare our minds, to poison them against our Creator, to make His goodness appear in a false light, to put light for darkness and darkness for

light. Looking over the world we perceive that to a large extent he has been successful. Our race has followed his misleadings, as the Apostle points out in **Romans 1:28**, where he assures us that man originally in accord with God became alienated and forsook the Lord, who gave men over to a reprobate mind and evil works, by which they have degraded themselves more and more. As a consequence we see members of the race who are almost devoid of the original likeness of God and proportionately blind to the Truth--"the god [Satan] of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not."

MAKING AND SERVING IMAGES

Nevertheless, amidst all the darkness that prevails respecting God and His true character and plan the organs of reverence and worship persist in the human brain. Hence, we find amongst all people a tendency to worship, to acknowledge responsibility; and this, combined with a realization of their own imperfection and unworthiness, leads them to fear the God whom they do not know. To assist them in the worship which they feel they should render they make images of earth and stone and metal or with silk batting and gold thread. These images are as different from each other as the conceptions of their makers. Nevertheless, they illustrate three things: (1) Power, strength, ability; (2) intelligence, wisdom, knowledge of us and our whereabouts and doings; (3) anger, malice, hatred, vengeance, cruelty.

Most evidently the poor heathen do not know the true God, hence do not worship and serve Him. They need a revelation that will remove from their mental eyes the delusions which now prevail and give them a glimpse of the true God--gracious, merciful, kind, loving, as well as wise, powerful and just. Alas! The poor heathen we see need to learn the Message of God's love exemplified

in the gift of His Son, who died for our sins and thus opened the way for our return to harmony with the Father. We send missionaries, we give millions of money and thousands of prayers for the breaking of the bonds of ignorance and the opening of the blind eyes of the

heathen. We thank God that so many have this degree of appreciation of God and of sympathy for the heathen.

But let us come nearer home. Let us look about us in the lands of highest civilization where Christian doctrine has prevailed for centuries, where from the least to the greatest should have had an opportunity to learn of the grace of God in Christ and to become reconciled to God. What do we find in so-called Christendom? We find scores of sects of Christians possessed of the same mental organ of veneration, exercising it to some degree in worship. We find that more intelligent than the heathen, they realize the impropriety of making images of God out of wood, stones, metal, etc. But we find also that each sect or party has made a mental image of God, and described this mental image until the disciples of each cult may worship the same mental image. We are not finding fault with these, for without some mental appreciation of God worship would be impossible.

"WORSHIP YE KNOW NOT WHAT"

We are reminded of our Lord's words to the woman at Samaria, of the true God. Our Lord said to her, "Ye worship ye know not what." And undoubtedly this is true of the majority of worshipers of all various sects and creeds. They worship, they exercise the organ of veneration, partly under the impulse of fear, but without particular knowledge of whom they worship and without any particular desire to become acquainted with Jehovah, that they might know the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent to be our Redeemer. (**John 17:3**.) This is true undoubtedly of the majority of worshipers of all the sects of all Christendom. But on the other hand in all the sects are to be found those who have a different

creedal image of God before their mental vision. We are interested in the comparison of these various mental images of God. Let us take a glance at a few of them as presented to us in the creeds of some of the most prominent Christian denominations.

THE CALVINISTIC IMAGE OF GOD

One of the highest conceptions of the Almighty, one of the most noble that prevails to a large extent in Christendom, is the Calvinistic. It pictures the Almighty as the high and lofty One possessed of all wisdom, knowledge, power; that He is grave, dignified, commanding reverence and worship. There is much in this image to attract our attention; it is so much nobler than any of the images of the heathen we have ever seen. It inspires us with awe, with reverence. But there is something lacking. A cold chill of fear comes over us as we gaze upon the august majesty. His face is serene and calm, but cold and unsympathetic, ungenerous; stern justice and uncompromising firmness are there. But love! oh, love is lacking! We tremble before this image, and the more so as we hearken to the message which this God of Calvinism has sent to those who have the ear to hear Him. He has declared His omnipotence, His justice and unchangeableness; He has declared an election and predestination of a little handful of our race to wondrous glory in His presence and equally foreordained and predestinated that the vast majority of our race shall have none of His loving favor, but shall die in heathen ignorance--non-elect, predestinated before their birth not only to ignorance of the only name in the present life but to an eternity of suffering in the ages to come.

To the inquiry respecting the justice of this program, the answer comes that those heathen not favored with a knowledge of Christ were foreknown of God to be unworthy, and that they would not have received Him if they had heard His message. If we ask respecting the

masses of Christendom who have heard of the only name but have rejected it and failed to become His footstep followers as saints--if we inquire what hope there is for these, the answer is that there is none. Alas! we say, as we turn away to seek for a still higher ideal, a still more glorious image and a still more blessed Message!

This Calvinistic image, glorious in many of its features and details, can never satisfy the longings of our hearts; for while its pictures of justice and of power are satisfactory, its lack of love and sympathy makes us fear

that it is deficient of the most important element of a truly noble character. We say to ourselves that with all of our weaknesses and faults we would love even our enemies too much to torture them, especially to torture them to all eternity hopelessly, uselessly. We would say to ourselves that if we possessed the wisdom and power of the Calvinistic God, the love in our hearts and sympathy would have co-operated with our wisdom and power and would have hindered us from creating a soul that could not be destroyed, could not be blotted out of existence. For this is the claim made in the name of this image of God; that He so made man that he must live forever, that God Himself could not destroy him; that man being unworthy of a place in glory God has no alternative but to perpetuate his existence in misery. Our reply is that this implies a lack of either power or wisdom on the part of the Calvinistic God.

THE ARMINIAN IMAGE OF GOD

Arminianism offsets Calvinism. While the latter is held by almost all the various branches of the Presbyterians and by almost all Baptists, Congregationalists, etc., Arminianism is most particularly represented today by our Methodist friends of different branches. The celebrated "five points" of Arminianism are in substance:--

(1) Conditional Election. (As in opposition to the unconditional election held by Calvinists.)

(2) A Universal Redemption, or that Christ died for all alike, though only those who accept His atonement by faith will be actually saved. (As in opposition to the Calvinistic theory that atonement was only for the Elect.)

(3) That Salvation is by Grace; or man can exercise true faith only by the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, with which, however, he can co-operate. (As in contradiction to the Calvinistic view that the grace of God--His mercy, His forgiveness, His assistance--was destined only for the Elect and applies to none others.)

(4) That God's Grace is not irresistible. (As in contrast with the Calvinistic theory, that it is irresistible

--that the Elect cannot resist God's grace but must yield to it.)

(5) That to fall from a state of Grace is possible. (As in contrast with the Calvinistic view, that for the Elect to fall from grace is impossible.)

Looking at this mental image, which has appealed to an increasingly large number of Christian people during the past century, we perceive that while it is a less dignified image than the Calvinistic one it has more warmth, more love, more grace. This draws our hearts sympathetically toward this image, to a considerable degree.

But as we look and hearken to its message we are impressed with the thought that it, too, is lacking in some particulars. It seems deficient in the qualities of wisdom and power. Its message is really no broader than that of the Calvinistic image; the same "Little Flock" alone will reach the Heavenly Kingdom, the same thousands of millions will be condemned to an eternity of torture. The only difference between these two images seems to be not in the result of their work, but in the method pursued therein. Unlike the Calvinistic image the Arminian one does not elect, does not foreordain, does not predestinate, but gives to every member of the race all the blessings, all the opportunities, all the knowledge, all the assistance it can render them, so that if they are lost it

is in spite of the best endeavors of the Arminian image for their aid. And so when the vast majority of mankind are lost in Eternal Torment it will not be because God willed it so, not because He predestinated it so, but because He could not help it; because with His very best endeavors He was unable to bring about a more favorable condition either in civilized or in heathen lands, because the great Adversary, Satan, had more power for evil than God could control for good.

Alas! Alas! The benevolent designs of this image can never reconcile us to its weakness, its inability, its unwisdom to foreknow and to forearrange and to accomplish its good and loving purposes. We need a God who is not only loving, generous and just, but who is wise enough and powerful enough to make His love of practical benefit to our race. These deficiencies in wisdom and power are the very point in which the Calvinistic

image displays such grandeur. But the Arminian image possesses the love which the Calvinistic lacks. Alas! Neither image can fully satisfy our hearts. The proper mental image of the true God to be satisfactory to our hearts must be complete--perfect in justice, in love, in wisdom, in power. And this can be said of neither of these. We must look further. Surely the Bible is the Divine revelation of the Divine character, and surely an error has been made by which some of God's people have shown Him from one side, ignoring the other, while others have shown Him from the opposite side. It should be the ambition and effort, dear friends, of every true child of God to formulate before his mental vision that proper image of God which would be complete in all respects, which would be in harmony with every declaration of the Bible--the image of God before which we could bow and worship and adore, the image of God which would awaken in us that grand conception of the Almighty as superior in every particular to all of His creatures, infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.

SM84

THE SCRIPTURAL IMAGE OF GOD

Since the two mental images thus described are worshipped by all Christendom as the best and grandest imaginable, and since these have been entertained for centuries by some of the best minds, we might naturally enough be deterred from even attempting to formulate before our minds and hearts a superior image. But, then, we remember that the time was when these images were novelties and had few adherents. We remember that these were vast improvements upon the grosser misconceptions of those who burned each other at the stake and otherwise tormented one another and were esteemed to be most particularly copying the Divine character, method and program. We take courage, too, when we remember that we are not left to the resources of our own imagination in formulating the proper image of God.

We remember that God has revealed Himself in His Word, in the Bible, and properly we go to it for guidance lest in our imagination we should be equally unsuccessful as others. We are encouraged again when we find that

these two most prominent images before the minds of Christendom had both been constructed with the aid of the Bible. We say to ourselves: "If the Bible presents one of these images to some minds and the other image to other minds it surely proves that there has been some mistake in interpretation, because as the Word of God it cannot be yea and say nay. It cannot contradict itself as these two creedal images contradict and oppose each other in vital points."

Let us, therefore, give the more earnest heed as we go to the Bible. Let us be sure to cast away all of our preconceived ideas, notions, opinions, etc. Let us build afresh our image of God from the very foundation, accepting nothing in respect to it that is not in full accord with every other portion of that Revelation. Let us expect that the true God must be as perfect in His Love as in His other qualities, and that He must be as perfect

in His Wisdom and in His Power as He is in His Love. Surely any other image of Him must be defective.

Coming thus to the subject of the Bible our text meets us as a consoling and encouraging message and declares in one breath not only the Justice of God and His Love, but also His Wisdom to foreknow, prepare and plan for the execution of His Justice and Love. It tells us further of His Divine Power to carry out all that His Wisdom, Justice and Love have planned. How encouraging the statement, "My Word that goeth forth out of My mouth 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. For ye shall be delivered with joy and brought home in peace"; "For My plans are not your plans, neither are your methods My methods, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My methods higher than your methods and My plans than your plans." (**Isa. 55:11,12,8**.) How Divine Mercy shines through these declarations of Divine Foreknowledge and Power!

And be it noted that the context is in full accord with this, showing that the deliverance with joy and home coming in peace is future during the Millennial Age--when Christ, who redeemed the world, shall be its Deliverer from the power of sin and death, its Deliverer from the

prison-house of death--Sheol, Hades. The home coming will mean the restitution to the former estate of harmony with God, lost through Father Adam's disobedience, but redeemed for all the willing and obedient by the precious blood of Christ. In our Father's house are many mansions, many stations; one is for the angels, another for the "Little Flock" of the Elect, and still another for the world in general, who will be brought into harmony with God as a result of the Millennial blessings, during times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began--to all cursed by the fall, but redeemed by the precious blood.

SM86

The picture continues. Our context declares that instead of the thorn and the briar there will then be the fir tree and the myrtle tree. The thorn and the briar are here used to typify the wicked, the injurious, who now flourish. The fir tree represents the evergreen, whose balsamic influence is healthful, giving a refreshing effect, while the myrtle tree, also an evergreen, yields sweet perfume and berries that are a delicacy. These two trees represent mankind under the favorable blessing of the Lord during the Millennium, yielding good influences and themselves possessed of everlasting life, symbolized by the evergreen qualities of these trees.

THE WORD OF GOD'S MOUTH

The difficulty with God's people for centuries has been that they have not given sufficiently critical heed to the Word of God's mouth. They have been contented too frequently to take the words of men, or, as our Lord declared, the traditions of men instead of the Word of the Lord. The lesson to us is that we must give heed to the Word of the Lord if we would have true Wisdom, and that the words of man must be hearkened to only as they are found to be in close alignment and assistances to us in the study of the Divine Word, which alone is authoritative. As an illustration of how we have added man's word to the Word of the Lord and thus have perverted the teachings of the Scriptures, we remind you of the Scriptural declaration that "the wages of sin is death,"

and "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and again, that "all the wicked will God destroy."--**Rom. 6:23**; **Ezek. 18:4**; **Psa. 145:20**.

These plain statements taken at their proper valuation leave no room for misunderstanding the mind of the Lord. But we are not content thus to do. We add to the Word of the Lord and say that the wages of sin is not death, and hence the word death here must be understood to mean life--life in torment. And again we said, "It cannot be true that the soul that sinneth it shall die;

SM87

for we have often heard the theory that the soul cannot die. Hence we must twist and wrest this statement of God's Word to mean its opposite. We must say, "The soul that sinneth it shall never die, but shall live forever in an eternity of woe and God Himself cannot destroy it." Again we said, "There must be a mistake about the statement that God will destroy the wicked; for we have been taught from infancy that He will preserve the wicked by miraculous power, so that the fires of torment will not consume them but merely cause pain." And again, "Have we not heard that matter is indestructible?"

Thus we have beclouded our reason and made void the Word of God through the traditions of our elders and seniors, our ancient and honorable ones--Doctors of Divinity. And how silly the only real argument here adduced--that matter is indestructible, that it passes from one form to another! We are not considering the indestructibility of matter; it is not in question that if you burn a man up his entire body will pass into gases. Undoubtedly there was as much matter in the world before Adam was created as afterward, and as much today as there was then. But matter is not conscious, matter cannot suffer, cannot enjoy. Hence the argument is merely a sophistry. When the Lord says, "All the wicked will be destroyed," let us accept this statement as the very truth and know that when the wicked are destroyed they will be no more, even though the matter which once composed their bodies shall have been turned into various gases. Let God be true though it proves every creed to be a lie. Let us go back to the Word of the Lord that from its standpoint we may have the true image of God's character before our minds and may worship Him in

spirit and in truth.

If then the Bible written by various pens, guided by the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, is God's Word or Message to His people, let us hearken to it. What say the Scriptures? They tell us that man was created in God's

SM88

image and likeness, that he was intelligent, upright and worthy of trial for eternal life; and that he was placed on trial in Eden. They tell us that he was disobedient, not through ignorance or deception; and that he thus came under the Divine sentence--a death sentence. Not a word do they tell us of his being condemned to an eternity of torture with devils some place beyond the bounds of space and time. Not a word do they tell us of his being condemned to Purgatory to expiate his guilt. They not only declare that the penalty for disobedience was announced to him in advance of his trial, but that after his trial he was cast out of Eden so that the penalty might take effect, so that he might die; and they reiterate the penalty saying, "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." How plain! How simple! No one could misunderstand this simple statement without the assistance of trained theologians, skilled in the art of handling the Word of God deceitfully or wresting the Scriptures, as St. Paul terms it.

The Bible record goes on to show that from that time onward sin and death prevailed; and that their reign has since continued we all can testify. God's only word on the subject was, "Dying, thou shalt die," and "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." He did, however, give a glimmer of hope when pronouncing the sentence upon the serpent. He declared that ultimately an offspring from the woman should bruise the serpent's head. This was a dark saying to our first parents, but to us it is luminous by reason of what has since transpired. We see that the Seed of the woman is Christ--Jesus the Head and the Church His Body. The clear intimation is that eventually this glorified company shall have a victory over Satan which in some manner will inure to the benefit of the entire race of Adam.--**Gen. 2:17**; **3:19**.

In the light of other scriptures we see that the death of Jesus was necessary as the very foundation of any blessing of forgiveness toward our race; and we see

SM89

that those who have accepted Jesus and received forgiveness have during this Gospel Age been invited to become of the elect Church, His joint-heirs in the Messianic Kingdom which is to crush Satan, destroy evil and release mankind from bondage to the reign of Sin and Death, delivering so many as will "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God" freedom from death, everlasting life.

For nearly eighteen centuries God was silent, giving no word, no message of hope except the glimmer which came from Enoch's prophecy, "Messiah cometh with myriads of holy ones." (**Jude 14**.) After eighteen centuries God revealed His purpose further and more particularly to His servant and friend, Abraham. After testing the loyalty of his faith God declared to him, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." (**Gen. 18:18**.) Although this Word of God could not be broken, could not return unto Him void but must be accomplished in its due season, nevertheless, the time for its accomplishment being long, God added His oath and swore to Abraham the certainty of this promise, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." For centuries this was more or less a plain promise which the nation of Israel hoped they would inherit. For eighteen centuries more they waited for Messiah to be sent to them to exalt them, to use them as the Seed of Abraham in blessing the world with a Divine law and government, stamping out sin and lifting up the slaves of sin from the prison-house of death and from the power of sickness.

"In due time God sent forth His Son." The time seemed long from the human standpoint, but through the Prophet the Lord reminded them that a thousand years in His sight are but as yesterday. Jesus at His first Advent accomplished a different work from that which His nation expected; it was necessary that He should first redeem Israel and all the families of the earth before He could give them the permanent blessing of life eternal. The penalty upon them was death, and they had gone

SM90

down to Sheol under it. And so we read that Christ died for our sins, that His soul descended to Sheol, and that

He was not left in Sheol, in Hades, but was raised therefrom on the third day. (**Acts 2:27**.) He did not pay an eternal torment penalty, for no such penalty had been announced. He paid a death penalty, the one the Scriptures declare that God had announced and inflicted.

Thus the basis was laid for the general blessing of every creature; for Christ died as the Substitute or Ransom for Father Adam; and in Adam's redemption all of his race were involved, just as through his transgression they were all involved. Jesus the Messiah first offered the privilege of joint-heirship with Himself in the sufferings and in the glory that should follow and a share in the Heavenly nature to His own people, the Jews; and when few of them accepted the proposal we are told that the remainder were blinded until His Second Coming. (**Rom. 11:7**.) Thus it came that in God's providence, after selecting the remnant of "Israelites indeed" to be members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, joint-heirs with Himself, our Lord subsequently turned to the Gentiles to take out from them a people for His name. (**Acts 15:14**.) He has been finding and gathering these for over eighteen centuries; and soon, we believe, the work will be completed, the last member of the Body will have been called, accepted and found faithful. Then this election or calling of the Seed of Abraham will be at an end.

What will follow? We answer just what God's Word declares. He said, "My Word that goeth forth out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void, but shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." He sent it forth to Abraham and all who would believe, announcing the blessing of all the families of the earth. But that has not been accomplished yet. He sent forth a further Message through Jesus to all who would accept of Him that thereby He might gather out the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. This Message will not return void but will find a suitable

class, a Seed of Abraham class, which God can use in conjunction with our Lord Jesus for the blessing and uplifting and restitution of mankind in general. It has prospered in the thing whereto it was sent. It evidently was not sent to convert the world, neither is such a statement to be found in the Word of God. It was sent to gather out a people for His name, both from the Jews and from

the Gentile nations. It will accomplish this, the Seed of Abraham will be found, and just so surely as that occurs the other part of the promise will also be fulfilled; namely, that in and through that Seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

ELECTION AND FREE GRACE HARMONIZED

Here we find supplied by the Scriptures the very feature which was lacking in the Calvinistic view or image of God. We see the Election of the Church during the present time, an Election according to favor; and we equally see that the great mass of the world are non-elect, not called, not chosen, and that they consequently could not be faithful to a calling they did not receive nor even hear about. But so far from the Election of the Church signifying the condemnation of the remainder of mankind, the world, the word of the Lord to Abraham tells us that the elect class will be God's instrumentality for the blessing of the non-elect. And through the Prophet, in our text and elsewhere, the Lord repeatedly draws attention to the Millennial Kingdom, which will be established under the whole heavens for the breaking down of sin and the exaltation of righteousness and the assistance of all who under that enlightening influence will go upward to perfection on the Highway of Holiness.

Now we are beginning to see in the proper image of God not merely the dignity of His Foreknowledge, His Wisdom, His Justice, His Power, but also in Him the Love which so draws our hearts and which calls upon us to bow before Him and adore Him, because His righteous dealings are being made manifest to us, because we are

learning gradually that His Plan must be considered as a whole, because we are applying in their proper places those promises which belong to the world and which assure us that they shall be brought into Divine favor and have glorious opportunities for gaining eternal life.

In this view also we find the elements of character, lacking from the image of God as given to us by our Methodist friends of the Arminian view. Here is the very God of Love they were looking for, all-loving, all-generous,

all-kind, yet just, not sparing the guilty from the punishment He had meted out to them--death--not purposing in any sense of the word their torture at any time. Here we see the qualities lacking in the Arminian image; we see God's Justice, Wisdom and Power, as well as His Love. We see that He has the Millennial Age for the purpose of granting Free Grace to every member of the race under much more favorable conditions than now prevail. We see that the Election of the present time is not to the disadvantage of the world, but that ultimately it will be to their great advantage, when the elect Seed of Abraham, as the agents of God, shall bless all the families of the earth.

THE PROMISE AND OATH OF GOD SECURE

But can we be sure of this, can we be sure that after the Election of the Church the world will not be destroyed or tormented but will receive Divine blessings? Are there other proofs? Yes, dear friends, when once you get the eyes of your understanding turned in the right direction and away from the hobgoblins of eternal torture and fireproof devils, when once you get the eyes of your understanding rightly focused upon the Word of God, you will see that it is full of exceeding great and precious promises not only to us, the Church, respecting the Millennial Kingdom and joint-heirship in it and a fellowship with the Lord in the glory, honor and immortality of that blessed state on the spirit plane, but also to the world--

SM93

rich provisions for the entire race of Adam redeemed by the precious blood--"In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 12:3**; **Heb. 6:13-20**.

Let us quote another Scripture pertinent to this subject. The Apostle declares that the Church is this Seed of Abraham, joint-heir with her Lord, saying, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the Promise." (**Gal. 3:29**.) The Promise is not yet fulfilled and cannot be until the Elect, the Seed of Abraham, is completed. We are heirs of that Promise; and our inheritance of it will mean our glorification and our authorization to begin and to complete the work of

blessing the world of mankind by releasing them from the bondage of sin and death and helping them onward through faith and obedience back to harmony with God and life everlasting.

Let us then, dear friends, have full confidence in the Word of God that it will be accomplished, that it will not return void. Let us co-operate with this Word and thus make our calling and election sure. To this end let us lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and run with patience the race set before us, the race for the crown of life, for joint-heirship with our Lord, for a share with Him in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth.--**Heb. 12:1,2**.

All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Ye chosen Seed of Israel's race,
Ye ransomed from the fall,
Hail Him who saves you by His grace,
And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.

SM94

THE BINDING OF SATAN

"He laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss, and shut him up and sealed it over him that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years should be finished; and after that he must be loosed for a time."--**Rev. 20:2,3**.

The unscriptural views we once held respecting hell naturally led us into unscriptural views respecting Satan. When we held the thought that hell was a vast furnace of fire--we knew not where, "beyond the bounds of space and time"--we were deluded into believing that Satan was in that far-off place, master of ceremonies, and chief over a host of fire-proof demons employed chiefly in causing indescribable pain and anguish to thousands of millions of the human family who passed into his control by Divine foreknowledge and intention, the number of new arrivals approximating ninety thousand per day. But with Satan afar off and more than busy, we could not think of him as giving any particular time and attention to the comparatively small number of humanity still living.

But when we get the Scriptural idea of hell, that Sheol and Hades are the names for the state of death and unconsciousness into which all mankind, good and bad, go at death and from which both the just and the unjust are to be resurrected at the Second Coming of Christ, it throws a different light on the whole subject. As for the term Gehenna fire, symbolically used to represent the Second Death--the utter destruction of the incorrigible--we find that rightly understood its flames are no more literal than those of the "fiery trials" which the Lord promised should come upon all of His faithful to consume

SM95

their dross and under Divine supervision; to prepare them for the Heavenly Kingdom. Since then we see clearly that Satan and the fallen angels, his associates

and servants, are not engaged in furnace stoking, it prepares us to note what the Scriptures have to say respecting them and their present occupation and their relationship to mankind and their future. We do well, too, to remember that we have no personal knowledge on this subject--that we are confined to the Scriptures for every whit of the information on this subject.

"A COVERING CHERUB"

Most distinctly do the Scriptures teach the personality of Satan and his malevolent character. Moreover, they show clearly that he is not another god who has existed from eternity, but a creature subject to Jehovah. Since the Scriptural declaration is that "God's work is perfect" (**Deut. 32:4**), it follows that He could not have created Satan in the condition in which he now is, an adversary to God and to righteousness. In harmony with this thought the Scriptures assure us that he was created an angel of a very high order--a cherub; that he was beautiful, high in authority and wise, but that he allowed ambition, pride, to enter into his heart and to seduce him from loyalty to his Creator. The time when his ambitious designs began to take shape undoubtedly was when he beheld our first parents in Eden and set about to capture them as his subjects. He is represented as saying in his heart, "I will ascend above the stars [be higher than the other angels--captain and leader]. I will be like the Most High" [similar to the Most High in the sense of being an independent ruler not subject to him].--**Isa. 14:12-14**; **Ezek. 28:16**.

When Satan beheld our first parents possessed of the quality of procreation, the power of developing a race like themselves, he discerned that this was something that neither he nor the angels of the spirit plane possessed, and that by capturing the hearts of

the first human pair he could become the ruler of the world. The success of his deception need not be told. The disobedience of our first parents and the fulfilment upon them of the Divine sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," has involved a race whose numbers now approximate

probably twenty thousand millions, a groaning creation, suffering under the sentence of death through its effects upon their minds, their morals, their physical systems. Thus our Lord Jesus declares of Satan, "He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the Truth." (**John 8:44**.) He lied to our first parents, and through that deception he brought them under the Divine death sentence. Thus Satan is the murderer of the entire race.

It is not necessary for us to determine that Satan's original lie was of full determination to misrepresent. He told our first parents that he would be their real friend and guide them to greater knowledge; that God, their Creator, was selfish and that the prohibition of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a deliberate attempt on God's part to keep them from useful and profitable knowledge because He did not want them to so closely approximate His own wisdom. It is possible that as the human mind, getting out of accord with the Lord, might deceive itself, so Satan's mind, poisoned by pride and ambition, may have reached the false conclusion that God was really working against the best interests of our first parents and their race. It matters not which view we take, in either event Satan was a liar and deceiver and thereby was our murderer, as our Lord pointed out.

"THE ANGELS THAT SINNED"

Satan risked everything when he took the course that he did, which not only alienated him from God as an adversary, but separated him also from all who were loyal to the Creator. Thenceforth his entire time and energy were devoted to the building up of the human empire which he had designed. He had no authority from God

to rule mankind; but by involving humanity in sin, by alienating them from their Creator, he was able more and more to gain control; for no sentence of death had been passed upon him and no impairment of his personal powers and vitality had been experienced. Mankind, on the contrary, under the death sentence, rapidly lost mental, moral and physical ability to cope with him.

During the 1656 years from Adam's creation to the Flood, a certain amount of intercourse was permitted between humanity and the angels. God's design in permitting this was to teach a great lesson, and to test the loyalty of the angels. The lesson taught was that sin is very contaminating. So far from the intercourse between angels and men tending to uplift mankind, the course was downward. The influence of evil taking hold upon many of the angels, of whom the Scriptures say that they left their own habitation--that is to say, permitted to materialize and to associate with mankind--some of them through lustful temptation preferred the human plane, thus sinning and transgressing the Divine arrangement of their angelic nature.

The account in Genesis very briefly tells us that these angelic sons of God, beholding the fair daughters of men, were enamored of them and took them for wives, with the result that a new race began to spring up in the world--"giants," "men of renown." The lesson having been taught and the angels having been tested as to their loyalty to God, that dispensation ended, the Flood of Noah's day wiping out the hybrid race and all of the human family except Noah and his family. Of Noah we read that "he was perfect in his generation." (**Gen. 6:9**.) He and his family were of pure Adamic stock, not contaminated.

It was at this time, according to St. Peter (**2 Peter 2:4**) and St. **Jude (6**), that God placed a ban upon the disloyal angels, consigning them to Tartarus, the atmosphere of this earth, mistranslated hell in our common

version. The Divine sentence against these angels which kept not their first estate was not, however, a death sentence, as in the case of man; it was that they should "be confined in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great Day." Thus the Apostle indicates that in due time there is to be a future judgment or decision rendered of God respecting those angels--in connection with the inauguration of the Millennial Day, the seventh thousand-year epoch of man's history. Meantime, isolated from fellowship with God and the holy angels and hindered from materializing and thus having no intercourse with mankind as previously, these fallen angels--called in the

Scriptures demons (mistranslated devils)--have undoubtedly had an unhappy time of it for now more than four thousand years. Satan is spoken of as their prince or leader, though nowhere are they mentioned as being of as high rank or order as is he, nor as responsible as is he.

It is fair to suppose that some of these fallen angels are of repentant mind and sorry for their sins, and that they no longer strive against the Divine regulations. Hence they have special opposition from Satan and the others. The Apostle distinctly shows us that the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus became a great sermon to these fallen angels, instructing them respecting the love and compassion of God for His human creatures and of His Power even to raise the dead and His willingness to reward our Lord Jesus with high exaltation because of obedience. This lesson respecting the true Divine character became to some of these fallen angels a lesson of hope, and gave them room to anticipate that if they would turn from sin and manifest their loyalty to God He might in their judgment day grant the blessing of forgiveness. The Apostle Peter speaks of these in his Epistle, saying that Christ preached to the spirits in prison who once were disobedient in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing. (**1 Peter 3:19,20**.) The sermon was not one of audible words but a pantomime

discourse. As we sometimes say, "Actions speak louder than words." So the facts in our Lord's case--His death as a sacrifice and His resurrection by Divine Power on the third day--constituted a great lesson, a great sermon for those who hitherto had been without much foundation for hope of deliverance.

"DOCTRINES OF DEMONS"

However, without knowing the proportions of those favorably inclined, we do know of the fact that there are legions of these fallen angels who, under the leadership of Satan, are the direct enemies of the human race, tempting, misleading, deceiving, putting light for darkness and darkness for light. Seemingly they enter fully into Satan's spirit and work as his associates. Not permitted

to materialize in the past they have sought intercourse with mankind, have preyed upon humanity. Realizing that they would be dreaded if their real character was recognized they have personated the human dead, thus helping to further and corroborate Satan's original falsehood--"Ye shall not surely die."

By various delusions humanity has been taught that its members, instead of dying when they appear to die, really become more alive than ever. This view was successfully propagated amongst the heathen nations. But to the Israelites God gave special instructions, that the dead were dead, that they must not be worshipped or prayed to; and the Israelites were commanded not to allow a witch or wizard or necromancer to live in their midst. They were told that their dead were really dead, and that the hope for their living again lay in the resurrection, which the promised Messiah would accomplish. They were distinctly told that the "dead know not anything," that their sons come to honor and they know it not, they come to dishonor and they perceive it not of them. (**Eccl. 9:5**; **Job 14:21**.) They were told to do with their might what their hands found to do, because there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in

SM100

Sheol, the grave, the state of death, Hades.--**Eccl. 9:10**.

JESUS CAST OUT DEMONS

Notwithstanding the protection of the Lord's Word, the fallen angels, demons, succeeded in gaining considerable influence over the Israelites, so that in our Lord's time that form of insanity which results from obsession--from these evil spirits getting possession of the mind, the brain--was common. Many of our Lord's miracles and those of His disciples consisted in the casting out of such demons, in one instance a legion possessing one poor man and making him crazy. The teachings of our Lord and the Apostles in the New Testament respecting the dead are in full harmony with those of the Jewish Ages in the Old Testament. Our Lord tells us that at His Second Coming all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth. The approved of God

will come forth perfect by a life resurrection; but the disapproved will come forth imperfect, that they may have a resurrection by judgments, chastenings and stripes for assisting them up, up, up to full perfection if they will. There is no intimation here that the dead are alive, but that they are in their graves, that they are dead. Similarly when our Lord awakened Lazarus He told the sisters first that in Him were the resurrection and the life power; and He did not call Lazarus from Heaven or from Purgatory or elsewhere, but merely from the tomb.

It was our Lord Himself who declared that no man has ascended into Heaven. (**John 3:13**.) It was the Apostle Peter who when pointing out our Lord's resurrection and how it had been foretold by the Prophet David saying, "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell [Sheol, Hades, the grave]," incidentally mentioned that "David had not ascended to the heavens" but was still in his sepulchre. (**Acts 2:34**.) It was the Apostle Paul who declared that if there be no resurrection of the dead all mankind are perished--even those who have fallen asleep in Christ. (**1 Cor. 15:17,18**.) Thus the united voice of

the Scriptures is in harmony with the facts as we see them, that God's sentence upon our race was a death sentence, which has affected all, and that the hope is that as a result of our dear Redeemer's Sacrifice there shall yet be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. A resurrection of the dead implies that they are dead, and not alive.--**Acts 24:15**.

Satan and the demons have worked against this truth of the Scriptures, deceiving mankind and thus fostering doctrines of Purgatory and of masses for the dead, in this way leading us to blaspheme God's holy name by believing that the dead are in torment somewhere, and thus blinding the minds and hearts of the vast majority, even in civilized lands. Even the civilized fear God, and because of the misrepresentations cannot love him. Thus has the work of Satan and his demon hosts progressed; and the wonder is that demonism has not accomplished more than even the dreadful things that we perceive. It has fostered sin of every kind; and of the immense numbers in insane asylums it is not unreasonable to believe that fully half are there because of obsession by

evil spirits, the other half suffering from softening or decay of the brain and physical derangements which affect the mind.

A REIGN OF SIN AND DEATH

Looking over the heathen world and noting their benighted condition of mind--the belief of some of them in numerous hells, the belief of others in the transmigration of souls, etc.--and then looking over Christendom with its multitudinous errors, indicating the effort of mankind to get free from the ignorance and superstition of the Dark Ages, we may well be appalled. What a power Satan has exercised! How weak man has been in his hands! Only in proportion as the Word and Spirit of God have given enlightenment and strength has a measure of freedom from the Adversary's toils been acquired. The Apostle reminds us of our Adversary's

cunning, saying, "We are not ignorant of his devices" and of his cunningly devised fables. (**2 Cor. 2:11**.) He declares Satan to be the god or ruler of this world by virtue of the deception which he has accomplished in the blinding of the minds of men as respects the light of truth. He assures us that as Christians we are not merely contending with flesh and blood, with human beings, but that beyond the adversaries of the true Church are the wisdom and cunning of the Adversary himself and his many agents. He says we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high positions.--**Eph. 6:12**; **2 Cor. 4:4**.

Ever since the Lord began to lift the veil of ignorance and to grant enlightenment, bringing forth the invention of printing and later steam and electricity, our Adversary has been kept more busy than formerly. As he is the Prince of Darkness and all of his work of deception upon the human family is favored by ignorance, by darkness and benighted conditions, so everything that has tended to lift the pall of the Dark Ages has tended to liberate mankind from the snares of Satan's ignorance, superstition and deception. We may well believe then that our Adversary is extremely active and increasingly so in

civilized lands and that even amongst the heathen he is necessarily more active, more vigilant.

"BINDING THE STRONG MAN"

In one of His parables our Lord represents Satan as being the householder at the present time; that the whole world is his household, or dominion, over which he has control. This is a similar picture to that used by the Apostle when he describes Satan as the prince of this world, and the god or ruler of this world. Our Lord, referring to His Second Coming and the gathering of the Church and the breaking up of present institutions in the end of this Age, says that if the householder (Satan) knew in what hour the thief would come he would be on the alert and take means to prevent the despoiling of his

household and goods. Hence many things connected with the Second Coming of our Lord have been kept secret until the due time of their fulfilment.

Our Lord, however, does show that at the time appointed of the Father He will come and will first of all bind the strong man, Satan, and then He will spoil his goods, overthrow his arrangements and institutions that are in so many respects deceptive, so that in the overturning our Lord, as the new King, the Prince of Light, may bring to all the slaves of sin, superstition and darkness the light and the blessings so long foretold in the Word of God and hoped for and prayed for by all the saints--"Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."--**Matt. 6:10**.

It is our opinion, dear friends, that we are living in this particular juncture at the present time; that the Prince of Light has already begun the work of binding the Prince of Darkness. We are not to expect that Satan will meekly submit. Instead, we should understand that while this name Satan applies to our personal Adversary, the Devil, it covers in a general sense all the influences for evil and unrighteousness in the world, however ignorant some of his dupes. Hence when we read of the binding of Satan, that old Serpent, the Devil, we should have in mind properly all the evil influences, all the sinful

tendencies, all the injustices and untruths whereby mankind have been enslaved for centuries.

Whatever sets free the light of Truth incidentally binds in similar proportions the darkness. Hence we might say that to some extent this loosing of the light and binding of the darkness has been in process for three centuries, but only in our day is the matter reaching a climax. That climax has not yet been reached by any means, but we believe will be attained in a very few years. The whole world is waking up to the evils which have oppressed it. As, for instance, opposition to intoxication is spreading not only in this land but abroad. A wave

of opposition to all injustice is also spreading, favoring the interests of all the people as in opposition to those of the few disposed to exploit the many for their own personal advantage.

In Russia, for instance, one of the darkest of the so-called civilized lands, a Jubilee Trumpet is heard, and the masses are awakening and grasping for their human rights and liberties. We do not mean to say that all that is said in favor of total abstinence is true, that all that is said and done in favor of the people and against wealthy magnates, aristocrats, bureaucrats is true. We do not mean to dispute that many liberties are sought and desired to be grasped for which many people are not yet prepared. But we call attention to these things as indicating that the power of darkness is losing its hold, its shackles are breaking from the human minds. We do not say that this means eventually what the Scriptures describe as a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation. (**Dan. 12:1**.) We do say that the strong man, the Adversary, and his numerous allies entrenched in power and privilege, will hold on like grim death; and that this will mean much suffering to all concerned. Thankful we are, too, that we can see beyond that awful time of anarchy which the Scriptures so clearly outline, the Golden Age, the Millennial Kingdom, the Reign of righteousness, peace and love--the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Not only might we expect that the Adversary and his various agents would be exceedingly active in this present time, but the Scriptures particularly admonish us that

this will be the case; and that the Lord, who could crush the Adversary otherwise, will permit his activity for a special purpose, partly for the testing and sifting of the Church for the selection of the Very Elect, and partly for lessons of discipline to the world in general. As, for instance, the Apostle, speaking of the present time, says, "God will send them strong delusions that they may

SM105

believe a lie: that they all might be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness [untruth]."--**2 Thess. 2:11**.

As we near this time we realize that no one is secure from the Adversary's power, from the influence of the demons, except as he is on the Lord's side, consecrated to Him and under His promised protection. We realize that His protection will be in large measure through the impartation of knowledge, light, which will guard from the darkness. Thus those who know that the dead are dead and will remain dead until the resurrection, and who know that those who represent the dead through spirit mediums, etc., are the demons--these are specially protected by their knowledge from many of the deceptions which are ensnaring thousands and which ultimately will cause thousands to fall into hurtful errors. Moreover, the Scriptural intimation is that in some manner in this present time the Lord will permit the fallen angels to find a manner by which they may circumvent and avoid His prohibition to materialization. So, then, we may expect that materializations will occur on the part of many of these demons, and that these will be an active agency, a pernicious influence. It is consoling to know that the Lord guarantees that in the end of the struggle Satan will be fully bound, shut up, sealed, that he can deceive the nations no more--

"UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS ARE FINISHED"

The blessedness of the Millennial Day, so graphically portrayed through the prophecies and the New Testament, could not be imagined except as we grasp the thought that Satan, the deceiver, will be restrained, will not be permitted further to deceive humanity. Instead

the glorious light of the Millennial Day, the Sun of Righteousness, Christ and His elect Church in glory, will shine forth for the scattering of all darkness and superstition, and that the light of Divine Truth will illuminate the whole world and cause the knowledge of the Lord to

fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.--**Isa. 11:9**.

How blessed! How glorious! Shall not we who have been called to this High Calling of joint-heirship with Christ as His elect Church, His Bride, His joint-heirs in the Kingdom--shall not we rightly value the things of darkness and the things of light and cast all of the weight of our influence and time on the Lord's side, the side of the Truth? May we not thus to some extent be used of the Lord in the shining forth of the light which will bind the Adversary, restrain the evil? Let us, as the Apostle suggests, lay aside every weight and every besetting sin and run with patience the race for this prize of our High Calling in Christ Jesus.--**Heb. 12:1**.

The clear declaration of the Scriptures is that at the close of the Millennial Age the Lord will permit a brief period of liberty to Satan for the purpose of testing those who will have received knowledge and uplift to perfection throughout the Millennial Age, to the intent that none of the human family or others shall go beyond that time or have eternal life except as they shall be in heart obedience to the Lord and His righteous requirements. The **verses following our text** tell not only of the First Resurrection of the Church and of their reign with Christ for the thousand years, but also tell us how the world during the thousand years may come up to perfection of life and live in the true sense of the word at the close of the Millennium. Then will come the testing time already referred to, and such as will be found disloyal to the Lord will be counted as the messengers and co-laborers with Satan and with him will be destroyed in the lake of fire, which is the Second Death--utter destruction.

Haste ye along, ages of glory;
Haste the glad time when Christ appears.
Oh, that I may be one found worthy
To reign with Him a thousand years!

SM107

A COVENANT WITH DEATH

"Ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell [Sheol, the grave] we are at agreement.... Your covenant with death shall be disannulled and your agreement with Sheol will not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then shall ye be trodden down by it."--**Isa. 28:15-18**.

The Prophet, in the language of our text and its context, gives us the Divine foreview of present-day conditions and their results. In the preceding verses he has pictured symbolically a description of intoxication with false doctrines to such an extent that the teachers of Christendom are represented as being all out of the way, confused, confounded, and disposed to vomit forth the various creeds and theories of the Dark Ages which have produced this intoxication. This is in full accord with the declaration of Revelation that all nations would be made drunk with the doctrinal wine from the cup of the woman who sat upon the beast. (**Rev. 17:4.**) The fulfilment of the prophecy is with us. Confusion prevails amongst religious teachers of every denomination. They loathe their doctrines, and fear to discuss them, as well they may; for although their doctrines contain some elements of truth, yet the mixtures as a whole are an abomination to reason, to justice, to love, and in violent opposition to the proper understanding of God's Word.

As if looking about amongst the people of our day, the Lord inquires through the Prophet, "Whom shall God teach knowledge? Whom shall He make to understand doctrine?" The answer is given, "Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts." In a word the difficulty with Christendom today is that a large proportion are not and never were Christians in the real

SM108

sense of that term, are not and never were believers in Jesus as the Redeemer of the world, through whom alone is forgiveness for sin, are not and never were consecrated followers of Him, earnestly desiring to know and to do

the will of the Father--**Isa. 28:9**.

And even amongst these comparatively few who are true Christians through faith and consecration, few have gone beyond the infantile stage of development. As the Apostle says, "For when for the time ye should be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and of strong meat." (**Heb. 5:12-14**.) The Lord points out (**v. 9**) that none may expect to understand His doctrine, the Truth, except those who will progress from the position of babes in Christ, that they may become strong men in Him; and that the course of procedure to attain this development is a feeding upon the Truth of the Divine Revelation. Let us, dear friends, be of this class who will not be satisfied with babyhood in Christ, but who will go on to perfection and to a realization of the privileges that are ours, both in the present life and in that which is to come.

STAMMERING LIPS AND FOREIGN TONGUES

The Lord proceeds to show how and why the Divine Revelation has been given in its present disconnected and broken form in the Scriptures. He informs us that He has a two-fold purpose in this: first, that His true people may the more particularly learn to depend upon Him and be strengthened through their search for the Truth, here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept, with stammering lips and in a foreign language, instead of plain statements in our native tongue. These conditions are really helpful to those who are of the right attitude of heart in that they learn lessons which otherwise might escape them. And in the end the harmony of the fragments of Truth from Genesis to Revelation,

often disconnectedly stated, becomes a demonstration and power to those who come to see their relationship, harmony and beauty. To such they have perhaps a greater strength, which would not come through a more plain and direct statement. The Lord tells us that this arrangement which He had made is quite sufficient to cause all the weary to rest and to be

refreshed. And all of the proper class, all of the Lord's "little flock," we may be sure, will rest in these promises and will be refreshed by them.

Secondly, the matter was stated in this fragmentary form, so that all others than the Israelites indeed (**John 1:47**) might be confused, might fall away, might be stumbled, broken, ensnared, entrapped, just as the Lord says here in **Verse 13**. The Word of God contains a bountiful provision of milk of the Truth and of strong meat of the Truth, covering every knowledge necessary to the man of God that he may be thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.--**2 Tim. 3:16,17**.

But these things are not intended for all. As our Lord declared to the disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear" (**Matt. 13:16**); and again, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to others [outsiders] in parables; that seeing, they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand." (**Luke 8:10**.) But to outsiders, to all not Israelites indeed, the precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, served not for their upbuilding, but for their ensnarement with error, that they "might go and fall backward and be snared and taken." (**v. 13**.) Thank God, this breaking and snaring do not mean that they will be turned over to eternal torment at the hands of demons! No! It refers merely to the present life, and indicates how those who profess Christianity, but have not the spirit of it, will in this Harvest time, the end of this Age, become ensnared in errors which will both separate them from the Truth

and the Israelites indeed, and cause them great perplexity in the Time of Trouble now begun.

THE DEAD MORE ALIVE

The secret of the deflection and stumbling which is now due and already considerably begun, lies in the false teaching respecting the death penalty that rests upon our race. A wrong view of this subject has done incalculable injury, while the pendulum swung to one extreme and then to the other, passing the central truth and

scorning it. Satan, the father of lies, has been at the back of the systematic delusions respecting death which have troubled humanity in all ages and in all climes. This first step in the delusion was to contradict the Almighty by telling Mother Eve in Eden that there is no death, and that God's declaration that a death penalty would come upon Adam and herself if they should eat of the forbidden fruit, was a falsehood. Satan declared, "Ye shall not surely die," whereas God had already instructed them that disobedience would bring upon them death--"Dying thou shalt die." Subsequently, when the dying process had set in and the race was becoming weaker and shorter-lived, the Adversary, pursuing the line of his original lie declared to humanity that when they seem to die they do not really do so, but become more alive than when they were alive. Strange to say humanity of every grade and language has accepted Satan's deceptive statement, and thus the old Serpent, the Devil, Satan has deceived practically all who dwell upon the earth.

The next step in the delusion was to tell humanity that not only are the dead more alive than they were before they died, but that the vast majority of them are in torture. At first it seemed to the Adversary that there was danger of making this doctrine of devils too strong for the human mind to receive; and hence not only with the heathen did he make a succession of heavens and of hells, with opportunity for passing from one to the other,

but also amongst Christians he first introduced the subject of future punishment by a purgatorial place of torment, in which practically all of the human family would suffer untellable torture according to the will of God; teaching that since only a mere handful were so saintly, so finished, so ripe for eternal life in glory as to be permitted to go to Heaven, all the rest must necessarily get their chiseling and polishing and preparation for Heaven in the flames of Purgatory. Upon this erroneous doctrine, that the dead are alive, the doctrine of Purgatory is built, and upon the doctrine of Purgatory rises as a superstructure the doctrine of masses for the dead, of prayers for the dead, etc.

Later on the Protestant arose, rebelling against the doctrines of Purgatory and protesting in general against

the theories and claims and works of Papacy. Then a change became necessary to suit the new conditions, and we can almost fancy with what a smile of sarcasm the Adversary concluded that he would try upon boastful, intelligent Protestantism the sternest doctrines, which he had previously feared to present even to the heathen mind. To these he declared that they are quite right in supposing that only the finished saints will attain the glory and that there is no Purgatory, but assured them that all the remainder of the race, except the little handful fit for Heaven, are destined to an eternity of misery without hope of ever escaping therefrom, in a place called hell, the location of which he did not think it necessary even to lie about.

It must have been to Satan's surprise that intelligent people should accept this, the grossest form of his great deception; that they would so far lose their balance of mind as to suppose that a God of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power would have created a race of thousands of millions, had He nothing better in store for the innumerable mass than an eternity of suffering; and that the joy of the handful of the Elect who would reach the

Heavenly glory would be no just compensation for the suffering of the multitudes of their kith and kin. Surely surprised at the success of his most extreme venture, the Adversary next so twisted certain texts of Scripture to the minds of some of these Protestants that they believed and taught that the Almighty Creator had created hell before He created mankind; and that He had predestinated that merely a handful should go to glory and that the great mass should go to eternal misery, predestinated this before Adam's creation. It is no wonder that under these circumstances death and the grave have such terrors that many noble Christians on their death beds are in agony to know whether or not they are of the Elect and whether or not their loved ones were of the same class.

AN AGREEMENT WITH THE GRAVE

In the long ago people attended funeral services largely with the view to hear what hope the minister

would hold out in respect to the deceased; and many were the anxious inquiries as to whether or not the deceased had given any manifestation of the peace of God in his heart during his dying moments. But all this is changed. It has become the custom, within the last forty years, for ministers to comfort all the friends of the deceased, and indirectly if not directly imply that he is much better off in the spirit-land. It is often indeed stated that he is present; and that if he could speak he would say, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves. I am far better off." What means this change, except as explained by our text? The pendulum has swung to the opposite side. Rationality has in some degree asserted itself and declared monstrous and unreasonable many of the doctrines presented in the Protestant creeds.

The doctrine that the Lord predestinated that 999,999 out of every million of the race should go to eternal torment, and that one alone should go to glory, is now properly considered too horrible for acceptance by any rational mind. The doctrine is quietly buried; and without

SM113

a qualm or quiver the very reverse is taught by implication; namely, that nearly everybody is going to Heaven, regardless of what kind of life he or she may have lived in the present time. Do not the flowers on the coffin imply this? Do not the presence of the minister, the singing of the hymns, the discourse and the prayer all teach it? Is it ever known that any except occasionally a murderer is otherwise treated amongst Protestants? The gates of eternal torment are considered closed and the gates of heaven flung wide open. From the one extreme the Adversary has led them to the opposite extreme. But both positions are thoroughly untenable, not even so reasonable as the Roman Catholic purgatorial one, which also is quite unscriptural, as we shall see.

The views of Protestants, the most intelligent people on earth on other subjects, are the most incongruous, unjust, unreasonable that well could be imagined. Instead of the old theory that all the heathen and nearly all of the civilized pass directly at death to eternal torment irrevocably, they now tell us that comparatively few of even the most vicious and villainous of our race go there; that all the remainder go to Heaven. What must be their

conceptions of Heaven? Surely not that glorious presentation which the Scriptures give us of a place in which God's will is absolutely done! How could the heathen, the idiotic, the insane, the undeveloped in mind and morals, the unprincipled masses of mankind--how could they do God's will in Heaven? How could they be fit companions of the saints or of the angels? And if they are there for schooling in a kind of probationary school, then who shall say that to go to Heaven means an eternity of bliss and happiness, and who may know what to expect for himself or anyone else? Is it not a fact that Protestants, repudiating the Purgatory of Roman Catholics as an antechamber to hell, have made a purgatory in Heaven as an anteroom to eternal bliss? And is it not true that neither the Catholic

nor the Protestant view of Purgatory finds any ground whatever in the Scripture?

In harmony with what we have just seen of this great change of Protestant teaching, which lands practically everybody in Heaven at death, is the statement contained in our text. With death they are at agreement. They tell us that it is an angel sent to bear us to the Lord. The office of the minister is to instruct the people that they need not sorrow for their dead, but must rejoicingly think of death as being the work of the Lord; that they must rejoice therein so far as they are able and consider that their friends are better off; and that they should seek to join them, and be glad when their death comes.

A CAUSE FOR SUICIDES

This false doctrine, this agreement with death, this teaching that the dead are so much happier and better off and more alive than before they died, this bestrewing the casket with flowers, this weeping tears of sympathy and joy on their behalf, is inducing the great tide of suicide which is spreading over the whole world and which, as statistics show us, is rapidly increasing year by year.

From press reports we have every reason to think that the poor deluded creatures came under this worse form of Satan's delusion, which has held Protestantism;

and that they all expected to better their condition by death. Therefore they hastened to end their unhappy lives.

Notice that one extreme error generally and naturally leads to its opposite, and hence that the false doctrines respecting eternal torment have worked a double injury: (1) By representing God as the very devil of devils and the worst foe that humanity ever had; and (2) by now misrepresenting Him reversely as being pleased to take to Heaven and Himself all sorts and conditions of humanity in all their various gradations of mental, moral and physical degeneracy and obliquity. Before examining the truth respecting this subject, let us point out

SM115

that the vicious character ascribed to God by our forefathers was not only a blasphemy against the true God and His true character of Justice, of Love and Wisdom and Power, but also a great injury to the minds of men; for rarely can a man's mind rise higher than, superior to, his own conception of a god. Because our forefathers believed that God had made great preparation for the eternal torment of the race, they thought it proper to copy Him and to begin the tormenting in the present life. Indeed they tell us that they were striving to copy God and to prevent heresies which would carry others to an eternity of torture. As that picture of God was unsatisfactory, so the more modern picture is equally reprehensible and unsatisfactory--a God without principle, without justice, without character Himself, who does not insist upon having character development in those whom He would bless.

TRUTH ABOUT DEATH AND THE GRAVE

The Scriptures nowhere represent death as a friend, but as an enemy. Thus it was death that our first parents were threatened if they were disobedient; and this was the sentence which God pronounced against them when He had them cast out of Eden. Not a word in the record refers to a place of eternal torment after death; but the Scriptures everywhere declare that all mankind go into this death and that the dead know not anything.

(**Eccl. 9:5**.) "There is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in the grave"--in the state of death, *sheol*, "whither all go." (**Eccl. 9:10**.) In harmony with this the New Testament also declares that a redemption from death was necessary; that Christ died for man's sin in order that the claim of justice against the race might be satisfied; and that thus a resurrection of the dead be made possible. The Scriptures consistently tell us that the resurrection of the dead is the real hope, and assure us that if the dead rise not, all our faith and hope and teaching are vain.--**1 Cor. 15:13,14**.

SM116

The Scriptures assure us that except Christ had died for mankind, had given His life as the offset or Ransom-price for the life of Father Adam, man's death condition would have been as hopeless as that of the brute. They assure us that God's mercy was afterwards manifest in sending His Son to die, the Just for the unjust, to bring us back into harmony with God and to the eternal life which God is pleased to give to all His intelligent creatures in harmony with Him. They tell us that the time for this resurrection of the dead is fixed in the Divine purpose; and they call it the New Day, the Day of Christ, the Millennial Day of a thousand years. They assure us that during this epoch Immanuel shall reign, Satan shall be bound, the powers of darkness shall be overthrown, and the whole world shall be flooded with the light of the knowledge of God and His goodness and His truth. Christ and His elect "little flock" are pictured as this Sun of Righteousness, which shall heal the world's troubles and chase away all of its shadows and darkness.

This is the good hope of the Gospel of Christ. It does not compromise with death and the grave. It plainly states that death is an enemy, and that the "grave is cruel." But it assures us that the Lord has laid help upon One who is mighty to deliver us from the power of death and of the tomb. (**Cant. 8:6**; **Psa. 89:19**.) Of our Lord it is written, "He shall reign [in His Millennial Kingdom] until He shall have put all enemies under His feet [in full subjugation]. The last enemy to be destroyed is death."--**1 Cor. 15:25,26**.

So, then, dear friends, we have no Gospel to preach that is in common with that which is preached today.

We cannot tell you that the dead are more alive than when they were alive. We must tell you the message of God's Word--that the whole race is dying; and that this condition was caused by original sin and the original sentence upon Adam. We must tell you, however, that the glorious hope of a resurrection of the dead is true.

SM117

We must tell you that the words and conduct of humanity now will have their bearing or influence upon their future, whether they be of the few called during this Gospel Age to be of the Heavenly class of the Elect, or whether they belong to the masses of mankind. There is no injustice with God. He will neither over-punish nor under-punish. A "just recompence of reward" is what the Apostle specifies and what appeals to our judgments.--**Heb. 2:2**.

In proportion as much light or little has been given, much or little will be required in the resurrection. Hence it is to the advantage of every one to have in mind God's provision of a future life, and to reflect that his present course in the use of light, knowledge and opportunity has a very practical bearing upon his future welfare, and is helping him either upward or downward as respects character, and that no one will reach the place of life eternal and full perfection as he shall under the Lord's guidance be developed in heart and ultimately changed by resurrection power to the likeness of God.

"THE OVERFLOWING SCOURGE"

The Apostle points us to the great Time of Trouble with which this Age shall end and with which the New Era of the Millennial Kingdom shall be introduced. Everywhere throughout the Scriptures this is specially indicated as a time of very severe trial, not only to the world, but to the Church. Who shall be able to stand, queries the Prophet and also the Lord, the hour of temptation which shall come upon the whole world to try all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth? (**Rev. 6:17**; **3:10**.) This epoch of trouble the Prophet in our context declares shall take hold upon and cause tribulation to all those who have made a covenant with death and an agreement with the grave, and in so doing

are doing violence to their own reason as well as to the Word of God. And this he declares will continue until they learn doctrine, until they shall understand and accept the truth of the matter that the dead are dead;

SM118

and that the only hope of consciousness and life is by resurrection through the power of the Redeemer.

We believe that one of the most serious aspects of this overwhelming scourge will be the power of the evil spirits, the fallen angels. For six thousand years having operated with their prince, Satan, in deceiving humanity and perpetuating his lie in various ways throughout the past through witches, wizards and necromancers as well as by obsession and mediumship, these angels have confirmed Satan's lie that a dead man is more alive than when he was alive. They have personated the dead, have answered for them, and in every way sought to deceive and delude humanity and to contradict the Divine sentence, "The wages of sin is death."--**Rom. 6:23**.

These demons have been restrained from the liberty of materializing and appearing as men for more than 4,000 years, by Divine decree; as the Apostle says, "Restrained in chains of darkness until the judgment of the great Day." (**Jude 6**.) Now, however, through spirit-mediums, who are as deceived as the remainder of mankind and know not that they are mediums of the fallen angels, the demons are telling that shortly they will have power to materialize, as of old. There are reasons, too, for thinking that when they do regain this power many of them again will use it in an immoral manner, as they did before the Flood, as recorded in **Genesis 6:1-5**. Of that time we read that these angels, sons of God, materialized, and "saw the daughters of men that they were fair and took them wives of all that they chose." As a result of this illicit intercourse children were born that became giants on the earth, men of renown; and on this account the Flood came and swept away all these. The Lord made sure that none of the mongrel race should escape that destruction; and in harmony with this fact we read of Noah and his family that "he was perfect in his generation"--that there was no admixture of this angelic stock in him and his.

SM119

If now it be true, as several Scriptures seem to indicate, that these will regain a considerable measure of their former liberties, it will indeed mean an overflowing scourge upon humanity. But alas, how poorly are mankind prepared for that scourge! Speaking of that time the Apostle says that the Lord will permit strong delusion to come upon men; that He will allow them to believe a lie because they have no pleasure in the Truth. (**2 Thess. 2:3**.) As an illustration of how the lie may operate to generate confusion we note the fact that a Methodist sister of good reputation and doubtless of honest intentions has reported that a child has been born to her after the same manner that Jesus was born, without an earthly husband, and that the spirit being who is the father of her child so presented the matter to her, and in support of the contention, even quoted Scripture "Thy Maker is thy husband." Another has reported that the father of her child is her dead husband, who appeared to her when she went to put flowers upon his grave.

These are but two of several instances which have come to our attention, but they are suggestions to show what an overwhelming scourge may be before us through the neglect of the Truth on this subject that the dead are dead and through the general acceptance of Satan's lie that they are alive. If it be true, as the Scriptures seem to corroborate, that these fallen angels, demons, will obtain special liberties within a few months, it is high time that as many as have an ear to hear should be made aware of the difficulty and should be safeguarded with the Truth that all such manifestations are of the evil spirits and are merely deceptions as respects the dead, who cannot be resurrected until after the Gospel Church shall have been fully developed and glorified in the First Resurrection.

SM120

THE TRUE CHURCH

"The Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven."--**Heb. 12:23**.

This subject should be approached prayerfully and honestly, that all who see that there was but one Church in the beginning, established by our Lord, may also see that there will be but the one Church in the end, the Church Triumphant in glory, "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife." For the same reason that there have been doctrines many amongst the followers of Jesus, there have been churches many, as representing those doctrines.

We have found the true Gospel more or less scattered in all the various creeds, and none of them the pure and unadulterated Gospel; so we should be prepared to find that *the one true Church* of Christ for the past eighteen centuries has been scattered here and there amongst various denominations, and that not one of these denominations is the true Church. Not one of them can claim to contain all the "wheat" and none of the "tares." Not one of them can claim to contain all of the saints and no hypocrites. The time was when the various divisions of the Christian Church severally laid claim to being the one and only Church. But that time has passed, as far as the people and the majority of the clergy are concerned.

"THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE"

I shall not charge intentional wrong-doing on the part of any of the divisions of the Christian Church. On the contrary, I shall assume that the framers of the various creeds were sincere, honest men; and that the original followers of those creeds were sincere, and that a few today may be equally sincere. I shall assume, however, that the majority of Christians, ministers and laymen, realize that the sectarian fences are largely composed of

misconceptions of the Divine Word and Plan, and that the causes which originally led to Church divisions have considerably disappeared. If we can now recognize one true Gospel we may all reunite, in harmony with our Master's prayer, that "All may be one, as Thou, Father, and I are one."--**John 17:21**.

I remind you again of the simplicity of this Gospel which recognizes the broad outlines of the Divine Plan and allows each individual to see as many of the finer lines of the same as his spiritual development will permit. On that broad basis of Christian *union* the early Christians were one and reprobated any division. St. Paul rebuked those who said, "I am of Paul; I am of Apollos; I am of Peter."(**1 Cor. 1:12**.) As only Christ died for us all, He alone must be recognized as our Savior. As He is the Head of the Church and the only Head, He only must be recognized. As all ye are brethren, so the class distinction as between clergy and laity must be abrogated that we all may be one Church with one Lord, one Faith and one Baptism and one God and Father over all. --**Ephesians 4:5**.

"BABYLON THE GREAT, MOTHER OF HARLOTS"

How the divided Church, with clashing creeds, appears to the Almighty, He tells us, calling it Babylon--which signifies confusion. And who can deny the appropriateness of the name? In times past Catholics have applied this name to the Protestant sects, and the Protestants in turn have applied it to the Church of Rome. But when we come to examine the Scriptures on the subject they seem to include all--the Church of Rome being represented as the Mother Church and the various Protestant Churches as her daughters. The charge of harlotry which the Lord makes against mother and daughters must be acknowledged, although with some this harlotry is more pronounced than with others.

Using the Jewish marriage ceremony as the basis of the figure, all Christians, as members of the true Church,

are declared to be "espoused to one husband, which is Christ." (**2 Cor. 11:2**.) Under the Jewish custom the espousal brought the woman under the same obligation of chastity as though the marriage had taken place. Thus the Church, by her vow to her Lord, is obligated to the full, although the marriage with the Heavenly Bridegroom will not take place until His Second Advent and the change of the espoused from earthly to Heavenly conditions; for "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--**Rev. 19:7**; **John 14:3**; **1 Cor. 15:50**.

Spiritual harlotry is the condition in which the espoused of the Lord becomes affiliated with and joined to the world. Thus the Church of Rome became affiliated with or united to the civil government of Rome; and when the Roman Empire went to pieces, the Papal Church entered into covenant relationship with various divisions of the civil government; and some of these paramours she still has, while others have left her. France is gone, Portugal also, and Italy. Spain is moody; Austro-Hungary is her chief reliance at the present time. She is well treated in America, but not joined to the American Government. She is well entertained and given every liberty in Germany and by many in Great Britain, but these countries are not her paramours.

"LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTERS"

The Greek Church is joined to the Russian Government; the Church of England to the British Government. The Lutheran Church is married to several European governments. Others of our Protestant Churches, having no opportunity for affiliation with earthly governments, have become united to worldly systems, worldly organizations of their own, in which, as a rule, Wealth, Mammon, sits at the head of the table. "Like mother, like daughters" is an old saying. Instead of charging this whole matter upon others, let us each recognize and take to heart our own share, for which we are responsible.

As the doctrinal errors which caused our divisions

gradually developed during a long period of darkness, so our development along the lines of spiritual harlotry were gradual. It is not for us to quarrel with the facts, which are undeniable, but to sincerely repent of the wrong condition and renounce it. Coming back to the *one faith,* we should come back also to the *one Lord.* So doing He will graciously receive us and thenceforth His name alone will be quite sufficient. We shall no longer need to style ourselves Roman Christians, English Christians, Lutheran Christians, Calvinistic Christians--but all such names will be abhorred as reminders of the unfaithfulness which we now deplore. As the name Christian was sufficient for the early Church it is sufficient today for all heartily glad to abandon errors of the past and to come together as the *one* "Church of the Living God."

As for the *one baptism,* let us concede what the Scriptures claim and declare, namely, that the water immersion is merely a symbol or picture of the burial of the *individual's will* and interests in death--like unto and in fellowship with our Lord's self-renouncement, even unto death. Thus all of the consecrated, of whatever denomination, can be recognized as members of the *one true Church* if they are dead with Christ to the world, its hopes and aims--buried with Him by baptism into His death, which death to the flesh (accepted by the Father) constitutes us members of the one Body of Christ, the true Church. If thus baptized into His death, we shall share also in His resurrection.--**Rom. 6:4,5**.

THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS

Is it asked, Where has the true Church been during all the eighteen centuries since the Apostles died? We answer that the Scriptures picture her as going into the wilderness condition, out of public view, for twelve hundred and sixty years of this time. As pride, pomp, arrogance and error came into prominence, meekness, gentleness, love, simplicity, gradually retired. Through the long period of the Dark Ages no history of the *true*

SM124

Church was written, just as no such history or record of her can be written today.--**Rev. 12:6,14**.

Since none of the various denominations is the true Church, therefore the history of none of these gives her history. As her members are Scripturally declared to contain not many wise, not many learned, therefore scattered amongst all the various creeds and churches, and some outside of them all, the espoused, chaste "virgin" of the Lord is not a prominent feature in church affairs and is wholly unknown to the world. Indeed, these, while in the world, are not of it and usually are disesteemed. As the Master said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own."--**John 15:18,19**.

If, then, the spirit-begotten ones, constituting the Lord's betrothed virgin Church, are few, and if that few be scattered amongst the four hundred millions nominally styled Christendom, it follows that they are greatly in the minority and could have comparatively little influence today even if they were ever so determined and energetic. The masses and classes rule. Wealth, learning, earthly interests and earthly power are better pleased with present conditions than with those which God's Word promises will be established when Messiah shall take to Himself His great power and begin His Reign.

Babylon, as the Scriptures declare, is great, influential, powerful--mother and daughters. She will never consent to a recognition of the saintly few in her midst, whom she considers foolish in claiming to be "the Elect" and true Church. To apply the Apostle's words, She esteems the saintly class "fools all the day long," "the filth and off-scouring" of the earth. To her they are the impracticables. To her they are insurrectionists always crying out for the simplicities of the Gospel, the rights and liberties of the individual in person and conscience, for holiness unto the Lord, not merely in name, but in deed and in truth. For this true Church class, so small

SM125

a minority in Babylon, to wait for the conversion of the worldly masses of the various systems to see "eye to eye" with them in this matter and to reform all these

various systems would be to confess folly and to be led of unreason.

"COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE"

In such a matter we need the wisdom which comes from above and the faith and courage to follow it. The Lord's prayer must be our guide respecting His will concerning us--us who have by faith and consecration and begetting of the Holy Spirit been adopted into the One True Church *"whose names are written in Heaven."* He prayed for us and not for the nominal mass, who are really parts of the world and thoroughly deceiving themselves in supposing that they have either part or lot or inheritance with the Church. Thank God that we now see that this does not mean that all except the saintly will be eternally tormented, but merely that none except the saintly, "copies of God's dear Son," can be members of the glorious "little flock," which God predestined to gather from every nation, people, kindred and tongue.

Of this faithful Church the Lord declares, "My sheep know My Voice and they follow Me." We hear His Voice assuring us that it is His will that we who belong to His chaste, espoused virgin class should all be *one*--should no longer be separated into sects and parties by creedal fences. The Lord declares that He gave Babylon time for repentance and she repented not. He declares that His sentence against the Babylonian system has already gone forth--that, from the Divine standpoint, already "Babylon is fallen! is fallen!" from Divine favor. What would be the wish of our Beloved, to whom we are betrothed? What is His message to us? It is written, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues"--her troubles--**Rev. 18:4**; **John 10:27**.

SM126

Since the nominal systems are not in that consecrated condition of heart, hungering and thirsting for the Truth and for righteousness, and dead to self-will, therefore it is hopeless to think of their surrender of their interests, theories, etc. The very most they could think of doing would be to *federate*--to agree not to war with each

other. Far better would it be to have some theological battles and air their inconsistencies before the wiser public of today. But whatever Babylon may do, mother and daughters, the course of the saintly few, the real Church, which is shortly to come from the "wilderness" leaning upon the arm of her Beloved Bridegroom, is clearly set forth. The saintly should *unite in heart* on the principles and doctrines of God's Word, and should stand free in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free from all human bondage and sectarianism.

Why should the Lord permit the formation of these great wards and divisions in Mystic Babylon? He has permitted only such things as He is able to make work out blessings for His Very Elect, His "little flock," who soon shall be joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. Babylon's strong sectarian walls, styled "orthodoxy," and the great brazen gates of worldliness will afford the saintly few the very test they need to demonstrate themselves "overcomers"--"more than conquerors"; for such overcomers only will constitute the members of the Bride class. All the promises are made to the "overcomers," and there must needs be permitted subtle evils for their testing, that those approved of God may be manifested.

UNION OF THE ONE TRUE CHURCH

In a word, our Lord's prayer will be realized by the "overcomers." They will be *one* with Himself and with the Father; there will be "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God, the Father." But as for the nominal systems their future will be destruction as systems, though many of God's dear people in them, failing to overcome, will be "saved so as by fire" in a great Time of Trouble

with which this Age will terminate and the New Age will be ushered in.--**1 Cor. 3:15**; **Eph. 4:4-6**.

You have my plea, Christian brethren, for the fulfilment of the Master's prayer in the *union of "the Church which is the Body of Christ,"* "the Church of the First-borns whose names are written in heaven." This union will not necessitate any reorganization as a new sect or new Church. It is the true Church, the only one which

God has ever recognized. Babylon, without it, would not be in any sense of the word recognized of God; and as soon as the "overcomers" shall have escaped from Babylon, Babylon will come in remembrance before God that He may give to her the cup of the wine of His wrath, and suddenly, in one hour, her fall will occur. (**Rev. 16:19,18,10**.) To the true Church the Lord all along intimated that their oneness is as members of Christ, and not in earthly organizations. We do not read, Gather together unto Calvin, Luther, Wesley, Paul, Apollos or Peter, but, "Gather together My saints unto Me, saith *the Lord*, those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I come to make up My jewels."--**Mal. 3:17**.

When all of the sanctified shall have been delivered, the clock of the Universe will strike the hour which closes the present Dispensation and opens the New; and "the salt of the earth" having been removed from Babylon, corruption will swiftly ensue. Flee out of Babylon! Deliver every man his soul! Let us use the light of "Present Truth" to the extent that each enjoys it. It will guide us in respect to all the affairs of life--into closer fellowship with God and the Savior and the brethren; and into separateness of mind and heart and service from Babylon. Let Babylon proceed with the good works in which she takes pride. The work of the saints, the Lord declares, is to "build one another up in the most holy faith," that eventually it may be said, "The marriage of the Lamb has come; for His Wife hath made herself ready."

SM128

HUMANITY DELUDED BY DEMON DOCTRINES

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ...should shine unto them."--**2 Cor. 4:4.**

During the Dark Ages doctrines of demons were foisted upon the Church by Satan's hosts of fallen angels. Millions were driven into the Church, but driven away from God and from the Bible. The theory was that all not members of the Church would surely go to eternal torture, but that by joining the Church they would have a chance of Heaven, even though the path led through Purgatory. Under these unscriptural teachings, Christianity has enrolled its hundreds of millions, very few of whom know anything about the real Christianity of the Bible--true discipleship of Jesus Christ.

We see them in Europe today--of all creeds--doing their best to destroy each other--to send each other to Purgatory or to eternal torture. About five per cent are estimated to be Mohammedans, Jews and infidels, and the remaining ninety-five per cent Christians. What a farce! What a hypocritical deception! The fact is that probably less than one per cent of all those millions would make any claim to be followers of Christ or of seeking to cultivate His Spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. The great majority manifest the reverse spirit of anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife--works of the flesh and of the Devil.--**Col. 3:8**; **Gal. 5:19-23**; **1 John 3:8**.

How few anywhere profess to be disciples or followers of Jesus and His teachings! Christian standards have been so lowered that today a Christian is not one who has surrendered his whole being to God and His service, and who has devoted himself to following the

SM129

Master's example, but merely one who refrains from profanity

and such gross sins as murder and immorality.
This change has come about as a revulsion against the thought that everybody except a mere handful of saints is enroute to eternal torture. Kind-hearted people could not think of their friends and relatives as suffering thus. They had the thought of eternal torture firmly fixed and let it remain, but moved down low the standard of worthiness for everlasting life.

DEMONOLOGY AND THE FIRST LIE

Lucifer, the cherub, through ambition became Satan, God's opponent. He deceived our first parents into sin by his great falsehood, "Ye shall not surely die." (**Gen. 3:4**.) Since then he has supported that lie personally and through his demon hosts of fallen angels. These are not far off stoking fires in Hell and Purgatory, but right with humanity, perpetuating the original lie and convincing the world that Satan told the truth when he said, "Ye shall not surely die"; and that God lied when He said, "Thou shalt surely die." The doctrines of demons have so far succeeded that now practically everybody believes that lie, and the claim is made that the dead are more alive after death than before.

On this original foundation-falsehood Satan has built up various theories, all of which tend to delude humanity and to drive them away from God and from the promises of the Bible. He tells them that the dead are alive somewhere, and that at death the good and the bad immediately enter their rewards and punishments without resurrection. The errors are so skillfully framed as to teach that Heaven can be entered only through a number of passage-ways; such as baptism in infancy, confirmation, holy water, holy candles and holy burial, prayers, Eucharist and masses. Satan enlists on his side all who are interested in these various Heavenward helps. These have been reverenced; money has been paid to them freely;

they have made the success already suggested, and claim four hundred million Christians. But how few of these really know the true God or really love Him!

"GATHER MY SAINTS TO ME"

In the Bible, however, God sets forth the True Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven. Jesus is the Head over these; and they all are brethren, and not divided into clergy and laity. They are called saints. (**Psalm 50:5**.) God could indeed use force in gathering His Elect Church, but He will not do so. He will now gather merely those who have the hearing ear and the responsive heart. Of these He says, "They shall be Mine in that Day when I make up My jewels."

Then a New Epoch will open; and under the Headship of Jesus these jewels will constitute the Messianic Kingdom. Then the blessing of the world will begin. The first step in that blessing will be the binding of Satan, that he may deceive the people no more. Next will come the sweeping away of the ignorance and superstition which have been his web for entangling humanity. Thus all the blinded eyes will be opened, and all the deaf ears unstopped--all will see; all will hear; all will know of the Love of God, which passes all human understanding. (**Isa. 35:5**; **Rom. 8:38,39**.) Then the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the earth; and as a result every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God.--**Isa. 11:9**; **Hab. 2:14**; **Phil. 2:10,11**.

The outcome will be that all wilful sinners will be destroyed in the Second Death, while all others will be ushered into the perfection of life in a world-wide Eden. Then there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying; for all the former things shall have passed away. "And He that sat upon the Throne said, Behold, I make all things new."--**Rev. 21:4,5**.

Is it not strange that we ever believed the monstrous falsehoods taught us by these doctrines of demons--that the dead are more alive than ever; that nearly all of them

are suffering untellable tortures, while the remaining small remnant look over the battlements of Heaven and rejoice in the misery of the unfortunates? Assuredly no human brain ever concocted such a Satanic theory! We challenge the ability of any man to sit down and deliberately concoct anything worse than what has been described

to us as the Plan of the great Heavenly Creator, the Father of mercies, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift, and whose very name is Love. We have never found man or woman so fiendish as our God has been described to us.

Herein we see the Satanic cunning of our great Adversary: By establishing great religious institutions he has satisfied a certain mental craving, bound to assert itself in humanity. Yet by these false doctrines which blaspheme the Divine character and the Bible by misrepresenting them, he has driven far away from God nearly all, even of those who have professed church membership --"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him."--**Titus 1:16**.

Some may be disposed to say Satan would never teach about eternal torment; for it would be contrary to his interests and would keep people away from him. We reply that after eighteen centuries this theory is proven to be wrong, and Satan is proven to have been wise in his method. Mankind do not wish to serve Satan and sin. Naturally they would be, as the Apostle declares, feeling after God and desirous of finding Him; for every man has inherently some degree of reverence for a supreme Creator. Let me illustrate how Satan's lie operates:

A Christian lady who has become a Bible student, and who now dearly loves God and the Bible, told me her experience thus: "I was a Presbyterian, trusted that I was one of the Elect, and felt serene, but not without sympathy for the non-elect, who were to be tortured eternally. Then came the thought, Are you sure that you are one of the Elect? In distress I went to my pastor. In

substance he said, 'You are all right; you are one of the Elect. Do not bother your head about such questions.'

"But still I was troubled. Finally I feared that I would land in an insane asylum; for I could not lift my thoughts from my danger of eternal torture. To escape insanity I plunged into society, gave and attended social functions, and made my life one busy whirl, in which I had no time to think of God or Satan or the Bible. Oh, how changed everything is now, Pastor Russell! My heart always yearned for God, and now I know Him. I read His Book, and see its great Divine Plan of the

Ages, showing a gracious blessing for the Elect on the Heavenly plane and a grand Restitution for the non-elect to perfection on the earthly plane. I ever thank God for the 'Studies in the Scriptures.'"

Have we not driven away from God and from the Bible some of the very best minds of the world, plunging them into business, pleasure, society, novel-reading, theater-going or intoxication--anything to stop themselves from thinking about the terrible possibilities of the future related to them by you and me who have been deluded by these doctrines of devils.

"SPEAKING LIES IN HYPOCRISY"

St. Paul describes Satan's work concisely in the statement which forms our text. If the true light of God shines into any heart, it begins a transformation work at once; hence Satan's anxiety to keep people from thinking of God as a reasonable and adorable Creator and from studying His gracious plan for human redemption. We see how the eyes of all have been much holden--the world seeing nothing at all, and Christians seeing little enough of the goodness of God. Thus St. Paul prayed for Christians that the eyes of their understanding opening, they might be able to comprehend the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths, and to know the Love of God, which passes human understanding.--**Eph. 1:18**; **3:19**.

This Love of God was completely obscured by the

dense darkness of the medieval period, when the doctrines of demons got full hold upon the minds of the people, because the Bible was reprobated and out of use for twelve hundred years, while the people were misguided into thinking that so-called Apostolic bishops had the same authority as the original Twelve Apostles whom Jesus ordained. The creeds made by these bishops took the place of the Word of God until the beginning of the Sixteenth Century; and since then, it has been a battle for the Bible to get into the hands of the people and for the latter to realize their privilege of Bible study. Protestant bishops, in front of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, set the example of burning the New Testament, because

those who would study it would thereby be ignoring these false apostles, who styled themselves Apostolic Bishops, and of whom Jesus said, "They are not Apostles, but liars."--**Rev. 2:2**.

Finally the people, feeling after the True God and His true Message, and wondering why the bishops kept it from them, made such a stir about the matter that both Protestant and Catholic bishops gave them the Bible in English, but with dire threats that if in reading they got anything different from the creeds that the bishops had made, they would roast to all eternity. Ever since, the Bible has been obliged to fight for every inch of ground it has gained--fighting against bishops and clergy who, if they could not keep it from the people, did their best to make it support the doctrines of demons--the clergy themselves being deceived also, and verily thinking that they were doing God service.

DIFFERENCE IN THE PAST FIFTY YEARS

During the past fifty years general education has come. Satan realized that he must adopt a new course. As St. Paul foretold, he affected to be an angel of light, a leader into new light. (**2 Cor. 11:13-15**.) He got hold of the colleges and seminaries, and now sees to it that practically everybody of college education has his religious

faith entirely destroyed, so far as a Divine Revelation is concerned. Surely not five out of every hundred ministers and others graduated make any pretense of believing in the inspiration of the Bible, when they are speaking privately and confidentially! They are too intelligent to believe in eternal torture, and experience a revulsion of feeling against the Bible, which they mistakenly believe teaches these Satanic delusions.

As a result, we have thousands of ministers drawing salaries totalling millions of dollars annually, who outwardly pose as God's servants, ministers of His religion revealed in the Bible, but who in reality are hypocrites. Privately they will confess that they do not believe that man was created in God's image and fell from it. Neither do they believe that Jesus redeemed man from the fall;

for they say, There was no fall. Neither do they believe in a coming Time of Restitution, which the Bible declares is the great hope for the world. (**Acts 3:19,23**.) They are hypocrites pure and simple. As the Apostle Paul declares, they "speak lies in hypocrisy, having their consciences seared with a hot iron."--**1 Tim. 4:1,2**; **Isa. 56:11**.

There are exceptions to this general rule. They are found amongst the less educated ministers, whom their educated brethren style "mossbacks." There are others whose consciences are not entirely seared, and who are in great distress, wishing to be honest, but fearing the cost. They say little about the future, occasionally work in a little Truth, and are generally very unhappy. I have hope for many of these yet, that they will get right with God and take their stand for truth and righteousness, casting all their cares and fears upon the Lord--fears respecting their living and provision for their families, respecting their good names, which will be cast out as evil, as mine has been, if they will firmly stand. The time of decision is here. Whoever is not for God and for the Truth is against the same.

SM135

The great leaders of Ecclesiasticism seem to have no conscience. If approached by their confiding flocks, they dodge the questions with deceptive phrases, fearing not God, neither regarding man, but merely looking for gain, each from his own quarter--his denomination.

It is the duty of all who see the Truth clearly to act positively. (**2 Cor. 6:17,18**.) Whoever lends financial aid or moral support to the great systems which are opposing the true teachings of God's Word, and assisting in the perpetuation of Satan's lie, is a partaker of the evil deeds and will share in the woes soon to come.

BLASPHEMY THE GREATEST CRIME

Recently a young business man told me of his experience. He inquired of his pastor, "Is there a Hell of eternal torture for all except the saintly?" The cheerful answer was, "Yes, certainly." The young man had been reading and thinking, and told the pastor his conclusions.

As he left the study, the pastor put his hand on the young man's shoulder, saying, "George, I do not believe in eternal torture, either. But, you know, we must preach it; otherwise, what would become of the world? They would go from bad to worse."

What does that young man think of his pastor now? --a liar, a hypocrite, a blasphemer of God--all to hold his place in the religious firmament--justifying himself by saying, "Let us do evil that good may come; let us blaspheme God's name, that we may lead the people, and drive them away from God and the Bible!" We know of no worse crime that humanity could commit than that of blaspheming God's holy name. In the Jewish Law this sin was placed ahead of all sins relating to fellowmen. That minister is merely a sample of about nine-tenths of the entire clergy, so far as we are able to know from their creed professions and their private denials of these. St. Paul's words surely appeal to every true Christian when he declares that the Love of God and of Christ --not fear--constrains us.

SM136

THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

"Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek."--**Heb. 6:20**.

Melchizedek was the name of a remarkable person who lived in the days of Abraham, and of whom little is recorded in the Old Testament except that he was a king and a priest at the same time--a "priest upon his throne" --"King of Salem," which signifies king of peace, prince of the Most High God. He is brought to our attention in connection with Abraham's battling with the kings of the North, who had taken captive Lot and his family and his household stuff, at the time of the sack of Sodom. As Abraham returned from the battle he called upon this king-priest and presented to him a tithe of the spoil taken and received his blessing, partaking also in conjunction the symbolical bread and wine. It remained, however, for the Lord in His own due time, nearly two thousand years afterward, to explain to us by inspiration through the Apostle Paul the real significance of this event--that Melchizedek in this procedure typified the glorified Christ.--**Gen. 14:18-20**.

The Aaronic priesthood, instituted by Moses, of which the head was Aaron, having continued for more than sixteen centuries, was so well established at the time of the Apostle's writing that the Jews considered it the only priesthood. Hence, when Christ was preached to them as the real Priest of God, who alone had power to forgive sins through the merit of His own Sacrifice, the objection was raised that Jesus did not even belong to the priestly tribe, and hence that no power to offer sacrifice to God or to make atonement for sin or to forgive sin could reside in Him. Before the logical reasoners of the Jewish people

SM137

could rightly appreciate the work of Christ on behalf of their nation and all the families of the earth, it was necessary that the Lord through the Apostle should point out to them that in the Divine Plan a still higher order of

priesthood than the Aaronic was recognized; that, as our text declares, Jesus from the time of His resurrection and ascension to God has been the Chief Priest or High Priest of a new Order of Priesthood--styled by the Apostle Peter the Royal Priesthood.--**1 Pet. 2:9**.

"AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK"

Every heathen religion has its priests; and so also amongst Christians, each denomination has its own priest. So strictly are the lines drawn that no Protestant would be allowed to preach from a Roman Catholic pulpit; and if by any inadvertence one did occupy it, a purification and reconsecration of the pulpit would be deemed necessary before it would again be used by a Catholic priest. The same rule holds with the Episcopal church--a pulpit would be considered desecrated if occupied by a Protestant member of any other denomination, and a similar purification and reconsecration would be demanded by Episcopal law and usage. But God and the Scriptures recognize none of these priesthoods--neither the heathen nor the Christian; they are of men and by men. The Divine arrangement takes cognizance only of the Aaronic and the Melchizedek priesthood. Whatsoever is more than these or outside of these is more than God has predestinated, and outside the Divine ordination, and consequently improper, misleading, dangerous.

Following the Apostle's discourse, we hope to make clear to you that the Melchizedek Order of Priesthood, of which the Apostle declares that Jesus is the High Priest, has for its underpriesthood the true saints of God from Pentecost to the present time, of various nations, peoples, kindred and tongues, but in all a "little flock." We hope to show that although this priesthood may include

preachers and public servants of God, it includes also the very humblest of the Lord's followers, who have His Spirit and are now laying down their consecrated lives in His service.

Going back we hearken to the Apostle's statement to the Jews in which he admits that Christ was not of the tribe of Levi, but of the tribe of Judah, and could not have

been an earthly priest under the Divine arrangement; for the earthly priesthood was confined to Aaron and his sons. But, says the Apostle, the priesthood of Jesus is not an earthly one, but a Heavenly one. It is the risen, glorified Christ who is the High Priest of this higher order than Aaron's--this Order of Melchizedek.

PURPOSE OF A NEW PRIESTHOOD

The Apostle points out that the priesthood of Aaron repeated the typical sacrifices year by year, but that this evidently could not be all that God designed; for these repeated sacrifices did not abolish original sin, but merely covered or condoned it for the year for which they were offered, and the purpose of God as everywhere set forth was evidently larger and broader than this, eventually a complete cancellation of sin. Hence the Aaronic priesthood could not have been the end of the Divine purpose. The Apostle proceeds to point out that God had already decreed a new priesthood to be established in His own due time, and that this Divine purpose was plainly stated through the Prophet David, who, as the Lord's mouthpiece, declares, "Jehovah hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." This is a part of the Messianic Psalm which opens with the statement, "Jehovah said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. Jehovah shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion; rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power."--**Psa. 110:1-3**.

SM139

The Apostle's logic is conclusive with all whose eyes of understanding are opened. The priesthood of Aaron, which had lasted for over sixteen centuries, was some day to terminate, and a new priesthood after the Order of Melchizedek was to be introduced, and the Chief of this order was to be Messiah Himself. The Apostle shows therefore that the Divine purpose was that "better sacrifices" for sin should be offered, and that this meant the passing at the proper time of the typical Aaronic priesthood. He proceeds to argue that the Lord Jesus, having

come as the High Priest of this new Order, has already offered Himself a sacrifice to God well pleasing, and that on the strength of this sacrifice all who believe on Him, all who accept Him, all who seek to flee away from their sins and to return to harmony with God, are privileged so to do. And not only so, but an invitation is given to the repentant believers whose sins are covered that they may become members of this antitypical priesthood--members of the Body of Christ, the antitypical Melchizedek. --**Heb. 10:19-25**.

Along this line the Apostle admonishes the consecrated Gospel Church, saying, "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the Heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our Order, Christ Jesus." (**Heb. 3:1**.) And in harmony with this the Apostle Peter, so far from claiming himself a pope, and so far from acknowledging any special clergy class in the Church, assures us that the entire Body of Christ, the entire company of consecrated believers, is a "Royal Priesthood." And be it noted that this royal feature differentiates the Melchizedek Priesthood from the Aaronic. Aaron and his sons had nothing whatever to do with the royalty of the typical Kingdom.--**1 Pet. 2:9**.

"A PRIEST UPON HIS THRONE"

In the case of Melchizedek as a type nothing is shown respecting sacrifice. He was not a sacrificing priest, but a blessing priest, empowered by his kingly office to give

his priestly blessing. So Christ, as the High Priest of the Melchizedek Order, does no sacrificing, but is merely a blessing Priest. True, He sacrificed in the days of His flesh; as the Apostle declares. "He offered up Himself." It is true also that the followers of the Lord sacrifice themselves, as the Apostle suggests: "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God [in the forgiveness of your sins through faith in Christ] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." (**Rom. 12:1**.) But this sacrificing of Jesus and His followers is not a part of the Melchizedek type. As the Apostle points out of our Lord Jesus Christ,

"though He were a son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. And being made perfect [in the resurrection as a New Creature] He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God, a High Priest after the Order of Melchizedek." --**Heb. 5:7-10**.

Similarly the Church, who will be the Royal Underpriesthood, are called upon now to prove their loyalty, their sincerity, by the things which they will suffer for righteousness' sake and in obedience to God in the present time when sin prevails. Not until these shall have proven their worthiness will they be glorified by the First Resurrection to become the Royal Priests, in association with the High Priest of the Melchizedek Order, to bless all the families of the earth during the Millennial Age. It is in accord with this that the Scriptures declare that this Melchizedek Order of priests shall be "kings and priests unto God, and reign on the earth."--**Rev. 5:10**.

The Apostle proceeds to show that both the Aaronic Priesthood and the Melchizedek Priesthood are of Divine appointment. He points out that Aaron was called of God to be the head of the Aaronic Priesthood, and likewise Christ was also called of the Father to become the High Priest of the Melchizedek Order. "No man taketh this honor to himself but he that is called of God, even as

was Aaron." So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest; but His High Priesthood came from God, who said unto Him, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten [born] Thee;" and again, "Thou art a Priest forever, after the Order of Melchizedek." As the Head of this Melchizedek Order came through Divine invitation, so all the members of the Royal Priesthood must be called of God. Hence the Apostle sought to find and to influence, not the whole world of mankind, but "as many as the Lord your God shall call" to this Melchizedek Priesthood.--**Acts 2:39**.

THE TYPICAL MELCHIZEDEK

Lest his Jewish readers should think that the atonement of Aaron was more pronounced and therefore more

authoritative than that of the Lord Jesus, the Apostle points out that the contrary of this is true--that Aaron was appointed without Divine oath, but that in the appointment of Jesus as the antitype of Melchizedek and the High Priest of this Melchizedek Order, God had pronounced Himself more emphatically than in respect to the Aaronic Priesthood by giving His oath, "I have sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the Order of Melchizedek." Here, then, the Apostle notes five significant items: (1) That God indicated a change of priesthood from Aaron to Melchizedek. (2) The latter was to be a greater and more important priesthood, as implied by the Divine oath. (3) It would come after and supersede the Aaronic priesthood, inasmuch as the prophecy respecting it came after the Aaronic priesthood had been long established. (4) It would be a perpetual priesthood, which should not be transferred to another. (5) It would be a higher priesthood, in that it would combine the priestly function of forgiveness of sin and instruction of the people with the kingly function of dominion and power.

Having established his argument that there must be a Melchizedek Order of priests, and that it must be higher

than that of Aaron because of God's oath and because it would be the successor which would endure, the Apostle proceeds to point out that much of this was typified by the man Melchizedek, who was but a type of The Christ of glory--Jesus the Head, and the Church His Body. The Apostle says, "Now consider how great this man was unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils." (**Heb. 7:4**.) The signification of this the Apostle amplified, showing that the Levites at that time were unborn, in the loins of Abraham; and that therefore Aaron and his sons, the Aaronic priesthood, acknowledged this higher priesthood of Melchizedek and gave tithes. The argument is a masterly one, and shows that as even in the type Melchizedek was higher than Aaron, much more would the antitypical Melchizedek be higher, more glorious, more powerful, more able to bless and to forgive sins. He proceeds to show that in other respects Melchizedek typified Christ. Would the Jews claim that under the Law every priest of the

Aaronic order was obliged to show that he had a right to serve because of his genealogy, that his parentage must have been in the priestly family, and would they inquire then how could Jesus be a priest since He had no relationship with Aaron and had no parentage in that family?

The Apostle's answer to such a query is that Melchizedek was without father or mother in the priesthood, nor could it be shown when his priesthood began or that it ever ended. This, the plain import of the Apostle's language, is somewhat veiled in the statement that Melchizedek was without beginning of days or end of years and without father or mother or children (in the priesthood). Thus the Apostle argues that God made Melchizedek a most graphic picture of Christ, whose authority as priest was not derived from either father or mother, and whose priestly office did not descend to successors, whose term of office is not limited by years, but is everlasting.

Thus he reasons that Christ's priesthood after the

Order of Melchizedek, a priest upon His Throne, is an unchangeable one--one that will be maintained in perpetuity, until it shall have served its full purpose.

THE AARONIC PRIESTHOOD TYPICAL

We have seen that our Lord was made a High Priest after the Melchizedek Order in His resurrection from the dead, a Spirit Being, far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. We have seen that the elect Church, the Royal Priesthood, are to enter upon their priestly office after sharing with Christ in His resurrection (**Phil. 3:10**), and be made "partakers of the Divine nature," glory, honor, immortality. (**2 Pet. 1:4**.) Thus we see that the Melchizedek Priesthood is merely prepared during this Gospel Age and is to do its work subsequently--during the Millennial Age. Then, as a Priest upon His Throne, our Lord shall be King of kings and Lord of lords to rule, to subdue, to put down all sin and insubordination, and as Priest to lift up and bless the whole world and heal it of its sicknesses, mental, moral and physical. Furthermore, we call to memory our Lord's promise that His faithful will sit with Him in His

Throne--share His Kingdom honors and glorious work of uplifting humanity.--**Rev. 3:21**.

This beautiful picture of the Melchizedek Priesthood therefore grandly confirms the whole teaching of the Bible, to the effect that God is now gathering out of the world a Little Flock, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, which, in association with the Lord, shall bring to pass "Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began." The world, the groaning creation, must needs wait in the Divine Plan for the "manifestation of the sons of God" in their Kingdom power and glory, the Royal Priesthood.--**Rom. 8:22,19**; **Rev. 21:1-5**.

What, then, shall we say of the priesthood of Aaron? Was it without typical signification? By no means. While it did not typify the glory of the Kingdom, it did in type

set forth most distinctly the sufferings of this present time, necessary to precede the glory that shall follow--"For if we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." Christ must needs suffer and enter into His glory as the Melchizedek Priest; and His faithful followers must walk in His steps and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, "Laying down their lives for the brethren."--**2 Tim. 2:12**; **Luke 24:46**; **Col. 1:24**; **1 John 3:16**.

These "better sacrifices" of Christ and the Church the Apostle contrasts with the sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood, so that we are on safe ground when we assure ourselves that the typical Atonement Day of Israel and its typical sin-offering represent the Sacrifice of Christ followed by the sacrifice of the Church, accepted as members of His Body. We have already seen on a previous occasion that the minutest details of the Atonement Day sacrifices, in Leviticus 16, found fulfilment in the experience of Christ and His faithful during this Gospel Age. The Aaronic High Priest having sacrificed, representing the death of himself and his associates, and having represented his change to a new nature by passing beyond the veil into the Most Holy, came out again and blessed all the people--representing the blessings that are to come to mankind through the new Priest after the Order of Melchizedek--as soon as the sacrificing shall all be finished

and accepted.

THE GLORIOUS MORNING

As the eye of faith looks back over the centuries of this Gospel Age and perceives the Sacrifice made by our great High Priest and His entrance into glory, and as we perceive further the little thread of faithful, consecrated followers of the Lamb all the way through the centuries, and as we note in our day multiplying evidences that this Little Flock of called, chosen, faithful ones will soon have finished their sacrificing, and as we realize that soon they will experience their change from

SM145

sacrificing priests, antitypical of the Aaronic, and "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," be changed to priests of the Melchizedek Order, our hearts are glad for two reasons: (1) We trust that some of us will thus shortly hear the Master's welcome voice saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of thy Lord," sit down with Me in My Throne--to bless all the families of the earth; (2) We realize that the glorification of the Church marks the time for the beginning of Divine blessing to return to Natural Israel, from whom in turn it shall flow to all the families of the earth.

Who that loves God and his fellowmen would not rejoice on learning of this gracious arrangement of the Divine Plan? Who that loves righteousness and hates iniquity would not be glad to welcome the New Dispensation, when Satan shall be bound and all the various deceptions by which he has enthralled the world shall be dissolved? Who would not be glad to know that the time is near at hand when the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth so completely that none shall need say to his neighbor, Know thou the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least to the greatest? (**Jer. 31:34**.) Who would not be rejoiced that soon the confused Babel of various changing creeds will be silenced; and that, as the Prophet has declared, the Lord shall turn unto the people (the masses) a pure Message, and they shall all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent? (**Zeph. 3:9**.) Ah, truly! As the Lord's

people now love to sing, "O happy day, that fixed my choice on Thee, my Savior, and my God," so the poor world will soon have the opportunity of singing much after the same strain when the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears unstopped and all shall be brought to an appreciation of the Lord and of His merciful Plan.

Why not now? does some one ask. Because as the Lord declares, "As the heavens are higher than the earth so are My ways higher than your ways, and My plans than

your plans." As we come to understand and appreciate the Divine Plan we see that it is by far better than any earthly human plan. And, thank God! it is not in the power of either the friends or the enemies of the Lord to change His purposes one iota. He declares, "The word that has gone out of My mouth shall not return unto Me void, but shall accomplish that which I please and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The Message sent during the Jewish Age was merely to take out a typical people, Israel after the flesh. The Message sent during this Gospel Age has been merely to gather the Elect, that they might participate in the sacrificing as antitypical priests like unto Aaron; and that thus they might be prepared to be, with their Lord, antitypical priests like unto Melchizedek for the work of the future, the blessing of the world. The Message of the future, as we have seen, will be "good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people"--restitution to human perfection, to all that was lost in Adam. But we remind you that while God has thus provided a great salvation and forgiveness of sins that are past for all mankind, His arrangement is for the punishment of every sin that is wilful, in proportion to its wilfulness.

We have heretofore seen that this signifies that some of the human family, having degraded themselves seriously with a measure of wilfulness, will have correspondingly the more steps to retrace in order to attain all that was lost and redeemed. It means a "just recompense of reward to every soul that doeth evil." It means an opportunity for a proportionate blessing, however, to each one who may have done the least kindness to any member of the elect Priesthood, even so much as the giving of a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple.

We remind you further that in the Divine Word there is the assurance that those who continue wilfully obdurate and rebellious will ultimately die the Second Death, from which there will be no hope of recovery.

SM147

In other words, God is providing in Christ one full redemption from the curse that came upon Adam and his posterity; and this redemption, secured by the precious blood of Christ, must be made available to every member of the race eventually--made available by each being brought to a knowledge of the Truth. Then the responsibility will rest upon himself; and his eternal destiny will be such as his course shall merit--either life eternal or death eternal. For ultimately the Lord will have a clean universe. As it is written, "Every creature which is in Heaven and on the earth and under the earth heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."--**Rev. 5:13**.

In conclusion, dear friends, let us learn to abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good, as being the very soundest policy for the life that now is and for that which is to come. And those of us who have accepted the Divine invitation for joint-heirship with the Lord as Royal Priests, let us appreciate the grand privilege which is ours; and laying aside every weight let us run with patience the race set before us. Let us be joyful partakers in the sufferings, trials and oppositions which go to make up the sacrificing of this present time; and while partaking by faith of the glory to follow let us wait in patience, hope and trust for a share in the First Resurrection, when we shall see our Redeemer's face and share His glory.--**1 John 3:1-3**.

Kings for the promised Throne,
Crowns we shall wear;
Christ reigns, but not alone--
We soon shall share.
O ye despised ones, come!
Pilgrims no more we'll roam:
Sweetly we'll rest at home;
Jesus is there.

SM148

THE WORLD'S JUDGMENT DAY

[Preached in Corinth, Greece, March 10, 1912]

"God hath appointed a Day in the which He will judge the world."--**Acts 17:31**.

True, it is not today fashionable in civilized communities to worship images; and yet in another sense it is still fashionable. To a great extent idolatry still prevails throughout the civilized world, but in a different form from that of old. No longer do we bow before wooden images, but before inward images--the images of our minds, our mental aspirations--with some, wealth and fame; with others, ease and pleasures; and with still others, the creed idols of our forefathers--miserable misrepresentations of the true God.

St. Paul on Mars Hill preached Jesus and the resurrection --Jesus as the Redeemer from the death sentence, making possible the resurrection of the dead by satisfying the demands of Divine Law against the sinner--the resurrection as the means or agency through which the blessing of the Savior's death will reach Adam and all the families of the earth. As we follow St. Paul's thought we shall surely be blessed by his view of the Gospel.

Addressing the Gentiles, the Apostle explains that for a long time God had "winked" at polytheism and image worship, "but now," he says, "God commanded all men everywhere to repent." Let us note the meaning of these words. How did God "wink" at sin and idolatry? And does He still "wink" at it? And why did He change and when did He begin to command all men to repent?

The answer is that for four thousand years idolatry prevailed and God "winked" at or took no notice of it. He did not "wink" at the idolaters dying in their ignorance, and say to the devils, "Take these poor creatures

SM149

who know no better! Roast them to all eternity!" Nothing of the kind. Our forefathers merely imagined that,

and by false reasoning convinced themselves, and twisted some texts of Scripture which they did not properly understand in support of this theory; and then they handed it down to us to our perplexity and to the testing of our faith in God.

God "winked" at idolatry and sin for four thousand years in the sense of not noticing it, making no comment on it, sending no reproofs, leaving the heathen in their ignorance. The only exception to this was God's dealings with the little nation of Israel. To the Jews He gave a Law Covenant which offered eternal life on the condition of their thorough obedience to the Divine Law, the measure of a *perfect man's ability,* which they were unable to comply with; and hence they died the same as did the heathen. All went to the Bible hell--to the tomb--to *sheol,* to *hades,* the state or condition of death --an unconscious state, a "sleep."

JESUS THE REDEEMER

God was in no haste, however. Over four thousand years elapsed before Jesus was born, and thirty years more before He began His ministry. Had it been true, as some aver, that millions for all those centuries were blindly stumbling into eternal torture for lack of a Divine revelation, we may be sure that our gracious God would not have left them without it. Who can think of a just and loving God as *winking* at the going of millions of His creatures to eternal torture? But since they merely "fell asleep" in death, He could very well "wink" at the matter in view of His future plans, as we shall see.

The fact is that no release from death could possibly be made until the Redemption-price had been provided for the original sin under which they were condemned to death. This is the Apostle's argument, viz., that *"now* God commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

SM150

The *now* implies that He did not command men previously to repent; and the reason why He did not do so is manifest; for all the repenting they could do and all the righteous living possible to them would not have saved them. They would have died anyway. Hence there

could have been no message sent to them; for if the messenger had come and had said, "Repent, and live contrary to your fallen tastes and appetites," the people might properly enough have said, "Why? For what reason should we practice self-denial, self-restraint? Would it bring us any blessing of everlasting life or harmony with God?" The truthful answer would have been, "No, because you are already under a death sentence and alienated from God as sinners."

Hence God merely overlooked or "winked" at the ignorance and superstition of the period from Adam to the death of our Redeemer. But as soon as Jesus had *died*, "the Just for the unjust," to make reconciliation for iniquity--immediately the message went forth--God offered forgiveness and reconciliation to those who would believe in Jesus and would accept the Divine terms. Such have their sins forgiven. Such may come back to fellowship with God. And, in the next Age, such may eventually attain full human perfection by restitution processes, up, up to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.--**John 3:16,17**.

GOD'S APPOINTED DAY

Let us note carefully what the Apostle says respecting God's appointed Day for the judging of the world. He says that the command to repent now goes forth to all men everywhere, "because God hath appointed a [future] Day, in which He will judge the world." The Apostle does not refer to that Day as already begun, but as merely appointed or arranged for in advance. He means that in arranging that "Jesus, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man," God was arranging that every man might have a judgment or a trial,

to determine whether or not he will be worthy of this blessing which Jesus' death provides him an opportunity to secure. The Day was future in St. Paul's time, and it is still future, because God has other work which He purposes shall be accomplished first, before the world's Day of Judgment or trial shall begin.

The world's Trial Day, or period of judgment, or testing

as to worthiness or unworthiness for everlasting life, will be one of the thousand-year Days mentioned by St. Peter, who said, "A Day with the Lord is as a thousand years." The same period is called elsewhere the "Day of Christ," the Day or period of Messiah's glorious reign. By the righteous ruling of His Kingdom, by the suppression of Satan and sin and the scattering of darkness, ignorance and superstition, by the shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in its beams, that glorious Day will bring blessing to the world in general--opportunity for each individual to come into judgment or trial, the result of which will be either the reward of life everlasting or the punishment of death everlasting--"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."--**2 Thess. 1:9**.

That great thousand-year Day is still future; and, meantime, the Apostle's words respecting mankind are still true: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together"--"waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (**Rom. 8:22,19**.) If the nineteen centuries delay in the introduction of this great Day seems long, let us not forget that it is less than half as long as the period which preceded--the period prior to the coming of Jesus and His dying, "the Just for the unjust." Nor is the entire period long from the Divine standpoint; for as the Prophet declares: "A thousand years in God's sight are but as yesterday," or even shorter, "as a watch in the night." The six great Days of a thousand years each, in which Sin and Death have reigned, are to

be followed by a great Sabbath of rest from evil--a thousand years of refreshment, reinvigoration, upbuilding, restitution.--**Acts 3:19-23**.

"THE MYSTERY OF GOD"

The purpose of the nineteen centuries between the time when Jesus died as man's Redeemer and the time when He will take His Throne as the Restorer of Adam and his race is spoken of as a Mystery, because the great work of grace herein accomplished is measurably hidden

from the world. The Jews do not understand it; they expected that Messiah's Kingdom and their own national exaltation would have come long ago. They cannot tell *now* why they have been for eighteen centuries outcast from the Divine favor. It is a mystery to them.

The Scriptures tell us who may know or understand this Mystery and when it will be finished. They say, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His Covenant." They tell us that "in the days of the voice of the Seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the Mystery of God shall be finished," which He hath kept secret from the foundation of the world. St. Paul refers to this Mystery, saying that it was "hidden from past Ages and Dispensations," and that it "is now revealed to the saints." He explains what it is, namely, that we should be fellow-heirs and of the same nature with our Redeemer.--**Eph. 3:6**.

This clearly means that the entire Church class, sometimes called "the Body of Christ, which is the Church," and sometimes styled "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife," is to be sharer with the Redeemer in the sufferings of the present life and in the glories of the future. The nearly nineteen centuries of this Age, therefore, according to the Scriptures, have been for the purpose, not of giving the world its trial for everlasting life or death, but for the trying, testing, the electing or selecting of the Church, and her perfecting with her Lord as sharers in *"His* resurrection," "the First Resurrection."

SM153

We have in the past made two serious mistakes respecting the Divine purposes. One was that we assumed without Scriptural authority that the whole world is now on trial for eternal life, failing to see that it is merely the elect Church, the consecrated class. The other mistake is that we reasoned as though the Church were part of the world and, therefore, that the trial of the Church meant the trial of the world. But hearken to the Scriptures respecting the Church: *"Ye* are not of the world, even as *I* am not of the world"; "I have chosen *you* out of the world"; and again, "Let *your* light so shine before *men* that they, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in Heaven" "in the day *of their visitation."*--**John 15:19**; **Matt. 5:16**; **1 Peter 2:12**.

TWO DIFFERENT REWARDS

We should notice also the wide difference between the reward promised the Church and that proffered the world. In both cases the reward will be everlasting life. In both cases this will mean full harmony with God, because "All the wicked will God destroy." And again we read that "Whosoever hath the Son hath life, and whosoever hath not the Son shall not see life." So, then, the attainment of everlasting life, either by the Church class or by the world, will mean coming into full harmony with the Heavenly Father and with the Lord Jesus, by the merit of Christ's sacrifice. It will mean a full turning away from sin and a full devotion to God and to righteousness.--**Psa. 145:20**; **John 3:36**; **5:12**.

The difference will be as to nature. The reward for the world will be earthly nature, human nature, with everlasting life in an earthly Paradise or Eden--worldwide. Mankind never lost a spiritual or Heavenly condition through Adam's disobedience, nor in any other manner. He never had such a condition or nature, or a right to it, that he *could* lose it. He was made *man*, "a little lower than the angels." His crown of glory and honor was an earthly crown. His dominion was over the

birds of the air, over cattle and over the fish of the sea. This which he *lost* Jesus gave the Redemption-price for at Calvary; and these things lost are the very things which Jesus and His elect Bride will *restore* to mankind during the thousand years of the Messianic Kingdom. Thus we read: "The Son of man came to seek and to save *that which was lost."*--**Gen. 1:26**; **Psa. 8:4-8**; **Luke 19:10**.

PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE

The reward of the Church, eternal life, perfection and harmony with God, will be on the spirit plane--wholly different from the human. Man in perfection will again be a little lower than the angels; but the Church, as the Body of Christ, will share with her Lord in His exaltation,

"far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named"--the Divine nature. This reward comes to the Church under a special covenant of sacrifice, which the Bible specifies.--**Eph. 1:21**; **Psa. 50:5**.

This Church class, like her Lord, must sacrifice the earthly nature, earthly interests, hopes and aims, and must be begotten of the Father to a Heavenly, spiritual nature, in order to be a sharer in the First Resurrection; and she must enter into her reward before the Messianic Kingdom can be established for the blessing of mankind in general--the saving of the race from sin and death.

Thus the Apostle wrote that the groaning creation "waits for the manifestation of the sons of God." (**Rom. 8:19**.) "Now are we the sons of God, but it doth not yet appear what we shall be [how glorious, how great], but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him." Our resurrection change will make us like the Savior; as it written, "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling," because "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of Heaven."

Come back again to St. Paul's words. He does not say that God *commanded* the Church to *sacrifice;* for if sacrifice were a *command* it would cease to be a sacrifice. Nowhere are God's people commanded to present their

bodies living sacrifices, nor to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, nor to take up the cross and follow Him. To the saintly these sacrificing features are set forth as a *privilege* --as an opportunity. If they do these things the Divine arrangement is that through the imputation of Christ's merit their sacrifice will be holy and acceptable unto God, and they will be granted a share with the Redeemer in His high exaltation--the reward of sacrifice, of self-denial, of loving, voluntary service to God, the Truth and the brethren.

"COMMANDETH ALL TO REPENT"

But to the world in general the Lord issues a command, viz., Repent; turn from your sins; come back to Me; seek My face; seek to know and do My will. The basis of this command is the Divine declaration that

God's grace has provided redemption in the blood of Jesus, a reconciliation through His blood, and that by and by the whole world will be on trial for life or death everlasting, in a great Day of trial, which God has ordained and over which Christ and the Church will supervise, as Judges.--**1 Cor. 6:2,3**.

Whoever comes to a knowledge of this great Divine arrangement through Christ has an incentive to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present time. Whoever hears and heeds this command is laying up for himself a good treasure of character and preparation for his life or death trial in the great Judgment Day of the Messianic Kingdom. Whoever ignores this knowledge and "sows to the flesh" will find himself reaping to the flesh further weakness, further degradation and severer stripes or punishments in that great thousand-year Judgment Day.

When He who is our life
Appears, to take the Throne,
We, too, shall be revealed, and shine
In glory like His own.

SM156

THE DECEPTIVE WAY

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."--**Prov. 16:25**.

Selfishness should be considered the synonym of Sin. Not that we could live under present conditions entirely forgetful of our own interests; but that these should be considered justly balanced with the interests of others, in harmony with the statement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Originally sin was inspired by Mother Eve's unlawful spirit of acquisitiveness--her desire to secure knowledge in advance of the Creator's arrangement. This spirit of acquisitiveness led her into disobedience. Father Adam's transgressions against Divine Law was prompted also by self-interest. Believing that by her disobedience his wife had fallen under the sentence of death, he selfishly planned to be disobedient also, believing that all the pleasure of his life would die with his wife. He disobeyed, in order to die with her.

The 6,000 years which have intervened between the first disobedience and the present time have stimulated and developed selfish propensities of the human mind at the expense of its more noble, more generous, more refined qualities. Driven out of the Garden of Eden, where their wants had been supplied by the fruits of the life-giving groves, our first parents found themselves in the unprepared, unsuitable, "cursed" earth, which brought forth thorns and thistles, and variously demanded their time and attention for the procurement of the necessities and comforts of life. Thus the fertile valleys and their fruitage attained a value, as compared with human time and strength, such as the fruits of Eden would not have where plenty was obtainable by merely stretching forth the hand.--**Psa. 107:10-12**.

SM157

This labor with sweat of face was a part of the curse or penalty upon the race for the disobedience, to the intent that the Divine verdict should be executed, "Dying thou shalt die," and that man should realize the difference

between his condition in favor with God and his state out of Divine favor, and might thus the more fully appreciate the undesirableness of the same. We should notice incidentally, however, that this arrangement, that man should earn his bread by the sweat of his face, was designed of the Lord to be really a blessing. Without this necessity for toil the abundance of idleness which would have prevailed would have been very disastrous indeed to the human race, which had merely tasted of sin and was separated from Divine favor. The downward course of humanity would undoubtedly have been much more rapid had idleness prevailed. This was part, we remember, of the difficulty of the Sodomites. "Fulness of bread and an abundance of idleness were in her," and this led to various forms of degradation.--**Ezek. 16:49**.

HOW SELFISHNESS HAS DEVELOPED

Labor for food and raiment having become a necessity, the hours of labor became proportionately valuable. Then came the inducement for some of the race to bring their fellows into slavery, that they might have their toil at minimum cost, thus not only securing their own leisure but laying up wealth to the extent of superior opportunity or ability. It led to bloodshed for the securing of slaves, and bloodshed again in endeavoring to rescue the enslaved. One of the earliest illustrations along this line in the Bible record is shown in connection with the capture of Lot and his family, and the Sodomites, by the army from the north, and the rescue of these by Abraham and his armed men. (**Gen. 14:12-16**.) However, the teaching of history is full of just such incidents. Indeed, it is only of very recent time that slavery has been abolished in civilized lands. Another manifestation of slavery along parallel lines was that of one nation conquering

another and putting it under tribute. Thus an entire nation was enslaved and its people made bondsmen to another, and obliged to pay a certain proportion of the fruit of their labor for nothing--simply because the neighboring nation was the stronger or the better armed.

Slavery in its old form still exists in certain parts of

the world. Elsewhere the form has been changed, though the principle of selfishness is considerably the same. In China and amongst the Malayans of India there is a servant class, really slaves to circumstances and conditions surrounding them, though not exactly the same kind of chattel slavery that fifty years ago prevailed in the United States. Wherever the Bible has gone the spirit of liberty has gone with it; for it teaches, as no other religious book in the world does, that all men stand on the same footing before their Creator--that all are sinners, that all are condemned with the same penalty, that all alike need the same salvation, and that entrance to eternal life is to all on the same basis--that class and caste make no difference whatever. Wherever the Bible has been read, this spirit of manhood has been inculcated, and the spirit of slavery correspondingly lost. However, the unbalance of the human character resulting from the fall and from the premium it put upon labor and leisure, and the consequent dwarfing of the higher qualities of the mind, because their cultivation was impossible except to those who could acquire the leisure. These conditions, continuing with us, have been ready to adapt themselves to new ones.

When it became difficult or impossible to hold fellow-creatures in slavery, financial usages were formulated and gradually organized and systematized, until today we see selfishness as rampant as ever in the world and as eager as ever to accumulate wealth, representing accumulated toil. The system under which this selfishness operates in our day has its elements of justice, its good qualities as well as its bad ones. It is the wage system.

SM159

Under this arrangement those who have the largest degree of mental power in combination with selfishness have the opportunity for becoming financial kings and princes in the world. We are now operating under the so-called law of supply and demand for brains, skill and energy; for these as never before possess large possibilities for the accumulation of wealth. That the accumulated wealth of our day is far beyond that of any other time is well known to us all. A fortune of a hundred million dollars has fallen to the lot of quite a few. A very large number have one million dollars and upward; and many thousands

possess fortunes of one hundred thousand or more. What these fortunes mean in accumulated labor it is quite difficult to estimate; but even counting labor at $2.00 per day, a man whose fortune is a million dollars has represented therein the earnings of 1500 years.

THE DAY OF PREPARATION

A factor in the great increase of wealth in our day is the great stimulation that has come to inventive genius. This is attributed to the extra speeding of the wheels of evolution, bringing us into the "brain age." We, however, following the guidance of the Bible, and looking more carefully to the facts surrounding these inventions, disagree with this thought. We find that the inventors of our day are not all brilliant, and that in comparison to the whole population they are very few, anyway. We find evidences of as great mentality in the past as in the present. Shakespeare, Newton, Socrates, Plato, St. Paul, King Solomon, King David, Job, Moses, and the builders of the Pyramid, shine out brightly on the pages of history, and find few if any equals in our day. The Bible explanation of the inventions of our epoch is that it is the "Day of His Preparation"--preparing for the Millennium. --**Nahum 2:3**.

So simple are some of the devices now common to us that we cannot avoid wondering why they were not discovered before. The only reasonable answer is the Scriptural

one, that the Lord did not until recently lift the veil and bring matters to our attention. We are not meaning to say that every inventor is inspired of the Lord; but we do mean to say that the Lord kept back the art of printing until the proper time to exert the influence which it is now having in the world--that the Lord did not favor general education until this Day of His Preparation; that He has allowed the world to take its own course in many of these matters until of late. The present running to and fro by which our race is commingled, and the interchange of ideas thus effected, and the increase of knowledge and education resulting, are all set down most distinctly in the Scriptures as marks or proofs

that we are living in the time of the ending of the Present Dispensation--that the New Dispensation is nigh, even at the door. For proof along this line note the declaration to the Prophet Daniel, "In the time of the end many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased ...The wise shall understand...and there shall be a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:1,4,10**.

KNOWLEDGE--LIBERTY--TROUBLE

With a wise object the Lord held back the light, the knowledge, the inventions of our day, knowing in advance what we are now learning from experience, that the effect of this upon our race, sold under sin, warped and twisted in favor of selfishness, would be to greatly increase the selfish propensities of the world in general. The inventions of our day, their labor-saving machinery, etc., all represents vast possibilities for the accumulation of wealth--accumulated toil. The most far-seeing of our race, the best and brightest minds, if they have thought of the advisability of throwing open to mankind in general all these advantages and blessings of our day, must have dismissed the thought; for all seem to be acting on the selfish plane--acquiring every advantage possible and using these for the accumulation of wealth.

SM161

True, the rush has come so suddenly that all mankind have been advantaged to some extent, even the day laborer. But as these advantages go into the hands of the few, and as the natural increase of population multiplies the number of laborers, it is not difficult to foresee what would be the consummation of the present system of competition along the lines of supply and demand. The supply of laborers is continually increasing, the supply of labor-saving machinery represents still further increase, while the demand for labor will be only to the extent that it will yield profit to those who have come to be the possessors of the world's wealth.

This is seen by many. The rich do not fear it; for they feel secure, and hope that if ever a distress should come they also shall feel generous. But the outlook is dreaded

by many of the thinking poor, who have little confidence in the generosity plan, and who are therefore crying out for Socialism the public ownership of the wealth-producing agencies which they hope would bring competency at once and by and by wealth to all.

We are not advocating Socialism; for we believe it to be thoroughly impractical. Our knowledge of human nature leads us to believe that those who now possess the wealth of the world hold it with such a tenacity and such selfishness that they would allow the entire social structure to go to wreck rather than release their hold upon the special privileges and opportunities which they now hold in their grasp. Although Socialists do not realize it to be so, their doctrines spell anarchy--the worst possible thing so far as human interests are concerned. We do not rest the matter with our opinions merely, but rather have formed our conclusions in accord with the Word of God, which distinctly tell us that the end of the Age is close at hand, that it will be followed by the Golden Age, the Millennial Kingdom, under the control of Christ and His glorified saints, the "little flock," from whom will proceed the blessing and uplifting

of whosoever wills of all the families of the earth.

We live in a day of rapid changes. A few more years will show the wealth of the world still more concentrated, still more powerful, and the masses of humanity still more eager for Socialism--ignorant of the fact that it will result in anarchy. We expect, in harmony with our understanding of the Scriptures, that this great crisis will be upon the world within the next eight years--a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation, no, nor ever shall be.--**Dan. 12:1**; **Matt. 24:21**.

THE WAY THAT SEEMETH RIGHT

This way of selfishness which has prevailed for six thousand years is the way which seemeth right unto a man--the usual way, the natural way, approved by the standards of the world for centuries--opposed only by the few, who are not highly esteemed amongst men--by Jesus, the Apostles, the Prophets, and those who follow

their course and teachings. We have indicated only one feature of this way which seemeth right unto a man, this selfish way; namely, the monetary. But selfishness takes hold of every affair of life. It affects the social standing and makes class distinctions along selfish lines; it affects the appetites and passions and seeks selfish gratification in every direction. Selfishness, we repeat, stands for and represents sin in its every form. Yet selfishness seemeth to a man to be right in his depraved condition; he was born with it--yea, in selfishness did his mother conceive him.--**Psa. 51:5**; **Gen. 3:20**.

This selfish way the Scriptures alone show is a wrong way, and results from the unbalance of the human mind, which originally was well balanced, the image and likeness of the Divine mind along the lines of justice and love. Only in the School of Christ is unselfishness taught; and in that School this is almost the only lesson and it is learned line upon line, precept upon precept, even in the principles of righteousness and godliness.

The great Teacher, Jesus, instructs us respecting the

Divine Law that Love is the fulfilling of the Law, that the entire Law of Love is briefly comprehended in the one word, Love--love for God supremely and love for our fellow-men as for ourselves. This Teacher gave the greatest illustrations of this lesson in His own conduct of life. In harmony with the Divine will He laid aside His glory and dignity as a spirit being and was made flesh and dwelt amongst men, being born under the Law, a Jew. Still in harmony with the Divine arrangement, when He reached manhood's estate He made a full self-sacrifice of Himself, the benefit of which was to accrue to Adam and his race. For three and a half years He was laying down His life in deeds of kindness--virtue or vitality going out of Him for the healing of the multitude --until finally He finished his course in ignominy, a Sin-offering on behalf of our race.

All the lessons that our Lord may teach, therefore, along the line of love, are well exemplified in His own course. Having bought the world with His precious Sacrifice, His life, in harmony with the Divine Plan, He is about to bless the world by opening their eyes, giving them to know the difference between right and wrong,

and by helping them out of their sin, selfishness and meanness back to the image and likeness of God as originally enjoyed. But this work according to the Divine Plan is reserved for the Millennial Age.

In the meantime the world's Redeemer labors not for the world nor even prays for the world (**John 17:9**), but in harmony with the Divine will labors and prays for His Church, a "little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, in association with Himself, the Redeemer. These are called or invited to separate themselves from the world and its spirit of sin and selfishness; and only so many as love righteousness and hate iniquity are drawn or desired in the present time. The vast majority of our race are left over for treatment during the Millennial Kingdom.

SM164

THE NARROW WAY--THE BROAD WAY

This "little flock" of believers, who turn from sin to be followers in the footsteps of their Master and Redeemer, are shown a new way--a "narrow way." This is not the way that seemeth desirable or right to the natural man, to the masses of mankind. These called ones are given a special opening of the eyes of their understanding, and the ability to discern the right way of the Lord as in contrast with the way that seemeth right to fallen man. They are informed that the way is narrow, difficult, etc., and are advised to sit down first and count the cost before undertaking to walk in it.

But those who undertake to walk in this way are assured of the Master's favor and His continued presence with them, and His aid in all of life's affairs and are guaranteed that, whatever may happen to them, all things shall work together for their good, because they love God and have been called according to His purpose. (**Rom. 8:28**.) They are assured that while in the present time their following of the Master will lead to the disapprobation of the world, the opposition of Satan, the traducing of their reputation, nevertheless it will be their privilege to be exceeding glad, very happy in the present life, because of their enjoyment of the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts, and

because of the exceeding great and precious promises of the future granted to them. These promises include the prospect of Heavenly riches, dominion, power in joint-heirship with the Redeemer Himself. Because of this close relationship these are frequently described in their future glory as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife--the marriage or union being represented as to take place at the Second Coming of Christ.

This way of the world that seemeth right to mankind in general--this way of selfishness which has become second nature to the race--our text declares leads into the ways of death. This seems astonishing! Apparently

very few realize this fact. Evidently the death here referred to is not the usual or Adamic death common to all mankind, saint and sinner, but the Second Death. Let us examine the matter in greater detail: How does selfishness lead into the ways of death? We answer that selfishness is at the foundation of nearly every crime in the calendar. Is it murder? Selfishness, acquisitiveness, is the motive. Is it robbery or fraud, lying or cheating? Selfishness has been the mainspring. Is it covetousness, fornication or adultery? Selfishness is behind it. Is it pride, self-conceit or violation of another's rights in any sense of the word? Usually it is because of selfishness in the heart. Is it dishonor of the Creator? This is generally a result of too high an appreciation of one's self--a lack of proper humility and reverence. All of these paths selfishness leads into; and they are all in the direction of the Second Death, just as the narrow way in which the faithful are called to walk leads in the opposite direction to life eternal.

We are glad to know from the Scriptures that only those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, and under its guidance brought to a clear appreciation of the Truth, are really upon trial for life or death eternal at the present time. We are glad that God has provided through Christ and the Millennial Kingdom an opportunity for all the blind eyes to be opened and all the deaf ears to be unstopped, that all may come to a thorough knowledge of God and of His righteous will, and at the same time be granted the necessary assistance to come into harmony therewith if they will. We are glad of

all these things; for evidently those who are walking in the broad road of selfishness, which leads into various paths and which ultimately would end in the Second Death, are so numerous that it would mean that the Divine Plan of Salvation would be almost a failure if there were no such provision for these in the future.

It will not be questioned by the intelligent and reflective

that if God is Love, and is the Pattern for unselfishness, as exemplified to us in the character of His Son, this is the character which He desires and approves and will bless with everlasting life. Then the majority of mankind, the great mass, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand dying under present conditions, necessarily die out of Divine favor and unfit for eternal life and the better terms on which God purposes to give it. Indeed, we see that even the most saintly have such a selfish tendency in their flesh that if they were judged of the Lord according to the strict letter of His Law they, too, would be counted unfit for eternal life. It is the fact that they are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, imputed to them because of faith and obedience to the extent of their ability, which permits these to be counted meet for the inheritance of the saints in light--reckoned as having passed from death unto life, to which they will be actually received in the First Resurrection.

UNSELFISHNESS IN HEAVEN

If we understand the teachings of the Scriptures aright, those who are in accord with selfishness are wholly unfit for the Heavenly state. Our Roman Catholic friends, admitting this, claim that practically all, even their own clerics, go to Purgatory, there to be purged of this dross of character and to be made fit for eternal life. We agree to this proposition, but deny that there is any Purgatory in existence at the present time. We hold the Scriptures to teach that Purgatory is a condition of the future--that the entire Millennial Age will be the period of Purgatory and this earth the place. Neither can we agree to the Roman Catholic view of Purgatory, that it is manned with devils and composed of torture chambers.

On the other hand we have the assurance of the Scriptures that during that time Satan will be bound, all evil influences be restrained and the whole world be blessed. Then, if they will, they will be lifted up out of their degradation, selfishness and sin back to the full perfection

SM167

lost in Father Adam; or failing to respond to those glorious opportunities and privileges, they will be esteemed unworthy of any further blessing and be utterly destroyed in the Second Death.--**Acts 3:23**; **2 Thess. 1:9**; **Rev. 20:11-15**.

SOWING AND REAPING

One of the points which we specially desire to impress on this occasion is that this way of selfishness which seemeth right unto a man, but which leads to paths of death and on which the masses of mankind are traveling very composedly, is an evil pathway--injurious in every sense of the word. Some one may say, "Ah, but if there is a Purgatory, a school of opportunity in the Millennial Age, why may we not indulge in selfishness now and get our lessons then?" We reply that all the tare seed and weed seed that we sow in our hearts and characters in the present time are doing much injury to us, not only as respects the present, but also as regards the future. He that sows selfishness reaps the same and finds his crop continually increasing, so that at the close of a busy life the majority of people find themselves very much more selfish than they were at its beginning. In other words, they were nearer to an acceptable condition with God in their infancy than on their death bed in old age.

We feel that even the consecrated of the Lord's people have not appreciated the situation aright; that while even having nominally changed from selfishness to love, while seeking to cultivate the latter more and more in thought, word and deed, they have not fully grasped the situation and are therefore making less strenuous efforts than they might make. Let all these resolve that by the grace of God they will lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and run with patience the race set before us in the Gospel--the race in the narrow way.

Not to ourselves again,
    Not to the flesh we live;
Not to the world henceforth shall we
    Our strength, our being give.

SM168

GOD'S INFINITE WISDOM AND LOVE

[Given in Shanghai, China, Jan. 7, 1912]

"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."--**Isa. 12:3**.

China's hundreds of millions of patient, incessant workers have had my sympathy from childhood. The philosophies of childhood are often as correct as those of mature years--sometimes more so. Well I remember as a child inquiring what would be the fate of the heathen, and the answer that I received--that only through faith in Jesus, the Redeemer, is there any salvation. Then I queried, What is the *penalty* of their ignorance of the Only Name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved? The answer was the usual one of all of our "Orthodox creeds": that they would spend eternity in a hell of unutterable anguish. How my heart went out sympathetically toward every missionary movement on behalf of the heathen!

Then came mature thinking and I said, Like others I am imperfect in every way; my sympathy and love, therefore, cannot be as great as that of our Creator. How is it possible that God, with all the force of the Universe at His command, could look calmly on and see the operation of His own laws carrying thousands of millions to eternal misery and yet refrain from giving those creatures the necessary information? There is something wrong with the Bible and with our creeds which we have built upon it.

I threw all away and began to reason--but, thank God! not along irreverent lines. I reasoned that He who made the Universe also made man; that whatever noble qualities I could find in humanity were the work of the Creator. I said, Man's noblest qualities are justice and love, and hence the Creator must possess these unlimitedly. I bowed in worship before God, infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power.--**Psa. 33:4-8**.

SM169

HE THAT SEEKETH FINDETH

I said, O great Almighty God, although unknown to me, I worship Thee! I adore Thee! My whole being cries out for the pleasure of more intimate acquaintance with Thee, that I might know Thy will regarding me and Thy purposes respecting humanity. I said, Assuredly, as God is all-wise, He must have an all-wise purpose, of which I need not be ashamed! So surely as He is just and loving, all of His plans and purposes must accord with His attributes; and having made man capable of appreciating these qualities, He will surely be willing to bestow the information which I desire--information as to how I can best please and serve Him and as to what His purposes are respecting mankind.

My prayers convinced me the more that there must be a Divine Revelation somewhere in the world. I thought that I had searched the Bible faithfully and proved it unreasonable and contrary to every conception I could have of a Divine Creator and His purposes; hence my eyes turned toward this Eastern land and your sacred books. I studied them for a time, only to find them far less satisfactory to my intellect than the Bible I had already cast aside.

I returned to the Bible. I asked myself, Might you not have been prejudiced when you examined it before? Although I thought not, I made a fresh investigation, because I felt there must be a Revelation from the true God somewhere, and because the Bible thus far gave the best testimony. It, indeed, told of a God of Love, as no other religious books do; yet its teachings respecting the future of the non-elect staggered me, for I was sure that they were not Godlike, but the reverse.

Disregarding the Old Testament Scriptures entirely, I began with the New. I said, Was not Jesus a most wonderful character? Is it not true that "never man spake like this Man"? Both heart and head answered, Yes!

SM170

His teachings are the noblest found on earth! His example fully comports with His teachings! I asked, Can I

rely upon the evidence? My mind replied, Yes. If just such men today told you their observations you would believe them implicitly. These men confessed that they were ignorant and unlearned men, telling of their own weaknesses in a way that impostors would not do. Their Message abounds in "good tidings of great joy for all people," and not merely for their own nationality. My heart began to take courage. I began to feel that I had found a footing for my faith and that the Bible indeed differed considerably from the various and conflicting creeds which claimed it as their support and authority.

However, I suddenly remembered that much of the New Testament is composed of passages from the Old Testament and comments thereon. Alas! I said, for I cannot accept the Old Testament Scriptures. But the more I studied the matter the more convinced I was that if Jesus and the Apostles were at all what they claimed to be, the Old Testament must be as true as the New--as St. Peter declared, "Holy men of old spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."--**2 Peter 1:21**.

THE BIBLE HELL IS THE KEY

Then I began a more critical study of the Old Testament; and to my joy, as I sought, I found; as I knocked the door of Truth opened for me. I found the Bible teaching very different from what I had supposed it to be, very contrary to that of all the creeds. The latter, indeed, each and all, contain truths taken from the Bible, but truths incrusted with various human credulities and misconceptions --the Bible message as a whole divided amongst many creeds and made to contradict itself.

To my surprise I found the presentations of the Bible not only more logical than anything else in the world, but absolutely the only logical presentation on earth. As interpreted by itself, and not by the creeds and theories

of the Dark Ages, the Bible tells one beautiful, reasonable, harmonious story, from Genesis to Revelation. It tells nothing of a fiery hell manned by fire-proof demons, and supplied with fuel for all eternity, to which Adam and his race were sentenced on account of sin. On the contrary,

it teaches that "the wages of sin is death."

It tells that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die"; and tells that Adam sinned and came under this death penalty and that all of his race by the laws of heredity are subject to frailty, weakness, mental, moral and physical--and that these have triumphed in a reign of Sin and Death for now six thousand years. It tells that this death is the death into which Adam and all of his race go--*sheol*, the *hell* of the Bible, for all mankind, good and bad. It tells that there is no pain or suffering there, no knowledge, no work of any kind.--**Ezek. 18:4,20**; **Rom. 6:23**.

It tells that all, both good and bad, *sleep*, awaiting the resurrection of the dead. It tells that man's death would have been an extinction as complete as that of the brute beast had God in His Wisdom and Love not arranged for human redemption and a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. It tells that the Divine arrangement whereby God could be just and not repudiate the rulership of His own Court and yet recover man from the death sentence, was arranged for. The arrangement was that Jesus, "by the grace of God, should taste death for every man"; that "as by a man came death, by a Man also should come the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die even so all in Christ shall be made alive, every man in his own order."--**Heb. 2:9**; **1 Cor. 15:21,22**.

With God "a thousand years are as one day." (**2 Peter 3:8**.) He has therefore arranged that six of these great Days shall constitute man's period of battling with sin and death and that the seventh of these great Days shall be the Day of Messiah, the Sabbath or Rest Day to the world, in which Messiah, as the Divine Representative, shall lift up all the willing and obedient, opening

their blind eyes, unstopping their deaf ears and causing all to know the Lord, from the least to the greatest.

"ALL SHALL KNOW THE LORD"

As a result, some will refuse and die the "Second Death"--utter destruction. No more than a century of trial is to be granted; for we read, "The sinner a hundred years old shall be cut off"--a child a century old in sin

shall be accursed--to the Second Death. (**Isa. 65:20**.) But all who will accept Divine favor may then be brought to full, human perfection, similar to that which Adam enjoyed at the beginning, plus the knowledge of good and evil, which he lacked.

Of these willing and obedient ones it is written, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Many of the Chinese, doubtless, will then be bowing before the great King of kings and Lord of lords, whom then they will know completely; for "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep." And their forefathers, whom they reverence, will be there, too; their eyes shall be opened and their ears unstopped, as it is written, "All the blind eyes shall all be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped." What a great reunion time that will be for the Chinese hundreds of millions! Yes, and still more! As the Scriptures declare, all the families of the earth shall be blessed similarly with a knowledge of God and with a full opportunity for *restitution* to all that was lost in Adam--to all that was redeemed at Calvary.

Do the Chinese say to me, This news is too good to be true? Do they say, No missionary ever told us of such a gracious God and such a mighty Savior! Had we heard such a gracious Message it would have attracted our hearts long ago, for our gods are non-sympathetic--they are great, powerful and vicious! But we thought as we heard the missionaries' message that the Christian God must be even more ferocious than ours, for the awful,

burning hell of which we have heard through Christians is terrible beyond anything we heathens had ever heard of before or conjectured for ourselves!

SATAN THE GOD OF THIS WORLD

Alas! my dear friends, I know this very well and the Bible explains the whole matter. It tells us that we have been believing "doctrines of demons." (**1 Tim 4:1**.) These vicious doctrines in the past, when more literally believed than today, led some noble Christian people into most atrocious conduct.

We are all awaking from this sad condition, thank God! We are emerging slowly from the darkness of the past. We are in the very dawning of the morning of Messiah's Kingdom; which is to bless the world. The rising of the Sun of Righteousness is to bring the New Day of emancipation from ignorance, superstition and death. The more awake we become the more clearly do we see the beauty of God's Word and the ridiculous inconsistency of things we once believed.

St. Paul explains to us why Satan strives to put darkness for light and light for darkness. He explains why Satan represents himself as an angel of light and endeavors to besmirch the Divine character and to make God the very personification of wickedness and injustice! It is a part of his general endeavor to thwart the Divine Plan, to mislead those who are seeking to know God. Hearken to the Apostle's words: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the glorious light of God's goodness, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, should shine into their hearts."--**2 Cor. 4:4**.

In proportion as humanity misconceives God's character and His Word, in that same proportion they will shun the Bible and its God, and thus get away from the faith and hope revealed in the Bible. As I have told you, I had my own bitter experiences along this line. How I

thank God for the "eye-salve" and for the glorious vision of the Divine character and Plan which now stands out so distinctly before the eyes of my understanding!

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

The Gospel of the Bible, the Message of the great God, Infinite in Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, is a Message of grace, of mercy, as has emanated from no other quarter --such as no other religious book in the world presents. And what else should we expect than that the great Supreme Being would be a Fountain of grace, of blessing to His dependent creatures. It should not surprise us, then, to find the Bible clearly teaching that the God of all Grace has in store for humanity great blessings--"Times

of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."--**Acts 3:19-21**.

Another Message should not surprise us; it is the message that was sung by the angels on the night of Jesus' birth, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people"--the thousands of millions of the Chinese included! It is a joy to me to be permitted to tell this glorious Message to such as have the ear to hear it. It is a further joy to me that in the Divine arrangement the time is coming when "all the deaf ears shall be unstopped" and when the clear knowledge of God's goodness shall fill the earth as the waters cover the great deep.--**Luke 2:10**; **Isa. 35:5**; **Hab. 2:14**.

God first told this Message of His benevolent designs toward humanity about thirty-six hundred years ago, when He declared to His friend Abraham, I intend to bless all the families of the earth, and this shall be done through your posterity--"In thee and in thy Seed shall the families of the earth be blessed." The natural seed of Abraham was first developed and instructed, and consequently uplifted, under a Law Covenant. This arrangement prepared the natural seed of Abraham more than others of the world's peoples to receive Jesus; hence,

SM175

when He presented Himself, and when afterward His Message was proclaimed by His twelve Apostles, approximately sixteen thousand Jews became His footstep followers, were begotten of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and after, and thus became members of the promised Seed.

THE NUMBER IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION

But this number was short of the Divine purpose--"a hundred and forty-four thousand." (**Rev. 14:1.**) Hence, in due time, the Message of grace and the privilege of becoming members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham was extended to one nation after another--to the Jew first, but also to as many as the Lord our God has called, of every nation, people, kindred and tongue. This "elect" number of spirit-begotten followers of Jesus will very soon be completely changed by the glorious First Resurrection, when this mortal and corruptible shall put on

immortality. All those found faithful will be made partakers of the Divine nature, far above angels, principalities and powers--associates with the Redeemer. (**Eph. 1:21**.) Then the Seed of Abraham will be completed and qualified for its great work of blessing the race.

St. Paul declares, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (**1 Cor. 6:2**) The judging will be in the nature of a trial or testing, to determine how many of humanity can be helped up to human perfection and harmony with God and everlasting life, and how many unworthy will be destroyed in the Second Death. God, who has elected these kings, priests and judges, has appointed a Day in which they shall rule, bless, instruct, judge mankind in general. It will be the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom, for "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years."--**2 Peter 3:7,8**.

SM176

NEED OF GREAT CONFIDENCE

IN GOD'S WORD

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward."--**Heb. 10:35**.

There is a practical side to the Gospel. Everything enjoined upon the followers of Christ and all their trying experiences in life are wisely designed to work out for them character-development of good, firm, fine texture. It is a mistake to think, as some have thought in the past, that it is the will of God that we should merely hear of Christ and give a nominal assent to the message of His death as our Redeemer and turn from outward forms of sin--and then, contented with our progress, help others to the same low standards.

THE FATHER DOES THE DRAWING

Quite to the contrary, the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles ignore the world as a whole and merely seek for a special class with hearing ears and appreciative hearts. The Gospel Message set forth in the Bible knows nothing of the ordinary mission work of rescuing drunkards, harlots and the profane. While not refusing publicans and harlots it did not go about seeking them. It waited for them to seek for righteousness; and, as the Master said, "No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him"; and "whosoever cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." (**John 6:37,44,65**.) As a matter of fact, those who came to the Master and those who have been interested in His Message ever since, have not, in any large proportion, been the rich, the great, the learned, the noble, according to the course of this world, but chiefly the poor, rich in faith toward our God.--**1 Cor. 1:26-29**; **Jas. 2:5**.

Take as an illustration St. Paul's course when he went to Athens. We do not find that he started a mission

SM177

Sunday School and offered the children the prospects of a picnic or a Sunday School treat, in order to gather them for a half hour's talk about nothing, "to keep them off the street." Neither did he seek out the drunkards in the slums and establish a slum mission. On the contrary He sought the ear of the intelligent classes, the thinking classes, irrespective of their wealth or station; for He had a Message--a Message which children could not understand, a Message which drunkards were incapacitated from understanding, a Message which should appeal to the best people of Athens, whether rich or poor.

Have we not had to a considerable extent the wrong idea? Are we wiser than the Lord and the Apostles, and able to give them pointers as to methods instead of following their example, as we were instructed to do? They proclaimed the Second Coming of Messiah and the establishment of His Kingdom. They preached that the very object of His Reign of Righteousness for a thousand years will be the putting down of sin in its every form and the lifting up of poor, fallen humanity. They taught that there was danger of attempting to make a proselyte and really doing more harm than good thereby. They taught that the special work to which God's people are now commissioned as ministers or servants of Christ is the proclaiming of the Gospel--"the Good Tidings of the Kingdom"--not the proclaiming of eternal torment nor the attempt to drive the world of mankind from sin through fear. They taught that the work of this present Age is the selection from amongst mankind of the Bride class, to be Messiah's associates in His Kingdom, for the blessing of all the world. It is this Message of the goodness of God that our text declares should be proclaimed with courage, with boldness, with outspokenness.

St. Paul is criticizing some who had for quite a time been Christians and who had been granted large opportunities for growth in grace and knowledge. He says to these, "For the time ye ought to be teachers, but ye need

SM178

that one teach you again which be the first principles of the doctrine of Christ." They had lost the first principles. They had gotten entangled with vain philosophies,

and their spirituality was at a low ebb. Conditions are very similar today. After eighteen centuries of Divine instruction, and with the wonderful Bibles now at our command and with helps for Bible study, what manner of Christians ought we to be--in faith, in love, in obedience, in courage!--**Heb. 5:12-14**; **6:1-3**.

A MOST SOLEMN THOUGHT

St. Paul points out the necessity for the Lord's people to assemble themselves together for fellowship and for the study of His Word and to provoke one another to love and good works. The necessity for this, he suggests, is that sin on the part of those who have received a knowledge of the Truth and been made partakers of the Holy Spirit is a much more serious matter than the same conduct would have been before they came into the precious relationship of spirit-begotten children of God. He says, "For if we sin after that we have received a knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of condemnation and fiery indignation which shall devour us as God's adversaries."--**Heb. 10:25-27**.

Have we grasped the import of the thought? It signifies that those of us who have accepted the Divine terms and entered the family of God will have no future opportunity in another life. We must either make our "calling and election sure" under the terms of the call, as accepted, or be rejected as unworthy of life everlasting --as fit for the Second Death--annihilation. He who despised Moses' Law died without mercy. But he who, having come to a clear knowledge of the Truth, shall be found a willing sinner, will not only be cut off from a further opportunity in the present Age, but be everlastingly cut off from life, destroyed. "God is able to

destroy both soul and body"--the present life and our future hope. These thoughts should make very earnest, very diligent, all who have accepted Christ and been accepted by Him.--**2 Peter 1:10**; **Heb. 10:28,29**; **Matt. 10:28**.

NEVERTHELESS BE NOT DISCOURAGED

These things were written, not only for the Hebrew Christians of St. Paul's day, but designed by the Holy Spirit for all the Household of Faith. We should not rock ourselves to sleep, nor give to each other opiates. While the *world* is not yet on trial for eternal life, the *Church* is now being tested--for life or death eternal. The thought should sober us. As the Apostle suggests, "Be diligent, be sober," be faithful, following in the footsteps of Jesus.

But St. Paul or, rather, the Holy Spirit through him, took cognizance of the fact that the Lord's people are in a world that is "no friend to grace to help them on to God." The Apostle recognized that we might become discouraged with our own faults and weaknesses. Hence, after earnestly exhorting to faithfulness and energy, and after pointing out the dangers of slothfulness and of being over-charged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches and thus losing the spirit of Christ, he turns from this threatening attitude and uses encouraging words.

He says, "Call to mind the former days in which, following your illumination of the Holy Spirit, you endured a great fight of afflictions." St. Paul's intimation is that at that time, while suffering persecutions, the brethren were really in a better, more alive, spiritual condition than later. The prosperity, privileges, freedom from persecution enjoyed, had made them slothful and less courageous. He would have them and us call to mind the victories won in the past, that we might have courage for the present and the future. How gracious, how helpful, are all the provisions of our God for those

who now hear His call and seek to walk in Jesus' steps! To these He guarantees that every experience of life which His providence shall permit shall work for good, for blessing, for valuable experience and education along lines of righteousness and character development.

TWO CLASSES OF THE FAITHFUL

In time of war not all can go forth as soldiers. Some unfit for such service may perform a useful part at home supporting, encouraging, sending supplies to those at the front, etc. And so it is in the army of the Lord; Jesus is the Captain of all those who voluntarily enlist as soldiers of the Cross to battle against sin, especially in themselves--fighting a "good fight of faith" and overcoming the spirit of the world, which surges all about them, threatening to overwhelm them as New Creatures in Christ.--**2 Cor. 5:17**.

St. Paul intimates a strong persecution, openly manifested by the worldly-spirited, Satan-deceived people of God. He says, "Ye endured a great fight of afflictions, partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods."--**Heb. 10:32-34**.

St. Paul and others prominent amongst the Lord's followers naturally would receive the brunt of Satan's attacks. It is presumed that the Epistle of which our text is a part was written while St. Paul was a prisoner at Rome. Fellow Jews, so far from being sympathetic for a countryman, reproached him as a traitor, unorthodox, seeking to tear down the work of God and to ignore the Divine promises belonging to Israel and their sacred traditions. By the Romans, too, be was regarded with suspicion, as one giving allegiance to another King, Jesus, and not therefore disposed to use his Roman citizenship especially for the pride and glory of

the Empire. St. Paul declares that thus himself and those who espouse the cause of the Lord are despised and rejected by all. He says that we are counted as the filth and offscouring of the earth--that which nobody cares for or values, but which all would like to get rid of; for the darkness always hates the light and seeks to quench it and reigns completely only when all lights are extinguished. Christians, far and near, either by expressing sympathy for the Apostle or fellowshipping with him, or by defending him from the unjust and

malicious slanders circulated against him, thereby exposed themselves to similar reproaches and their disesteem, opposition from their neighbors, etc.

History tells us of various terrible persecutions of the Christians by the Roman Emperors. It declares, for instance, that to gratify his depraved mind, Nero, the Emperor, caused a certain portion of Rome to be burned by incendiaries, and that when he found how angry the people were he blamed the entire matter upon the inoffensive Christians--partly, no doubt, because these had no friends, either at court or amongst the people. They could be blamed with impunity and the Emperor's own vicious criminality would thus be hidden. On this account many Christians were publicly and brutally put to death.

"GREAT RECOMPENSE OF REWARD"

Poor human nature finds it difficult to stand alone with God and with the few who are on his side--the side of righteousness and truth. When, additionally, there comes persecution it tries their hearts, proves their loyalty. This is exactly what the Lord designs. He is now seeking a special class of overcomers to be joint-heirs with His Son on the spirit plane as the Bride of Messiah. Through these He designs shortly to grant to Israel and, through Israel, to all mankind glorious blessings of instruction and restitution. To be qualified to thus serve in the instruction and uplifting of humanity

SM182

it is necessary that these called ones should be of strong character--copies of their Master, in the spirit of their minds. To these he says, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His Throne."--**Rev. 3:21**; **Rom. 8:l6,17**.

We can readily see how some of the more prominent followers of the Lord who suffered martyrdom because of their loyalty to the principles of righteousness and to the name of Jesus would be accounted overcomers and members of the Kingdom class. But sometimes it is difficult for us to discern clearly how the less prominent, less persecuted ones stand with God. St. Paul's argument

proves that they stand *well*--that God counts them in as martyrs, as faithful unto death, if they have the martyr spirit, if they are loyal, courageous for the Truth, even though they never seal their testimony at the stake, even though they never are counted worthy of open or public opposition or persecution. Here is an encouragement for all; and this is exactly what St. Paul would stimulate us to in the words of our text.

WE MUST LET THE LIGHT SHINE

He says, "Cast not away, therefore, your outspokenness, which hath great recompense of reward." The Lord has not promised a great reward to us for merely believing, merely trusting, and in a cowardly manner keeping our light hidden, lest its exposure should bring to us persecution or reproach. He seeketh not such. They will not be counted worthy of a place in the Kingdom which is to bless the world.

St. Paul elsewhere declares, "If we deny Him, He will also deny us" (**2 Tim. 2:12**). If we have accepted the Lord as our Counsellor, Guide, Captain, Teacher, Exemplar, Bridegroom, He expects of us courage to confess Him as such and on all suitable and proper occasions to "let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is

in Heaven." (**Matt. 5:16**.) Our good works are to so accord with the Master's teachings that, however we may be represented by others, all who know us intimately will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and have learned of Him. They should also see that our courage, our boldness, our outspokenness, is not a desire to preach ourselves, not vainglory in ourselves, but that, on the contrary, we preach Christ and the glorious Message of His Word, which always has brought opposition and persecution from the Adversary and from all who are under his blinding influence.--**1 Cor. 1:23**.

Every faithful follower of Jesus must be a confessor --must show his colors. We do not mean by this that he must be belligerent and fight a carnal warfare, either with swords or spears or hands or tongue. On the contrary,

like his Master, he must ever be alert to do good.
His orders from the Captain are, "Speak evil of no man."
What he must speak forth and show forth by his life is
the doctrine of Christ--the Truth, the Light, in contrast
with the prevailing Error and Darkness.

The reward which the Scriptures hold before our eyes
of faith is so great that, to the worldly, it seems foolish
to believe in it. It is to consist of a share with our Lord
in His glory, honor and immortality, in His Mediatorial
Kingdom soon to be established, in His great work as
the Mediator of the New Covenant in granting Divine
blessings, through the merit of the better sacrifices, to the
people of Israel and eventually through them to all mankind.
Not all have a knowledge of this great reward.
Not all, therefore, have the encouragement to faithfulness
which this knowledge inspires. Not all even have the ears
to hear. It is written, "The secret of the Lord is with
them that fear Him, and He will show them His Covenant."
--Psa. 25:14.

Equip me for the war,
And teach me how to fight:
My mind and heart, O Lord, prepare,
And guide my words aright.

SM184

GOD PREPARING FOR THE HARVEST

[Given in Glasgow, October 29, 1911]

"Of the times and 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; ye are children of the light."--**1 Thess. 5:1-5**.

The common tendency of the human mind is expressed by St. Peter, who prophesies of the present time that the worldly will be saying, "Where is the promise of His presence!...All things continue as they were from the foundation of the world." Ignorance of God's Plan is to be expected of the world, but the true people of God have the promise of His special instruction so that they need not be in darkness respecting the Divine Program.

Our world for six thousand years has been the battle field between the forces of light and darkness, truth and error, righteousness and sin; the Prince of Darkness, otherwise styled the "Prince of this world," has led his forces in person, and has controlled the masses and is still controlling them. The Prince of Light is represented in a feeble way by ambassadors who are specially cautioned by Him that they must not use carnal weapons nor carnal methods, but must in meekness correct those who oppose them. They must be subject to "the powers that be" to the extent that their consciences will permit, and so far as possible live peaceably with all men.--**Rom. 12:18**.

This experience of subjection to the powers of evil has been a hard lesson, difficult to learn; a trial of faith as well as of endurance, the value of which has been difficult sometimes to appreciate. But these must walk by faith and not by sight if they would please the Captain of

SM185

their salvation. For centuries the prayer has gone up to God from their hearts, "How long, O Lord!" Reason

assures them that it cannot be the Divine purpose to forever permit the victory of sin and death.--**Rev. 6:10**.

PLOWING, SOWING, REAPING

God represents Himself as a great Husbandman. Each Age is a "season" and bears its own crop. Each Age has its own time for the plowing of the field, the sowing of the good seed, and the harvest work. As Bible students we have already noted the work accomplished in the Age which ended with the Flood, the different work accomplished during the Patriarchal Age, and the still different work accomplished during the Jewish Age, which lasted from the death of Jacob, and particularly from the giving of the Law, down to the death of Jesus.

Our Lord's ministry of three and a half years was a harvest time to the Jewish people in the close of their Age in favor or "day of visitation." He said to His disciples, "I send you forth to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored and ye are entered into their labors." (**John 4:38**.) The plowing and sowing connected with the Jewish Dispensation was in the far past. The Egyptian bondage served to do a plowing work as also Israel's escape from that bondage and the forty years of wandering in the wilderness before they reached Canaan. The giving of the Law and the establishment of them as a people, the lessons of their sacrifices, and the exhortation of their Prophets, all constituted a seed-sowing, harrowing and cultivating experience. In the end of their Age Jesus gathered the ripe fruitage of that experience--those sanctified thereby and developed in character and obedience to God.

The crop gathered by our Lord and the Apostles in the Jewish harvest numbered thousands. These were gathered out of Judaism and from under the Law Covenant into Christianity--gathered under a covenant applying

only to the "Church which is the Body of Christ." This covenant, under which they became associated with Messiah, reads, "Gather together My saints [holy ones] unto Me," saith the Lord, "those who have made a Covenant with Me by sacrifice." (**Psa. 50:5**.) All coming

thus into relationship to Jehovah as members of the Body of Messiah came by way of the cross--through a recognition of their own imperfection, and of Jesus and His sacrifice as the satisfaction for their sins, a covering for their blemishes, by which alone their sacrifices were rendered "holy and acceptable to God."--**Rom. 12:1**.

SOWING FOLLOWS REAPING

The reaping work of the Jewish Age merged into the sowing work of the Gospel Age as the invitation to become joint-sacrificers with Jesus was extended to those having hearing ears amongst nations aside from the Jews. For eighteen centuries this sowing work, with "harrowing" experiences and various cultivations, has been in progress. Now in turn we have arrived at the harvest of this Gospel Age--the reaping time, the time of gathering into the garner--beyond the veil--by the power of the First Resurrection.

"None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand" (**Dan. 12:10**), is the Lord's declaration. Our text declares that "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness" respecting this time. This implies either that the brethren are very few or that a considerable number of them have not yet become sufficiently awake to a discernment of the times and seasons in which we are living. Many of the brethren and many of the world and many of the "wicked" do realize that we are living in strange times and under peculiar conditions. These try to persuade themselves, however, that what we see today is merely a recurrence of what has repeated itself time and again during the past centuries. Thus they lull themselves, saying, "Peace and safety!"--**1 Thess. 5:3**.

SM187

This attitude is what the Scriptures foretold, "When *they* shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon *them."* It is only "ye, brethren," who are privileged to have the clearer light respecting present and future conditions. We know that we are in the Harvest time of this Age--the reckoning time--the testing time--the time when the "wheat" is to be gathered into the Heavenly "garner" the time when the field is

to be cleared of all "tares" in a fiery trouble--the time when the plowshare of trouble will be run through the world of mankind to prepare the whole world for the New Dispensation just about to begin.

THE PLOWMAN OVERTAKES THE REAPER

Illustrating the Divine methods and the rapid following of events in the Divine Program, the Lord through the Prophet tells us that "the plowman will overtake the reaper." (**Amos 9:13**.) So accurately timed is every feature of the Divine Plan that part fits to part and work to work closely. The Harvest of the present time is the gathering of the fruitage of this Gospel Age--the gathering of "the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven"--those who have made a covenant with Jehovah by sacrifice.

The Head of the saintly Messiah, developed and glorified eighteen centuries ago, is Jesus. The members of the Body of this Messiah have been gathered from every nation, first from the Jews and then from all nations. God's call and selection of saintly sacrificers in this Gospel Age ignore all sectarian, all denominational, all national lines--"The Lord knoweth them that are His." The winds of violence, "the powers of the air," which will shortly be loosed, and which will produce the terrific "storm," are being held back until the sealing of God's servants in their foreheads shall have been accomplished.

This sealing in the forehead implies an intellectual appreciation of Heavenly things, and is intimately associated with the Harvest work--the sealed are the ripe wheat

SM188:

being gathered for the Heavenly garner. As soon as the sealing work shall have been accomplished the winds of strife and trouble will be let loose according to the Master's declaration, and the result will be a "Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation"--no, nor ever shall be the like again. The awful lessons which will then be learned by humanity will be sufficient for all time. The strife, the hatred, the malignity, the anarchy of that day of trouble are depicted in various places in the Word of God.--**Rev. 7:1**; **Matt. 24:21**; **Psa. 46:8-10**.

The trouble time impending is indeed declared to be a time of Divine wrath, and we must not lose sight of that feature of it. Divine Justice has indignation against inequity and selfishness in general, for selfishness is but another name for sin. All sin is selfish, and all selfishness is sin. The captains of industry, the captains of education, and captains of wealth have today greater opportunities and therefore greater responsibilities than the kings of the earth for their dealings with their fellowmen.

Similarly, there are leaders of the people, presidents and secretaries of unions, etc., who are also captains, and who also have great responsibility. All perceive that the world of humanity is rapidly nearing a crisis. The almost miraculous opening of the eyes of understanding which God has recently granted has brought to the world mechanical inventions and chemical processes which are making the world rich with amazing rapidity.

Although these blessings are in considerable measure reaching the masses of mankind and uplifting all to a higher plane of comfort, nevertheless general education has opened the eyes of human understanding correspondingly. "The common people" are looking with amazement at the luxury of the rich as the barbarians of old looked upon the much lesser splendors of Rome. They are covetous, they are hungry for what they term their "share" of the bounties being dispensed by Providence with so lavish a hand.

SM189

Even if the vast increase of wealth through machinery, chemistry, etc., were to be evenly distributed we doubt if it would satisfy these new-born minds.

TWO POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

There seem to be two possible solutions: (1) To convert all of the wealthy into saints, whose pleasure it would be to administer the flood of wealth now rolling in upon them for the general blessing of mankind, along the most benevolent lines imaginable; or (2) To convert into saints the masses of mankind and so imbue them with Heavenly hopes and prospects that they would not particularly care for earthly good things nor crave them, but rather

rejoice to be "the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs of the Heavenly Kingdom."--**James 2:5**.

We confess that neither solution seems to be practicable. We cannot believe that either can be accomplished; hence we must believe what the Bible teaches, that an awful conflict is about to be precipitated between these two classes, because neither one nor the other can be fully converted to the Lord's way. How glad we are that the Bible shows that the culmination of the conflict will bring everlasting peace a just, loving, equitable and satisfactory adjustment of earth's affairs, under Messiah's glorious Reign of a thousand years!

THE DIVINE ARRANGEMENT

Someone may ask, Would not these same difficulties beset any new government which Messiah or others might institute? Will not the element of selfishness forever persist in the human heart, and will not this imply that to all eternity there will be a strife of selfish interests? We answer, No. The Divine Plan solves the problem perfectly. Jesus has demonstrated His unselfishness as respects earthly things. His laying down of His life not only proved His loyalty to righteousness and to the Father's will, but proved also His unselfishness--His

love--"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man should lay down his life for his friends."--**John 15:13**.

This friend of humanity is to be the great King of the world in the New Dispensation, and His associates in the Kingdom, the Bride class, are to be such only as have His spirit and disposition of obedience to the Father's will--self-sacrifice and love for fellowman--unselfish love. Under present conditions these may not always be known, nor their true character and unselfishness be discerned, because they have the treasure in "earthen vessels," which do not always fully present their true benevolence of heart.--**2 Cor. 4:7**.

The Divine provision is that such of these as shall demonstrate their unselfishness of heart and loyalty to the Lord shall be given new bodies in the resurrection--"sown in weakness, they will be raised in power; sown in

dishonor, raised in glory; sown an animal body," with Adamic weaknesses and fleshly imperfections, they will be raised spirit bodies--perfect, complete, lacking nothing. --**1 Cor. 15:42-44**.

These, in association with their Redeemer, will constitute the Kingdom class which is to rule the world for a thousand years under the Headship of Jesus. Surely, we can trust these, we can have confidence in them. The fact that God has elected them, and that He is pleased to give over to them the rulership of the world for a thousand years testifies beyond peradventure their worthiness and capability.

That Government will not be a republic, but a monarchy, a theocracy, a Divine Kingdom. Christ and His Bride will be the King and Queen of the New Dispensation, supplanting Satan and the fallen angels, who for centuries have been in control. The Kingdom of God will be as invisible as the kingdom of darkness has been. It will operate through human agencies, as does the other. But even its human agents have been provided. The Scriptures inform us that the worthy ones of the Jewish

Dispensation and before, will be the Princes in all the earth who will represent Messiah's Kingdom amongst men. Not only so, but they will be perfect men, made so by participation in the "resurrection of life." How grand the prospect!--**Psa. 45:l6**.

The Time of Trouble, although it will be awful, will be short, as typed in the terrible trouble which came upon the Jewish nation following the harvest work of their Age. Then will come the leveling process, which in the Divine order will prove to be a blessing to everybody. In other words, the socialists and anarchists are not so far from a correct conception of what must ultimately prevail, but they are far astray respecting the methods by which it will be obtained. Their attempt to grasp the rudder of the world's affairs shows an utter lack of appreciation of the mighty influences with which they seek to contend. Their efforts will merely precipitate upon themselves and upon others the terrible trouble which the Scriptures foretell.

God's people are distinctly warned that they must keep hands off, must not interfere with the powers that

be--their reliance must be upon the Lord and not in the use of carnal weapons. St. James, writing on this subject, declares the coming trouble and tells that it will be specially severe upon the rich: "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." (**James 5:1-7**.) No doubt the troubles will be equally upon the poor; but to them they will seem less severe since they have been accustomed to less. To God's people is the message, "Be patient, brethren, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"; "Wait ye upon Me, saith the Lord." (**Zeph. 3:8**.) "Seek meekness, seek righteousness, it may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."--**Zeph. 2:3**.

SM192

PREACHING TO IMPRISONED SPIRITS

"By which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."--**1 Peter 3:19**.

Much speculation has been aroused by our text. Some have claimed that it signifies that Christ, after His death on the cross and before His resurrection, went to some place where human spirits are imprisoned in some kind of purgatory, and there preached to them. Not only is the Catholic theory in line with this suggestion, but many Protestants hold that the dead may be prayed for and thus be assisted to escape from eternal torment. All of this is wrong, as we shall show--quite contrary to the teachings of our text and its context.

Those preached to were not human beings, but spirit beings--not men, but angels. This is clearly stated in **Verse 20**, which tells us when these angels were imprisoned and why. They were imprisoned in the days of Noah at the time of the Flood. They were imprisoned for disobedience. So we read (**Verse 19**): "He preached unto spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing." Turning back to the Genesis account of that time we find quite a complete record of these disobedient spirits.--**Gen. 6:1-5**.

Some time after Father Adam's disobedience and his expulsion from Eden, the holy angels were permitted to visit humanity with a view to assisting men back to harmony with God. This doubtless was permitted for two reasons: (1) Had such an opportunity not been furnished, the angels might in the conclusion of God's great Plan, have been inclined to say, "Yes, God accomplished human salvation, but in a very roundabout way and at very great cost and trouble. Had He given us an opportunity to mingle with humanity we might have had

SM193

an uplifting influence upon the people and have accomplished their reconciliation to God." Therefore God wished to forestall any such misunderstanding of the wisdom

of the Plan which He had arranged and would, in due time, work out. (2) The angels themselves never had come in contact with sin of any kind. Hence they never had been tested or tried in respect to their obedience and loyalty to the Creator. They were permitted to attempt the recovery of humanity--partly in order to test their own obedience and loyalty to God.

ANGELS PREFERRED TO BE HUMAN

Our knowledge of spirit beings and the powers granted to them by the Almighty is limited to our observation of the Bible record. The angels who appeared as young men at our Lord's sepulchre and again at His ascension and who, as soon as they had accomplished the purposes of their visit, vanished, are illustrations. We remember the account of how Abraham sat in the door of his tent and, behold, three men came to him. He received them as men, entertained them at dinner, and we read that they ate and talked with Abraham. They had human powers though still spirit beings. When they dematerialized, they vanished.--**Gen. 18:1-15**.

Genesis 6:1,2, informs us that this privilege of materialization for the assistance of mankind was eventually misused by some of the angels as an opportunity for sinful intercourse with humanity. The time at which this began is not definitely stated. The expression, "When men began to multiply on the face of the earth," might safely be estimated at about a thousand years after Adam's creation and fall. This would leave a period of 655 years to the Flood. It was approximately during that long period that the angelic sons of God, seeing the daughters of men, took to themselves for wives all that they chose of the fair daughters of men. "And they bare children to them. The same became mighty men which

were of old, men of renown"--and giants. We remember that at that early day human life was much longer than now, that manhood was scarcely reached before a century, and that few became fathers sooner. When we remember also that the children of the angels are not mentioned as boys, but as men, mighty men, renowned men, it gives

the thought that the angels, without Divine permission, had really started to propagate a new race, and that their progeny was much stronger than that of the poor, Adamic stock, weakened by the dying process.

The disregard of Divine Law meant that the strength of these giants would be used selfishly, and that the licentious example of the angels had a demoralizing effect upon the children of Adam, as well as upon their own children. All this is stated and implied in the words, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." What a terrible picture of the condition of things before the Flood! But God was not astonished; for He had foreknown everything. Hence He had a great canopy of water in the sky which temporarily gave the earth an equable, temperate climate, but which He purposed should fall upon the earth and cause the great Flood in Noah's day. Then at the appropriate time God gave instructions to Noah to prepare an ark for the saving of himself and his house. Noah and his family were the only members of Adam's race in all the earth who were not more or less contaminated by those angels. How wide must have been that influence when we read as an exceptional matter, "Now Noah [and his family] was perfect in his generation"--the disobedient angels had nothing whatever to do with generating them!--**Gen. 6:13-22**.

While the angels preferred to live as men in human bodies, they would not be overwhelmed like humanity in the Flood, but merely dissolve, by dematerialization, their human bodies and be, as originally, spirit beings. Satan

was the first sinner against the Divine government, in his endeavor to set up a separate empire and to have humanity for his subjects. Although God had full power to destroy Satan and the other disobedient angels, He has not exercised that power. Instead He merely isolated them from Himself and the holy angels and imprisoned them, in the sense that He no longer permitted them to materialize, either as a serpent or as humanity for the tempting and injury of our race. In this sense they are imprisoned--restrained of liberty.

FALLEN ANGELS CHAINED

Now let us hear St. Peter's words respecting these angels who sinned. He says (**2 Peter 2:4**), "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The word *tartaroo* here rendered "hell" in our Common Version, is found nowhere else in the Bible. It refers to our earth's atmosphere and to the fact that those fallen angels, called demons or devils, are "the power of the air." Satan, who was originally an angel of much higher rank and nature, is their Prince, "the Prince of the power of the air," the Prince of demons. They are "cast down" in the sense of being treated ignominiously. They are "in chains of darkness," not in chains of iron. They can still go and come, and be sources of temptation to humanity who are in a sinful attitude of mind. They are restrained in chains of darkness in the sense that whatever they do must be done in the dark--until their judgment time at the Great Day--at the beginning of Messiah's thousand-year Day of the Reign of Righteousness.--**Eph. 2:2**.

Turn to St. **Jude's Epistle. There we read (Verse 6**.) "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in agelasting chains, under darkness, unto the Judgment of the Great Day." Their first estate, in which they were created, was

the spirit or angelic condition. They left their own proper condition of living and nature, in violation of the Divine will, that they might live on a lower plane--live in sin; for the angels are sexless, though always referred to as masculine. And our Lord declares that those begotten of the Holy Spirit, who during this Age shall attain to the resurrection of the dead, the "First Resurrection," will be "like unto the angels" in several respects--one of these being that they will neither marry nor be given in marriage, but be without sexual distinction.

"WICKED SPIRITS," "LYING SPIRITS"

In harmony with this note how spiritualists hold their seances, either in absolute darkness or in a very faint light. They claim now that the spirits are getting more and more power of materialization, and that soon they will be able to materialize in broad daylight and to go about amongst humanity as members of the race. We do not question the power of God to restrain these fallen angels, these demons--His power to restrain them from materializing and thus doing great harm in the world. Nevertheless, we wonder if they will not be permitted by God to find some greater powers of materialization, contrary to the Divine decree, that their course in this matter may more particularly manifest to what extent some of them have changed and reformed--desire to be obedient, for instance--while others are as opposed to God and righteousness as ever. There is room for this understanding in the statement of the Apostle that the chains of darkness were to control them until the Great Day--not necessarily *into* that day--perhaps at its very beginning they may be permitted to gain certain liberties and do a certain amount of injury to humanity, to all who are not attentive to the Word of God, and who, therefore, will not know who these spirits are--that they are the fallen angels, the demons of the Bible.

The above terms are used in the Scriptures in describing the fallen angels, who from earliest days have attempted

to deceive humanity--representing themselves as human beings who have died and who desire to communicate with their friends. And they attempt to do so through spirit mediums. This is their practise from of old. Their endeavor is to break down the human will and to more and more control it. The height of their ambition and success is to fully dominate the human will, so that they may use the human body as their own flesh, as when they had power to materialize. Those who come fully under their control become demented, often several spirits gaining possession of the one personality and attempting to use the same brains and body. It is estimated that one-half of all who are in insane asylums are merely victims of spirit-obsession. The great remedy

against all this is the Truth of God's Word. Those who accept this cannot be deceived. But the masses of mankind are being deceived. The Scripture teaching is that when a man is dead he knows not anything, and will never know anything until the resurrection of the dead. Whoever knows this is fortified against all the deceptions of the evil spirits.--**Eccl. 9:5,10**; **Isa. 8:19,20**.

JESUS PREACHED TO THESE SPIRITS

There are no human spirits to be preached to. Human beings are not spirit beings. The dead of humanity who have never heard of "the only name given under Heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved" will hear that name in God's due time--in the resurrection--during the thousand years of Messiah's reign when He, as the true Light, shall lighten every man that cometh into the world."--**John 1:9**; **Acts 4:12**.

But if Jesus died and in death knew not anything, how could He preach to the fallen angels? We answer that it is a common expression that "actions speak louder than words." The great actions or facts connected with our Lord's death and resurrection constituted a most wonderful sermon to the fallen angels. As they beheld the

Redeemer's faithfulness to God, even unto death, even the death of the cross, and as they then beheld God's faithfulness to Him in raising him from the dead to the highest nature--the Divine nature--"far above angels, principalities, powers and every name that is named"--all this constituted a most wonderful sermon of love, loyalty, faith and obedience. The sermon to them meant, How serious was our mistake in being disobedient to God in any particular! It meant also, May not God, who has thus gone to so much trouble for the redemption of fallen men, have in His heart also a place of mercy for us, should we repent? The Apostle intimates that these angels, with the exception of Satan, are yet to have a testing or trial; for he assures the Church that God purposes that we, as the Bride of Christ, shall not only be entrusted with the work of judging or giving trial to the world of mankind during the Millennium,

but also that we shall judge angels--not the holy angels, for they need no judging on our part--but the fallen angels.--**1 Cor. 6:3**.

Quite possibly the hopes inspired by the great sermon preached by our Lord's resurrection to the spirit beings led some of those fallen angels to repentance. If so, we may suppose that during the eighteen centuries since, they have suffered severely at the hands of the rebellious angels, who would be aroused to animosity by their reform, and who would mercilessly persecute them.

The Scriptures seem to imply that "fallen angels," "wicked spirits," "lying spirits," "demons," will have much to do with bringing about the great Time of Trouble with which this Gospel Age will end, before the complete inauguration of Messiah's Empire and the binding of Satan. (**Rev. 20:4**.) The intimation is that the trouble here will be short and sharp, as in the days of Noah. The declaration of the Apostle that these evil spirits will be in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day leaves room for the inference that when

the Judgment of the Great Day begins, the chains of darkness will be broken. If, therefore, we have the right understanding of this matter, great events are near at hand.
Spirit mediums are already declaring that the spirits tell that they will soon be able to materialize in broad daylight. With the power to counterfeit and personate humanity what may this not mean in the way of deception mentioned by our Lord, who declares that it will be so strong that it would deceive even the "Very Elect" were they not specially protected and guided.--**Matt. 24:5,6,23,24**.

We remind you also of the great stride which Spiritism, Occultism and Psychic Science have made within the last few years. These now number among their friends and advocates some of the brightest scientific minds. One of these, Prof. James of Harvard College, before dying, declared that he would speedily communicate with his friends. Already the newspapers tell us that he has begun to communicate, but the mediums claim that he has difficulty in operating through them, because of the great force and power of his intellect and that they must gradually become able to act as his mediums. From the Bible standpoint all this is a fraud--a deception--

but not on the part of the mediums, who are themselves deceived, but on the part of the fallen angels, who are thus tricking humanity.--**2 Tim. 3:13**.

SM200

DIVINE PLAN HIDDEN IN ABRAHAM'S FAMILY

"And Isaac brought Rebecca into his mother Sarah's tent; and she became his wife and he loved her."-- **Gen 24:67.**

When we sometimes speak of Abraham, Isaac and others as types we should not be understood to mean that the Bible stories respecting them are fictions. A person or thing is a type when, in addition to the actual experiences, the Scriptures indicate that it prefigures and illustrates on a small scale some person or things yet future. For instance, in certain respects Adam as the head of the race, was a type of Messiah, the second Adam.

The first Adam, the father of our race has failed to give the eternal life desired. In God's providence Messiah is to be the second Adam, in the sense that He will regenerate, as His children, all the posterity of the first Adam. Messiah is thus declared in prophecy to be the Everlasting Father of mankind--the Father or Life-giver, who will give to our race everlasting life, instead of a heritage of weakness, imperfection and death.

Similarly, Moses not only was a real character, the leader of the nation of Israel, but additionally he was a type of a greater Mediator--Messiah. As Moses mediated the Law Covenant for Israel, so Messiah, the Prophet like unto Moses, or antitypical of him (**Acts 3:22**), is to be the Mediator of Israel's New Covenant, under which the Abrahamic blessings will reach them and through them reach all the families of the earth. (**Jer. 31:31**.) Similarly, Aaron was a type of the higher priesthood and its better sacrifices connected with the New Covenant. So, also, the under-priests and the Levites, additional to their own experiences, served, in God's providence, as types of the higher institutions by which the New Covenant will be inaugurated shortly.

SM201

On this occasion we ask your attention to Abraham, known in the Scriptures as the Friend of God, as the Father of the Faithful, and to his son Isaac, the son of promise, born out of the natural order, miraculously, when his mother was old; also to Isaac's wife, Rebecca, selected by Abraham to be the companion and joint-heir with his son Isaac in his inheritance. These personages lived their lives wholly unconscious of the fact that God was using them and overruling their affairs so as to make of them prophetic pictures of His own great Plan of the Ages. These type-pictures are always to be read in full harmony with the inspired writings of the Bible and never to be understood in contradiction of the same.

ABRAHAM A TYPE OF GOD

Not everything that Abraham did, however, is to be esteemed typical. In a general way this grand man of the past looms up before our minds as a monument of faith, integrity and justice. The blessings promised to go through him to his Seed, which would constitute him the father of many nations, made of him, as St. Paul points out, a type of the Almighty, from whom flows every good and every perfect gift--from whom proceeds the blessing which ultimately is to flow through Messiah, His Son, and through Israel, His people, unto all the families of the earth.--**Rom. 4:16-25**; **Gal. 3:8,16,29**.

All Christians, presumably, are aware of St. Paul's interpretation of Abraham and his family as types. As Abraham typified God, so his wife typified the Covenant through which the vitality of the promise ultimately develops the Seed of Promise--Isaac in a type, and Messiah in the antitype. St. Paul also explains that Sarah's servant, Hagar, at Sarah's wish, became for a time her representative with Abraham and brought forth Ishmael. Hagar, St. Paul explains, typified the Law Covenant, vitalized by the gracious arrangements of the same God and Father; and Hagar's son, literally Abraham's firstborn,

SM202

typified the Jewish nation, the first development

under the Covenant.--**Gal. 4:22-31**.

As Abraham loved Ishmael and desired a blessing on him, so God loved Israel and desired a blessing upon Israel, the offspring of the Law Covenant. Nevertheless, as Ishmael, the offspring of the bond-woman, was declared not to be the primary heir of the Abrahamic promise, but a secondary one, so the children of Israel, the offspring of the Law Covenant, were not designed to be the Spiritual Messiah through whom the promise declared that the blessing should first proceed.

In the type, we see that Sarah, Abraham's wife, who represented the original Abrahamic Covenant, brought forth a son of her own, Isaac, long years after the bond-maid, her substitute, had brought forth Ishmael. When Isaac was born, Sarah repudiated Ishmael and no longer acknowledged him as her son, but, instead, claimed everything for Isaac. The antitype of this is that from the time that God began the development of the Spiritual Israel and set forth the "Covenant by Sacrifice," through which this Spiritual Israel would be developed--from that time it began to be clearly manifest that the chief portion of the promise of God to bless the world was not to be fulfilled through the Ishmael Seed, Natural Israel, but through the Isaac Seed--Spiritual Israel.

WELL-SPRING OF HOPE FOR THE JEWS

From the first there was manifested a competition for the Abrahamic blessing. And as Ishmael mocked at the infant Isaac, so the Jew, in his considerable development and strength, mocked at the Antitypical Isaac--Jesus and His comparatively ignorant and unlearned followers--and persecuted them. In order to continue the type, that Abraham might typify God, he was commanded to send forth Hagar and her son into the wilderness. That sending forth typified the Divine disfavor which came upon the Jews eighteen centuries ago and which has made them

outcasts from God's favor, as Hagar and Ishmael were cut off from Abraham's presence and family and care. The bread and water which Hagar took with her, by which she and Ishmael were nourished in the wilderness for a

time, types the promises of God through the Law and the Prophets which still belong to the Jew and upon which for eighteen centuries he has been nourished, and without which the hope of the nation would have perished.

Now we come to the dire moment pictured in **Gen. 21:15-19**. The water provided by Abraham had been consumed. No more was to be had. Ishmael was dying. Hagar, his mother, separated herself from him. At the opportune moment the angel of the Lord appeared to her and pointed her to a spring of water, where she refreshed herself and Ishmael with new life.

The antitype of this is now to be seen before us. The Jewish people, separated more and more from the Law and the Prophets, are becoming weak and faint as respects hope. They are about to die! But no! The Lord graciously points out a well-spring of the Water of Life at this critical moment. As Ishmael was rescued from death by this water, so the nation of Israel, whom he typified, is now about to find in the providence of God that their portion of the Abrahamic Covenant is the earthly one, not the Heavenly one, not the spiritual. They are about to be refreshed and to enter upon a new career. That career, however, will not mark them as Ishmaelites, nor will their New Covenant relationship be symbolized by Hagar, the Old Law Covenant. Thenceforth they are represented under a new type.

ISAAC WAS HEIR OF ALL

If at first our Jewish friends might be inclined to feel disappointed that they were represented in Ishmael and not in Isaac, by the Hagar Covenant, the covenant of bondage to the Law, instead of being formed free from the Law, there is a consolation. Their consolation is that

Isaac typified the Messiah and that Israel is pictured as the nation on whose behalf Messiah will mediate the New Law Covenant. The Messiah must be spiritual, in order to be able to confer the great blessings indicated in the Covenant made with Abraham. The nation of Israel never expected to be spiritual and had no such promise in the Bible. To the Jews will come exactly what they

have always been expecting--greatness as an earthly people, honor as the elect nation through whom the New Covenant blessings will be opened up to all mankind.

As already pointed out, Isaac, the son of Abraham, typified the Messiah of glory, the Son of God and Heir of all the promises--the One through whom alone eternal life may be obtained and restitution to that perfection which will enable Israel and the world to keep the Divine Law perfectly and to merit the gift of God, eternal life, according to their New Law Covenant, by and through its great Mediator--Messiah.

ELEAZAR TYPE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In due time, Abraham sent his trusted servant Eleazar (typical of the Holy Spirit) to select a Bride for his son Isaac. Eleazar might not go everywhere. He was directed to go only to those of Abraham's family, thus implying that none would be called to be the Bride of Messiah except such as were already in relationship to God through faith, obedience and justification. When the servant had found Rebecca he put upon her certain jewels, explained to her and her relatives the nature of his mission, and asked her if she were willing to come and be Isaac's Bride. He said, "My master, Abraham, is very rich; and all that he hath he hath given unto Isaac."

Thus the great riches of God are again illustrated in Abraham, and the fact that Messiah is His Son and the Heir of all the promises of God, the One through whom Israel and all mankind shall be blessed. Rebecca promptly responded, and thus betrothed herself to the unseen bridegroom and hasted with the servant to Isaac. As

her kinsfolk bade her goodbye they wished her a blessing in these words, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." --**Gen. 24:60**.

We read that "Rebecca arose and her damsels [maids, servants], and they rode upon the camels and followed the man Eleazar."

Here we find, in harmony with other Scriptures, a picture of the Gospel Age, and its work of bringing to Messiah a special Bride class of saintly ones. First

amongst these saints were some of the Jewish nation, according to the Divine Rule; as the Scriptures set forth --"to the Jew first." This Bride class has been selected from every nation, people, kindred and tongue yet in all will be but a little flock--"Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"--the spiritual, unseen Kingdom of Messiah--joint-heirship with Him in His Throne--not the earthly Kingdom which has been promised definitely to Israel.--**Eph. 2:12-17**.

BRIDE CLASS AND GREAT COMPANY

Other Scriptures have shown us that amongst these saints there are two classes. A few, peculiarly devoted, will constitute the Bride class. A larger number, not so courageous for the truth and righteousness, will constitute her companions, her servants, as Rebecca travelled accompanied by her maidens. These two classes are particularly specified in the Scriptures (**Psalm 45**), where we read of the Messiah-Bride and Queen. In her resurrection glory she is pictured as the Queen robed in gold of Ophir with fine needlework--the glory representing the Divine nature which will be granted her, and the fine needlework representing her glorious righteousness, embellished with the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The Psalmist tells that she shall be brought into the presence of the great King Jehovah, and then adds that the virgins, or companions, that follow her shall also be brought into the presence of the King, thus showing that there will always be a difference of rank on the spiritual plane.

SM206

These two classes are pictured in the Law as Priests and Levites, the Bride class being represented by the Priests, owing to their willing sacrifices of the earthly portion in favor of the Heavenly.

We are not to identify the Bride class with the nominal Christian Churches of today any more than we would identify the Apostles with the Jewish Church of their day. The Apostles were a select few; and similarly all the members of the Church throughout the Age have been a select few out of a nominal many. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." The true Church has been selected,

not only from all of the twelve tribes of Israel, but from every other nation, people and tongue, even so many as the Lord our God has called.--**2 Tim. 2:19**.

Rebecca's leaving her father's house typified the personal consecration of each one who, led of the Spirit, accepts the Divine invitation to joint-heirship with Christ. The first jewelry given to Rebecca, when first she heeded the invitation and invited the servant to her home, represents the earliest blessing received by believers. The jewelry she received after she had decided to go to Isaac and become his wife represents the blessings of the Holy Spirit which come upon the fully consecrated, those who determine to walk in the footsteps of Jesus in the narrow way into the Kingdom, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Arrived at the end of her journey, she found herself in the presence of Isaac, and immediately alighted from her camel and covered herself with a veil. Thus pictorially is represented the fact that the Church, when having experienced the change of the First Resurrection and having entered the presence of the Heavenly Bridegroom, will no longer need the guidance of the Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures. This part of the picture, of course, is yet future. The Scriptures, however, indicate, and outward conditions corroborate the fact, that the time of this glorious change is nigh at hand.

SM207

MOTHER OF THOUSANDS OF MILLIONS

Isaac immediately received Rebecca, and took her into his mother's tent. Sarah had died, and Rebecca became her successor. Thus is beautifully pictured the fact that when the Bride of Messiah shall be complete on the plane of glory, the Sarah Covenant will be at an end, and its place, as a channel of blessing, will be taken by the glorified Church. Then will be fulfilled the prophetic blessing of her relatives, "Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." Those thousands of millions represent the world of mankind, which will be regenerated, or granted new life, by the great Messiah during the thousand years of His reign as the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Messiah will be the Regenerator and His Bride will be

the nourisher, instructor, helper, of all mankind under the New Covenant; for it will be this antitypical Isaac and his Bride that will mediate for Israel, and through Israel for the world, the New Covenant of Restitution blessings. (**Acts 3:19-21**.) "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," applies primarily, as St. Paul shows, to Messiah and His Church in glory--the sacrifices being past, the spiritual nature being attained as a reward for the sacrifices.--**Gal. 3:16,29**.

Whoever will first receive Messiah and come into harmony with the righteous laws of His invisible Kingdom will be the first to be blessed. There will be no partiality in this matter; for "God is no respecter of persons." However, because of their past experiences and earthly hopes and trust in the Law and the Prophets, the Jews will be the first amongst the nations to accept the new order of things and to ally themselves with it. Therefore, to them will the blessings go first and through them the blessings will extend to all mankind.--**Acts 10:34**.

While thanking God for the glorious prospects of that glorious time which is nearing, let us, dear friends, seek to make our calling and election sure to membership in the Body of the Bride of Christ.

SM208

ISRAEL'S NEW COVENANT

"The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His Temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold He shall come, saith Jehovah of Hosts; but who may abide the day of His coming?"--**Mal. 3:1-5**.

Six thousand years ago in Eden our Maker, in justly sentencing His disobedient children to death, intimated that ultimately the Seed of the woman would bruise the Serpent's head. This hidden promise was the first intimation of the Divine mercy which our gracious Creator had purposed in Himself from before the foundation of the world. Ever noble, kind and gracious our Creator restrained His mercy for the good of His creatures--that they might learn to appreciate the exceeding sinfulness of sin. For the good of the angels also--that they might fully know of His justice, as well as of His Wisdom and Power--God insisted upon dealing with His creatures from the standpoint of exact justice. They had sinned, and thereby had forfeited all claim upon the eternal life which He had given them conditionally.

Eternal torment, as we have already seen, did not in any sense or degree enter into the Divine purpose. His sentence upon man, plainly stated, was, "Dying thou shalt die," not, Living thou shalt live in torment. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (**Gen. 2:17**; **Ezek. 18:4**.) God purposed to exemplify in His dealings with our race a principle of Divine government to be made operative everywhere ultimately--amongst all His creatures on the spirit plane, as well as upon the earthly.

Long centuries after, in the seventh generation of Adam's children, God spoke prophetically through one of these, Enoch, saying, "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of His holy ones to execute justice in the earth" --to establish righteousness amongst men. Time passed

SM209

on; but sin prevailed, and the coming of the Great Deliverer was still future.--**Jude 14**.

Next God spoke to Abraham, after first having tested

his faith and loyalty. To him He mentioned the same great Deliverer who would bruise the Serpent's head and who would come in great glory with ten thousands of His holy ones. To Abraham He gave assurance that this One would, in some way, be identified with his posterity, so that He might properly be called the Seed of Abraham. God said, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 12:3**.

The Divine Program was not changed, but more explicit statements were given respecting it. Thereafter all taught of God would know to look for the Messianic blessing through Abraham's Seed. Besides, the Covenant was afterward confirmed with an Oath to Abraham; later to Isaac; later to Jacob. That Covenant Promise became the basis of God's adoption of the entire nation of Israel--all of Jacob's children. They were heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant--the Oath-Bound Covenant. If so great an honor from the Almighty God has made some of the Jewish people at times to appear arrogant and proud, let us not forget that to err is human--to forgive, Divine. Perhaps if we were in their stead our imperfections would similarly display themselves.

GOD'S COVENANT OF THE LAW

Israel's experiences of tribulation and bondage in Egypt were probably necessary to prepare them for God's great proposition--that they should keep the Law and as a reward have life everlasting. As it is written, "He that doeth these things shall live by them." (**Lev. 18:5**.) Israel greatly rejoiced in this manifestation of Divine preference for them more than for all others of humanity. The Law Covenant was mediated. The sacrifice of bulls and of goats made a typical atonement for them for a year, so that they might enter into this covenant

relationship with God. But when they attempted to keep the Law they were disappointed. They failed. The Law of God is the full measure of a perfect man's ability; and the Jews, being imperfect like other men, found that they had undertaken an impossibility.

Not a Jew kept the Law perfectly. Not a Jew, therefore,

gained eternal life during the first year. But foreknowing this, God had made preparation for a repetition of the Atonement Day every year, so that the people might continue striving to attain eternal life. Year after year, century after century, they failed, and discouragement took the place of hope. God was teaching them a great lesson respecting the need of *better sacrifices* than those of bulls and of goats, and also teaching them that there is no other means of justification in His sight. They had blessings under this Covenant--educational blessings, but not the blessing hoped for, not *life eternal.* Hence they were not in a position to become, as they had hoped, a national Messiah, a national Seed of Abraham, for the blessing of all the nations.

NEW COVENANT AND BETTER MEDIATOR

For a time God gave them kings, but these were unable to accomplish the great things hoped for. But the promise of a personal Messiah was made, who should be of the lineage of David, a great King, far superior to the great, wise and rich Solomon, Messiah would be David's Son and yet David's Lord. (**Psa. 110:1**; **Matt. 22:42-44**). Here, as God designed, Israel began to get the thought of a personal Messiah, a King of Glory, who would use their nation as His instrumentality for the conquering of the world, when every knee should bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God.

The next lesson for Israel to learn was that a change of dispensation must come--that, as Moses had mediated the Law Covenant, so an antitypical Moses, a greater than Moses, would induct them into the blessings and

privileges of a still better covenant, a covenant more favorable to them, one under which they could gain eternal life. This New Covenant was particularly set before them through Jeremiah's prophecy (**31:31-34**). And this, combined with the statement of Moses respecting a greater Mediator, helped their faith to take a fresh hold upon the Oath-Bound Abrahamic Promise--"In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

If a great enough Mediator should come as the promised

Messenger of God, and should establish a better covenant, under which Israel could have eternal life, and if He, as the offspring of David, should become their King, then indeed Abraham's Seed, the nation of Israel under that great Mediator-King, would be fully qualified to bless all the families of the earth. The thought of this glory to their nation became a fresh inspiration, and around it gathered the fifty odd thousand of Jews, out of all the tribes of Israel, who returned from Babylonian captivity under the edict of Cyrus.

Through the Prophet Ezekiel the Lord again made mention of the fact that their Law Covenant made at Sinai must, before their great blessing of *restitution,* give place to a New Covenant, a better covenant. Speaking of the time when He would regather them out of all lands and would fulfil to them the promise made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and make them a great nation, and use them for the blessing of other nations, the Lord declares, "Not for your sakes do I this, O House of Israel, but for My name's sake." He then proceeds to tell them that at the time He would receive them back into His love and favor He would also humble their pride by restoring the Samaritans and the Sodomites--peoples whom Israel detested as inferiors and sinners.--**Ezek. 36:22**.

God declares that neither of these peoples had ever committed as serious sins against Divine goodness as had Israel, and that when He would again bless Israel He would bless also these other peoples in their midst. Let

me quote His words: "When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their *former estate,* and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their *former estate,* then thou and thy daughters shall return to your *former estate*....Nevertheless I will remember My *Covenant* with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting Covenant,...and I will give them [Sodomites and Samaritans] unto thee for daughters, but not by *thy* Covenant [not under the Old Law Covenant; but under the New Law Covenant of the future], and I will establish My Covenant with thee; ...[in order 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."--**Ezek. 16:55-63**.

"ABIDE THE DAY OF HIS COMING"

This new and better Covenant is to be mediated through a personal Messiah--a still more glorious Mediator than Moses, a still more glorious King than David--this One whom Israel began to look for and to long for. Can we wonder that they failed to identify Him in the lowly Nazarene who died at Calvary? We cannot! Nothing but a special assistance of the Holy Spirit would enable any one to trace the connection between the glorious pictures of the prophecies and the humble appearance of Him who came to fulfil those prophecies. We do see, however, that the great Messiah of Glory, Jesus, in His Second Advent as King of kings and Lord of lords, fills absolutely every demand of Jewish expectation and of prophetic outline. Some can see, but others cannot as yet, that He who was pierced is the same One who, as the Son of God, in great glory is shortly to bless Israel--and all the families of the earth through Israel.

Our text is from another prophecy speaking of this same great Messiah, the Mediator of the New Covenant, King of kings and Lord of lords, who, as the Representative

of the great Jehovah, His Father, is to reign until all enemies shall be put down--until Satan shall be bound and, ultimately, shall be crushed; until Adam and his race, released from Divine sentence, under the New Covenant provisions shall be uplifted from sin, degradation and death to perfection and everlasting life--the unwilling and disobedient being destroyed in the Second Death.

The Prophet Malachi points out that the Messiah of the New Covenant, whom he announces, is the glorious Mediator and antitypical King for whom they had waited long and of whom they delighted to think. He would come to the Temple--thus implying that He would be not only an antitypical Prophet, an antitypical King, but also an antitypical Priest--"after the order of Melchizedek."

But after this joyful proclamation that their long-expected and gloried-in Mediator of the New Covenant should be looked for, they were warned that His Day

would be one of trial, one of special testing and proving, that the Lord might find the antitypical Priests and antitypical Levites to serve in the antitypical Temple. He would be like a refiner of fire to take away the dross and to leave only the pure metal--fiery trials and testings being implied. He would "be like fuller's soap," in the sense that a great washing would take place to make for the Kingdom the called, chosen and faithful.--**Mal. 3:2**.

At that time the consecration of Judah and Jerusalem unto the Lord will be accepted as in olden times. We may understand that this spirit of devotion is now reviving amongst the Jews, particularly amongst those who are identified with Jerusalem and the Zionist movement. Hitherto this has been a political movement in the interest of Jewish nationalization and a home for exiles. Now, however, the due time has come for a real movement of those who have the faith to draw near to God and to show that faith by helping forward in the restoration of earthly Jerusalem and her interests.

SM214

WHY MESSIAH'S COMING DELAYED

The First-begotten of the Father, as His glorious Agent in the great work of creation, had the honor granted Him of becoming the great Messenger of the Covenant, the great Prophet, Priest and King of Israel, the great Michael of **Daniel 12:1**. But there were tests connected with His attainment of this high position: (1) By faith He must lay aside His Heavenly glory, in obedience to the Father's will, to become a man--not a sinful man, but a perfect man--holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. (2) Thus prepared to become the Redeemer it was His privilege to make full consecration of His earthly interest, and the Father's pleasure to beget Him of the Holy Spirit at Jordan to the spirit nature on the highest plane. For three and a half years His sacrifice burned upon the altar. It was indeed better than the sacrifice of bulls and goats; for it was a corresponding price for Adam--an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a man's life for a man's life. (3) When Jesus had thus sacrificially parted with His earthly life He experienced a resurrection change from human nature to

spiritual, like what He was originally, only higher and more glorious. Thus He was at once both a sacrifice and the spirit-begotten priest who offered that sacrifice. When He arose from the dead His personal sacrifice had ended, and His personal perfection as a spirit being was completed.--**Heb. 10:1-14**; **13:11-13**.

Then why did He not at once begin His great work as Prophet, Priest, King and New Covenant Mediator for Israel and through Israel for the world? It was because there was to be more than one sacrifice in the Divine Plan on the Day of Atonement. Throughout this Gospel Age this risen, glorified High Priest, Mediator, Prophet and King has been waiting to inaugurate His glorious Kingdom of blessing--waiting while a little handful of saints should be selected from the world,

tested and found worthy and glorified with Himself--a "little flock" out of all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles.

When this Bride class shall have completed her sacrifice in and under the merit of the great Priest, then every arrangement for the blessing of Israel as Abraham's seed, and of all nations through Israel, will have forthwith commenced. Thus seen, the revelation of Israel's great Messenger of the New Covenant is very important not only to the Jew, but also to the world of mankind, who must receive their blessings under Israel by a compliance with the same New Law Covenant. Moreover, the elect handful of saints drawn, called and gathered during the parenthesis period are also deeply interested in God's glorious Kingdom; for the Divine promise is that they shall be then changed to be like their Master and share His glory.

JUDGMENTS WILL BE OF THE LORD

Notice the further message of the Lord through the Prophet, "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those who oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right."--**Mal. 3:5**.

Ah, do we not see here plainly stated that the Messianic Kingdom means not only glory and honor to those whom He will accept as servants, but also requirements of faithfulness to the principles of truth, of purity, of harmony with God? And this lesson for the Jew, under his New Covenant arrangement, will ultimately apply to all nations. Under that new arrangement, under Israel's New Covenant, all the families of the earth will be privileged to become "Israelites indeed" through faithfulness to the great Prophet, Priest, King and Mediator of Israel and of all the families of the earth.

SM216

THE CHIEF SOURCE OF PERSECUTION

"Perils among false brethren."--**2 Cor. 11:26**.

St. Paul was remarkable in many respects, but chiefly for his loving devotion to the Master and His Cause. His faithfulness brought also many trying experiences. In our context he enumerated some of these. He served the Cause of Christ to such an extent that many thought him unwise, and counted him a fool. This service brought him stripes, whippings, as a disturber of the peace--not that he *did* disturb the peace, but that those who opposed his teachings raised a tumult and blamed him for it, in order to bring him into disrepute, hinder his service and forward their own interests. This at times brought him to prison, too, and even close to death's door.

Nevertheless, the Apostle rejoiced in all such privileges. He declared that five times he received whippings, stripes; once he was stoned, and three times he was shipwrecked. But none of these things moved him from faithfulness to his Master, whose servants he had persecuted before his eyes were opened. Then he recounts various perils experienced from waters, from robbers, from the Jews, from the heathen--in the city, in the wilderness, on the sea. He winds up the list of perils in the words of the text, "Perils among false brethren."

One question which will arise in many minds is, "Were these sufferings--stripes, perils, etc.--deserved?" If asked, the answer would surely be that they were *not* deserved; for St. Paul was a noble character and bore the Message of God's grace in Christ--"good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people." The next question with some would be, "If his sufferings were not punishments, what were they?"

SM217

We reply that they were the same as were the Master's --evidences of his loyalty to God and of the darkness of the world, which led them to oppose him. The declaration, "Whosoever will live godly will suffer persecution," was fully exemplified in his own experiences

and in the Master's. The amount of suffering as a reward for well-doing marked the measure of loyalty and zeal, and the measure of hatred and malice aroused by the Adversary. The answer to the question as to why Jesus suffered is the answer to all such questions in respect to St. Paul and all other footstep followers.

DARKNESS HATES THE LIGHT

The Master declared that He stood for the principles of light, righteousness, Truth; while Satan stands for the reverse--darkness, superstition, blindness. And so it is with the followers of Jesus. They must all be children of the light, must walk in the light, must be uncompromising in their attitude toward sin and all that is wrong. Therefore the world will hate them and say all manner of evil against them falsely. Yea, men will feel that they do God service when they slay the righteous, whether literally, as in Jesus' case and St. Paul's, or by "shooting out arrows, even bitter words," as is the more popular method of the present time.--**Psa. 64:3**.

But some one will say, "Ah, times have changed! Today our bishops and popes and preachers are all reverenced. No one thinks of persecuting them. Rather all men speak well of them. Any one not spoken well of today must be in some way unworthy." How strange that we should forget, and argue along these lines! Were there not Doctors of Divinity in Jesus' day? Were there not priests and chief priests and Levites then? And were there not Pharisees who made long prayers in the Temple? And were they not highly spoken of and reverenced? Did they not make broad their phylacteries? Did any one think of traducing *them?* No, indeed!

But the *Master* was there and His disciples; and they

were not of the popular clergy. By their own record they were styled "the filth and off-scouring of the earth"; and, as the Master said, whoever persecuted them thought that he did God service. How apt we all are to think of our own day as being different from other periods! So it was in Jesus' day. As He told some of them, "Ye garnish the sepulchers of those whom your

fathers slew, yet ye do their works." So today many extol the Lord and the Apostles, and denounce their persecutors, while they similarly persecute.--**Luke 11:47,48**.

The climax of St. Paul's perils, the severest of them all, was from false brethren. How strange that seems! One would think that however much the heathen or the Jews might have persecuted him, at least all professed followers of Jesus would have thanked God for his example and ministry, and have esteemed him. But this was not so; and as we look back to the Master before him, we see the same to be true. As He declared, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household."

The Master was a Jew. The Jews were His brethren according to the flesh; and it was they that hated Him without a cause--they that persecuted Him--they that said, "He hath a devil and is mad"--they that "took up stones to stone Him"--they that finally crucified Him. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not," except a few saintly, elect ones.--**John 10:20,31**; **1:11**.

St. Paul also had persecution from the Jews, who repeatedly sought his life. He lived after the establishment of the Church. He had also Christian brethren, begotten of the Holy Spirit and fellow-members of the Body of Christ. Jesus had none such. "Of the people there was none with Him."--**Isa. 63:3**.

The Holy Spirit was not given until Pentecost; hence Jesus could not receive *Christian* persecution. The nearest approximation was the case of Judas. But if St. Paul enjoyed the sweetness of Christian fellowship in his study, labors and toils, he also knew the bitterness of

opposition and persecutions from false brethren--the climax of his perils. We may be sure that such experiences were more difficult for him to bear than any others, because they came closer home. They came from brethren of the closest imaginable relationship--fellow-members of the Body of Christ.

THE GODLY SUFFER PERSECUTION

As we glance down through this Gospel Age, from St. Paul's day to the present, we find that all followers

of Jesus have had experiences such as He foretold for them--persecutions. We find that these persecutions have come from every quarter, but none, apparently, more severe, more cruel, more perilous, than those which have come from Christian brethren. It is scarcely necessary for us to refer to history to demonstrate this fact. Disputes between Christians have been very bitter. Thousands have lost their lives at each other's hands. The word *heretic* became more obnoxious than any other term in the dictionary.

Neither Catholic nor Protestant can deny the terrible story of the pages of history. All true men are ashamed of the record. All are ready to say, *"We* would not so have done." Monuments stand in various parts of the world, marking places where sectarian strife has manifested itself in atrocious, barbarous acts. Our Catholic friends blush at the story of the Huguenots. Our Church of England friends blush at the story of the Covenanters and other non-conformists. Our Presbyterian friends, in turn, blush for atrocious acts of injustice, etc., done in the name of Calvinism.

We might also say that each denomination in its turn has been a subject of persecution from one and another. Baptists were publicly whipped--sometimes driven from their homes to exile. So were the Puritans, who afterwards became persecutors themselves. The Methodists also suffered from sectarian spite and jealousy, ignorance and superstition. Indeed, who will dispute that

Christendom has *good cause* to be ashamed of her own record, no matter what her standpoint may be?

Thank God for the advancement made along the line of human sympathy! No longer can civilized people take pleasure in public executions, tortures, burning at the stake, as in former times. Whatever competition may remain between Christian brethren, the peril is not that of open persecution; for general sentiment has advanced beyond the point where physical torture could be tolerated by the masses.

We have come to the time when Calvinists erect a monument to Servetus, expressing dissent from their great leader's mistake in causing a Christian brother to be burned. We have come to the place where the "perils

among false brethren" are of a different kind. Now whatever jealousies or rivalries there may be, either at home or in the mission fields, are recognized as improper and suppressed, so far as brethren connected with popular and influential bodies of Christians are concerned.

But is it not true today that the Truth is unpopular? Has this not always been the fact? Is it not true that in proportion as the denominations have become popular they have escaped persecution? But woe be to those who are unpopular, as were Jesus and the Apostles! If they indeed escape the cross, the guillotine, the rack and the fagot, they are amenable to other means of torture. Something can be trumped up against their personality. Insinuations can be given by word and look, and shrug of shoulder. More damage can be accomplished in this way than in any outward attack.

Evil speaking, evil surmising, slanders, ambiguous suggestions, etc.--all, as torture--can be applied to the followers of Jesus today. And all who today take such a course are sharers with the malefactors, even though they do not indulge in *physical* torture. Who can dispute that sometimes *mental* torture is equally severe? In our day there are other and more refined ways of persecuting,

torturing, open to false brethren, than imprisonment or crucifixion or burning.

And what shall we say of the false brethren who do such things? And how shall we assure ourselves that we shall not be of them? Undoubtedly the Master is still of the same mind as St. John expressed when he declared, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." (**1 John 3:15**.) Murderers may indeed receive severe stripes, and eventually learn better under Messiah's Kingdom; but no one of a murderous condition of heart, seeking to do evil to a brother, could possibly be of suitable character to be a joint-heir with his Master in the Kingdom.--**1 Cor. 6:9-11**.

"ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE"

In every time, and now, the spirit of persecution naturally

would strike most prominently certain leading figures; nevertheless, even as Jesus' words implied, all lovers of righteousness are to have more or less share in such experiences of opposition. St. Paul mentions this, saying, "Ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock...and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." (**Heb. 10:32,33**.) Jesus gives us the same thought in His declaration that whosoever shall offend one of the least of these, His disciples, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.--**Matt. 18:6**.

This, of course, is very highly figurative language, and yet it must have a special meaning. It must mean that the Lord has a special care over all of His consecrated saints; and that no matter how poor, how weak, how ignorant, they may be, the very least of His followers are supervised, and injury to the least is punishable. Of course, there would still be an awakening from the dead for the one who was drowned in the sea; and so there are possibilities of help and recovery for those

who would stumble the Lord's "little ones." Nevertheless, the intimation is that of drastic punishment. This would not mean anything like we once supposed--eternal torment--but some just recompense of reward for every evil deed.--**2 Peter 2:9**.

From this standpoint we may readily assume that considerable satisfaction of Justice is necessary; for surely a considerable number of the Lord's "little ones" have suffered persecution. And as we have seen, not all of this persecution lies at the door of the world. Much of it lies at the door of the professed Church of Christ--"false brethren."--**Isa. 66:5**; **Matt. 7:21-23**.

Speaking of some such, Jesus once declared that they would have great disappointment when the time of rewards would come. He says, "Many shall say unto Me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name,...and done many wonderful works? And I will declare, I do not recognize you." They will not be worthy of the Lord's recognition as amongst His Elect Church, His Bride class. We shall be glad if they will be found worthy of some blessing under His Kingdom.

But there will be great disappointment to them. They missed the greater point of the Gospel--*Love*.

LOVE FOR THE BRETHREN

The Lord's will concerning all His followers is that they should love one another as He loved them. St. John expressed this sentiment, saying that as Jesus loved the Church and laid down His life for the Church, so also His followers should lay down their lives for the brethren. (**1 John 3:16**.) If this is the *love standard* that the Lord has sent for His people, how sorely some will soon be disappointed in respect to His will if they have ignored this requirement. If, instead of loving the brethren and laying down their lives for them, they say all manner of evil against them, etc., what then? Then they are false brethren. Then they are the peril of the true brethren.

Oh, how much the true followers of Jesus need to

impress upon themselves this great lesson--that love does no ill to his neighbor, that love is sympathetic, suffereth long and is kind, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, seeketh not merely its own interest and welfare, but seeketh the interest and welfare of others!

The supreme test of our loyalty to God is our love for Him. And this love is manifested by our desire to do those things acceptable to Him. There is little that we really can do for the Almighty. He is so great and we are so small! But if we have His spirit of Love, then we shall love all those who love Him. And our conduct toward them will demonstrate the real sentiment of our hearts. Thus seen, we are daily making our reward in the Lord's sight, daily showing Him to what degree we are worthy or unworthy of His great reward.

Those mentioned in our text as false brethren were perilous to the true brethren, but did not get into this position immediately. It was a growth, a development. The wrong spirit gradually supplanted the right. It is well that Christians note this insidious canker which gnaws at the root of brotherly love, tends to poison the spirit and to bring forth the evil fruitage mentioned. Apparently, in some cases, the spirit of pride, the spirit

of sectarianism, the spirit of ambition, are the leading features of the wrong course, which, if permitted to go to the heart, will develop a bad fruitage, such as we are discussing. It will produce false brethren, persecuting brethren, blind to the real spirit of their Master, heady, high-minded.--**Jude 11**; **Gen. 4:6,7**.

Let us then, beloved, be more and more on guard against the encroachments of the Adversary upon us as New Creatures! Let us be more and more zealous for the Spirit of our Master and show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light! In no way can we better show forth these praises than by exemplifying in our daily conduct the lessons we have learned of Him!

SM224

THE JUDGMENT DAY

PICTURED BY JESUS

*"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."--**Matt. 25:40**.*

This Scripture is generally misunderstood and misused. If one has not studied it in its connections, one would quite likely think that the Lord is referring to those who have lived during the Gospel Age. But the context shows that He refers to those living in the Millennial Age. The principle, however, is helpful to us now. Whoever does a kindness for any one belonging to the Lord is counted by Him as doing it unto Him.

In the parable of the Sheep and the Goats we read, "When the Son of Man shall come in all His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the Throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations"--peoples, not the Church. The Church will be with Him in His Throne. (**Col. 3:4**.) Those spoken of here as gathered before the Throne will be the whole world of mankind. These are sometimes called Gentiles, meaning those not in covenant relationship with God.

In the past God made a covenant with the nation of Israel alone. Therefore all other nations and peoples were outsiders. During this Gospel Age the Lord has made a covenant with the Church, through Christ, a special Covenant of Sacrifice into which you and I are privileged to enter. The opportunity to make this Covenant of Sacrifice has been open throughout the Gospel Age; and all who come to God through that covenant are said to be Israelites indeed.--**Gal. 3:8,16,29**.

Our text refers, not to Christians, but to Gentiles--the world in general. Before Messiah's Throne shall be gathered all people, all nations. "And He shall separate them the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep

SM225

from the goats." It is not a class separation, but an individual one. Whoever, after trial, demonstrates that

he is a goat will go over to the left hand. Whoever proves himself to be a sheep will go to the right. The whole picture refers to the thousand years of the Messianic Reign, the world's judgment, the world's trial. The sole object of that Reign is to prove who will desire to be God's sheep, to come into His fold and have His Son as their Shepherd, and who will not come into harmony with Him, but will have a goat-like nature. Then Christ will deal with them accordingly.

A THOUSAND YEARS OF SEPARATING WORK

Gradually all the goats are gathered to the left hand, and all the sheep to the right hand. In figurative language the Lord thus designates the place of disfavor and that of favor. These two classes will not be aware of the fact that they are going to the right or to the left, as the parable shows. Not until the conclusion of the trial do they find out where they stand.

The question arises, In what way will the people have an opportunity of ministering to the Lord's brethren during the Millennial Age? We note that the Apostles were in prison sometimes because of their service to the Lord and were ministered unto; and that some of the Lord's followers since have been in prison or in need of assistance; but that probably not very many have been in prison or hungry or naked. Presumably it has been so all down the Gospel Age. Hence it is difficult to see how this parable could have any reference to us. Now we see what the parable means, and this is the explanation:

Throughout the Millennial Age The Messiah will be dealing with the world of mankind, the majority of whom are now in the great prison-house of death. The Apostle Paul, in speaking of the resurrection, says that the dead shall come forth "every man in his own order," or company or class. They will not all come forth at once. The

Church class will come forth first; then the Great Company class; and early in the new order of things will come forth the Ancient Worthies, who will be the earthly representatives of God's Kingdom.--**1 Cor. 15:21-23**.

As Jesus said to some in His day, "Ye shall see Abraham,

Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God." (**Luke 13:28**.) They will be the human representatives of the Heavenly Kingdom, which will be invisible. Jesus said nothing about their seeing Himself. Neither did He say, "Ye shall see these My disciples in the Kingdom." He did say, however, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more." St. John tells us that the Church shall be like her Lord. (**1 John 3:2**.) If the world will not see Him, they will not see the Church; for the Church will be spirit beings, that cannot be seen.

So we have these orders, at least: The Little Flock, the Great Company, the Ancient Worthies, and the world of mankind--"every man in his own order." Jesus said, "The hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." (**John 5:25-29**.) As the world return from the tomb, our thought is that they will come back in answer to prayer, very much the same as did Lazarus. The Lord, you remember, said, "Where have ye laid him?" Then He lifted up His eyes and prayed to the Father, after which He said, "Lazarus, come forth."--**John 11:41-44**.

MINISTERING UNTO MILLENNIUM BRETHREN

We do not understand that in the Millennial Age the people will have power to command the dead to come forth from the tomb, but that our Lord Jesus will have that power. As He prayed for the restoration of Lazarus, not because of any service which Lazarus would do for Him, but because Lazarus was the brother of Martha and Mary, so we conceive that nearly all the world will come forth in answer to the prayers of their brothers, their sisters, their parents, children and friends.

SM227

To illustrate: Suppose that you and I were of the Restitution class, and not of the Church class. Suppose that we were living down in the Millennial Age, and that Restitution had progressed so far that the world was in good shape--plenty of machinery for conducting affairs, more being produced than was needed, etc. Then the Lord would let us know, as a world, that we might have the privilege of co-operating with God, that we might

join with Christ in the work of Restitution. We might say, "First of all, let us pray for father." We would not desire to have father get here and find that there was no place for him to eat or sleep or live; so we would make provision for him.

Similarly, we would provide for mother and for other relatives. Each would thus be brought forth, preparations being made to assist them when they would come back into life. This whole work of bringing mankind back into life will be God's work. It will be the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the work of spirit beings, as God's agents. But human beings will be permitted to co-operate, through their interest in humanity.

The "sheep" class of that Age will be those who will have the Lord's spirit; and as the Lord's purpose will be to bring people back from death, to teach them and to prepare them for eternal life, all the sheep will feel the same way. This they will do gladly, because they have a love for this work. They will be feeding, clothing and helping those whom they have gotten out of the prison-house of death. Their prayers will go out continually after those in prison. This explains the whole work of the Millennial Age, and shows how all the people will come into harmony with God.

THE INDIFFERENT, SELFISH CLASS

But there will be some who will say, "I do not care so much about this matter. I would rather go automobiling than to care for these people." The sheep class will be busy working, working right along; but the goat class

will be showing their selfish disposition. God does not purpose that any who are selfish shall have everlasting life. Selfishness came in as a result of sin. You and I were born selfish, and could not help it; but we have better knowledge now. We are beginning to see God's way. All then in true sympathy with God and righteousness will be cultivating love in their hearts.

After the sheep class have provided for those already recovered from the prison-house of death, they will say, "Now let us ask for others to come back. Let

us get back Uncle Jim." The others will say, "I do not see why we should bother about Uncle Jim. He was only a distant relative. He did not leave me anything when he died." But the one with the sheep-like disposition will say, "Poor old Uncle Jim! I shall try to give a good welcome back. He will wonder that conditions are so changed. He never saw these things which we now have. When He died, he thought that he was going to Hell. This will be his greatest blessing!"

THE LOVING, UNSELFISH CLASS

Thus the sheep class will take their pleasure along the lines in which God and Christ will be taking theirs. Do you think that God, Christ and the Church will be running around Heaven in automobiles? The sheep class will say, in effect, "How can we co-operate with Christ in this work of blessing the world?" They may not realize it, but they will be developing a noble, Christlike character. They will be doing themselves good as well as those raised from the dead.

At the close of the Age the Lord will say to the sheep class, "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took Me; naked, and ye clothed Me; sick and in prison, and ye visited Me"; for "inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me." You did not know it, but I was watching you. You are on My right hand--in My favor. The Father wishes you to have the

Kingdom originally given to Father Adam but lost through disobedience.

No other class will be given the kingdom. God is not selfish, but is always considering what He can do for somebody else. All of His people must have His spirit. All mankind must eventually have the same spirit or they cannot get the earthly kingdom. The Heavenly Kingdom is for those of the Church who prove worthy. They will get it because they have the spirit of love; and those of the world who cultivate the Lord's spirit will receive the kingdom prepared for them *from* the foundation of the world. (**Gen. 1:26-28**.) Christ's Kingdom was prepared

from *before* the foundation of the world. Mankind's will be an earthly kingdom a Paradise world-wide.

EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED

So, dear friends, there is a little lesson here for us. We see in this parable God's disposition. It helps us to understand His mind. But you may say, "It is not natural for me to act so unselfishly." All the more need, then, for you to cultivate that spirit. The Lord is not looking for natural people, but for New Creatures.

"But," you say, "in my case it would make a great difference; for my mind is not formed that way." We reply, "You must be transformed--formed over again. We are all wrong to start with. We must get out of the condition in which we were born."--**Rom. 12:1,2**.

The Lord does not say that we must entirely transform our flesh. But He does say that we must transform our mind, our will. We must show Him that our mind is continually striving for those things which are good, kind, loving and generous. He will take note of what we are striving to do.

Lest we should be accused of neglecting a certain part of this parable, let me remind you how it reads. The goat class are to "go away into everlasting punishment." "I thought that you do not believe in everlasting punishment," says one. My dear brother, I always believe

SM230

in everything the Bible says. I believe in everlasting punishment. But what kind it will be is another matter. God says one thing, and some of our creeds have said another thing. Therefore you and I, if true to God, are giving up our creed as unreliable, thoroughly unsound. The Bible says that the punishment will be death; and we believe the Bible.--**Rom. 6:23**; **Ezek. 18:4**.

The creeds have it that everlasting death means everlasting dying, endless torture. So when the Bible speaks of everlasting death, some people have their heads so twisted that they make death mean life. At one time we had our heads badly twisted. We ran into all kinds of difficulties. I am glad that we are getting straightened out. We are able to reason more clearly and to understand the English language better. There is such a thing

as everlasting death. When the goat class are remanded to death, they will become dead everlastingly. They will remain dead to all eternity.

The Greek word *kolasin*, here rendered punishment, means to cut off, or to restrain by cutting off. The Lord will give mankind all the opportunities they wish to be selfish, to choose the wrong way. They will have the opportunities and blessings of the Millennial Age, as long as they will not outwardly violate the Law, as long as they will not injure somebody else. They will not be forced to help the dead. That work will be one of charity, of love. But unless they attain the spirit of love, they will not be fit for the kingdom; for God is Love. Whether on the spirit plane or in the Millennial Kingdom or in the everlasting kingdom of mankind upon the earth, no one shall continue except those who are in accord with God. All others shall be everlastingly cut off from life. See **Acts 3:23**; **Psa. 101:8**; **37:9**; **2 Thess. 1:9**.

FIRE A SYMBOL OF DESTRUCTION

Concerning the wicked, our parable says, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels." Fire always symbolizes destruction, and

everlasting fire would mean an everlasting destruction. What about its being prepared for the Devil and his angels? I answer: The Devil is the father of lies, a murderer from the beginning, the one who "abode not in the Truth." (**John 8:44**.) He has some assistants, "the angels that kept not their first estate." (**Jude 6**.) Instead of remaining holy angels, they became demons, associated under Satan. Their final penalty is to be quite appropriate for them--fire, the fire of God's anger, the fire of God's opposition.

As fire destroys, so God's anger will destroy Satan and all in harmony with him. And because the goat class of mankind manifest the spirit of Satan, the selfish spirit, contrary to the Divine spirit, they will be classed in with Satan and his angels; they will have their portion with Satan and the fallen spirits. They will all be destroyed in the Second Death. This will cleanse the

Universe and have everything pure. Not a sinner will be left in it. Thenceforth all will be governed by Love.

The Lord Jesus Christ was tried; the Church, His Bride, is being tried; the Great Company will be tried, before being received into the Heavenly condition. In the days of Noah all the angels were tried. So all mankind will be tried during the thousand years of Messiah's reign, and only the victors will go into the everlasting conditions. No wonder that the Revelator, prophesying of that glorious time, says "Every creature in Heaven [the Church, the Great Company, the angels, the cherubim and seraphim], and on earth, and under the earth [those now in the tomb], heard I saying, Blessing, glory, honor and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever!"--**Rev. 5:13**.

Soon all shall come, and coming sing,
Throughout this earthly ball,
Hosannas to our Heavenly King,
And hail Him, hail Him, hail Him,
Hail Him Lord of all!

SM232

FORCES MUSTERING FOR ARMAGEDDON

"For the great Day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"--**Rev. 6:17**.

God seems to have given the Book of Revelation with the intent of covering up great and important truths, not only because these were not due to be understood, but because He designs to keep certain features of His Plan from the world. Being a book of symbols, the Revelation will not be understood by the world in general; but the Bible assures that when the due time for revealment comes, the wise amongst His people, "The wise virgins," shall understand.--**Dan. 12:10**; **Matt. 25:1-13**.

The Prophet Daniel, who tells us that the Time of the End is the time for those wise toward God to understand His great Plan, gives two particular signs by which this time will be especially marked: First, "Many shall run to and fro"; second, "knowledge shall be increased." (**Dan. 12:4**.) Today we see this prophecy fulfilled. All over the world the people are running to and fro as never before; and all over the world are opportunities for knowledge such as have never before been known. The remarkable fulfilment of this prophecy characterizes our day as the Time of the End, in which this Gospel Age is to be concluded and the Messianic Age to be ushered in --the time when God's people will understand and prepare for their change.

In the Scriptures God has seen fit to associate the name of Israel's famous battlefield with the great controversy between Truth and Error, Right and Wrong, with which the change of dispensation will take place. While the phrase, "Battle of Armageddon," is heard on all sides and is applied in many ways, nevertheless Christians realize that in the Bible this phrase is used in a

SM233

spiritual sense. Therefore if the present is an opportune

time to consider this Battle of the great Day of God Almighty, surely it is the proper time to view it from its true religious standpoint.

Before we proceed to set forth our understanding of the symbolic language of the Revelation, we wish to state most emphatically that we are saying nothing whatever against godly Christians at any time or in any place, in any church or out of any church. We realize that the Word of God conveys a terrible arraignment of some of the great systems of our day--some that we long have reverenced, that we have esteemed as containing many of God's people. We have nothing to say against godly individuals, but what we have to say in the interpretation of Scripture is in respect to these systems.

AGENCIES MUSTERING THE HOSTS

Coming to the interpretation of the symbols of **Revelation 16:13-16**, we find that the Scriptures mention three agencies connected with the gathering of the hosts to this great battle. We read that three impure spirits, teachings, will go forth from the mouths of the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet, and that these three will be in accord. These three doctrines, symbolically represented by frogs, are to have a mighty influence throughout the civilized earth; they are to gather the kings and their armies to the great Battle of Armageddon.

The ecclesiastical kings and princes, with their retinues of clergy and faithful adherents, will be gathered in solid phalanx--Protestants and Catholics. The kings and captains of industry, and as many as can be influenced by them, will be gathered to the same side. The political kings and princes, with all their henchmen and retainers, will follow in line on the same side. The financial kings and merchant princes, and all whom they can influence by the most gigantic power ever yet exercised in the world, will join the same side, according to this

prophecy. They do not realize, however, that they are coming to Armageddon.

These "doctrines of demons," represented by the frogs, will lead many noble souls to assume an attitude

quite contrary to their preference. For a time the wheels of liberty and progress will be turned backward, and medieval restraints will be considered necessary for self-preservation --for the maintenance of the present order of things and for the prevention of the new order which God has decreed. Even those who may be God's people do not stop to consider whether it is His will that things should continue as they have been for six thousand years.

In giving this interpretation, it is necessary for us to indicate what is symbolized by the Dragon, the Beast and the False Prophet. Bible students of nearly all denominations agree with us that the Dragon of Revelation represents the purely Civil Power. Protestant interpreters generally agree with us that the "Beast like a leopard" (**Rev. 13:2**) represents the Papacy. But fewer still, we fear, will be ready to support our view that Protestantism is the "Image of the Beast" (**Rev. 13:15**), elsewhere styled "the False Prophet."--**Rev. 16:13**.

"UNCLEAN SPIRITS LIKE FROGS"

We urge no one to accept our interpretation, nor shall we think unkindly of those who refuse it. We will neither slander or otherwise injure them, nor threaten them with eternal torture. They have the same right to their views that we have, and the same right to make them known to others. For our part we shall be very glad to consider anything which opponents may set forth as their interpretations of this Scripture.

The symbolisms of Scripture, rightly understood, are always forceful. When the Holy Spirit used a frog symbolically to represent certain doctrines or teachings, we may be sure that the true application will fit well. A frog is a small creature, yet it puffs itself up until it almost

bursts in its efforts to be somebody; it has a wise look, even though it does not know much; and whenever it utters a sound it croaks. The three most prominent characteristics of a frog, then, are pomposity, an air of superior wisdom and a continual croaking.

Applying these symbols, we learn that an evil spirit, influence, teaching, will come from the federated Protestant

churches, from the Church of Rome and from the civil authorities, and in full agreement. The spirit of all will be boastful, an air of superior wisdom and knowledge will be proudly assumed--all will croak in harmony. All will predict dire results to follow, involving the interests of both the present and the future life, if their counsel be not heeded. However conflicting the creeds, the differences will be ignored in the general proposition that nothing ancient must be investigated or repudiated, but that all things must remain as they are.

The Divine authority of the Church, and the Divine right of kings, aside from the Church, will not be permitted to conflict. Any persons or teachings in conflict with these boastful and unscriptural claims will be branded as everything vile, at the mouths of these frog-like spirits, speaking from pulpits and platforms and through the press. The nobler sentiments of some will be strangled by the philosophy of the same evil spirit which spoke through Caiaphas, the high priest, respecting our Lord Jesus. As Caiaphas declared it expedient to commit a crime in violation of justice, both human and Divine, in order to be rid of Jesus and His teachings, so this frog spirit will approve of every violation of principle necessary to their self-protection.

The croaking of these frog spirits of doctrine will gather the kings and princes--financial, political, religious and industrial--into one great army. The spirit of fear, inspired by the croakings, will scourge the passions of otherwise good and reasonable men to fury, desperation. In their blind adherence to these evil spirits, evil

doctrines, they will be ready to sacrifice life itself on the altar of what they mistakenly suppose is righteousness.

As we understand the Scriptures, for a brief time these combined forces of Armageddon will triumph. Free speech, free mails, and other liberties which have come to be the very breath of the masses of our day will be ruthlessly shut off under the plea of necessity, the glory of God, the commands of the Church, etc. All will seem serene until the great social explosion takes place, described in Scripture as "a great earthquake."

In symbolic language, an earthquake signifies social revolution. The declaration of the Revelator is that it

will be "such as was not since men were upon the earth." Our Lord Jesus and the Prophet Daniel described it as "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation." --**Matt. 24:21**; **Dan. 12:1**; **Rev. 16:18,19**.

THE OPPOSING FORCES AT ARMAGEDDON

The false, froglike teachings will gather together into one host the great, the rich, the wise, the learned and the kings of the earth. At this juncture Divine Power will step forward and marshal the hosts to Armageddon--to the Mount of Destruction. The very thing which they sought to avert by federation will be the very thing which they will hasten. Other Scriptures tell us that God will be represented by the great Messiah, and that He will be on the side of the masses. Thus we read, "At that time shall Michael [the God-like One--Messiah] stand up"--assume authority. He will take possession of His Kingdom in a manner little expected by many of those who erroneously have been claiming that they were His Kingdom, and authorized by Him to reign in His stead.

The Scriptures declare, "His servants ye are unto whom ye render service." Some may be rendering service to Satan and error while claiming to be serving God and righteousness; and some of these may be serving ignorantly, as did Saul of Tarsus, who "verily thought that

he did God service" in persecuting the Church. The same principle holds true reversely. As no earthly king holds himself responsible for the moral character of each soldier who fights in his battles, so the Lord does not vouch for the moral character of all who fight on His side of any question.

The same principle will apply in the approaching Battle of Armageddon. God's side of that battle will be the people's side; and that very nondescript host, the people, will be pitted at the beginning of the battle. Anarchists, Socialists, and hot-headed radicals of every school of reason and of unreason, will be at the forefront of the battle. The majority of the poor and of the middle class prefer peace at almost any price. The masses have no sympathy with anarchy; for they realize truly that the

worst form of government is better than none.

A comparatively small number, God's consecrated people, will at heart be longing for Messiah's Kingdom. These will wait patiently for the Lord's time; they will be of good courage, knowing the outcome delineated in the "more sure word of prophecy," to which they have done well to "take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the Day dawn."--**2 Peter 1:19**.

Conscious of their own weakness as compared to the kings and princes, financial, religious and political, who will then hold sway, the masses will be restless. Through the ballot and the peaceful readjustment of earth's affairs they will seek for the elimination of evil, for the placing of monopolies, utilities and the supplies of nature in the hands of the people for the public good. The crisis will be reached when the hitherto upholders of law shall become violators of that law and resisters of the will of the majority as expressed by the ballot. Fear for the future will lead the well-meaning masses to desperation; and anarchy will result when Socialism fails. This is the extremity toward which multitudes are being driven by the force of circumstances propelled by selfishness.

SM238

WHY ARMAGEDDON IS NECESSARY

Horrible indeed would be the outlook for the future did we not have the infallible Word of God assuring us of a glorious outcome. Divine Wisdom has withheld until our day the great knowledge and skill which is breeding both millionaires and discontents. Had God lifted the veil a thousand years ago, the world would then have lined up for its Armageddon. But that date would have been too soon for the Divine Purpose; for God has His own times and seasons, and has appointed the Seventh Thousand-Year Day of the world's history for the Reign of Christ. Therefore in kindness God veiled our eyes until the time when the gathering to Armageddon would immediately precede the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom--**Rev. 11:17,18**.

St. Paul, writing prophetically of this time, declared that it would be one of trial and testing to many professed Christians, for the reason that they received not

the Truth in the love of it. (**2 Thess. 2:10,11**.) They preferred their own erroneous theories, the Apostle explains, and therefore God will give them over to a strong delusion, permitting them to believe the lie which they preferred and to suffer for missing the Truth which they did not love. Thus they will be in the condemned host, "fighting against God."

Sad to say, we Christians have labored under a thorough delusion respecting God's Plan. We have claimed that Christ set up His Church in Kingdom power and that the Church has been reigning on the earth as His representative. On the strength of this delusion, Jews and so-called heretics have been persecuted to death as opponents to Christ's Kingdom. Meantime we thoughtlessly prayed, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as in Heaven." We knew that the Redeemer had said that He would come again to make us His Bride and Joint-heirs; but we ignored the Scriptures. We were drunk, as the Scriptures symbolically say; all nations were drunk

with the false doctrine. (**Rev. 17:2**.) It is this false doctrine which will constitute the frog spirit that soon will croak, preparatory to Armageddon.

For the past forty years the forces have been mustering for the conflict. As the belligerent parties have crossed each other's paths, incidental skirmishes have taken place--strikes, lockouts, riots, etc. Court and army scandals in Europe, trust and court scandals in America, have shaken public confidence. Dynamite plots, charged by turn on employees and employers, have tended to make each distrustful of the other. Bitter and angry feelings are more and more manifest.

THE WAR CLOUD'S SILVER LINING

According to Scripture the great battle must follow the occurrence of two events; the transformation of the Image of the Beast into a living force, and the return of many wealthy Jews to Palestine. The Protestant Federation realizes the futility of its organization unless it receive vitalization--unless its clergy be recognized as possessing apostolic ordination and authority to teach.

This the prophecy indicates will come from the two-horned Beast--symbol, we believe, of the Church of England. High-handed activities of both Protestantism and Catholicism, operating in conjunction for the suppression of human liberties, await the vivifying of this Image.

At the very close of Armageddon will come "Jacob's trouble" in the Holy Land. Then Messiah's Kingdom will begin to be manifested. Thenceforth in the Land of Promise Israel will gradually rise from the ashes of the past to the grandeur of prophecy. Through its Divinely appointed princes, the Ancient Worthies (**Heb. 11**; **Psa. 45:16**), the all-powerful, but invisible Kingdom of Messiah will begin to roll away the curse of death and to uplift mankind. Then will be fulfilled the Promise "in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

SM240

THE TRUE LIGHT

"That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."--**John 1:9**.

Everywhere throughout the Scriptures light is used to represent God, His truth, His righteousness, His servants and their messages; and, contrariwise, darkness is the synonym for Satan, the Prince of Darkness, and all his deluded followers, the children of darkness, and the wickedness with which he is identified, the works of darkness. So forceful are these figures of speech that they are recognized quickly, not only by those skilled in the use of the Scriptures, but also by the world. The voice of inspiration in the Bible declares that the "whole world lies in the Wicked One"--under Satan's influence--under the powers of darkness. And this declaration was made, not in the period before the Flood, nor in the period before the giving of the Law to Israel, nor during the Law Age, but during this Gospel Age. Furthermore, since Jesus has come and has given His life a Ransom, and since His followers have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit, since Pentecost, the world still lieth in the Wicked One, as again stated, "Darkness covers the earth --gross darkness the heathen." (**1 John 5:19**; **Isa. 60:2**.) But the Scriptures also testify that Jesus is the Light of the world--the true Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world--the statement of our text. How and in what sense is this true? We reply that it is not yet true--that it is a prophetic statement of what shall yet be.

Our Lord declared this great truth when He said, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me should not abide in darkness"; but "men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil." (**John 3:19-21**; **12:46**.) In other words, our Lord here indicates that mankind had become so depraved, so in

SM241

sympathy with sin, so out of accord with absolute truth, justice and righteousness, that it was not attractive to them--or rather, less attractive to them than the error.

He declares that this was the secret of the hatred which His presence engendered and which led to His crucifixion. "The darkness hateth the light, neither approacheth the light lest its deeds be made manifest"; for it is the nature of light to scatter the darkness.

Strange to say, the darkness was not confined to the ignorant then, nor is it today. It is no respecter of stations. It was the Chief Priests, the Doctors of the Law and the leading Pharisees who were the most pronounced servants of darkness and most opposed to the light of Truth which shone forth from our Redeemer's life and teachings. "The common people heard Him gladly." Indeed, we say that the powers of darkness are greatest in the more influential and the better educated. Satan himself, the Prince of Darkness, is not such by reason of his ignorance and stupidity, but by reason of pride and sinful ambition, which led into a course of opposition to the Divine Plan.--**Mark 12:37**.

"YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

Our Lord not only informed us that the possibilities of the light shining from Him were limited by the surrounding darkness of Satanic influence and human depravity and wrong ambition, but that the same would be measurably true of His followers--that, so far from being bright luminaries, powerful suns in the firmament of earth's affairs, scattering its darkness, they would merely be little lights or candles. He admonishes us not on this account to be discouraged or ashamed of Him, ashamed of the light but to set our candles on a candlestick, that they may give light to all that are in the House--in the Household of Faith our lights are to shine. We are to build one another up in the most holy faith.

True, indeed, our windows are to be opened, so that

those who are without may see the light within the Household of Faith and come to the light, and all such are to be welcomed. But we are not to suppose that the world will love our light, nor that if we take it to them they will be inclined to glorify us and exalt us and to honor us. On the contrary, so long as the Prince of Darkness has

his hold upon the world and operates through worldly ambition and prejudice, strongly entrenched delusions and false doctrines, so long the Lord's words are true, "Marvel not if the world hate you; ye know that it hated Me before it hated you." (**John 15:18**.) "Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." (**Matt. 7:6**.) The depth of your message is not intended for the world, which is worshipping Mammon, but merely intended for the Elect--the class whom God is choosing out of the world for a special purpose, a "people for His name." To these alone is given to know the mysteries of the "Kingdom of Heaven"; for these alone the light of Truth is now intended--even "as many as the Lord your God shall call." As for the rest of the world, they are the children of darkness, who will be dealt with in the Lord's providence in due time.--**Matt. 13:11**; **Col. 1:13**.

Similarly the Scriptures speak of the pathway of the just throughout this Gospel Age. They do not indicate that the pathway of the Church is a brilliant one; but, quite to the contrary, that it is narrow, crowded, beset with trials and difficulties, and hedged about with darkness except as the lamp of Divine Truth illuminates it. Moreover, the picture of this path and of the Church as a traveler on it, given in the Scriptures, emphasizes this point. It pictures the traveler with the lamp attached to the toe of his sandal, giving light only for each step of the way, as it is written, "Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, a Lantern to my footsteps." (**Psa. 119:105**.) The Apostle Peter gives the same thought, saying: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to

take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place until the Day dawn." (**2 Pet. 1:19**.) Here four facts are emphasized: (1) That there is a new Day Divinely arranged for, which shall dawn in its proper season; (2) that we are now in the night-time preceding that new epoch; (3) that the Word of the Lord is the only light and guide for His people in this night-time; (4) that those who are not His people and who do not have this light are walking in darkness, however worldly-wise and prudent themselves and others may believe them to be.

How glad we are of the assurance God has given us

that a better Day is coming, a glorious Day, when all "the shadows, weary shadows, from the world shall flee away!" This implies the victory of the light over the darkness, of which we are assured in various Scriptures, which tell us that in due time our great Redeemer Christ shall take to Himself His great power and begin His Reign--the Reign of Righteousness--the Reign of the Kingdom of God. The further assurance is that promptly at the beginning of that Reign Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, that his deception of mankind shall thus be restrained. Our Lord, speaking of this in one of His parables, calls Satan the strong man of this present dispensation, and declares that He will bind him and "spoil his goods"--destroy the works of evil, of sin, of superstition, of ignorance, etc. Oh, what a happy day that will be for the world!

"BRUISE SATAN UNDER YOUR FEET"

But here we are reminded by the Apostle that the Divine Plan respecting the future Kingdom of God is that the elect Church of this present time shall be associated in it with her Lord, her Bridegroom. So intimate is this association of the Church with Christ that sometimes the work of restraining Satan and the powers of evil in the opening of the Millennial Age is ascribed to the Church under her Head and Lord, as when the Apostle declared, "The very God of peace shall bruise Satan

under your feet shortly." (**Rom. 16:20**.) Similarly, our Lord mentions the Church as associated with Himself in the enlightening work of the future; for, while our text refers to Christ as the true, great Light which ultimately shall enlighten every man that cometh into the world, our Bible shows that the Church now enlightened, now walking in the narrow way in His footsteps, now exposed to peculiar trials and difficulties in order to develop and test the overcomers, shall also be members of the great Sun of Righteousness which the Scriptures promise shall arise with healing in His beams.--**Mal. 4:2**.

This participation of the Church with Himself as members of the glorious Sun of Righteousness our Lord shows in the parable of the wheat and tares. In the conclusion

of that parable He shows the gathering of the Elect in the end of this Age by a resurrection change, and then declares, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as *the Sun* in the Kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."--**Matt. 13:43**.

GROSS DARKNESS COVERS HEATHENDOM

Coming back from the glorious pictures of the Millennial morning to the facts as we now have them, we perceive the absolute truth of the Scriptural pictures, which represent the world in darkness and heathendom in gross darkness, and the Church alone possessing the Lamp of Divine Revelation--and it, close to the path, giving light only for one step at a time. Everything in these pictures corroborates the other statements of the Word and also our own experiences: that nothing that the Church could do in the present time could scatter the powers of darkness. Our little candles should all be on their candlesticks, our lamps trimmed and burning, to give out as much light as possible for ourselves and for others; but there is absolutely no encouragement for us to think that by any power of our own we could become the Sun of Righteousness and scatter the darkness of earth. It will require the glorious change of the First Resurrection to

thus equip and qualify us for the work of enlightening the world. On the contrary, despite the efforts of God's people during eighteen centuries since Jesus' death, the numbers of heathendom are increasing hourly. According to statistics there are twice as many heathen in the world today as there were a century ago--1,200,000,000 now, 600,000,000 then.

Alas, while the outward show and splendor of civilization called Christendom are in many respects impressive, our Lord's true picture of the situation prophetically given is, "This people draweth nigh to Me with their lips while their hearts are far from me"! (**Matt. 15:8**.) Only a few today, as ever, are right with the Lord, filled with the Spirit and guided by His Lamp of Truth. The majority of Christian people everywhere, in all denominations, are falling, as described by the Lord through the

Prophet, saying to the true Church of Christ, "A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee."--**Psa. 91:7**.

These thousands--yea, tens of thousands--include many of the most learned of our day, just as the falling at the First Advent of our Lord included the Doctors of the Law, the Chief Priests and the members of the Sanhedrin. The fall in this case is not a moral deflection, not a falling into vulgar sin, but the falling away from "the faith once delivered to the saints"--a falling into Evolution theories, into Higher Criticism, Infidelity, into Theosophy, into New Thought, New Theology, Christian Science, etc.--away from the teachings of God's Word respecting the fall of the race into sin and under Divine sentence, respecting the redemption of Adam and all his race by the precious blood of Jesus, respecting the deliverance of the Church and ultimately as many as will receive Divine favor at the hands of Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood.--**Jude 3**; **1 Pet. 1:18,19**.

While declaring His power to conquer sin and Satan and to deliver the poor world from its darkness and ignorance

and superstition, why does the Lord permit so long a delay? Why was it four thousand years after the fall before He sent the Redeemer, and why has it been nearly nineteen hundred years since the Savior died for all the world before He comes in power and great glory to deliver mankind from the yoke of sin and death--to deliver the groaning creation from the bondage of corruption to the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Why? Ah, there is a reason, but it is not for all to know now. Even if we tell it all cannot hear. Our Master said truly, speaking to the faithful Little Flock, the followers in His footsteps: "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to others in parables; that, seeing, they might not see, and, hearing, they might not understand." (**Luke 8:10**.) Hence, we need not be afraid of giving away the secrets of the Lord in respect to this matter, which the Apostle styles "the Mystery hidden from past ages and dispensations, but now revealed unto the saints." (**Col. 1:26**.) It is proper that the saints should know this Mystery, for now the strength which this knowledge would give will be of special value to them

in their combat with the special trials and difficulties which lie immediately before them. The Mystery is this: that God's purpose from the first was that the great Deliverer, Messiah, should be not only the Lord Jesus, the Redeemer, but should include also the elect Little Flock of this Gospel Age--the ripe grains gathered in Israel's harvest time and also during this Gospel Age those gathered from every nation, people, kindred and tongue. These the Lord styles His "jewels"--"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that Day when I come to make up My jewels." (**Mal. 3:17**.) The "jewels" will not be made up, will not be glorified, until the full number of the Elect have been found and polished and prepared. Then shall the Elect, the righteous, shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father--for the blessing of all mankind. They, with their Lord, the Bridegroom, will then,

SM247

as the antitypical Seed of Abraham, fulfil the Divine promise, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 12:3**.

WHY GOD'S PEOPLE REJOICE

Thus the Mystery hid from past ages becomes plain to those whose eyes have been anointed by the Holy Spirit, and who are looking in the direction which the Lord is indicating. They see that now "Light is sown for the righteous--Truth for the upright in heart," and this rejoices them: first, as a manifestation of Divine favor; and secondly, because it encourages and stirs them to uprightness of heart, that they may abide in the Divine Love, and go onward from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, in the narrow way, guided by the Word as a lamp to their feet. They rejoice because they now understand the purpose of Divine Wisdom in permitting special trials and tribulations of the people of God--that these are intended to work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory to which they have been "called according to the Divine purpose."

They are not jealous or envious of the world and its Highway of Holiness, upon which it will be privileged to go up to perfection of restitution during the Millennium.

They realize that, grand as those blessings will be, "God has provided some better things for us." (**Heb. 11:40**.) They are content, yea, able to rejoice in fiery trials, because of their realization that these are the Divine arrangement by which they are being prepared, tested, proven worthy of a place in the glorious Kingdom so soon to be established for the blessing of the world. These large-hearted, warm-hearted saints, full of love for God and every creature, are made further glad by the knowledge of the Divine Plan, that the whole creation is under the Divine charge, though saints are God's peculiar care. They rejoice in the unfolding of the Divine Plan, which shows most clearly that God has provided an opportunity for eternal salvation through Christ for all those who

shall obey Him, and, furthermore, that the knowledge and opportunity and assistance necessary to such obedience will be granted to mankind during the Millennium.

"GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE"

Is it any wonder that the Message of God's grace as it was announced on the first Christmas morning was a Message of peace and good will toward men--all men? Is it any wonder, in view of what we see of the developing Plan of God, that the angels declared to the shepherds, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Messiah, the Lord"? No! That Message is in full accord with all that we know of the Divine Word, and with all that the reasonable, intelligent mind could expect from an all-wise, just, powerful and all-loving Creator. Why should He not delight to bless every creature of Adam's race? Why should He purpose to save merely a handful of the Elect and to turn the others over to eternal torment at the hands of fireproof demons? Such unscriptural ideas evidently came from the great Prince of Darkness himself, who fain would turn our hearts away from the God of Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power--who fain would have us think of our God as the real adversary of the race, delighting in its suffering.--**Luke 10:11**.

How broad, how gloriously sweeping the statement of our text, which declares Jesus to be the true Light of the world--for every man that cometh into the world! How it assures us that the Redeemer of the world was God's great Christmas Gift to Adam and all of his posterity--a gift whose value grows in the estimation of all the Lord's holy ones in the present time, as day by day and item by item they come to know the Christ of God--an estimation which will grow with the world as, during the Millennial Age, they will avail themselves of the glorious opportunities then afforded and come into hearty accord with the Lord and His righteousness--an estimation

which will grow with them throughout eternity as the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of the Love of God shall become more and more manifest.

GOD'S WAYS HIGHER THAN MAN'S

Let us not mistakingly allow our own littleness of mind to hinder our appreciation of the true meaning of our text. Let us remember our Lord's words, "For your thoughts are not My thoughts; neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My plans than your plans." The great Plan of God, which has thus far reached only the Church, even as many as the Lord our God has called, is yet to reach not only the world of mankind living when the Election of the Church is completed and when the Bride of Christ shall have been ushered into Heavenly glory, but also all those who have already gone down into the great prison-house of death--the tomb, Sheol, Hades.--**Isa. 55:8,9**; **40:5**.

We know certainly that the vast majority of these have never been enlightened by the Lord Jesus and His Gospel Message. There was no such light before our Redeemer came into the world, although four thousand years had elapsed and billions of humanity had gone down to the prison-house. On this the Scriptural testimony is most explicit, namely, that "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." (**2 Tim. 1:10**.)
Neither the immortality which is God's gift for the

Church was seen and appreciated and understood, nor was the eternal life which God is providing for all of Adam's race who will accept it. True, there were vague promises before, but there was no clear light upon them. They had to be received strictly by faith.

But now it is different. We see Jesus, we behold Him as the Word of God made flesh, we perceive His mission, that He came to redeem our race. With the eye of faith we behold Him crucified for our sins, yea, risen from the dead and ascended to the Father's

presence and appearing as the Advocate for the Household of Faith, the Church of the First-borns. As the Apostle says, "There to appear in the presence of God for us." (**Heb. 9:24**.) Now we can see, as the ancients could not see, that God could be just and yet be the Justifier of him who believeth on Jesus. We can see that Adam's penalty being paid for him, he and all of his family, his race, may be released from the tomb and from the death sentence, and be given an opportunity to behold the Light--the true Light--to be enlightened thereby--to be brought to a knowledge of the Truth and thereby have an opportunity for a full reconciliation with the Father and to he restored to all the blessings of His favor. It would seem that the subject is too plain to require controversy--that God has promised that the true Light should enlighten every man--that it has as yet enlightened but a few--that it must, therefore, be manifested during the Millennial Age to every creature before the great Plan of God for human redemption shall have reached its consummation--that one must see this great Light before He could be liable to the great penalty --the Second Death.

Let us who have been favored, called of God in the present time, and who have seen the true Light with the eye of faith, and who have been begotten by the Holy Spirit, and whose footsteps have been guided in the path of faith, in the light from the Lamp--let us rejoice more and more in the goodness of our God and follow on in the good way, practising the fruits and graces of the Spirit, and thus be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, that we may with Him shine forth as the Sun in the blessing of all the families of the earth.

No need of the Sun in the city to come,
    The light of the world is Jesus;
All nations shall walk in the light of the Lamb:
    The light of the world is Jesus.

SM251

THE QUEEN IN GOLD ATTIRE

"Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for He is thy Lord and worship thou Him."--**Psa. 45:10,11**.

The beautiful imagery of our text and context relates to the Elect Church of this Gospel Age, which is here pictured as a Bride, the Spouse, and ultimately the Wife of the great King, Immanuel. The Scriptures abound with this view of the Church. Notice, for instance, the Apostle's words to the Church of his day: "I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste Virgin to Christ." (**2 Cor. 11:2**.) Note again the words of John the Baptist, "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." (**John 3:29**.) The speaker does not identify himself with the Bride class and this with propriety; for, as our Lord declares, John the Baptist was the last of the Prophets; he belonged to and was faithful as a member of the House of Servants, but did not come in under the Gospel privilege of the Pentecostal blessing following our Lord's redemptive work. Of him our Lord says, "There has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist, and yet I say unto you, the least one in the Kingdom of God is greater than he." (**Luke 7:28**.) In other words, our Lord assures us that to have the humblest position in the Church class, in the Bride class being selected during this age, is an higher honor than that which belongs to the very noblest of the previous dispensations.

Failure to notice God's dispensational dealings with the patriarchs in the Jewish nation and with the Gospel Church has hindered many of the Lord's people from

SM252

making good progress in the study of the Word; and it is time that all awake to this fact and realize that various features of the Divine Plan belong to various dispensations

or epochs, and that all these are working together for the grand fulfilment of God's glorious purposes, of which the Apostle writes, "He will gather together in one all these things in Christ, both which are in Heaven and which are on earth." (Eph. 1:10.) This great work is not yet accomplished. The angelic hosts do indeed give reverence and obedience to the glorified Son of God. A "little flock" of footstep followers of the Lord Jesus from amongst men so glorify and honor Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. But as for the masses of mankind, living and dead, they have never even heard His name, or known of the grace of God in Him.

But according to the Lord's Word these all must hear and know and have an opportunity for salvation through Christ--"in due time." That due time is the coming Age or new epoch called the Millennium, the great thousand-year Day which God has appointed for the world's trial or judgment; as we read, "God hath appointed a Day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness." (**Acts 17:31**) But prior to that appointed Day He called out of the world a special class of those who have the hearing of faith and the eye of faith, that He may thus select the Bride of Christ to be His joint-heir in that Kingdom and His joint-associate in that glorious work of blessing all the families of the earth and granting to all of them a trial or judgment--a knowledge of the Truth and an opportunity to show their willingness to obey it.

THE BRIDAL ROBES

The context declares (**V. 13**), "Her clothing is inwrought with gold." But this pictures her as the Bride when all the trials, difficulties and testings shall have been successfully passed and she shall be accepted as the Very Elect, to be forever associated with her Lord and a sharer

of His glory. In the Scripture symbology gold is used to represent the Divine nature. Hence the picture as a whole teaches us that when the King of kings shall present His Bride before the Heavenly Father at the close of this Age, after she shall have been glorified by the First Resurrection, she will be possessed of the Divine

nature--"glory, honor and immortality."--**Rom. 2:7**.

This is what the Apostle Peter assures us will be the outcome. Speaking of the promises of God's Word to this Bride class he says that God "hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises whereby we might be partakers of the Divine nature." (**2 Pet. 1:4**.) We do not get this Divine nature or this gold raiment in the present life; our immortality is a hope and not an actuality. As the Apostle says, "we seek for glory, honor and immortality." How difficult it is for us to grasp the thought that the great Creator, desiring that the elect "little flock" should be associated with His Son in the great work of the Millennial Age, the blessing of all the families of the earth, did not invite the holy angels, but instead has sent the invitation to our fallen race, to such of its members as would have the ears to hear and the hearts to respond to the call of this Gospel Age--to walk the narrow way in the footsteps of our Redeemer!

No wonder the Apostle declares that although we have God's assurance that we are sons of God, and although this signifies that we shall be heirs of God, yet it does not appear what we shall be, how great we shall be. It is too wonderful a matter for us to comprehend; too wonderful to even be described in the Scriptures. Hence, the only information granted to us is that when our Lord Jesus shall be manifested at His Second Advent in power and great glory, then the First Resurrection change shall make His faithful "little flock" like Him, that they may see Him as He is--not as He was--and share His glory; for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God--though all flesh shall see the salvation of God, shall experience

the blessings that will flow from that Millennial Kingdom and be recipients of the Divine favors which will then be poured out upon all flesh with lavish hand and blessed results.--**1 Cor. 15:50**; **Isa. 40:5**.

But the context says more respecting this raiment. Note (**V. 14**) "She shall be led unto the King in raiment of needlework." This word "led" properly enough applies to the present life. All through this Gospel Age, from Pentecost until now, the Lord has used various instrumentalities to call out from the world this peculiar people; and by various instrumentalities He has led them

from grace to grace, from knowledge to knowledge, and changed them from glory to glory, to prepare them for their final acceptance, in the First Resurrection, of the clothing of gold--glory, honor and immortality.

It is in full accord with all this that the Scriptures represent that all accepted of the Lord throughout this Gospel Age have been granted a wedding garment clean and white, "pure linen which is the righteousness of the saints." (**Rev. 19:8**.) That robe figuratively represents justification, the covering of our blemishes; and it is a wedding garment because it constitutes a basis of our ultimate acceptance by the Lord in the end of this Age, when the marriage of the Lamb shall come. These espoused ones are cautioned that their treatment of the robe will determine whether or not they will ultimately be of the Bride class: (1) They must keep their garments unspotted from the world (**Jas. 1:27**), and (2) must embroider them with fine needlework. Painstakingly they must endeavor to fix and establish in their robes the glorious pattern outlined for them by the word and example of their Bridegroom and His mouthpieces, the Apostles.

REMOVING SPOTS AND WRINKLES

If any of those "called to be saints," on accepting that invitation and receiving the robe, supposed it would be an easy matter to keep it without spot or wrinkle or

any such thing he was soon undeceived. Each one of this class has found out that it requires great circumspection, great care, to live in a world in which sin abounds and, as a New Creature, to act through a body the imperfections of which are continually coming to light as growth is made in grace and knowledge. The great Apostle acknowledges the impossibility of perfection under present conditions--except that our hearts, our intentions, our wills, might be perfect, should be perfect, must be perfect, thoroughly loyal to God and to righteousness. He says, "When I would do good evil is present with me"; and again, "We cannot do the things that we would."

The Scriptures declare that "There is none righteous, no not one" (**Rom. 3:10**); and when the thought of our

own imperfections and the sin abounding all about us would make us fearful, convincing us of the impossibility of preventing our garments from receiving spots or wrinkles, what then? Ah, they tell us how these are to be gotten rid of; they tell us that the merit of our Lord's sacrifice not only cancelled for us our past sins and covered us with His robe of righteousness, but that all subsequent imperfections, resulting from original sin, weakness and ignorance, may all be forgiven us and not remain as spots upon our robes. The Apostle says, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." (**1 John 1:7**.) The thought of this text is not the original justification which we received when we received the robe, but a cleansing which may be ours after we are the Lord's and have the robe. The word cleanseth here refers not to something already past but to that which is now at our disposal, which is now in progress, a cleansing or forgiveness which all of the Lord's people need to pray for and to accept, as in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Thus through the Age from Pentecost down, those who have been called, accepted and robed with the wedding garment have been obliged to strive to keep their garments

unspotted, and oft with tears to apply for the cleansing when a spot would be seen. Their consciences are so tender on the subject that their neighbors and friends of the world and nominal Christendom think them strange, peculiar people. They are more distressed to see one spot upon their robe than are many whose garments are filthy. But the effect upon them is a blessed one, as it develops in them more and more love for righteousness and greater zeal and strength in overcoming. They are making progress, even though to themselves it may appear slow; they are becoming fortified, strengthened and built up in character--in their love for whatsoever things are just, true, lovely and of good report. (**Phil. 4:8**.) We are now referring merely to that class of the called ones who will ultimately be accepted as the Bride. We are not referring to all who make a consecration and are accepted of the Lord, but who fail to be thus particular about the spots and wrinkles on their robes. These we will consider later.

"IF YE DO THESE THINGS"

When the Apostle Peter said, "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**), he is referring to the same things that are represented by the embroidering, the needlework upon the wedding garment. All the espoused ones are shown the pattern on the robe. They are all informed of the necessity of working out their own salvation, of cooperating with the Lord in the matter of making their calling and election sure to the glorious station to which they have been invited. They are informed that through much tribulation shall they enter the Kingdom. (**Acts 14:22**.) This tribulation is the painstaking "fine needlework" of our context.

Not all tribulation that may come to mankind is a part of this embroidery. The Apostle speaks of some in these

words, "But let no man suffer as an evil-doer or as a busybody in other men's matters." (**1 Pet. 4:15**.) The intimation is that such sufferings are not incidental to the embroidering we are to do, but the result of our not being engaged in our embroidering work and having time to meddle with sin or with other matters and affairs. Such tribulations add nothing to our embroidering on the robe, except as they might awaken us to a sense of our neglect of the important work which must be done in our own characters if we would be fit for a share with our Lord in His Kingdom, fit to be accepted as members of the Very Elect, the Bride, the Church in glory.

The baneful experiences which come to us as a result of our faithfulness to the Lord, to the Truth, to the brethren --these constitute parts of the embroidering. These help us to fix in our hearts and characters the principles of righteousness and of love divine. How tedious the work appears to us sometimes! At the close of each day we are astonished at how little we have accomplished; and the weeks and months go by with similar experiences. With the close of the year, when we give our robes particular attention we behold the comparatively little that has

been accomplished since the examination of the year before. But how does the Lord view this matter? Is He expecting that you and I and all of His followers will be able in every detail to follow the glorious pattern that is stamped upon our robes? Will He require of us as a condition of our acceptance as His Bride that not a feature or detail shall be lacking? Oh, no! Such a view would swerve and at once discourage us from further effort. The entire tenor of Scripture is to the contrary. As, for instance, in the parable of the talents, our Lord represents some as having less ability and some more, and indicates that His approval will be in proportion as we have endeavored to accomplish His will. The one who had faithfully used the two talents heard the same words of approval as the one who had five talents and used

them--"Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."--**Matt. 25:21**.

And so with the robe: If the Lord, who takes cognizance of our endeavors, sees persistency and the right intention He counts it unto us as being perfect. We shall not be married in these robes. These are merely the ones in which we are being led to the marriage. More and more they should show our love, our zeal and patient endurance. As the Master examines the work will He not expect to find the last better than the first, even though none of it be perfect? Will not this be the basis of His approval of our endeavors and on account of which He will be willing to give us the new robe of gold?

Some of us, perhaps, remember that when we were children at school we had writing copy-books with perfect copper-plate engravings at the top of each page as copy. Alas! and do we not remember also that in many instances the first few lines were the best on the page and that carelessness and indifference to the copy and to the necessity for the lesson became more and more marked as we proceeded to the bottom of the page? We remember that we copied our own instead of looking to the engraving at the top. So it is with this matter of the embroidering of our robes. If we become heedless, careless, indifferent, overcharged with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches and the affairs of this world, our robes will show it. Little embroidering will be done

and it will be of poor quality. Spots will get on; and we shall neglect to have them cleansed away. Soon our robes will be entirely unfit for the Inspection of the Lord or for the marriage. It is time, dear friends, that we awake to the responsibilities of the hour, that we realize that the Bridegroom is nigh, even at the door; that the last of the wise virgins will soon enter into the marriage and the door will be shut; and that the choicest blessings of all time will soon be won or lost as far as we are concerned. --**Matt. 25:1-13**; **Eph. 5:15-17**.

SM259

LOVE FULFILS THE LAW

Let us make no mistake as respects what constitutes this needlework, this embroidery. It is not knowledge, though knowledge is very necessary to its proper in-working. It represents not natural talents, though these may be utilized in connection with it. It represents not merely laborious works, though these may be very proper and perhaps necessary to it if conditions are favorable. This embroidery represents love; for "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." (**Rom. 13:10**.) This is the new commandment which our Lord has given, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another." (**John 13:34**.) Love for the Lord, and His Truth He places on a parity when He says, "Me and My Word." One of course, comes first. To our Lord and His Word we must be true at all hazards. Then comes love for the brethren--because they are His--because they have His spirit--because they are seeking to walk in His footsteps. "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"--**1 John 4:20**.

This is the forceful argument of the Apostle. The love must continue and extend to neighbors, friends, yea, to enemies, so that those who would have the full pattern on their robes must have in their characters a true, genuine, staunch love for all these. And if, perchance, the enemy should be a brother, the testing to love might be all the more severe. But that this feature of the embroidery be worked is our Lord's requirement. Whoever does not love even his enemies is not fit for the Kingdom--whatever he may be fit for. Love as brethren, be pitiful, be

sympathetic, be generous, be helpful, be self-sacrificing, do unto others as you would they should do to you. Let the Golden Rule measure your thoughts, words and deeds --measure the length of the stitches in your embroidery and assure yourself that it is "fine needlework."

Our context declares that when the Bride class shall be the Queen and shall be presented before the Father,

SM260

the virgins, her companions, shall follow after. Who are these virgins? They are those represented in the parable as the foolish virgins. They were as truly virgins as the wise ones, as truly justified and as truly consecrated to the Lord. They also got the wedding garment. Theirs also was stamped with the pattern for embroidery. But they neglected the work. They became overcharged with cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. The first spot upon their robe distressed them; but subsequently they became accustomed to seeing it spotted, and thought less and less of the matter. They were themselves free to admit not only their consecration and their possession of the robe, but also its disfigurement by the spots and wrinkles which they did not approve, but which they had given up the thought of removing as too great a task to perform.--**Mark 4:19**.

What they should do is to apply to the Bridegroom for the cleansing fluid, the precious blood--that He would take away these spots and blemishes, giving such chastisements as His wisdom would see best for the inattention, carelessness--and to entreat that they might no longer be of the foolish virgin class but of the wise--wise toward God, wise to appreciate the fact that the great blessing now being proffered to the Very Elect is valuable beyond all estimate. But the more spots and wrinkles that get upon the robe the more likely is the wearer to be careless. Noting that the majority of even the consecrated have spots and wrinkles, he is apt to conclude that he is no worse than others, and not nearly so bad as many. How we would like to awaken some of these to a realization of their proper position and need of prompt action and redoubled energy not only in securing the cleansing of the robe but also in the work of embroidering it with the fruits and graces of the Spirit which they have so sadly neglected!--**2 Cor. 10:14**.

Our father's house is the world; for as the Apostle

declares, "We were children of wrath, even as others."

SM261

(**Eph. 2:3**.) In accepting our Lord's invitation to be His Bride we are joining a new family, a new house. We are exhorted to show our appreciation of our espousal by forgetting the house and family to which we formerly belonged and held allegiance. This is in harmony with the Apostle's exhortation, "Forgetting the things which are behind, I press on to those things which are before"; and again, "the things that I once loved, now I hate"--things highly esteemed amongst men I now see to be unworthy of those called to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord.--**Phil. 3:13**; **Rom. 7:15**.

"FORGET THY FATHER'S HOUSE"

Here, dear friends, is the gist of the entire question: Our Lord declares that we and the entire world are either for Him and His cause or against the same. There is no neutral ground; and hence in leaving the father's house, the world, and our own people, and in becoming members of the New Creation, the Church, the Body of Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit, we should understand that the change is a radical one and not any longer seek for our fellowships and joys from the worldly sources but only amongst those who with ourselves are consecrated to the Lord and waiting for His return, and for the marriage and for membership in the elect class, the Bride. The more we attempt to mix worldly things and prospects and aims with our high calling the more it will be shown that we are at the very most foolish virgins; for we cannot serve God and Mammon. This, of course, does not signify unkindness toward friends or neighbors or kindred. The Lord's saints are exhorted to do good unto all men as they have opportunity but especially unto the Household of Faith. And with the latter and their aims they must specially identify if they would come off conquerors, and be received by their Lord and King as His Joint-heir and Bride and introduced as such to the Heavenly Father.--**Gal. 6:10**; **2 John 8**.

SM262

THE SECRET OF TRUE PEACE

"Let not your heart be troubled."--**John 14:1**.

The world is full of troubled hearts; for it is full of imperfection, directly or indirectly the result of sin and its death penalty, which for 6,000 years has been preying upon our race, impairing our mental, moral and physical powers and bringing us instead depravity, disappointment, sorrow and pain. If each of us only had his own burdens he would have too much for his strength; but additionally each is in touch with others in life, in the home, in business, in society, in all of life's affairs; and his own weaknesses and blemishes are augmented and his troubles increased by his contact with the idiosyncrasies of others, their troubles, blemishes and peculiarities --mental, moral and physical. Well did the Apostle write, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together." Well did the Prophet write, "Man that is born of woman is of few years and full of trouble." --**Rom. 8:22**; **Job 14:1**.

None know more respecting the burdens of life than do sympathetic physicians, attorneys and ministers. The groaning creation in the time of its special perplexity and anguish, physical, mental and moral, turns to those whose knowledge of balms, physical and spiritual, and of legal relief are loopholes through which the light of hope streams in a little upon the troubled soul. These three professions, therefore, are esteemed to be amongst the most honorable and most beneficial known; and where backed by sympathy and love they are sure to accomplish much good, to afford great relief, to inspire new hopes. But alas, not all physicians, not all lawyers, not all ministers are actuated by love and sympathy! Without judging them individually we are safe to suppose that like the remainder of the race, these men, possessing the highest

SM263

opportunities in the world for the relief of their fellows, are sharers in general of the selfishness that has developed in the hearts of men as part of the fruitage of sin,

as a result of its partial destruction of the Divine likeness in which man was created--a perfect image, in the flesh, of God--the God of love, "the God of all grace."

"WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE"

Our text was part of our Lord's message to His disciples just before His crucifixion. Himself bowed with grief and exceeding sorrowful in anticipation of the shame of the death He was about to suffer, our Lord's thoughts and comforting words went forth to His disciples, who were perplexed and distressed. Hiding his own sorrow He comforted them, and thus has set an example to all of His followers who, walking in His steps and imitating Him, are at once in the world good physicians, expounders of the Divine Law and ministers of the Divine Law of Love. Indeed, however much we appreciate the miracles wrought by our Lord--the healing of the sick, the awakening of the dead, the opening of the blind eyes and deaf ears--that which appeals to us as the most wonderful manifestation is His teaching, His doctrine. Truly did some of His day say, "Never man spake like this man" (**John 7:46**); and again, "And all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth"--"Beautiful words, wonderful words of life."--**Luke 4:22**.

And so must it be with the footstep-followers of Jesus. Our Lord might have spent all of His time and all of His energy in healing the sick, in awakening the dead. But this was not His mission. He merely in these miracles gave evidence of the power of God residing in Him, and foreshadowed the blessings yet to come to the world at His Second Advent--Times of Refreshing that then would come, "Times of Restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world

began." (**Acts 3:19-21**.) At the Pool of Bethsaida were multitudes waiting for healing, but our Lord healed only one; for this was sufficient for His purpose, and not because of lack of sympathy. The due time had not yet come for the healing of the woes and difficulties of the world. Those whose interest was awakened by the physical

healing had their attention promptly drawn to the Lord's readiness to heal all the broken-hearted, to give the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness, and to awaken those dead in trespasses and sins to a newness of life through faith.--**Isa. 61:1-3**.

Similarly all the footstep-followers of Jesus are commissioned as His representatives to tell the Message of Good Tidings to all who have ears to hear--to announce to such the Divine Program, that as sin and death came by one man's disobedience, so a redemption has been accomplished by another, by "the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (**1 Tim. 2:5,6**.) They are authorized to do the work of a good physician and to bind up the broken-hearted. They are authorized as lawyers versed in the Law of God to point out to those willing to hear that sin, the violation of the Divine Law, has brought all the havoc upon our race which causes countless thousands to mourn. They are authorized further to point out that Jesus our Lord gave Himself a full Ransom-price, meeting the demands of the broken Law; and that thus it is possible for all who have turned from sin, and who are seeking to come back into harmony with God and His perfect Law of Love, to approach Him through Christ as their Advocate, and to realize that they are no longer condemned, but justified freely from all things through their faith in their Redeemer and Advocate.

They are further authorized as ministers of the Gospel, the Royal Priesthood, to point out to those who have the hearing ear that the reconciliation accomplished by our Lord Jesus not only covers our sins of the past,

but also covers weaknesses and imperfections of the present and of the future for the believer to the extent that these are involuntary, disapproved, striven against. They are authorized in the Master's name to assure all such that "the Father Himself loveth you"; that "all things are working together for good to those that love God, the called ones according to His purpose"; and that eventually through the glorified Christ, Head and Body, Bridegroom and Bride, a blessed opportunity for reconciliation to God under the terms of the New Covenant are to be extended to "all the families of the earth"--including

those who have gone down into the great prison-house of death without having had a full, proper knowledge of the Lord and of His Plan, such as the death of Christ has guaranteed that all shall have ere they could die the Second Death.--**John 16:27**; **Rom. 8:28**.

"BIND UP THE BROKEN-HEARTED"

Thus seen the Lord's consecrated Little Flock, the Royal Priesthood, have even in the present time gracious opportunities for serving the brethren and such of the world as have hearing ears and a desire to become of the "brethren" class. It is not true that God gave a commission to His ambassadors to go through life breaking the hearts of their fellow-men. On the contrary, the commission reads that those members of the Body of Christ who have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit from the Lord Jesus, their Head, are commissioned to bind up the broken-hearted, to comfort all that mourn in Zion, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

If some are disposed to object that the comforting of mourners and the binding of broken hearts imply that God's ministers, servants of the Truth, are first of all to break the hearts, to cause the mourning, we answer, No! It is not thus written, and we are not to add to the Word of God. Various agencies are at work all about us, doing the heart-breaking and the wounding. It is for

us to receive so much of the Lord's spirit that so far as possible we shall break no hearts, wound none, but on the contrary do all in our power to effect the proper healing of such as are within the range of our influence. Sin is breaking the hearts of thousands. Disappointment in themselves, in their own ambitions, in their own efforts, disappointment in their friends, in business, in pleasure--all of these are doing the wounding and the breaking. So many more hearts are troubled and broken that the Lord's people can possibly heal that we can rest well content to do the work which the Master gave us to do, and to leave to the Adversary and those who are in outer darkness of sin and ignorance of the Lord and His Spirit to do the heart-breaking.--**Isa. 42:16**.

In our understanding the Scriptures teach that a great Time of Trouble is near at hand--the great final trouble of this world's history, in which, during a period of anarchy unparalleled, all human hopes and ambitions will utterly fail. As the Scriptures declare, "There shall be a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation--no, nor ever shall be afterward." (**Dan. 12:1**; **Matt. 24:21**.) That great trouble, as the Scriptures point out, will be the result of selfishness reaching its limit, becoming ripe and going to seed. The world has always been selfish; but according to the Scriptures and according to our observation, this spirit of greed and selfishness is extending more and more widely, and impressing almost every member of the race. Eventually it will be true, as the Scriptures describe, that "every man's hand will be against his neighbor" with the result that there will be "no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in."--**Zech. 8:10**.

The world, ignorant of God and of the Plan He has prepared for the blessing of all the nations during the Millennium, will feel the Time of Trouble most keenly. But the Scriptures give us to understand that their sorrows, woes and heart-breakings will eventually be favorable

to them, so that that general plowing of the world with the plowshare of trouble and the perplexity of that time, when all its hopes will be dissipated, will work for good to them eventually, and draw their attention away from the false hopes which many of them had long been vainly chasing--to the better, the true hope which the Lord has provided, the center of which is Christ's Kingdom and the ground of which is His Ransom-sacrifice at Calvary.--**1 Tim. 2:5,6**.

THE FUTURE WORK OF BLESSING

How wise is the Divine arrangement that those who are to be associated with the Lord Jesus during His Millennial Reign in the work of uplifting and helping mankind over their difficulties and out of their various degradations are to be the same ones who gain practise in this matter now by binding up the broken hearts of

the comparatively few, and who have the ear to hear and the desire to respond to the grace of God during this Gospel Age. Thus we see illustrated the statement elsewhere given us in the Scriptures that we are in the School of Christ, in preparation for future usefulness. Thus we see that, as physicians and nurses are given a training for their future work, so those whom the Lord has called to the glorious "Royal Priesthood" of the future for the blessing of mankind are now given a practise-work in their own hearts, in their own families, amongst their own kin and in the Household of Faith.

What a thought, that our future graduation and the possibility of our sharing in the Kingdom work is dependent upon how we shall learn now the art of binding up the broken hearts of those with whom we are in contact! Not that the skill is the important matter, but the love. He who loves much and who now sees the broken and troubled hearts around him will be led to "do good to all men as he may have opportunity, but especially to the Household of Faith." If, on the contrary, his love and sympathy do not go out toward these

troubled ones, if his best energies are spent on money-making or in some other selfish channel, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let us remember the words of Scripture, "The Lord your God doth prove you whether ye do love the Lord your God with all your heart or not." (**Deut. 13:3**.) For, as the Apostle tells us, he who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen? (**1 John 4:20**.) The test then upon us all is Love--"He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and he that loved not is not begotten of God."

Here we note that, with sympathetic minds, some are improperly, injuriously binding up broken hearts. It has become the general message of what is termed the New Thought and the New Theology that there is no exclusiveness in God's Plan--that all mankind are children of God, that our Lord Jesus made a great mistake when He declared to some, "Ye are of your father the Devil." (**John 8:44**.) It has become with many a stock phrase, the "Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." But we warn all that there is no Scriptural authority for such teaching, but that on the contrary they are drawing

away the hearts of men from the good Physician and the Divinely given balm; for "there is none other name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus. There is none other, therefore, qualified to speak true peace to the troubled soul or to properly bind up the broken heart.

"ONLY JESUS WOULD I KNOW

AND JESUS CRUCIFIED"

Our Lord forewarned us of these various theories of salvation through another channel than that which God has provided. He declared Himself to be the only Door into the sheepfold, and that all who attempt to get into it otherwise are thieves and robbers--that no man can come unto the Father save through Him. (**John 14:6**.) We therefore warn against every theory which attempts to present mercy and restoration to Divine favor otherwise than through faith in Christ's sacrifice. And we

denounce as unscriptural all those teachings, growing increasingly prevalent because of the Evolution theory, which present the thought that there was no original sin, no original sentence, and hence no need of a Redeemer and no need of an uplift by Restitution, such as God has promised and made provision for, and which He assures us will be accomplished during the Millennial Age, when Satan shall be bound. We hold forth as God's olive branch, as His message of peace, the invitation that all the "called" may come unto the Father through the Redeemer--through the merit of His sacrifice, and, coming, may realize their sins forgiven, their restoration to Divine favor, the Lord's loving interest in all of their affairs, and His willingness and ability to make all things work together for their good, and His promise that, if faithful, ultimately they shall be made sharers with their Lord in the blessings of the resurrection of the just--glory, honor and immortality; and that by and by, during the Millennium, all those now blind and deaf may taste of Divine grace.

Another error which we should warn against is that

of acceptance of Jesus and a hope in Him contrary to the presentation of the Scriptures. Some tell us that they reject the thought that Jesus died to be man's Redeemer, but that they, nevertheless, accepted Christ as their Teacher and Example. Our reply is that as our Teacher the Master taught us that He "came into the world to give His life a Ransom for many"--for all. If His life was not a Ransom, or Corresponding-Price, then He falsified in so stating; and those who believe that He did falsify could not consider Him a proper teacher. Furthermore, if He came into the world merely to be our Exemplar and not to be our Redeemer, our Ransomer, then His mission was a failure; for no one since His coming has been able to follow the example He set. To view our Lord as merely as Example for proper living for the world would be an absurdity, since no one of the

fallen race can possibly live up to the perfect standard which our Lord set in sacrificing all of His rightful interests as a man.--**Matt. 20:28**.

The Scriptures present the opposite view--that mankind are all imperfect through the fall, and under the death sentence; and that "Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man"--"gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." They teach that this sacrifice for the sin of Adam, and applicable through him to the sins of the whole world, was necessary for the meeting of the Divine sentence before Divine forgiveness and restoration to eternal life and favor would be possible. They represent that for the majority of mankind such a restoration will be effected during the Millennial Age. They represent that to a very small minority, even "as many as the Lord your God shall call," our Lord was not only a Redeemer but an Exemplar: that these called to a separation from the world to walk in the narrow way of self-sacrifice are to copy Christ's example as far as possible, though admittedly they will never be able to come up to His standards. The Scriptures assure us that the best endeavors of this class, covered by the merit of Christ's sacrifice, will be acceptable and reckoned to them as though they were perfect sacrifices, and that thus they may have their share with their Redeemer in the glory, honor and immortality of

His Kingdom, and be participants with Him in the great work of bestowing upon the world during the Millennium the blessing of Divine forgiveness and favor secured through the sacrifice of Christ.

"YOUR HEARTS NOT TROUBLED"

We come finally to the application of our text to the Apostles and those who have believed through their word. The hearts of these are not to be troubled under any circumstances. They are no longer of the world, because separated from the world through their acceptance of the Lord and His acceptance of them. While still

sharers in the trials, difficulties of the world in general, these have now the consolations of the Scriptures to offset these troubles and to make of them "light afflictions"--not worthy to be compared with the glories promised to be revealed in us. (**2 Cor. 4:17**; **Rom. 8:18**.) Indeed, it is not an unusual thing for the Lord to permit trials and difficulties to come upon His faithful much more severe than those which fall to the lot of the world.--**Heb. 12:6-11**; **Rev. 3:19**.

Yea, as the Apostle says, so it should be with us all that "none of these things move me"--none of these experiences in life cause anxious thought. Why? The Apostle tells us, "Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts." (**Acts 20:24**; **Rom. 5:5**.) We have not only learned that God has forgiven our sins, that He is our Father and our best friend, that He is merciful to our imperfections, that He has called us to glory and association with our Redeemer, but that these blessings are to be ours at the Second Coming of our Lord, the resurrection of the just and the establishment of the Kingdom. Additionally also, we have now the peace, the joy, the blessed hope which these gracious promises afford. These the world can neither give nor take away.

What wonder if the hearts of this class are not troubled! Their Father knoweth the things they have need of. Day by day they are learning more distinctly than ever before that He who cares for the sparrows and for their necessities, He who clothes the grass of the field,

is much more interested in them, will be much more careful of their interests, so that figuratively speaking not one hair of their heads could fall without Divine attention. "Nothing shall by any means hurt you," is the Master's assurance. (**Luke 10:19**.) Why then should we be troubled? Surely anxiety on the part of such would be a lack of faith, a lack of confidence, or else ignorance of the Divine promises, character and arrangement.

SM272

LOVE THE PRINCIPAL THING

"Now abide faith, hope and love; but the greatest of these is love."--**1 Cor. 13:13**.

The value of resolution or decision of character is generally acknowledged. All proper instruction aims to have the youth of our land accept some high ideal, some high standard of character and course in life, and to seek to attain that ideal. Those who are without purpose, aim, ideality in life are the shiftless and unhappy; and the success of each life in respect to its happiness or failure and in respect to the happiness or misery it will bring to others in contact with it, will be in accordance with the character of the ideal accepted.

Moreover, the active, energetic, rushing people who have ideals, and are striving to attain them, frequently with advancing years experience a change of sentiment. Often they find that their ideals have proven unsatisfactory. Indeed, there is no doubt about it that this is the experience of the majority of the wisest people of the world. Hence by common consent the beginning of a New Year is considered a favorable time, not only for the youth of the land to make new resolutions and to start energetically to pursue an ideal, but also for those who have failed of their ideals in the past, through weakness and difficulties, to take a fresh start of resolution and determination. Additionally this is admittedly a favorable time for discarding ideals which have proven unsatisfactory, and for the seeking and acceptance of higher, nobler, better ones. Furthermore, it is a favorable time for putting into effect good resolutions. Those who fail to make such resolutions make very little progress in character-building.

What we have been considering is applicable to all mankind, but to the true Christian these things are still

SM273

more important than to the world, because the aim and the hope set before him in the Scriptures are so much higher and so much more valuable than that recognized

by the world in general. And here we must differentiate between the nominal Christian and the true one. The name Christian has become synonymous with civilization in general usage, but not so in Biblical usage; and our standpoint must be that of the Scriptures. The true Christian, then, according to the Bible, is one who has recognized himself as a sinner by nature, "a child of wrath even as others," and who desires to flee from his sins and imperfections and to attain unto righteousness and eternal life. He has seen in Divine providence that our Lord Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, by whom alone he may return to Divine fellowship and love and to the gift of God, eternal life. The true Christian is one who has accepted Christ as his Redeemer, and who, while striving for righteousness and in opposition to sin within and without, is not deceived into thinking that he can do perfectly; but realizing the imperfections of his very best endeavors, he relies upon the merit of the great Redemption-sacrifice of Christ to make up for his unwilling blemishes. Because of his faith in the precious blood he is reckoned a member of the "Household of Faith," and is styled one of the "brethren."

But a Christian, in the still higher sense that the Scriptures set forth, is one who goes beyond such faith, such righteous endeavors, and hearkens to the words of the Apostle, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God, and your reasonable service." (**Rom. 12:1**.) This sacrifice that the Apostle speaks of is a matter that few even of the Household of Faith understand experimentally. It means much more than to strive against sin. It means a voluntary surrender of the will, and hence of all that we possess, to the service of God and His Message of Grace. It means such

a complete revolution that those who take this step are called in the Scriptures "New Creatures in Christ Jesus," "members in particular of the Body of Christ."

Such are the "begotten again" ones, styled by the Apostles a "Royal Priesthood," a "holy nation," a "peculiar people." These enter into covenant relationship with God, by which they surrender all their rights and privileges as men that they may have the higher

riches and greater privileges as spirit beings. These greater privileges will be fully entered upon at their resurrection change, but are reckonedly entered into from the time of their covenant. Of such the Apostle says, "Old things have passed away, all things have become new." (**2 Cor. 5:17**.) The worldly aims and ambitions which once they held as their ideals have been exchanged for new ideals, Heavenly hopes, Heavenly ambitions. If once they looked upon Caesar, Napoleon or Alexander the Great, as their ideals for courage, or if once they regarded Socrates or Plato or Confucius or Shakespeare as their literary ideals, or if they looked upon a Carnegie, a Rothschild, a Rockefeller or Croesus as their financial ideals, these things have changed. They have new standards, new ideals, and new representatives of these. Not that they have lost an appreciation of wealth or honor or power or literature, but that they have gained a new standpoint of appreciation.

THINGS ONCE LOVED NOW DESPISED

So lofty are the new ideals of these "New Creatures in Christ Jesus" that their former standards are greatly depreciated. When they now think of greatness, of victories and of power, they think not of Caesar, but of Jesus--His greater victory and high exaltation to the power, glory, honor and immortality of the Heavenly Kingdom, which soon is to establish itself and rule over the world of mankind--not for selfish objects, but to the intent that all the families of the earth may be blessed.

SM275

Taking this higher ideal, and hearing the promises of the Lord through the Scriptures, these New Creatures now aspire to be "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord." (**Rom. 8:17**.) And they have the assurance of attaining a share in His glory, honor and immortality if they are but faithful--even unto death. (**Rev. 2:10**.) Instead of losing their appreciation of riches they get the higher appreciation, hearing the Word of the Lord, "All things are yours...for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." (**1 Cor. 3:21-23**.) They aspire then in harmony with the Divine invitation, not

only to the possession of all power but to all riches--not for selfish uses, but that they may lavish Divine favors and blessings during the Millennial Age upon the whole world of mankind, which then will enter the blessed epoch of Restitution--"Times of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."--**Acts 3:19-21**.

Nor does their love for knowledge abate one whit, but rather increases, though it takes a different turn and relies for guidance upon Divine revelation rather than upon human guesswork, speculation and philosophy. Content to admit ignorance of many things, these have an assurance that by and by they shall know even as they are known--perfectly; and that in the present time, by following the counsels of the Divine Word, they are really wise toward God, however foolish they may appear to the worldly wise. They are content to believe that the outcome will show that God is true, and will prove many so-called wise men to have been in error in many of their guesses respecting Truth.--**Rom. 3:3,4**.

Still confining ourselves to the true Christian class addressed in the Scripture we find that because of difference of mental structure and varying experiences, some are inclined to put one feature of living grace in advance of another, so that there is some perplexity and difference of opinion. One tells us that his highest conception of

a consecrated life is represented by activity in the service of others in preaching or mission work. Others tell us that their highest conception of privilege as New Creatures is in providing things honest and in doing benevolent works, helping the poor with an open hand. Others tell us that their highest conception of the duty of the New Creature is the study of the Word of God, that they may understand the Divine Plan and teach it to others. As a matter of fact, all of these are good purposes, and under certain circumstances proper enough; but none of these recognize what the Scriptures point out to be the very highest of Christian ideality.

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Considering our text in connection with its context, we perceive that the Apostle has been discussing the miraculous gifts enjoyed by the early Church--granted to them of the Lord with a view to their instruction and establishment. The Apostle discusses the various gifts that were then granted to believers. One would rise in meeting possessed of power to speak in an unknown tongue which he had never studied. Another was gifted with ability to interpret or translate the message of the unknown tongue into the vernacular of the congregation. The message thus came through two persons; and the company of the Lord's people, not then having the Bibles and helps which we now possess and enjoy and use profitably, were drawn together by these operations of the Lord's Holy Spirit for their instruction. Others had gifts of healing or of knowledge or of oratory.

The Apostle found the brethren of that time inclined to think of these gifts of the Spirit too highly, attaching too much importance to them. Some of them seemed to take pride especially in the gift of tongues. The Apostle assured them that he spoke in more tongues than any of them--that he had more of the various gifts than any of them; but that he did not esteem these his highest

treasures nor the most noble marks of his being the servant of the King of kings. He says in substance, It is proper enough for you to esteem these gifts and to seek to use them and to desire the most useful of them. He tells them that the gift of prophecy or public speaking would be the most useful of all gifts, because its opportunity for influencing others would be the greatest.
Hence he advised them that amongst the gifts they would choose this rather than the unknown tongue. Pointing out that all the gifts of God are good, he declares that God has set some in the Church, first Apostles; secondarily prophets, orators; thirdly, teachers; after that miracles; then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversity of tongues. He thus ranks the gift of tongues, which they thought so much of, as the very last of all the gifts, and says, "Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But covet

earnestly the best gifts, and yet I show unto you a more excellent way"--something better than any of these gifts.

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT SUPERIOR TO GIFTS

The fruits of the Spirit are those developments which come to us as New Creatures in Christ, gradually growing daily, yearly. The fruits of the Spirit are manifest, namely, Faith, Hope, Meekness, Patience, Gentleness, Long Suffering, Brotherly Kindness, Love. These are gifts in one sense of the word, but fruits in another. As the fruit of the tree is the gift to its owner and caretaker, so is the fruitage of the new nature. These fruits of the Spirit represent a development of character under Divine guidance and by Divine assistance, and are therefore far superior to those miraculous gifts of the early Church which indicated no special character development but were merely to be witnesses and encouragements.

Seeking to discourage a too great appreciation of the gifts in the early Church, and to encourage an appreciation of the higher things, the Apostle contrasts the

two, saying that the gifts would pass away but that the developed fruits would remain, prophecies would cease, the gift of tongues would cease, knowledge would vanish away as greater knowledge would come, but faith and hope and love, these three would abide, would continue. And it has been so; miraculous gifts imparted through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles necessarily ceased when the last of the Apostles had died and when those died who had received these special gifts through them. But all down through the Gospel Age, for centuries, faith has persisted, hope has persisted, love has persisted, and these three we still have; and whoever has these three--with what they include--is rich in grace beyond all comparison with those who had the gifts of the Spirit at the beginning of this Gospel Age.

FAITH, HOPE, LOVE

We yield to no one in our appreciation of the value of faith--a correct faith, faith in God, faith in the precious blood, faith in the Bible as the Word of God, faith in the exceeding great and precious promises. We realize that without such a faith we could never be conquerors, overcomers, but would succumb either to the wiles of the Adversary or to the spirit of the world or to the weakness of our own flesh. The proper faith is an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast, entering in within the veil and holding us serene in all the storms and difficulties of the journey to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Hope also is a necessary element of Christian character; it is built upon our faith. Without faith we cannot have hope. Hope is faith in activity; it is the anchor within the veil. Faith is the cable by which we are held firmly to it. Who does not see the importance of holding fast, being well anchored in the hopes and promises given us by our Lord directly and through the Apostles and Prophets. Ah! we must hold both to our faith and hope--nothing can persuade us that these are unimportant,

trivial. As the Apostle declares, these have abode throughout the Age.

But when he speaks of love, the Apostle declares that it is the greatest of all. Why? we ask. Indeed many would be inclined to suppose that love would be much less important than any other quality. They speak of rugged, rude faith and hope, and of rugged characters whose lives represent little of love. Where shall we set our standards, our ideals as New Creatures? What shall we strive for most particularly? The Apostle's declaration is that love is the greatest of these great qualities; but his advice is very contrary to the sentiment of the world. It tells us that if we have love, we cannot be successful, that the quality would interfere with us whatever our ideals might be. From the world's standpoint love would hinder a politician from crushing down others that he might rise to prominence himself; love would hinder the merchant from crushing his competitors that he might amass the larger fortune. Large love for others, they tell us, would lead us to esteem

others better than ourselves, and mean that we would be hindered in the great race that is going on amongst men for riches and honor and power. Shall we heed to the world's advice or shall we follow the Divinely inspired testimony of the Apostle?

The two standpoints are totally different. The New Creatures cannot follow the advice of the world; to do so would be to renounce and deny all the new ideals we have accepted, and toward which we have been laboring. If as New Creatures we would gain the great prize of our calling in Christ Jesus, we must hearken to Him that speaketh from Heaven; we must hearken to the words of the Lord through the Apostles and Prophets; we must note our Master's testimony, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another"; "Herein shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one for another." (**John 13:34,35**.) His

further message through the Apostle is, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law"; and again, in our text, "Love is the principal thing," the greatest thing in the world.

The New Creature must attain this character of love; for all of his hopes depend upon his attaining this character-likeness of his Lord. Otherwise he will not be fit for the Kingdom or be granted a place in the elect Little Flock, which is to inherit it and to be used of the Lord during the Millennium for the blessing and uplifting of the world in general out of sin, degradation and death. Love is the principal thing, then; for whatever knowledge we might gain, whatever talents we might possess, whatever faith, whatever hope, none of these could bring us to the Kingdom. They can all merely assist us in developing this love-character which is the Kingdom test--the fulfilling of the Law. Nor do we mean that the perfection of love-character can be manifest in our fallen flesh. Its weakness, its kinks, its peculiarities are hindrances so that the Apostle declares, "We cannot do the things that we would." (**Gal. 5:17**.) But our hearts must be up to this love standard; we must will lovingly. In our hearts we must love the Lord supremely, we must love the brethren, we must love our neighbors, we must love our enemies; and if we so do, the effect will be that so much as lieth in us this love

will be manifested to others in our words, in our looks, in our tones, in our actions. Whatever imperfection there is in the matter must not be of the heart but merely of the flesh, and such imperfection because of heredity is counted a part of what our Lord redeemed us from and the merit of His sacrifice is counted as covering all those unwilling blemishes so that the love of our hearts carried out in our lives to the extent of our ability is counted of the Lord as perfect love--perfection of character. Such are counted copies of God's dear Son, who was in turn a copy of the Father, an image of God--"the express image of His glorious person."--**Heb. 1:3**.

SM281

WHAT IS LOVE?

We answer that love is perfection of character. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God" --is fully in accord with God, and hence in the condition pleasing to the Father, the condition the Father is pleased to recognize and bless with eternal life. According to His covenant with those who have become the followers of Jesus, He is pledged to give them upon demonstration of this character, glory, honor and immortality in association with their Redeemer.--**Matt. 5:48**.

Let us take the analysis of love that is given by the Apostle. One of its elements is meekness. There is a difference between meekness and weakness; Moses was a meek man but a very strong character. He was humble-minded, not boastful, not proud or haughty. So with the New Creatures who have this quality of meekness, from the Divine standpoint. Gentleness is another element of love. It does not signify weakness or fear. The Christian man is, therefore, the true gentleman, the Christian woman the true gentlewoman--the highest ideals of these. The world may feign a gentleness which it does not really possess, but the gentleness of the Christian is a part of his character of love. It is because he thinks lovingly, considerately, of others that he is gentle towards all, seeking to walk with soft tread that he may not disturb others, to touch not rudely, but gently that he may avoid the giving of pain to others, to speak not rudely or harshly, but kindly and gently

that he may not wound others.

Patience is another element of love and a part of the true Christian character. True, we often see great patience in merchants, clerks, etc., exercised merely for policy's sake--for fear a good customer might be offended and dollars be missed. But the Christian's patience is of an unselfish kind; for it is a part of love, a part of his disposition. In proportion as he has sympathy and kindness, love, he is disposed to wait, to assist

with patience those who at first fail to come up to his ideals. He remembers his own trials and difficulties along these lines; and his broad, sympathetic love enables him to exercise much patience with those who are out of the way and who have not yet seen and have not yet learned to overcome difficulties and hindrances.

Brotherly kindness is another element of love. It is the kindness that ought always to prevail amongst true brethren, but in the Christian this kindness so appropriate to a brother is to be such a heart condition that it will be applied to all men. In this he is copying the Lord, who is kind to the unthankful, the ungrateful. All these qualities the Apostle sums up in the one word, Love, because love includes every kind of gentleness and kindness imaginable--and love must be the basis of such conduct in order that it may have value in God's sight.

"WITHOUT LOVE I AM NOTHING"

Emphasizing the importance of love in the forepart of the chapter from which our text is taken, the Apostle declares that if he could speak all the languages known amongst men and the angelic tongue as well, and if he used these talents in preaching, if his preaching were not inspired by love, it would be nothing--God would esteem it no more than the sound proceeding from cymbals or any brass instrument. God has not glory, honor and immortality for brass horns and brass cymbals; and if a man should preach the whole Truth in all its grandeur, yet without the spirit of love he would be, nevertheless, as unfit for Divine favor and a share in the Kingdom as the brass horn would be. No place in the Kingdom would be

found for such. What a lesson for us all as we attempt to sound forth the praises of Him who hath called us from darkness to light! How necessary it is that we shall speak the Truth in the love of it, with hearts full of devotion and appreciation!

Taking another illustration, the Apostle suggests that if he had mountain-moving faith, if his knowledge of

SM283

Divine mysteries and all other mysteries were very great, superior to those of all other men, and even if in his zeal for man or for God he should become a martyr and permit his body to be burned, yet, notwithstanding all this, if the primary influence in these matters were not love, all the sacrifice, all the self-denials, all the labors, even the burning, would profit nothing. Ah, dear friends, when we come to get the Divine standpoint of things we find indeed that it is very high; and yet our judgment assures us that it is right, that it is just, that it is proper, that God should thus set the standard of love as the only standard by which we shall ultimately be measured. But whoever thinks to have this perfect love for God and for man and make no manifestations of it is equally mistaken. Wherever love is in the heart words, works, thoughts and looks will testify to it, so that he who loves much will serve much. If we love the Lord we shall delight in His service regardless of failures, regardless of fame, regardless of any earthly consideration; yea, even though the service of the Lord should cause us the loss of human approbation, fellowship, etc. The language of love is well expressed in our dear Redeemer's words, "I delight to do Thy will, O my God; Thy Law is within in my heart." (**Psa. 40:8**.) Hence every true Christian may link the two words love and service, and be sure that his love will manifest itself in zeal. Similarly, love of the brethren will mean a desire to serve the brethren; love of the home and family will mean a desire to do good to them; love of our neighbor will signify a desire to do for his interests according to our knowledge and limitations.

THE RESTRAINTS OF LOVE

The Apostle points out some of the restraints of love. It cannot be quick, irascible; for "Love suffereth long and is kind." He who is loving cannot be envious of others, nor covetous of the blessings and favors they are enjoying; for "Love envieth not." He who is loving cannot be boastful and proud; for "Love vaunteth not itself, is not

SM284

puffed up." He who is controlled by the spirit of love will not be ungracious, unkind, rude; for "Love doth not behave itself unseemly." He who is full of the spirit of love will not be selfish, grasping, neglectful of the interests of others; for "Love seeketh not her own" merely. The truly loving one will not be quickly angered, will not be easily offended; for "Love is not easily provoked." The one controlled by the spirit of love will not be imagining unkindness and rudeness nor seeking to interpret the words or conduct of others unkindly; for "Love thinketh no evil."

He who has the spirit of love will have no satisfaction in the adversities coming upon those who are even his enemies; for "Love rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." He who has the spirit of love regulating his heart, his words, his thoughts, his actions, the Apostle declares will be ready to "bear all things" and ready to believe everything that is favorable and all that is possible of good, and will be disposed to hope always for the best outcome in respect to all with whom he may have to do. He will be ready also to "endure all things," to submit to many unkindnesses and to credit these largely to weakness or poor judgment or fallen nature.

"LOVE NEVER FAILETH"

Faith will fail in the sense of ceasing when the present time of limitations of knowledge has passed; for then, instead of faith, we shall have sight. Hope will then also reach a glorious consummation; for instead of the hope for the things God has promised us we shall then have them. But "love never faileth," will never cease. Whoever then attains this glorious character of love has a thing of beauty and a joy forever. It will beautify his

own character, make him lovely in the sight of his Lord and be the quality that will bring him the Master's words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord; thou hath been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things." Thou

SM285

hast faithfully developed My spirit of love in the little things of life. I can therefore now give you greater things to do in My service in glory, in the blessing of others. This character of love, essential to Divine favor, will be essential to the eternal life and eternal happiness of the individual. For God to give eternal life to any others than those who have the perfection of this His own character would be to permit an element in Heaven which sooner or later would be in danger of working mischief and bringing in works of selfishness, sin and injury.

This love-standard of character, which is now being developed in the saints in the few short years of the present trial time, must be developed also in the world of mankind--in all who will ever attain to eternal life during the Millennial Age. One difference is that they will have a thousand years for the development of such character while we of the present time have a much shorter period in which to make our calling and election sure by such character development. But then, if our trial is briefer and therefore more rigorous, it also has attached to it the still greater reward of a share in the Divine nature--glory, honor, immortality. Let us, then, dear friends, resolve for this year that we will strive for the principal thing; that the love of God may more and more be shed abroad in our hearts and that we may come more and more into heart-likeness to Him and so far as possible exemplify this character in our outward words, deeds and looks. Thus we shall attain the highest ideals, God's ideal, and the greatest blessing--God's blessing.

Finish, Lord, Thy New Creation;
Pure and spotless let us be;
Show us all Thy great salvation--
Thine shall all the glory be.
Changed from glory into glory,
Till we see Thine own dear face;
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love and praise.

SM286

"WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING"

"Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil Day, and having done all, to stand."--**Eph. 6:13**.

Only those who have learned the meaning of the Apostle's words concerning rightly dividing the Word of Truth--only those who have learned from the Scriptures that the Divine Plan is a progressive one, in which successive ages form links--such can understand why Divine providence should permit peculiar experiences, trials, etc., upon the Church at one time, not permitted at another. Would that all Christian people would awake to a proper study of the Bible--to see the object of the Divine dealings with the Jews during the Jewish Age, with Christians during the Gospel Age, and with the world during the coming Millennial Age. From this standpoint they would see what the Scriptures represent; namely, that there is a seed time, or sowing time, and a harvest, or reaping time, with each Age, which, when it has served its purpose, passes away, giving place to another age and a different work. In the end of the Jewish Age, for instance, there came to that people a peculiar sifting and testing which John the Baptist, the last of the Prophets, declared was a winnowing of the wheat, a separating of the chaff preparatory to the gathering of the wheat into the garner of the next Age, and the permission of trouble to come upon the chaff class of that people, which utterly destroyed them as a nation.

Similarly the Lord tells us in one of His parables (**Matt. 13:24-30**) that in the end of this Gospel Age there will be a separation of wheat from tares, the former being gathered into the glorious Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come," the latter being consumed as tares, though not as individuals. The destruction of a tare,

SM287

an imitation Christian, will signify that the person thus posing as a Christian, drawing nigh unto the Lord with

his lips while his heart is far from God will cease to make such profession. Thenceforth the true Church will be recognized in its peculiar position as the "Very Elect" of God, a "little flock" who follow the footsteps of the Master, gladly sacrificing earthly interest for the attainment of the Heavenly. Thereafter, as the parable shows, these will shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom for blessing of all the families of the earth, including the tare class, who thereafter will be no longer deceived or deceivers in respect to their true position, but be privileged with the remainder of mankind to come into full harmony with God.--**Mal. 4:2**; **Matt. 13:43**.

It is concerning the Harvest time of this Gospel Age that I address you on this occasion, believing that this entire Harvest period, according to the Scriptures, is to be forty years long, and that we entered it in 1878, and that consequently it will close with 1918. I desire to point out to you that the special trials and difficulties and testing of faith and obedience appropriate to the complete separation of the wheat from the tares is upon Christendom now--has been upon us as a "thief in the night" for some years. We have not the necessary time to examine here the various Scriptural evidences which indicate that we are in the closing time of the Gospel Age and in the opening or dawning of the Millennial Age. Many of you already have our Studies in the Scriptures, in which these are fully presented, with their Scriptural evidences. We must content ourselves at this time by pointing to some of the outward demonstrations that we are in the period which in our text the Apostle designates

"THE EVIL DAY"

All throughout the Scriptures this period is most dramatically set forth as being a time of thorough testing, a time in which the separation of the wheat from the tares

will be most absolutely accomplished, so that not one grain of wheat will be lost and not one grain of tare will by any mischance be preserved with the wheat, for the Lord declares that He will make a thorough work of separation. It seems difficult for the majority of people

to think of anything specially occurring in their day--that they should be in the midst of the fulfilments of prophecy. If we were telling that these things would take place within a century or within a thousand years, far more would be ready to investigate and acknowledge the force of the arguments. But familiar with the conditions, the trials, the difficulties, the perplexities and the suggestions of many--as the Apostle predicted, that all things will continue as they were from the beginning of the world (**2 Pet. 3:4**)--for such reasons many shut the eyes of their understanding to the most remarkable condition of affairs in our day.

The Apostle says they are "willingly ignorant"; and Jesus, "They hear not, neither do they understand"; and again, the Lord through the Prophet says, "My people perish for lack of knowledge." (**2 Pet. 3:5**; **Matt. 13:13**; **Hosea 4:6**.) Indeed the majority of professing Christians are careless, indifferent to what the Lord had caused to be written for their admonition and encouragement and assistance in this "evil Day." Such are not of the "Very Elect." The latter, as the Apostle shows, will not be in darkness that that Day should overtake them as a thief. They will be earnest, vigilant, watchful and standing fast in the faith. Therefore, using the means the Lord has provided, they will receive the blessing, the special reward, while others by neglecting their privileges mark themselves as unworthy of the great favor God is now dispensing to the "little flock." We will not say that they will not have opportunities in that great company that the Scriptures point out, who will come up out of great tribulation, and be before the Throne instead of in the Throne.--**Rev. 7:15**; **3:21**.

SM289

Mark how our Lord declared that the trial of our time would be so critical, so crucial, that it would deceive if it were possible the "Very Elect." (**Matt. 24:24**.) But this will not be possible, for the Lord has promised them the assistance needful, and they will be in that attitude of heart and mind to seek assistance and use it. Mark how the Lord through the Prophet David (**Psa. 91**) foretold the special trials of this time, picturing the various devices of Satan--Spiritism, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, etc.--as pestilences and arrows. He tells us that

a thousand shall fall at our side, yea, ten thousand at our right hand--amongst those whom we consider most favored and, in some respects, as our friends in the Lord.

Then the reason is given why the Very Elect will not fall under these same pestilences and arrows; namely, "Because thou hast made the Lord, even the Most High, thy Refuge and thy Habitation, no plague shall come nigh thy dwelling"--"the Wicked One toucheth him not." (**1 John 5:18**.) What to others will be a stone of stumbling will to this class be an assistance, in that they will climb upon it to still higher personal development and character-likeness of the Lord. All things must work together for good to these because they love God truly, sincerely, above self or any other creature, and because of their faithfulness to their covenant--their consecration to the Lord. The pestilence of error cannot harm them, because in the secret of the Lord's presence they have an armament of grace and truth specially provided. As it is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him, and He will show them His covenant."--**Psa. 25:14**.

"THE DAY SHALL DECLARE IT"

Pointing down to this Harvest time, which began in 1878, the Apostle calls it a special Day, or epoch; and such it surely has been. No other period in the world's history has ever been so notable in so many ways. Referring

SM290

to this time, and to the testings of faith that will come upon the Lord's people here, the Apostle says, "Let every man take heed how he build [faith]; for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." By these words the Apostle shows that he refers not to the heathen world, but to those who at least nominally accepted Christ as the foundation of their hopes. He proceeds, "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall declare it: because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."--**1 Cor. 3:10-15**.

How could a plainer statement of this be made? The fire referred to, of course, is symbolical, as are the wood,

hay, stubble, gold, silver, precious stones. As wood, hay, stubble can be destroyed by literal fire, so selfish doctrines, errors and all improper faith will be destroyed in this time which the Apostle designates. "The Day shall declare it," or demonstrate the faith that will stand and the faith that will be consumed. The Apostle proceeds, "If any man's work shall abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss." Alas, how many are finding their faith burned out! How few are having the great reward of finding that they have a faith that will stand all the tests of this day! Is it not true that Spiritism, Theosophy, Christian Science, and Higher Criticism are consuming the faith of many--of all who have come in touch with them, who have only the wood, hay, stubble of human tradition and who lack the gold, silver and precious stones of the Divine Word?

The Apostle, continuing, assures us that all who have built upon Christ will ultimately be saved, even though they suffer great loss as respects their faith. He says: "He himself shall be saved, so as by fire." The fire of this Day, then, will demonstrate to some how poorly they have built, how little they have heeded the Word of the

Lord, to what extent they have been influenced by human traditions and creeds of the Dark Ages. Many, we may be sure, will lose all faith in Christ at this time, but if so it will prove that their faith was not properly founded upon Him who is the only true Foundation.

Note again that our text applies, refers to, the Harvest time of this Age, and also calls it a Day, and designates it an "evil Day"--a Day or epoch in which trials, testings, etc., will be upon the Lord's people for the development, proving worthy, of those who love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul, strength, and their neighbor as themselves, the Israelites indeed, and for the demonstrating also of those who have been lukewarm in their love for the Lord and the brethren, and who have been overcharged with the cares of this life or the deceitfulness of riches, and so overtaken by "that Day"--our Day.--**1 Thess. 5:4**; **Eph. 6:13**.

Our text, much in harmony with the quotation I have made from the Psalms, indicates a need for the armor,

a difficulty in withstanding the assaults of this day, and the fewness of those who will eventually stand. The Apostle's exhortation is that we take the whole armor of God--not merely the shield of faith, not merely the helmet of salvation, not merely the breastplate of righteousness, not merely the Sword of the Spirit, not merely the sandals of preparation, not merely the girdle of Truth; but that we take all of these--that we shall need all of these if we would be able to withstand all the assaults to be expected in this "evil Day," and having done all to stand. Alas! how few seem to realize the importance of this armor which God has commended! Their difficulty is the result of not knowing the time in which they are living, not being sufficiently awake, not being sufficiently zealous to search the Scriptures and to put on the armament and preparation for the battle there alone provided. Therefore all such lukewarm Christians will surely be overthrown in this Evil Day.

SM292

WHY GOD WILL PERMIT IT

St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, foretold this "evil Day" in which we are living--in which so many will fall because not attentive to the Word of the Lord, because overcharged with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of the earthly riches so many are seeking. He tells us that the trials of our day will come from the Great Adversary, Satan, not because God will be unable to prevent him from bringing these deceptions and tests, but because God wills that he should bring them--wills to permit him to thus test and prove and sift the professed Church of our day, that all may be confused, deceived, stumbled who are not at heart loyal to Him. After telling about the workings of Satan that are to be expected, with great power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceitfulness of unrighteousness, the Apostle explains that this is permitted, "because they received not the love of the Truth." He adds, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all should be condemned who believed not the Truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" --in untruth. (**2 Thess. 2:9-12**.) They did not

obey the Truth of God, but acted hypocritically.

Many tell us that it makes no difference what we believe --truth or falsehood--that it is by our work that the Lord will determine our standing. But the Scripture forbids this thought, and assures us that none have works that would be pleasing to God because all are imperfect. The Divine purpose is that during this Age God will honor and reward faith--it being assumed and declared that a true faith will be backed by good works to the extent of ability, and that God will reckon this as perfection through Christ. The Apostle in his words last quoted corroborates all the teachings of Scripture respecting the value of the Truth to the people of God. Mark the Master's words, "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free"; and again His prayer to the Father

for His followers, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."--**John 8:32**; **17:17**.

The Lord has provided His Word, and from time to time has used instrumentalities for the unfolding of its meaning to those who are in the right attitude of heart to receive it. But He has also permitted errors, falsehoods and lying wonders to stalk about, though never before to the same extent as in this "evil Day"--because now He desires specially to use these errors as a testing, sifting, separating work amongst His professed people, that the improper faiths may be manifested and may be destroyed, and that the true faith may shine the more brightly, and ultimately the professors of it be glorified with Himself in the Kingdom.

In view of the Apostle's words respecting the love of the Truth, it behooves each one to examine himself whether he is loving and serving a creed of the Dark Ages or a denomination and creed of modern times; or whether his love and devotion are simply to the Truth presented to us in the Divine Word. We may deceive others; we may even to some extent deceive ourselves; for, as the Prophet declares, the heart is exceedingly deceitful. But we cannot deceive God. If in the Lord's providence the Truth comes to us and we get some glimpse of its beauty in contrast with the hopelessness of error, a test is upon us. If we reject the Truth because of its unpopularity, and hold to the abominable error

because it is popular, we are thereby tested. Or, if we receive the Truth and rejoice in it in our minds, but because of its unpopularity hide the light under a bushel, concealing it in order to thus shield ourselves from the opposition of darkness, we may be sure that this would be displeasing to the Lord, who seeketh not such for His "Elect." He puts His Word on a parity with Himself, saying, "He that is ashamed of Me and My Word, of him will I be ashamed when I come in My Kingdom."

This is what the Apostle refers to as receiving not the

SM294

Truth in the love of it. Whoever receives the Truth in the love of it will to the best of his ability and judgment show it to others at whatever the cost may be. Thus he will be proving himself a child of the light, a child of God. He will be saved. But the one who seeks to save his life, to save earthly interests by hiding the light or failing to publicly acknowledge it, will be sure to find his course injurious to himself.--**1 Cor. 4:1,2**.

LIKE THE HYPOCRITES OF OLD

We have already pointed out that the influences at work in the present time undermining faith consuming it, destroying it, are likened to a pestilence which is in the very air and which lays hold upon all whose systems are in condition to be inoculated with the poisons. I must elaborate this point; for the evil influences by which we are surrounded at the present time are so subtle, so deceptive, so all-pervading, that the majority do not recognize them. What a shock it would give to Christendom could it be realized that these pestilential influences are going forth from the pulpits--not perhaps from all, but surely from four out of five in the larger cities, and increasingly it is spreading to the smaller towns and country places! Let us look the matter squarely in the face. It is necessary for the Lord's true people to know the facts. As for others, they are so stupidly asleep, so thoroughly intoxicated with the wine of Babylon (**Rev. 18:3**), that we have no hope of influencing them. Ever since this evil Day began this pestilence has been going forth--over thirty years.

Today every college, every theological seminary throughout the whole civilized world, is teaching what is commonly known as Higher Criticism of the Bible--though the proper name for it would be Higher Infidelity amongst the high ones of all Christendom. These Higher Critics are doing the same work exactly that Thomas Paine and Robert Ingersoll did, only that they are carrying

SM295

on their work on a higher plane--appealing not to the gross and the vile, but to the refined, intelligent and truth-seeking. As a result their influence is a thousand-fold more injurious.

Those to whom Paine and Ingersoll appealed were very rarely Christians at all. Hence they destroyed very little faith--they merely made the unbelief more rank and foul. But these Higher Critic infidels of this "evil Day" are making use of all the vast machinery of Christendom in all denominations, especially through theological seminaries, to undermine and overthrow the faith of all who have named the name of Christ, great and small, rich and poor, cultured and ignorant. It is being done systematically, too, craftily, deceitfully, in a manner that the masses of the people would scarcely credit. It is safe to say that fully four out of five who graduate from theological seminaries, of all denominations, are Higher Critic infidels, who are instructed that their main business is to promote morality amongst the people, especially to build up Churchianity, particularly their own denomination, and to gradually, stealthily, craftily wean the people from the faith of the Bible to their higher critical dogmas. And they are succeeding most wonderfully. A "pestilence" is the only figure of speech which really fits to this pernicious influence.

"OUT OF THINE OWN MOUTH

WILL I JUDGE THEE"

Said the Lord; and in harmony with this we find that in the Lord's providence these Higher Critics are gradually more and more telling on themselves. But the nominal Christian is quite obtuse; and many of the true Christians, as the Apostle explains, are merely "babes in

Christ," unable to use the strong meat of the Word, and capable only of enjoying or using the "milk of the Word"--understanding only first principles. Hence the open declarations of these wolves in sheep's clothing, who masquerade as sheep, are not taken seriously. If

SM296

the sheep are startled by the words, they are soothed again by the thought, "This is our kind minister, polished in manner and well educated; and he surely would not lead us astray. He surely would not deceive us. If he had ceased to believe the Bible and become an infidel, he surely would have left the pulpit. He could not be so dishonest as to wear sheep's clothing and to use it for our deception and destruction." Poor innocents! Hearken now while I read to you the confession of one of these false shepherds, and his explanation of the trickery and deceit by which he keeps the people quiet while inoculating them from time to time with a little and a little more of the higher critical poison, which eventually brings on spiritual stupor and tends to spiritual death.

I refer you to his words as they were printed in the most prominent religious paper in the world--the Independent, New York City. The Editor of that journal, respecting the desire of this wolf not to be exposed, and apparently sympathizing with him in the whole procedure, vouches for him as a man of intelligence and Christian character, and of high standing in an orthodox Church, so-called, whose orthodoxy would never be suspected. This is the confession:

"I have never won distinction by my heresy, nor even acquired a local reputation from violent departures from orthodoxy. If I should set about some Sunday morning to tell my congregation all my divergencies from the accepted Christian belief, I would shock them beyond measure. They understand in a general way that I am a liberally-minded person, and I take occasion not infrequently to hasten their heels in their movements from wornout dogma to the truth that is to be. That they are engaged in such a journey I have no doubt; and most of them are willing to maintain a reasonable pace. My congregation is above normal in intelligence, information and sympathy with forward movements; but nevertheless

SM297

I am fully persuaded that a complete revelation on my part of the beliefs to which my studies have forced me would set their ears a-tingling, and not only awaken antagonism to me personally but also cause a turn of sentiment in the direction of conservatism and orthodoxy."

What think you of that confession, dear friends? What think you of the stealthy, murderous deliberation of this educated man, professing to be a minister of the Word of God, and as such "highly esteemed amongst men"? He is a pattern, a fair sample, of about four-fifths of all the preachers in all denominations--a sample of the hypocrisy which has come into the Church of Christ. But I have not concluded his confession. Let me continue to read from his own lips, his own pen, of his dastardly cunning or deceit whereby he is entrapping, ensnaring and destroying the sheep. Judge then if we are not right in thus particularly calling attention to the matter. Do not the Scriptures say that the shepherds, pastors, who see the wolves coming and give no alarm and seek not to defend the flock, are unfaithful to their responsibilities? I wish to clear my skirts by crying aloud and sparing not these wolves in sheep's clothing. I proceed to read:

"RAPID GROWTH OF REFINED INFIDELITY"

"So rapid is the advance in the religious opinion, at least as I experience it in my parish, that I would not hesitate for a moment now to give fullest utterance to views utterly condemnatory of the whole scheme of sacrificial atonement and imputed righteousness. Devout saints who were wont to inquire anxiously every week or two why I did not mention that Christ made atonement for sin, after a sermon on any subject from Dan to Beersheba now sit patiently under preaching which never refers to Christ as a Propitiatory Sacrifice."

How true this is! We pointed out thirty years ago from the Scriptures that the testing of Christendom was

SM298

coming along this very line--that the atonement for sin

effected by our dear Redeemer was the foundation for all Scriptural faith and hope and that it would be repudiated by Christendom as a whole according to the prophetic delineations of the Scriptures which I cannot here discuss, some of them belonging to the symbolic book of Revelation. What a great change since that time! Not only has Christian Science largely influenced all denominations by its false statements that there is no original sin and that there is no death and hence no penalty for original sin, and hence also that Christ did not die and redeem from the original penalty, and that there was no necessity for a redemptive work because there is no sin--they claim sin is merely a delusion--but since that time also higher Criticism has gotten its work all over the civilized world and is surely destroying faith in the very center of the Divine Plan. For whoever does not believe in the atonement work of Christ is not a Christian, despite his professions of discipleship.

Christianity is not merely an acceptance of the fact that Jesus was born and that Jesus died, nor is it an acceptance of merely the moral and religious teachings of Jesus. Christianity is an acceptance of the fact that we are sinners; that Christ died for our sins, and rose again on the third day for our justification; that through Him we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins through faith in His blood. He who has lost this faith in Jesus' blood has lost his relationship to true Christianity; and the sooner he and all mankind know it the better for all concerned. If he be an honest man he will come out plainly and confess his position. If he be like the writer from whom I have quoted, a dishonest man, he thus evidences his unworthiness of the Truth; for he prefers, as he tells us, to act a lie, to destroy the faith of the too confident sheep whom he leads, and whose praise and money he enjoys. But we must quote further from this false shepherd (**Ezek. 34:2-10**), as follows:--

SM299

"Experience has taught me not to be too rampant in my heresies. I have learned that if one keeps his doctrinal discoveries in his study drawer for about five years, and takes them out now and then to refresh his soul, allowing occasionally a delicate effluence from them to steal over a page or two of his next Sunday's sermon, he

will find at the end of the period that he may avow them as violently as he pleases, and they who aforetime would have lit the torch for his burning will sit peacefully under his doctrine, and sing the last hymn lustily in satisfaction that they have heard once more the truth they have always believed."

AWAKE, O SHEEP, AND LISTEN!

What noble-minded, truth-loving layman would change places with this self-satisfied deceiver and fraud? What honorable business man would without blushing make such an acknowledgment respecting his method of conducting business to the Editor of the New York Independent, even if his name were kept secret? Would he not be ashamed that even the Editor should know of his perfidy? And indeed we can make much more excuse for those who practice some deception in connection with their business advertising and the overstatement of the quality of their goods, etc.; for they are professedly self-seeking, and the public know to take their statements with a grain of allowance. But the minister of the Gospel professes to be a philanthropist who is sacrificing his life to the service of the Truth, to the service of the Lord, to the building up of his fellow-creatures in the most holy faith once delivered to the saints. How abominably mean and contemptible, then, is such a man as well as his course! The more refined and polished and educated he is the more is it to his shame. Hearken further:--

"For this reason I am not shouting out every Sunday that I do not believe in the virgin birth of Jesus nor in the physical resurrection. Much as I honor and admire

Doctor Crapsey, I am not scurrying to put myself in the pillory beside him. I let others do the talking, and I answer questions cautiously."

Doctor Crapsey referred to was recently tried for heresy and expelled from the Episcopal pulpit. He, magnanimous soul! after having avowed his own faith in the teachings of the Bible, after having been honored with a high position amongst those who reverence the Bible, and while drawing a good salary for expounding it to

his congregation, considered it the proper and honorable course to break those vows, and while retaining his hold upon the titles, honors and emoluments of his position, to proclaim to his confiding hearers the theory of the Higher Critics respecting the non-inspiration of the Scriptures, that Jesus was born like any other man, that His death was not sacrificial and that His blood was a "common thing." (**Heb. 10:29**.) We are not surprised that the honorable wolf whose confession we are reading, and who glories in it, honors and admires Doctor Crapsey. For our part we can admire no such duplicity, but of the two would consider it the more honorable to be in Doctor Crapsey's position; for he is a little the more honorable. Let us take another quotation from this glorious confession. The writer says:--

"I have hopes that before many years the heresies, as undoubtedly they are, of the miraculous origin and resurrection of Christ will become at least tolerated opinions. With patience, tact and perseverance I hope some day to bring out this deliverance of my soul, as I have already waited in patience for a time to declare my opinions of the atonement. To expose it now would endanger my real work, which is not to teach history, not even true history concerning Jesus, His Apostles, or His Church; but to enlarge lives with real religious faith, and induce some morals and gentle virtues through devotion to duty as God gives me to see it. One shrinks from being called a hypocrite, but it is encouraging to remember that in

Jesus' time they were not branded as hypocrites who counted themselves still Jews and went to the feasts while in utter contradiction with the prevailing opinion."

"WHO GLORY IN THEIR SHAME"

Apparently there is just a little mite of conscience here, which seems to vaguely realize that there is at least a suspicion of hypocrisy in his course. But note how he seeks to justify himself. He speaks of "devotion to duty as God gives me to see it." Should we expect that God would give such a man ability to see anything? Rather we should say, as Jesus said to the hypocrites of old, "Ye

are of your father the Devil; for his works ye do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the Truth." (**John 8:44**.) This man, and he is but a sample of others, is a murderer. He is murdering in a spiritual sense the people under his care by taking from them, if possible, their spark of faith and spirit-begetting, and doing it as did the great Adversary--by lies and by contradictions of the Lord's Word. This man's idea of duty is very manifest; it consists in holding all the honors of men which he is able to accumulate, gathering in all the shekels within his reach, and belying his covenant with God and with his congregation. From such duty, such hypocritical wolves, good Lord deliver us! This gentleman and all the Higher Critics and Evolutionists occupying the pulpits of Christendom are in exactly the position of the Scribes and Pharisees of old, of whom the Lord said, "Ye do make void the Word of God through your traditions." He told them that outwardly they were clean and respectable, as this man appears to be; but that inwardly they were full of all manner of corruption --deceit, selfishness, unfaithfulness--as this man, opening his bosom, shows us he is.--**Mark 7:5,9,13**.

Then, as now, the common people were so hypnotized by their Doctors of the Law and priests that they hesitated to hear the voice of the Son of Man and His humble

followers, waiting first to get the approval of the hypocritical teachers, who with outward raiment feign to be servants of God and for pretense make long prayers. What the common people needed then was what the same class need now--an awakening. As the Israelites indeed in whom there is no guile got the message, so a similar class will get the message now. To this class and not to the Higher Critics and Evolutionists is the promise made. "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God"; but unto all outsiders these things are done in parables and dark sayings.--**Matt. 13:11**.

We are in the shaking time, the burning time when all the wood, hay and stubble of falsehood must be consumed, when only the precious truths of God's Word, gold, silver and precious stones of faith will stand the test. Let us hearken to the Apostle's words, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men." Seek the

"old paths"--not the paths nor the theories of the Dark Ages and their horrible "doctrines of devils," but the doctrines of Jesus and the Apostles--that your faith should not stand in the doctrines of men but in the power of God.--**Jer. 6:16**; **1 Cor. 16:13**; **2:5**.

Let the world despise and leave me,
They have left my Savior, too;
Former friends are wont to leave me,
Thou art faithful, Thou art true.

And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may scorn me,
Show Thy face and all is bright.

Oh, 'tis not in grief to harm me
While Thy love is left to me!
Oh, 'twere not in joy to charm me,
Were that joy unmixed with Thee!

SM303

"WHO, THEN, SHALL BE SAVED?"

"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"--**1 Peter 4:18**.

The words of our text are solemn, from whatever standpoint they may be viewed. But for our friends of various denominations who hold that death marks the end of hope these words should be not only solemn, but terrifying in the extreme. They note the death of friends and neighbors, and know from statistics that ninety thousand fellow-creatures die every twenty-four hours; and they well know and would not dispute that a very small number of these could by any stretching of language or any allowances be considered righteous or even to have had righteous intentions. If these dear friends would take seriously their teaching that all but the righteous, all but the saintly, go to a never-ending hell of torment, from which there is no hope of alleviation of suffering, it would be sufficient to unbalance their minds. Fortunately for them, therefore, they do not take too seriously their own unreasonable and unscriptural views on this subject.

Apparently a great many people would scarcely be willing to be saved, just as they are scarcely willing to forsake sin. We have heard people tell us that they would be glad to creep into some little, obscure corner of Heaven and enjoy its glories and blessings if they could only escape the miseries of which they have been mistaught. We are sorry for such poor creatures. They can enjoy neither the present life nor the future prospect. Instead of hoping for glory, honor and immortality, as the Apostle suggests we should do, these merely hope to escape torture by the skin of their teeth--a poor, unsatisfactory hope, quite contrary to the one set before us in the Gospel.

It is the same Apostle who urges the Church to pursue

SM304

a course that would be pleasing to God and who assures us that "so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (**2 Peter 1:11**.) It is proper that

we inquire why in these words an abundant salvation is suggested, while in our text it is declared that the righteous shall scarcely be saved. Let us examine our text more particularly; it seems inconsistent as generally viewed. It seems out of harmony with what we might expect for their eternal welfare by our Heavenly Father, who is rich, wise and powerful beyond all compare.

TO WHOM DOES OUR TEXT APPLY?

We inquire first who are the righteous referred to in our text? We reply that the Apostle is not referring to any class of people, but merely in a general way referring to a principle of the Divine Law which declares that he that doeth these things shall live, and that any failure to do the perfect will of God would be sin, and that "the wages of sin is death." (**Rom. 6:23**.) In other words, the Apostle is speaking of God's arrangement. God has promised eternal life only to the righteous. If we should take one hundred as representing the standard of righteousness, it would be impossible for any one to have one hundred and one points; for he could not be more than righteous. And if he lacked anything of being up to the hundred mark, he would not be righteous. With a hundred as the standard the man possessing the ninety-nine points of righteous character would still be an unrighteous man; and, according to Divine Law, he could not have everlasting life. So, then, God's Law makes no allowance for sin, but condemns it and declares that all unrighteousness is sin.--**1 John 5:17**.

This is the basis of the Apostle's statement that a righteous person could be no more than saved under the Divine Law. He could not say, as some teach, "Lord, I have done more than was required of me; I have been

more than righteous. On the score of my righteousness I could claim Thy promise of eternal life, but having been more than merely righteous I have a reserve of merit which I can apply for others." This, to some extent, is the theory of our Catholic friends. On the strength of this they pray to Mary, the Apostles and certain others of the saints whom they believe to have laid up for them

a surplus of merit. The Apostle's words are in contradiction to this thought, assuring that no one could be more than righteous and that consequently God's offer of salvation to the righteous could not be more than made. The righteous would scarcely be saved; that is to say, would have nothing of left-over merit, nothing of surplus. It would require his every effort to comply with the standard of righteousness.

From this standpoint the Apostle's words are very clear, very meaningful, very reasonable; and we see at once the significance of the latter part of our text, "Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?"--What show would they have? In other words, his thought is that if the Divine Law has provided eternal life for only those who are absolutely perfect in God's sight, what chance, what show, would there be for any sinner condemned for either many or few transgressions; and as for the ungodly--those failing to recognize their responsibility to the Almighty--where would they appear, what show would they have? The inferential answer is, None! God's Law would condemn them, sentence them.

But nothing in the Scriptures indicate that the Divine Law would sentence them to an eternity of torture. Rather the Divine Law is that "the wages of sin is death." "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (**Ezek. 18:4**.) Eternal life is the gift of God (**Rom. 6:23**), and will be given only to those who have His approval, only to the righteous. And since the wicked will not receive this gift from the Almighty, and it would be impossible for them to get it from any other source, it is apparent

that they cannot live, either in torture or otherwise, that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction.

WHO ARE THE RIGHTEOUS?

Coming now to a still fuller examination of the subject, we inquire, Who are the righteous amongst men? The Scriptures answer, "There is none righteous, no, not one." (**Rom. 3:10**.) They again declare that our Lord Jesus was the only righteous One, and that He died, the Just for the unjust, for our reconciliation to the Father.

But now the question arises, If God's Law is so strict that only the full one hundred per cent would have His approval and be granted eternal life, what hope is there for our race, the majority of whom, instead of being ninety-nine per cent perfect or righteous, could not be claimed to be more than twenty-five per cent, with an exceptional person, perhaps, able to stand the test of forty or fifty per cent and some of the poor race, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, as low down as ten per cent, with consequently ninety per cent of unrighteousness in their natural makeup? Where is the hope under God's Law for either the best or the worst of our fallen race?

Ah, we answer, right there lies the key to the Gospel of Christ, which assures us that as we all inherit our imperfections from our parents and they from theirs, and thus originally all from Adam, so Christ Jesus, having given Himself as a Ransom or corresponding price for Father Adam, having laid down His life for Adam's sin, has a corresponding merit represented in the value of His death as a Sin-offering. This, from the Divine standpoint, is the full offset to Father Adam's transgression, and hence is not only sufficient in value to cancel his debt and condemnation but sufficient in value also to offset the influence of his sin and condemnation as it has contaminated the twenty thousand millions of our race. Here behold the Wisdom, Love and Justice of God in combination! His Wisdom permitted the arrangement of the plan by which His Justice would be fully visited upon

Adam, the sinner--and indirectly upon his race through him--and yet leave abundant room that in due time Jesus by His sacrifice for all could make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. For if all were condemned in one it would be equally just on God's part that all should be justified or forgiven through the merit of the one Redeemer, so that the cancellation of sin through the merit of the precious blood of Jesus affects not only Father Adam, but all of his children, who shared with him his condemnation.--**Rom. 5:18,19**.

Whoever sees clearly the foregoing argument not only sees that there are none righteous, no, not one member of the race, but also sees that Jesus, by the virtue of His sacrifice, is prepared to justify or cover over and

excuse and set aside all the unrighteousness of the world. But since it is not God's purpose to favor unrighteousness, ignorance, etc., He has arranged that only those who intelligently accept Jesus and renounce sin and turn away to righteousness to the extent of their ability--only these shall have the full benefit of His arrangement, which in the present time is called justification by faith, or making righteous by faith.

Accordingly, we perceive that there are some righteous in the world according to this reckoned arrangement, although there are none actually righteous according to the strict standard of the Law. But still we cannot claim that there are many righteous, even according to this benevolent arrangement which God has made; for comparatively few of our fallen race have yet heard of the only name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. Not having heard thereof they cannot believe therein, and not believing they could not be justified through faith in His blood, for faith cometh by hearing --the hearing of the message of the Lord. These righteous ones (righteous or justified through faith in the blood of Christ) are referred to by the Apostle and their relationship to the Divine Law clearly shown by his statement,

SM308

"The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh [with its sinful, depraved tendency] but after the Spirit [after the perfect standard of God's Law, as nearly as possible up to its real meaning, coming short only where our imperfections and weaknesses of the fall render obedience impossible on our part]." For, as the Apostle again says, "We cannot do the things that we would."--**Gal. 5:17**; **Rom. 8:1-4**.

The believer in Christ who has devoted himself to the Lord and the service of righteousness and who has been begotten of the Holy Spirit is counted a New Creature, as separate and distinct from his flesh, in which the motions of sin may still prevail to some extent contrary to his new mind, new will, righteous intention of heart. With his mind he can serve the Law of God perfectly; in this respect he must not come short one jot or tittle; from the heart he must love righteousness and hate iniquity. But even so, though his flesh be gradually brought into subjection, he cannot hope to have the full victory over it

until it is totally dead, until he, as a New Creature, begotten of the Spirit, shall be born of the Spirit in the First Resurrection.

DIVINE STANDARDS UNLOWERED

Not only is the Christian religion the only one which presents God as loving and merciful to the sinner, but it is the only one which presents the thought of mercifully saving the sinners without in any degree breaking or bending the Divine Law, the standard of righteousness. God does not say to the sinner, "You have but twenty per cent of character; I will blot out the requirement of the other eighty per cent and treat you as perfect." Nor does He make a similar proposition to the one professing fifty points of character. God's Law still requires of each one the full one hundred per cent, but makes it possible for all to attain that full perfection. How? By a double process: (1) To the man of but twenty per cent of character the lacking eighty per cent is imputed or reckoned

as his share of the merit of Christ's Sacrifice for Adam's sin. To the man possessing the fifty per cent of character, the lacking fifty per cent is reckoned or imputed in a like manner. (2) But it is required of both that not only shall they maintain what they have, but that their hearts shall be at the full one hundred standard; that they shall be willing and attempting nothing less than perfection. They will be reckoned and dealt with according to the standards of their hearts and minds and will, and not according to imperfections of their flesh.

Meantime it will be expected of them that they shall stand tests, trials and difficulties which will be allowed to come upon them to prove the genuineness of their faith and to establish it, to prove the sincerity of their love for righteousness and their opposition to iniquity, and to strengthen their determination to keep their covenant with the Lord. If they fail in these tests they cannot be acceptable in the class that is now being called, the saints, the Royal Priesthood, the "Little Flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

Thus their standing of reckoned righteousness is dependent upon their degree of heart-loyalty to the Lord

and not dependent upon their actual qualities. Where much is possessed much is required; where little is possessed less is required as respects the flesh, provided the heart is up to the standard of one hundred per cent loyalty to God and to righteousness. In this picture which we have given we have illustrated the Apostle's words, Where sin abounded, grace did that much more abound. (**Rom. 5:20**.) In an individual in whom sin had abounded to the extent of destroying eighty per cent of his character, leaving only twenty per cent, sin abounded more than in the person in whom it had destroyed fifty per cent and left fifty per cent. And the Apostle's message is that God's grace in Christ, forgiving and justifying or counting as righteous, is in the same proportion. That is to say, the one in whom sin abounded most can have the

more favor to abound in his case. In other words, the Lord takes us just as we are according to the flesh; and, if we have accepted Christ and given ourselves fully to Him, we are judged not according to the flesh but according to the spirit, intention, will.

"WHERE ARE THE SINNER AND THE UNGODLY?"

What then shall we say of the sinner and the ungodly; where shall they appear? Let it be noted that the Apostle does not say that they shall appear in hell shrieking in torture! He did not say, as did Brother Jonathan Edwards, that the righteous will look over the battlements of Heaven and see in eternal torment their friends, neighbors, brothers, sisters and parents who died without accepting Christ. The Apostle's question is, Where shall they appear? or in more modern language, What show will they have? We answer that they have no show. Those who are not justified through faith in Christ according to the Divine arrangement have no show at all with God at the present time. They are unjustified. They are, as the Apostle declared we once were, "children of wrath, even as others" (**Eph. 2:3,12**); or, as he again says, "without God, having no hope in the world."

It is not their privilege, as some would have us believe, to claim God as their Father and Christians as their

brethren. On the contrary, we take our theology from our Redeemer, who said that some are of their father the Devil, for his works they do (**John 8:44**), and the Apostle's statement where he declares that Satan now works in the hearts of the children of disobedience (**Eph. 2:2**), who certainly are vastly in the majority, while the saints who walk in the footsteps of Jesus are the small minority, going contrary to the course of this world. We take the Apostle's words further where he declares that the "god of this world [Satan] has blinded the minds of those who believe not." (**2 Cor. 4:4**.) We have nothing therefore, to say respecting the ungodly and the sinner

at the present time. We have no hope to hold out to them that they can be saved in ignorance, any more than they can be saved in rebellion. God has but the one way of salvation, and that is through faith in the precious blood of Christ and through an endeavor to come into harmony with His righteous Law through the merit of the Savior.

What then? Is there any hope for the ungodly and the sinner? We answer, Yes, there is a hope. God's Word clearly portrays this hope, telling us that in due time all the families of the earth shall be blessed; that in due time every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God; that in due time when His righteous dealings are made manifest, all things that God has made shall come and worship before Him; that in due time Christ, who tasted death for every man, shall take unto Himself His great power and shall reign, and shall bring to every member of the race the blessing of knowledge with the opening of the eyes of their understanding, now closed by Satan, the god of this world, through ignorance, superstition, etc.--**1 Tim. 2:4**; **Psa. 22:27,28**.

Our dear Redeemer assures us that these children of wrath, without God and without hope in the world, blinded by Satan, led captive by him through their fallen natures, have not been dropped down into a place of eternal torment but are merely asleep in death, in their graves, waiting for the time when God shall establish His Kingdom of righteousness under the whole heavens, the time when His Millennial Kingdom shall control the world, the time when Satan shall be bound and be no longer permitted to deceive the nations; and that then not

merely will the living of that time receive the blessing of His instruction and assistance, but all that are in their graves shall come forth--not come down from Heaven, nor come up from hell, nor from purgatory, but from THEIR GRAVES.--**John 5:25-29**.

How strange that we were so long deluded, that we heard the voice of man instead of the voice of

SM312

the Son of Man! What peace comes from His Message that the wicked have ceased from troubling and the weary are at rest, asleep in the tomb, in Sheol, in Hades, in the grave! How glad we are that He assures us that not only the Little Flock of His faithful ones, partakers of the First Resurrection, shall come forth, but also that the great mass of mankind not approved of God, who went down to the grave children of wrath, shall come forth also! And He tells us for what purpose. His words are somewhat mystifying because of the poor translation of our Common Version, the Revised Version making them more clear, saying that they "shall come forth unto a resurrection [a raising up out of sin and death conditions] by judgments"--chastisements, corrections, with reward for every good endeavor.

Thus during the Millennial Age the ungodly and wicked of this present time shall have a much more favorable opportunity than they now have of coming to know God and Jesus Christ whom He sent; and by obedience to the knowledge then granted to them they may, if they will, attain to life everlasting and full restitution, perfection on the human plane with the earth as their Paradise. --**Isa. 11:1-11**; **35:1-10**.

"SOME BETTER THINGS FOR US"

Some one may say, "We admit that when Christ comes and Satan is bound and the true knowledge of the Lord is filling the earth and it is as easy to do right as to do wrong, these conditions will make the Millennial Age more favorable to the ungodly and sinner than is the present age. But would not this view imply an injustice on God's part in that He has made the way now so narrow, so difficult? Would it not imply that He is partial, and that He

has given to those most zealous for righteousness severer trials, tests, persecutions, etc.?"

We answer that this view is the result of an imperfect understanding of the Divine Program. It ignores the

SM313

Lord's declaration that those being selected by Him during this Gospel Age, who are called upon to walk in the footsteps of Jesus in the narrow way and who are to sacrifice their earthly interest, are to have a much higher reward, a much grander salvation than that provided for the world in general. Man was of the earth earthy, the earthly image of God and adapted to the earth, flesh and blood, etc. His sin losing for him perfection as a man, his redemption and restitution would restore him to the perfection of manhood in harmony with God. But this would not make of mankind spirit beings nor fit them for a Heavenly condition. God's proposition is the return of the race in general to human perfection in an earthly home, which He declares shall "abide forever." (**Eccl. 1:4**.) But the Divine reward for the Church is that this "little flock" is accepted as the Bride of Christ and His Joint-heir in the glorious Millennial Kingdom. They shall sit with Him in His Throne. They shall be made partakers of the Divine nature with Him, and thus shall share His glory, honor and immortality.

The Apostle declares that God "has provided some better things for us" (the Gospel Church) than He provided for the Ancient Worthies of past times. They will be the first to reach the perfection of the human nature, while to us the promise is given of a participation with Christ in the Heavenly nature, which flesh and blood cannot inherit. When, therefore, the difference of reward is considered, and the difference of salvation borne in mind, it will be seen that those who are now drawn and justified and called to sacrifice the human nature and to receive the Divine nature, have much advantage every way over the remainder of the race in that to them is counted the very cream of Divine riches of grace and loving kindness. Nevertheless, the blessing to the world of mankind will be so great as to leave nothing to be desired. During the Millennial Age all the willing and obedient may return to human perfection in a world-wide Eden.

SM314

"MADE TO BE TAKEN AND DESTROYED"

We should not be understood to be teaching Universalism, except in the limited sense that the Bible teaches it; namely, that there is a universal redemption and that there shall be a *universal opportunity* for salvation that will apply to every member of Adam's race, either in the present life or in the future, under the provisions of the Millennial Kingdom. As in the present time the Apostle, speaking of the Church, declares that if we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the Truth, have tasted of the good Word of God and the powers of the age to come, if we should fall away, it will be impossible to renew such to fellowship with God and the blessing of eternal life. The same principle will apply to the world of mankind in general when they shall be on trial for eternal life during the Millennial Age. Whoever then shall enjoy the blessings of that glorious time and not be moved to loyalty to God and to righteousness and brought to a developed character will not be permitted to go beyond the limits of the Millennium into the eternal future, but will be utterly destroyed. The same Apostle Peter, speaking of this, says, "The soul [individual] who will not obey that Prophet [the great Preacher, Messiah, during the Millennial Age] shall be destroyed from amongst the people." On the contrary, all who do hear or obey will be guided in the right way and will gain eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.--**Acts 3:23**.

But such as are unworthy of life during this present Age, as well as those who will be found unworthy of eternal life in the Millennial Age, will not be preserved by Divine Power to all eternity to be tortured. On the contrary, the Apostle declares that such will be treated like "brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." (**2 Peter 2:12**.) As St. Paul says, "Whose end is destruction" --not preservation in torture. (**Phil. 3:19**.) This is in full harmony with the Scriptural declaration that he who has the Son has life; but he who has not the Son

SM315

shall not see life, but the wrath of God (the sentence of

God) abideth on him; and through failure to accept Christ he will die the Second Death.--**1 John 5:12**.

Let me clearly emphasize in this connection that the Scriptures show that the degree of our knowledge measures the degree of our responsibility in God's sight. Infants and idiots, who have no knowledge whatever, have no responsibility whatever, and will evidently deserve no stripes or punishment during the Millennial Age. And as for the heathen and for those in civilized lands, each one has some measure of knowledge and some measure of conscience; and the responsibility of each is in proportion as he has discernment of right and wrong and obeys or disobeys his conscience. The more light, the more intelligence, the more knowledge the world may have, the greater will be its responsibility and the more will be the stripes in the event of unfaithfulness.

We are not now speaking of the Church, whose members are to receive their stripes in this present life, so that, as the Apostle says, they may not be condemned with the world in the future, in the world's Judgment Day, the Millennial Age. We are speaking of those who have more or less light of conscience or light from the Divine Word, but who make no use of their light, who in greater or less degree live in violation of their conscience. Let such know assuredly that in proportion as they disregard the light they have they are laying up for themselves stripes, punishments in the future, and that in proportion as they see and do right they are making the pathway of the future smooth. This is the principle which the Lord enunciated, saying, He that knew his Master's will and did it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, while he who knew not and did things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes.--**Luke 12:47,48**.

SM316

HEAVEN AND EARTH BEING SHAKEN

"Yet once more [finally] I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens."--**Heb. 12:26**.

The heavens that are being shaken refer not to the Divine residence and Throne, but symbolically represent the ecclesiastical system of the present time. The stars, or bright ones, have been falling for some time. There is a great shaking or confusion now operating in ecclesiastical circles. It will progress until, as St. Peter figuratively declares, "the heavens shall take fire"--shall be consumed, shall cease to be, leaving the way clear for the "new heavens," the ecclesiastical system of the Millennium, which will be the glorified Church, invisible to men, but clothed with Divine power for the blessing of mankind, for their release from ignorance and superstition and their uplift for a thousand years to return them to the image and likeness of God, lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary.--**2 Peter 3:10-13**.

The shaking of the earth referred to by the Apostle and symbolically by Jesus as earthquakes, signifies revolutions that are expected to immediately follow the present European war. And if the Pastor understands the Bible teaching correctly on this matter, this great symbolic earthquake, which will eventuate in anarchy will reach its culmination first in Italy. However, this will not be merely a sectional shaking; the whole earth, the entire social fabric, will be shaken, and everything in it that is not of a permanent character--not in harmony with Divine Justice, Mercy and Truth--will be shaken loose, or, in the symbolical language of St. Peter, the earth, society, also shall take fire, and will pass away with a great noise, a great commotion, a great disturbance, in the fire of anarchy.

Joel's prophecy, referring to this time, points specifically

SM317

to the "blood, the fire and the pillars of smoke," which we see already beginning in Europe. More than a million men of the flower of Europe, in the bloom of

life, have shed their blood, although the war is only beginning. The explosion of tons of powder and the burning of cities and villages is surely a fire in the earth, the like of which never occurred before in the same space of time; and everywhere the pillars of smoke are rising, not only from the battlefield, but also from the burning villages and the funeral pyres whereon the dead, too numerous to bury, are burned. Whether or not there shall be other fulfilments of these signs, we surely see this much shaking and this much fulfilment already commenced. How much more of the blood and fire and pillars of smoke before the terrible ordeal is passed, we can only surmise.

We have courage to speak of these terrible things only because of our full confidence that behind this dark cloud, hidden from human sight, is the glad sunrise of the New Day--the Day of Messiah. With such a glorious hope beyond it--the hope of the Church's glorification in the First Resurrection power, and the hope of the world's Millennial blessing--God's true people everywhere can lift up their heads and rejoice through their tears, even as their great Teacher, eighteen centuries ago, prophesied that they would do.--**Luke 21:28**.

"MY PEOPLE PERISH FOR LACK OF KNOWLEDGE"

Many of God's true people have been in ignorance of His real character and Plan because stupefied by the false doctrines of the Dark Ages. They have not studied their Bibles aright. On the contrary, many of them have been "overcharged by the cares of this life" and the "deceitfulness of riches" and have been unfruitful in respect to their character development and knowledge of God. The deceitfulness of riches does not signify that merely the rich are thus deceived. The great mass of humanity are under the lure of riches, spending their earthly

attainments, time and strength of mind and body; searching for earthly wealth but getting little. Some of these in the distressing times impending, though late, will see their mistake and wish that they had been more alert in the laying up of Heavenly treasures--knowledge of the Bible, of God and character development in His likeness.

Our Adventist friends are not the only ones who have made the mistake of thinking of the fire and shaking of the earth and heavens as merely literal. Practically all the creeds of "Orthodoxy" give this misinterpretation, but now at least it is time that our eyes of understanding should open. Now that the shaking and the fire have begun, it is high time that we should see that "the earth abideth forever." There is no reason why it should be destroyed; neither is there reason why humanity should be destroyed from off the earth. God's purposes have not yet been accomplished. Yea, the Divine Plan is only in its infancy. Humanity as yet has learned only its first lesson--"the exceeding sinfulness of sin" and the bitterness of its results. The second lesson will be given by Messiah during the thousand years of His glorious Reign of Righteousness. All shall be brought from the tomb, from ignorance, superstition, darkness, to fullest opportunity, knowledge and blessed uplifting. Only the wilful enemies of God and of righteousness shall be destroyed. The race thus purged from sin and sinners, and again in the Divine image and likeness, will usher into its glorious inheritance--an eternity of God's favor on earth and life everlasting.--**Eccle. 1:4**; **Rom. 7:13**.

SHAKING OF MOUNT SINAI TYPICAL

There might be also literal earthquakes and great physical changes at this time, intended to bring the earth into alignment with Millennial blessings, but we are not so sure respecting these physical changes. They may or may not play a part in the trouble of this Great Day.

In our context the Apostle compares the inauguration of Messiah's Kingdom, with its New Law Covenant

mediated by the Redeemer, with the typical Law Covenant given to Natural Israel at Mount Sinai at the hands of the typical mediator Moses. There, the voice, the cloud, the darkness, the lightning, the thunders, the earthquakes, were literal. Here, now beginning, we have the antitypes of these in the inauguration of the Antitypical Covenant, which, at the hands of The Christ, is to bring the wonderful blessings foretold, to all men.

St. Paul declares that the Word of the Lord upon this subject implies the removing of all things that can be shaken, so that only the unshakable things will remain; and these unshakable things he associates with God's Kingdom of righteousness. When with the eyes of our understanding open we look about us, we see very many things that evidently are not permanent, not right, not satisfactory to God and to all who love righteousness and hate iniquity; and when we reflect that the shaking will be such as to loosen and destroy all the imperfect things of the present time, we can better imagine than describe the severity of that shaking.

In the Revelation this same thought is expressed under the figure of a mighty earthquake, the like of which there had not been before and would never be thereafter. (**Rev. 16:18**.) Throughout the Apocalypse the term earthquake is used to symbolically represent revolution. We are to expect, then, a great revolution, a great earthquake, which will overthrow everything that is not of the Lord's establishment and approval. From this standpoint a certain class can read the signs of the times intelligently and with confidence; and this class the Scriptures call the Lord's "little flock" (**Luke 12:32**); counted foolish by the world, but counted of the Lord as "the wise" who are to "understand." (**Dan. 12:9,10**.) To these the Master Himself addressed the words, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those

things which are coming upon the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken." And again, "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh."

The Lord's consecrated people, possessed of His Spirit, cannot in any sense rejoice at tribulations coming upon others. Their rejoicing can be only in respect to the glorious things which they hope to experience and know to be near by these outward signs. They rejoice not merely on their own behalf, but also on behalf of the whole world; for they have the assurance of the Scriptures that behind this Time of Trouble, which looms up as a dark cloud to cover the entire social world, there

is a silver lining; and that shortly the glorious Sun of Righteousness will blaze forth, dispel every cloud and all shadows of ignorance and superstition, and bring to mankind the rich blessings of Divine favor secured through the precious blood of Christ.

GREAT CHANGES NOW DUE

Evidently wonderful changes will be effected, some to be brought about gradually. We all know of the gradual change of the temperate zone--its extension further and further and further toward the poles. We notice also the increasing moderation nearer to the equator. Those who recognize the Power of God can have full confidence that He is able to perform all the glorious promises of His Word respecting the paradisaical conditions of this earth for the use of mankind during the Millennial Age and the ages to follow.

As already intimated, social upheavals are pictured in the Word of God under the symbolism of earthquakes, "mountains carried into the sea," etc. These uprisings in anarchy are pictured as tidal waves engulfing the "mountains"--governments. This is one of the most forceful pictures used, in the Psalms, in Revelation and in our Lord's symbolical reference to the great Time of Trouble near at hand.--**Psa. 46:2**.

SM321

Let us not be understood as advocating anarchy or revolution of any kind. On the contrary, we are giving heed to the Master's injunction that all His true followers seek peace and pursue it; that they like Himself resist not evil with evil, force with force, but commit their way unto the Lord, walk in His paths, relying upon Him for the results that will be to their profit and His glory. We hold and teach that even the meanest and poorest government is superior to anarchy; and in full sympathy and kindness we counsel those tending toward Socialism that they are unsuspectingly "hatching cockatrice eggs"; for under present conditions Socialism is absolutely impossible. The rich will not give up their advantages without a struggle to the death; and this, as soon as Socialism shall have gained the power it is seeking, will spell

anarchy for the world; for those now entertaining Socialistic hopes will find those hopes vain, and will become angered, embittered, mad, with the deceptions of their theories and the impossibility of carrying them out, as they intended, along the lines of benevolence. Then they will be drawn to the desperate methods of the anarchist.

We urge all who are the Lord's to seek to more and more understand His wonderful Plan of Salvation, to glorify Him in their bodies and spirits, which are His, and to wait for His time and manner of bringing in the blessings which all see are so much needed by the poor "groaning creation." Meantime, all such should cultivate the graces of the Holy Spirit, should "put on Christ," His character, His meekness, patience, long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, against which there is no law. "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**.

SM322

THE SCIENCE OF HEALTH.

"Be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."--**3 John 2**.

In this day of general awakening and independent thinking, many are coming to realize the wonderful power of the mind over the body. They fancy that this is something new, and some even appropriate as a name for their theories the "New Thought." Other names are Christian Science, Mental Healing, Hypnotism, Mind Cures, etc. Peculiarly enough, all these writers find the best expression of their sentiments in the language of Scripture, although they ignore the Scriptural teachings as a whole and very evidently do not understand them. For instance, favorite amongst their quotations are these: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (**Prov. 23:7**); "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds" (**Rom. 12:2**); "Changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord" (**2 Cor. 3:18**), and again, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."--**Gal. 6:7**; **Prov. 4:20-22**.

But, notwithstanding tributes to the teachings of the

Bible, so far as we can discern few of these "mind-cure" teachers are really "believers" in the Scriptural sense of the word. We have yet to find any of them willing to accept the Bible teachings connected with the very passages just quoted. Very generally, while referring to Jesus in a respectful manner, they give evidence that they do not accept Him as the only Teacher--the Sent of God. Rather they seem to class Him with Plato, Socrates, Confucius, and others of the good and great, and to accept His teachings as on a parity with theirs. As for the Apostles these teachers quote their words, but generally ignore their teachings. (**Col. 2:3**.) The advocates of these false doctrines are surprisingly active everywhere.

SM323

ON A FALSE FOUNDATION

We do not claim that these various theories are wholly bad, wholly false. Satan himself is aware that nothing that is wholly false could succeed; hence the Apostle says there is a "deceivableness of unrighteousness," and "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." (**2 Thess. 2:10**; **2 Cor. 11:14**.) Having kept the world in darkness for long centuries, as the Apostle explains, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not," Satan now realizes that it is impossible to shut out the light of the incoming Day. Hence his transformation, by which he becomes a leader, teacher, is along what might be termed good lines in many respects. He would be a teacher of gentleness, quietness of spirit, good thoughts, pure thoughts. He would teach the downwardness of every evil thought, every evil passion, every impurity of mind, word, and deed, and theoretically he would be an angel of light. In this capacity he now is flooding the world with spurious teachings, and making a special point of mental healing. Indeed we cannot doubt that he even stands prepared to assist these theories which he is now promulgating by granting blessings of health and relief from disease to those whom he would more particularly associate with himself and his theories. This power is manifest to some extent in the healings done in the name of Mormonism, in the name of Christian Science, in the name of Spiritism, in the name of Occultism,

in the name of Mind Cure, etc.

But what motive could Satan have in so doing? Is there any power in respect to disease under his control? We answer the last question first. The Scriptures everywhere not only recognize Satan as a malevolent being, opposed to God and to righteousness, but they declare that he does possess certain power for evil. In olden times these were known as occult powers, and the Apostles wrote about those who were afflicted of the devil. Our Lord said of one poor woman whom He healed, "Whom

Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years." (**Luke 13:16**.) Mrs. Eddy's son, in a published newspaper interview, declared his belief that his mother was under occult influence, and that she herself acknowledged this to him years ago.

Answering the other question: God declares in His Word His ability to control sin completely, and promises that ultimately He will do this--that Satan shall be bound during the thousand years of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, during which time the world will be blessed and uplifted from sin and death and from the malevolent influences that are now upon mankind. They declare that even in the present time God will permit the wrath of man and the malevolence of Satan only so far as He can use these ultimately for good, and that the remainder He will restrain. In other words, God at the present time is gathering out of the world the "little flock," the Bride of Christ, whom He designates His "jewels"; and He uses Satan, evil men and the malevolent conditions of the present time to try, to prove, to test, to polish these saints whom He is preparing for the Heavenly Kingdom --for joint-heirship with His Son in the work of the Millennial age--the work of uplifting humanity, so many as will return.--**Isa. 66:18**.

We might say, then, that the adverse influences of the present time constitute the grindstone upon which these jewels are polished, and that Satan through his various agencies is used of the Lord in turning this grindstone. And this is the Scriptural thought. Note the experience of Job, and how God in his case gave Satan permission to try, to prove, to test that noble man--to polish him. Note that the Apostle similarly refers to his own experiences,

saying that a certain adverse condition of the flesh was used of Satan to buffet him, but that the Lord assured him, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." (**2 Cor. 12:9**.) Therefore, says the Apostle, I will glory in my infirmities,

SM325

since I shall have correspondingly more of the grace of God wherewith to resist them and be profited by them. For, he declares, the light afflictions of this present time are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look away from the things seen to the things that are unseen.--**2 Cor. 4:17,18**.

DECEITFULNESS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

In these words the Apostle points out that Satan will be granted by the Lord special power in the end of this Age, and that as a result there will be special, severe testings upon the people of God. We are to discriminate closely between Divine permission and Divine authorization. We are to remember that "God tempteth no man" (**Jas. 1:13**), and that it is a totally different matter that He permits Satan to tempt. The Divine thought as interpreted by the Apostle is that the Lord's people of our day have had special opportunities, privileges, mercies, blessings and assistances in respect to the Divine Word. Such as have been of the right disposition of heart profited by these opportunities, and became strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. They have put on the whole armor of God, and are therefore strong, and can stand much more of testing than others could have done, less favored in the past. It will be no injustice to these that after they have been better qualified they should be expected to fight the good fight more valiantly than others can do.

But why will these tests come when the Lord knows that a "thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand," as He has foretold by the Prophet? We answer that He wishes some to fall. They will not be falling into eternal torment, nor falling into the Second Death, but merely falling away from a Christian profession and a nominal faith, which in many respects have

been mere forms of godliness without real meaning or power. Thus the Lord would separate the wheat class from the tare class, and not only so, but divide the wheat

class into two portions, two classes--a "little flock" of "more than conquerors," and a "great company," loyal at heart but not sufficiently zealous to be counted worthy a place as members of the Bride of Christ. These are represented as the "virgins," the "companions" of the Bride, who also shall be brought near before the King in due time, and who shall have an honorable place beyond the veil.--**Psa. 45:14**; **Rev. 7:9**.

So much for the reasons why God permits Satan now to masquerade as the champion of pure thoughts and righteous living, and to deceive and lead astray all those who, having the Word of God in their hands, have loved the error rather than the light. Or, as the Apostle puts it, "They receive not the Truth in the love of it"; therefore now there come to them strong delusions that they may believe a lie, that they all may be condemned--that it may be manifested that they were not worthy of the glorious things which God has in reservation for those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, who love the Truth and hate falsehood.--**2 Thess. 2:11,12**.

SELFISHNESS AND FALSEHOOD REWARDED

We are not uncharitable but truthful when we say that in the case of many of these false teachings the reward of health is sought from selfish motives purely. Nor are we too severe when we say that the health is frequently secured as a reward for systematic falsification. The very teaching is that the facts are to be denied and that the denial, the untruth, is to be insisted upon until it becomes a very part of one's being. Those who take this evil mind-cure are taught to lie to themselves as well as to others, and to say, "I have no pain, I have no aches, I am well, thoroughly well." This systematic lying is no doubt rewarded by the father of lies who, if he had the power to inflict with all manner of diseases in olden times, doubtless has considerable of the same power today; and if he has power to inflict he would also have

SM327

power to release somewhat from his affliction. Very different from this is the plan which the Lord gives through His Word; yea, the Word of God, the Truth, stands forth pre-eminently. As our dear Redeemer said: God's very name is Righteousness, "Thy Word is Truth." The power of selfishness in this system is seen in the fact that, for the sake of relief from the aches and pains, many, very many, are willing thus to deny the Truth, to deceive others and to deceive themselves.

But, do you say, how could Satan be interested in such a propaganda? We reply: (1) That all who follow this prescription and learn to lie thoroughly to themselves thereby vitiate their own minds and consciences so that thereafter they cannot reason correctly because they have lost the foundation of Truth. Their minds are in confusion, upon every religious subject at least. With them the entire Word of God has become warped and twisted. Their minds are perverted. It is impossible to influence them with the Truth. They are wholly captives to the error and caught by their love of relief from pain and their willingness to have relief at the cost of the Truth. (2) By this so-called new light, new thought, new mind, science, etc., the Adversary directs and draws away from the true light, the true science, the Word of God. He kept it hidden under a foreign language for centuries, called the "dark ages"; then, subsequently, as the Reformation light broke in, he endeavored to turn it aside, and to twist it and to misrepresent it. So, now, when the true light is shining forth, showing that the Word of God is grand, beautiful and harmonious, and that our difficulties in the past were mistranslations and misinterpretations of the Word, Satan draws attention away from it entirely to what his unwitting votaries style the power of the new thought, the new mind. (3) Those whom Satan is using in this direction, as we have already seen, quote Scriptures freely wherever they can pervert them to an apparent support of their theories. But they do

SM328

not really believe the Scriptures, neither do they really believe in Christ. Does this seem a hard saying?

We answer that by their words they deny Christ; for although they use His name--as, for instance, Christian Scientists--they really deny the foundation of His teachings. They deny, for instance, that man was ever perfect, in the image of God; they deny that he ever fell from perfection into sin; they deny that a death penalty was upon him. They declare that there is no such thing as sin and death, that belief in these are merely mental delusions that should be put away. And if they deny sin and death, of necessity, logically, they must also deny a redemption from sin and from death; and if they deny the redemptive work of Christ they as surely deny that He is the Redeemer. I call your attention to Mrs. Eddy's latest published statement, so far as we know. It appeared in the "Christian Science Sentinel," copied from the "New York American" and endorsed as true. In it she says, "If there had never existed such a person as the Galilean Prophet, it would make no difference to me." This statement was no doubt made inadvertently, but the spirit of it runs through everything that is written along the lines of Christian Science, New Thought, Mind Cure, etc. The essence of all this teaching is, "Every man his own savior," by transforming his own thoughts from evil to good, from disease to health, etc.

"LOOK UNTO ME AND BE SAVED"

We are opposed to Satan and all his healing falsehoods and to all the various delusive arguments by which he is now seeking to put darkness for light, and to make the true light of God's Word appear to be darkness. It is time that every soldier of the cross should see to it that he is lifting high the royal banner, not only as respects his own heart and experiences but also as respects his influence upon fellow-soldiers of the cross, that all may put on the whole armor of God and be able to withstand the attacks of the Adversary in this evil day, and fighting

the good fight of faith, to be esteemed as more than conquerors by our dear Redeemer, through the Word of His testimony. While, therefore, others are looking to Mind-Cures, Hypnotism, Christian Science, Spiritism, Occultism,

and other "isms" selfishly, for the cure of their maladies, let us hearken to the voice from Heaven, saying, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved." (**Isa. 45:22**.) Let us be content to have what the Lord has promised us in His Word and to desire no more. And, on the other hand, let us not be content with anything less than He has promised us. God promised typical Israel health, wealth, prosperity, in proportion as they would be obedient and loyal to Him. But those blessings were all to an earthly people and were earthly blessings. Spiritual Israel enjoys God's favor during this Gospel Age, and is promised health, wealth and prosperity of a spiritual kind.

Indeed the Spiritual Israelite is exhorted to have such an appreciation of the spiritual blessings proffered him that he would gladly surrender all of the earthly blessings that he may have the Heavenly--even to the extent of laying down wealth, strength, life itself in the service of the Lord and on behalf of the brethren. "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," says the Apostle. (**1 John 3:16**.) And the laying down of life frequently means the laying down of health and strength. It means self-denial in the interests of others. It is the reverse of seeking first physical health and personal advantage. Its rule is, Seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all earthly blessings shall be added unto you according to the Heavenly Father's wisdom of what would be for your highest welfare. Of those who make the earthly interests the chief concern of life, physical health and prosperity the chief aim, the Apostle says, "Whose god is their belly, and whose glory is their shame, who mind earthly things."--**Phil. 3:19**.

True Christians, the Elect, are urged to set their affections on things above and not on the things of the

earth; for they are reckoned as dead to the world and as having become alive as New Creatures in Christ and as therefore enjoying with Him superior joys--seated in the Heavenlies with Christ Jesus. These can thank God often for earthly adversities, and can say with the Apostle, "These light afflictions that are but for a moment are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"; and again, with the Prophet, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." (**2 Cor. 4:17**;

Psa. 119:67.) They have afflictions and trials which to others may seem wonderfully severe but to these--because of the grace of God and because their affections are set on High--these are esteemed to be light afflictions and as only momentary, because the Lord's grace is sufficient for them. As the Lord permitted Satan to have some power over Job, so He has permitted him to put some of His saints on the grindstone, and to do for them a grand polishing work, as the result of which, under the Lord's supervision of their interests, they shall sparkle and shine gloriously by and by.

"BE IN HEALTH--EVEN AS THY SOUL PROSPERETH"

Our text presents another side of this question which many of the Lord's dear people evidently have overlooked. On account of this oversight many of them are perplexed by the teachings of the Adversary respecting the power of the mind in the care of the body, in its comfort, its joy, its prosperity. Had they properly studied and properly appreciated the wonderful teachings of the Bible they would be ready to say at once to these mind-healers, etc., "O my dear friend, we Christians have full instructions along those lines in the Word of God, and much clearer and much better than you have them, because on a much better foundation of reason and logic, built upon the Redemption Sacrifice of Christ and the blessings which God's Word assures us flow from it."

The Scriptures acknowledge sin, sorrow, pain, suffering, death; and they teach us to sympathize with those

who are thus afflicted. They show us that all these are the works of the flesh and the Devil, that Satan was a murderer from the beginning, that it was through his lie that our first parents were led into disobedience. They show that Satan's course since has been to lead men downward through error, through falsehood, through the perversion of their minds with all manner of untruth and impurity. They show God's condemnation of sin and His declaration of sympathy, and the manifestation of that sympathy and love in the providing of Christ as man's Redeemer. They show that ultimately the Redeemer

is to be the King of the world and to take His great power and bind Satan, destroy all unrighteousness, and lift up the poor fallen race during the Millennial Age, called in the Scriptures the "Times of Restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began." (**Acts 3:19-21**.) They tell us that this will be accomplished at the Second Coming of Christ and that in the interim between the sacrifice and the time of the establishment of the Kingdom in power and great glory a special work is in progress; namely, the selection of a Little Flock of footstep-followers who, hearing of the grace of God, have been so moved thereby to love righteousness and hate iniquity that they have accepted the Master's invitation to walk in His footsteps of self-denial, self-sacrifice, under the promise that if they do so faithfully they shall be sharers with Him in His glory, honor, immortality and work of blessing and uplifting the race during the Millennial Age.

"A MORE EXCELLENT WAY"

We have been surprised that Christian people of considerable development and experience have been attracted by the literature and theories of Mind Cure, etc., when we have heard them comment upon the good, helpful advice given in some of these writings. We have been astonished that they did not seem to know how much better advice is given in the Word of God, in comparison with

which all such writings are but as twaddle and nonsense. The little truth they contain is so mixed with error as to remind us of a story told by an African missionary, that, traveling through a torrid country almost destitute of streams, himself and family and several natives came upon a pool of water almost dried up. The natives jumped in and splashed and cooled themselves from head to foot with the wet mud; and the missionary and his family were glad to take some of the same after it had been thus washed in, and squeeze the water out to get a drink. If, in the illustration, the water represented Truth, and the wet mud error, it seems as though a considerable number of people with the Bible in their

homes know not of the spring of living water which it contains, useful for their refreshment in every way. If they knew of this surely they would not stop to squeeze the few drops of water from the mud and slime of the various "New Thought" books, tracts, articles, etc.

In illustration: These various "New Thought" instructors give out as a piece of news, as something thoroughly original with themselves, the declaration that fear is the basis of much of the pain and sorrow and disease of mind and body which prevail. There is truth in this beyond a doubt, a truth that was recognized and taught long ago by physicians of every school; namely, that to fear a disease is to induce the disease; and the same lesson in much its best form is taught in the Scriptures. For centuries they have been telling such as have the ear to hear that while "the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," the "fear of man bringeth a snare." Do they not again declare that "fear hath torment" or trouble? Do they not exhort God's people saying, "Fear not their fear, neither be afraid, but sanctify the Lord God in your heart, and let Him be your fear and Him be your dread." In other words, fear nothing except what would be displeasing to God, and therefore wrong and injurious toward yourself and others.

SM333

On the other side of the question do not the Scriptures hold out hope and courage in a way that no other writings in the world ever did? Do they not say, "Be of good courage and He shall strengthen thine heart?" Do they not apply this mental medicine to all of life's affairs and interests, as, for instance, assuring us, "The Father knoweth what things ye have need of," and He "is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask than are earthly parents to give good gifts unto their children?" Do they not assure us that "As our days so shall our strength be?" Do they not tell us that "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly?" Is it not written, "The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the Everlasting Arms"? Again, "Thy help cometh from the Lord"; "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"; "Take no anxious thought for the morrow"; "Cast all your cares upon Him; for He careth for you"; "It is God that girdeth me

with strength"; "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee"; "Surely I will be with thee"; "My strength is made perfect in weakness"; "If God be for us who can be against us?" "He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee"; "When He giveth peace who then can make trouble?" and again, "Let the peace of God which passeth all understanding rule in your hearts, and be ye thankful."

THEIR ROCK IS NOT AS OUR ROCK

What a rock foundation is thus presented in the Word of God for those who have the proper faith and can claim these promises! How wishy-washy and puerile in comparison are the words of the worldly-wise of our day, who are attempting to give the world the "New Thought"--attempting to take away their fear and instead to give them hope and courage. We might say without fear of contradiction that the only strength their position contains is gained from the occasional

misapplication of Scripture. We say misapplication of Scriptures advisedly; for the Scriptures are applicable only to the class who have made their peace with God according to His own terms, and are not applicable to the world, which the Scriptures declare "lieth in the Wicked One" and are still "children of wrath."

The messages of peace which the Bible extends are not for the world. On the contrary, we read, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (**Isa. 57:21**.) The peace, the joy, the rejoicing, the blessing, the comfort, the refreshment, the rest of heart set forth in the foregoing expression of sympathy and love and assurances of help are all and only for the Lord's beloved ones, His saints, His holy ones--those mentioned through the Prophet, saying, "Gather together My saints unto Me; those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (**Psa. 50:5**.) "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord, in that Day when I come to make up My jewels." (**Mal. 3:17**.) "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare My statutes, or that thou shouldst take

My covenant into thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction and casteth My words behind thee."--**Psa. 50:16,17**; **Matt. 11:28-30**.

CLEANSED, TRANSFORMED, RENEWED

These "new thoughts" are antagonistic to the Bible, and anti-Christian in that they teach unregenerate men and women to ignore the sin which separates them from God, and to claim to be God's children and to appropriate promises of peace and of Divine favor--thoughts contrary to the doctrines of devils, which ignore Him who is the Way, the Truth, the Life; and aside from whom none can come unto the Father nor under Divine blessing, nor properly have peace with God.

These philosophies of men seem to parallel the Truth on a false basis. This is another evidence that they are not merely of human origin, but that the father of lies has had to do with their arrangement and propaganda.

SM335

They give out as a brand new thought that all disease is the result of filth, mental, physical or both; that the proper course for man is to put away sinful thoughts, impure affections, from his mind, and to fill it instead with good things; that his body similarly should be cleansed by an abundant use of water, inwardly and externally; that the system should not be clogged by gluttony, else the blood will become impure and sickness result; that the air we breathe should be pure and plentiful; and that physical exercise is necessary to proper health. To all this we agree. It is all good, it is all useful, and we wish that all mankind--the world and Christians--might appreciate it and obey its suggestions.

But it would be a mistake to suppose that these things are new to a Christian who is informed respecting the teachings of the Word of God. Is he not therein taught by the Apostle, "Cleanse yourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and the spirit [mind]?" Is he not urged to be abstemious and instructed--"Let your moderation be made known unto all men?" Is not purity of thought, word and deed inculcated by the words of Jesus and the Apostles? Are we not taught that the beginning of the

cleansing work, the purifying work, the transforming work is in the heart, and that if we get the heart right, the effect will be a proportionate cleansing and purifying of the flesh? Did not the Master teach this when He said, "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God?"--**Matt. 5:8**.

Did not the Apostle teach the same when he taught that out of an evil heart proceedeth enmities, murders, blasphemies, etc.? Did not the Master Himself say that an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil fruitage in his life? and that a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good fruitage of kindness, mercy and love--good works? Did not our Lord go further than any good teacher ever went before or since when He declared that whoever in his

heart hateth his brother, is in heart a murderer? that he who in heart desires adultery is in effect an adulterer? and that he who in his heart covets the things of another is in effect a thief? Is it not the Scriptures which enunciate the now well-known proverb, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh?" Is not this the reason why the Scriptures everywhere exhort--not the world, but those whom they address, who will appreciate good from the right standpoint, and are building upon the only foundation which He can recognize, on the redemptive work of Christ--to be pure in heart? For such Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."--**John 17:17**; **Matt. 12:34**.

The "New Thought" teaching that anger, by its effect upon the nerves, throws off into the blood a poisonous element which tends toward disease, and therefore that anger should be avoided, but that correspondingly good and loving thoughts produce healthful currents in the system, which make for peace of mind and of body and for health and strength, may be inculcating something that will be beneficial to the world, but certainly not to the Lord's saints. The latter should all know that this is the teaching of God's Word; and all should have realized in considerable measure the advantageous results in their own experience. That is to say, all Christians should know that the Scriptures direct that their minds should be transformed--that they should put away

all these, anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife (**Col. 3:8**), and that they should put on instead the fruits and graces of the Lord's Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. (**1 Tim. 6:11**.) They should remember the Apostle Peter's words, "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former desires in your ignorance; but as He that has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living." --**1 Pet. 1:14,15**.

The general teachings of the Word of God for those

who have made the consecration of themselves is that they should set their affections on things above and not on things of earth; that they should be transformed by the renewing of their minds; that they should seek to prove, to know, the good and perfect and acceptable will of God. What does this mean but a purifying of the thoughts, the lifting of them from sensual, earthly things and fixing them upon the higher and nobler things which accord with the Divine character and the wonderful Plan of God of which our present high calling is a part--to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in His Kingdom, and as heirs of the great Abrahamic Covenant thereunder bless all the families of the earth during the Millennial Age? Well does the Apostle say of this cleansing, "If a man cleanse himself from these he shall be a vessel fit for honor and meet for the Master's use."--**2 Tim. 2:21**; **Psa. 15**.

"THE PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY"

It is not a new thought that love should be the guiding, the controlling impulse amongst men everywhere. But the Bible first of all presented this teaching--love for God and the brethren, love for kindred, love for our neighbors, yea, even love for our enemies. It is the Bible that pre-eminently teaches that perfect love filling our hearts will cast out fear and selfishness; and that relieved of these--which are the representatives of darkness--our whole bodies may be full of light and be refreshed and reinvigorated and strengthened, and that thus we may be blessed, not only in the life to come but

also in the life that now is. But we hold, with the Scriptures, that while a kind of love may be possible to the world, the real genuine love which is of God can come only through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and all other loves are merely fragments or imitations of this true love. This love alone will stand the careful inspection and criticism which the Apostle gives us in **1 Cor. 13**.

In concluding this subject we urge upon all who have

SM338

approached the Father through the new and living way opened by the Redeemer's sacrifice to exercise more and more of faith and trust in His goodness and in His wonderful provision for all those who are seeking to know and to do His will. As we come to understand His Word more fully we find that He has made provision--not merely for those whose eyes and ears are now open to hear His message--but that eventually all the families of the earth will be pleased to know of His gracious provision and offer, through Christ, of eternal life. This should give us a rest and peace of heart which the world little understands. And in respect to our own affairs shall we not apply the gracious promises? Shall we not rest upon them? Shall we not allow the peace of God to rule in our hearts? In proportion as we do this we shall be refreshed, reinvigorated in mind and in body.

VALUE OF GOOD THOUGHTS

In proportion as we by faith grasp the promises, and in proportion as we daily strive to live so as to maintain our relationship with the Father and with the Son and with their gracious promises, in that same proportion our faces will show all these--joy, peace, patience, love. These will gradually become more and more written in the lineaments of our faces, visible to all. And more and more will our health and strength prevail, spiritual and physical. It is proper in this connection to remember the instruction of the Apostle, that we should not think about the evil and undesirable things, but think about the pure, good, noble things. Undoubtedly a poisonous effect upon the system is engendered by thinking about sinful or injurious things of any kind. Undoubtedly also

the body and mind are both strengthened by thinking about things noble, good and pure. The Apostle's words are, "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute, think on these things."--**Phil. 4:8**; **John 13:34,35**; **Rom. 13:8-10**.

SM339

As daily and hourly we seek to cultivate this spirit of love, and to allow it to dominate in our words and deeds, in the same proportion will be the measure of our blessing, because in this we shall be "doers of the Word and not hearers only." We are not, however, to place too high an estimate upon the present life, and health and earthly blessings and joys. Rather we are to be content with such things as we have, and to realize the Divine supervision of our affairs and to allow all of life's experiences to bring us more and more of the peace of God which passeth all understanding and which should continually rule in our hearts. But while not seeking to save the present life, but rejoicing in the privilege of laying it down prudently in the Lord's service as opportunity offers, we shall, nevertheless, find that the rest and peace of mind which comes through believing and through following the Lord will be a favorable influence as respects our physical health, peace, joy, blessing. We who believe enter into rest now, and yet, as the Apostle declared, "There remaineth a rest for the people of God." (**Heb. 4:9**.) We shall attain that in our change in the First Resurrection--we shall be satisfied when we wake in His likeness.--**Psa. 17:15**.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." This is not to be understood as meaning that whatever a man thinks is true. That is a false definition; the correct thought respecting this statement is that what a man may seem to be outwardly is not necessarily a correct view of his real character--his heart, his will, his intention, the real man as God sees him. If, therefore, our hearts condemn us not, we have peace with God; but if our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things. Then we should not have peace, but should repent of the wrong-doing and come again into harmony with God, where we may enjoy true peace. The Apostle illustrated this, saying, "If any man seem

to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth

SM340

his own heart, that man's religion is vain." (**Jas. 1:26**.) Outwardly he might have seeming piety, might be a church attendant, etc., but so surely as his heart is changed, so surely as he is begotten of the Holy Spirit, so surely as the Spirit of love dwelleth in his heart and more and more abounds richly, it will affect not only his actions but also his looks and his words. He will seek to bridle his tongue, to bridle all of his passions, to be emptied of his former ambitions and desires, and to be filled with the noblest, purest and best which come to us from the fountain of grace and truth in God's Word.

The majority of mankind, fearful and discouraged, fail to make the best possible use of their talents and opportunities. The Scriptures instruct those who have entered the School of Christ that the will is the first matter to be settled--that a double-minded man, who has never a settled purpose in respect to his life, is unstable in all his ways. They urge positiveness--a full consecration of heart, mind, body, talents, everything to the Lord. To those who take this position of a full consecration the Scriptures give valuable assurances which should strengthen every fiber of the human body. As the Apostle expresses it, "Gird up the loins of your minds and hope to the end," as again he says, "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might," and again, "According to thy faith be it unto thee." O what marvelous power has come to weak and fainting hearts through the fixing of the will--the conversion of the will to do and to be in harmony with the Lord at any cost--and the appropriating then of these promises, exceeding great and precious, which, belong to none others than this class! How many have found that thus the Lord's strength was made perfect in their weakness after they had taken the proper step of consecration--after they had exercised the faith which He called for, and which is necessary for our development! No wonder these can rejoice in the Lord--no wonder the Apostle says that they are able to rejoice in tribulation!--**Rom. 5:1-5**.

SM341

NOAH'S ARK A TYPE OF CHRIST

"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."--**1 Peter 3:21**.

We see from the context that the Apostle Peter has in mind the great Deluge. He reminds his readers that all mankind perished in the Flood save eight souls, who were preserved from a watery grave by means of the Ark which God provided them. That Ark, though submerged in water, was their salvation. St. Peter declares that this is a "like figure to baptism." We are to notice that those who were saved in the Deluge were not saved from eternal torment, and that a like figure of salvation would not indicate that the Church is saved from eternal torment by their baptism into Christ. Noah and his family were saved from death; and the Church of Christ are likewise saved from death through their baptism.

As the whole world perished in the great Flood, so the entire world of mankind now is a dead world, a perishing world. The Church class were of that world until they got out of it through Christ. As Noah and his family were saved from death by coming into the Ark in obedience to God, so the Church of Christ are saved from Adamic death by obedience to God, by accepting His offer of salvation. (**John 17:16**; **15:19**.) Noah's Ark represented Christ. Whoever comes into Christ comes into safety and salvation, out of danger and destruction. All who come into this relationship to God in Christ are said to have "passed from death unto life."--**John 5:24**.

Only a very limited number come into Christ and fulfil this picture. It does not include those who merely say, "I wish to live a better life." To do this is commendable; but it does not constitute a coming into Christ; for as the

SM342

Apostle says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (**2 Cor. 5:17**.) Just how much is comprehended

in the words "a New Creature" even true Christians come to see only gradually. A New Creature is one who has died to his human nature, who has new hopes, new ambitions, new affections, who has the precious promises of God and the prospect of a spiritual existence in the future instead of a human existence. He is an exception to others in that he has been begotten of the Holy Spirit. From the Divine standpoint he is no longer a human being; a new life has begun in him.

This New Creature is at first a babe, and must take spiritual nourishment and grow up into Christ more and more. God has provided the "exceeding great and precious promises" of His Word, that this class might be stimulated, strengthened, developed, thereby becoming more firm for righteousness and in opposition to whatever is sinful. The Church is indeed a New Creation, as the Apostle says.--**2 Peter 1:4**; **Eph. 2:2**.

TWO LIKE FIGURES OF CHURCH'S SALVATION

Coming back to our text: We notice that St. Peter says, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us." Salvation through the Ark was one figure of the salvation of the Church through baptism into Christ; baptism in water is another. There is a correspondence between these two figures. Noah and his family were submerged in literal water. Candidates for baptism are also submerged in literal water. But in neither case was it the water that saved. Nor is it the outward baptism that saves us, except in a figure. It represents the real. But the figure is not in washing away the filth of the flesh (the body) in water. And the filth of our flesh as New Creatures can be washed away only by the grace of God in Christ, "by the washing of water by the Word"; it is a gradual process after we become New Creatures. So neither of these is what is prefigured in water baptism.

SM343

Our text is pointing out to us a peculiar baptism, not a baptism that washes the flesh clean, either literally or figuratively, but "the answer [the response] of a good conscience toward God." What has God said to which we should respond? We reply that our Heavenly Father

has called us, invited us, to a wonderful Heavenly inheritance, and we respond by accepting His proposition. He has invited us to be a separate people. Just exactly as God said to Noah and his family that they should be saved by gathering into the Ark, so He says to all who are invited during this Gospel Age, "Gather My saints together unto Me, those who have made a Covenant with Me by Sacrifice."--**Psa. 50:5**.

Let us notice to whom we are to be gathered. Serious mistakes have been made here. Some have thought that we were to be gathered to Luther; some to Calvin; some to Wesley, etc. Not so! "Gather My saints together unto *Me,"* saith Jehovah. He did not tell us to gather together into the Church of Rome, into the Church of England, into the Lutheran Church, into the Presbyterian, the Methodist, the Baptist, or any other man-made organization. Millions are gathered into these various denominations whose lives manifest that they know not God, neither seek to know him.

THE COVENANT OF SACRIFICE

Only a very few have made this Covenant of Sacrifice with God, have presented their bodies a living sacrifice with Christ, in response to God's special Call during the Gospel Age. God is not trying to attract the world now. He tells us that they are blind and deaf. As Jesus said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Again, He said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear!" (**Matt. 11:15**; **13:16**.) We thank God on behalf of those who have the seeing eye and the hearing ear. It is a great privilege to hear and see.

The Apostle Paul tells us why the great majority of mankind cannot hear the glorious Gospel Message. He

says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." (**2 Cor. 4:4**.) Satan is this god. He is in violent opposition to every feature of God's great Plan. He has been God's adversary ever since his deflection from righteousness. He does all in his power to thwart Jehovah's arrangements. He knows that if men could once see the light of God's goodness and hear the

glad Message of God's grace, it would have such an attraction that the great majority would surely respond. Hence he tries to keep them from seeing and hearing. He has multitudinous devices for blinding men. Fair earthly prospects, ambitions to be some great one, selfish schemes for gaining advantage over their fellows--all these and many other things of like nature are held up to keep them blinded to the things of real and lasting value.

Those who are hungering for God Satan endeavors to draw away into various reform movements, such as socialism, woman suffrage, prohibition of the liquor traffic, etc. This he does to keep them from hearing God's special Call. These are all, perhaps, good for the worldly. These movements are probably more or less awakening thought and developing sentiment along lines of restitution for the next Age. But none of these is the work for the saints of God on this side of the veil. Satan would delight to deceive these, however, and entice them into some of these movements to prevent them from seeing and doing the real work of the Church of Christ, and thus to prevent them from making their calling and election sure.

The real Gospel is the most wonderful Story in all the world! There is nothing like it--that God is now inviting a certain class to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ, "to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in Heaven" for the Lord's faithful, an inheritance "that fadeth not away"! (**Rom. 8:17**; **1 Peter 1:4**.) Truly, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love Him."--**1 Cor. 2:9**.

SM345

"THE ANSWER OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE"

Our surrender to the Lord was "the answer of a good conscience toward God." When God invited us to become living sacrifices through Christ, to be saints and follow Jesus, the answer of our conscience was, "Lord, we respond, we accept Thy gracious invitation." Was not that the answer of a good conscience? It was indeed. What could a good conscience toward God say except to be glad to do the Heavenly Father's will? He made a most wonderful proposition to us, providing a Redeemer

to open up the way to all this glory and honor with Christ. The only answer of a good conscience could be, "Here, Lord, I give my little all to Thee!" That is what baptism means; and it is surely our "reasonable service," as the Apostle says. (**Rom. 12:1**.) It is the most reasonable thing that could be imagined. Therefore we should carry out our covenant of consecration even unto death.

If our Lord Jesus, after He had made this Covenant of Sacrifice with God and had begun the work of carrying it out, had said, "Father, I know that I came to earth to do Thy will; but I find that so many of the people misunderstand Me and speak evil of Me that I cannot go on in this way. They misrepresent all the good I try to do; and I cannot accomplish anything." What would the Father have replied? His answer would have been, "If you prefer the approval of men to My approval, take your choice. I cannot give You the glorious reward which I have offered to You unless You meet the conditions. You must love My will more than all else or I cannot accept You."

So it is with the followers of Jesus. We receive the same tests that He did. The Father does not permit the trials to press us too hard, and He supplies His grace for every time of need; but we must have a heart that fully responds to the will of God or we cannot be acceptable; we shall lose the prize, and be accounted unfaithful servants. We are to be willing that loyalty to God shall cost us something, yea, even the loss of all earthly prospects.

SM346

The heart-attitude that says, "So long as right is as easy as wrong I will choose the right, but if wrong is easier than right I will choose the easier way," is disloyal to God. Such a heart would be unworthy of the glorious High Calling. Indeed, it would make even an unworthy human being. We are to be loyal to the very core, or God will reject us. The Lord Jesus puts the matter in just this light when He says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (**Mark 8:38**.) Jesus would be ashamed to have such a one in His Kingdom.--**Psa. 51:6**; **66:18**.

The Father and the Son are watching to see how true we are. If we are faithful--under present unfavorable

conditions--when loyalty to the Truth brings much reproach, when people point the finger of scorn at us, then the Lord will say, "These are the ones that shall reign in My Kingdom. Those who so delight in My love and approval as to serve Me through evil report, misunderstandings, persecutions and sufferings, will be true when exalted to positions of glory."

DEATH WITH CHRIST THE GATE TO GLORY

Such dear, faithful children of God "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." To these the Lord Jesus will say, "I take pleasure in saying to you, Sit down with Me in My Throne." (**Rev 2:26,27**; **3:12,21**.) In **Romans 6:3** the Apostle says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ [into the Body of which Christ is the Head] were baptized into His death?" These become with Jesus The Christ of God, The Anointed of God; for the word Christ means The Anointed. God has never counted any in as members of the Church of Christ except those who have fully surrendered their wills to Him and become dead to the world.

This is our baptism into death as human beings and into life as spiritual beings. Our spirit nature is only

begotten as yet, but we shall be born spirit beings at our "change" in the First Resurrection. We are now raised, as New Creatures, "to walk in newness of life," but not yet raised in the complete sense. We have not yet received our new bodies. Our new mind is in process of development. We have said that we gave *all* to God. If we continue in this attitude and fulfil our covenant faithfully, we shall abide in His love and in due time be associates of His Son in glory. The giving up of our will in consecration is only the beginning of the matter. Day by day, week by week, month by month, we are to carry out the terms of our covenant. We are to have no thought of turning back. Having put our hands to the plow, we are not even to look back. "He that looketh back is not fit for the Kingdom of God."--**Luke 9:62**.

When Jesus was here in the flesh, on a certain occasion He made some very strong statements (**John 6:50-69**);

and it is written, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." They said, "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" Then said Jesus to The Twelve, "Will ye also go away?" Simon Peter--impulsive, noble Peter--answered, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

There is no other Message of eternal life open during the present Age than the Call to joint-heirship with Christ, suffering unto death with Him that we may share His glory hereafter. This is the only way by which we can get into the Ark and be preserved from the general death all around us. Jesus is our Ark of Safety. "By the resurrection of Jesus Christ" our baptism is made possible, as our text declares.

It is this same Simon Peter who tells us in our text that the Ark of Noah was a symbol of saving power, a likeness or figure of our being saved now through baptism into Christ. What a refuge is this Ark of Safety! As Noah and his family were in the world but not of the world, and were carried in safety through the engulfing

waters in which the whole world were dying, so it is with those who are in Christ. Everybody around us is in death, as the Bible says: "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." (**1 John 5:19**, Diaglott.) The Church alone have escaped the condemnation upon the world.

We who were children of wrath even as others, were sentenced to death with the rest of the world. But the Lord our God has graciously brought us into the relationship of sons, through our faith in Christ and obedience to the Divine arrangement in Him. And as Noah and his family, after their deliverance, started the world afresh, so Christ and His Bride will by and by give life anew to all of the race of mankind who will accept the gracious provision for them in Christ.

The dead world are soon to have a resuscitation, with the opportunity to fully live again. Christ is to be the Everlasting Father of the race (**Isa. 9:6,7**), and the Church will be the mother. Grand and glorious as are the blessings in reservation for the world of mankind when they shall have learned their lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, far greater and grander still will be the reward of the faithful Church, who so love the Lord as to

be willing and glad to obey and follow Jesus under the trying and painful conditions of the present time.

Salvation! let the tidings fly
The sin-cursed earth around!
Raise the triumphant notes on high,
And let your songs abound.

Salvation! O ye weary souls,
It brings you life and peace--
Eternal life, eternal health,
And joys which ne'er shall cease.
Salvation! O the blessed theme
Shall fill the world with joy!
When all its mighty work is seen,
Praise shall all tongues employ.

SM349

AN APPALLING LACK

IN EVERYDAY LIFE

"Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame."-- **1 Cor. 15:34**.

This exhortation is not addressed to the world of sinners, but to Christians, as are all of the Apostolic writings. If we were to translate the text a little differently, it might better give the Apostle's thought. For instance, "Awake to a proper appreciation of justice. Do not sin against justice in your lives; for some have not a knowledge of God respecting justice, the principles of righteousness. And this is to your shame."

We who are in the School of Christ recognize that the Lord is teaching us and is preparing us for a great work in the future. The work of the Church during the incoming Age is, according to the Bible, to be kings, priests and judges, to be God's representatives in the Messianic Kingdom. As kings, they will be sharers with our Lord Jesus in the ruling of the world. As priests, they share in the work of healing, instructing and sympathizing with the world. As judges, they will administer justice, will give stripes or rewards to mankind, during the thousand years of Messiah's Reign. Manifestly, therefore, it is proper that whoever hopes to be of these kings, priests and judges should now attain the qualifications of heart and mind which will make him competent for the work; for we may be very sure that God will not appoint any who are not properly qualified.

It is for this reason that God has been calling His Church out from the world during the last nineteen hundred years, and has been giving us the glorious instructions of our Lord Jesus and the Apostles and of the Law and the Prophets. All these things have been for our

SM350

upbuilding in those qualities of heart and mind which will

fit us for the great service to which God has called us.

But God is not testing His children according to their imperfect bodies; for He knows that we cannot do the things which we would. He is dealing with our spirits, our minds. Through the transforming influence of His Word, He is giving us a new mind; and it is this new mind which He receives into His family. This becomes the New Creature. (**Rom. 12:1,2**; **2 Cor. 5:17**.) We accept a new will, the will of God, instead of our own wills, and the Divine arrangements instead of our own plans and purposes. Thus God is dealing with us as His children, according to this new relationship into which we have come by faith and obedience; and through Christ our Lord we are reckoned perfect in God's sight.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL

But how can we be perfect in will when our bodies are imperfect? We answer, as did the Apostle, "To will is present with me, but how to perform I find not." (**Rom. 7:18**.) He did not always succeed in carrying out his will for righteousness. So it is with every one who seeks to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We all know how to *will* right, but how to *do* right is the problem.

Gradually we learn that God will not judge us according to the imperfections of our flesh; for so long as we remain faithful, these blemishes are covered with the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness. Therefore we do our best to show our Heavenly Father that we are trying hard to do right in every act, word and thought. And since He expects every member of His family to have a perfect will, it becomes a personal question as to what is the will of God for us. So we seek diligently to prove "what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."--**Rom. 12:1,2**.

To prove what is God's will means to come to a knowledge of His will, to demonstrate it for ourselves. If we are faithful, we are progressing in this more and more as

the days go by. At first we had a little knowledge, and this we put into practise. As we grew in grace and in knowledge, we became better acquainted with the will of

God; and it was for us to put this increased knowledge into practise also. This knowledge of the will of God we obtained, not in any supernatural way, but through the study of the Bible.--**2 Tim. 2:15**.

Whoever has come into the family of God has given up his own will and accepted, instead, God's will. Whoever has not given up his own will to the Lord is not His child. As the Apostle declares, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (**Rom. 8:9**.) The spirit of Christ was the spirit of full surrender to the Father's will; and as we come to this same condition, we give up our own wills and take instead the Divine will. This we do because it is the proper course for all who desire to follow in our Redeemer's steps, and because our own wills have proved to be unsatisfactory to ourselves. Our minds and our bodies are so imperfect that we have frequently gotten into difficulty through doing our own will. Therefore we are glad to know and to do the will of God, especially since we see that it is so gracious a will.

JUSTICE FIRST, THEN LOVE

During the present time it is the will of God that His children shall have trials, difficulties and polishings, in order that these experiences may develop in us a God-likeness of character, a crystallization of character, that will render us fit to be used of God in the great work which He has appointed to the Lord Jesus, that we might thus become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord in that Heavenly Kingdom which is designed of the Father for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Sometimes Christian people see the doctrine of love in the Bible, and forget that there is a lesson which precedes love. This primary lesson is the one to which we draw your attention today. It is the lesson of justice--righteousness. Our text really signifies, "Awake to justice!"

SM352

We must all learn to distinguish right from wrong and to practise what is just, right. Justice is righteousness.

The Law of God was given to the Israelites at Mount Sinai to show what justice means. They were not asked to do anything more than justice. "Thou shalt not kill,"

said the Law; for to take another's life is wrong, except when God's own Law demands it. "Thou shalt not steal." To do so is wrong, unjust. "Thou shalt not bear false witness." To do so would be an injustice.--**Exod. 20:2-17**.

Thus we see that the Law of God given to the children of Israel amounted to this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." To do justice to your neighbor as you wish that neighbor to do justice to you is the essence of the Law of God given to the Jews for their treatment of others.--**Matt. 7:12**.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF JUSTICE

Did God give this same Law to the Church? Yes, so far as the spirit of the Law is concerned. God's Law is over all of His creatures. But during the Law Dispensation there was a special Law Covenant which God had made with Natural Israel. No others have ever been under that Law Covenant. The Jew who could keep that Law perfectly could live forever; and, having everlasting life at his command, he might have the opportunity of becoming a part of that great antitypical Spiritual Israel which was to bless all the families of the earth. This our Lord Jesus did. Moreover, in His statement of the Divine Law to Spiritual Israel, He "has magnified the Law and made it honorable," by showing how far-reaching and comprehensive are its requirements.

No intelligent person will question the propriety of dealing justly with every one in the world. This subject has many ramifications in all the affairs of our daily life. The principle of justice enters into every transaction, even the most trivial. It applies not only to our dealings with the world at large, but with every member of our

own family. The principle of justice must be recognized with our own as well as with others. If all might get this thought of the Golden Rule firmly fixed in the mind, if each one could awake to righteousness, to justice, the whole world would be revolutionized.

If this principle of justice were recognized and followed, men would not be shooting one another today over

in Europe. On the contrary, they would be doing something better, something good one toward another, just as they would wish others to do toward them. But men are not living up to this standard of righteousness, of justice. It is entirely ignored by governments and by individuals. The general excuse for violating the Golden Rule is, "It would never do for us to grant to others what we would expect for ourselves; for others would take advantage of us; they would not do their part; they would not reciprocate." Say the British, "It would not do for us to practise the Golden Rule toward the Germans; for we do not know what they would do to us." The Germans advance the same kind of argument.

This course of conduct is not the fear of God, but the fear of man; it ignores the fear of God. God says that if Christians are afraid of men and of nations and of what these may do, we are carnal, are living according to the flesh, are like the unbelieving world. How shall we who have come into relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, we who have given our lives to Him, do under such circumstances? Shall we say that we fear to trust this principle of justice in our lives, that we do not dare to carry it out in every word, thought and act? Are we afraid to trust God and to obey Him?

God did not say that we were to observe the Golden Rule whenever others observed it toward us, and to ignore it whenever others failed to observe it toward us. On the contrary, we are to practise it on every occasion, regardless of what others do. Then we shall know that all things shall work together for good toward us, because we shall

be in line with God and His arrangements. He has power to overrule in all of life's affairs. The very least that we must do is to give justice to one another; and to do so will mean a great blessing to our own characters.

Whoever is violating the principle of Justice, the Golden Rule, in his home or in the Church of Christ or in business or social relations should, if he is a Christian, examine the matter earnestly and prayerfully, and "awake to righteousness [justice], and sin not." Thus to do violence to justice is sin; and so far as our knowledge goes, it is a sin that prevails everywhere. Many have not a proper appreciation of this fact. They do not see that

justice is the very foundation of all character, of all right living. It is the foundation of the Throne of God. (**Psa. 89:14**.) In vain does any one practise love to his fellow creatures or even toward God while he is at the same time violating the principle of justice toward that one. Only after we have rendered justice are we at liberty to practise love toward another. Then we may do as much as we are able along the line of love. Justice first, love afterwards, should be the rule governing all of our dealings with others.

RESPONSIBILITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Those who are children of God are expecting shortly to be made the judges of the world. As the Apostle says, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (**1 Cor. 6:2,3**.) Moreover, God is seeking now to develop in our hearts and lives, in our characters, those principles which He desires. Therefore, unless we are just in our very hearts, unless we appreciate this principle of justice and rejoice to practise it, we shall not be fit for the Kingdom. We should not be unjust even to an animal. Every creature has its rights; and we should give each creature the rights which belong to it. The results are with God. Thus doing, shall we not be preparing our minds, our hearts, for the glorious condition which the Lord has in store for His faithful children?

SM355

We are not to think that the Kingdom of God is to be given on the basis of mercy or favor. There will be neither mercy nor favor in connection with the bestowal of the Heavenly reward. God shows mercy in connection with our sins and the weaknesses against which we are striving; but He will not allow in that Kingdom one individual whose character is not suitable. Those whom He approves for joint-heirs and rulers with our Lord Jesus must represent the principles of righteousness and must know how to apply those principles now. Whoever is not disposed to justice to such an extent as to be willing to suffer loss rather than do an injustice will not have a share in the Kingdom.

The Bible everywhere pictures God as the great Representative

of Justice. If we receive a place in the Kingdom, it will be apportioned us on the basis of works, on the basis of our growth in grace, in knowledge, in character-likeness to our Lord Jesus. If we have been justified by faith in Jesus' blood, if we then have made a covenant with God and have been begotten of His Holy Spirit, He wishes to see us go on to perfection as New Creatures. We are not to think that our Heavenly Father is uninterested in us, and that He will coldly and indifferently judge us. On the contrary, we are to remember our Lord's assurance, "The Father Himself loveth you."

In conclusion, let us remember that if we are true, loyal children of God, all our blemishes are covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness; and if we are doing with our might what our hands find to do in this great matter of justice, dealing with all, along the lines of the Golden Rule, we are showing the Father that we appreciate this principle as the foundation of His Government. Upon this sure foundation we shall build a superstructure of love. Thus shall we be made ready for the Kingdom.

SM356

HEAD MUST RULE MEMBERS OF BODY

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh! 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. 12:25**.

These words are not addressed to the world, but to the members of the Body of Christ, those who have left the world and entered into covenant relationship with God. The Apostle has just been describing the scenes enacted at Mount Sinai, when God by His angel spoke to His typical people Israel. He then declares that if sore punishment came to all in Israel who disobeyed the voice which then gave them commandments, much sorer shall be the punishment of those Spiritual Israelites of the Gospel Age, who, after having come into vital relationship with the Son of God as members of His mystical Body, shall then refuse to hear and obey.

In order to have harmony in the human body each member must respond promptly to the dictates of the head. Suppose that my hand were afflicted with St. Vitus Dance, so that when my brain instructed the hand to lift a glass of water that I might drink, the hand would twitch, tremble, suddenly throw the glass over my shoulder and spill the contents. What would be the trouble with my hand? It was a sick member; the connection between it and my head was interrupted; and thus the hand refused to obey the mandates of the head. Or suppose that my limb were paralyzed; and that when my head directed it to move, it would remain motionless and refuse to carry my body. The connection between this member and the brain had become interrupted, and the message from the head was not received. What confusion and trouble would thus be caused in my body!

SM357

Thus it is with the Body of Christ. If any member of that Body become spiritually sick, if the perfect harmony between the Head, Christ Jesus, and any member be interrupted, there will be trouble and distress throughout the

entire Body. If the connection become altogether destroyed, the member is thenceforth useless, and is cut off from the Body. Our Lord pictures this matter when He called Himself the Vine and the members of His mystical Body the branches, and declared that every branch in Him that failed to bear fruit would be cut off.

THE HEAD THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER

What carefulness this thought should inspire in each member of Christ! We should realize that of ourselves we are nothing. We are only the humble instruments that God is using in the outworking of His wonderful Plan. Not one of us is at all necessary to His purposes. It is a very great favor that the Father permits us to co-operate in His great work under the Headship of His Son Jesus Christ. God formed the Plan, and is carrying it out according to His own purposes. Our Lord Jesus is the important factor in the accomplishment of God's designs. We are invited in, not to be rulers, but to follow instructions, to be obedient. The greatest blessing which we can have is to be permitted to co-operate with our great Head, who under Jehovah, the great Head over all, is guiding the work.

Through experience and observation the thought has impressed itself that there may be a considerable number cut off from membership in the Body of Christ, and not only so, but cut off from all hope of future life. There can be no place, now or ever, in God's family for one who is wilful and refractory, one who will not be guided by the Lord, one who wants his own way and who thus refuses Him that speaks from Heaven.

In **Hebrews 10:28,29** the Apostle declares that those who disobeyed Moses "died without mercy." Then he speaks of those who will receive a much "sorer punishment."

SM358

Israel being a typical people, the death penalty visited upon them for certain offenses was only a type of the death penalty to be visited upon those of Spiritual Israel who wilfully disobey the voice of God speaking to us through His Son. The penalty suffered by refractory members of Natural Israel was but a temporary one; for

during the Millennial Age they will be awakened and have the opportunity, with all the remainder of the world, of accepting Christ and coming under the terms of the New Covenant, then operative. But those who during the present Age have been enlightened and begotten of God's Holy Spirit, shall, if they fall away--renounce allegiance to Christ--come under the penalty of the Second Death--total annihilation.

This, then, is the "sorer punishment" to which the Apostle refers. This penalty of death without any hope of a recovery will be inflicted also upon those of the world at large who, during their time of trial in the next Age, shall wilfully disobey the voice of God speaking through the great Mediator of the New Covenant--The Christ, Head and Body--Jesus and His Church.

EVIL EFFECT OF REJECTING LIGHT

The Apostle's argument is, Look back, brethren, to the history of Israel in the past. See how from time to time they were negligent of the messages which God sent to them at the mouth of angels and of Moses, the servant of God; and how disasters often came upon them for their disobedience and neglect, many of them even suffering the death penalty. If the penalty was so severe for negligence under the Law given through Moses, what would be the result of neglecting and of doing despite to the words of Him who now speaks from Heaven, of counting the blood of the Covenant by which we have been sanctified an unholy thing, a common thing, and of doing despite to the Spirit of grace--despising God by ignoring His only arrangement for atonement!--**Heb. 6:4-8**; **10:26-31**; **Acts 3:23**.

SM359

There are some who have never made a full consecration of themselves, who have never enlisted upon the Lord's side, and yet have had considerable knowledge of the Truth. They have heard the true Gospel Message; they have felt its power, its reasonableness; they have realized in their hearts that it was God's Message. They have felt a certain measure of drawing toward it. Yet for some reason these have turned away from the Heavenly

Voice. These are not the class addressed by the Apostle in our text, however; for like all of the Apostolic Epistles, that to the Hebrews is addressed to the "holy brethren" (**Chapter 3:1**), "the saints."

But all who have heard the Gospel Message with a measure of understanding and appreciation have thereby some responsibility concerning it. To turn away from any degree of light brings a hardening of the heart. It would seem that whoever has rejected the Message after a measure of understanding of its import would never again be drawn to it in the same degree as before. The Message would not seem so wonderful as at first. Whoever gets a glimpse beyond into the future, whoever hears now of the goodness of God and is not melted by the thought of his own imperfection and his need of a Savior, may never accept God's favor, even during the next Age, when the opportunity for Restitution is opened to all mankind. This is a thought which all who hear will do well to consider.--**Rom. 2:4**.

No one becomes fully responsible, however, until he has entered into the spirit-begotten condition; for no one can be tried for eternal life until first he has gotten free from the Adamic death sentence. The first death sentence must be removed before anybody can be put on trial for life or death again. Thus we see the wonderful mercy of God in providing that those who would come now into Christ are not put on trial at the moment when they hear about Christ, when they learn that there is a door of return to God open to all who comply with conditions.

SM360

CHRIST SUFFERING IN THE FLESH

Whoever endeavors to draw near to God will find that every step nearer will bring him a blessing; for he is going in the right way--toward justification by faith. But he has not yet come into full trial, full testing. As he continues to draw nearer, learning more and more about God, cleansing himself more and more from the natural filthiness of the flesh resulting from the Adamic fall, he finally comes to the parting of the ways. He finds that he cannot go forward unless he make a full consecration of himself to God. He learns that he can have no standing

with God unless our Redeemer Himself accept him and present him to God; and that our Lord Jesus will not accept any one who does not give himself fully and unreservedly to the Father through the Son.

So he has reached the point of decision. Whoever reaches this place and then gives himself unreservedly is accepted of the Lord Jesus, in harmony with the Father's Plan. Immediately after He has accepted the one presenting himself in consecration, He imputes of the merit of His sacrificial death to the one offering himself and counts that one as His flesh. Then the Father also accepts that flesh, and begets the person to a new, spiritual nature. Thus the flesh of Christ has been in process of being offered in sacrifice throughout this Gospel Age. First, our Lord Jesus offered His own flesh. Then, when He had finished that work, He appeared in the presence of God and made satisfaction for the sins of all who would follow in His steps--the Church.--**Heb. 9:24**.

As soon as our Lord had made satisfaction for His followers, the Father immediately accepted their sacrifices, as was indicated by His giving them the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. So all other believers throughout this Age have received the begetting of the Holy Spirit as soon as the Father had accepted them through the great Advocate of the Church. The flesh of these consecrated ones having been counted as the flesh of Jesus (**Acts 9:4,5**),

SM361

Christ has been suffering in the flesh all down the Age. Thus we perceive the fulfilment of the Scripture which declares that we are filling up "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."--**Col. 1:24**.

Various Scriptures tell us that now is the time for suffering with Christ, and that afterward will come the time for sharing His glory. St. Peter says that the Prophets of old spoke of the sufferings of Christ--Jesus the Head, and all the members of the Body--and of the glory to follow. That glory will follow promptly just as soon as the sufferings are accomplished. Whoever shares in the sufferings now will also share in the coming blessings of glory, honor and immortality--the Divine nature.--**1 Peter 1:10-12**; **2 Tim. 2:11,12**; **Rom. 8:17**; **2 Peter 1:4**; **1 John 3:1,2**; **James 1:12**.

PHASES OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

The Lord Jesus counts the flesh of His Body members as His flesh. So we now have before our minds the thought that the human bodies of the Church constitute a part of our Lord's flesh, in the larger sense.
Then there is the present spiritual Body of Christ, composed of the spirit-begotten new nature of the New Creatures in the Christ Company dwelling in these earthly tabernacles and seeking to bring them to the sacrificial point in every respect day by day. Then there is also the thought of the glorified Body of Christ, to be composed of the "more than conquerors" only, after the two companies shall have been eliminated who have failed to make their calling and election sure.

The Scriptures inform us that those who compose the Body of Christ in the flesh will finally be divided into three classes, after the testings and provings have been applied by our Lord. The first class will constitute the Body of Christ in glory, the "more than conquerors" mentioned by St. Paul in **Romans 8:37**. The second class will be composed of those who have not been wholly faithful to the Covenant of Sacrifice which they made with the

Lord, and who must consequently lose their places in the Body. Later, these will come up out of the great tribulation with which this Age will close, and will make their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. Then they will stand before the Throne, with palm branches in their hands, instead of sitting in the Throne, wearing crowns. (**Rev. 7:9-17**; **3:21**; **20:4,6**; **2:10**.) The third class will be composed of those who repudiate their covenant with God, and who therefore will suffer the penalty of the Second Death.

During the Gospel Age God deals only with those who constitute these classes. He does not receive any one who has not come to the point of full consecration; for it is the New Creature, not the flesh, that is on trial for life or death. Whoever becomes a New Creature hears the voice of God in a special sense; for the spirit-begotten class receive, as it were, a new hearing and a new sight, so that as New Creatures they can understand spiritual things, can hear and see as never before.

SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE TRUTH

It is very important that all of the spirit-begotten keep their hearts so loyal, and their walk in life so consistent, that they shall be of the Body of Christ in glory. To this class our Lord still speaks; and it is for each of them to see that he refuse not anything that the Head says to His Church. The will of the Head is to be done in the Body.

In His last prayer with His disciples our Lord prayed for them, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." (**John 17:17**.) We cannot be sanctified without the Word of God. Nothing else can take it place. Let us listen to His Voice speaking to us there. He tells us that we are in the School of Christ, who has become our Teacher. Through His teachings, through the prophecies and through the various experiences of life He is teaching His disciples meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

Whoever has not learned meekness has not learned

even the primary lesson in the School of Christ. Meekness is the foundation for love. Gentleness is very important. The person who is rude and boisterous is not in proper condition to be used of the Lord. He must become gentle in order that he may not offend or stumble the brethren. He must learn brotherly kindness in order to love them, to be helpful to them. This is the Lord's Spirit.

We must become so meek, so humble, so teachable, that in whatever way God may send us instruction--whether through trials, difficulties, sickness, or through books, pamphlets or hymnals--we shall be ready to learn. Whatever scatters our darkness, our ignorance, our superstition, whatever brings us out of darkness into the marvelous light of God, is surely of Him; for we cannot do this of ourselves.

THE VOICE THAT SPEAKS FROM HEAVEN

God's Voice is sounding throughout the earth today, speaking louder than ever before, telling us that the world

is on the eve of a great change of dispensation--that the Redeemer is about to take His great power and reign. Let those who hear see that they do not refuse the Message of the hour. If they refuse Him who speaks from Heaven--as most of them are doing--all the more severe will be the tribulation which will come upon them--"a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation, no, nor ever shall be" the like hereafter.

Centuries ago, when the Law Covenant of which Moses was the mediator was made at Mount Sinai, the Voice of God then shook the earth. St. Paul, standing prophetically down here in our day and pointing back to that time, says that once more will God's Voice shake not only the earth--society--but the heavens also--the ecclesiastical powers. (**Heb. 12:26-29**.) Let us heed this Voice. Let us humble ourselves and cultivate the qualities of character which will prepare us to be used of the Master to speak of the New Dispensation and the blessings coming to all mankind through Messiah's Kingdom.

SM364

SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM

"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."-- **Matt. 6:33**.

Every Bible student has noted the great frequency of reference to the Kingdom in the teaching of our Lord and the Apostles. We read that the message which John proclaimed was, "The Kingdom of God has come nigh," and that when Jesus sent forth the twelve Apostles their mission was to declare the Kingdom of God at hand. And later, when He sent forth the seventy others, their message was the same, "The Kingdom of God is at hand." We notice that when the disciples asked the Lord how to pray, one of the principal items of the petition He taught them was, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." We notice, further, that nearly all of our Lord's parables, and hence nearly all of His teachings, were in respect to the Kingdom, which was likened to a net, likened to a sower and his crop of thirty, sixty and an hundred fold, likened to a field, the wheat of which was finally gathered into the garner, likened to the merchant seeking pearls and giving all that he had for the choicest, likened in the end of the Age to the ten virgins, the five wise of whom went into the marriage.

It is with some degree of astonishment that these same students notice that in modern theology, as represented by the colleges in Christendom, there is scarcely a reference to the Kingdom of God. When sometimes inquiry is made respecting the matter--as to why this teaching is so prominent in the New Testament and so little heard in modern pulpits--the reply usually is to this effect: "Yes, the poor Jews had the opinion that God would establish them as the Kingdom; and that when

SM365

Messiah would come He would receive them as associates in the Kingdom, and would honor them and use them as His instrumentality in blessing all the families of the

earth. In all this the poor Jews were evidently mistaken, as our Lord did nothing of the kind for them. In some vague sort of way we must suppose the Church to be the Kingdom now, though we scarcely understand how to apply that name to it." This answer is generally taken by the students as satisfactory; for they know no better and have not learned how to reason on subjects theological. Few people understand God's Word.

BLESSINGS THROUGH ABRAHAM'S SEED

Let us look on the other side of the subject. Let us remember the falling away of the Dark Ages, in which nearly all the precious doctrines of Jesus and the Apostles were buried under a mass of human tradition and superstition and "doctrines of devils." (**1 Tim. 4:1**.) The Lord be praised that we are gradually getting out of that terrible darkness. But on some subjects many of God's people are still evidently far from clear, far from an appreciation of the teachings of our Lord and His Apostles. Wiping the dust of the darkness of the past from our eyes, let us examine God's Word on this subject of the Kingdom.

We find that the Jews did have as the mainspring of their religious and political system the thought that they were to be the representatives of God in the work of blessing the world in general--that He had called them out first, in advance of other nations, that He might use them as His holy nation under the Messiah, and through them communicate a blessing to the world. This thought had its foundation in the Divine promise to Father Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." As the seed of Abraham they expected the fulfilment of that promise and took the various trials and difficulties, captivities, etc., that came upon them as a nation as so much of Divine instruction

preparing them for the Divine service when Messiah should come and establish His Kingdom.

Nor is there a thought in the Old or in the New Testament contradictory to this. They had the right idea. In harmony with this thought our Lord at His

First Advent preached only to Israel and said to His Apostles, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and unto the city of the Samaritans enter ye not: for I am not sent except to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." The blessing and privilege went first to that nation. St. **John (1:11,12**) distinctly tells us that our Lord came unto His own people and that they received Him not, except a remnant; and that to that remnant was granted a special blessing of spirit-begetting, which constituted them the nucleus or start of Spiritual Israel. The rest of the nation of Israel, the Apostle tells us, were turned aside and blinded for a time until a sufficient number should be found from among the Gentiles to complete the foreordained number of Spiritual Israel. This gathering of Spiritual Israelites out of all nations, peoples, kindreds and tongues, and the testing of these, has been the work of this Gospel Age; and when the full number shall have been found and tested and perfected this Age will end and a new Age, the Millennium, will begin.

THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

It will be noticed, then, that the central thought held by the Jews respecting God's purpose of establishing a Kingdom in the world for the blessing of all nations was substantially correct; and that the difficulty was that there were not enough Jews to constitute the elect class. Hence the delay of this Gospel Age, which God had foreseen and approved. The Kingdom thought, however, is still there; for, as we have just seen, the Lord and the Apostles continually referred to it and invited all the faithful to be "heirs of the Kingdom." As a matter of fact, then, the Church, as Spiritual Israel and the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, has inherited this chief blessing

which God offered primarily to Abraham and his posterity. This Spiritual Israel, composed of "Israelites indeed" and the faithful ones of every nation, is to constitute the Bride of Messiah, and as such is to share with Him the Kingdom honors and Kingdom work specified in the Abrahamic promise, "In thy Seed shall all the

families of the earth be blessed." That there may be no doubt of this, note carefully the Apostle's arguments in **Gal. 3** and **4**. Note especially his words, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs [of the Kingdom and its work of blessing the world] according to the promise."--**Gal. 3:29**.

No wonder, then, that our Lord continually appealed to the Kingdom thought. It is along this line that the entire Divine Plan is arranged. The Kingdom class must first be found, selected, glorified. Then the Kingdom work of blessing the world will be due to begin--not before. Any blessings that may come to the world through the Church intermediately are merely incidental. This is the meaning of the various invitations given us all through the Scriptures, such, for instance, as our Lord's words in our text, "Seek ye first [chiefly] the Kingdom of God and His righteousness"; "Pray ye, Thy Kingdom come"; "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom"; "As My Father has appointed unto Me a Kingdom, so I appoint unto you"; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne"; "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him"; etc., etc.

Another part of the same Kingdom story we shall not have time to tell you on this occasion. We merely, in passing, note the fact that the Scriptures most clearly set forth that from the Divine standpoint there are two seeds of Abraham, and that both seeds are to be blessed and to be used in communicating the Divine blessings to the world in general. Spiritual Israel has attained the highest place as the Seed of Abraham, but there is

still a promise to Natural Israel--"This is My covenant with them when I shall take away their sins." "It shall come to pass after those days," saith the Lord, "that I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah....I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." "I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh."--**Jer. 31:31-33**; **Ezek. 11:19**.

The Apostle tells us when this will be fulfilled; namely, when Spiritual Israel shall have been completed

and Natural Israel shall have obtained mercy through Spiritual Israel. (**Rom. 11:25-32**.) It is in harmony with this that the Apostle assures us that the promise shall be sure unto both the seeds, both that which is according to the spirit and that which is according to the flesh. (**Rom. 4:16**.) These two seeds of Abraham were distinctly referred to in the Lord's promise to him in which He said: "Thy seed shall be as the stars of Heaven [the spiritual class, the Heavenly, the Church], and as the sand upon the seashore [the earthly seed]," although favor to Natural Israel will gradually extend and absorb into that nation all of the entire human family who love righteousness, all others being destroyed in the Second Death.--**Psa. 67:3,4**; **37:38**.

HOW WE SEEK THE KINGDOM

Having now before our minds what the Kingdom is, we appreciate the fact that the Church in the present time is the Kingdom, but without power and without glory--in an embryo or undeveloped stage--in preparation for the glories that shall be ultimately revealed. We perceive the force of the Apostle's explanation that we are walking by faith and not by sight, and that the world knoweth us not. The world is not aware of the Divine purpose, nor does it recognize the heirs of salvation. Hence, as it crucified the Lord Jesus we must not marvel if it hate those who have His spirit, even

as darkness hateth the light. We must not marvel if persecution, therefore, be the lot of those who shall be favored of God in connection with this Kingdom and its privileges. Indeed, these very experiences are necessary for our development and preparation for the Kingdom. Thus by faith these heirs of the Kingdom are to realize that all things connected with their interests are under Divine supervision, and all working together for good to them that love God--the called ones according to His purpose--His Kingdom class. (**Rom. 8:28**.) Those unwilling to walk by faith, those unwilling to endure hardness as good soldiers, those who love the world and its honors and praise, and seek not alone that which cometh

from Above, will by these conditions be separated from the loyal, true overcomers. And this is the will of God, as only the latter are fit for the Kingdom.

Now we understand why the Lord said of some, "Blessed are your ears, for they hear," and intimated that many of His time were not in the condition to either see or hear or in any sense appreciate this message, this blessing of the Spiritual Kingdom now proclaimed. Not only so, but even among those who do have the hearing ear or seeing eye of understanding, the spiritual perception of the Kingdom, its call and its conditions, there is a need, as our text tells us, that they seek the Kingdom. It will not be thrust upon anybody; it is a high privilege, a high honor, and whoever shall get it must appreciate it. And whoever seeks the Kingdom under present conditions will find, as the Master said, that the way is narrow and difficult.

OTHER ATTRACTIONS CONTRASTED

Our Lord is addressing not the world, not sinners, not unbelievers. The Jewish nation was a believing nation, nominally at least, just as Christendom professedly believes in Christ. But our Lord's message was not merely to Israelites, but only to such as were "Israelites indeed" and had signified their desire as

His disciples to walk in His steps and to become joint-heirs with Him and His Kingdom. He calls the attention of these to the earthly things for which the majority of mankind are seeking--What shall we eat? What shall we drink? Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

We are not to understand the Lord's words to signify that His followers should be improvident, careless, so inattentive to the responsibilities of life as to depend upon others for their food and raiment or else go naked and hungry. There are two extremes in this matter, and our Lord was controverting the one that is most troublesome to His followers. The spirit of the world is a spirit of selfishness, which spurs all the brighter minds of earth to get, to enjoy, to be, according to earthly standards. Summing the matter up, our Lord says that what we

shall eat, what we shall drink, wherewithal we shall be clothed are the things after which all the Gentiles seek--the whole world is seeking for earthly good things, but the Lord's disciples are to take a different course. Having the invitation to joint-heirship in the Kingdom of God before their minds as the grandest possibility imaginable, they are to so esteem it that all other interests and ambitions are to sink into insignificance in their estimation and to be comparatively neglected. Our Lord's advice is, therefore, "Seek ye first [primarily--as of the first or primary importance] the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [food, raiment, etc.] shall be added unto you."

Be it noted that the Lord does not say that His followers shall have as much of these temporary good things as others have; but elsewhere He declares, "Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of." The implication, therefore, is that to those who have put their matters entirely in the Lord's hands by a full consecration of all they possess, their every talent, their every opportunity, and who are thus seeking to please God and obtain the Kingdom inheritance which He has promised--to

these He will give earthly good things according to His wisdom--those which would bring the highest measure of blessing as New Creatures, those which would prepare them and assist them best for a share in the Kingdom. Whatsoever of earthly good things would be a hindrance to their chief aim and desire in life this class would not intentionally choose. Hence they should be glad that the matter is entirely out of their hands and entirely in the Lord's hands. It is for them to rejoice that their affairs are being more wisely and more favorably ordered than if under their own control. It is for these to rejoicingly pray, "Thy will be done," in respect to all of life's affairs. Thus seeing and thus doing and thus praying this class may rejoice even in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh experience, patience, hope, and will ultimately make them not ashamed, because it will be God's method of chastening and polishing them for a share in the Kingdom.--**Rom. 5:3-5**.

SEEKING HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS

It is not enough that the Lord's Elect shall seek the Kingdom. They might seek it in a measure of selfishness, because of its honor and glory. Hence, the Lord makes another stipulation: That we shall not only seek the Kingdom, but seek its righteousness--the righteousness which the Kingdom will bring, the righteousness which God will approve. Ah, this is a searching proposition! All who will be counted worthy a place in the Kingdom must come up to the standard of perfect love toward God and toward men. This is the Divine standard, and nothing short of it will be acceptable. It means that this class will be in harmony with their God, right, just, loving, peaceable wherever found; and that they will be out of harmony with all injustice and unrighteousness wherever found--in themselves and in others.

Since we were all born in sin, since we were all tainted with selfishness, even though in differing degrees, it follows that we must all fight a good warfare against this

element of our human natures--that as New Creatures we shall not be in sympathy with any of the fallen proclivities and tendencies in ourselves and in others. It is a work of days, months and years to find out and rout these selfish propensities, these Amalekites, which have entrenched themselves in our fallen flesh, and to bring in instead of them the loving, generous impulses and endeavors of the spirit of love, which seeks to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith. This is learning to speak evil of no man, to have no sympathy with slander, backbiting and evil surmisings, but, on the contrary, to rejoice in the Truth and in "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."--**Phil. 4:8**.

The law of absolute justice, righteousness, the Law of Love, which will be introduced world-wide during the Millennium, must already, even now, have our sympathy and support. In the present time, when so much may be gained by a little deflection from the proper standards of purity or truth or honesty, when so many are in favor

of graft if it works favorably to themselves, and so unfavorable to graft if it works against their interests--in these times the heirs of the Kingdom are to be governed strictly by the laws of the Kingdom. They are to seek after and to appropriate to themselves the principles of righteousness which they perceive will be the laws of the Kingdom for the whole world by and by.

It will be much easier for the world to conform to the laws of righteousness by and by, when every transgression will receive prompt rebuke or punishment, and when every good word or deed will receive a prompt reward. But it is comparatively difficult now for this Kingdom class to think and to act along opposite lines from those which prevail to a large degree amongst their friends and neighbors. This sympathy for righteousness, truth and

purity must be sought even as the Kingdom is sought; and those consecrated believers who find the one find the other. Much of the Christian's time, therefore, must be devoted to self-examination and self-instruction in righteousness, as well as building one another up in the most holy faith, the Divine Word being the censor.

All such are really taught of God. They learn to consider honesty not merely in respect to dollars and cents, but also in regard to words and actions. Yea, more, they learn to observe honesty in their thoughts--to be honest with the Lord, honest with the brethren, honest with themselves. As these lessons are learned, appropriated, the pupils in the School of Christ are being made meet for an inheritance in the Kingdom.

THE LESSON OF SELF-DENIAL

One great difficulty among these "heirs of salvation," "heirs of the Kingdom," "heirs of glory," lies in our inability to rightly appreciate the importance of the little things in life and the little things in our own minds. Many who would have the courage to go to the stake in defense of some principle of righteousness and truth find it very difficult to "examine themselves," and, as the Apostle suggests, to bring eventually even the very thoughts of their minds into subjection to the will of God

as expressed in Christ. But our Lord's word is, "He that is faithful in that which is least will be faithful also in that which is greater." Hence we should have in mind that the Lord will instruct us along the lines of little things; and in our endeavors in all the trifling affairs of life we should cultivate and exercise the spirit of Christ, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, that these things being in us, and abounding, an entrance shall be administered to us abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

An important feature of the teaching of the School of Christ is the necessity for self-denial. The repudiation

SM374

of sin and sinful words, acts and thoughts is a difficult enough matter, but the Lord calls upon His followers to repudiate and fight against more than these. They must learn to be well-rounded-out characters, copies of God's dear Son. They must learn self-denial; our Master as the Great King and our Bridegroom learned obedience in His self-denials. And these were not along the lines of sinful things; for in Him was no sin; His special trials were of self-denial, self-sacrifice in the interest of and in the support of righteousness and for the blessing of others. Thus He developed and manifested the spirit which the Father is pleased to reward in the Kingdom.

All who will be counted worthy to be kings and priests to God in that Heavenly Kingdom must demonstrate now to Divine satisfaction their willingness to sacrifice their own personal interests and rights in favor of the Kingdom and the Father's will and the blessing of those whom the Father designs shall be blessed by the Kingdom. Whoever, therefore, refuses to take up his cross of self-denial and to deny himself cannot long be one of the Lord's disciples. He will fall out by the way, for ultimately only those will constitute members of the Kingdom class who shall count it all joy to gain that Kingdom and the Divine favor and the great privilege of being associated with Jesus in the great work of blessing the world at any cost, at any self-denial. Let us, dear brethren, emulate more and more this spirit of our Redeemer, who made Himself of no reputation that He might work the works of God, who sent Him. Thus we also shall be

counted worthy of a share with Him in the Kingdom and its glorious opportunities.

SM375

ALL ARE DEBTORS TO GRACE DIVINE

"Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as though thou hadst not received it?"--**1 Cor. 4:7**.

Evolutionists and Higher Critics in their so-called "New Theology" would apply our text to what they denominate the "ascent of man." They tell us that the first man was second cousin to a monkey, and that all the progress that has since been made by the various races of mankind is so much to be thankful for and to be proud of. According to their theory each generation receives from the preceding one additional blessings, and thus the world is going onward and upward to wonderful heights, mental, moral and physical. But we cannot agree with this theory, and find the Bible story much more consistent with the facts of the case.

The Bible records and revelations teach the fall of man from original perfection and likeness to his Creator through disobedience--a disobedience which has been accentuated in proportion to the degree of alienation from the Creator. The Bible shows us also a measure of recovery or ascent of man from the depths of his degradation proportionately to his attainment of a knowledge of his Creator and his rendering of obedience to the Creator's laws. Our text fits well to this, the Scriptural teaching from Genesis to Revelation. Man's original perfection was a gift from his Creator. His sin was of his own voluntary opposition to the Divine will, and any progress made by any member of the race has been in proportion as he has received of the Lord's favor and accepted the same. "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" Let us inquire further of the Word of God and of history, Who maketh us to differ from others? Let

SM376

us see whether or not we are different by reason of a process of evolution or different because of having received more of the grace of God.

ADAM NOT A CHIMPANZEE'S COUSIN

Those who have accepted the Evolution theory instead of the Bible record seem to be so infatuated with it that they deceive themselves into believing a lie. They sometimes give the public to understand that there is but a slight difference between the lowest, most degraded member of the human family and the highest development of the brute creation, when, as a matter of fact, they well know that this is not true. They know that there is a wide difference indeed. They assure us that there is but one missing link to be found; but the informed ones among them well know that the missing link is a very long one.

Several skulls have been found which these wise men tell us belong to periods hundreds of thousands of years before Adam's time, as Scripturally marked. But while disputing the age of these relics and denying that there ever was a man before the first man, Adam of the Scriptures, we ask these sages to account for the fact that every one of those skulls they exhibit as antiques shows a brain capacity and cavity larger than that of the average man of today. How will they explain this, in view of the fact that the brain space of the most developed ape is little more than one-half as large as the brain space of the least developed among men today? Do not these facts upset their entire theory and show that the average of human brain capacity has been decreasing instead of increasing? Do they not know also that statistics recently published in Great Britain show that the sizes of hats worn by Englishmen have considerably decreased within the last century? If it is necessary to establish some relationship between man and the ape (which we deny), would it not be fair to suppose, as one scientist of Europe has recently done, that the apes are degenerate members

of the human family? Is it not safe for the man of average information and reasoning faculties to doubt the wisdom of these scientists who guess on both sides of the question and who reserve to themselves the right to change their guesses frequently, and who show the wildness of their unreason by discrepancies of millions of

years in the guesses as to the time the first man appeared on the earth?

The "common people," who heard Jesus gladly and who still listen for the message of the Great Shepherd, will feel much safer and be much wiser if they will give heed only to the Divine Word on this subject. It speaks in no uncertain terms; and its theory is not self-contradictory, but safe and sane. It tells of man's original creation in the image and likeness of God. It explains that the fall of the race from that perfection was proportionate to the alienation from God. The Apostle explains the whole situation in few words, saying, "When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became foolish, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, that their bodies should be dishonored among themselves. And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind to do those things which were not fitting."--**Rom. 1:21-28**.

CHANGE FOR WORSE--CHANGE FOR BETTER

Does not the Apostle's inspired record of the influence of godlessness toward obscenity and degradation agree well with all that we surely know from our own experiences with the race and from the records of history? They surely do! They are satisfactory to those who are

in a right attitude of mind, but nothing is satisfactory to those who are in a quibbling attitude and seeking to ignore a personal God and man as His handiwork. The Apostle's argument is strengthened when we look at the reverse side and consider the effect of God's truth and grace wherever it has touched and glanced throughout the world during the ages marked by the Scriptures and since.

For instance, consider the moral, physical and intellectual state of the world in Abraham's day. We do not

go further back, because little information is furnished us in the Scriptures respecting the epoch before the Flood, and little after the Flood until we come to Abraham, who under the call from God became a sojourner in the land of Canaan, while Shem, the son of Noah, was still living. If the theory of Evolution were correct, Abraham would have been a short remove from a chimpanzee. But what do we find was his character? The Scriptural record tells of his various weaknesses as well as of his good qualities, and thereby shows itself to be an unbiased, truthful narrative. Its story dignifies Abraham as a most wonderful man, full of faith in God to the extent that his character is still in many respects a model even for Christians. His dealings with his nephew Lot show him to have been a most just and honorable man. His management of extensive flocks and herds, with 318 trained male servants, shows him to have been a man of affairs, with a considerably larger capacity for management than the average man of today. His pursuit of and defeat of the army which had captured Sodom and taken its valuables as spoils and its people as prisoners, including Lot, Abraham's nephew, showed a generalship on Abraham's part of no mean order, and a skill among his trained servants which places them also on a plane of intelligence far removed from that of monkeys.

Moreover, Abraham's dealing with the spoils--his refusal to accept any portion of them for himself--indicates a length, breadth, height and depth of intellect

and of character far beyond that of the majority of farmers, cattlemen and generals even of this, our day. Furthermore, recent excavations in Babylonian ruins have brought to light the fact that among that people there was a high degree of civilization prevalent at that time; that goods were bought and sold by measure and for money; that accounts were kept much after the manner of the present time among the most civilized, and far away beyond what we find among the heathen races of our time. Further, we have connected with the history of Abraham a glance at the character of the King of Egypt, which shows that the latter was governed by high principles of honor, justice and morality in his dealings with Abraham and Sarah, his wife--principles so noble

that we fear they could not be matched by one-half the princes and rulers of our day.--**Gen. 20:9-11**.

GOD MADE ISRAEL TO DIFFER

The children of Abraham are still to be found--the Arabs of the desert, the sons of Ishmael; the Hebrews, the sons of Isaac. Do we find that any process of evolution has brought the children of Abraham to a higher, nobler standard, mental, moral or physical, than we see illustrated in him? Surely not! Let us look at God's dealings. He declared to Abraham that He would take his posterity through Isaac and accomplish through them a work which eventually would bless and uplift the entire human family of every nation, of every race. But as though to show us that He was not dependent upon natural evolution for the development of the Jewish people God allowed that nation to go into a kind of slavery or serfdom to the Egyptians. After a long period of such serfdom the Lord brought them forth under the lead of Moses, who unquestionably was a great leader, a great general, a good man, as well as the meekest of men. He was a man that any nation in the world might be proud of today. Surely evolution has not developed the race

up to the standard of this son of a serf. The Law given at Sinai has served as the basis in the formulating of all laws since, and its brief, succinct statement, given in **Leviticus 19:18**, and in **Deuteronomy 6:5**, is still the standard of all law among the wisest and best people of earth, namely, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength"; and "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."--**Matt. 22:40**.

True, the people of Israel, surrounded by examples of idolatry and immorality, frequently slipped back from their covenant relationship to the Lord and their endeavors to keep the Divine Law, yet on the whole that nation ultimately became in some respects the greatest and wisest in the world under the administrations of David and Solomon. True, that nation passed under a cloud and lost special Divine favor when they rejected

the Messiah, yet even now the influences of the Divine Promises and Law make them still a great people, so that while without national existence, scattered among all the nations of the earth, they wield an influence in finance and in literature second to none other. Unquestionably they were made to differ from other men by reason of God's dealings with them and promises to them. In proportion to their faith and obedience to the Lord they have had a blessing.--**Rom. 3:1-3**; **Deut. 4:5-9**.

HOW CHRISTIANS DIFFER ALSO

But we are not to judge of the blessing upon Israel from the standard of those who had not a sufficiency of faith to accept the Messiah in His day. Rather we should look to those faithful ones who received Jesus. The twelve chosen by our Lord from the humbler walks of life to be His Apostles have left their mark in the world as its benefactors in the very highest sense--next to that of their Lord, the Redeemer.

When we come to consider the effect of this Gospel of Christ in the world, we must differentiate between true

Christians and nominal Christians. The latter are estimated to number 400,000,000 and include both the best and the worst specimens of the human family, including true Christians. All of this mass have been enlightened more or less through the teachings of Christ and the Apostles, but only a comparatively small number of them have received that special blessing to which they were invited and which does not carry an every-way favorable opinion among men.

Keep in view our argument, based upon the words of our text, "Who hath made us to differ?" Our claim, supported by the Bible and by history, is that the degradation which came upon the world through the disobedience and fall of Adam has been to a considerable extent offset by the grace and truth which our Lord Jesus brought to light through His Message of Salvation. As the Jews were blessed by the types and shadows of the Law and the prophetic messages sent to them, so during this Gospel Age every nation of the world has been

blessed with a measure of enlightenment through the Gospel of Christ--in proportion as they have received the true Message in its purity and in proportion as they have responded thereto. But, alas, these two exceptions are very important ones! Let us consider them:

The Message itself has been woefully corrupted, and that by the very ones who have claimed to rejoice in it and to be its ministers. The beauty and simplicity of the original Message--that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, imputing their transgressions to Him who died for us--gradually became warped and twisted into meaning that the Heavenly Father had been endeavoring to do violence to every principle of justice and love and to send the entire race of Adam to eternal torment; that Jesus in love and sympathy had interposed Himself in His endeavor to assist our race; but that His efforts, including His death, would avail but little to the majority who have died without so much as hearing of

the only name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved. The beautiful teaching of God's Word, that He is now electing or selecting from the world of mankind a very special class to constitute the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, and joint-heir in the Millennial Kingdom which shall bless all the families of the earth--this has been twisted into a most horrible doctrine.

The false view of Election is that God, in the exercise of a Sovereign authority, determined to save a handful of our race to show what He could have done for all if He had so chosen; that He is utterly regardless of the interests of the non-elect, and has provided no salvation for them, either in the present or in the future life. The fate of those who have died outside of the knowledge of Christ, and hence outside the possibility of salvation through faith in His name, has been horribly misrepresented, so that to the intelligent thinker the God of Love --who is working all things according to the counsel of His will--is made to appear a most terrible demon, lacking in justice and devoid of love, and far inferior to the most degraded of the human family--not one of whom could be supposed to take pleasure in the eternal torment of a fellow-creature.--**Isa. 29:13**.

Is it strange that such a perversion of the Message

brought forth an evil fruitage? Is it not true that so surely as a corrupt tree brings forth bad fruit, so false doctrines will develop bad characters in those who receive them? Looking back to the Dark Ages we feel a horror as we read of millions who suffered violent deaths, excruciating tortures, etc., for conscience sake; and when we are told that these cruelties were inflicted in the name of God and religion and the Bible, we rightly feel incensed at such a perversion of the truth, and subsequently we feel a sympathy as we realize that this wrong course of action resulted from the inculcation of false doctrines--contrary both to the word and to the spirit of the Bible. Thus we see that churchianity does not properly represent

SM383

Christ and His teachings and those of the Apostles. Nevertheless, as we should expect, the letter of Christ's teachings to some extent prevails even among those whose conduct indicates that they either never possessed or had lost the spirit of His teachings--love, joy, peace, meekness, gentleness, patience, kindness.

"FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK"

The blessing has been in proportion as the people have returned to the true Message. Apparently a few in every land have been in that attitude of heart which enabled them to appreciate the spirit of the true Message, notwithstanding the admixtures of human philosophy and falsehood. Yet these are but few now or at any time. Speaking of this our Lord Jesus called them a "little flock," saying, "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." The twelve Apostles were of this little flock class; and there have been others of this same spirit all the way down through the ages, mixed in among the tares, among the formalistic hosts and more or less confused with the false doctrines. These, despite the errors and despite their own inability, have held to the Scriptural declarations respecting the justice and love of the Creator and the mercy provided in the Redeemer. They have ignored the misrepresentation of the Divine Character by the creeds of the Dark Ages, and have in heart accepted the

Lord on the terms stated by our dear Redeemer: "If any man will be My disciple let him take up his cross and follow Me."--**Luke 9:23**; **Matt. 19:27-29**.

Following the letter and spirit of this teaching this class have been willing to be counted fools for Christ's sake, and have sought to walk in the footsteps of Him who has set them an example, to live separate from the world, to live for God and the Truth and for the blessing of fellowmen. But so small is the number of these and so insignificant their influence that they are not recorded among any of the great denominations of the world, but

are counted as offscourings of all denominations--sometimes pitied, sometimes scorned. What the Apostle said of such in his day is still true--the world knoweth us not even as it knew our Lord not. What our Redeemer said of this class is still true: "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."--**John 15:19**.

But although the world disowns and despises this class it recognizes, nevertheless, in them what it terms an impractical spirit--because their conceptions, ambitions and methods are not such as would bring the greatest prosperity and success in the present time, when sin and selfishness rule in the world. The world and churchianity have so misconceived the Divine Plan that whatever is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of the Lord, while that which is highly esteemed by the Lord is an abomination in the sight of those who are not in full accord with Him.

"WHO HATH MADE US TO DIFFER?"

We have seen that truth mixed with error has made Christendom to differ from heathendom, greatly to its advantage in some respects. The teaching of the Gospel respecting the original equality of the race and respecting the final accountability of each individual to the Lord alone--to the effect that the rule of judgment will be the same for prince and peasant, for learned and unlearned--

has had the effect of opening the eyes of the human understanding along this line, whereas the heathen peoples are still under superstition respecting classes and castes. The spirit of liberty thus infused through that measure of the truth which the world could and did receive has worked marvelous reformations of one kind and another wherever the Message of the Gospel has gone. The common people have grasped the thought that "A man's a man for a' that," and to some extent have grasped the

SM385

thought that opportunity and education and mental power have established the rulerships of this world, but that these have neither power nor influence respecting the life to come, when all will be on a common level before the judgment seat of Christ. The little of truth which Christendom has received therefore has been liberating and uplifting and enlightening and destructive to ignorance and superstition. But Christendom has not been prepared to receive other features of God's Message, "speaking peace through Jesus Christ." They have not received the invitation to make a full consecration of their hearts to the Divine will and service and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Consequently they have not received the full benefit and blessing which they might have had.

In other words, they have developed along the lines of love and liberty, while they have not developed along the lines of consecration and realization of responsibility to God. As a consequence we are rapidly approaching a time when these poorly balanced conditions will mean the wreck of our present civilization. Growth in liberty, independence, etc., in connection with growth in selfishness, is liberty working out a condition of things which the Scriptures portray in respect to the closing of this age, in which--throughout Christendom especially--every man's hand will be against his neighbors. Selfishness gone to seed will bring forth anarchy, the overthrow of all human government and restraints, the precipitation of the most awful trouble the world has ever known. Here we have an illustration of the danger of liberty while selfishness is the motive power. The essence of the Lord's message being rejected, the consequences will be disastrous. The greater the light the greater the responsibility; the higher the elevation the greater the

fall. This is the sad picture which the Scriptures give of our present civilization. "Churchianity"--which lacks of the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love--will wreck itself on its own intelligence because of its own spirit of

selfishness. A measure of truth made "Christendom" to differ from heathendom, and the result will be that in the collapse the most favored will sustain the greatest injury.

But what about the Little Flock, the true Christians, who not only appreciate their liberty, freedom from ignorance and superstition, but who accept the Lord's Message in full, and by consecration of their all take up their cross to follow the dear Redeemer, not living merely for the present joys, comforts and honors, but chiefly for the Father's will to be done--what about these? Ah! theirs is a peculiar case, difficult for many to comprehend. As the Master said to them, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." So it is also that the world understands them not and thinks of them merely as a class of foolish persons who have no joy, no happiness, no pleasure in life. On the contrary, these well know that they have more pleasure, more joy, more happiness than have their friends, because there is a peace of God which passeth understanding ruling in their hearts. They not only joy and rejoice in the future prospect--in a hope of a share in the First Resurrection and the glory, honor and immortality then to be given to the Elect, but are happy in present trials, difficulties and oppositions.--**Rom. 5:3-5**.

Ah, this is the secret of true peace and true joy--the love of God, the promises of God, the realization from God's Word that present trials and difficulties are all working together for good to them that love Him, to all called ones according to His purpose--preparing them for the glory, honor, blessing and usefulness of the future --of the Millennium and after! These have learned not to care so much for the smiles or frowns of the world, as they once did. They look beyond for the smile of their Heavenly Lord and Bridegroom, and are happy, while by the eye of faith they discern that, no matter what their earthly conditions may be, they rejoice in the privilege of serving their Master and His cause.

SM387

"WHAT HAVE WE THAT WE HAVE NOT RECEIVED?"

And in these words of our text there is a thought which should help us toward humility, one of the graces of the Lord's Spirit, without which, He tells us, we could never be acceptable to Him as joint-heirs with our dear Redeemer in His glorious Kingdom that is to bless the world of mankind very soon. Do we not see it to be true, as the Apostle expressed it, that everything that we possess--every quality of character and of its development --has come to us from the Lord; that we ourselves originated nothing whatever of which we could boast or of which we could be proud?--**1 Cor. 4:7**.

Looking back into the remote past we find that our forefathers were heathen savages, and that the Lord sent to them some measure of the Gospel light. They were blessed in proportion as they received it into good and honest hearts. Coming down we find the blessings of civilization following this Gospel of light, truth and grace. And in our own individual cases we realize that we were favorably born, and that in the Word of God we have the power of God for the transformation of the character; and that our own work in connection with this has been so inspired and enthused by the Lord's promises that we see, as the Scriptures tell us, that God has been working in us to will and to do His good pleasure by these promises and instructions furnished us through the Scriptures. Our justification through faith in the precious blood is surely not of ourselves, but of the Lord, who provided the sacrifice and who has given us the blessed anointing of the eyes of our understanding that we might see Jesus as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. It was favor upon favor that we were granted an appreciation of the privilege of presenting our bodies living sacrifices, and of thus becoming disciples of Christ and followers in His footsteps, that eventually we might attain unto the First Resurrection and become members of the Bride, the Lamb's Wife.

SM388

"PUT AWAY ALL FILTHINESS"

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

Although the words of our text were not addressed by St. Paul to the worldly, they would, nevertheless, be excellent advice and very profitable to all. In a general way all civilized people recognize that "cleanliness is next to godliness." In a general way the pure, the clean, are recognized as the beautiful; and impurity and filthiness are detested even by the impure and the filthy. Outwardly at least we are in a time when water is plentiful, when soap is cheap, and when filthiness of the flesh is almost inexcusable as respects the outward man. But filthiness of the spirit cannot be cleansed with ordinary soap and water; and this is undoubtedly the reason why the Lord and the Apostles have not addressed these words to the world.--**Psa. 119:9**.

"HAVING THESE PROMISES"

Our text tells the difference between the well-intentioned worldly person and the thoroughly consecrated Christian. The latter has heard through the Word of God certain "exceeding great and precious promises," which the well-meaning worldly class have not yet heard in the true sense of hearing--in the sense of appreciating, understanding. The whole civilized world, in one sense, has the same Bible, the same Word of God, the same precious promises; but it has not appreciated these. It has not understood them, accepted them and made them its own by a surrender to the Lord. The Church, on the contrary, is composed of those who have heard the Lord's promises intelligently and accepted those promises upon

SM389

God's conditions. Those promises of God constitute the

power of God, which works in the heart of each of the Church, first to will aright and, secondly, to do to the extent of ability the Lord's good pleasure.--**Phil. 2:13**.

This is the class addressed in our text--the followers of Jesus. These have heard of the grace of God--that it is the Divine purpose to bless Adam and his race through the great Mediator--The Messiah, The Christ. They have heard that Jesus left the glory which He had with the Father and humbled Himself to human nature, in order that He might redeem the human race. They have heard that the application of the merit of His sacrifice, when made in due time, will be sufficient for the sins of the whole world; and that then the Heavenly Father will turn over the world to the Redeemer. They have learned that the Redeemer, backed by Divine authority, will put all things into subjection under His feet, will institute a Heavenly Kingdom in the earth, and for a thousand years reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. They have heard that when He shall thus reign, His Kingdom shall be "under the whole heavens," although the King Himself will be the King of Glory on the spirit plane, "far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named."--**Eph. 1:21**; **Dan. 7:27**.

They have heard that His Kingdom will prevail from sea to sea and unto the ends of the earth, and that eventually unto Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess allegiance and obedience, and that all refusing thus to submit to that Reign of Righteousness will be destroyed from amongst the people in the Second Death. (**Acts 3:22,23**.) They have heard that this great Kingdom will not only lift up, raise up, resurrect humanity from its fallen condition, from sin and death, but that it will also bring the whole earth to the condition foreshown in the Garden of Eden, making God's footstool glorious and every way fit to be the eternal habitation of such of the human race as will be saved by that glorious Kingdom

for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."

"BELOVED, LET US CLEANSE OURSELVES"

But these have heard something more--something that belongs to the present time. They have heard that it is the Divine purpose to select from amongst mankind a Royal Priesthood, to be associated with the great Redeemer in His Mediatorial Kingdom. They have heard that a call went forth to this effect eighteen centuries ago, inviting, first of all, the Jews who were ready and willing to accept this very highest favor of God--joint-heirship with His Son in the spiritual Kingdom which is to bless mankind in general by and by. They have heard that to attain membership in this Royal Priesthood means the attainment of the character likeness of Jesus, to become copies of God's dear Son. (**Rom. 8:29**.) This implies, as its cost, the sacrifice of earthly interests. They have heard the Lord's Message, not only inviting to the glories of the Kingdom, but also informing them that the way to that crown of glory is a narrow and difficult one. They have heard the voice of the Master, saying, "Sit down first and count the cost," before you undertake such a consecration of your life, such a sacrifice of your earthly interests. "No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back would be fit for the Kingdom"--fit for a place on the Throne as a joint-heir with Christ. (**Luke 9:62**.) They heard the further expression of St. Paul to all who would become joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom assuring them that if they suffer with Christ, they shall reign with Him.--**Rom. 8:17**.

We doubt not that as the Heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus so loved the world as to provide the great Sacrifice for sin, so St. Paul loved the world--and all others of God's people must have a sympathetic love for the world. But when we think of those who are dearly beloved by the Father, by the Son, by the Apostles and by each other, we think of the special class of consecrated

saints who Scripturally are described as of no earthly sect or party, but as "The Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven."

These are "dearly beloved" because they have the mind of Christ, which is also the mind of the Father. According to the flesh they are not all lovely or beautiful.

St. Paul elsewhere admonishes us that amongst these "dearly beloved" are not many great, not many wise, not many noble, not many rich, but chiefly the ignoble and the poor of this world. Their riches and their nobility are not of the flesh, but of the spirit, of the heart, of the new will, to which they have been begotten of God by the Holy Spirit. This is surely the Apostle's thought, for in the preceding verse he speaks of these "dearly beloved" ones as "sons and daughters" of the Lord, children of the Almighty--hence begotten again of the Holy Spirit--"New Creatures in Christ Jesus." (**2 Cor. 5:17**.) Ah, how wonderful it seems that there should be such a class as this in the world, yet not separated from the world, except by their new spirit! These are *in* the world but not *of* the world, as the Master declared. These have died to worldly aims and objects, and have become alive toward God through the Holy Spirit and through the quickening influences of God's exceeding great and precious promises given unto them. God's purpose respecting them is that they may be transformed from human nature to spirit nature--from participation with the world in the blessings coming to it to receive instead the Divine nature, with the glory, honor and immortality attaching thereto, as New Creatures, sons of the Highest.

CHRISTIAN "FILTHINESS OF THE FLESH"

Having located definitely the class addressed by the Apostle, "the saints" (**2 Cor. 1:1**), let us note why it is necessary that saints should receive such an exhortation. Why should the Apostle write to saints respecting the cleansing of their flesh from filthiness? Could one be a saint and yet have filthiness of the flesh?

SM392

We reply that these saints, begotten of the Holy Spirit, will not be perfected as New Creatures until they experience the "change" of the "First Resurrection." Meantime they have the treasure of the Divine nature, the Holy Spirit, the first-fruits of their inheritance, in imperfect human bodies. It is not the flesh that is begotten again by the Holy Spirit, but a new mind, a new will. The will of the flesh they sacrifice. They give up all earthly

rights and ambitions and accept instead the will of God, the will of Christ, the Holy Spirit, that they may walk in newness of life. However, from the very beginning of their Christian experience all of these members of the Royal Priesthood, in the present life, pass through difficulties which arise from three different sources:

(1) The Adversary is in opposition to them, and will do them all the harm the Lord will permit. Their protection is the Divine promise that they shall not be tempted above what they will be able to bear--that the Lord will so supervise their interests that with every temptation there will be provided a way of escape.--**1 Cor. 10:13**.

(2) They are in a world that is dark with sin and selfishness, superstition and ignorance of God and out of harmony with His righteousness. The world and its spirit surge about them every day, from morning until night. Its tides and currents seek to sweep them away from their resolutions of self-sacrifice and loyalty to God and righteousness. In various ways it holds out to them enchanting prospects, pleasures and riches, ease and affluence. These have their weight, even though it be known that comparatively few who follow the world's beckoning and allurements ever receive the fulfilment of the promises held out to them.--**1 Cor. 2:12-14**.

(3) The New Creature's closest and most persistent adversary is his own flesh. The longings of his depraved nature cry out against restraints, and insist that he is taking an unreasonable course in that he undertakes to follow the Lord Jesus, and thus to go in an opposite direction

from the course of the world and at the cost of the crucifixion, the mortification, of his own flesh and his natural preferences.--**Rom. 8:13**.

Thus viewed every spirit-begotten Christian is an object of sympathy from the Divine standpoint, and this should be their standpoint toward each other. But the world has no sympathy. The world sees not, neither does it understand nor appreciate the exceeding great and precious promises which lie behind the consecration of the "saints," "the Church of the First-borns." So much the more each of these brethren, "dearly beloved," should have sympathy for each other, should encourage one another, strengthen one another, build one another up in

the most holy faith and, by all means, do nothing to stumble each other in the narrow way.--**John 13:34,35**.

The "saints" cannot fight Satan. They can merely by their wills *resist* him and rely upon the promises of grace to help and to protect. The "saints" cannot conquer the world and convert it to God--that is too herculean a task. God, as we have seen, has provided the thousand years of Messiah's Reign for that purpose--to conquer the world, to overthrow sin and to uplift the willing and obedient of humanity. But the "saints" must all overcome the world in the sense of resisting its spirit and keeping their hearts loyal to God, loyal to their covenant of consecration which they have made to Him. The Heavenly promises with the still greater rewards of glories, far above anything that the world has to offer, are the greatest aids in this resistance of the worldly spirit.

The great work for the Church is the good fight of faith manifested in the putting away of the filth of their own flesh and spirit. Some by nature have more filth of the flesh and spirit, more meanness, more selfishness, more natural depravity, etc., than have others. Nevertheless, the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; for God's arrangement is that each member of the Royal Priesthood shall be judged according to the

spirit or intention, and not according to the flesh. From the time of the Christian's consecration to the Lord he is reckoned dead as a human being and alive as a spirit being. His test or trial is not with a view to seeing whether or not he can do the impossible thing of living an absolutely perfect life in an imperfect body. His trial or test, on the contrary, is to see to what extent his mind, his will, fights a good fight against his natural weaknesses and frailties. "There is none righteous, no, not one." All the *trying* in the world could not prove this Divine statement an incorrect one. Righteousness of the will, holiness of heart, purity of heart, are the possibilities. For these God seeks; and these He will reward in the "First Resurrection" by granting perfect spirit bodies, in full harmony with their pure hearts, their loyal intentions and purposes.--**Rom. 3:10**; **1 Tim. 6:12**.

HOW TO PUT AWAY FILTH OF THE FLESH

If it is impossible for the New Creature to perfect the flesh, what does the Apostle mean by urging the saints to cleanse themselves from the filth of the flesh? He means that we should not, as New Creatures, be discouraged and say that, because we cannot hope to attain perfection in the flesh, therefore we will make no endeavors in that direction. He wishes us to understand that it is the Lord's will that we fight against the weaknesses of the flesh with a twofold purpose.

(1) That we may gradually cleanse ourselves--gradually become more and more what the Lord would have us be and what we should like to be ourselves.

(2) Additionally, this fight against sin in the flesh will make us stronger and stronger as New Creatures, in the spirit of our minds. It is this firmness, this determination, this positiveness of the New Creature *against sin* and *for righteousness* that God desires. Those who develop it are called "overcomers"; and all of their experiences in these trials and battlings against the

world, the flesh and the Adversary, are designed to make them "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Their experiences are so ordered and directed as to lead them to more and more of faith in God and obedience to Him. In order to be acceptable, they must reach the place where they love righteousness and hate iniquity--in-equity--injustice.--**Psa. 45:7**; **Luke 16:13**.

The word *spirit* in the Bible and in ordinary language is used in a variety of senses. In our text it does not signify that the saints, as spirit beings, are filthy and need cleansing. Quite to the contrary, the New Creature, begotten of the Holy Spirit, is pure. But as the New Creature must use the body of flesh until it receives the New Body, so it must use the brain or mind of the flesh wherewith to do its thinking and reasoning, until that which is perfect shall be attained in the "First Resurrection." The Apostle's meaning, therefore, is not only that the saints should put away filthiness of words and actions, and all sympathy with impurity of every kind, but that their minds (their thoughts) also should be pure, should be cleansed of everything not fully in sympathy and

accord with the mind of Christ. Nor are we to suppose that this work is purely God's work in us. It is His to forgive the sins of the past. It is His to cleanse us from all condemnation of the past. It is His to cover through Christ all of our unintentional blemishes. It is His to encourage by His promises. But it is ours to show our loyalty to the principles of His Word and character by putting away, to the extent of our ability, all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.--**Phil. 2:12,13**; **2 Peter 1:10**.

SM396

JERUSALEM THE HOLY CITY

[Brooklyn, June 5, 1910]

"Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins."--**Isa. 40:1,2**.

Christendom, with united voice, admits that all of the Divine Revelation came to and through the Hebrew people. Listen to the argument of the Apostle Paul, "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way; chiefly, because that unto them were committed the Oracles of God"--the Divine Message respecting the Divine purposes, present and to come. The Apostle again informs us that the entire Gospel Message was briefly comprehended in the Creator's promise to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--**Gal. 3:8**.

"TO THE JEW FIRST"

It was the most natural thing imaginable for the Jewish Nation to suppose that the giving to them of the Law at Mount Sinai, through the mediatorship of Moses, was the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham. Nevertheless, they were mistaken, as the pages of history show.

Israel's mediator, the sacrificing priests, the sacrifices they offered, their Tabernacle with its Holy and Most Holy, the Temple, and all the features of the Law Covenant were type or foreshadows of the "better sacrifices," higher Priesthood, better Mediator, and glorious blessings of eternal forgiveness and reconciliation yet to be accomplished. Nevertheless the period of Israel's types was not wasted. Not only were the types there given,

SM397

but at the same time a special class of agents were

selected: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the Prophets and worthy ones of that Age, holy, consecrated to God, and accepted as agents qualified for the Kingdom conditions. Of these the Scriptures declare, "They fell asleep." They are still asleep in the dust of the earth, awaiting the glorious Resurrection Morning, and a grand share with Messiah in the work then to be accomplished. In their lifetime, they were styled "the fathers," because Messiah was foretold to be of the posterity of Abraham, and also "David's Son."

"COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE"

But other Scriptures, without contradicting these statements, show us distinctly that "David's Son" and "Abraham's Seed" is to be Lord and Father of both David and Abraham. Thus we read, "Instead of Thy fathers shall be Thy children, whom Thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (**Psa. 45:16**.) David's son, Messiah, will be David's Father, or Life-giver, when He will raise David from the dead. Similarly He will be the Father of all those Ancient Worthies; and as David's Lord, and "Lord of lords," it will be His pleasure to appoint to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, to all of the Ancient Worthies and the Prophets, and other faithful ones a glorious share with Himself in the great Messianic Kingdom, which He is about to set up for the ruling and blessing of Israel and all the nations of the earth. Will not this be a grand honor to Abraham and his Seed! Could we expect that the Almighty would use in such a high position any except the faithful? Surely not! When Messiah shall make these Ancient Worthies "Princes in all the earth," as representatives of His invisible Kingdom, will not this mean honor to the Jew first?

Our text is one of three declarations in the Old Testament, which assure us that there is a "double" connected with Israel's history. That is to say, Jewish history naturally

divides itself into two exactly equal parts. The first of these parts was a time of favor, intermingled with disciplines, but favor, nevertheless. The second of these parts has been one of disfavor and exclusion from Divine

fellowship. As foretold by the Prophet, Israel for many centuries has been without prophet or priest, without ephod and without communion with God; whereas, at one time they were God's favored people. They now, according to their own admission, are so thoroughly rejected that they have no communication whatever, no light to shine upon their pathway. The Prophet's words have been fulfilled, "Let their table become a snare before them: and that which should have been for their welfare, let it become a trap. Let their eyes be darkened, that they see not." (**Psa. 69:22,23**.) They have stumbled; they are blinded; but thank God! their blindness is not to be perpetual. The period of their blindness is the second part of the "double." With the fulfilment of that "double" their blindness will begin to vanish, and "all the blind eyes shall be opened." Of that time the Lord declares that He who scattered Israel will gather them.--**Deut. 30:3**; **Ezek. 37:20-28**.

We are impressed, not by fancy, but by the Word of God, that Israel's "double" is now fulfilled, that Israel's blessing has already begun, that the opening of Israel's eyes is now in progress. For this reason we have chosen for our text, "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God. Cry unto Jerusalem and say unto her that her appointed time is accomplished; for she hath received at the Lord's hand double [the two parts of her chastisement] for all her sins." Because the "double" is completed, we may speak the words of comfort.

Thirty-four years ago we called attention to these facts, but few had ears to hear. When eighteen years ago we visited Jerusalem, having in mind chiefly the fact that the time for the regathering of Israel was nigh at hand, and that the set time to favor Zion had come, we

found no hearing ears amongst the Jewish people; and Zionism had not then been dreamed of. Our communications with the representatives of the Baron Hirsch Immigration Fund, and also with the executors of the Sir Moses Montefiore Jewish Relief Fund met with scant recognition. Nevertheless, we felt sure that Israel's "double" had been fulfilled, and that her morning of joy would soon break.--**Psa. 30:5**.

Meantime how much has happened during those

eighteen years! Zionism has risen and engendered the hope of the "chosen people" in every land, and turned their eyes toward the Land of Promise--not that all are thinking of returning thither, but that every Jew who retains faith in the God of his fathers, and in the Abrahamic promise, is now looking and hoping for the time of blessing, long foretold. They know not about their "double"; they have not been studying the Holy Scriptures, but the teachings of their ancients, as presented by the Talmud. They have been making a very similar mistake to that of Christian people, who have been studying the creeds of the Dark Ages instead of God's Word.

THE THREE "DOUBLES"

Glance with me at three different statements by the Lord through the Prophets of Israel respecting Israel's "double" of experience: the first, an experience of God's favor; the second, an experience of equal length without Divine favor. Notice first Jeremiah's prophecy. (**Jer. 16:18**.) After telling of Israel's disfavor, and then of their regathering, the Lord declares, "And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin *double"*--some of the recompense with favor, and some without favor. Jeremiah's prophecy looks down to the "double" from his own day, which was more than six hundred years before the second part of their "double" began.

Turn now to Zechariah's prophecy, and note that prophetically he takes his standpoint at the very time

when the second part of the "double" began. His words are, "Even today do I declare that I will render *double* unto thee."--**Zech. 9:12**.

Come next to our text, and note that the Prophet Isaiah stands with us, and views the matter from the standpoint that the "double" of experience has been fulfilled: *"Speak comfortably unto Jerusalem, cry unto her that her appointed time is accomplished, because she hath received at the Lord's hand double* [two equal parts] *for her sins."* It is our understanding that this "double" reached fulfilment in the year 1878 A.D.; and since that date we have been declaring to the best of our ability,

as the Lord granted opportunity, these comforting words to Israel, assuring God's people that their period of disfavor has ended, and that they are gradually returning to prosperity; that Divine favor began with them in 1878. Yea, more than this, our sermons which to some extent reflect this feature of the Divine Program relating to Israel's restoration to Divine favor, are being read to a considerable extent by Hebrews as well as by Christians. Their eyes are gradually opening, as the Scriptures foretell they shall do.

But how may we know when the turning point of Israel's "double" took place? How may we know that the "double" was completed in 1878? We reply that the answer to the question necessitates an acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah. Israel's rejection of Him as their King marks the turning point of God's favor, as the prophecy of Zechariah, just quoted, distinctly shows. Neither Christians nor Jews have appreciated the full import of the incident mentioned in the Gospel; that five days before His crucifixion, Jesus rode upon an ass, after the manner of Jewish kings, into the city of Jerusalem, a multitude surrounding Him, and going before Him, shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah!" The Prophet Zechariah called attention to this incident centuries

before it occurred, and then gives the Lord's words, "Even today do I declare I will render *double* unto thee."--**Matt. 21:1-5**.

Israel's history as a nation began with the death of Jacob, when he gave his blessing to the twelve tribes. The period from that time to the death of Jesus, according to the Scriptures, was 1845 years; and a like period of disfavor, measuring from the day of Jesus' rejection marks the year 1878, as the end of Israel's disfavor--the time when the message of comfort should go forth. However, Divine favor was only gradually taken from Israel, and altogether a period of thirty-six years intervene between the death of Jesus and the utter destruction of Jerusalem. Similarly we should expect that the return of favor would be gradual, a like period of 36 years; and this would bring us to the year 1914, as the time when God's favor for His people will be gradually manifested,

during the closing hours of Gentile supremacy in the close of the Gospel Age.--**Luke 21:24**.

"THE SEED OF ABRAHAM"

The question now arises, What has God accomplished during the latter half of Israel's "double"? Did He pass by His chosen people to bless the Gentiles directly, or how shall we understand Divine providence with respect to this matter?

We answer that Almighty God had one feature of His Plan which He did not make known directly and explicitly to Abraham or any other Prophet. He kept that feature of his purpose a secret. It is this: Messiah could not be a man and yet accomplish the great things which Jehovah purposed, as stated in His Word. The Law called for an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a man's life for a man's life. In this God set forth His principle governing His course of dealing with men. As by man (Adam) came the death sentence, and through heredity upon all of his offspring, even so the Divine Law purposed that there must be a sacrifice of one human life to

offset the one human life condemned to death. The one who would thus meet the demands of Justice on behalf of the race would have the right to give eternal life and human perfection to every member of Adam's race willing to accept it on the terms of the Divine Law. It was for this reason that Christ should die, "the Just for the unjust."--**1 Peter 3:18**.

As a reward for His obedience to the Father even unto death, Christ was raised from the dead to the Divine nature. In this exalted condition He is capable of being a Mediator and of doing a work for Israel and for the world much higher and broader than Moses could effect. Moses, the typical mediator, made atonement for a year with the blood of beasts; but Messiah with His own blood makes perpetual atonement for the sins of all the people. This is the great Messiah (Jesus) who suffered the death of the cross--for the Jews and for the Gentiles--"for all the people." This is the glorified Messiah, who as the Spiritual Seed of Abraham is about to bless Israel's

Ancient Worthies, and to "make them Princes in all the earth"--ministers of His Kingdom for the ruling, blessing and uplifting of whosoever will, out of the present sin and death conditions, to life eternal, to full human perfection, with the earth as Paradise restored.

MEMBERS OF MESSIAH

But some one may say, Where do Christians come, in connection with this Divine arrangement? And if God's dealings with the world are to be through Israel, and not through the Church, why has there been so long a delay? Why did not the glorified Messiah at once set up His Kingdom, and bring forth the Ancient Worthies from the tomb to be its earthly representatives? Oh, here is another part of the Mystery of God! Isaac, Abraham's son, was typical of Messiah, the Spiritual Seed. But before Isaac began the work of dispensing the blessings to his brethren and to his children, he first took a bride;

SM403

and this act also was allegorical or typical. In the antitype, Messiah, the glorified Jesus, partook of the Divine nature according to the Father's invitation, and He is to take a Bride who is to be His joint-heir on the spirit plane--to share with Him the glory, honor and service of His Messianic Kingdom. The period of Israel's disfavor, as a nation, has been the time in which a special class has been called of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit to joint-heirship with Christ as His Bride.

But did God pass by the natural seed of Israel to give these spiritual privileges to the Gentiles--to gather from the Gentiles a people, figuratively to constitute the Bride of Messiah? Nay. The Scriptures assure us that this spiritual privilege went first to the Jews. They show us that during the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry, and during the thirty-six years following it, the Gospel Message was given almost exclusively to the Jews, and gathered from that people as many as were found to be "Israelites indeed" without guile, as many as were not only of the circumcision of the flesh, but who were also of the circumcision of the heart. God did not continue to deal with His chosen people; but after having gathered

from them as many as were worthy of the spiritual blessing and exaltation--only then did He send the Message to the Gentiles, to gather from the Gentiles a number sufficient to complete the foreordained and predestined number who will constitute the Bride.

So, then, my brethren, in proving from the Scriptures that Israel's "double" is about completed, that Israel's blindness is about to be taken away, and that Israel's exaltation as the earthly representatives of Messiah's Kingdom is near at hand, we are proving to ourselves another thing; namely, that the full number called from amongst the Gentiles to participate with Christ on the spirit plane, as members of His Bride class, will soon be completed and exalted to Kingdom glory.--**Rom. 11:25-32**.

SM404

THE DESTRUCTION OF MYSTIC BABYLON

"Declare ye among the nations, and publish; set up a standard; say, Babylon is taken."--**Jer. 50:2**.

While our message for today is "meat in due season" to the Household of Faith, and in every way important to be understood, it is, nevertheless, a subject difficult to treat without giving offense, without seeming harsh. Bear with me, then, while expressing what I believe to be the Divine Message in as kindly a manner as I know how.

The Scriptures which I may quote in support of my presentation seem harsh almost to cruelty; but I assure you, my hearers, that I am not responsible for the language of the Bible. My responsibility is to speak the Word of the Lord. In doing this I shall endeavor to present the message in as kindly a manner as I am able, and as far as possible explain some of the harsher expressions; but I must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God--and as fully as I believe He would now have His people understand it.--**Jer. 23:28**; **Acts 20:26,27**.

In the days of Jesus and His Apostles there was no Mystic Babylon. Therefore the expressions in the Revelation of St. John bearing upon Mystic Babylon were prophetic of the systems and conditions which have since risen in the Church. The word Babylon has a double significance. It is derived from the word Babel, and reminds us of the time when the sons of Noah lost faith in the Divine providential care and in the rainbow of promise, and endeavored to erect a structure for their own preservation --the Tower of Babel. This attempt led to the confusion of tongues.--**Gen. 11:1-9**.

Similarly, following the days of the Apostles and of the persecution of the early Church, an attempt was made to erect a great religious system for the protection of the

SM405

Church, not waiting for the fulfilment of the Divine promise that in due time Messiah would come and establish His Kingdom for the blessing of the world.

The religious "Tower of Babel" was, primarily,

Papacy. So far as it went, it was a wonderful structure, but it never accomplished the designs of its founders. It never mastered and established the Church far above the power and influence of the civil governments and earthly monarchs.

It was when the Tower of Babel rose to a considerable height in dignity and grandeur that the Lord manifested His Power amongst the workmen and confounded their speech. Disconcerted, the people ceased the further building of the Tower, and each set up for himself. This corresponds well with the Protestant Reformation Movement and the various denominations into which those once Catholic became divided.

BABYLON AND ITS WALL

Another thought connected with our subject is that the literal city of Babylon was a prototype, a prophetic figure of Mystic Babylon. The name Babylon signifies "The Gate of God"--the gateway by which access to God is to be attained. This in effect was the claim made by Papacy, and the claim which she still makes--that she is a great City, a great kingdom; that she has a great wall of Divine salvation and protection round about her--a great wall built of superstition and ignorance, say her enemies.

In the Revelation Jesus prophetically pictures the greatness of this City, this spiritual Empire. It is essentially religious, although it includes the great kingdoms of earth, which unitedly are styled Christendom. This great "city," Babylon, is represented as being divided into ten different wards, each of which represents one of the kingdoms of Christendom, and which corresponds to the ten horns of the symbolic "beast." Compare **Rev. 11:13**; **13:1**; **Dan. 2:41**; **7:7**.

SM406

As this great "city," or spiritual kingdom, thus includes the chief monarchies of Europe, so under another figure Babylon, Papacy, is represented as a woman, in whose forehead is found the name, "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots." Thus is shown in some manner the various Protestant systems of Christendom which separated from the "Mother Church" of Rome, but which

are still her daughters, still related to her, partakers of her character, traits and disposition. Thus Babylon with her ten wards includes practically all of Europe; and Mother and Daughters of this same family name include nearly all of the Protestant denominations as well as the Catholic Mother Church.

WHAT IS MEANT BY HARLOTRY?

It should be remembered in discussing this subject that the Scriptural language is figurative--that it does not signify that either the Church of Rome or her Protestant Daughters are immoral. The correct thought is this: Primarily the Church of Christ was a "virgin" company of persons, called out, separated from the world, its aims and its ambitions--called to be saints and joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom. To whatever extent systems rose amongst the followers of Jesus and became affiliated with any of the kingdoms of this world--to that extent, Scripturally, figuratively, they committed harlotry; for they were espoused to the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and were to wait for Him, that at His Second Coming they might become His Bride and His Associate in His Throne.

It will not be questioned that Papacy became affiliated with the Roman Empire and sat down on the throne of Rome; nor that the Church of England, as one of her "daughters," became affiliated with the British Government and now sits, representatively, in the House of Lords. It would not be questioned that the Greek Church experienced a similar betrothal and marriage to the Russian Government, the Lutheran Church to the German

Government, etc., etc. It is on this account and in this sense that the Church of Rome and her Daughters--mother and daughters, organizations of Protestants--are figuratively called by the family name of Babylon.

BABYLON'S GOLDEN CUP

Under the figure of "a woman clothed in purple and scarlet" the Mother System of Babylon long centuries

ago "made all the nations drunk with her wine," the doctrines which she had in her Golden Cup. (**Rev. 17:1-6**.)
The Golden Cup represents the Bible, the Divine Standard, or authority. It was misused when the wine of false doctrine was put into it--when the Bible was claimed as authority for various erroneous teachings of the Dark Ages. The intoxicating "wine" which made the nations drunk, and which led them to support the "woman" and to call themselves Christian nations, Papacy still holds in her hand, and still offers to whoever will receive it. But the nations are gradually sobering up.

It is not necessary to suppose that every doctrine presented by Papacy was false and intoxicating. The thought is, rather, that a stupefying potion was put into the wine already in the Cup. As the Golden Cup represents the Word of God and its Message, the stupefying potion may well be understood to be some of the doctrines; for instance, that God's Kingdom has already been set up, that the papal throne is the Throne of Christ, and that the Pope reigns as Christ's Vicegerent, or substitute and representative. Other poisonous elements threatened the people with purgatorial torture or with eternal torment if they failed to keep in line with the papal authority --this claimed vicegerent authority of Christ.

The Protestant denominations were all born under these intoxicating influences and false theories. While they separated from the Mother system and denounced her, nevertheless they held doctrinally to many of her intoxicating errors. Consequently they, too, claim that

somehow, they know not how, Messiah's Kingdom has been set up and is reigning. They, too, join in giving the nations some of the same commingled "wine" that the Mother gave them, telling the people that these are Christian nations, even though they have anything but the Christian spirit, and are building guns and dreadnaughts to blow each other off the face of the earth.

So strong is the power of this intoxication that the inconsistencies of such theories are not discerned by those intoxicated. Only the few who are gradually getting free from the stupefying potion are able, by Divine assistance, to see some of the mistakes along this line. These see that neither the Church of Rome nor any of her Daughter systems

is the true Church.

Each system professes to be the Bride of Christ, yet each knows that the marriage of the Lamb is to take place at the Second Coming of Christ. They have therefore very generally lost sight of the fact that the true virgin Church of Christ, only a Little Flock (**Luke 12:32**), who will be accounted worthy to become the Bride of Christ, must wait for the Lord from Heaven. (**1 Thess. 1:9,10**.) She must keep herself "unspotted from the world," a *virgin,* that she may be accounted worthy to enter into the joys of her Lord, become His Queen and Joint-heir.

BABYLON, THE GREAT CITY

It is not to be expected that either the Mother or the Daughters, who are now claiming to reign with Christ, who are now claiming that His Kingdom is already set up, who are now claiming that their union with the kingdoms of this world is legitimate, can have the Bridegroom's approval. It is not to be expected that they realize their true condition--that they are disloyal to the Heavenly Bridegroom and King.

In the symbolic language of the Book of the Revelation, as already explained, the name Babylon is applied not only to the typical woman, Papacy, and her mystical daughters, the Protestant denominations, but also to the

great City, Mystic Babylon. The symbol woman more particularly represents the ecclesiastical systems, and the symbol city the governmental features--the sacerdotal, or religious, authority to govern and control the kingdoms, the nations of the earth.

We all remember the history of the ancient city of Babylon, with its most wonderful walls and its hanging gardens. We all remember that it was built across the River Euphrates, which flowed through its center and was supposed to protect it fully from the hazard of invasion. Besides its vast storehouses of food it had the river for its water supply. Babylon was therefore considered impregnable--a strongly fortified city.

Mystic Babylon, Christendom of our day, is a most masterly organization. Its walls are built of ignorance

and superstition, whose great foundations were laid centuries ago. Ancient Babylon's great gates of brass, which came down to the level of the Euphrates, represented Mystic Babylon's worldly wisdom, human ingenuity and dexterity of organization, to maintain the control of the symbolic waters and to protect the "city" from a possible approach from that direction.

THE EUPHRATES TO BE DRIED UP

In the symbolic language of the Scriptures the word water has two distinct interpretations: (1) Water is a symbol for Truth; (2) Water also symbolizes revenues from outside peoples and kingdoms. In harmony with this latter thought we read that the woman with the golden cup sits upon many waters; "and the waters which thou sawest are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (**Rev. 17:1-15**.) This "woman" does not reign over one nation or people alone; her rule is catholic, or general; for all nations were made more or less "drunk with her false doctrines." The water of the River Euphrates, flowing through Babylon, might therefore be understood to symbolize the peoples and nations supporting Mystic Babylon by contributions, offerings.

SM410

In the Revelation not merely is the name Babylon used long after the ancient city was so blotted out of existence that for centuries its site was unknown, but the symbolic description includes also the River Euphrates. Of that great river we read, "The water thereof was dried up, that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared." (**16:12**.) If we are correct in our interpretation that the waters of that river signify revenues from all nations, the drying up of the river implies a cessation of the revenues of Babylon, a decline in the contributions which heretofore have made her wealthy--millions coming every year from rich and poor of all nations, for her support.

It is in full accord with this Divine prediction of what is yet to come that we hear cries of distress rising from all denominations, both Catholic and Protestant, to the effect that the revenues of the churches are being "dried up," and this at a time when the world is larger in population

and in wealth than ever before.

History tells us that ancient Babylon was captured by Cyrus the Great and his army after a siege of considerable length, which was unsuccessful until his soldiers digged a fresh channel for the river and turned aside its course. Thus was the River Euphrates dried up; and the Medo-Persian army entered the ancient city suddenly in the night. While these events were occurring, the princes of Babylon, corresponding to the notables of Christendom, were holding high carnival, rejoicing in their security, boasting of the strength of their walls, the impregnability of their gates and the sureness of their waters. As they were using the golden vessels of the Lord's Temple from which to drink their wine, so now, in the hour of Mystic Babylon's fall, we may expect something to correspond to this--a spirit of boastfulness, of pride, of intoxication with error, apparently drawn from the Divine Word.

At this moment of their exuberance there appeared in Belshazzar's banquet-hall a hand, which wrote the words,

SM411

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin"--the days of your rule have been numbered by God and are finished; you are weighed in the balances and found wanting; your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians. (**Dan. 5:25-28**.) The strong symbolic language used in respect to Mystic Babylon corresponds so well to the prophetic language respecting ancient Babylon that we are warranted in understanding that city to have been a prototype of Mystic Babylon and her fall a prefigure of Christendom's fall.

"FLEE OUT OF BABYLON"

When foretelling the disaster upon Babylon, the Prophets of Israel gave to God's people the message, "Flee out of Babylon; deliver every man his soul"--his life--and terrible descriptions, which seem grossly exaggerated unless we view the matter from the standpoint already suggested--that the experiences of the ancient city were figurative and prophetic of the much more serious experiences of Mystic Babylon, then long future. If

further evidence were required to demonstrate that Mystic Babylon represents a great nominal system, it is found in the Apocalypse, a part of which is, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues."--**Rev. 18:4**.

This call must be heard and heeded before the disaster comes; for it will come suddenly, as in an hour. Those who do not stand aloof will be involved in the disaster. And it is God's will that they should be involved if, after seeing the truth respecting Babylon and her character, they are not enthusiastically opposed to her deceptions and intoxicating false doctrines. The tribulations upon Babylon will constitute a part of the great tribulation with which this Age will terminate and the New Dispensation of Messiah's Kingdom be ushered in--"a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation." Let God's people remember that loyalty includes action and faithfulness even unto death.--**Dan. 12:1**; **Matt. 24:21**.

SM412

DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH PERPLEXITY

[October 4, 1914]

"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 that are coming on the earth."--**Luke 21:25,26**.

Never was there such a war as there is at the present time. Peculiar conditions have arisen, more so than has ever been known before in the history of the world. With the utter destruction of civilization impending, present conditions seem to take on a peculiar force as we think of what relationship God has to all these matters.

On every hand prayers for peace are ascending to God. Some are praying for the success of the allied armies--which means the slaughter of the Germans, Austrians and Hungarians; others are praying for just the reverse; still others are praying that the war shall not go on. All this shows great confusion of thought. How could all these prayers be heard? The Master has told us that we are to pray in accord with the Word of God. Therefore, before praying on the subject, it would be well to determine what are God's purposes in regard to this war, in order to pray in harmony with His arrangements. Instead of telling the Almighty what to do, we should all hearken to His Word, and take note of what He says about this war and the terrible Armageddon which will follow it--the "Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:1**; **Rev. 11:16-18**.

As I read my Bible with clearer eyes than once I read it, I see so many things different from what once I thought that I have great sympathy with people who are confused on this matter. As I read the Bible, God has foretold this very war and has indicated just what is happening today. Through the Prophet Joel He has said

SM413

to all nations, "Let the weak say, I am strong.... Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat"--to the Battle of the great Day of God

Almighty. If God prophesied this war of nations, then we need not pray that He stop a war which He has foretold would take place.--**Joel 3:9-12**.

Surely, so far as the present war has gone, it has brought a greater number to the grave than has any previous war. Many, doubtless, will be shocked at the declaration that this war and the still greater calamity to follow are of Divine arrangement. Nevertheless, the gathering of the nations to the present struggle is referred to in the Prophet's words, where the weak nations are called upon to assert their strength and to go down, all of them, to the Valley of Jehoshaphat--otherwise the Valley of Graves.--**Joel 3:2,14**.

SEEN IN GOD'S PLAN

In harmony with this prophecy, the nations have for years been "beating their plowshares into swords, and their pruning-hooks into spears," in the sense that money has been spent for military purposes which should properly have been spent in agricultural implements and developments. Apparently all the nations of the world will yet be involved. Happy would it be if our own land should escape! We are very glad to note that our President and our Secretary of State are men of peace, and will surely do all in their power to avoid complications and war itself. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to expect that the great nations of Europe, realizing how much they will be weakened by the war, will do all in their power to ensnare these United States, lest at the conclusion of the war we should tower too much above the other nations in financial strength and in every other way.

But to the majority it is very confusing to think that God would bring about any great war. There is surely something wrong or there would not be such perplexity; for the Lord tells His people that they will not be in darkness.

SM414

Speaking about this Time of Trouble, St. Paul says, "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that Day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of the light, and the children of the Day." (**1 Thess. 5:1-6**.) God's people should have general information

regarding His plans, purposes and arrangements.

Only as we look at the Divine Plan as a whole can we understand God's relationship with this bloody war--and with all war. Many have seen only small portions of the Divine Plan, and so have failed to grasp the great lengths, breadths, heights and depths of God's great Purpose. But whoever has an understanding of the great Plan of God will ever after be able rightly to appreciate and to locate not only the events of today, but also everything that is coming; for the Bible outlines the history of man.

The Scriptures clearly teach that our earth is the only rebellious province in all God's fair creation. In this little planet God has permitted sin to take its course --to bud, to blossom, to bring forth its fruitage--that both men and angels may see the dire results of opposition to the Divine Government. The Bible tells us how this world became rebellious. It tells us that God did not create mankind imperfect, as we are today. Man was created perfect, an earthly being--in the image of his Heavenly Creator, in the sense of having a moral character, but limited to earthly conditions. This perfect man was placed in a perfect home, in every way adapted to his needs. This Eden was especially prepared for him, and he was to enjoy it. But he was the king of the whole earth; and therefore his Creator instructed him that, as his family increased, he was to subdue the earth and develop it. Had mankind remained in harmony with God, the whole world would have become as Eden.

God foreknew just what would occur, however. He foreknew Adam's sin and fall, as well as the mental, moral and physical degeneracy which would result from the disobedience of our first parents. He foreknew our

weakness and imperfection, our attempts at moral, religious and mental reform and at mental and physical health. Yet He permitted all this to come to pass.

Sin entered the world, and has continued to rest upon the human family for six thousand years. This curse of sin and death is upon mankind. God's penalty for sin is death; and whether it comes through pestilence, famine, war or by slower processes, matters little. There is no one so stupid but that he can see that the whole course of human history has been a reign of Sin and Death.

WHY GOD PERMITTED SIN AND DEATH

The Bible tells us that God has permitted this condition to continue for the past six thousand years as a great lesson on the exceeding sinfulness of sin and on the utter hopelessness of any other help than that which He Himself has provided. For six great Days of a thousand years each--from Adam's time until now--Sin and Death have reigned over the race. These are man's Work-Week, in which he has been permitted to try everything he could imagine for his own relief from sin and its penalty --death.--**Rom. 6:23**.

And now, after the Week has drawn to a close, what do we find? Mankind are still dying--mentally, morally, physically. So far from gaining life for our race, all our efforts through doctors, scientists, etc., have accomplished practically nothing. Yea, our most learned physicians and specialists tell us that the world is on the verge of a collapse. They say that at the present rate of increase there would not be, in a hundred and sixty years from now, enough sane people in the world to care for the insane. They tell us that various diseases are increasing so rapidly as to endanger the existence of the race in a very short time; and this in face of the fact that sanitary conditions are made a necessity, even to the extent of providing individual drinking cups.

Our only hope is in God; and He has arranged that His blessing shall come through Messiah's Kingdom when

our race shall have reached its limit. Man's extremity will be God's opportunity. In the great Seventh Day of man's Work-Week, the antitypical Sabbath, Messiah will, in association with His Church of this Gospel Age, set up the Divine Kingdom amongst men--a spiritual Kingdom, not an earthly one, ruling, blessing and uplifting mankind. For a thousand years this work of uplift will progress, until all the willing and obedient will have attained again the lost likeness of their Creator and all the unwilling and disobedient will have been cut off from life in the Second Death.

"THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES"

Another great lesson which God has been teaching mankind during the reign of Sin and Death is the fact that they are incapable of establishing such a government as is necessary for real blessing and uplift of the race. For a time He appointed the nation of Israel to be His typical kingdom, selecting King David and his posterity to constitute the royal family. The last king of David's line was Zedekiah, of whom we read: "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose time has come that iniquity shall have an end. Thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem, take off the crown; I will overturn, overturn, overturn it until He comes whose right it is; and I will give it unto Him." (**Ezek. 21:25-27**.) The One whose right it is, is Messiah--Jesus the Head, and the Church His Body--on the spirit plane.

Certain Scriptures indicate that the time during which God's Kingdom would be removed would be seven prophetic Times, each of which is 360 years in length. Seven Times would therefore equal 2,520 years. That period, reckoned from the time of King Zedekiah's overthrow, ends with this year; for, according to the Scriptures the crown was taken away from King Zedekiah in 606 B.C. If so, with the close of the present year, Messiah should take to Himself His great power and begin the long-promised Millennial Reign of Glory, the opening or beginning

of which, according to the Bible, will be a very dark hour--"a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation," "nor ever shall be"--the like again.

When God took away His typical kingdom, 606 B.C., He gave the Gentiles authority or permission to do their best to rule and govern the world and to bring in righteousness. That we might know all this, He gave a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, and sent the interpretation of the dream through Daniel, the Prophet. The dream showed a great image, whose head was of gold, representing Babylon; the breast and arms of silver, representing the succeeding government of Medo-Persia; the belly of brass, representing the Grecian Empire, which succeeded the Medes and Persians; and its legs of iron represented Rome, the government of the Caesars.

Each of these governments has had universal sway, each has shown the best it was able to do for humanity, and each has failed.--**Dan. 2:37-45**.

The feet of the image were of iron, showing that they represented part of the Roman Empire; but they were smeared with clay and thus made to represent stone feet. These feet represented the Holy Roman Empire, whose divisions, or toes, are now at war with each other. The dream and its interpretation showed that the stone which struck the image in the feet, ground them to powder and utterly destroyed the entire image, represented God's Kingdom. According to the prophecy, this Kingdom will ultimately fill the whole earth.

The clay smeared on the feet, making them look like the stone, represents the fact that the present Roman governments of Europe claim to be Christ's Kingdom. On their coins, and otherwise, they claim to be representatives of God. They have deceived themselves into thinking of themselves as Christendom, which signifies Christ's Kingdom. In reality, however, they are Gentile kingdoms, the last representatives of Gentile power--the feet and the toes of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw.

SM418

These powers are what the Bible calls "the kingdoms of this world." But they are part of the Gentile power which has been permitted to rule the world up to the time when God will be ready to set up His Kingdom, which was also represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream--the stone cut out without hands. The Word of God transforming the hearts of His people will gradually make them His Kingdom, and in the spiritual Kingdom these will be Messiah's joint-heirs. When the image of Gentile supremacy falls, these will be put into power and place. Then all will have opportunity to return to Divine favor.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

We have read in history, and daily we are reading in the newspapers, how these nations are attempting to blow one another off the sea and the land. "The nations were angry," says the Revelator. There is no nation so small but that it desires to go to war. As the Prophet Joel

says to the nations, "Come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat." Outside of the walls of Jerusalem is the cemetery of Jehoshaphat, known as the Valley of Graves. In figurative language the Prophet is saying to the nations, "Come up to the Valley of Graves!" And this is just where they are going.

When we think of the appalling loss of life amongst these angry nations, it is grand to know that all these bitter experiences are not lost, and that the poor creatures who have suffered are not, when they die, hurled into eternal torment--that these poor creatures, not knowing what the war really is about, but demonstrating to the best of their ability their patriotism, are not thrown to the Devil to be forever roasted. Ah, no! According to the Scriptures, they are falling asleep in death. Their sorrows and woes are all over for the present. They will know nothing more until He who has redeemed them will call them forth from the dominion of Death.

The present war will weaken the nations, not only of their life-blood, but also of their wealth; and it will demonstrate

the inefficiency of all Gentile kingdoms to bring to the world peace, righteousness, satisfactory government. But Messiah's Kingdom, which will then be inaugurated, will be "the desire of all nations." This war and the anarchy of Armageddon, which will follow it, will prove conclusively the great need of Divine interposition in human affairs.--**Hag. 2:7**.

Doubtless earth's great rulers have done the best they knew how to do for their peoples. Some of our very best laws came from Julius Caesar, in combination with the Mosaic code. Some of the world's rulers today are also doing their best; but they are confused. Having a false idea of what constitutes Christ's Kingdom, they seem to think it their mission to conquer the world. They also believe that they foresee a general uprising of Socialism, and their hearts are failing them, fearing the things coming upon the earth.

While they knew that this would be the worst war ever known, yet they preferred it to that which they were striving to ward off and which they have succeeded in keeping off for the present. But they have lost their best blood, their best energy, their money, commerce, etc.;

and when the war is ended, these nations, sorrowful and famine-stricken, will be greatly angered at their rulers. Then will come the determination for something like Socialism. This the governments will endeavor to put down, and to some extent they will succeed. Then will come the great explosion--the Armageddon of the Scriptures. Then will be the Time of Trouble, immediately preceding the Messianic Kingdom.

Let all the Gentile kingdoms be
Subjected, mighty Lord, to Thee!
And over land and stream and main,
Now wave the sceptre of Thy reign.

SM420

"THE SIGN OF THE SON OF MAN IN HEAVEN"

"Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."--**Matt. 24:30**.

Various suggestions have been made by scholars respecting the import of this prophecy by the Master. Some guessed that the sign would be a Cross in the sky. Others thought that it would be Christ Himself, who would appear in some wrathful form to humanity, causing fear and dismay.

We cannot say that the sign of the Son of Man in heaven will be His Parousia. On the contrary, the Parousia of Christ will not be known to the tribes, or families, of the earth in general, but will be known only to the most saintly ones of the Church of Christ. Consequently, the sign of the Son of Man must in some sense stand related to His Epiphania, or shining forth in the "flaming fire" of judgment, which the whole world of mankind will recognize. --**2 Thess. 1:7-9**.

The word "sign" is of broad meaning; for instance, crepe is a sign of mourning; the Cross represents Christianity; the Crescent, Mohammedanism. In other words, a sign is merely an indication. So when we read of the "sign of the Son of Man in heaven," the thought might properly be that something will occur indicative of the presence of the Son of Man--that He has taken to Himself His great power and has begun His reign. Since the Son of Man is to be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance, it follows that this sign must be some sign of vengeance, some indication of righteous indignation against wrong.--**Isa. 59:17,18**.

SM421

JUDGMENT TO BEGIN WITH THE CHURCH

The question, then, arises, How would such a sign, or indication, appear in the sky, in the heavens? We reply that this is not the thought. On the contrary, let us remember that the Bible repeatedly uses the words heaven, mountain, sea, in a symbolical manner--the earth representing organized society; the mountains representing kingdoms, as the backbones of this organized society; the seas representing the restless masses of humanity, continually seeking to swallow up the social "earth." In the same symbolic terms the heavens represent the ecclesiastical powers of the world--churchianity. The sign appearing in the heavens signifies that the beginning of Christ's judgments will fall upon the ecclesiastical systems of our day. The flaming fire of judgments will first manifest itself in ecclesiastical affairs and circles.

Mankind will gradually become awakened to the thought that a new Government is in control, and that its policy will be the law of "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet." Since unrighteousness is prevalent as a result of man's fallen condition, the conscience of the whole world will be awakened, quickened; and fear, dread, will come upon all classes everywhere. This will be not only because they will see the primary sign of Christ's righteous judgments in religious circles, but because they will see Him *coming*--drawing nearer and nearer in judgment; and they will recognize that they, too, must shortly be involved. Hence there will be mourning because of Him.--**Rev. 1:7**.

Furthermore, it will be remembered that all the families of the earth have very crude and incorrect views of Messiah and of the object of His Second Coming and Kingdom. The "doctrines of devils," brought into the church creeds during the Dark Ages, have so made void the Word of God that the majority of mankind fear the Almighty, dread Him as their Almighty Foe, instead of realizing Him to be the God of all grace and the Father

SM422

of all mercies, "from whom cometh every good and perfect

gift."--**1 Tim. 4:1**; **James 1:17**.

The eyes of the world have been blinded to the goodness of God. Terrible dread in the hearts of humanity will lead to the wail of fear as they perceive Christ's righteous judgments encircling all the earth--

"The signs and groanings promised
To precede a second birth."

Not knowing of a "second birth" and all the glorious blessings which Messiah's Kingdom is designed to bring to mankind, human hearts will be filled with dread and apprehension. Only those who are truly the Lord's and are rightly informed respecting the Divine Plan of the Ages will be able to lift up their heads and rejoice, knowing that their "deliverance draweth nigh."--**Luke 21:28**.

"THE HEAVENS BEING ON FIRE"

St. Peter apparently described this sign of the Son of Man in the heavens, revealed in flaming fire. His words are, "The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved," and "the earth also [shall take fire] and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (**2 Peter 3:10-12**.) Let us not make the mistake of our forefathers in supposing that these descriptions mean a literal burning of the literal earth. Let us, on the contrary, realize that the symbolical earth and the symbolical heavens are to catch fire and pass away with a great commotion, while the physical earth will remain practically as it is, and will begin to undergo the transforming influences of Restitution under the new King, the Restorer of all things--The Christ.

It will be noticed that St. Peter mentions the fire as coming to the heavens before it reaches the earth, in just the same order that Jesus stated the matter. The sign, manifestation, of the flaming fire of judgments will appear in the heavens; and subsequently the sign of the Son of Man in judgment will be seen coming nearer and nearer to earth's affairs, with a view to purging them absolutely from everything sinful, selfish, unjust.

SM423

We are told that the elements will melt with fervent heat. We see the Capitalistic element and the Labor element separating, the one from the other. We see the

preparations for the great conflagration, the great Time of Trouble. We sometimes speak of it in this language, saying, "Things are getting very hot." They will presently be so hot that spontaneous combustion will set in. And the fire of that Day will be so extreme and its results so drastic as to fulfil the Master's words that unless those days should be shortened no flesh could survive.

But because of the Elect, because of the Kingdom which will then be set up, those days will be shortened--brought to an end. Nothing will be destroyed except that which is injurious. The world-wide results of that flaming fire of Divine judgments will be corrective, preparing men's hearts for the blessings which the Lord is prepared then to give. Thus it is written, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."--**Isa. 26:9**.

It will be noted that St. Peter, in speaking of that Time of Trouble, mentions that the heavens--ecclesiasticism--will be on fire first; and that later, the earth--society and its political, financial and social organizations--will be involved also. In harmony with this, our text tells that this sign, or indication, for the revealing of Messiah in flaming fire, will first be in the Church. Furthermore, according to St. Peter's statement, we are to expect that the ecclesiastical heavens will pass away with a great noise--a great commotion--before the social order is fully reached by the consuming fire.--**2 Peter 3:10**.

The same thought is brought to our attention in Revelation, where a wide distinction is made between the nominal church systems, called Babylon, and the true Church, which is admonished in advance to come out of Babylon and to stand in personal relationship to God through Christ. This general call, which belongs to the end of the Age, before the judgments come upon Babylon,

reads, "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The intimation is that as soon as the loyally obedient have been gathered out of Babylon some drastic trouble will come upon her.--**Rev. 18:4,5**.

We should not apply this term "Babylon" to individuals, but to great systems, outwardly having a form of godliness, but really misrepresenting the Divine character,

the Divine Plan, the true teachings of the Bible. Of course, the individuals identified with the systems have more or less responsibility, according to their official position and their intelligence. In similar proportion these individuals may have tribulations in conjunction with the fall of Babylon. We do not understand the term "Babylon" to be applied Scripturally to any sect or party, but rather to refer to the general conglomeration of systems and denominations. Likewise, when reading of the utter destruction that is to come upon Babylon, we are to differentiate between the systems and the individuals connected with those systems.

The judgments of the Lord are not designed to crush or destroy humanity, but to destroy utterly the systems of error, bondage and superstition which have fettered humanity and hindered them from fuller progress and development in the knowledge and favor of God. With the fall of the great systems (Babylon, confusion) men's eyes will begin to open; the blind will begin to "see out of obscurity." (**Isa. 29:18**.) As a result, the high praises of God will arise as a sweet savor.

The fall of Babylon is declared to come speedily, suddenly --figuratively, "in an hour." The descriptions of her fall are various. In one place we read that she shall be utterly burned with fire. The same symbol of fire is used by St. Peter in referring to the same trouble and destruction. In another place we read that Babylon shall be cast like a great millstone into the sea and be found no more at all.--**Jer. 51:58**; **Rev. 18:8,21**.

SM425

"EVERY EYE SHALL SEE HIM"

Throughout this Gospel Age, the Lord's people have with the eye of faith recognized Jesus as their Redeemer and Deliverer. But comparatively few have had such eyes of faith and understanding. The majority, as the Apostle declares, are blinded by Satan and by error, and fail to get a proper, true view of Christ. He says that "the god of this world" has blinded the minds of all unbelievers. But the gracious promise of the Lord is that all the blinded eyes shall be opened.

The experiences of eighteen centuries have done little

toward opening the eyes of the world; but the revelation of Messiah in flaming fire will appeal to them quickly. They will see Him thus--"Every eye shall see Him, and those also who pierced Him"--the Jews. Instinctively they will fear. It may require a considerable time for them to become fully persuaded that the One feared is their best Friend, who gave His life as their Redemption-price, and whose judgments in the earth are for the very purpose of breaking the bondage of fear, ignorance, superstition, sin, selfishness and injustice, and of allowing the whole world to go free from a sin-slavery which has long oppressed them.--**Rom. 11:25-27**.

In due time they will learn that the fire of God's anger does not burn against the sinners for whom Christ died, but merely against their sins. The learning of this lesson will open their eyes still more widely and enable them to see something of the length, the breadth, the height and the depth of God's Love, of which the Apostle tells.--**Eph. 3:14-19**; **Rom. 5:6-8**.

That the Jews will be in that trouble, the Bible distinctly marks out. It will be "the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it." (**Jer. 30:7**.) The Gospel Church having been completed by that time and having passed beyond the veil, God's favor will be restored to Natural Israel; and the time for the special manifestation of that favor will be in the dark hour of Jacob's trouble,

when the Jews are surrounded by enemies. In and through that trouble the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, and they will look upon Him whom they pierced. (**Zech. 12:10**.) They will discern that they made a great and horrible mistake in crucifying the Friend of Sinners, their long-promised Messiah. We are told that they shall mourn because of Him, and that then the spirit of supplication will come to them and they will see Jesus in His real character.

At or about that same time Divine favor will be manifested on Israel's behalf, and the Lord will deliver them, as in olden times. Their eyes of faith and understanding will open more and more widely. Eventually, according to the Bible, they will become the leaders of mankind in returning to God, who will abundantly pardon their iniquity and grant them a prominent share in the blessings

of His Kingdom.

"FEW STRIPES" AND "MANY STRIPES"

The great Messianic Kingdom will not spare the rod, but will inflict punishments for the world's correction in righteousness. Some will suffer more and some less, according to the Master's own statements. Those understanding the principles of righteousness and wilfully violating them will be beaten heavily, "with many stripes"; while others, such as the heathen, for instance, who knew little, will receive fewer stripes, proportionate to their ignorance. All the stripes, however, will be reformatory, and with a view to helping and encouraging the transgressors to abandon the ways of iniquity and to walk in the paths of righteousness.--**Luke 12:47,48**.

That will be a happy Day for earth's thousands of millions --a Day with the Lord, a thousand years. Everywhere there will be evidences of the operation of Divine Mercy and Justice, and the necessary lessons will be quickly learned by all people. We cannot doubt that even fifty years of Kingdom influence will make a wonderful change in human affairs and conditions. The blessing of

the Lord will come to the earth in proportion as God's will shall be done by mankind.

Finally, with all sin eliminated, all imperfections gone and all the wilfully wicked destroyed, every creature on earth, as well as in Heaven, will be heard saying, "Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Then, and not till then, will God's will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven; for not until then will there be a perfect race capable of doing God's will, and a tested race, all of whom will delight to do His will.

A special lesson to God's people today is that now is the Church's time of calling, accepting and making their election sure by hearty obedience to the Divine will. Thus neither shall we be of the world, who will wail because of the sign of the Son of Man in the dissolution of the ecclesiastical heavens, nor shall we be identified with the ecclesiastical heavens, which are to be dissolved. Rather, it is

our privilege, as followers of Jesus, to walk in His steps, to stand for the right, to be guided of the Holy Spirit, to "come out of Babylon," to "touch not the unholy thing," that we may have relationship and fellowship with the Lord, with the Savior, with the holy Apostles and with all the faithful martyrs and footstep followers of our Master.

We've been watching, we've been waiting,
For the star that brings the day;
For the night of sin to vanish,
And the mists to roll away.

We've been watching, we've been waiting,
For the beauteous King of day,
For the chiefest of ten thousand,
For the Light, the Truth, the Way.

We begin to see the dawning
Of the bright Millennial day;
Soon the shadows, weary shadows,
Shall forever pass away.

SM428

GOD'S STANDARD IS PERFECTION

"As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."--**1 Peter 1:15**.

The Scriptures explicitly declare that our great Creator made man in His own image and likeness, and pronounced His creature very good. But when sin entered the world, through the disobedience of Father Adam, he was cut off from fellowship with his Creator--as a part of the penalty of sin. This alienation from God must have been one of man's most grievous trials. He must have hungered and thirsted to draw near to God once more, to have the Divine protection, the Divine love; otherwise he could not have been created in the perfect image of God.

But as centuries rolled on, Adam's posterity became more and more depraved and demoralized; the original character-likeness to God became blurred, faint, indistinct. So while the desire for God still remains, in some it is more pronounced than in others. In some it is so feeble that they care little for their Creator and are easily satisfied by the pleasures of the world.

Many are separated from God through ignorance, superstition and the doctrines of demons, as the Bible declares. Misunderstanding our gracious Creator, they are thus driven away from Him. Whatever of natural inclination they have had the Adversary seeks to thwart. As St. Paul declares, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that 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**), should scatter the darkness and make known to them the true character of God; and thus they should be drawn to Him.

But with some of the race desire for God and righteousness

SM429

has prevailed above the stupefying influence of the world, the flesh and the Devil. This class are drawn by the natural inclination of their minds Godward--desiring to be in harmony with their Creator. While

those who were not born of religious parents have had a large experience with sin and alienation from God, others, born in a measure of justification, have had a measure of fellowship with God always, as children of believers. This class are in a favorable condition to be drawn of God, and to hear His voice speaking peace to them and pointing them to Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth, the Life.--**John 6:44**; **14:6**; **Heb. 10:19-22**.

"LORD, SHOW US THE FATHER!"

As these come to appreciate our Lord's beautiful character and His loyalty to the Father, and to understand that He came into the world to die for Adam's sin, their hearts respond with increasing gratitude to the Redeemer and to the Heavenly Father, whose Plan our Lord was carrying out. More and more do they long to draw closer to God, and to be recognized of Him as members of His family. Through the Word the Master instructs them that whoever will walk in His steps shall eventually see God in the fulness of Heavenly glory.

Still further study of the Scriptures informs this class that the first step to be taken is one of faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Those who take this step must recognize that they are sinners, under the Adamic sentence, from which no one can be freed except in God's appointed way--Jesus. Then by faith they must accept Jesus as the Redeemer of Adam and his posterity. They must perceive that His death on Calvary was a sacrificial one; and that the grand outcome of this Ransom sacrifice will be that the Kingdom of God will be established in the earth for the purpose of uplifting mankind out of sin and death conditions--back to the full image of God in the flesh.--**Acts 16:31**.

SM430

THE CALL OF THE GOSPEL AGE

Those who take this first step may know what is the second step; and if they have sufficient faith to take this step, their sins will be forgiven and they will be granted a new nature. This second step is to accept God's invitation

to "present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, their reasonable service." Those who accept this invitation are thus privileged to sacrifice their all of earthly time, talent, wealth, etc. When they have so done, our Lord imputes to them individually His merit, and thus makes them holy and acceptable unto God, who immediately begets them of His Holy Spirit.

Thenceforth they are New Creatures--"old things have passed away and all things become new." They are now counted as members of His glorious Church. Their sins that are past are all cleansed; and the New Creature has no defilement of itself. But attaching to the flesh are certain imperfections, which from time to time crop out. The New Creature is to be prompt to notice these; for the New Creature is the new will, which henceforth regulates the mortal body.--**Rom. 12:1**; **2 Cor. 5:17**.

Apparently some of God's dear people have not realized what a contract they have on hand. Some are inclined to be careless about watching the very things which they have been told to watch. It is for all the consecrated to remember that their first obligation is in respect to their own flesh, not that of others. We may give each other valuable suggestions, but the responsibility for the body rests with each as a New Creature. And here we have the task of our lives; for in our flesh, as the Apostle says, dwells no perfection. Some have one degree of imperfection and some another; some are more imperfect and blemished in one way and others in another. But as the Scriptures continually assure us, there is none righteous, none perfect, no, not one. We all come short and need to recognize our shortcomings; and we are to fight the good fight against them.

SM431

THE NEW CREATURE IN SCHOOL

Whoever would be of the class to which God has called us must of necessity be developed; therefore whoever God has called, accepted and begotten of the Holy Spirit are in the School of Christ. Then begin the lessons which they must learn--they must grow in grace, in knowledge

and in love. As the Apostle explains, they must be transformed --be formed over. If they are not thus transformed, they will not be ready for the Kingdom to which they are called. This transforming is not a work in the flesh, although it will affect the flesh to some extent. It is the renewing of the mind--their minds must become new. Thereafter matters are to be decided, not according to their preferences, but according to certain principles--justice and love. The New Creatures in Christ have a set of new rules, altogether different from what they had before they become New Creatures.

The world has no such rules and regulations as those which are applicable to the New Creatures in Christ. Everything done by those who are in the School of Christ must be squared by the Rule of Justice. They dare not do anything that would be unjust to a neighbor, to a brother or to anybody. To the full extent of their ability the New Creatures must render justice. Many of the Lord's people apparently have not fully realized this fact--that obedience to the rules governing the new nature means absolutely the Golden Rule on their part toward all others. They must not do to others what they would not have others do to them.--**Matt. 7:12**.

Because of failure on the part of some to recognize this principle, the way of the Lord is spoken evil of sometimes. If a Christian fails to pay his debts, or if he is careless as to how he involves himself in debt, it is because this principle of justice does not stand out prominently enough before his mind. As an old creature he has perhaps been in the habit of ignoring the lines of justice and of sliding along as he may be able and of leaving others in

the lurch. This will not do for the New Creature; for he has come under a set of new rules, and no matter how much the old creature may seek to shirk, the New Creature's duty is to bring the body into subjection and to see that justice rules in every act and word, and so far as possible in every thought.

"THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD"

To whatever extent the principles of justice control our minds, to that extent we have character-likeness to God. The cultivation of these principles in all our actions and dealings, in all our words and thoughts, must be our daily concern. It may be comparatively easy to be just so far as money is concerned, to say, I would pay to the very last penny, and would live on the plainest of food rather than be in debt; but it is not so easy to be thoroughly just in our words and thoughts. The New Creature is to sit in judgment on every word which his mouth may utter. It is no wonder that St. James says that if any man sin not with his tongue the same is a perfect man. The New Creature is to be on guard that he may be developed along this line, and must thoroughly show the Lord that he has no sympathy with injustice.

One must be just in his thoughts before he can be properly just in his dealings. The man who thinks unjustly will act unjustly, in spite of himself; therefore the New Creature must be disciplined even to the control of his thoughts. He must never think of any one except with an unprejudiced mind, a calm judgment, seeking to give others the benefit of the doubt, if there is any doubt whatever. Additionally, he must heed the Lord's counsel that we should exercise great mercy, and that He would rather have us err in the sense of being too lenient than have us be merely just.--**James 3:2**; **Matt. 5:7**.

But beyond justice comes love, the very highest of God's attributes. God is just; but He is Love, also, which is higher, in the sense that it implies something more than mere justice. Not only will God do full justice to everybody,

but He will do a little more--He will do something of love. This He shows us in His dealings with mankind. God was only just when He condemned the race of Adam as unfit for everlasting life; and He would still have been just if He had never provided redemption or any other opportunity for the world whatever.

God is more than just, however, and so in due time He provided the Redeemer. This was Grace, this was Mercy, this was Love. And Love has been working all through His great Plan of the Ages, providing first the Savior,

then making provision for the Church, that through His mercy we might come from the ranks of sinners up to the ranks of glory. To accomplish this, He has forgiven the sins of the Church, has encouraged them by assurances of His love and has overruled all things for good.

"BE YE PERFECT"

This, then, is the Love of God; and the New Creatures in Christ must have this character-likeness to God. We must have love, sympathy, and not merely justice. There is nothing of grace in the giving of justice; anything less than justice is wrong. But the Lord's people must be more than just; they are to be kindly affectioned one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. Our Heavenly Father wishes His children to see that quality in His character and to copy it. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." We cannot bring our mortal body to that degree of perfection where every act would be perfect, every word perfect; but the mind must be in full sympathy and accord with God and His arrangements, and each must strive to the best of his ability to bring the body into harmony with God.--**Matt. 5:48**.

As the Bible teaches, the Church class are in the School of Christ, being taught of God--His workmanship. By His providence and His Word He has been working in us, by our experiences, which He has shaped for us, and by

the opportunities which He gives us. All these things are designed by the Lord to bless us and to develop us in His own character-likeness, so that, as Jesus said, we may be like unto our Father in Heaven, so that we may be holy, even as He is holy--that our intentions, aims, desires, may be of exactly the same kind as His own.

If, therefore, any one who professes to be a New Creature in Christ has in his heart a feeling of bitterness, envy or strife, let him beware! Such a condition of heart is dangerous; it is not of the Holy Spirit at all. Those who have such elements of character are not holy as the Heavenly Father is holy. On the contrary, as the Apostle

explains, these qualities of character are works of the flesh and of the Devil; and to whatever extent one possesses these, they are the result of the spirit of the flesh and of the Devil at work in the heart.

THE GRAND CLIMAX OF CHARACTER

Of our Lord Jesus it was written: "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of joy above Thy fellows" (**Psa. 45:7**)--above the angels, above the Church, making Him to be Head over all things to the Church and decreeing that all the angels shall worship Him. (**Heb. 1:6-9**.) In order to copy Him we must see to what extent He loved righteousness and hated iniquity.

This, then, is the great test of character going on with the Lord's people, and according to these lines God is dealing with them. It is not merely that they are fighting the good fight and trying to accomplish something in their flesh; for the New Creature will never succeed in getting as good control of the flesh as he could wish. But what God wishes to see in His people is that their whole hearts are set for righteousness, that they love the right and hate the wrong, and that they are striving to the best of their ability to put down the wrong and to uphold the right, especially in themselves--in their own characters and in their own acts, words and thoughts.

SM435

THE HEATHEN--MESSIAH'S INHERITANCE

"Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession."--Psa. 2:8.

Our text is from one of the Messianic Psalms. It represents our Lord as making known to His people the Heavenly Father's decree rewarding Him for His faithfulness as our Redeemer, assuring Him of His exaltation to the Kingdom, and declaring that with this will come the inheritance of all the earth, with power to subject all things to the Father's will. He was to have it for the mere request--"Ask of Me." As a matter of fact, this world-wide dominion has not yet come to Messiah; the heathen are not yet His inheritance; the uttermost parts of the earth are not yet His possession. Indeed, as the Prophet declares, "Darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the heathen."--**Isa. 60:2**.

When we remember our Redeemer's love for the race, the love which led Him to lay down His life to seek and to recover that which was lost, we are at first inclined to amazement that He has not yet asked the Father for His inheritance of the heathen. We are astonished that He has permitted the Prince of Darkness and the reign of Sin and Death to exist for more than eighteen centuries since He suffered, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." But perplexity in the matter might well be answered by our Lord's reply to the Sadducees: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." As we come to understand the Scriptures more fully, and to appreciate how the power of God will be exercised in bringing the heathen under the domination of the Redeemer, the eyes of our understanding open, and we are enabled to rejoice accordingly.

SM436

WHY DID HE NOT ASK?

Our Lord did not ask for His great power to reign

at an earlier date because He knew the Father's Plan, and was well contented with the Divine times and seasons. He had no wish for a change in this. He did not ask to receive the heathen for an inheritance at the beginning of the Gospel Age, but has been content to wait, and to place that request in its due time, in harmony with another feature of the Divine Program which must first be fulfilled. That other feature is the selection of the Church, the Bride of Christ, the members of His Body. It pleased the Father to make our Lord not only the world's Redeemer and King, but also the High Priest of an under-priesthood, the Bridegroom of the Church His Bride, the Elder Brother of these saints of glory whom the Father is pleased to develop during this Gospel Age as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, to be sharers of His sufferings and of His glory to follow.

Meantime the heathen have been suffering no injustice. Born in sin, shapen in iniquity, condemned to death, they have been having experiences with sin and death, and going down into the great prison-house for periods of unconsciousness--until the Redeemer, at His Second Advent, shall call them and all mankind from this great prison-house, the tomb. This He foretold, saying, "All that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth."--**John 5:28,29** R.V.

Not only will this include the Church of the First-borns who have been approved of God and who, passing trial now, will come forth unto life eternal, but it will include also the remainder of mankind, those who have not had God's approval, all of whom, because redeemed, shall come forth unto judgment--trial. A fair trial will be theirs, to determine their worthiness or unworthiness of life everlasting by the manner in which they shall receive, or by their rejection of, The Christ of God when during the Millennium He shall be made fully known.

SM437

It was also part of the Divine purpose that the whole earth should be filled with people; and hence the bringing forth of a progeny is a part of the Divine will for mankind. The few short years of the present life, with an experience of sin and death conditions, will in due time be supplemented by the glorious period of the Millennium, with its grand opportunities for lessons of righteousness

and its rewards for obedience. Its corrective "stripes," or punishments, will be to the intent that so many as possible may ultimately be entirely recovered from death conditions and brought into full accord with God in Christ. But those who demonstrate their unwillingness to come into heart sympathy with righteousness will be utterly destroyed from amongst the people.--**Acts 3:23**; **2 Peter 2:12**.

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

So, then, our Lord's reason for not asking sooner for the heathen as His inheritance and the remotest parts of the earth as His possession, was that He knew the Father's Plan to be a different one, the more excellent way; and He delighted to do the Father's will. And so with all the followers of Christ. As soon as they ascertain the Father's glorious Plan of Salvation, they find it to be soul-satisfying, and greatly prefer it to any plan of their own. Undeveloped Christians, whom the Apostle designates "babes" in Christ, are the ones who are continually praying to the Heavenly Father for a change of the Divine Program, imagining that their wisdom and their love in respect to the heathen are superior to those of the Infinite Creator. Nearly all Christian people have had their experience with such ignorance; and we are glad to suppose that the Heavenly Father laid not the sin of such presumption to our charge, but rather sympathetically appreciated our interest in the heathen, although He must have deprecated our lack of reverence, our headiness, our highminded assumption of more than infinite wisdom!

SM438

We are not saying a word against missions--home or foreign. Quite to the contrary, we believe that every Christian should labor with heart and hand to do all in his power to glorify the Father and the Redeemer, and to enlighten his fellow-men respecting the Cross of Christ, and the blessings which it secures. But while willingly, gladly, serving the Divine Cause, "instant in season and out of season," we should "learn to labor and to wait." We should learn that the laboring under present conditions

is arranged chiefly for our benefit--for the development in the minds of the Royal Priesthood of the sacrificing qualities and the graces of the Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, faith, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

"WORKERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"

Let us be sure, dear friends, that any theory of ours respecting the heathen, or any other feature of the Divine Program, which in any degree implies superior wisdom, superior energy or superior love on our part, as compared with that of our Heavenly Father and our Redeemer, must be wrong. The sooner we learn to pray from the heart, "Thy will be done," the better it will be for us, the more shall we be able to get into harmony with our Lord, and the more shall we be used as His ambassadors and representatives. The wisdom of man is foolishness with God, and the Wisdom of God is foolishness with man. Hence we must not take the human standpoint in investigating or reasoning upon the Divine purposes and Program. Rather, we must go direct to the Word of God, that we may be taught of God, that we may discern the beauty, the harmony, of His plans.

It is written that "obedience is better than sacrifice"; and this being recognized, how careful it should make us to inquire what the will of the Lord is; to search the Scriptures, that we may there ascertain the Divine Program, and be found in harmony therewith! There we find that the Lord's present work is the completing of the

Royal Priesthood, the Royal Judge, the Royal Prophet, the Royal Mediator, the Great King, for the world of mankind --for the world's deliverance from the bondage of Sin and Death, and their assistance back to harmony with God. Thus seeing, we shall have patience in respect to the heathen, and strive now to make our own calling and election sure and to lay down our lives for the brethren, in assisting to build them up in the most holy faith, "until we all come to the measure of the stature of a Man in Christ"--the great Mediator of the New Covenant, of whom Jesus is the Head--the Church His Body.

CONVERTING THE WORLD

When will the world be converted? When will Christ ask for the heathen? When will the Father give them to Him? How long, O Lord? The Scriptural answer, dear friends, is that it has pleased the Father to select the "jewel" class during this Gospel Age by means which the world would think foolish--by means of the preaching of the Good Tidings. But His Program for the future Age is different. There are millions who have no ear to hear the preaching of the Cross of Christ. (**1 Cor. 1:18**.) There are millions who have no eye of faith to see the glorious things of God. In fact, according to the Scriptures, only a Little Flock, comparatively, can be brought into accord with the Lord under the conditions of the present time, because sin abounds, because Death reigns, because Satan, the Prince of this world, now works antagonistically in the hearts of the children of disobedience.

Hence it has pleased God to have a different method of dealing with the world of mankind in general from that which He has adopted in dealing with the Church in this Age. In the next Age, force will be used, and not merely moral suasion. Force will be employed in putting down the reign of evil. Satan will not merely be requested to desist from deceiving the world, but will be bound for a thousand years, and be unable to deceive the nations.

Likewise, mankind will no longer be invited to accept

Christ, and to give their hearts in obedience to Him; but on the contrary, they will be compelled to be obedient. As it is written, "Unto Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God." Offers of grace will no longer be held out, with reward for faith attached; instead, knowledge shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep. (**Phil. 2:10,11**; **Isa. 11:9**.) As a result, no one shall then say to his neighbor or to his brother, Know thou the Lord! for they shall all know Him, from the least unto the greatest of them.

HEATHEN FALL UNDER HIM

Another Psalm describes Messiah's triumph in the Millennial Age, saying, "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously in the cause of Truth and Meekness and Righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee." (**Psa: 45:3-5**.) Instead of ***people*** here, read ***heathen,*** as in the original, and we have a picture of the conversion of the heathen as it will shortly be wrought. We are not to suppose that the Lord will ride upon a horse, or that literal arrows will literally pierce the hearts of His enemies. We are to understand this picture to signify our Lord's triumphal conquering of the world; and that the arrows of Truth, which will go forth unto the whole world, will reach the hearts of men and smite them down. Even so we read that when St. Peter preached at Pentecost that the Jews had taken and crucified the Son of God, the hearers were "cut to the heart" --with the lance of Truth. Thank God for such arrows from the quiver of Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love! We rejoice that the heathen will thus be conquered for the Lord, and thus eventually every knee bow and every tongue confess.--**Acts 5:33**; **7:54**; **Psa. 72:11**.

The work of dealing with the heathen, with the world --with all except the Church--will begin with the generation

living at the time of the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom. In due time it will proceed and will ultimately include all that are in their graves in the reverse order from that in which they entered. And the last shall be the first to come forth--"every man in his own order," or class.--**1 Cor. 15:20-23**.

DEEP HUMILIATION PROMISED THE WORLD

Too frequently do Bible students neglect to see whether or not their interpretations are in harmony with the context of the passages under discussion. Let us not make this mistake. Turning to the second Psalm, we

find that following our text is the declaration, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (**Verse 9**.) The application of this evidently is to the time of our Lord's Second Advent, when the selection of the Church shall have been completed and she shall have entered into His glory as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, symbolically pictured as the New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven.--**Rev. 21:1-5**; **22:1-5**.

From that New Jerusalem, we are told, the River of the Water of Life shall flow freely, and whosoever will may freely partake of it. On either bank will grow the Trees of Life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. And the Spirit and the Bride will say, Come; and whosoever will may come, and take of the Water of Life. But in the meantime, before the nations, the world, will be ready for that blessing from the New Jerusalem, they must needs pass through a period of very deep humiliation--"A Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation."--**Matt. 24:21**.

As for the nations of that time, the extent to which they will suffer destruction will depend largely upon their own attitude, as is intimated by the verses following our text. Those of the nations who freely and heartily accept of Messiah's rule will be correspondingly saved from the breaking process. Hence it is urged, "Be wise, O ye

kings of the earth! Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

But while this seems to offer leniency, mercy, these favors are conditional on the manner in which the Messianic Kingdom shall be received. Other Scriptures intimate that all the nations, not only heathen but civilized, will be found in violent opposition to the Heavenly Kingdom, and hence that all together they will be crushed as the vessels of a potter.--**Rev. 2:27**; **Psa. 149:7-9**.

THE GLORIOUS OUTCOME

The Lord tells us that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are His ways higher than man's ways, and

His plans higher than man's plans. And this we find true as we come to better understand the Scriptures. Who ever dreamed of such lengths and breadths and heights and depths of "Love Divine, all love excelling," as are implied and included in God's great Plan of selecting first The Christ--Jesus the Head, and the Church, His Body--and then through these blessing all the families of the earth with a knowledge of Himself and the opportunities for life eternal!--**John 11:25,26**.

We make no claims of universal salvation; for the Scriptures distinctly speak of some who will die the Second Death, having proved themselves not sufficiently in harmony with righteousness to be worthy of eternal life--even after being brought to a knowledge of the Truth. But the Scriptures show us that when all the unwilling and disobedient shall have been cut off in the Second Death, the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God.

Let hope cheer those who weep;
E'en now the rays of dawn
Above the eastern hill-tops creep--
We're near the light of morn.

SM443

CREED IDOLS OF CHRISTENDOM

"The Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort." --2 Cor. 1:3.

When in India, China and Japan last year, I was forcibly struck with the intelligence of many among these peoples. I visited their idol temples for the purpose of noticing the degree of reverence exhibited and the status of worshipers, and was favorably impressed. Many seemed sincere, absolutely unmindful of any other matter than their own worship. I made inquiry as to what importance was attached to the idol. Was it regarded as the god, or merely a reminder of their god? They assured me that the idol itself was known to be of metal, or stone, or wood, and was used merely as a reminder of their god, in much the same way that Catholics use the crucifix--not as worshiping the image or the picture, but merely having these before the mind to assist in fixing reverence and the spirit of worship.

OUR CREED IDOLS WORSE

At first I felt disposed to chide the heathen for the horrible features which they give their images. I said to myself, Why do they not make graceful, beautiful idols instead of horrible ones? But a little reflection brought me shame and confusion. I said to myself, Look at the creeds, the idols, the images of God, set up in Christendom. We have not attempted to picture our Deity in wood or stone or mineral, but we have written out a description of His character--our Christian creeds.

These creeds stand before our mental eyes with exactly the same hideous features that the tangible idol has before the natural eye of the heathens. Each different creed shows a slightly different image of God, but they are all horrible. They all picture God as a most

SM444

atrocious character, more hideous by far than are any of

the idols of heathendom.--**Eccle. 7:29**; **Lam. 5:7**.

How could anybody carve, or cast, or model, a mute image, or idol, that would speak such horrible things as all of our creeds portray by description? Where is the artist who could picture a God deliberating upon the creation of the human family, and before beginning His work planning and arranging a great place called Hell (and some say another called Purgatory), creating fire-proof devils to man these, laying up fuel for use therein through all eternity, and then starting the human race with procreative powers, with the foreknowledge that billions would spend eternity in those horror chambers!

Who could picture or model an image representing a God who would, after preparing such a place, inject new life and vigor into the poor sufferers so as to prevent them from dying--so as to insure that they must live everlastingly under those horrible conditions! No heathen was ever capable of such an imagination; and hence none was ever able to picture such a God, either in clay, or stone, or metal, or wood, or with the pen. It remained for the most cultured and civilized peoples of the world, who had enjoyed most of God's favors and blessings and enlightenment, to misunderstand Him most, to misrepresent Him worst, and to carry those misrepresentations to the heathen, in the name of the God of Love.

THE HEATHEN KNOW IT, TOO

Missionaries have indeed reached a few people and brought them under a measure of Christian influence, but their number is small; so also their intelligence. Like some true Christians here, they have a reverence for God sadly encumbered with error. The more intelligent classes are agnostics. Christianity, so-called, has led them to doubt their own religions, but it has not given them anything in their stead.

When some of the higher caste natives learned that my preaching was different from that of the missionaries,

and that it presented a God of Love, and an ultimate opportunity to all mankind to come into harmony with Him, the matter spread among them. Committees were

sent to me to inquire if I could not stay longer, assuring me of audiences of the higher caste natives. They explained that as much as they appreciated the intelligence of the white man and his Christian religion, they could not receive it because it pictured a God so terrible and so unjust as to be repugnant to their minds.

"Why," said they, "our gods and our religion teach us to be kind, even to the dumb brutes, and to cause them no unnecessary pain. How, then, could we worship the God of the missionaries? They tell us that He has consigned our forefathers, from the remotest generation, to everlasting torture because they did not believe in Jesus, whose name is the only name by which any can be saved. We cannot believe in so unjust a God. The slightest degree of justice would have obligated Him to send our forefathers the Message in no uncertain terms."

I felt it obligatory to apologize, not only for myself, but for all Christendom. I said: We Christians have erred. We neglected our Bible, and thus brought on the Dark Ages. Since then we have been trying to get nearer to the light as the days go by, and some of us have made a little more progress than others. I am preaching the God of the Bible, "the God of all grace, the Father of mercies," whose name is Love, and who is perfect in all His ways. Certain parables and symbolic phrases have been misunderstood, misapplied, mistranslated; and thus, while we had the best of intentions, the great Adversary, Satan, has kept Christendom considerably in the dark, and has led us to picture in our creeds a God who is fierce, unjust, unloving, unwise, and who is using His Power contrary to every principle of righteousness. Now the dawn of the New Age is about upon us. The thousand years of Christ's Reign is shortly to begin. God is getting us ready for it by sending blessings of every kind.

SM446

Furthermore, we see that we are in the Day of the Lord's preparation, and His faithful people are finding a better light shining on the Bible, and are gradually coming to a better understanding of it. Cling to the Bible! We are endeavoring to arrange so that yourselves and all people who are hungering for a God of Righteousness, Justice, Wisdom and Love may learn what the Bible really teaches.--**Isa. 40:8**.

MISSIONARIES OPPOSE THE TRUTH

I am sorry to say that although the missionaries are free to confess that the conversion of the world is an absurd proposition, they are not ready for the Bible teaching on the subject. Although they know there are twice as many heathen today as there were one century ago, they are bound, fettered by their creeds. True, they are seeking federation, co-operation; but the co-operation includes only those who are colaboring to get the heathen to cast away his graven and molten images, and to take instead a written creed image that is worse. Of course, few of the missionaries believe in these creed idols themselves; but they were sent to foreign lands to put these fetters upon the poor heathens, and they are not at liberty to do otherwise than they have been instructed.

One would think that even then they would rejoice to have somebody else proclaim the Message of a God of Love, and one chance of salvation to every member of Adam's race. But they do not; they oppose our teachings at every step. We cannot read their hearts; we must therefore imagine some of them are still fettered by the ignorance and superstition of the Dark Ages and are thoroughly conscientious in their endeavor to put these fetters on others, thinking thereby to do God service.

Others, we must assume, feel their responsibility in respect to the reports they will make to the home Boards of Foreign Missions. Their reports in the past have been colored to the very limit to show progress and to encourage contributions to the missionary funds. The

very thought brings terror--that any of their followers would get more light, more knowledge of God, and thus cease to be counted in as worshipers at the shrine of the hideous creed idols of the various denominations.

Apparently for the past few years, missionary activity has been chiefly with the native children. Apparently very little religious information is being imparted. If only the missionaries had read the Bible to the people, many more in heathen lands would know about Messiah's Kingdom and appreciate the import of the prayer, "Thy

Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in Heaven."

GOOD TIDINGS TO EVERY NATION

My visit to foreign lands was not a pleasure jaunt, but strictly in the interest of the true Gospel, of which the angels sang--"Good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people." I had heard reports which led me to believe that there were sincere people in heathendom who were feeling after the true God, if haply they might find Him. I believe that God wishes us to carry the Message to these. I have far greater interest in such, whether at home or abroad, than in the vast majority of people, who are utterly careless, utterly indifferent, utterly faithless, and who do not wish to know God.

Christ's Millennial Kingdom will deal with all such, and open their eyes of understanding, and through chastisements develop the peace of God in all who will. The present Age is merely for the electing of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Finding such in heathendom I, as President of the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION, promptly took the necessary steps for sending the Gospel of God's Love and Justice and Wisdom and Power all over heathendom.

Our association has had sermons translated into the languages of Japan and Korea, and into the principal languages of China, and into the six principal languages of India; and millions of copies are in the hands of the

people. Considerable fresh interest in Christianity has been aroused. Peoples in those lands who had begun to doubt everything religious have begun to take courage, and to think and study their Bible. If the missionaries could but catch the same spirit, what a blessed opportunity would be theirs! But, alas, not many of them are so inclined! Very generally they seem to be bitter, hostile, slanderous, doing everything in their power to oppose the light, even as Jesus declared that the darkness has always hated the light, because the light makes manifest, or shows up the darkness.--**John 3:19-21**.

HOW TO KNOW GOD

Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." He knew we could not come into personal touch with the Almighty. He knew that we could learn respecting Him only through the Bible, as He said, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." There is a difference between knowing about God and knowing God. The beginning of faith is to believe that there is a great Supreme Creator. It is another step to learn that He is wise and powerful, as indicated in the great Universe that He has made, and in our human organization with its wonderful powers for thought and action. Truly

"There is a God--
All Nature speaks!"

At first it may occur to some that knowledge of God simply means to come to know that there is a God, and that He has provided a Savior, His Only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. But the knowledge of God means far more than this. To the advanced and developing Christian it signifies an intimate acquaintance with the Father and with the Son--a knowledge of "the mind of Christ," which is a full and clear representation of the Father's mind.--**1 Cor. 2:16**.

SM449

We grow in this knowledge by the study of the Word of God, by discerning through that Word the principles which govern the Divine conduct--as to how Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power operate. These are progressive studies. Something may be learned along this line on the very first day of our Christian experience; but the end of the first year should show considerable progress in the knowledge of the Divine mind; and so to the end of the Christian's course.

It is only as we realize something of the greatness and the perfection of the Divine character that we are properly able to estimate our own littleness and imperfection. Only as we see the beauties of His gracious character can we become intimately acquainted with God, with His graces and virtues--His glorious attributes.

Then we come to investigate the more subtle qualities

of the Divine Being, His Justice and Love. Who can imagine a real God who is devoid of Justice, devoid of Love? So surely as it is true that no human being could be really great without the qualities of justice and love, so surely is it true that there could be no real and great God without the same qualities. Wisdom and Power without Justice and Love would picture to us a demon, and not a God--not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But what can we know respecting God's Justice and Love? We answer that there are two ways of ascertaining: The first way is to wait and see how His plans and arrangements will be ultimately carried out. If it is true of humanity that "by their fruits ye shall know them," the same must be true of the Almighty--by His fruits, His workmanship, finally completed, He may be known to be either good or bad, just or unjust, loving or vicious.--**Matt. 7:16**.

The other way of knowing the Divine character, in advance of the finished work of God, would be along the lines of faith; and faith, in order to be intelligent, must

have some basis or foundation. The Bible is God's Message, to those who have the ears and eyes of faith. In it He tells us in advance what He purposes to do; and from what we thus hear we must determine whether He is just, loving and good, or whether worse than ourselves.

If the creed idols which we have been worshiping truly represent God, then the consummation of His Plan will be awful in the extreme--enough to make all creation shudder. It would mean thousands of millions in everlasting torture without the slightest hope of any glory coming to God, or of any good coming to the sufferers or to anybody else. The only purpose to be served by such torture would be the satisfaction of a devilish disposition to witness the torture of others. Is that creed idol which we have worshiped a real picture of the God of the Bible? We know that it is not.

The God of the Bible on the contrary declares that He has permitted the reign of Sin and Death, which is entirely just. He tells us that from among the sinners He will first gather out a saintly handful to be associates with their Savior and to participate with Him as members

of His cabinet, or Kingdom, for the administration of the world's affairs, to lift humanity up out of sin and degradation and death back to human perfection, and ultimately to destroy all of those who prefer sin when they shall be brought to a full appreciation of it.

The outcome of this Divine Plan of the Bible shows us a reclaimed humanity, in a world-wide Eden, blessed with a knowledge of God, and with experiences which will make them happy to all eternity. Our Lord tells us that then God's will shall be done on earth, even as now it is done in Heaven; and that there will be no more sighing, crying and dying on earth, even as there is none in Heaven; and that every creature in Heaven and on earth will everlastingly praise the Creator and the Redeemer. Hallelujah, such a Savior! Hallelujah, such a God!

SM451

PEACE DESIRED, WAR NECESSARY

[Washington, May 25, 1913]

"He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. ...Be still and know that I am God."--Psa. 46:9,10.

No one could be more averse to war, on general principles, than myself. I am an extremist in my sentiment for peace. Yet I cannot close my eyes to the facts of history--that practically every blessing has come to the world through war, at the cost of cruel bloodshed. Where would America be today had there been no War of Independence? Where would the nations of Europe be today if they had not fought to maintain their national liberties? Where would a refusal to fight land every nation in less than a year?

There is no conflict between this particular and common-sense view of the matter and the teachings of our Savior. Our Master was not addressing nations, but individuals, when He directed that he who is smitten on the one cheek should turn the other, and be non-resistant. The instructions of Jesus were wholly and solely intended for His disciples, His followers. And they were instructed that they should come out from the world and be separate --a new nation, a holy nation. They were to expect to suffer persecution, even as did their Teacher. They had His personal promise that if they would thus suffer with Him for righteousness' sake, their reward would be by and by in the Kingdom--then they should sit with Him in His Throne.--**Rev. 3:21**.

Jesus gave His followers no assurance that a peace policy would be successful and bring them earthly prosperity. Quite to the contrary, the Scriptures declare that whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution--yes, must expect to endure persecution, in order to thereby have his loyalty to God demonstrated prior to his acceptance

SM452

to the Throne of his Redeemer. "If any man will be My disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me."--**Matt. 16:24**.

THE BEATITUDES NOT FOR NATIONS

When Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God," He was not addressing nations, but individuals--a special class of individuals--those who would become His disciples by a full renouncement of all earthly interests. The Redeemer's declaration respecting nations was the very reverse of His statement respecting His followers. He declared, "Nation shall rise against nation," and there shall be wars.--**Matt. 24:6,7**.

I fear that I shall be misunderstood; but there is so much confusion upon the subject that the Truth needs to be stated plainly. And I know of no place more appropriate for its statement than in this capital of the most peace-loving nation on earth--next to China.

The truth is that war is not the disease, but merely a symptom of the disease in the body politic and in the affairs of earth. So long as the disease continues, its outward manifestation, war, is bound to continue. Need I say to you that the disease to which I refer is sin? Sin and war are inseparable. There would be only two ways of inhibiting war:

(1) By converting the world of nations from a condition of hardness of heart, selfishness, sin, to a condition of righteousness, tenderness of heart, generosity; or,

(2) By the establishment of a government or power not swayed by sin, to supervise, overrule and control the affairs of the sinners by superior strength. Is this proposition debatable? It is not. Its basic facts are as sure as mathematics, as certain as that two and two make four. Various scriptures may be cited corroborating this position, and showing that sin, selfishness, is continually on the warpath, either politically, socially or financially.

SM453

The battle has been going on ever since man became a sinner. At one time this selfishness manifested itself in buccaneering, piracy, slavery. At another time policy changed and the leaders of men perceived that they could accomplish more by milder methods, along the lines of politics and ecclesiasticism. Again conditions changed;

and the wise perceived that with the coming of mechanical inventions into the world's affairs human slavery would be unprofitable, and that more could be accomplished with less responsibility by setting the slaves free, and making them work for their own living in competition with machinery. This course was followed.

Next came the era of financial combination, giant trusts and corporations controlling the destinies of the human family, from peasant to king. But with all these changes, war has gone on. It has merely changed its form, merely changed its weapons, merely changed its methods. The basis of all these wars is selfishness; and so long as selfishness continues, war will continue. Success will mean prosperity. Failure will mean oppression.

VARIOUS KINDS OF WAR

You see that I am not limiting warfare to naval engagements, nor to battles fought with guns and swords and charging steeds. I am including in the great warfare all the social, political and financial disturbances and conflicts. They are all battles in which the shrewder minds, as a rule, conquer. And now instead of earth's war being ended, we see new conflicts begun from new quarters. ***Labor,*** having organized, is developing strength more and more each day. It is professedly training for a great conflict or battle. The battle is on; and it already has won some victories, and declares that its warfare against oppressors of every kind is only commencing.

The dull and stupid and ignorant of a century ago, by free schools and educational advantages, have become keen-eyed and keen-witted, and alert to grasp every possible

advantage. Moreover, for a quarter of a century our great colleges have been undermining faith in the inspiration of the Bible, and their influence has extended finally to the masses. These are now declaring their doubts respecting a future life, and their determination that they will grasp at the earliest possible moment the opportunities of the present life, that they may share in the luxuries of the rich and make them common to all. If their program be half carried out, it means the most dreadful war

ever known in the world's history. The Bible describes it as "a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:1**.

Since the spirit of war is the spirit of selfishness in action, it corroborates the thought that the world was never more strifeful than at present, never more on the alert for self-gratification; and although we have blessings beyond the dreams of any other day, discontent is more general than ever before and is goading mankind with increasing speed to the greatest of all conflicts.

So long as money has its value and political combinations can hold control, the social structure will remain intact and exercise itself, nation against nation, through fleets and armies. But as soon as the political and financial powers begin to crumble, the warfare will become anarchy, which the Scriptures describe as "every man's hand against his neighbor."

WHAT IS THE REMEDY?

The leading minds of the world clearly recognize the matter as I have presented it. Only a smile of sympathetic pity greets the proposal of well-intentioned peace men, such as Andrew Carnegie. Not generally have inheritance taxes and income taxes been legalized by those who will suffer by their requirements. Not of good-will, but of necessity, have come many of the reforms of our day. They are concessions wisely made. They will doubtless be followed by still greater concessions, which

also will be wise; yet all the concessions that can be made will not satisfy the appetite of the growing discontent. Each concession of the favored classes to the masses is like throwing food to a pursuing pack of hungry wolves. They stop to devour the advantage, but have their appetites thereby whetted for more.

Man's only remedy is now too late. A complete turning of the hearts of men to God was much more nearly possible fifty years ago, when there was greater faith in the Bible, greater faith in an Almighty Creator. The Higher Critics have done their work well, destroying faith in the only Book for which Divine inspiration can be

claimed. Education has done its part and commercialism its part, until the world is on fire with selfish ambition--desire for riches and luxuries--being desirous of obtaining them without cost to themselves.

THE CHRISTIAN'S GLORIOUS HOPE

The picture I am painting you, dear friends, would only harrow you and not be worth while, had I not a good Message of encouragement to give in offset. I will proceed to explain that God has foreknown the course of evil for the Six Great Days of earth's history--six thousand years--and has prepared for the Great Seventh Day, which will also be a thousand years long. God describes it as the Day, or Epoch, in which Messiah upon the Throne will make all things new.

Many Scriptures may be quoted respecting the evidences of the night of sorrow and sin and strife, and the dawning of the new Day, in which righteousness will be enforced throughout the earth, not only by the word of the King, but by the Divine Power of His Kingdom. The words of the Prophets describing Messiah's Kingdom as the "desire of all nations" give us the correct thought.

Other Scriptures show that the Time of Trouble now looming up as a cloud before mankind will be such a terrible storm of strife, bloodshed, trouble, that the world

will have its fill and be nauseated. Thenceforth, under the guidance of the new administration of Messiah, the spirit of a sound mind will gradually come to mankind as a whole; and proportionately they will turn to Messiah's Kingdom in loyal obedience, declaring, as says the Prophet, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us." (**Isa. 25:9**.) Rich and poor of every nation will gradually be made aware of the changed conditions, and all lovers of righteousness will rejoice.

So, then, dear friends, let us not be discouraged if the wars between nations continue or increase, if the strife--political, social, religious and financial--shall rage as never before. Let us think it not strange, but remember that all these are the motions and out-workings of the fallen human heart. The Bible intimates that God

is about to give mankind an object lesson respecting the influence of selfishness--a lesson which they will never forget, and which will prove valuable to all eternity.

"BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS"

What we have said should in no way encourage anybody toward selfishness and strife, but to the contrary. For those who can learn by instruction God's Word is provided. He who closely follows the instruction of the Scriptures will receive a proportionate blessing. While the Bible is specially addressed to the few, the consecrated, who are the real peacemakers meant by Jesus when He declared, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God," nevertheless in proportion as others recognize the right principle--the principle of justice and mercy, sympathy and compassion --they will proportionately be in harmony with the great King, and proportionately shield themselves from a measure of the trouble of the great Day of Wrath, which is rapidly approaching.

We have only kind words for Mr. Carnegie and his fellows of the Peace Society. We merely forewarn that

their well-meant plans can never carry out; for God is not favorable for peace at the present time and under present conditions. "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked."--**Isa. 48:22**.

This word ***wicked*** includes broadly the entire human family; for "there is none righteous, no, not one." Only a comparatively small number have ceased to be wicked, from the Scriptural standpoint. The only ones justified in God's sight are those who have gone the full length of the surrender of their hearts to the Redeemer. These the Scriptures declare have escaped the condemnation that is on the world. These were once "children of wrath," even as all the others are children of wrath.

But alas, the number who have come fully into the family of God is indeed small! Not many have made a full surrender to the Lord. Not many have received Jesus as not only their Teacher but their Redeemer and Exemplar. The majority, as the Apostle said, are still bound

by the Wicked One--still blinded, still deaf in considerable measure, and cannot see afar off, nor appreciate fully the Divine arrangement.

These will have a terrible experience in the approaching Time of Trouble, because they will not understand how and why the Omnipotent Jehovah will allow the storm of human passion and strife to work such terrible havoc in the world--even as they do not understand why the same gracious Creator has permitted the storms and floods, earthquakes, pestilences and famines. The full and satisfactory understanding of these matters is designed to be granted by the Lord only to His faithful few--the disciples of Jesus. Of these He declares, "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence Him; and He will show them His Covenant."--**Psa. 25:14**.

We are not advocating the cause of any particular Christian denomination or earthly Church. From our viewpoint there is but one Church, which includes all recognized by the Lord as His people. We consider all

such as brethren--whether Catholic or Protestant, black or white, old or young, male or female.

It should not be difficult to discern that the words of Jesus respecting the offering of the other cheek to the smiter could not be applicable to the world, even in a figurative way. Such counsel would be utterly impossible for a natural man to understand. God's saintliest people have found great difficulty in observing this rule, even when its literalness is ignored and its spirit accepted as His teaching. All such we earnestly exhort to "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"--in the sense that none but such will experience the glorious change of the First Resurrection, and be made like the Master--of the spirit nature--and see Him "as He is"--in His glorious spirit condition. The world will never see Him thus. As the Master declared, "Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more."--**John 14:19**.

The Lord's followers, like Himself, are to be peculiar, and separate and distinct from the world--a New Creation. They are to be so devoted to the teachings of their Master and so filled with His spirit of love for each other and for all mankind that they would suffer evil and injustice

rather than do injury to others. Our Lord Himself was always peaceably disposed and a peacemaker as respects others; and so all of His followers are to be. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

I am waiting, hoping, praying
For Messiah's glorious reign,
For I know He'll rule in justice;
Right and truth will triumph then.
Worldly pleasures cannot win me,
While I wait for that bright day;
Worldly splendor cannot charm me,
While its light beams on my way.

SM459

ST. PETER'S KEYS

"Upon this rock will I build My Church; and the gates of Hell [Hades, the grave] shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven."--Matt 16:l8,19.

For some unaccountable reason numerous Catholics have gotten the thought that I am their foe, just as Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc., have gotten the impression that I am their foe. I am a foe to no human being, and especially to no Christian. I believe more fully than do Methodists in Free Grace--that ultimately God's grace will reach every human being. I believe more emphatically than do most Presbyterians that the Church is an especially elect class, and is now being gathered out of the world to be God's agents in the ultimate blessing of all the non-elect. I believe with Baptists that only the Elect, the immersed, will constitute the Kingdom of God, although I deny their claim that baptism in water is the real immersion. I hold, with the Apostle, that it is baptism into Christ's death. Similarly I hold to the great Catholic doctrine that there is only one true Church, founded by the Lord Jesus Christ through His Apostles, nearly nineteen centuries ago.

THEY DENY THEIR CATHOLICITY

I am aware that several churches claim to be Catholic --the Anglican Catholic, the Syrian Catholic, the Greek Catholic, and the Roman Catholic. Each claims to be the true Church and reprobates the others as heretical. But I take the still broader, catholic ground. I hold that the word catholic means general; and that any limitation, such as Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, etc., to that extent denies their catholicity. Perhaps, therefore, I am really saying that I am more catholic than any of these brethren.

SM460

I must prove my point or be misunderstood. I hold, and few, if any, will dispute it, that the one catholic or universal or general Church of Christ is the one mentioned in the Bible--"the Church of the First-borns, written in Heaven." If this be admitted, my next proposition is that the Lord in Heaven records as members of His true Church all the saintly--whether Roman Catholics, Anglican Catholics, Greek Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc.--and none others.

Have we not here the one Church, the Catholic Church, the universal, the only Church which the Bible recognizes? In the past we have been too narrow and have supposed that God was as narrow as ourselves. It was on this account that in the past Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Baptists and Methodists persecuted and were persecuted, because each thought itself the true Church. Are we not all getting broader conceptions of our God and of His Church? Do we not see that a part of our mistake was in calling the outward organization the Church of Christ, instead of remembering that the Lord alone writes the names of the Church, that He alone reads the hearts, that He alone is the Judge, and that He alone has the right to blot out the names of those who become reprobates?

RECTIFYING PAST ERRORS

St. Paul wrote against the spirit of sectarianism, already manifest in his day--some saying, "I am of Paul"; others, "I am of Peter," etc. The Apostle asks, "Is Christ divided?" (**1 Cor. 1:10-13**.) So, today, if with us, he would ask, "Why Romanists, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, etc.? Is not the name of Christ enough?" He explains that these different names of old signified a sectarian spirit, the spirit of division, that failed to recognize the true Head of the Church, His true representatives and His true members. The trouble is the same today. The entire foundation of divided Christianity would disappear and all the true Church of

Christ--all real saints--would be speedily manifest, if true catholicity were acknowledged.

The one great obstacle to unity is the erroneous doctrine respecting the eternal torture of all not members of the Church. We must open our eyes wider and see that many of our theories were not taught by Jesus and the Apostles. We must see that the Church is a comparatively small company of saintly footstep followers of Jesus, irrespective of sectarian lines; that the Bible teaches not that these are to look over the battlements of Heaven to all eternity and see all others in torment, but that they are to demonstrate their loyalty unto death and in due time be associated with Messiah in His great Millennial Kingdom, which will bring knowledge and opportunity to all the families of the earth--the living and the dead.--**Rev. 20:11-13**.

THE TWELVE FOUNDATION STONES

St. Paul declared that the saints of God, the true catholic Church, "are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone." (**Eph. 2:20**.) The Twelve Apostles are here referred to in their double office--Apostles especially commissioned by the Lord as His representatives and prophets, mouthpieces, for the proclamation of the Message to the Church. Jesus, referring to these same foundation stones, pictures the Church of Glory as the New Jerusalem, and its twelve foundations as twelve precious stones, in which are the names of the ***twelve*** Apostles of the Lamb--no more, no less--St. Paul being God's choice to take the place of Judas, the betrayer of his Lord and Master.

To think of St. Peter as the only foundation for the Church would be to deny Christ's teaching and St. Peter's own statement--that the entire Church is symbolically represented as living stones built together by the Lord through the Holy Spirit. (**1 Peter 2:4-6**.) It was a costly mistake when our forefathers, overlooking this

well-established point of Scripture, thought of the bishops of the Church as Apostolic Bishops, and took their decisions in councils assembled as the voice of God to and through the Church. The voice of God to and through the Church came only through "the twelve Apostles of the Lamb." All others so claiming are denounced by Jesus Himself as false Apostles.--**Rev. 2:2**.

God's true saints of all denominations should ignore all human creeds and return to the Bible and its declaration of "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all." (**Eph. 4:5,6**.) Are we more loyal to human organizations than to God, His Truth, His Church--all saints and one people, imbued with one spirit, the world around--the catholic Church?

POWER IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH

As St. Peter was only one of the twelve foundation stones of the Church, so, likewise, he was only one of The Twelve to whom the Lord declared, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven" (**Matt. 18:18**)--the same statement exactly that on another occasion He made to St. Peter only. But He gave the keys to St. Peter alone.

Would it seem reasonable that Jesus should tell the twelve Apostles that God would do anything that they bade Him do--taking to Heaven whom they pleased and excluding whom they chose? Would it be wise or safe to entrust to poor humanity such dictatorial powers respecting the eternal interest of even one individual? Assuredly not! When we remember that these Apostles declared that they were men of like passions with others, that St. Peter himself dissembled on one occasion and on another denied his Master, we are the more convinced that Jesus did not mean that God would abdicate His authority and wisdom in favor of any twelve men.

What, then, does this passage mean? We answer, It implies that the Lord would so overrule the utterances

and writings of His twelve Apostles as to make them safe guides for His Church. To these Apostles would be given through the Holy Spirit at Pentecost wisdom enabling them to understand which things of the Jewish Law were binding upon the Church and which not binding. Their decision would be absolutely right, and the entire Church might have confidence that what the Apostles bound or loosed on earth was equally bound or loosed in Heaven. As an illustration of this binding and loosing, see **Acts 15:28,29**.

To get back into proper relationship with each other and rid of all sectarian systems, God's people must recognize that only the words of the New Testament Apostles and Prophets are authoritative, properly representing the Divine mind. Other things men have bound and loosed on earth, without recognition in Heaven. The things necessary to the Church are found only in the Bible, as St. Paul declares.--**2 Tim. 3:16,17**.

THE CHURCH UPON THE ROCK

"Other Foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Jesus Christ." (**1 Cor. 3:11**.) In the Divine arrangement Jesus Christ is the Foundation, the Rock, upon which is built the entire superstructure of His Church--the one Catholic, world-wide Church. On this Rock, Christ Jesus, as St. Peter declares, all the Church is being built as a Temple of God. (**1 Peter 2:4-10**.) The New Jerusalem, the Church in glory, had twelve foundation stones, built upon the one Foundation Rock, the Lord Jesus Christ. It would manifestly be erroneous, therefore, to suppose that our Lord abdicated His own place in the Church in favor of St. Peter, much as He loved His impulsive disciple.

What, then, did Jesus mean when He called St. Peter a stone, spoke of building His Church upon "this rock," and declared that the gates of Hell (Hades, the grave) would not prevail against it? We reply, Jesus went down into the prison-house of death, Sheol, Hades, the

tomb; but on the third day the gates of Sheol, Hades, were opened, and He came forth. These gates will not prevail against the Church, as they did not prevail against her Lord. This is an assurance of the resurrection of the dead.

To understand St. Peter's connection with the Rock Foundation of the Church, we should read the preceding context. The disciples had told Jesus the common talk respecting Himself. He then asked them, "Who say ye that I am?" St. Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This was the first public declaration of Jesus' Messiahship. Even the disciples had only now come to recognize their Teacher as the long-promised Messiah. Jesus answered, "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jonas; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but My Father in Heaven. Thou art Peter [a stone, ready for the spiritual Temple, the first one to publicly acknowledge Jesus], and upon this rock [the Truth just declared, that I am Messiah] I will build My Church."

In the Greek the word Peter signifies a stone of moderate size, while the word here rendered rock signifies a mass of stone--a foundation. Our Lord Jesus Christ evidently meant that St. Peter's statement was a recognition of Himself as the great Foundation of the Divine Plan--Messiah. Upon that foundation truth, that Jesus is Christ, the Church would be built; and St. Peter was the first living stone to build himself upon that foundation by believing and confessing Christ. St. Peter himself gives us the same thought--that he and all others of the Church are living stones, being builded together as a holy Temple of God. This entire Gospel Age has been devoted to the building of these stones upon that great Foundation Rock, Christ Jesus. As soon as the great Temple of God shall be completed, this Gospel Age will end and the New Dispensation be inaugurated, for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

SM465

"THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM"

To St. Peter our Lord said, "I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." What did He mean? We shall not suppose that any who hear my voice or are sufficiently intelligent to read this discourse in the newspapers are stupid enough to think Jesus meant that Heaven is locked up, and that nobody could get in except as St. Peter would open the door or gate. True, some have voiced such fantastic notions. But we refuse to believe that intelligent people could be in earnest in any such view, the absurdity of which is apparent.

What the Lord meant is very simple, very beautiful; and we see exactly how it was fulfilled. He indicated that St. Peter, the first to confess Him, was to have a special honor in connection with the inauguration of the Church on earth. By the expression, "Kingdom of Heaven," is meant the Church, a class being called out of the world to become with Christ the ruling power of the world during the Millennium, through the great resurrection "change."--**1 Cor. 15:42,54**.

Jesus meant that St. Peter would be honored in being permitted to do an opening work in connection with the Church. The Bible shows us two different opening works and two different keys. The key is a symbol of power or authority or an initiative. St. Peter used his first key of privilege on the day of Pentecost. When the Holy Spirit came upon the early waiting Church, it was St. Peter that used this key. Standing up with the eleven, he lifted up his voice, explained the situation and opened the door to the Church of Christ for the Jews, admonishing them of their opportunity to enter. He told of the merit of Christ's death and how He had risen and had ascended on High, and how forgiveness of sins was, therefore, preached in His name.--**Acts 2:14-36**.

The second key to the Kingdom of Heaven--the Church, the embryo Kingdom preparing for glory--St. Peter used three and a half years later. Then the seventieth

SM466

week of Divine favor prophetically appointed to the Jews expired, and the time came that the Gentiles might be

fellow-heirs with the Jews of the same Promise. The opening work was with the household of Cornelius, to whom St. Peter preached Christ. The Lord blessed the preaching and granted the Holy Spirit to Cornelius and his family. Thus the Gentile door into the Kingdom was thrown wide open.--**Acts 10**.

REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF SINS

"That repentance and remission of sins might be preached in His name to all people" (**Luke 24:47**). God never gave power to bishops, priests or ministers of any denomination to forgive sins. "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Nor did Jesus give authority to His Apostles to forgive sins. They might preach repentance and forgiveness, ***but only in His name.***

Any child of God is Scripturally authorized to declare that Christ died for human sin, and has thus made arrangement by which all repentant sinners may be forgiven. It is an honor to be the bearer of such a Message from God to men; and every child of God is fully commissioned to tell the Divine Message to all who will hear.

In proportion as God's people throw away their sectarian spectacles they can read God's Message in the words of Jesus and the Apostles. Let us hold fast the precious Word which Jesus exhorted us to search and which is sufficient that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. Let us remember that there is only one true Church, each member of which is a saint, related to God and the Lord Jesus Christ through faith, repentance and remission of sin and the begetting of the Holy Spirit; that it is the only Church that is catholic, universal; and that a member of the Body of Christ is a member of that Body anywhere. "Now are ye the Body of Christ, and members in particular."--**1 Cor. 12:27**.

SM467

THE SEAS IN THE HOLLOW OF GOD'S HAND

"Who hath measured the seas in the hollow of His hand."--Isa. 40:12.

The wonderful force and immensity of the thought of our text cannot be appreciated by those who have never been upon the great ocean. As we travel through the water at railroad speed and keep watch in every direction, yet seldom see a vessel, large or small, day after day, we begin to get a little conception of the world in which we live. It is so much larger than previously we were able to comprehend. Yet by the aid of the telescope and of mathematical calculations we perceive that our earth and its seas are small, in comparison to many other worlds. We perceive that our solar system (our sun and his planetary satellites) constitutes but a small fraction of God's great creation. Astronomers tell us that by the aid of sensitive photographic plates they are able to count about one hundred and twenty-five millions of suns, around which planets are revolving, as our earth revolves around our sun. And they estimate that probably only a portion of these suns is visible to our naked eye--so far distant are they. Astronomers estimate that there are millions of other suns so far distant that their light cannot even be discerned by photography.

We stand appalled at the immensity of space and at the law and order which everywhere reign. We heartily assent to the words of the Prophet David, "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge; there is no place where their voice is not heard." The person who can look upon this wonderful display of superhuman power and believe that these worlds created themselves shows to the majority of us that if he has brains they are sadly disordered, unbalanced. The person who, after intelligent thought, concludes that there is no God,

SM468

that everything came to be what it is by chance or by the operation of some blind force--that person is described in the Scriptures in the following words: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."--**Psa. 14:1**.

"THE HALF WAS NEVER TOLD"

On first reading our text some of us might have been inclined to say, Ah, a beautiful poetic extravagance! But not so, dear friends! As scientific instruments demonstrate to us the immensity of the Universe we perceive that the Prophet used very moderate language indeed in his description of the majestic power and greatness of the Creator, representing Him as weighing the mountains in His balances and holding the seas in the hollow of His hand and that, from His standpoint, a thousand years are but as a watch in the night. How insignificantly small we all feel in the presence of our God! No wonder some great men have been inclined to say that humanity is too insignificant from the Divine standpoint to be worthy of the least consideration much less to be objects of Divine care and providence! The Scriptures encourage us to reason from the known to the unknown. They tell us that although God is so great, so wise, so powerful, He is also just and loving. And the more we consider the matter, the more reasonable this Bible description of the Almighty appears. His power we see demonstrated. The wisdom of One so great cannot be doubted. Then we come to consider, Could One so wise and so powerful be unjust or ungenerous? Our hearts answer, No! No one is really great who is devoid of justice and love. So surely as our God is Jehovah He must possess these qualities. He must be the Center of Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power--His four cardinal attributes.

When we came in contact with the Bible, and particularly after we learned something of its teachings and got rid of the misrepresentations which gathered about it during the Dark Ages--then we began to recognize it as

SM469

the message of Jehovah to His creatures. It informed us

that the great Creator of the Universe is not only Almighty and All-wise, but loving and kind, with Justice as the very foundation of His Empire. From the Bible we learned, too, that our Creator had been pleased to make us in His own image, in His own moral likeness, to the intent that we might enjoy Him and the fruits of His righteousness to all eternity. From this standpoint we began to realize that the loftiest sentiments of the human mind and heart are merely the reflections of this Creator. Thus coming into sympathetic accord with our Maker we can comprehend the principles of His character--what justice signifies, and mercy and kindness--what is wisdom as contrasted with foolishness. From this standpoint we were enabled to see the glorious perfection of our Maker's character and attributes, which justify the name which He has taken to Himself when He declares through His ambassador, "God is Love." As we come to realize this more and more, we are grasping the Infinite; we are getting near to the heart of the great Eternal One, who weighs the mountains as in a balance and measures the seas in the hollow of His hand.

"LIKE UNTO YOUR FATHER"

Godlikeness is love-likeness; and, as the Scriptures declare, "Love is the fulfilling of the [Divine] Law." (**Rom. 13:10**.) Our great Creator, the only living and true God, is thus seen in contrast with all the gods of the heathen, who are pitiless, merciless, vengeful, devilish. From the Bible we learn that Jehovah, the True God, takes delight in doing good--in the exercise of His Almighty Power and Wisdom in the creating of beings in whose everlasting life and enjoyment forever He takes pleasure. With such glorious purposes His creative work began with the celestial beings, who are still enjoying His favor. With similar benevolence He created man a little lower than the angels, crowning him with glory and honor as the king of all creatures, on the animal, the

human, plane, the likeness of his Maker, who is a Spirit. Hearkening to the explanations of the Divine purposes by the Apostles and Prophets, we have received assurances

that nothing has befallen humanity in all the dire experiences of the past six thousand years that the great Creator did not foresee. Furthermore, we have the assurances that Divine Wisdom purposes eventually that the tears and sorrows, cryings and dying--the penalty for Original Sin, under which man has suffered all these centuries--shall work no real disadvantage to His creatures. Instead, the end of the Divine Program will attest the various elements of the Divine character as nothing else could have done. The holy angels, who have known no sin, will in mankind read to eternity a valuable lesson of the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the wisdom and blessedness of righteousness.

And even mankind, although at present suffering seriously under the weight of Divine displeasure and condemnation to death, will ultimately be so blessed and the weight of blessing so outweigh the sorrows of the curse, that every creature shall bow the knee and every tongue confess to Divine Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, in connection with the Divine dealings with humanity.

"JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING"

A night of weeping six thousand years long, involving suffering and sorrow to twenty-thousand millions, is an awful thought. But the proposition is yet a different one when we remember that the majority of Adam's children die in infancy and that to those who live their threescore years and ten with labor and sorrow, there are pleasing and happifying experiences, as well as tears. And when we read that even the tears of a few years are a part of the disciplines, instructions and experiences which God designs shall be valuable lessons in preparation for a glorious and joyous eternity--then the whole matter begins to have a new aspect to our minds. If the light afflictions of this present time will work out blessings

for eternity then we can rejoice in them for ourselves, our neighbors and all humanity. And this is the Divine proposition. Not that God has ever purposed eternal life for a single rebellious soul, but that He has prepared blessing for all of Adam's race who shall come into full

harmony with Himself. At present He is teaching great general lessons to humanity as a whole by the exceeding sinfulness of sin. It would be too bad if, as these lessons are learned, there should be no opportunity of profiting by them. But there will be an opportunity of profiting, and this is the great Message which God has sent to mankind and which, Scripturally, is styled the Gospel--the "Good Tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people," through Christ.

The night of weeping, six thousand years long, is about to be followed by the morning of joy. The New Day, in which darkness and sin will be abolished and in which the Sun of Righteousness will bless and heal the world of mankind, is a Thousand-Year Day for the blessing and uplifting of our race. (**2 Peter 3:8**.) The Bible describes that Day in most glowing terms. It is the Day of Messiah, the Day in which God's Kingdom shall come and His will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven, the Day in which the poor and needy will be lifted up from the dung-hill of superstition and depravity, the Day in which the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth.

And there shall be no more fear. That Day will not end as do others. It will not be followed by a night, but lead on to a glorious eternity for all of God's creatures who appreciate Divine goodness and, using the Divinely provided opportunities, will return to full harmony with their Creator. Such He will in turn recognize as His sons and, at His right hand of favor, they will enjoy pleasures for evermore.

THE REVELATION OF OUR GOD

One of old truly said, "Thou art a God which hidest Thyself." (**Isa. 45:15**.) How true! As a result the

SM472

world by wisdom knows not God. He is near in His Wisdom and Love, yet He can be seen only by those whose eyes of understanding have been opened. But we are glad that the time is coming when all the blind eyes shall see clearly. "As I live, saith the Lord, the whole earth shall be filled with My glory," "The knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover

the great deep." (**Hab. 2:14**.) Then all shall see what God hath wrought; and our temporary blindness will but accentuate the glorious brightness of His Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power:

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

In the end it will be seen that the Divine permission of the reign of Sin and Death in the earth, instead of being a blot upon Divine character and a demonstration of Divine unwisdom and incompetency, will reveal the great Creator to His subjects, His children, as nothing else could have done. Besides, the experiences of mankind during the seven thousand years from Adam's creation to the end of Messiah's mediatorial Kingdom will demonstrate traits of the Divine character which could not otherwise be manifested to angels or to men.

For instance, without the permission of sin, the element of Divine Justice and the unalterable opposition of God to all sin would never have been known to His creatures. His sentence upon Father Adam and his race and the permission of the reign of Death and Sin for all these centuries have demonstrated the fact that Divine Justice cannot be trifled with. And this reign of sin and the strength of the Divine opposition to sin, and the sentence upon sinners, in turn gave opportunity for the exhibit of Divine mercy, compassion, sympathy, love. Undoubtedly God's Love was known to the angelic hosts before, but not to the same extent. His dealing with humanity

will prove the depth of His sympathy to angels and to men. "God commended His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." (**Rom. 5:8**.) Surely, as the poet declares, we have in this a manifestation of "Love Divine, all love excelling."

Perhaps some of us at one time were inclined to criticize our Maker and to say that He had no right to redeem us at the cost of Calvary; that it was wrong to cancel the sins of one and require their payment of another. But we erred. It was not thus. Rightly understood, the dealings of the Father with the Son add still further to His glory--magnify still more His Wisdom, Justice, Love

and Power. With all power and authority the Almighty would not command the death of His Son. For Jesus to become man's Redeemer meant His voluntary sacrifice of Himself. And how shall we understand this--the Redeemer's willingness to be man's Ransom-price? The Scriptures, replying, tell us that it was because of His great love for the Father, His great confidence in Him and His willingness to submit to the Divine will, purposes and arrangement in everything. Yet, notwithstanding the willingness of the Redeemer, the Father would not permit Him to engage in this great undertaking which would cost Himself so much, without a corresponding reward. Thus we read of Jesus, who "for the joy set before Him endured the Cross and despised the shame."

"NO! IT IS JUST LIKE HIM"

The Divine Plan being set forth to an old colored woman, she was asked if it was not strange that God should do such great things for us. Her answer was, "No, Master; it is just like Him!"

So we say respecting the great God who made the heavens and the earth and sun and stars. It is not strange that He should have a glorious Plan for all of His creatures--a Plan which will fully exemplify His character--His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power!

SM474

And amongst these wonderful things of the Divine Purpose none is more wonderful than that which relates to the Church class, "the Elect," drawn, called and begotten of the Holy Spirit during this Gospel Age. These, justified by faith instantly, are a separate class from the world, who will be justified, perfected, through works during Messiah's glorious Reign. The arrangement for their faith-justification through the merit of the Redeemer in advance of the world's justification is for the purpose of allowing these, who by nature are "children of wrath even as others," to become sons of God on the spirit plane, "partakers of the Divine nature."

Dealing on lines of impartiality, God's offer to these members of Adam's race, a "little flock" in all, is that, if they join with their Redeemer in sacrifice and walk in

His footsteps, His merit shall cover their blemishes and they may become for all eternity His glorious Bride and Joint-heir with Him in His Kingdom--that they may sit with Him in His Throne and be associated in the great work of uplifting the children of men.

How wonderful is our God, infinite in all His qualities! "Who hath known the mind of the Lord; who hath been His counsellor?" (**Rom. 11:34**.) How came all these wonderful things which are written in His Book, unless by His own knowledge? Let us bow before Him and adore Him, and be faithful followers in the footsteps of Jesus until the end of the race--until we receive the Crown of Life--glory, honor and immortality.

High in the Heavens, Eternal God,
Thy goodness in full glory shines;
Thy Truth shall break through every cloud
That veils and darkens Thy designs.

Forever firm Thy justice stands,
As mountains their foundations keep;
Wise are the wonders of Thy hands,
Thy judgments are a mighty deep.

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SM475

ZIONISM IN PROPHECY

[On October 9, 1910, Pastor Russell addressed a Jewish Mass Meeting, in response to a request by a Jewish Mass Meeting Invitation Committee. The invitation was signed by many prominent Hebrews of New York City. The invitation and Pastor Russell's response follow:--

New York, September 20, 1910.

Pastor C. T. Russell, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Dear Sir:--Your sympathetic interest in the Jewish people for years past has not escaped our notice. Your denunciations of the atrocities perpetrated against our race in the name of Christianity have added to our conviction that you are a sincere friend. Your discourse on "Jerusalem and Jewish Hopes" has struck a responsive cord in the hearts of many of our people. Still we doubted for a time if any Christian minister could really be interested in a Jew as a Jew and not merely from a hope of proselyting him. It is because of this feeling that some of us request you to make a public statement respecting the nature of your interest in our people and we desire you to know that the statement you did make was very satisfactory. In it you assured us that you are not urging Jews to become Christians and join any of the sects or parties of Protestants or Catholics. That statement, Pastor Russell, has been widely published in the Jewish journals. We feel, therefore, that we have nothing to fear from you as a race. On the contrary, in that statement you mentioned that the foundation of your interest in our people is built upon your faith in the testimonies of our Law and the messages of our Prophets. You may well understand how surprised we are to find a Christian minister acknowledging that there are prophecies of the Bible still unfulfilled, which belong to the Jew and not to the Christian, and that these prophecies, according to your studies are nearing a fulfilment of momentous interest to our Jewish race and, through us as a people, to the nations of the world.

These things, Pastor Russell, have led to the formation of a Jewish Mass Meeting Committee, which, by this letter, requests you to give a public discourse, especially to our people. If you will kindly accept this invitation, will you permit us to suggest a topic for your address, which, we believe, will be very interesting to the public and especially to the Jews, namely, "Zionism in Prophecy"?

As for the meeting: We suggest Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, October 9th. We have secured an option on the Hippodrome, New York's largest and finest Auditorium, for that date, and we hope that

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this date and the place will be agreeable to your convenience. We assure you also of a large audience of deeply interested Hebrews, besides whoever may come of the general public.

Trusting to hear from you soon, we subscribe ourselves,

Yours respectfully,

JEWISH MASS MEETING COMMITTEE.

Brooklyn, N.Y., Sept. 21, 1910.

Jewish Mass Meeting Committee, New York.

Gentlemen:--Your kind invitation to address the Jewish Mass Meeting in the New York Hippodrome Sunday, October 9th, came duly.

I thank you for the confidence which this invitation implies. The date you have selected is not only appropriate in its relationship to the Jewish New Year, but very suitable to my own arrangements, as I leave on October 12th for appointments in London and elsewhere.

Amongst the several prominent members of your race suggested for Chairman of the Mass Meeting, I select Mr. John Barrondess, because I have had the pleasure personally of conference with him and because I know him to be very loyal to the interests of your people and because I believe him to be very highly esteemed as such in the counsels of your race. Faithfully and respectfully yours,

C. T. RUSSELL.

The Hippodrome is an Opera House with a capacity of about five thousand. It was crowded that day, and many failed to gain access. The Jewish people of New York, who number more than a million, have become deeply impressed by various discourses which Pastor Russell has delivered and were alert to hear his presentation of Zionism, as foretold by the Prophets. The speaker held his immense audience spellbound for nearly two hours, all apparently as unconscious of the flight of time as was the speaker himself. After the service the Hebrews could be seen in little groups discussing the subject. The speaker's views were evidently shared by the majority. Altogether the meeting was something unique. Never before did Jews give such attention to the message of a Christian minister; and never before did a Christian minister give such a message to the Jews.]

WHAT PASTOR RUSSELL SAID

While once I had been inclined to discard the Bible as unreliable along the lines of Higher Criticism, I subsequently have given it very earnest study, entirely apart from all creeds and theories of men. This study has

SM477

greatly enlightened my mind and has given me a very different view of the sacred Book. I now have absolute confidence in it. I now realize, not only that there is a great Creator, but that He is definite, orderly, in His dealings with humanity, in His shaping of earth's affairs. For instance, **Psalm 102** mentions the time, yea, the set time, for the return of Divine favor to Zion. So we find matters all through the Scriptures. In due time David, Solomon and others represented Jehovah in the kingdom of Israel and "sat upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord." Later the kingdom was taken from Zedekiah, the last of the line of David to sit upon the throne of God's typical Kingdom. When the dominion was taken from him the Gentile governments were recognized, but not in the same manner as was Israel. None of them was designated the Kingdom of God. None of them was given perpetuity of rule.

ZEDEKIAH REJECTED--

NEBUCHADNEZZAR ACKNOWLEDGED

But Gentile governments were promised a lease of power during the period when Israel would be cast off from God's favor. Then at the end of the appointed time the Gentile lease of earthly power in turn, and God's original provision for Israel to represent His Kingdom in the world, would return. These are the set times referred to by the Psalmist. God's promise to David-- "The sure mercies of David"--were that of the fruit of his loins one should sit on the Throne of the Lord forever. The real purport of this promise was that Messiah, the long-promised King of Israel, would be the root and off-shoot of the Davidic line and blessed of the Lord; His Kingdom should be an everlasting one and fully competent

to fulfil all of the Divine promises made to Abraham --"In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 12:3**.

So long as God acknowledged the nation of Israel as His Kingdom their kings were His representatives; but

SM478

when Zedekiah was rejected it was not inconsistent on the Lord's part to recognize the Gentile governments, as above suggested. Of King Zedekiah we read, "O thou profane and wicked Prince, whose time has come that iniquity should have an end. Remove the diadem. Take off the crown. This shall not be the same. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it until He come whose right it is [Messiah], and I will give it unto Him." (**Ezek. 21:25-27**.) It was at this very time that God gave the lease of earthly power to Nebuchadnezzar and his successors, as is related in Daniel's prophecy. Nebuchadnezzar dreamed, but forgot his vision. Daniel the Prophet, made prisoner at an earlier date, was by Divine providence introduced to the king as the one person in all the world able to rehearse the king's dream and to give its interpretation, and his power so to do is declared to have been of the Lord.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S VISION

OF GENTILE DOMINION

The vision was of a stupendous image. Its head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar's Empire--Babylon. Its breasts and arms of silver represented the Medo-Persian Empire. Its belly and thighs of brass represented the Grecian Empire. Its strong legs of iron represented the Roman Empire, East and West. Its feet of iron and clay represented Papal Rome. The iron continues to represent civil governments; and the miry clay, making them appear like stone, represented ecclesiasticism as it is now mixed up with the politics of the ten kingdoms of Europe. The whole period of time in which these various Gentile governments would dominate the world would last until Messiah's promised Kingdom. And this period is symbolically stated to have been "seven times"; that is, seven years--evidently not literal years, but

symbolical.--**Dan. 2:28-45**; **Lev. 26:18,24,28**.

At their end the lease of earthly power of Gentile governments will terminate in the great Time of Trouble

SM479

foretold by Daniel (**12:1**). Then Messiah shall stand up in the sense of assuming control of earth's affairs and Gentile governments will cease; for all nations shall serve and obey Messiah. Then God's Chosen People, Israel, will come to the front in the world's affairs; for they will become the representatives and instruments amongst men of Messiah's Kingdom, which will be spiritual and invisible, as is that of the Prince of this world, the Prince of Darkness, whom Messiah will bind or restrain during the thousand years of His Reign of Righteousness and destroy at the conclusion, when He shall deliver over the Kingdom of earth to the Father. Mankind will then be perfect; for all wilful sinners will be destroyed in the Second Death. Meantime, not only will Messiah's Reign bless and uplift Israel, but through Israel the blessing will extend to every nation, people, kindred and tongue in full accord with the Divine promise and oath made to Abraham more than thirty centuries ago.

All this is briefly and beautifully represented in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as explained by Daniel. He saw a stone taken from the mountain without human aid. He watched and saw the stone smite the image on its feet and beheld, as the result, complete demolishment of the Gentile systems. This smiting of the image in the feet symbolically represents that it will be by Divine Power that present institutions will all come to naught preparatory to the establishment of the Kingdom of God in their stead.

MESSIAH'S KINGDOM IN THE VISION

Then Messiah's Kingdom, symbolized by the stone, not only will fill the place where the image stood, but gradually increasing, will fill the whole earth. From this standpoint it is not difficult for us to believe the words of the Psalmist that there is a time for God's gathering Zion, yea, a set time--fixed and unalterable. I do not pretend to say the day or month or year in which these things would be accomplished, in which the Gentile lease

of earth's dominion would expire and Messiah's Kingdom assume control. I do, however, offer a suggestion: So far as I can discern, the time for these stupendous events is very much closer than many of us had supposed. The seven Times, or years, of Gentile domination, reckoned on the basis suggested in the Scriptures themselves, should be interpreted a day for a year, lunar time. Seven years in lunar time would represent 2520 days; and these symbolically interpreted, would mean 2520 years--from the time Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the image, was recognized down to the time of the expiration of the lease of Gentile power, when the stone shall smite the image in the feet. So far as I have been able to determine, the year of Zedekiah's dethronement was 606 B.C. Thus calculated the 2520 years of Gentile lease of power will expire in October, 1914. There are some who claim that Zedekiah's dethronement should be dated B.C. 588. If this be true it could make a difference of but eighteen years and give the date 1932. My convictions, however, favor 1914.

ZIONISM'S FUTURE ASSURED.

For more than thirty years I have been presenting to Christian people the views I am today presenting specially to Jews, at the invitation of your Committee. Thirty years ago I attempted to tell to Israel the good tidings that God's set time to remember Zion had come. But that seemingly was too early. God's set time for Israel to hear was still future. I am still waiting for God's own time and way for the fulfilment of **Isaiah 40:1,2**, and other Scriptures relating to Israel.

About twenty years ago Providence raised up for your people a great leader, Dr. Herzl, whose name is now a household word with your race. While your people were unready for any message that I could give them they were ready for what God sent them through Dr. Herzl--a message of hope, a message of national aspiration which quickened the pulse of your people into new hope respecting the future of the Jews. Dr. Herzl's endeavor was

SM481

to have all loyal sons of Israel rise from the dust
and aspire to be a nation amongst nations and to provide
a home for the persecuted of their race in Russia
and Eastern Europe. Dr. Herzl struck the popular cord
in the hearts of the people. At first it was purely
political, and the name of Zion meant little of anything
religious; but gradually Dr. Herzl and all the leaders of
the counsels of your people began to see that the religious
element of the movement was the most powerful.

Dr. Herzl has been succeeded by Dr. Nordau, also evidently
a man of great talent and great patriotism; but
Zionism languishes. I am disclosing no secret when I
tell you that amongst the leaders as well as amongst the
rank and file, Zionism is trembling in the balances and
fearful of coming to naught. It has spent its force along
the lines originally inaugurated; but it will not fail, as
many fear. Without assuming the role of a seer I answer
you that Zionism is about to take on fresh vigor; that its
most prosperous days are yet to come. According to my
understanding of the Hebrew Prophets the time of
"Jacob's trouble" is not yet ended. Further ***pogroms*** of
Russia may be expected, and further atrocities in Roumania
and elsewhere. It is sad indeed to be obliged to
admit that these tribulations will probably come to you
from professed Christians. How ashamed I feel of those
who thus dishonor the name and the teachings of my
Master, I cannot find words to express! They are deluded.
They have misunderstood the Teacher whom they
profess to follow. Their thought is that God will torment
eternally all who do not profess the name of Christ. Controlled
by delusion they are serving the god Adversary
and dishonoring Jesus. But as the trials and difficulties
of the patriarch Joseph were God's providences to lead
him on to influence and power and honor, so will all these
experiences and persecutions work blessings for your
race and tend to drive them out of their present satisfaction
and make them long for home--for Palestine.

SM482

These experiences, in connection with the voice of the
Prophets, which will henceforth more and more ring in
your ears, will be the providences of God to accomplish

for you more along the lines of Zionism than personal pride and national patriotism.

It is not my thought that the eight millions of Jews in the world will all go to Palestine, even though it has been estimated that, under most favorable conditions, the land could support more than twice that many. It is my thought that some of your most earnest and saintly people will go to Palestine quickly, that the rejuvenation there will be astonishing to the world. Further, it is my thought that Jews in every part of the world, in proportion as they come under the holy influences of God's promises through the Prophets, will go to Palestine sympathetically --by encouraging those who can better go than themselves and by financial assistance and the establishment there of great enterprises. Permit me to suggest that in the Time of Trouble, incidental to the transfer of Gentile rule to the power of Messiah, all financial interests will be jeopardized. Many of your race, growing wealthy, will surely take pleasure in forwarding the work of Zionism, as soon as they shall realize that it is of God, foretold through the Prophets. And those of your people of insufficient faith to use their means in forwarding the Lord's work at this important juncture will, before very long, find themselves in the condition pictured by the Prophet Ezekiel, who declares (**7:19**) that in this great Day of Trouble--"They shall cast their silver in the streets and their gold shall be removed; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord." The great Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in (**Mal. 3:1-3**) will test and prove you as a people. Those who worship idols of gold and silver, stocks and bonds, will receive severe chastisement at His hand before He will grant them a share in the coming blessings.

SM483

WHEN GOD WAS ALONE!

"From everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God." (Psa. 90:2.) "I am Jehovah, that is My name and My glory will I not give to another." (Isa. 42:8.) "To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things." (1 Cor. 8:6.) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one--Jehovah."--Deut. 6:4.

These and other Scriptures tell us of a personal God, the Father or Life-Giver of all, the Great One who inhabiteth Eternity. St. Paul declares that to the heathen "there are lords many and gods many, but to us there is but one God, the Father," and one appointed Agent of His in dealing with humanity--one Lord Jesus Christ --"and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus, Messiah, is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The Scriptures tell us of "the beginning of the creation of God." Hence there was a time before that beginning of creation when Jehovah God was alone--"He that inhabiteth Eternity." Not even the great Michael was with Him, the great Messiah, whom God has so highly honored and whom He declares He will still further honor throughout a glorious eternity. He was not with the Father before the beginning of creation; for He Himself was "the Beginning of the creation of God"--"the First-born of every creature." (**Rev. 3:14**; **Col. 1:15**.) He was the first expression or manifestation of the Divine attributes.--**John 1:18**.

DIVINE ATTRIBUTES GLORIOUS

This mighty God, Jehovah, self-centered, self-contained, is ours, the same yesterday, today and forever. He changes not.

Every attribute of the Divine character was the same millions of years ago that it is today, but that character

SM484

was unrevealed. Every step of creation has tended to

display the Divine character more and more, and each successive step and development of creation has brought forth new creatures capable of comprehending the Eternal One. We deem it not unreasonable to assume that Jehovah's creative power will continue to be exercised throughout all coming time.

Astronomical photography now reveals nearly 125,000,000 suns, around which circle systems such as the one which circles around our sun, and of which our earth is a part. We deem it not unreasonable to assume, from the Scriptures, that the great work of ordering all those hundreds of millions of planets stretches forward into eternity, and that the work of Divine grace, begun on the planet "Earth," will be continued throughout the Universe, not only in conjunction with the planetary systems we can discern, but probably with millions of planetary systems too far removed from us to be discerned.

THE PERMISSION OF EVIL

Doubtless Divine methods in connection with other worlds and other inhabitants will display the manifold wisdom of God. For instance, we understand the Bible to indicate that while the permission of evil in the earth was wise, it will not necessarily be wise or expedient for any reason to permit a similar reign of Sin and Death in any other of the millions of worlds, in connection with their ordering or development and their peopling with glorious creatures who will show forth the praises of the great Creator without their passing through experiences with sin and death such as have been permitted in connection with the humanity of earth.

Can we not see a broad reason for the permission of evil on the earth--for the permission of the reign of Sin and Death, which for six thousand years has apparently disgraced the Creator, degraded humanity, astonished the angels and constituted our race a groaning creation?

SM485

Only when we discern that Messiah's Kingdom will surely bring order out of this confusion, do we begin to get the proper focus upon our subject and realize something of the greatness of our God.

From the standpoint of the completion of the Divine purposes in connection with humanity, and from that standpoint alone, can we see illustrated Divine Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power. The primary lesson was Justice--that sin brings suffering and eventually death. The second lesson was that of Divine compassion, sympathy --Love. This lesson was manifested in the sending of the Redeemer and His subsequent reward of exaltation, and His gathering of an "elect" Church to be His associates in glory and in the blessing of the redeemed race. The Reign of Glory, the Reign of Messiah, soon to be introduced, will lift up poor humanity from sin and sorrow, from degradation and death, and give to each and all the fullest opportunity to return to human perfection and to Divine favor and everlasting life. In that work of human restitution, which will include the awakening of mankind from the sleep of death, the one great lesson will be the greatness of the Divine Power which will be exercised through Messiah, the God-like One, the Prince of Life, "the Prince of Glory," the Redeemer, the Regenerator of Adam and the whole race of mankind, his posterity, all of whom have shared his death sentence.

And finally, from the standpoint of the completion of Jehovah's great purposes and dealings with man and in respect to Him, will stand revealed the Foreknowledge and Wisdom of God, who knew the end from the beginning and who foresaw how even the permission of a reign of Sin and Death could be made eventually to work out to His own glory and to the blessing and instruction of His creatures on both the human and the angelic planes. Then will be revealed to all, the glorious character of their Creator, and the necessity for His requirement of absolute righteousness and perfection.

SM486

Surely, the result eventually will be as the Scriptures declare, that all shall learn righteousness, and hate iniquity; and that every creature in Heaven and in earth and under the earth shall acclaim both Jehovah, who sitteth upon the Throne of the Universe, and the Lamb, the Redeemer, forever.--**Rev. 5:13,14**.

Were we to allow ourselves to speculate respecting the future--respecting the Divine purposes in relation to the millions of worlds around us, our speculations would

run thus: Those instructed and used of Jehovah in conjunction with the initial development of the Divine Plan in the earth will thereby be fitted and prepared to be the Divine Agents to other worlds. The Great Redeemer and His "elect" associates, after dealing with humanity for their uplift out of sin and death conditions, will surely be qualified for further service in other worlds, to "show forth the praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."

And what shall we say of humanity when perfected at the end of Messiah's glorious Reign? Will not all be well prepared, not only to approve righteousness in themselves, but to tell in other worlds, to other races, the story of the fall and of the reign of Sin and Death resulting; and of the redemption accomplished by God's love; of the great restitution; and of the lessons learned?

THE UNCHANGEABLE ONE

The qualities of the Divine character which we have just considered--Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power--belonged to our Creator in the great eternity preceding creation. But there was no one at that time to appreciate God. It requires a full view of the perfected Plan of the Ages to make known to any and to all the glory of the Lord. As we have just seen, thus far the secret of the Lord and the glories of His character are known only to His "sons," begotten of His Holy Spirit. But the time nears when "the whole earth shall be full of the

SM487

knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the great deep." He and His glorious government will then be "the desire of all nations"; "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." --**Hag. 2:7**; **Isa. 40:5**.

St. Paul assures us that every feature of the Divine Plan which we see in process of execution was known to Jehovah from before the foundation of the world. He declares that these things God purposed in Himself before the foundation of the world. The creative processes, which have been operating for thousands of years, were all surely elaborated in the mind of Jehovah before the

creative work began. In that purpose angels had a part --of how many grades we may not surely know, but they are variously designated in the Holy Scriptures as "angels, principalities and powers." Later came the creation of man, "a little lower than the angels" and crowned with earthly honor, dignity and power, in the image and likeness of his glorious Creator.

These creations varied not in degrees of perfection and imperfection. Each was perfect on its own plane. Each intelligent creature was a free, moral agent, and hence, whether on the angelic or human plane, was created in the likeness of God, unblemished, but with different capacities and abilities. Almighty God, infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, purposed the orderly exercise of His infinite powers, as a great Father, desirous of giving life and happiness to His creatures.

These intelligent ones were designated "Sons of God" so long as they maintained their attitude of perfect loyalty to Him, their Creator and Father. Not only was it the Divine purpose thus to give pleasure to millions of creatures to be created, but it was also the Divine will to manifest to His creatures His own greatness and the perfection of His own goodness that they might enjoy Him and He enjoy them everlastingly.

We are not to understand that Almighty God was

lonely in that great Eternity before creation began. On the contrary, human loneliness is largely because of human deficiency. What we lack we seek for in others. But the great Jehovah lacked nothing; He was complete in Himself; He needed not companionship to complete or to supplement His happiness. It was His pleasure to create, that His creatures might have joy by reflecting as a whole His Divine qualities implanted in them.

The wreck of the human race produced by sin He well foreknew. Nor did this wrecking of human hopes defeat, nor was it in danger of defeating, the Divine purpose. It merely demonstrates to angels and to men the graces of the Divine character and shows unto all the more fully the qualities of God proper to be appreciated and copied by all His intelligent creatures.

THE SEVEN-SEALED SCROLL

When God would illustrate to us His own great personality, when He would show to His creatures how He is working all things according to the counsel of His own will, He pictured it symbolically in the Book of Revelation. In that vision the Throne of the Eternal One is graphically portrayed as the seat of Divine power and authority for the Universe, with angels as ministering spirits. Then is described a scroll, in the right hand of Jehovah--in Divine power and keeping. That scroll, written inside and outside, was "sealed with seven seals," representing the complete secrecy of the Divine purposes related in that scroll. From before the foundation of the world it had been in the hand (in the power) of the great Eternal. He had given hints respecting it and had caused it to be symbolized in the Law and to some extent to be described by the Prophets. But still it was a Hidden Mystery; for the Prophets understood not the things which they wrote; nor could any understand them until the Father's "due time."--**1 Peter 1:10-12**.

Not only was the Divine Program thus sealed and safely secreted, but it was the Divine determination that

it should be given only to the One who would demonstrate His worthiness to be Jehovah's honored Agent for the carrying out of those purposes--predestinated before the world was. The honor of being the Agent, the Representative of Jehovah, to carry out the Divine purposes, should be disclosed in advance only to the One who would demonstrate His worthiness to be the great Messiah, the great Deliverer, Prophet, Priest, Judge, King of Israel.

High as the Redeemer stood in the Divine counsels and fellowship before He came into the world to be man's Redeemer, it was not then granted even to Him to know all the mysteries of the Divine Program. But by virtue of His high station, His perfection, His obedience, the privilege was given to Him first to become man's Redeemer, at the cost of personal humiliation and death; and then, if faithful in this redemptive work, it should be His to be glorified, exalted to the Divine nature, and to execute the Divine Program to its completion. First, He must manifest His devotion and loyalty to the Father,

ere He could be trusted even with the knowledge of the Divine Program for blessing the whole world of mankind.

"WORTHY IS THE LAMB"

All this is declared in the account. (**Rev. 5**.) The proclamation was made, Who is worthy to receive the scroll and to break its seals and to execute the wonderful purposes of God? None was found worthy! Finally, One demonstrated His worthiness. He left the courts of glory; He humbled Himself, He "was made flesh." More than this, being found in fashion as a man, He consecrated His ***all*** to the doing of the Father's will, even unto death, the death of the cross. Wherefore, says the Apostle, "God also highly exalted Him" and gave Him a standing, a rank, a title above all others. (**Phil. 2:7-9**.) He commissioned Him to execute all the Divine purposes; and to Him He handed over the Scroll with the privilege of opening its seals and comprehending its message.

SM490

In the symbolic picture John saw a freshly slain Lamb at the same time that the angelic messenger declared that the Lion of the tribe of Judah had prevailed. Jesus proved Himself worthy and therefore the privilege of understanding the things of the Divine Plan, and the privilege of executing them rightfully belonged to Him. The Lamb slain represented the work of Jesus from the day He was thirty years of age and made His consecration. There He became dead to self and to the world. When He successfully finished this great contract, He cried on Calvary, "It is finished."

This glorious Victor was then acknowledged by God and by the holy angels to be the worthy One to whom the Father would entrust the execution of every feature of the Divine Program, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory and honor, dominion and might." He has not yet completed His great work there and then entrusted to Him. The Father glorified Him and set Him at His own right hand--the place of Divine favor--when He finished His demonstration of loyalty even unto death. As yet He has only begun His great work. The blessing of the Church as "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife,"

is the first step in the glorious Program; and it is not yet completed. Following it will come the blessing of the world, all the families of the earth, not only the living but the dead. His declaration to those now called to be His Bride is, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne even as I overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne."--**Rev. 3:21**.

"To us there is one God," says the Apostle. All wisdom and power are His. Recent electrical inventions assist us greatly in apprehending His greatness. What man can do limitedly with the telephone and wireless telegraphy merely hint to us of the infinite resources of the Eternal One--from everlasting to everlasting, God. But our knowledge of the Divine Justice and Love satisfies our hearts--our Great Creator becomes our Father.

SM491

"THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION OF GOD"

"In the beginning was the Word [Logos] and the Word [Logos] was with the God and the Word [Logos] was a God. The same was in the beginning with the God. By him were all things made and without him was not anything made that was made."--John 1:1,2.

The Logos was Jehovah God's first creative act as respects intelligent beings. Long before man was created, or our earth was brought from its chaotic condition, long before angels and cherubim were created, Divine Power brought forth a Son on the spirit plane--Jehovah's First-Begotten --glorious, perfect, beautiful--His own image.

This glorious One is in our text designated the Logos, the Word, the Message, the Expression of God. In the Old Testament He is symbolically referred to as "Wisdom" (**Prov. 8:22-30**): "Jehovah possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old....Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him."

This mighty One, personified as Wisdom, is declared by St. Paul to be "the First-born of all creation." (**Col. 1:15-18**.) The Psalmist similarly refers to Him as Jehovah's "First-born, higher than the kings of earth." (**Psa. 89:27**.) Jesus thus refers to Himself as one who had a prehuman existence, saying, "Before Abraham was, I am." (**John 8:14,23,52**.) The glorified, ascended Christ, in Apocalyptic vision, declared the same great truth, that He was "the Beginning of the creation of God." (**Rev. 3:14**.) And again He declared, "I am the First and the Last."--**Rev. 1:17**; **2:8**.

All of these Scriptures fully corroborate the statement of our text that He who subsequently became the world's Redeemer was long before, the primary Son of God. He ranked first, not only in seniority, but also in

SM492

honor, dignity and station, above all other sons of God,

not one of whom was like Himself--the direct Creation of Jehovah. "For all things were made by the Logos, and without Him was not one thing made that was made." He was not the Creator in the primary sense of the word, but in the secondary sense. He was the active Agent of Jehovah in all of His subsequent creative work. Thus He was not only the First-born of all creation, but, individually, He was also the last of Jehovah's creation. To this agree the words of St. Paul, "All things are ***of*** the Father and all things are ***by*** the Son."

Surely many have failed to appreciate not only the Divine personality of Jehovah, but also the greatness of Him who is styled "the Son of God."

IN THE DARK AGES

There was a time when God's people did not possess the Bible in their own language, when the ability to read it was extremely limited, and when nobody possessed such wonderful Bibles (with references and concordances) as are common today. It should not surprise us that in that far-off time confusing errors crept into the traditional faith of the Church. The contention of the Jews was that Jesus of Nazareth was an impostor and that His mighty works were done under the influence of the fallen angel, Beelzebub. Should we think it strange that in the heat of discussion some of the followers of Jesus would make extravagant claims for Him in their endeavor to oppose the theory that made of Messiah a mere sinful man?

It does not surprise us, therefore, that early in the third century claims were put forward in the name of Christ and His Apostles which neither He nor they ever authorized. The Apostles declared Him to be "the Son of God with power," and that He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (**Heb. 7:26**.) The Master Himself declared, "My Father is greater than I." "He is above all;" "He sent Me;" "I came to do the

will of My Father in Heaven, and not Mine own will;" "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; Thy Law is written in My heart."--**John 14:28**; **6:38**; **Psa. 40:7,8**.

True, He also declared, "I and My Father are one";

but He showed in what this oneness consisted--that it was a oneness of will, of purpose, of work. Because He had fully submitted His will to the Father's will and had made the Father's will His own, therefore they were one.--**John 5:19-23**; **10:30**.

The Master again illustrated this oneness when He prayed for His disciples that "they all might be one, even as Thou, Father, and I are one." (**John 17:11,21,22**.) Evidently the Master did not pray that His disciples should all become ***one in person,*** but that they should all become of one mind, of one heart, of one disposition through their loyalty and obedience to the Word and to the Spirit of God. And this oneness, He declared, was the kind which subsisted between the Heavenly Father and Himself.

Leaving the simplicity of the teachings of Jesus and of the Apostles, some went to the extreme of declaring that Jesus was His own Father; that the terms Father, Son and Holy Spirit all applied to one person, who manifested Himself to mankind in three different ways corresponding to these names--one God in three manifestations. Others took a still different view and claimed that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit were three Gods who operated as one. In proportion as these unscriptural human theories were received, they produced confusion. And when asked how three persons could logically be one person, and how one person could be three persons equal in glory and power, of course no answer could be given. Then the subterfuge was raised, "This is a great mystery which nobody can explain."

It should not surprise us from what we know of the structure of human nature that these extreme views were opposed by others of the opposite extreme, some claiming

that Jesus was a mere man; that He was born as are other men; that Joseph was His father, etc. Thus we behold the danger of any variation whatever from the precise teachings of the Word of God.

It should be needless to say to Bible students that there is nothing in the Bible which declares a trinity of Gods. There is just one passage of Scripture quoted in proof of the Trinity (**1 John 5:7,8**); it is never quoted by scholars, because all scholars know that it was tampered

with, several words having been added in the seventh century which are not found in any New Testament manuscript of earlier date. And those added words make the statement as a whole foolish.

If you will turn in your Bibles to this passage, you may strike out the spurious words as follows in verse seven: ***"In Heaven the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one";*** and in Verse eight the words, ***"and there are three that bear witness in earth."***

After thus eliminating the spurious additions, after thus removing from the precious ointment this dead fly of falsehood which was inserted for the very purpose of deceiving, and because no Scripture could be found to give color to the doctrine of the trinity--then you will be able to read that portion of the Word of God in its purity and simplicity. Then the "mystery" part will be gone from it forever. It will be in full accord with the entire Bible in declaring, "To us there is ***one God,*** the Father, of whom are all things, and ***one Lord,*** Jesus Christ, by whom are all things and we by Him." (**1 Cor. 8:6**.) How absurdly the passage reads in our Common Version, stating that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are bearing witness in Heaven that Jesus is the Son of God!

The pure Word of God presents simply and beautifully the fact that the great Creator, the Father of all mercies, is Jehovah God; and that He has an Only Begotten Son who is yet to be the Savior or Deliverer of all of Adam's race willing to accept the grace of God provided

in Him. And there is one Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of Truth," "the Spirit of Wisdom," "the spirit of a sound mind," the spirit of power, energy, will, mind of the Father--which is also the spirit of the Son, and which must be also the spirit, disposition, mind, will of all those who now come unto the Father as sons through the adoption which is in Christ Jesus.

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN HONORED

Before the beginning of the creation of God, before the Only Begotten of the Father became the Alpha of Creation, the Father had wonderful purposes in Himself respecting all His great Plan for the everlasting future.

It included this world, and mankind, and the permission of sin, and the redemption of man from sin and its penalty, and the restoration to be accomplished by Messiah's Kingdom and the glorious work of eternity in further creations in world after world.

But, as the Master declared, these things the Father had kept in His own power--in His own hand. He divulged them not to the angels, nor even to His dearly beloved "Only Begotten Son." We have seen how this Divine secret, Divine purpose, was symbolically represented in the scroll in the hands of Jehovah, as pictured in **Revelation 5:1**. We have seen that this revelation was delivered to the Lamb, the Only Begotten One, after He had been slain--after His consecration at Jordan, and in its fullness after His death at Calvary, when He ascended on High, glorified at the right hand of the Father's majesty.--**Acts 2:32,33**.

But before the Logos was made flesh, before He undertook to be man's Redeemer, the Heavenly Father set before Him the glorious proposition. He informed the Son that He had a plan, a scroll, and that the execution thereof was to be given to One who would prove Himself worthy, by demonstrating His loyalty to the Divine will.

We read that God ***sent*** His Only Begotten Son into the world, but we are not to understand from this that He

came under Divine command, the refusal of which would have meant Divine displeasure and His own degradation. On the contrary, we understand the matter clearly when we hearken to the Apostle's statement. He declares that Messiah left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, and humbled Himself to take upon Himself man's form and then consecrated Himself even unto death--all because of the joy that the Father had set before Him. The joy set before the Logos was:

(1) That thus He might serve the Heavenly Father's gracious purposes.

(2) That He might recover mankind from the state of sin and death into which all were plunged by Father Adam's one act of disobedience.

(3) Additionally He was promised the honor and distinction of the Messianic Kingdom by and through which mankind would be blessed and uplifted.

(4) He was promised a special Bride class to be selected from among the redeemed race of men--a class having His own disposition of loyalty to God and to righteousness, and faithful unto death--which like Himself would be exalted in the Chief Resurrection from the earthly to Heavenly condition, far above principalities and powers and every name that is named.

(5) He was promised that His own personal distinction would be to all eternity a participation in the qualities of the Divine nature; He would possess not only glory and honor, but also inherent life, deathlessness, immortality. --**John 5:26**; **Heb. 1:1-3**.

For these joys, He left His glory, He was made flesh, He sacrificed His earthly life; and, being raised from the dead, He entered into His promised joy. Since, He is waiting in expectation for the completion of the Church, His Bride, the members of His Body, assured that then the Father will give Him the heathen for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, that He may bind Satan, put down sin and uplift the sinner

SM497

and bring everlasting order out of earth's confusion by destroying the wilfully wicked.

A GOD BUT NOT THE GOD

As all Bible scholars know, the word ***elohim*** in the Old Testament Hebrew is of plural form, somewhat like our English word sheep. Thus we read in Genesis, "The Elohim [Gods] said, Let us make man in our image." This would very properly apply to the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Son, in full accord with our text. "Without Him [the Logos] was not anything made that was made." The word Elohim signifies, literally, ***the mighty, the powerful, the great.*** Surely it would be strictly proper to consider the ***Logos*** mighty, great, powerful as the active Agent of the Almighty One, Jehovah, who is also styled the Mighty Elohim.

This word ***elohim*** not only is used in respect to the Heavenly Father and His Heavenly Son, but it is also used in respect to angels as the messengers of God and of Christ, mighty to the doing of the will of God. (**Psa. 8:5**.) "Thou hast made man a little lower than the angels

[elohim]." Still further notice that this word ***elohim*** is used in respect to men; when Divinely appointed and active as God's agents they were mighty, or ***elohim.*** Thus we read of the seventy judges of Israel appointed by Moses, "The master shall bring him unto the judges ***(elohim)."*** **--Ex. 21:6**.

We have given a very literal rendering of our text, showing the fine distinction of the Greek original in a way that our English version does not show it. As Bible students we have not in the past been sufficiently critical in our study of God's Word; but now, in Divine providence, it is possible for those even who have practically no knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew to understand the Scripture presentations thoroughly.

Our text in the common English version misrepresents the true thought of the original; but as we have rendered it, the matter is so simple and clear that a child may

understand. Jehovah God is from everlasting to everlasting and had no beginning. The Logos had a beginning --He Himself was the beginning. "In the beginning was the Logos and the Logos was ***a*** God." He was a mighty One, the Beginning of creation, the First and the Last Creation of ***the*** God, the Almighty One--"of whom, by whom and through whom are all things."

All honor, majesty and worship belong primarily to the great Father of lights; and to Him Jesus directed the attention of His followers, saying, "After this manner pray ye--Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name." It is always therefore eminently proper in the highest sense of the word that our petitions should ascend to "the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift."

It has pleased the Father to so honor His First Begotten Son, and to so reward His faithfulness unto death, and to so make Him the Head in all things over the Church which is His Body, that it is eminently proper that, in the language of the Master, "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." (**John 5:23**.) They should not honor the Son instead of the Father, however; for the Latter declares, "My glory will I not give to another." The exalted Christ is to be honored, yea, worshiped, because the Father has highly exalted Him.

Moreover, there is a special reason why all who recognize Jesus as the world's Redeemer should recognize the propriety of including Him with the Father in their thoughts and in their prayers. This is because, by Divine appointment, He is the Church's Advocate with the Father--the One through whom we are acceptable to God. And so with the world in the future, throughout Messiah's Reign, this will be equally proper; for then He will be the world's Mediator, standing between God and men, until by His Mediatorial Kingdom He shall have lifted mankind from sin and degradation and death, back to actual justification and harmony with God.

SM499

THE DESIRE OF ALL NATIONS

"I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."--Hag. 2:7.

The great Messiah, "King of Glory," has long been waited for by the civilized nations. For thirty-five centuries the Jews have waited for Him as the great Prophet foreshadowed by Moses and foretold by him (**Acts 3:22**), as the mighty King foreshadowed by their kings David and Solomon, and as their glorious Priest typified by Aaron, but especially in the combined majesty of king and priest foreshown by Melchizedek--a priest upon his throne.--**Psa. 110:4**.

Free Masons have waited twenty-five hundred years for the same glorious personage, as Hiram Abiff, the great Master Mason whose death, glorification and future appearing are continually set before them by the letters upon their keystones. He died a violent death, they claim, because of his loyalty to the Divine secrets typed in Solomon's Temple. He must reappear, they claim, in order that the great antitypical Temple may be completed and its grand service for Israel and for all peoples may be accomplished. They claim that his presence is to be expected speedily.

Christians of every shade, in proportion as they are conversant with the Bible (Old Testament and New), also believe in a great Temple Builder who died because of His faithfulness to the Divine plans for the spiritual Temple, the elect Church (**1 Peter 2:4,5**); Him they expect to come a second time "in power and great glory" to complete the Temple which is His Body, and in and through that spiritual and glorious Temple to bless Israel and all the families of the earth. His Second Presence in glory and power, but invisible to men, is believed to be imminent.--**Rev. 1:7**; **3:20**.

SM500

The Mohammedans, who also worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and David and Solomon, are also expecting a great Heavenly Messenger to bless them

and all peoples by the establishment of a Heavenly Kingdom. They have awaited His coming for centuries. They believe His Kingdom to be near at hand.

The same glorious personage will fulfil all these desires--these hopes. Is it not time that all of these peoples, fearing God and hoping in His promises, should come together in one hope, in one expectation? It must be so; for do we not read prophetically, "The desire of all nations shall come!"

We are well aware that great barriers lie between these multitudes; but we hold that these are chiefly barriers of superstition and ignorance. In the past they have pulled apart, and have slandered and persecuted one another. If now they will sympathetically draw near to each other, surely they will find much to appreciate in each other's hopes and aims.

THE BASIS OF SYMPATHY

The fact that the Jews and Mohammedans, Catholics, Protestants and Free Masons all base their faith on the Old Testament of the Holy Scriptures, is ground for the better understanding pleaded for.

All Christians must accept the authority of the Hebrew Scriptures because the founder of Christianity, Jesus, and His special mouthpieces, the Apostles, taught nothing contrary to the Law and the Prophets. Indeed, they quoted from the Old Testament in proof of every doctrine advanced. They claimed that they neither destroyed nor ignored the Old Testament, but merely noted its fulfilment.

The error in the past has been the general disposition to appeal to superstition and prejudice and bigotry, rather than to facts and Scripture. We must reverse the lever in order to attain the good results--in order to see eye to eye.

SM501

All agree that the world needs the Divine blessing! All agree that we have been laboring under a mistake in supposing that education and civilization are alone necessary to secure human happiness. We perceive that the greater the civilization the greater is the unrest, and that the broader the education the greater are the suggestions

and opportunities for taking selfish advantage of others. All agree that only the later inventions, telephones, etc., and our modern and costly police precautions make it possible to live in civilized lands; and that, despite all these, murders are a hundredfold what they were fifty years ago. In those days a murder would be detailed and discussed for a year. Now we give little heed to several reported in each day's newspapers. Thousands are executed, other thousands are imprisoned for life; and we pay little heed--so gradually have we become accustomed to these horrors of our civilization and education.

We oppose these with Church and mission influences, with Sunday-Schools, Y.M.C.A.'s, with courts, Juvenile and Superior; and yet they increase. We penalize the carrying of weapons and bombs, and wisely prohibit inflammatory speeches; and the better informed know that Christendom is like a powder-magazine which some unlucky friction between the classes may explode.

ALL HOPES REALLY ONE

Admitting that all mankind are imperfect, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity," we nevertheless cannot assent to the doctrine of Total Depravity--that there is nothing good in any man, or in all men. Each one who prays "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others" should concede that others, as well as himself, would prefer righteousness to sin, if the environment were different --if his appetite were not so perverse, if his will power were not so inadequate. So, then, whether Jew, Mohammedan, Catholic, Free Mason or Protestant, do

we not all really desire the one thing? And do we not admit, after centuries of endeavor along different lines, that God alone can send us the aid which the whole world so greatly needs? We do!

Let us now formulate this "desire of all nations" from those Holy Scriptures which we all acknowledge. Let us see that it is exactly what we all have been looking and praying for under different names: It is the Kingdom of God!--the Kingdom of Allah! Its rule is to be ***"under*** the whole heavens" however Heavenly or spiritual

the great Ruler will be. (**Dan. 7:27**.) Under its beneficent and uplifting influence the glorious result will be that God's will shall be done on earth as completely as it is now done in Heaven. This is exactly what the Scriptures declare--that sin and ignorance will be done away; that the knowledge of the glory of God's character will fill the whole earth. It means a strong government exercised for the restraint of sin and for the freeing of mankind from slavery to sin--the slavery of inherited weaknesses entailed by Adam's disobedience. The great Heavenly King, the Son of David, who will do these things, according to the Law and the Prophets, will have many titles indicating various features of His greatness. "He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty Elohim, the Prince of Peace, and the Father [Life-giver] of eternal life."--**Isa. 9:6**.

He is called the Savior by the Prophet Isaiah (**43:3**); for He shall "save from their sins" and from the penalty of sin all who shall become "His people." And all who will wickedly refuse His rule of righteousness and His assistance out of sin and death conditions will be esteemed "wicked" in the proper sense of that word; and of these we read: "All the wicked will He destroy."

We have had too much of hatred and persecution because of the differences in our degrees of knowledge as expressed in our differences of belief. Let this cease. Let us unite in our love for righteousness and in our

hatred of unrighteousness--in-equity. Let us cultivate such a sympathy for the coming Reign of Righteousness to be established by Messiah (by whatever name He and His Kingdom may be handed down to us) that our characters shall be more and more influenced and transformed by the prophetic view. We are all agreed that Messiah's Kingdom is nigh, even knocking at the door of the world. In the wonderful inventions of our day we have the very foregleams of that Kingdom as outlined in prophecy. The necessities of the case also corroborate this: The tension between Capital and Labor will soon be to its limit and break; the grasp of monopoly will soon be so strong that the masses will be ground between the upper and the nether millstones; our high-tension living is calculated soon to have our race in the madhouse; specialists

say, within one century. Let us believe the Word of God delivered by the Prophets of old. Let us prepare our hearts for the Great King and know that those ready for His rule will have the chief blessing.

"HE MUST REIGN--UNTIL"

According to the Bible the Reign of the promised great King shall not be eternal. Eventually the dominion of earth, originally given to Adam and lost by disobedience and consequent incapacity, is to be restored to such of Adam's race as shall attain ***earthly perfection*** and Jehovah's approval. Messiah's Empire will be a Mediatorial one and, according to the Scriptures, will continue only one thousand years. But we are assured that the period will be quite sufficient for the great work to be accomplished. Father Adam, after being sentenced for sin--"Dying, thou shalt die,"--experienced the dying processes for 930 years. Contrariwise the world will, under the Messiah's rule as King and Priest (Melchizedek, **Psa. 110:4**), gradually rise up, up, up, out of sin and death conditions during a very similar period.

Paradise restored will no longer be a garden merely;

but the whole earth, as God's footstool, shall be made glorious. (**Isa. 60:13**.) The promises of God to the children of Isaac and Jacob are not Heavenly or spiritual, but earthly. From Genesis to Malachi there is not a suggestion of a Heavenly or spiritual calling. If Christians have a Heavenly calling, it is no cause for offense to Mohammedans and Jews--neither of whom have conflicting hopes. There is no need for conflict--every reason for harmony.

"TIMES OF RESTITUTION"

Not only do the ancient prophecies foretell coming blessings of the Lord upon Jew and Gentile, bond and free, but the Law typified the same. Every fiftieth year with the Jew was to be a Jubilee year--a time of release from debts and from all bondage. The lesson is that Messiah's Reign will be the great time of jubilation to

men, to all who will accept and obey His rule. The cancellation of debts represents that God (through Messiah) will thus cancel the debt of Original Sin and set free Adam and his race. All will then be given a fresh start for life eternal. The setting free from bondage in the Jubilee Year typed man's release from the weaknesses inherited through Adam's fall. It will include the resurrection from the dead, the great prison-house mentioned by the Prophet.--**Isa. 61:1**.

If we see this great fact about to be accomplished need we quarrel about how it is to be done? Since it offers blessings to all who love God's righteousness, why dispute over details? Shall we contend with God and His plans and promises except to our injury? Let us rejoice with the Jew. God has decreed for the natural seed of Abraham a glorious share in the great work of blessing the world--to the Jew first, to the others later! The Scriptures clearly teach that Messiah will establish the New Covenant with Jacob--Natural Israel. Let all who reverence the Lord acquiesce in His arrangements.

SM505

And if the Jews shall some day see that the Oath-Bound Promise to Abraham meant two seeds, let them be glad and rejoice in their portion. If the great Messiah soon to be revealed in power and great glory be composed of "many members" on the ***spirit plane,*** what matters it to Jacob, all of whose promises are on the earthly plane? Moreover, there is no room for jealousy anyway; for these "Elect" who shall be on the spirit plane are of all nations--the Jew being there given also the preferred place. Furthermore the select or elect few are not either Christians or Jews in the ordinary usage of those words, but saintly, holy ones chosen by the Lord from every sect and party, because of their love for righteousness and faithfulness under trials.

"I WILL SHAKE THE EARTH"

The context shows us that "The desire of all nations" will be realized as the result of a great shaking of the heavens, earth, sea and all nations. This is prophetic of the great Time of Trouble, with which the collapse of

present institutions will come about as precedent to the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom--"the desire of all nations," as our **text** declares.

We are not left to speculate respecting the import of these words, "shake the heavens, the earth and the sea." The great theologian, St. Paul, quoted this very passage in his epistle to the **Hebrews. (12:26-28**.) He pointed out that the literal shaking of Mount Sinai and the terrible sights associated at the time of the inauguration of Israel's Law Covenant were but a feeble picture of the awful commotion which will prevail in its antitype--when Israel's New (Law) Covenant will be instituted at Mount Zion in the end of this Age at the hands of the antitypical Moses--Messiah, Jesus the Head and the Church His Body.

The Prophet intimates that it will be a short, sharp, decisive shaking, quickly accomplished. And the Apostle

explains that it will be so thorough-going that everything that can be shaken will be shaken and will be removed. In other words, everything that is in the nature of a temporary make-shift for righteousness, truth, equity, will be shaken out of the way--not be permitted to remain; for the Lord will make a thorough work. St. Paul intimates that the Kingdom which the Church is to receive will be the only institution which will stand the shaking time and that only because the "Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven," will have the Divine approval. They will "be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"--established enduringly on the Heavenly plane at the right hand of God, principalities and powers being subject.

"THE PRINCE OF PEACE"

Notwithstanding the fact that Messiah's Kingdom will be introduced by a period of universal trouble, anarchy, etc., which will overthrow civilization and uproot every sinful and imperfect human organization, nevertheless this will eventually lead to the most profound and most enduring peace. In that one great lesson humanity will learn the futility of its own endeavors and will cry unto

the Lord for help and for the desired peace--then "the desire of all nations shall come."

Referring to this Time of Trouble the Prophet David declares of the Lord's work at that time, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear asunder." Then wonderfully he announces the climax of it all, "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted amongst the nations. I will be exalted in the earth." The only true basis of peace is righteousness and on this firm foundation Jehovah through His Anointed One will shortly establish it.--**Psa. 46:9,10**.

SM507

GOD'S UNPROFITABLE SERVANT PUNISHED

"Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."-- **Matt. 25:30**.

We who delight to be known as Christians, followers of Jesus, have heretofore been very careless in our study of God's Word, and have thus been disrespectful to our Teacher, and have gotten ourselves into a world of trouble and confusion of thought which is driving many into unbelief. We must learn to be more critical in our reading of the Word of God. We must not assume so much, but must carefully note the Master's exact statements, that we may be able to distinguish between His literal utterances and His parables, dark sayings, figures of speech and hyperboles.

Take, for instance, our text. How few have ever sought to weigh it and to draw proper inferences from it! The usual custom is to conclude that it refers to an eternity of torture into which the majority of our race enter at death; whereas no such conclusion would be a reasonable deduction from the narrative from which the text is taken. It is part of a parable, every element of which is figurative. Whoever reads the connection will perceive that the person or class mentioned as going into the outer darkness is not represented as going into death at all. Furthermore, the phrase "outer darkness" could not refer to such a place as is generally pictured by evangelists as the future abode of the non-elect; for that place is invariably said to be the very reverse of dark, and its inmates to be shut in--not cast out!

It should be noted that the person or class referred to in our text as cast into outer darkness, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, is a Christian--not a worldling, not a stranger, alien, foreigner to the Divine

SM508

promises, but one of the Lord's recognized followers. The punishment comes upon him, not because of murder, theft or blasphemy, not through immoralities, but because of neglect of opportunities of service. Had he been guilty of gross sin, he would not have been recognized of God as a follower of Christ, regardless of any profession he might make to that effect. Having become a consecrated believer in the Lord, he had received a talent of privilege and opportunity in the Master's service, and this he had neglected to use.

From this viewpoint many Christian people should be startled and thoroughly awakened by our text; for undoubtedly many are in the very position described in the parable. An investigation of the matter which comes close home to themselves will assist them in the exercise of common sense in the interpretation of this Scripture; whereas the general tendency seems to be to permit unreason to interpret such texts as these, which are always inferred to belong to the very grossest, immoral enemies of God and the principles of righteousness. The majority of people are much more merciful in thinking about matters which are applicable to themselves; for their love is not yet sufficiently developed to enable them to feel an equal interest in their neighbor--yea, in their enemies.

THE PARABLE AS A WHOLE

Let us examine the parable as a whole, in order that we may make no mistake in the application of any of its parts. (**Matt. 25:14-30**.) It represents the entire Gospel Age--from the time when our Lord ascended on High, going to the far country, even Heaven itself. He left His interests in the hands of His servants--the Apostles and believers in general; and in their hands these interests have remained ever since. The whole narrative shows that not merely nominal Christians are meant by the servants, but true Christians--fully consecrated believers. These alone have the talents belonging to the Lord in

SM509

their charge for use in His service, "every man according

to his several abilities."

In olden times a talent represented a sum of money, an Attic talent being equivalent to $1,200 in our money. Thus to one servant five talents were entrusted, representing $6,000; to another, two talents, representing $2,400; and to another one talent--$1,200. But while the matter is here stated merely from the financial point of view, all will agree that such a statement is only for convenience; and that the real thought in the parable is that these talents represent not only financial ability, but also social standing, education, mental equipments, etc.

THE TALENTS COMMITTED TO SOME

Those who hear the Lord's voice calling them as sinners to repentance are not as yet His servants, nor are they entrusted with any of His talents. They are still strangers, aliens and foreigners, without God and having no hope. (**Eph. 2:11-13**.) But after they have learned of the grace of God in Christ and of the provision made in Him for the covering of the sins that are past and of the blemishes which are present, then if they rejoicingly accept Him as their Savior they thereby take the first step toward God. Being thus justified by faith, they have peace with God as respects their former sins and the condemnation under which they realize that they had rested. (**Rom. 5:1-3**.) But still they have not yet become servants of God. However, they are in that attitude of mind where the Lord would be willing to accept them as His servants; and hence the Apostle invites such, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and your reasonable service."--**Rom. 12:1**.

In his consecration the believer thus lays at the Lord's feet his life, his time, his influence, together with whatever property or mental endowment he may possess--all for the Lord, "to be used in joyful service for the glory of

our King." It is at this juncture that the Scriptures represent that we are begotten again by the Holy Spirit to newness of life, newness of aim, newness of purpose. "Old things have passed away; behold, all things have

become new." (**2 Cor. 5:17**.) It is these New Creatures whom God recognizes as His servants, consecrated to His service; and it is this class which is represented in the parable under discussion. To these servants He gives various talents to be used by them.

Some one may ask, "What are these talents?" We reply, The very talents which they possessed before consecration, and which in consecration they laid at the Lord's feet. These He now gives over to them, gives into their custody, thus making them rewards of their own time, influence, means, education, mental ability, etc. From this viewpoint we can see how some have one talent, others two talents, and still others five talents; for no two of the Lord's people are exactly alike in mentality, in influence, in opportunity or in wealth. Each, however, is responsible for exactly the amount thus entrusted to his stewardship, plus whatever increase he may be able to effect; and his love for his Master and his loyalty as a servant are to be tested by the degree of activity he will exercise in the use of these talents, opportunities, etc., under his care.

Although the parable represents the faithfulness of the one having the five talents and of the other having the two talents, and the unfaithfulness of the one having but one talent, this we are to understand is merely an illustration. It is possible for the person having the one talent to be faithful, and equally possible for those having two or more talents to be unfaithful. Indeed, our experience has been rather along the line that those possessing the most talents are as likely to be amongst the unfaithful as are those who have but the one talent. It is not unreasonable to suppose that by far the majority of those consecrated to the Lord have possessed only one talent.

SM511

Hence the Lord's statement of the parable is undoubtedly the most appropriate one, applicable to the larger proportion of His people who will prove derelict, unfaithful, in the use of their consecrated ability in His service. As a matter of fact, the Lord tells us that not many of those who have money talents will accept His invitation at all. Not many of them will make consecration of themselves, so as to place their natural talents at His disposal or make it possible for them to become stewards of the

same. The Scriptural statement, we remember, is that not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble, according to the course of this world, but rather the poor, rich in faith, hath God chosen to be heirs of the Kingdom.--**1 Cor. 1:26-28**; **James 2:5**.

APPORTIONING REWARDS TO THE SERVANTS

"After a long time the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." The reference here is undoubtedly to our Lord's Second Advent, and indicates that then His first work will be with the Church, not with the world. To this agree the words of St. Peter: "Judgment must begin at the House of God." (**1 Peter 4:17**.) In this we have a most positive assurance that the servants of the parable are not worldly people at all, who have neither lot nor part in this matter, and who are not in any sense of the word stewards of the grace of God. True, the Lord causes His sun to shine upon the just and the unjust, and His rain to fall upon good and bad alike. But He recognizes none as His servants except those who have come to Him in the appointed way--"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."--**John 14:6**.

If we have the right understanding of "the times and seasons" outlined in the Scriptures, we are now living in the very time of the Second Advent of Christ--the time during which He is reckoning with His servants, preparatory to assuming the Kingdom control of the world. This transfer of the world to Immanuel's Government will

be accomplished through the overthrow of present institutions --financial, political, social and religious--in "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:1**.

This reckoning of course must include the resurrection change of all the faithful in Christ Jesus, mentioned in the Apostle Paul's description of the First Resurrection. (**1 Cor. 15:42-44**.) Those who during this Gospel Age have been faithful to the Lord in the use of the talents committed to them are in line for the glory, honor and immortality of this First Resurrection, by which they will enter into the joy of their Lord. The Apostle's statement

respecting these--that they will differ in the degree of glory received "as star differeth from star in glory"--is corroborated, if not directly by this parable under consideration, at least by the corresponding parable of the pounds. (**Luke 19:12-27**.) There the stewards are specified in parabolic form: Our Lord declared that one of the faithful should have authority over ten cities, another over five, etc., in His Kingdom.

THE TALENT HID IN THE EARTH

But now comes the particular feature of the parable from which our text is taken. The servant who had but one talent entrusted to him hid it in the earth. In excusing himself for not having made better use of it, he intimates that his heart was filled with fear instead of with love for his Lord; for he thought of his Lord as unjust, hard, unmerciful, unloving, exacting. He had a bad theology. Alas, how many Christian people are in a similar plight! Having a wrong conception of the Lord's character and purposes, they are deterred from using in His service what talents they possess. Evidently this class is pictured most distinctly in this parable. The hiding of the talent in the earth is full of meaning. It implies that the opportunities and abilities consecrated to the Lord are being buried in earthly interests, earthly affairs--business

or pleasure, family or society or what not--to the neglect of the stewardship, and hence to that extent in the repudiation of the original consecration.

If you, my dear brother or sister, are not in the place of this unfaithful servant, you probably recognize the likeness of some of your fellow servants. They are not bad people; they are not wicked. They are moral, honest in their dealings with their fellow men--though not honest with the Lord in the use of their consecrated talents. Now that you see the person or the class represented by the unfaithful servant in the parable, doubtless your love and your sympathy begin to exercise themselves toward these dear neighbors, friends and relatives. You begin to hope that in God's mercy they are not to be sent to eternal torment because of their carelessness in respect

to their consecration vow.

THE PUNISHMENT BAD ENOUGH, HOWEVER

Although there is nothing in the parable to indicate eternal torment for this class of unfaithful servants, nevertheless the punishment outlined is certainly bad enough, severe enough. Our hope is that this discourse may prove helpful to some who are now in this attitude, to the intent that before their earthly accounts are called for they may take their talent out of its earthly investment, and with redoubled energy and zeal apply it according to their original covenant, hoping in the mercy of God for forgiveness of their previous laxity; and that by His grace they may yet hear His words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The first part of the punishment meted to the unfaithful servant is the loss of the talent--the loss of the opportunity and privilege of service as a co-laborer with the Lord. This implies that the unfaithful one can have neither part nor lot in the Kingdom--cannot be accepted as a member of the glorified Body of Christ. His failure to use his consecrated talent signifies his failure to make his calling and election sure.

SM514

The second feature of the punishment is the being cast out from the light and from the privileges enjoyed by those who are the Lord's faithful followers. To be thrust into the outer darkness of the world is to lose what light, privilege and appreciation of spiritual matters had been previously enjoyed. The third feature of the punishment is that the unfaithful servants shall share in the great Time of Trouble with which this Gospel Age is to end--the time of anarchy and confusion which the faithful class of the Lord's people shall be accounted worthy to escape, as our Lord declared.--**Luke 21:36**.

THREE CLASSES OF CONSECRATED CHRISTIANS

The parable merely mentions the punishment of the unfaithful servant without showing what the result will

be--how he will be exercised by the tribulations through which he will pass. But the great Teacher who spake the parable sent a message later on to His people in which He indicated just where all unfaithful servants may be found, and through their tribulations be enabled to some extent to recover their standing and obtain a share in the Divine blessing--although not in the Kingdom class. We refer to **Revelation 7:9-17**. There we see the unfaithful servants after they have passed with weeping and gnashing of teeth through the great tribulation which marks the full end of the Age. We see that their severe experiences will work with many of them such a change that they will gladly acclaim their Lord, and rejoice to be servants in His Temple and before His Throne.

Faithfulness in the use of their talents would have given this class a place with their Lord in His Throne, even as He promised. (**Rev. 3:21**.) But in His great mercy, while rejecting them from association in the Throne and while causing them to pass through merited tribulation for their unfaithfulness, He will nevertheless permit them to come up through that tribulation, washing their robes in the merit of His sacrifice. To those who

SM515

are rightly exercised by these experiences He will give the palm of victory, but not the crown; for this is reserved for the faithful servants alone.

But it is not our thought, nor that of the Scriptures, to guarantee that all of the consecrated shall be either in the Throne or before the Throne, shall be either crowned with our Lord as joint-heirs or else stand as servants with palms of victory in their hands. The Scriptures bring to our attention still another class amongst the truly consecrated, namely, such as are described in **Heb. 6:4-8** and **10:26,27**. "There is a sin unto death"--the Second Death. But this sin is something beyond the sin of hiding the talent in the earth--neglecting the covenant made with the Lord. From that wilful sin unto death there is no hope of recovery, either in this Age or in that to come.

Let us arouse ourselves, dear fellow servants of the King of Glory. Let us use every talent that we possess to "show forth His praises who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Let us develop in our hearts more and more the graces of the Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, love.

"For if these things be in you and abound, they will make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the service of the Lord;...and so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--**2 Peter 1:8-11**.

Take my will and make it Thine;
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is Thine own;
Thus in me Thyself enthrone.

Take my love, my God; I pour
At Thy feet its treasure-store;
Take myself--I wish to be
Ever, only, all for Thee.

SM516

TO HELL AND BACK! WHO ARE THERE

"Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell, neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption."--**Psa. 16:10**.

Although the caption of my topic has a sensational aspect, I assure you all that it is not really so, that I shall treat the subject most earnestly and prove every assertion most conclusively from the Scriptures. God forbid that I should treat lightly a subject which has caused more distress, more heartache, more sorrow of mind, than all other subjects combined--caused these distresses to the very best among the Lord's followers. I care not to specially address those who are so selfish as to regard merely themselves and their family connections, and who are quite content that all others might suffer an eternity of torture so long as their friends are saved from such a calamity. I would reach especially those whose hearts and heads have been troubled almost to the extent of distraction over this subject--those who have wept and prayed as they remembered sons and daughters, friends and neighbors, parents and children, who died without having accepted Jesus as their Savior, without having taken upon them the only name given under Heaven and among men whereby we must be saved.--**Acts 4:12**.

I hold that it is the best of God's people, the tenderest of heart, the most Christlike, who have had trouble with the question of eternal torment. I know how to sympathize with them because once I had similar distress of mind, and like others was obliged to say, "If I believe this doctrine and meditate upon it, it will surely make me crazy, as it has done hundreds and thousands of others." Such loving hearts have found a palliation but not a relief, not a satisfaction, in the thought that somehow,

SM517

perhaps, somewhere, at some time, God's character would be cleared of the dreadful stain cast upon it by this doctrine, which we believed to be the teaching of God's Book, the Bible.

I, too, once so believed and feared, and was ashamed of my God because of the injustice, lovelessness, devilishness implied in the theory taught me from infancy, that God, knowing the end from the beginning, had created our race under conditions as we see them; that He provided a great place called hell for their torture, and created a corps of fireproof devils to attend to the matter, and provided also fuel enough to perpetuate the torture to all eternity. I felt thankful indeed to realize myself an object of Divine mercy and favor, but my heart went out for the thousands of millions of human beings of civilized as well as heathen lands who had gone down into death utterly ignorant of "the only name given under Heaven and among men whereby we must be saved"-- "neither is there salvation in any other."

THE PASTOR'S EARLY EFFORTS

That I thoroughly believed this doctrine you may know when I tell you that at 17 years of age it was my custom to go out at night to chalk up words of warning in conspicuous places, where working-men passing to and fro might see them, that peradventure I might save some from the awful doom. And the while I wondered why God, who is of infinite power, did not blazon forth some words of warning upon the sky or cause angel trumpeters to announce positively and forcefully the doom to which the world in general was, I supposed, hastening. I was an admirer of the great Baptist preacher, Charles Spurgeon, and esteemed him very highly for the honesty and candor which made his sermons so dreadfully hot, believing that he was an exceptionally honest minister, and that others were grossly derelict in not preaching hell strenuously, in proclaiming eternal torment continuously.

SM518

But I am here this afternoon, dear friends, to explain to you how in great mercy God opened the eyes of my understanding to see that the doctrine of eternal torment is not the teaching of the Bible, but on the contrary is a misrepresentation and blasphemy of the great and holy name. I am here to prove to you that the doctrine of eternal torment has come down to us from the Dark Ages

in the hymns and catechisms and creeds, and that it is contrary not only to reason, but also to God's Word.

Demon gods--vicious, spiteful, merciless--are known to all the heathen peoples. The Bible alone of all religious books teaches a God of love, sympathy and compassion, sympathetic with His creatures and desirous of rescuing them from their fallen estate. It was during the Dark Ages when the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, became so nearly extinct even among Christians, that they thought it perfectly proper and pleasing to God that they should tear one another limb from limb on the rack, that they should burn one another at the stake, that they should torture one another with thumb screws and fill each other's mouths and ears with molten lead--it was at that time and by some of our deluded ancestors that this doctrine of eternal torment was torn from heathendom and engrafted upon the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles.

We find indeed that the inquisitors of old justified the tortures of their fellow creatures with the very claim that they were thus copying God, and that their victims would receive still worse treatment when after death they should come into the hands of the Almighty. People will copy their conceptions of the Creator--how necessary, therefore, that we have the right conception, that we worship a God who is greater in Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power than ourselves. With such a terrible misconception of God the wonder is that Christianity made any progress at all. The only offset has probably been the thought of the love of Jesus and of His willingness and endeavor to rescue men.

SM519

INFIDELITY FOSTERED BY HELL THEORY

Intelligent people everywhere are very generally discarding the doctrine of eternal torment as being contrary to reason. But, alas, thinking that it is taught in the Scriptures these same intelligent people are rejecting the Bible, losing faith in it, drifting into unbelief in general--into Christian Science, spiritism, theosophy, etc.

If this afternoon I shall succeed in proving to you that the Scriptures do not teach this unreasonable theory of eternal torment, which is supposed to be built upon its

statements--if on the contrary I shall show you that the "hell" of the Scriptures is logical and reasonable, I shall hope to have planted the feet of some upon firmer ground, to have re-established to some extent faith in the Bible as the Word of God and to have prepared your minds to see that as this error is not of Scriptural foundation, so likewise all the unreasonable teachings of the creeds of the Dark Ages are without foundation in the Bible. I hope thus to lay a foundation for your future growth in knowledge and in grace. I could not possibly ask for you of the Lord a greater blessing than has already come to my own heart and life through better knowledge of the Scriptures along these lines.

I will endeavor to give you Scriptural proofs that the hell of the Bible is not a place of torment at all; that the word refers to the state of death, the tomb, the grave. I shall show you that the Scriptures teach that both the good and the bad alike go to the Biblical hell, the tomb, and that their hope of salvation is a resurrection hope--to be delivered from the power of death by the Redeemer in God's due time.

THE HELL OF THE BIBLE

You are all aware that the Old Testament portion of the Bible was written in the Hebrew language and the New Testament in the Greek. We will commence with the Old Testament. We find that the word "hell" everywhere throughout the Old Testament is a translation of

SM520

the Hebrew word *"sheol,"* which occurs altogether 66 times, and is translated three different ways in our Common Version; 32 times grave, 31 times hell and three times pit. It should have been translated grave or pit or tomb in every instance. Indeed, in two instances, where it is rendered hell in the Common Version, the marginal reading says, "Hebrew, the grave."

One of these is **Jonah 2:2**. Jonah is represented as telling how he prayed to God while he was in the belly of the great fish. He was buried alive, entombed. Our Common Version reads, "Out of the belly of hell cried I"; the literal meaning is, "Out of the grave-belly I prayed."

Adding these two instances to the last we would have grave 34 times, pit three times and hell 29 times, or the word is erroneously rendered 29 times out of 66. I shall not weary you by giving you all of these 66 passages, nor is this necessary; for we have a free pamphlet to which you are all welcome on request. It takes up every text in which the word hell occurs, from Genesis to Revelation, and every passage which in any sense of the word appears to teach an eternity of torture. It analyzes these with their context and shows what they do and what they do not mean. It will convince any fair-minded man who will give it careful reading.

In passing I remark that much of the difficulty on this subject has arisen from careless handling of the Word of God, adding to its statements in our minds if not in our words. For instance, when we read in the Bible, "All the wicked shall God destroy" (**Psa. 145:20**), we unwittingly said to ourselves, "Destroy must mean preserve, preserve in fire, preserve in torment, preserve with devils eternally." Thus we distorted the Word of God to our own injury as well as to the injury of others. Similarly the word die; when we read in the Scriptures, "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (**Ezek. 18:20**), we perverted the Word of God as we would not think of perverting any other writings and said, "Die must here

mean live, live in torment eternally with devils in suffering." Similarly the word perish; on reading in the Scriptures that the "wicked shall perish" (**Psa. 37:20**), we turned the language upside down and said, "Perish means preserve." Thus our confusion continued; we were blinded by the Adversary on the lines on which he has blinded the entire heathen world, hindering the glorious light of the goodness of God from shining more and more into the hearts of men.--**2 Cor. 4:4**.

GRAY HAIRS IN HELL

The first occurrence of the word Sheol is in connection with the patriarch Jacob and his twelve sons. His two youngest sons, nobler than their brethren, were most beloved by Jacob. Joseph, his favorite, clothed in his

handsome coat of many colors, was sent to his brethren, who were pasturing the sheep at a distance from home, to take them delicacies and bring back word of their welfare. The brethren, moved with envy, first thought to kill him, but subsequently sold him to the Ishmaelites, who in turn sold him to the Egyptians, in whose land under God's providential care he in after years became ruler next to the king. Meantime the brethren took the peculiar coat of many colors, bedraggled it in the blood of a goat and in the dust, and sent it home to Jacob, inquiring if he recognized it. He answered, "Alas, it is Joseph's coat; wild beasts have devoured him! I will go down to Sheol to my son mourning." (**Gen. 37:35**.) What did he mean? Did he mean by Sheol a place of fire and torment? Did he believe that Joseph, his best son, had gone there, and that he, Jacob, also expected to go to that place? No, we answer. He meant that evidently Joseph was dead, and that he would mourn for his favorite son the remainder of his life, until he also should go into the state of death, into Sheol, into hell.

The second occurrence of the word is a little further on in the same narrative. The brethren had been to Egypt to buy corn, because of famine in Canaan. It was

necessary that they should go for more, but they explained to Jacob that the Governor, whom they knew not was Joseph, had required of them that if they came again they must bring with them Benjamin, their brother, the one whom Jacob now specially loved. Jacob protested, but finding that there was no escape he finally told them to take Benjamin, but declared also that if they did not bring the lad back safe they would bring down his own gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, Sheol. Jacob evidently meant not that he would go to a place of eternal torment if Benjamin did not return, but that a failure to bring Benjamin back would hasten his death through sorrow. Does any sane person have any doubt as to the meaning of Sheol in these instances, the first two occurrences in the Bible? No! you have no doubt, nor reason for any. And the word has the same meaning exactly in its every occurrence throughout the Scriptures, as you will see when you read carefully our free pamphlet.

HELL IN OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

Just a word in defence of the translators of our Common Version English Bible. All living languages are subject to variation in meaning, and this seems to have been particularly true of the English. To illustrate, the word hell at one time meant the grave in the English language. But gradually this meaning has been dropped out of the word, until now it is never used in ordinary conversation. As illustrations of its use in bygone times we find in ancient English literature reference to the helling of a house, meaning not the burning of the house nor the torturing of it, but the thatching of it. Similarly we read of the farmer helling his potatoes, the meaning of the expression being not the roasting of potatoes nor the torturing of them, but the putting of them into a pit for preservation from the frosts, etc., until needed.

As for the translators of the Revised Version they seem to have been too honest to use the word hell as a translation for Sheol and Hades, but not honest enough to

tell the people the truth on the subject. Hence you will find that in the Revised Version no translation at all is given, but the Hebrew word Sheol in the Old Testament and the Greek word Hades in the New Testament are used instead of the word hell when grave is not used. The translators evidently anticipated what occurred; namely, that the public, knowing nothing about Greek and Hebrew, would esteem this as an attempt to do away with hell, whereas the real animus of the translators was to perpetuate it. The translators knew that the public would say that hell was just as hot and just as real, although now called Sheol and Hades. They knew that the public would never suspect that the wool was being pulled over the eyes of their understanding to hinder them from seeing the plain teaching of God's Word, that Sheol means the grave or tomb or death state--nothing more, nothing less.

PRAYING TO GO TO HELL

Job, one of the most prominent characters of the Old Testament, one especially mentioned as a favorite with

God, made a most eloquent prayer that he might go to hell, to Sheol, to the tomb. And no wonder, poor man; for surely in his case was fulfilled the statement, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous!" (**Psa. 34:19**.) Unwilling to suicide, he craved relief from his sorrows and troubles in death. Refresh your memory respecting his troubles. The Almighty, while approving him, permitted the Adversary to vex him sorely, to the extent of taking away every earthly possession except the mere thread of life itself. His children, gathered for a birthday party, were killed by a cyclone; later his flocks and herds and property in general were destroyed. Finally his health gave way, and he broke out in boils from head to foot.--**Job 1:6-22**.

To add to his sorrows his friends and neighbors, instead of consoling him, turned against him and declared that he had been acting the part of a hypocrite, and that

God was now exposing him--showing His disapproval. In vain did Job protest his innocence and appeal to the Lord, until subsequently the Lord gave His verdict in favor of Job against the friends. But as though all these trials and difficulties were not enough for the poor man, to cap the climax his wife exclaimed, "You are accursed of God and should die!" Then poor Job poured forth his prayer for death, saying: "Oh, that Thou wouldst hide me in Sheol until Thy wrath be past!"--**Job 14:13**.

Does anyone of sane mind think that poor Job, after passing through all these afflictions, was in these words praying to God to cast him into a place of eternal torment, to be the sport of devils? No; such a supposition would be irrational. Very evidently Job meant that, if God were willing, he would be glad to die, to go into Sheol, the tomb, the state of death.

SHEOL NOT DESIRABLE FOREVER

But Job had a hope for the future--he was not desirous of being annihilated; hence his prayer is, "Oh, that Thou wouldst hide me in Sheol [hell, the tomb] until Thy wrath be past." The "wrath" here mentioned is elsewhere called the "curse." Back in Eden, when our first parents were perfect, by disobedience they brought

upon themselves the Divine sentence of "curse" or "wrath"--the death sentence, which includes all mental, moral and physical degeneracy known to our race, and which has been afflicting us as a whole for now 6,000 years. Job was looking beyond the period of the permission of this "curse" or "wrath" to a time future, when the "curse" would be removed, and instead of it a "blessing" would come to every member of the race, himself included. As a Prophet he recorded his hope of a coming Redeemer: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth." Through this Redeemer's work he realized that the "curse" would be abolished, and his prayer to be hid in SM525

Sheol, the grave, the tomb, was merely until the "curse" the wrath" would be over--until the great blessing time, the Millennial Reign, should begin. His prayer continuing shows his hope of a resurrection, "that Thou wouldst appoint me a set time and remember me." Then particularly referring to the resurrection, he says, "Thou shalt call and I will answer Thee, for Thou wilt have regard unto the work of Thy hands."--**Job 14:15**.

We remember also the Prophet David's prayer for deliverance from death. He said, "Oh, save me for Thy mercies' sake. For in death there is no remembrance of Thee; in Sheol [hell, the tomb] who shall give Thee thanks?" (**Psa. 6:4,5**.) We remember the good King Hezekiah also, whose life was spared 15 years in answer to prayer. In thanking the Lord for this he said, "Death cannot celebrate Thee; Sheol [the tomb] cannot praise Thee."--**Isa. 38:18**.

QUOTE THE ENTIRE PROVERB

One of Solomon's inspired proverbs much quoted is, "Do with thy might what thy hand findeth to do." But very rarely do we ever hear the remainder of the quotation, namely, "because there is neither wisdom nor knowledge nor device in Sheol [the grave] whither thou goest." (**Eccl. 9:10**.) How reasonable is this statement, rightly understood--there is no wisdom nor knowledge nor work in the hell to which the good and the bad, all mankind, have been going for the past six thousand years! The

dead are really dead, extinct, except as God has provided for them a resurrection from the dead, a reawakening to sentient being. The very moment of their awakening will seem to each to be the next moment to the one in which he died; for there is no wisdom or knowledge in the tomb, in Sheol, in hell. How wonderful the goodness and mercy of God will appear to the great mass of our race when they are awakened from the sleep of death and learn for the first time of the goodness of God, that

SM526

instead of having provided devils and torture, He has provided through His Son an opening of the prison doors of the tomb and a setting at liberty of the captives of death, providing also for their future uplift out of sin and degradation under the favorable conditions of the Millennial Kingdom of God's dear Son.

SHEOL IS IN THE GREEK HADES

We now call your attention to the fact that the word Sheol in the Old Testament, which we have shown means merely tomb, the death state, is the exact equivalent of the word Hades in the New Testament Greek, which likewise means the tomb, the state of death. For instance, in **Psalm 16:10** we read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol" (hell, the tomb), and we find St. Peter quoting this on the day of Pentecost (**Acts 2:27-31**), "Thou wilt not leave My soul in Hades," hell, the grave. St. Peter proceeds to explain that David spoke this not respecting his own soul, but the soul of Jesus, and thus foretold our Lord's resurrection from the dead on the third day. How simple, how plain the entire matter is from this the Scriptural standpoint!

Take another illustration: the prophet Hosea declares, "I will ransom them from the power of Sheol [the grave, hell], I will redeem them from death: O Death where is thy sting? O Sheol [grave, hell], I will be thy destruction." The Apostle Paul quotes this passage in his great discourse on the resurrection, saying, "O Death where is thy sting? O Hades [grave], where is thy victory?" (**1 Cor. 15:55**.) What could be simpler, plainer? All that we need is to get the smoke of the Dark Ages

out of the eyes of our understanding, and to allow the true light from the inspired Word of God to speak to us plainly and be its own interpreter.

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.

SM527

THE OATH-BOUND COVENANT

"God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath."--**Heb. 6:17**.

Only those who have strong living faith in the Almighty God and His Son Jesus could have much interest in the words of our text. To the evolutionist these words have little meaning, as he is looking to a natural development rather than to any supervening power of God to bring the blessing which the world so greatly needs. To the Higher Critic, the Apostle's reference to God's dealings with Abraham is nonsensical, believing as he does that the statements of Genesis are foolishness, written hundreds of years after the death of Moses.

However, some of God's true children, whose eyes of understanding have not yet been opened to a clear apprehension of the Divine Plan of the Ages, may be inclined to question what interest we could possibly have in God's oath to Abraham--given more than 3,000 years ago. Such are inclined to say to themselves, "That event was helpful to Abraham, but has nothing whatever to do with us or our day." It is our hope that an examination of this covenant, which God attested with His oath, as stated in our text, may be helpful to many of the Lord's people today, enabling them to see that God had a Plan in Abraham's day; that He is still working according to that Plan; and that its completion will be glorious--a blessing to His creatures and an honor to Himself.

The context shows distinctly that the Apostles and the early Church drew comfort from this Oath-bound Covenant, and clearly implies that this same comfort belongs to every true Christian down to the end of this age--to

SM528

every member of the Body of Christ. The Apostle's words imply that God's promise and oath were intended more for us than for Abraham--more for our comfort than for his.

Doubtless Abraham and all of his family, Israel after

the flesh, drew a certain amount of blessing and encouragement from this covenant or promise; and the oath of the Almighty--which doubly sealed it--gave double assurance of its certainty of accomplishment. But the Apostle intimates in the words quoted that God's special design in giving that covenant and in binding it solemnly with an oath, was to encourage Spiritual Israel--to give us a firm foundation for faith. God well knew that, although from His own standpoint 3,000 years would be but a brief space, "as a watch in the night," nevertheless to us the time would appear long, and the strain upon faith would be severe; hence the positive statement, and the still more deliberate oath that bound it. We cannot but wonder at such condescension upon the part of the great Creator--that He should stoop to His fallen creatures, and above all that He should condescend to give His oath on the subject. An upright man feels that his word should be sufficient in any matter, and, therefore, would hesitate except under special conditions to confirm his word with an oath. How much more might the Heavenly Father have so regarded the matter! But our text explains the reason for such condescension. He was "willing more abundantly to show the unchangeableness of His Plan."

It was not God's purpose to show His Plan to everybody --to the world in general--nor has He done so. The world by wisdom knows not God, understands not His great and gracious operations which for thousands of years have been gradually unfolding, and which are now near of accomplishment. God wished to show the natural seed of Abraham something of His Plan; and hence they were granted an external glimpse of it; but the Apostle

points out that the clear showing of the matter was especially designed for the "heirs of the promise."

JOINT-HEIRS WITH JESUS

Our Lord Jesus was the great Heir of the Abrahamic Promise, and the faithful of His consecrated people of this Gospel Age are declared to be His joint-heirs in that promise, which is not yet fulfilled. For its fulfilment not

only the Church is waiting, as the Bride or fellow members of the Body of Christ, to be participants with the Lord in the glories implied in the promise, but additionally the whole creation (the entire human family) is groaning and travailing in pain together, waiting for the great fulfilment of that Oath-bound Promise or Covenant.

Those who follow the Apostle's argument and realize that we as Christians are still waiting for the fulfilment of this promise, will be anxious to know what are the terms of this covenant which is the hope of the world, the hope of the Church, and the object of so much solicitude and care on the part of God, in that He would promise and then back His word with His oath. We answer that every Christian should know what this promise is, since it lies at the foundation of every Christian hope. The Christian who cannot understandingly call to mind this Oath-bound Covenant or Promise evidently lacks information very necessary to his spiritual growth.

How can this hope be an anchor to our souls in all the storms and trials and difficulties of life, in all the opposition of the world, the flesh and the Adversary, if we do not know what the hope is, if we have not even recognized the promise upon which this hope is based?

Let us awake in time, dear friends, before the poisoned darts of infidelity strike us and wound us and poison our minds, and blind the eyes to the glorious things of God's Word. Need I quote the promise--the one so repeatedly referred to in the Apostolic writings--the one which is the basis or anchorage of our souls? It was made to

Abraham and reads thus: "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." It was the promise for the future and not for Abraham's own time. The world was not blessed in Abraham's day, nor did he even have a child at the time this promise was given. Isaac did not fulfil the promise; he was merely a type of the greater Seed of Abraham who in due time would fulfil it. Jacob and his twelve tribes, Fleshly Israel, did not fulfil the promise, but still looked for a greater Messiah to fulfil it, to bless them and through them all the families of the earth. The Apostle Paul referred to this very promise, declaring that the Seed of Abraham mentioned therein is Christ. All Christians agree to this, even though they

have not distinctively and properly associated it with the declarations of the promise. But the Apostle makes clear to us that, in saying that Christ is the Seed of Abraham, he had in mind not only the Lord Jesus as the Head of the Body, the Head of The Christ, but also the overcoming saints of this Gospel Age as the Body of Christ. This he distinctly states in many places; for instance **Galatians 3:16,29**. Here he declares the matter expressly, saying: "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise."

THE SEED NOT COMPLETE

The Seed of Abraham is the Gospel Church, with her Head the Lord Jesus, as the Apostle states again, saying: "We, brethren, as Isaac was [typified by Isaac], are the children of promise." (**Gal. 4:28**.) It follows that the Seed of Abraham mentioned in the promise is not yet complete, for the Gospel Church is not yet complete and will not be until the full close of this Gospel Age, the Harvest time of which we believe we are now in. But what a wonderful thought is involved in this plain interpretation of the Divine Word. It is big with hope for Spiritual Israel, the Spiritual Seed, and no less it seems a blessing to the natural seed, Fleshly Israel, and ultimately

the Millennial blessings to all the families of the earth. Let us examine these three hopes: The hopes for these three classes center in this Oath-bound Covenant. Let us thus obtain what the Apostle tells us was the Lord's intention for us; namely, strong consolation--strong encouragement.

All through the prophecies the Lord foretold the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow; nevertheless the glories to follow have been granted much more space in the Divine Revelation than the sufferings of this present time. The implication suggested by the Apostle is that when the glories of the future shall be realized, the trials, sufferings and difficulties of the present time will be found not worthy to be compared. But those glories and blessings have been veiled from our mental vision, and instead a great pall hangs over the future in the minds of many of the Lord's people. With

some it is merely a mist of doubt and of uncertainty; with others it is the smoke of confusion, blackness and despair as they think of their own friends in connection with an eternity of torture, and the probability that a large majority of those whom they love will spend an eternity of horror in torment--from the Dark Ages.

OURS IS THE CREAM OF THE PROMISE

Now, what hope and interest has the Church of Christ in this promise made to Abraham? To us belongs the very cream of the promise, "The riches of God's grace." The promise implies the greatness of the Seed of Abraham --which Seed is Christ and the overcoming Church. This greatness is so wonderful as to be almost beyond human comprehension. The overcomers of this Gospel Age, who "make their calling and election sure" in Christ, are to be joint-heirs with Him in the glorious Millennial Kingdom, which is to be God's agency or channel for bringing about the promised blessings--the blessing of all the families of the earth. How great, how

wonderful, the exaltation of the Church is to be beyond human conception. As the Apostle declares, "Eye hath not seen, neither ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man [the natural man] the things that God hath in reservation for them that love Him"--that love Him more than they love houses or lands, parents or children or any other creature--more than they love themselves-- and who show this by walking in the narrow way, in the footsteps of their Redeemer.

Again, the Apostle John speaks of the great blessings coming to the Church as the Seed of Abraham: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be [how great we shall be made in our change], but we know that when He shall appear we shall be like Him." (**1 John 3:2**.) The Apostle Peter has a word on this subject of the greatness that shall belong to the Church, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, saying, "God hath given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the Divine nature." (**2 Peter 1:4**.) To whatever extent we are able to grasp the meaning of these wonderful promises, they speak to us of blessings,

favors, "exceedingly, abundantly more than we could ask or think."--**Eph. 3:20**.

PROMISE TO THE JEWS

The second class to be blessed under this Abrahamic Covenant is Fleshly Israel. We are not forgetting that the Jews were a rebellious and stiff-necked people; that they slew the Prophets and stoned the Lord's ministers and caused the crucifixion of our Redeemer. Nevertheless, the Scriptures clearly hold forth that after they have had a period of chastisement, which they have been undergoing as a nation since the Lord's crucifixion, and after Spiritual Israel shall have been glorified in the Kingdom, then a blessing from the Lord will come upon Natural Israel. They shall be saved or recovered from their blindness, and as the Prophet declares, "They shall

look upon Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him," because the eyes of their understanding shall be opened. We rejoice, too, that the promise is clear and distinct that the Lord will pour upon them the "spirit of prayer and supplication."--**Zech. 12:10**.

The Apostle Paul elaborates this subject. In **Romans 10-11**, he points out how Israel failed to obtain the special blessing of this Abrahamic Covenant by rejecting Christ--how only a remnant received the great blessing and the mass were blinded. In Chapter 11 he proceeded to explain that their blindness is not to be perpetual, but only until the Church shall have been gathered out; and that then the Lord's blessing will come to fleshly Israel, saving them from their blindness and granting them mercy through the glorified Spiritual Israel. I trust that every hearer will feel interested enough in this feature of the Divine Plan to examine carefully **Romans 11:25-33**. The Lord will do this for the natural seed, not because of their worthiness, but because of His promise made to the fathers: "For this is My Covenant with them, when I will cancel their sins."

But if God is to have mercy upon the Natural Israelites, whom He declares to have been stiff-necked, hard-hearted and rebellious, would it surprise us that the Divine, benevolent purpose should be to bless others

than the Jews--others who had not in the past the favors and privileges of this favored nation, and whose course, therefore, was less in opposition to the light? It should not surprise us, and so we find in this great Oath-bound Covenant a blessing for all nations--all peoples. Let us look at the promise again--remembering that our Heavenly Father made it deliberately and subsequently bound Himself to its provisions by an oath, so that we might not only be sure that He could not break His word, but doubly sure that He could not break His oath, and therefore without peradventure this promise shall be fulfilled. It reads: "In thy Seed shall all the

SM534

families of the earth be blessed."--**Gen. 12:3**; **22:17,18**.

What is the blessing so greatly needed by all mankind? It is the very blessing that Jesus declared He came to give, saying, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Ah, yes! Life! Life! Life! It is life that the whole world needs, and our Lord Jesus declares Himself to be the great Life-giver. Indeed, in the Syriac language, in which probably our Lord discoursed, the word Life-giver is the equivalent to our word Savior. Jesus came to save man from sin and from the penalty of sin--namely, death. It is a human invention of the Dark Ages to attach eternal torment as the penalty for sin. It is the Divine arrangement to attach to sin a reasonable and just, but an awful penalty--Death! It is because we are sinners that we are all dying creatures, and for the Lord to give life implies that He will take away the sin and all necessity for this penalty. Hence, "Christ died for our sins."

THE MILLENNIAL PROMISE

The great blessing of forgiveness of sins which are past, and even the blessing of being awakened from the sleep of death, would profit mankind but little if the arrangements of that future time--the Millennial Age--were not on such a scale as to permit a thorough recovery from present mental, moral and physical weakness. Hence we are rejoiced to learn that in that time Satan will be bound, every evil influence and every unfavorable condition will be brought under restraint, and the favor

of God, through the knowledge of God, will be let loose among the people--"the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep." Blessing! Ay, favor upon favor, blessing upon blessing, is the Lord's arrangement and provision. All shall know Him from the least unto the greatest, and none shall need say to his neighbor or brother, "Know thou the Lord."--**Isa. 11:9**; **Jer. 31:34**.

SM535

But so accustomed have we all become to measuring the Divine Plan by our narrow minds that I doubt not there may be some ready to say, "I believe, Brother Russell, that in your love of heart you would delight to do good in this manner to the whole world of mankind, and so would we; but God's ways are not so great as our conceptions would be." Stop, my dear brother! You are looking at the matter from the wrong standpoint. Remember that our God is all-wise, all-just, all-loving, all-powerful, and that it is His own Word that declares that as the heavens are higher than the earth so are His plans higher than our plans, and His methods higher than our methods. (**Isa. 55:8,9**.) As the poet has expressed it:

"We make God's love too narrow
By false standards of our own."

It is time for us to wake up to the fact that we are no better than our God, but that we are poor, imperfect creatures of the dust, fallen by nature; and that it is time for us to stop misconstruing the Divine Character and Plan as against His creatures, and to hearken to the Lord's own Word when He declares, "Their fear toward me is not of Me, but is taught by the precepts of men." It is time for us to be praying for ourselves and for each other as the Apostle prayed for some, saying, "I pray God for you that the eyes of your understanding may be opened, that ye may be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths--to know the love of Christ, which passeth all knowledge." --**Eph. 1:18**; **3:18,19**.

Do not misapprehend us. We are not teaching that the heathen, the imbecile and unregenerate in general shall be taken to Heaven, where they would be utterly out of harmony with their surroundings and require to

be converted and to be taught. Such an inconsistent view we leave to those who are now claiming that in the hereafter these classes will be saved in their ignorance.

SM536

We stand by the Word of God, that there is no present salvation without faith in Christ Jesus, and hence that the heathen and the imbeciles have neither part nor lot in the salvation of the present time. We stand by the Scriptures which declare that any who are saved in the present time must walk in the narrow way, of which the dear Redeemer says there be few that find it. We stand by the Scriptures which say that salvation at the present time is only for the "little flock" who through much tribulation, shall enter the Kingdom. We stand by the Scriptures, which say that this Kingdom class now being developed is the Seed of Abraham under the Lord their Head, the Elder Brother, the Bridegroom. We stand by the Scriptures which say that through this Christ, when complete, blessings shall extend to every member of Adam's race--the blessings of opportunity to know the Lord, to understand the advantages of righteousness, the opportunity of choosing obedience and by obedience obtaining everlasting life.

JUDGMENT-DAY OPPORTUNITY

The blessings of the future will be of such a kind that every individual who does not have his full opportunity in this present life will have it then--not an opportunity to become members of the "little flock," not an opportunity of becoming members of the Seed of Abraham, not an opportunity to have part in the great "change" from human nature to Divine nature, not an opportunity to sit with the Lord in His Throne, but an opportunity to obtain that which was lost--human perfection, everlasting life under human, earthly, paradisaical conditions; an opportunity of coming again into the Divine likeness, almost oobliterated in the human family through the 6,000 years of fall.

As our hearts go out with sympathy towards the poor groaning creation in heathen lands and in home lands, and as we take pleasure in doing the little now possible

for us to do, what is our joy when we think of that future glorious opportunity that is to be ours, and of the great results that are to accompany it? Surely the hearts of the Lord's people are stimulated as we contemplate the meaning of this great Oath-bound Covenant! Surely, as the Apostle declares was God's purpose, we have strong consolation in our ineffectual efforts to bring the majority of mankind to an appreciation of God's mercy and love now. It gives us consolation also in respect to our neighbors, friends and members of our own families who are not saints, who are still blind to the grace of God as we see it, the grace which has brought salvation to our hearts in the present time, and which eventually is to bring salvation to the uttermost in the resurrection.

It encourages us further, as the Apostle points out, to lay hold upon the hope set before us--to take a firmer grasp of the Divine character and Plan. It gives our souls encouragement beyond measure when we see how gracious is the character of our Heavenly Father, how wonderful is the Plan He has devised, and how He has been carrying it forward step by step up to the present hour. We realize that by His grace we are what we are and have been called to joint-heirship with our Redeemer, as members of the Seed of Abraham. We reason that if the Lord so loved us while we were sinners, that much more does He love us now that we have accepted Christ and are under the robe of His righteousness and seeking to do those things in harmony with the Divine will.

When darkness seems to hide His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace;
In every high and Stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant and His blood
Support me in the 'whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He, then, is all my hope and stay.

SM538

THE HEREAFTER

"There shalt be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."--**Rev. 21:4**.

Mankind instinctively believe in a future life; for to the majority of minds it does not seem logical that death ends all. So surely as we believe our Creator to be all-wise, we must assume that He has some purpose in connection with our race, not attained as yet, something beyond the capacity of attainment in the present life, under present conditions. Even without a Divine Revelation, therefore, we would be justified in anticipating a life beyond the tomb. But speculation upon such an important subject, of such vital interest, is not necessary. We are glad that our Creator has given us in the Bible clear intimations respecting His purposes in relation to mankind in the future. Nevertheless these purposes were kept secret, not revealed, until the First Advent of our Redeemer. Thus the Apostle declares that "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." The future life was invisible before, not brought to light; and its terms could not be clearly discerned.

Without any Divine Revelation, we see a sufficiency on every hand to cause astonishment and to call anxiously for explanations. We see the world of mankind weak and depraved, sighing, crying and dying. "Transitory" is written upon everything human. The Scriptures assert that we of today are living under "a reign of Sin and Death," and that this dominion has lasted for over six thousand years. Why are these things so? Is it not true that there is but the one God? Is it not true that His creatures on the spirit plane are perfect, that in Heaven there is neither sighing, nor crying, nor dying? There is no reign of Sin and Death there, no hospitals, no asylums, no

SM539

jails, no penitentiaries. All is harmony, perfect, pure, in full accord with the Almighty. Why are conditions so different on this earth of ours?

BECAUSE ONE MAN DISOBEYED

The Bible alone offers us an explanation of the situation. It tells us that God created our race as pure, as perfect, as holy, as happy as the angels, and that He placed our first parents in Eden, surrounded with everything beautiful and desirable. It explains that our fall from that perfection into mental, moral and physical decrepitude came as a result of disobedience to God. It explains that "the wages of sin is death," that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die," that all the souls produced by Father Adam and Mother Eve are dying souls, in consequence of our sin-inheritance. This is bad enough, sad enough; and, as was designed, our hearts cry out after the living God, for His mercy and compassion, that He would save us from death, save us from destruction. The answer of Divine Justice is, that we are unfit to live--that our Creator graciously designs that sinners shall not be immortal. But, hearkening, we hear a message assuring us that God has looked down in compassion and "heard the groaning of the prisoners." He foreknew our helplessness under the reign of Sin and Death, and in His Plan made provision for our case in advance--"before the foundation of the world."--**Eph. 1:3-6**.

After four thousand years of this reign of Sin and Death, exhibiting Divine Justice without mercy, our Creator revealed the wonderful features of His Program. He sent forth His Son, "that he, by the grace of God, might taste death for every man"--not for the elect Church merely, but for all the families of the earth. Hence it is written that Jesus "gave Himself a Ransom for all"; and again, that "He is the Propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the Church], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."--**1 Tim. 2:5,6**; **1 John 2:2**.

SM540

So, then, the death penalty pronounced against our race, which would have reduced Adam and his posterity to the hopeless condition of beasts, as respects eternal life, God had already purposed to set aside through the sacrifice of Christ. Nevertheless, He permitted Sin and Death to reign from Adam to Moses, and from Moses to Christ,

and from Calvary to the present. He has contented Himself with laying the foundation for the world-wide blessing, in the death of the Redeemer. He purposes ultimately, the Bible assures us, to offer to Adam and all of his children complete deliverance from sin and death. The arrangement is that, "since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. But every man in his own order."--**1 Cor. 15:21-23**.

"DOCTRINES OF DEMONS"

The truth about this matter is severe enough. It shows forth Divine Justice, intertwined with Divine Mercy and Love. We admit our present unworthiness of life eternal, and feel grateful for proposed assistance through Christ. But our great Adversary, operating through ignorance, superstition and fear, seized the opportunity to deceive us and misrepresent our Creator by bringing in what St. Paul designated "doctrines of demons." (**1 Tim. 4:1**.) These have been promulgated, not merely in heathen lands, but amongst the civilized. These false doctrines have tended to alienate the hearts and minds of humanity from God and His revelation. They have put a barrier between God and mankind.

These "doctrines of demons" are presented from various standpoints, but they are alike in one respect; namely, they all teach that God deceived our first parents when He told them that "the wages of sin is death." These "doctrines of demons" assert the contrary--that man cannot die, but must live somewhere to all eternity. Thus on the basis of man's fears, this doctrine that God thrust immortality

upon His creatures, the demons built up for us a theory so horrible as to be nauseating and terrifying to every sane, healthy mind. These "doctrines of demons" have been promulgated far and near, and with various colorings, but in essence they are all the same. They have come down from the Dark Ages, represented in all our creeds, Catholic and Protestant.

Our Catholic friends have developed this thought to a nicety. They tell us that of those who die, only a mere handful are fit for Heaven and go there immediately.

They tell us that the most reprehensible class, heretical rejectors of Divine Truth, will be sent to a hell of eternal torture, where they will never die. They assure us, however, that the number who will receive this extreme punishment is small in comparison with the race as a whole.
They tell us that the majority, Catholics and Protestants, civilized and heathen, are unfit for Heaven at death, and likewise not deserving of eternal torture; and that thus the great mass of mankind, nine out of every ten, go at death to Purgatory, there to suffer for centuries or for thousands of years in expiation of sins, and for purification of their souls, that they may be eventually fit for Heaven and its blessings. Our hearts rebel at such a view of the Hereafter. While giving our Catholic friends, and our own forefathers who were Catholics, credit for being as sincere as ourselves, we conclude that the light of our day and of our intelligence will not permit us to believe and rejoice in such a view of the Hereafter as this. We say to ourselves, Surely the Great God has something nobler than this in reservation for His creatures.

PROTESTANT VIEWS WORSE

What shall we say of the Hereafter from the standpoint of our Protestant creeds? How do these compare with the Catholic views foregoing--how much worse? When our forefathers thought they had found something erroneous in the teachings of Papacy, when they concluded

that Purgatory was not to be found in the Bible, they heroically determined to cast it out of their creeds. But alas! When discarding it, they did not realize that they were making a bad matter worse. They held on to the "doctrine of demons," that God had created man so that he could not die, and could not be destroyed; and so they proceeded to interpret matters along that line. Realizing the Scripturalness of the proposition that only the saintly were fit for Heaven, and rejecting the theory of Purgatory, they logically consigned all except the saintly thereafter to eternal torture. Alas, how inconsistent it is! How strange that we ever thought Divine Foreknowledge, Wisdom, Justice, Mercy, Love and Power should have created man to the number of thousands of millions, with

the foreknowledge and fore-intention and desire that they should suffer an eternity of torture!

PARTING OF THE WAYS

Thus, my dear hearers, you with myself and others of the intelligent people of the world, find ourselves today in a most trying position. Our hearts have repudiated the doctrine of eternal torture as being un-Christlike, unworthy even of a devil. We can believe neither in a Purgatory of centuries, nor in eternal torture as a consequence or penalty for Adam's disobedience in eating of the forbidden fruit, nor as a penalty upon his children for not living perfect lives when they were "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" and "prone to sin as the sparks to fly upward." Our hearts cry out for the living God and the true light upon His dealings.

Under this awakening intelligence, thousands of noble men and women are leaving God's Book, and leaving all of the churches to go after Theosophy, Christian Science, and especially after Evolution, with its companion teaching of Higher Criticism--that the Bible is thoroughly unreliable. We are living now in a time of great falling away from the faith when few intelligent people any

longer believe in the Bible. Our colleges and universities --and, sad to say, our theological seminaries--are busy turning out unbelievers--infidels. Nor are these people wicked or immoral in their unbelief. They are as well-meaning as ever, but have lost their way. They reject the Bible because they believe it to be the *foundation* of the various inconsistencies in their creeds. They are stumbling for lack of knowledge. They cannot believe that man's hereafter is one of centuries of suffering, or of eternal suffering.

SEEKING THE OLD PATHS

The Lord, through the Prophet Jeremiah, tells His people to "inquire for the old paths"; and this is the appropriate lesson for each of us. We do, indeed, need to discard the creeds of the past, not because they contain nothing of truth, but because error commingles in them

to such a degree as to make them perversions of truth as a whole. We need to take off the creedal spectacles with which we have hitherto been studying God's Word, and come to the Bible afresh, to hear its message. Thus coming, many of us have been surprised as we have found its purity, consistency and harmony with itself. We have already intimated the Bible view of man's death sentence, and the Bible presentation that Christ died for our redemption, and the Bible assurance that as a consequence, in "due time," "the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth." We have also the Bible assurance that not merely the living will profit by the provision of God's grace, but that "all that are in their graves shall come forth" to share in and to be blessed by the favorable conditions which God will inaugurate.

The Bible declares that the penalty for sin is being experienced by humanity at the present time--the death penalty--and that the Redemption-price of Christ's death is sufficient for the sins of the whole world. It declares that on account of this redemption, ultimately the resurrection

of the dead shall take place--"all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth." Because of the Divine purpose that there shall be a resurrection of the dead the Bible everywhere--in both the Old and New Testaments--speaks of those who have died, both good and bad, as being "asleep," and the promise is that "they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake."--**Dan. 12:2**; **John 5:28,29**.

Nor will they come forth to similar conditions of sorrow that now surround us all. On the contrary, the First Resurrection is to be composed of the holy, the saintly; and they are to be associated with their Redeemer as His Bride and Consort, to assist in delivering and restoring mankind. Later the imperfect, who have not had their full trial--the great mass of mankind--will be brought forth, that they may learn the ways of righteousness, that they may learn to know God and Jesus Christ, and in due time be lifted out of the conditions of sin and death. Then will come the time mentioned in our text, the Hereafter for the world. How joyful is the message, "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor dying; for the former things have passed away!" Ah,

how different is God's proposition of a general uplift of the worthy and their assistance back to perfection--to all that was lost in Adam! How different is this from the "doctrines of demons," which have perplexed us, which have divided the Church of Christ into numberless sects and parties, and which have almost driven us from Christ and the Bible!

LIFE, NOT IMMORTALITY

Thus we see that God's provision in Christ for mankind is that each individual member of our race may yet, if he will, attain to everlasting life through the merit of Christ's Sacrifice, and through the operation of His Kingdom. Each may attain to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary; namely, human perfection and

Edenic blessedness. But additionally, note the blessing which God has provided for the Church--a spiritual blessing, a change of nature. These are called out now from amongst men, that they "might be a kind of first-fruits unto God of His creatures." (**James 1:18**.) These are to be a Royal Priesthood, associated with Christ now in the priestly work of sacrificing, presenting their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is their reasonable service. And when the sacrificing shall be finished, they are to be joined with Christ in the glories of His Kingdom, and share with Him in the work of blessing mankind. These are the Elect who, in God's providence, shall by and by uplift and bless the non-elect. These are the ones to whom will come the promised "glory, honor and immortality." Our Redeemer brought to light life eternal for the world, and immortality for the Church.

Let us then be glad and rejoice in the Hereafter that God has provided; and let us search His Word more diligently and more carefully than ever, that we may know the things which God has freely given to us. Thus we may avail ourselves of our present privileges and opportunities and by and by hear the Master's "Well done! Enter thou into the joys of thy Lord."

I see a new creation rise,
    Through merit of His blood;
I see the dead of earth arise,
    Washed in the cleansing flood.

They rise to walk in Heaven's light,
    Forever free from sin,
With hearts made pure and garments white,
    And Christ enthroned within.

Amazing grace! what joy to know
    The virtue of His blood!
Our Father's wisdom planned it so;
    His Son our Ransom stood.

SM546

THE OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S EMPIRE

"And He laid hold on the Dragon, that old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and He bound him a thousand years,...that he should deceive the nations no more."--**Rev. 20:2,3**.

Long has the world been taught the fable that Satan is in some far-off and unknown place called Hell, stoking fires and causing untellable anguish to millions of our race. But the Bible tells no such fable. It represents Satan as a great and powerful spirit being--"the Prince of this world." (**John 14:30**.) Again it styles him the ruler or "god of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience." (**Eph. 2:2**.) He has a great spiritual empire amongst men, which controls through ignorance, superstition and fear, the vast majority of the human family. The Bible declares him to be the great expert in deceiving the people--making darkness appear to be light, falsehood appear to be truth, and truth appear to be falsehood. It declares that God has permitted Satan thus to rule as a prince, but has never authorized him--that his power is purely usurpation, based upon these deceptions. It tells why God has permitted him, what object will be served eventually by the permission of evil, how Satan shall be restrained or bound during the thousand years of Messiah's glorious Kingdom, and that eventually he will be utterly destroyed --annihilated.--**Rev. 20:7,9**.

SATAN ORIGINALLY A GLORIOUS ANGEL

The Bible story is that Satan was created perfect, an angel of very high rank, named Lucifer, which signifies bright, glorious, intelligent. He was the first creature of God to rebel against the Divine arrangement. Pride

SM547

and ambition beclouded his wisdom. He desired to become

a king, an autocrat, in some realm of his own, which he apparently fancied he could rule more wisely than could Jehovah. Beholding the newly created Adam and Eve, with procreative powers and authority from God to fill the earth with glorious perfect human beings, Satan concluded that he would never have a better opportunity than this for establishing himself as a great king. If he could alienate man from the Creator, he would soon have an empire of his own. He succeeded in tempting Adam to disloyalty--disobedience to God--and thus barred him from Divine favor. But later, he found that God's pronouncement, "the wages of sin is death" (**Rom. 6:23**), was not an idle threat; and that all of his subjects were dying. The blight of sin was upon his kingdom, and the only way he could continue it at all was through continued deceptions.

His next move was to establish a new race, infused with fresh blood. The fact that God had not punished Satan's disloyalty was, no doubt, a surprise to all the holy angels. It appeared as though Satan were too powerful for God to punish him. Hence, when Satan presented the proposition that the angels should materialize as men and beget human children of the human mothers of the race, a considerable number of the angels deflected, and participated in the proposition. As the Bible declares, "they left their own estate," or condition. The Bible tells us that the result of this unauthorized union was a new race, physically giants, "men of renown"--intellectually strong, but morally perverted. The record further is that this new race filled the earth with violence, dominating, enslaving, mistreating humanity.

WHAT THE DELUGE ACCOMPLISHED

Foreknowing these conditions, God had arranged for a flood; for mankind had become so corrupt under these evil influences that a continuance of those conditions could no longer be beneficial. The entire race, except Noah's

family of eight persons, were drowned in the Deluge. Not a word in the Bible tells that these antediluvians went to eternal torture, but everything in it teaches that

they died--lost life entirely. But because God purposes their eventual deliverance from death during the thousand years of Christ's Reign, therefore the Bible teaches that they fell asleep in death, not to be awakened until after the Millennial dawn and the establishment of righteousness in the earth. Then they are to come forth, not all at once, but "every man in his own order."

St. Peter (**2 Peter 2:4**) and St. Jude (**Jude 6**) inform us that from the time of the Deluge, Satan and the other angels of lower order, who were misled by him into misuse of their powers, were put under chains of darkness until the judgment of the great Day, now at hand. This signifies their restraint, their hindrance from materializing. Since then, their dealing with mankind has been, not open as before, but in darkness, in deception, etc. Satan is called the Prince of Darkness, of evil, of sin, of error. Jesus styles him the "father of lies"; and because it was through his misrepresentations that Adam and his race came under the Divine sentence of death, therefore Jesus styles Satan "a murderer from the beginning."--**John 8:44**; **2 Cor. 4:4**.

For approximately four thousand years this mighty, wicked spiritual prince has not only been the Prince of demons, "the angels that sinned," but also, by deception, the god or ruler of humanity. His rule of darkness has not been an open one, which the race would resent, but a reign through deception and through the wickedness of humanity--"children of disobedience."--**Eph. 2:2**.

The work of Satan and his demon hosts is manifest amongst the heathen peoples. As St. Paul declares, these are so deceived that they really worship the demons instead of God--ignorantly. (**Acts 17:23**.) The demonology by which they have been deceived has operated through dreams, visions and spirit mediums.

SM549

CHRISTENDOM IS SATAN'S TRIUMPH

When God entered into a Covenant with the Israelites at Mount Sinai, His Law forebade them to have anything to do with these evil spirits, whose communications were through necromancers, wizards, etc. The Divine command was that no such agents of the Evil One were

to be permitted to live in the land of Israel. But by putting darkness instead of light, Satan brought many of the Israelites under the influence of his errors, so that in the days of Jesus one of His most prominent works was that of casting out demons from those who had come into so close contact with the evil spirits that they were obsessed by demons. The same was true of the Apostles, who also cast out demons. A notable instance was that of the maid that brought her masters much gain through soothsaying--fortune telling. St. Paul commanded the evil spirit to come out of her, and forthwith her power to foretell events, etc., was at an end.--**Acts 16:18**.

The teachings of Jesus and the Apostles brought a great light into the world and established new standards, in proportion as their teachings were received. The Bible tells us that as the darkness hates the light, so those who are under the influence of Satan's falsehoods hate the true Message of God, promulgated by Jesus and His followers. Much of the persecution of the children of light must be ascribed to Satan and his hosts. As we read, "The Devil shall cast many of you into prison," etc. (**Rev. 2:10**.) Throughout the eighteen hundred years of this Gospel Age there has been a warfare between the light and the darkness, between Satan's false teachings, insidiously ingrafted into men's minds, and the teachings of the Lord and His people, who received these into good and honest hearts. Pride and ambition were stirred up in the Church; and those who should have been humble followers of Jesus were misled into pomposity, with a form of godliness, but denying its power.--**2 Tim. 3:1-5**.

About the year 325 A.D., the Bishops of the Church,

misled by Satan, proclaimed themselves to be successors to the Apostles in power and Divine authority; whereas the Bible declares that there were only "Twelve Apostles of the Lamb." (**Rev. 21:14**.) We see clearly that the Church has their testimony in the Bible as fully today as ever; and, as St. Paul, who took the place of Judas, declares the Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished. (**2 Tim. 3:17**.) The deluded Bishops, claiming Divine authority, made many changes from the teachings of the Bible, claiming that they individually had the same inspiration as the Apostles.

They additionally fortified their position by holding Apostolic Councils, and through these making creeds which for more than twelve hundred years entirely supplanted the Bible.

The first of these creeds claimed to be a simplification of the Bible story, making Bible study unnecessary. The Nicene Creed was made in the year 325 A.D., at the Council of Nice, attended by three hundred and eighty-four Bishops, at the invitation of Emperor Constantine, who paid their expenses. According to his promise, he backed up this creed, made at his suggestion and in harmony with his assurances. Hundreds of thousands of the heathen forthwith flocked into the Christian churches, with practically no knowledge of God or of the Bible. Considering it impossible to immerse these multitudes, the Bishops sprinkled them, claiming full authority for their action; and the heathen following of the Emperor are said to have been baptised by the dipping of boughs and branches of trees into water and the sprinkling of it upon them en masse!

For more than twelve centuries anybody found in possession of the Bible, or studying it, was suspected of heresy and liable to persecution; for why should they study the Bible when the Emperor and the so-called Apostolic Bishops had declared the Nicene Creed to be a condensation of the Bible, and all that was necessary to

be believed? During those twelve centuries in which the professed followers of Jesus were without the guidance of the Bible, the so-called Bishop-Apostles met from time to time and made new creeds containing fresh errors--the very errors which have troubled the whole world ever since, and which are still troubling us and confusing us.

The Bible, speaking of the influence of these false doctrines of the civilized world, declared that all nations "were made drunk by the wine" of false doctrine. (**Rev. 17:2**.) Gradually we are getting over the drunken stupor of error which has so beclouded our faculties that they led us to think of our Almighty Friend and Creator--the God of all grace, the Father of all mercies, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift--to think of Him as a great devil, who from the beginning has plotted

knowingly and intelligently for the creation of the race, nearly all of whom were to spend an eternity in torture.

SATAN HAMPERED REFORMATION

Any one familiar with history realizes that both Catholics and Protestants are truer and nobler men and teachers since the Reformation time than they were before. We are not blaming humanity for the reign of darkness. We are charging the matter to our great Adversary, Satan, as the Bible does. It has ever been his custom to pose as an angel of light--a leader--to defend the Truth and to spread knowledge; whereas in reality he has always persistently continued to be the enemy and adversary of God--seeking to thwart every feature of the Divine Plan. No doubt at many times he has thought himself successful, not catching the spirit of the Divine Program or realizing that God is able to make all of his machinations to work out eventually for good.

When in the Sixteenth Century the light of the Reformation began to break, the people began to look past the Bishops and to inquire what Jesus and the Apostles had said. They wanted the Bible. But for a time the

Bishops stood in their way. It was in the year 1526 A.D., exactly twelve centuries after the making of the first creed, that Professor Tyndale, a godly man and a scholar, translated the New Testament into English and sought to give it to the British people. Although printing and paper had been invented, he could not have his work published in Great Britain; for the power of the Bishops was too strong. No printers dared offend them.

Professor Tyndale finally succeeded in having his work printed on German presses in the city of Hamburg, and then imported these New Testaments into London. They appeared in the shop windows, and the people rejoiced. But the masses found themselves unable to read; for education was only amongst the favored few. They started to have Bible readings--to hire scholarly persons to read to them. But the Bishops, learning of these things, bought up the entire edition of Tyndale's New Testament and publicly burned the books in front

of St. Paul's Cathedral, in London--Protestant Bishops of the Church of England! They reasoned that if the people got back to the Bible, they would ignore the creeds and those who had made the creeds; and that thus their own honor and influence be lost. They foresaw also that all the creeds would be challenged by Bible authority, and that their Apostolic claims also would be challenged by the words of Jesus, who declares that those who so claim "do lie."--**Rev. 2:2**.

But the Lord's time came for the Bible to return gradually to its proper place. The Bishops found that the people were murmuring against their course; and in forty years the murmuring reached such a height that the Bishops found it wiser to bring out a Bible translation. They called it the Bishop's Bible, in order that they might draw back to themselves the favor of the people, and thus offset their previous Bible burning. But they warned the people that in reading the Bible they must interpret it by the creeds which the Bishops had

made during the preceding twelve centuries; that otherwise they would be heretics and suffer eternal torment.

The matter worked well. Then the Catholics said, "Why cannot we similarly give the people the Bible, and yet hold them down to creedal interpretations of it?" So they prepared at Douay College, France, the Douay Bible, and gave it to the Catholics, with similar warnings that there was great danger in reading it, and that whoever interpreted it otherwise than by the creeds would be heretics and could not even get off with Purgatory, but would go down to eternal torture.

In addition to these handicaps, we must remember that all the reformers who really appreciated the Bible had their minds warped and twisted by twelve centuries of human misrepresentation of the Divine character and Plan, under the malevolent influence of "the Prince of this world." Hence, although the translations of the Bible are generally good, they are interspersed here and there with the mental coloring of the translators. Nor can we wonder at this. Twelve centuries of error and darkness must greatly becloud the mind and require time to be dislodged.

SECT FOLLOWED SECT SEEKING LIGHT

Again Satan sought to block the path of Christian progress from the darkness to light by encouraging sectarianism. Yet each sect was really seeking more light; and Satan, as the Prince of Darkness, succeeded in leading some this way and some that way, and in perpetuating and to some extent increasing the confusion of doctrines, until today the vast majority of even those who profess full consecration to God are perplexed, bewildered. The fire of Higher Criticism and of Evolutionary theories emanating from the colleges is bringing up the false faith of many, as St. Paul foretold would be the case with those who built their faith with the wood, hay and stubble of human tradition, and who did not

SM554

sufficiently search out and build with the gold, silver and precious stones of Divine Truth.--**1 Cor. 3:12**.

The eminent Cardinal Newman expressed the sentiment of all honest Christians in his hymn, which has met with such general favor everywhere. In it he says:

"Lead, kindly Light,
Amid the encircling gloom;
Lead Thou me on.
The night is dark,
And I am far from home:
Lead Thou me on."

Like the Cardinal, all Christian people are coming to realize that they have been in an encircling gloom; and that somehow or other, error, false doctrine, has been the cause of that gloom. All Christians, as well as the Cardinal, realize the need of a Divine Light to guide the people of God. They realize that they are still in the dark night, and that the morning of Divine blessing has not yet burst in upon the people of the world. Thank God, however, it is breaking now! We are in the dawn of the glorious Millennial Kingdom.

Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His beams. (**Mal. 4:2**.) Soon Satan will be bound for a thousand years, to deceive mankind no longer. (**Rev. 20:2**.) And then, a little later, according to the Word of the Lord, Satan and all those who will then intelligently sympathize with his wrong course, and who refuse

obedience to God under the blessed influence of Messiah's Kingdom, will be destroyed in the fire, or judgment, which will come down from Heaven--the Second Death, from which there will be no redemption, no recovery. (**Rev. 20:9**.) Of those St. Peter declares that they shall perish like natural brute beasts; and St. Paul tells us that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction.

Although Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans--all--admit, as does the Cardinal, that they are encircled in the gloom and the darkness of the night everywhere about, nevertheless each consoles himself with the thought that it is no more dark or gloomy

with him than with those of other sects. Evidently this is the truth. But the difficulty has been that although there are many sects, parties and divisions amongst the people of God, there is no more authority in the Bible for one of these sects than for another. The only Church of the Bible is "the Church of the First-borns," whose names are "written in Heaven"--"in the Lamb's Book of Life."--**Heb. 12:23**; **Rev. 21:27**.

The course which God's people should have pursued would have been to keep free from any sectarian bondage and to continue to walk in the light of the Truth, instead of binding themselves with human creeds and staking their minds back to the teachings of Luther, Calvin, Wesley and others. It is not too late yet to step out from all human bondage and to obey the command of the Lord's Word, which says that we should walk in the Light, and not sit in sectarian darkness. The Bible tells us that "the path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (**Prov. 4:18**.) We are now in the beginning of that perfect Day; and all who are walking in the light, and are free from bondage, are receiving blessings from the Lord; for it is "due time."--**1 Tim. 2:6**.

It is safe to say that no ministry of education in any of the so-called orthodox sects believes the creed of his own denomination or would think for a moment of defending it before the public. A Baltimore minister, recently challenged by one of his congregation as to the truthfulness of the creeds respecting the eternal torment of all except the saintly believers in Christ, said, "George,

George, I do not believe those things one bit more than you do! But, George, I am bound to preach them. I cannot help myself!"

Alas, poor man, how terrible his slavery! What mighty power could bind him to slander his Creator? The wealth of the world should not be worthy of the slightest consideration if it could be obtained at such

SM556

a price. The sale of the Almighty's name and character necessarily seem worse to us than the course of Judas Iscariot in the selling of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Additionally, how much more would any honorable man demand for deceiving the congregation who trusted him and who supplied a living for himself and his family? How much money should it require of any honest man to keep his confiding flock in ignorance of his real views and of the teachings of the Bible?

Alas, alas, how much hypocrisy appears to be in the world under the cloak of religion! The ministers of today have taken vows to preach creeds which they do not believe, and are quietly assenting to those creeds and allowing their congregations to think that they believe them, when privately they confess to their fellows and to many of their congregations that they have no faith whatever in those teachings. As with the pulpit, so with the pew! How many bankers, doctors, lawyers, far too intelligent to believe the monstrosities of the creeds, nevertheless back with their personal influence and their money those very creeds which dishonor God, and which have driven thousands of sensible people away from all denominations! Would these same men be so dishonest in respect to their vows to the Masons or the Odd Fellows or other human organizations? Would they support things which they did not believe? We cannot think so.

The only explanation we have for such a terrible course of hypocrisy is that these good people do not realize what they are doing and believe themselves justified in professing a lie because others so do. Surely the hour of awakening and of decision is upon us. If I am correct in teaching that Messiah's Kingdom is at the door, surely it is time to be sobered up from the false doctrines, time to be very penitent for our share therein, time to step out of all false representations into the liberty wherewith

Christ has made His people free (**Gal. 5:1**), and time to profess the Truth and to uphold it and it alone.

SM557

PASSOVER IN TYPE AND IN ANTITYPE

"Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."--**1 Cor. 5:7,8**.

The Passover ceremonies, the first institution of Divine favor with the nation of Israel, prefigured the first institution of Divine favor inaugurated by our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. As the Apostle indicated in our text, the Jewish Passover was a foreshadowing, or typifying, of the better things, the real Passover, with which we Christians have to do. We are not wholly dependent upon the Jewish type for our information, however; for we have clear, Divine statements by our Lord and His Apostles respecting the relationship between Christ and His Church and respecting the special salvation of the Elect. Nevertheless, we find in the Passover type many details which assist us greatly in the understanding of the Antitype.

First of all we should notice that the Passover directly affected only the first-borns of Israel, although it indirectly affected all the remainder of Israel. That is to say, the last plague upon Egypt was the death of all their first-borns; and the Passover celebrates the fact that the first-borns of Israel were spared, or passed over, by the destroying angel in that night. As the younger children of the Egyptians were not endangered, neither were the younger children of the Israelites. Hence the latter were not passed over. Yet they were certainly interested in the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns, not merely because of their relationship, but because in the Lord's providence those first-borns became leaders and deliverers of the people on the next day, as they went forth from Egypt.--**Num. 8:17,18**.

SM558

Furthermore, those first-borns of Israel, exchanged by Divine direction for the entire tribe of Levi, were thereafter represented in them; and they, as the sacrificing

priests and the teaching Levites, became the ministers of the Law Covenant for that nation. The antitype of this was distinctly pointed out by the Apostle Paul; namely, that the elect Church of this Gospel Age is "the Church of the First-borns, which are written in Heaven." These are to be the "able ministers of the New [Law] Covenant."--**Heb. 12:23**; **2 Cor. 3:6**.

These first-borns alone are being dealt with during this Gospel Age, or "night." These alone are in danger of a death penalty. As the Apostle declares, if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for our sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour us as the adversaries of God and of righteousness. (**Heb. 10:26,27**.) Nevertheless, the whole world of mankind is certainly interested in this Church of the First-borns, in its successful passing over, its attainment of everlasting life; for these are the Royal Priesthood and the instructors of the New Covenant, which is shortly to be sealed, and by the terms of which all the families of the earth are to be blessed. All mankind will receive the blessing of reconciliation to God through the knowledge of the Truth and through the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, associated with the New Covenant.--**Jer. 31:31-34**.

JESUS THE PASSOVER LAMB

Having noted the first-born class, we should discern clearly also the Passover lamb, through the merit of whose blood the passing over of the first-borns was effected. The lamb is a peculiarly innocent animal, wholly unprepared for defense or resistance, and thus a suitable picture, or type, of our Lord, who was non-resistant and who fully and freely surrendered His rights and His earthly interests on our behalf--on behalf of the

First-borns. True, others than the First-borns will ultimately profit by His sacrifice, but these especially and peculiarly so. Thus far God's only dealings during this Gospel Age are with this class. These alone have an Advocate with the Father--Jesus Christ the Righteous.

(**1 John 2:1,2**.) These alone thus far are reconciled to God.

All of God's blessings to the unbelievers must come in the future, under the New Covenant; for only believers can be justified by faith and receive the blessings of the Faith Covenant--the Abrahamic Covenant. "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," first saves, or passes over, the Church of the First-borns, and later in the Millennium will bless all who become Abraham's seed.

There are pictures of the Church which represent her as participating with the Lord in His sacrifice; but this Passover type is not one of these. The Passover lamb represented our Lord Jesus Christ as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (**John 1:29**.) But the sin of the world has not yet been taken away. Our Lord has not yet applied His merit for the world, but only and expressly for the Household of Faith. In another sacrifice, which represents our Lord and the Church conjointly sacrificing, as Head and members, the body of the animal was cut into various pieces and laid with the Head upon the altar, thus typifying Christ Jesus as the Head and the Church as His members. (**Exod. 29:15-18**.) But provision was made that the Passover sacrifice was not to be divided. It was to be eaten whole --not a bone was to be broken. It represented, not Christ and the Church, but Christ alone in His sacrifice.--**Exod. 12:46**; **John 19:36**.

"IN THAT NIGHT"

Be it remembered that the passing over took place in the night, not in the daylight. When the morning arrived, the Israelites went forth out of the land of Egypt

to liberty, to freedom from bondage. But during the night they were still in bondage, waiting for the deliverance which could come only after the passing over of the first-borns. That night of the type represented this Gospel Age.

This same thought is given by our Lord when He says, "Let your light so shine before men"; again,

"Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." (**Matt. 5:15,16**.) The Apostle Peter expresses the same thought, saying, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts." (**2 Peter 1:19**.) Again, the Prophet, speaking of the Church, says, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."--**Psa. 119:105**.

Numerous other Scriptures refer to the new Millennial Dispensation as the Morning in which the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams, and in which the shadows of superstition and works of darkness shall all be driven away. The appropriateness of this figure must be evident to every reasonable mind. God's people are children of the Day in the sense that their hopes and sentiments belong, not to the darkness of sin, not to the night-time, but to the Day, to the Reign of Righteousness, for which they are praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven."

Eighteen centuries ago our Lord said that He had come as a Light into the world, but that men loved darkness rather than light. (**John 8:12**; **3:19-21**.) Only a few yet recognize Him as "the true Light." But eventually He will "light every man that cometh into the world." (**John 1:9**.) Indeed, His Church are invited to become associated with Him as lamp-bearers; and if faithful in permitting their light to shine now, they will

by and by be parts of that great Sun of Righteousness which shall heal the world with its beams. Our Lord pointed this out in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. He declared that in the end of this Age He would gather the wheat into the barn; and that then should "the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (**Matt. 13:43**.) Alas, that so few have "an ear to hear" and accept the wonderful teachings of the Divine Plan!

BLOOD ON THE DOORPOSTS ALL NIGHT

The Israelites were instructed that the blood of the lamb must be sprinkled on the doorposts and the lintels of their houses that night. This indicated that all who would belong to the Household of Faith must believe in the precious blood of Christ, and thus be "justified by faith" irrespective of denomination. To believe thus would make us members of the Household of Faith; but it would not determine whether or not we would be of the First-borns. The Very Elect, the Saints, the Royal Priesthood, have this place of seniority in the Household of Faith--not by reason of natural years, but by reason of spiritual development. They are priests, elders, in the sense of their primacy of development in the character-likeness of their Redeemer, which also indicates their faith and obedience.

We cannot emphasize too strongly the fact that this is the Scriptural teaching. We are not merely to believe that Jesus lived, that Jesus died. We are especially to believe that He died SACRIFICIALLY, "the Just for the unjust," and are to accept our share of the redemption which He secured by His precious blood. The sprinkling of the blood upon the doorposts in the type implied public confession of the precious blood of the Lamb of God, in His death and in its efficacy for us, which is thus signified.

It will be remembered that the Israelites were enjoined against going out of the house during the night; for when the Lord would pass through to smite the

Egyptians, He would see the blood upon lintels and doorposts, and would not suffer the destroying angel to come into their houses. (**Exod. 12:1-13**.) The injunction that those under the door sprinkled with blood should not go out from under it during that night had special application and force with respect to the first-borns. Antitypically it signifies that if any of us who are of the First-borns should go out from under the blood, in the sense of denying the merit, the efficacy, of the blood of Jesus, the penalty of such a course would be death--the Second Death--hopeless extinction.--**Heb. 6:4-6**; **10:26-31**.

EATING THE LAMB

As the blood of the lamb marked the household of faith, not merely the first-borns of that household, so the eating of the lamb was not merely for the first-borns, but for all the household. So our Lord said, "My flesh is meat indeed"; and again, "This is the Bread which came down from Heaven; he that eateth of this Bread shall live forever." (**John 6:55,58**.) In other words, not only was it necessary that Jesus should die, a meritorious Sacrifice, but it is also necessary that all who would have profit through His Sacrifice must feed upon Him--must appropriate the merit of His Sacrifice.

The eating of the lamb pictured, or typified, the appropriation, by the Household of Faith, of those earthly rights and interests which were forfeited by Adam's disobedience and redeemed by Jesus' death. In other words, it signifies our appropriating justification from sin. We eat by faith, and therefore are said to be "Justified by faith." By faith we are permitted to count ourselves as fully reinstated in God's favor through the merit of Christ's Sacrifice, even as we were debarred from Divine favor through the demerit of Adam's sin. The eating of the lamb signifies the appreciation of these things and the appropriation of them to ourselves. The more we eat, the greater is our feeling of satisfaction in respect to our

freedom from condemnation and our reinstatement in Divine favor through the merit of our Passover Lamb.

THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT

Year by year for more than sixteen centuries the Jews kept the Passover by Divine decree--not merely the sacrifice of the lamb and the eating of it on the same night, after the doorposts had been sprinkled with blood, but additionally a feast of seven days following. That Passover feast represented the joys and rejoicings, the blessings and favors of relationship to God, based upon the merit of the Passover lamb--its sacrifice and the eating thereof. Yet the Jews understood not the meaning of what they did. It was not necessary that they should

understand. When God's due time came, the explanation would be granted.

That due time came on the night in which our Lord was betrayed--the night of the fourteenth day of the first month, the very night of the typical killing of the Passover lamb. The Master gathered about Him His twelve Apostles. They had their usual Passover supper of roast lamb; and afterwards our Lord introduced what we familiarly term "The Lord's Supper"--a new symbolization of the antitypical Passover.

What our Lord introduced was to take the place of the Jewish ceremony with His followers, to carry out the same thought, but on a higher plane, as representing a clearer, better understanding of the matter. Instead of the lamb would be the unleavened bread, representing our Lord's flesh. This He distributed to His Apostles, saying, "This is My body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me." (**Luke 22:19**.) The eating of that unleavened bread represented their appropriating to themselves of the merit of Christ's sacrifice--their justification by faith.

Then our Lord added a new feature--"the cup." For while all believers might partake of the bread, might realize justification through the merit of His sacrifice,

yet only a certain class of believers were invited to partake of the blood. The cup represented death. Ordinarily, under the Jewish Law, the partaking of blood would represent blood-guiltiness, or responsibility for the death. (**Lev. 17:10-14**.) But our Lord gave His disciples fruit of the vine as symbolic of His blood; and He urged upon them its appropriation, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you," and "for many." "Drink ye all of it."--**Luke 22:20**; **Matt. 26:27,28**.

This invitation to drink of His blood signifies a participation with Christ as His members in a sacrifice of earthly life, earthly interests, hopes, aims, ambitions--everything. All who accept this invitation to drink of His blood thereby pledge their lives in the same service for which He gave His life. This thought is entirely additional to anything in the Jewish Passover type. There is no intimation that any of the household were to partake of the blood of the slain lamb. Nevertheless we who now

accept our Lord's proposition to share in His blood and lay down our lives with Him in defense of the Truth, thereby mark ourselves as elder brothers in the Household of Faith, members of the First-borns with our Lord, our Redeemer, and as prospectively the Royal Priesthood.

Therefore whoever intelligently partakes of the Memorial Supper thereby indicates two things: (1) His faith in Jesus as the Passover Lamb, and his appreciation and participation in the merit of Jesus--his justification by faith; and (2) his membership in the Body of Christ, all the members of which agree to be broken--membership in that "little flock" whose faithfulness is manifested by drinking of the Master's cup--sharing with Him in His sacrifice, suffering with Him in order to reign with Him.--**1 Cor. 10:16,17**; **2 Tim. 2:11,12**.

SM565

"TONGUES OF FIRE"

"These signs shall follow them that believe: In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, who shall recover."--**Mark 16:17,18**.

From all parts of the world, but especially from the Pacific coast, have come reports of what its friends call a fresh Pentecostal blessing--an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, etc., and what its opponents call a religious insanity. The movement is amongst so-called "holiness people" of various sects and parties--"missions," as their meetings are generally styled. People who have been seeking and claiming "divine healing" seem to be among the most susceptible. Amongst these are some who give evidence of deep sincerity and a superficial knowledge of God's Word. Though generally swift to speak and slow to hear, they, through indolence or fear, neglect systematic study of the Divine Message. They seem to come under the head mentioned by the Prophet, "My people perish for lack of knowledge."--**Hosea 4:6**.

Reports of the movement in various directions seemed so absurd that we declined to believe them, supposing that since they were sent out by the secular press the facts must surely be misrepresented. Now, however, the "flame," as it is called, has reached Pittsburgh, where at one of the Christian Alliance Missions we have had an ocular demonstration of this delusion.

What we see here corresponds well with the general reports from elsewhere. The meetings are "bedlam"; everything is confusion, prayers to God are yelled or groaned or barked--yelped. Now and then some one "gets the blessing" and falls in a trance-like condition

SM566

on the floor, to remain rigid perhaps for hours. Another begins to talk some sort of gibberish interspersed with English. Another in a different guttural mumbles and then gives an interpretation in English. These are said

to have the "unknown tongues" of Pentecost; but we remember that foreigners present recognized those tongues as *bona fide* and got a Gospel Message from them, according to the inspired record.--**Acts 2:8**.

The people in attendance pay little heed to what is uttered by these "tongues" and their interpretations. Some are simply curious and attend as a free show; others are too engrossed with their desire to have a trance or an "unknown tongue" to do anything else than groan their prayers to God for those "gifts," as evidences of His favor. Frenzied hugging and kissing and rolling on the floor (reported from elsewhere) are amongst the evidences that these poor people are surely under some spirit influence. And it certainly does not appear to be "the spirit of a sound mind."--**2 Tim. 1:7**.

EVIL WORDS FROM EVIL SOURCE

It is quite true that there was confusion at Pentecost, caused by so many speaking at once in foreign languages; but nothing in the record implies insanity or fanaticism; nor could we expect either from such sound logicians as their writings show the Apostles to have been. On the contrary, our experiences corroborate the declaration of St. Paul, that the operation of the Holy Spirit of God in our hearts and minds has been favorable to the development of greater soundness of mind, by reason of our heed to the Word and its wisdom, which cometh from Above. A WATCH TOWER reader in Los Angeles, Cal., writes that a neighbor woman got this so-called gift of tongues; and that a reputable Chinaman hearing her, said that he understood her quite well--that she spoke his dialect of Chinese. Pressed for an interpretation he declined, saying that the utterance was the vilest of the vile.

SM567

In our judgment, the facts justify the conclusion that these "flames" are of all unholy spirit, of Satan: that he is now producing a poor counterfeit for the deception of a class whom he cannot reach through Spiritism, Christian Science, Hypnotic New Thought nor Higher Critic Evolution theories.

Is it asked, Why would the Lord permit Satan to

delude honest souls? We reply, that He has permitted "doctrines of devils" these many centuries amongst the heathen (**1 Tim. 4:1**), some of whom doubtless are also honest. The *time* for the binding of Satan is not yet--though we believe it is very near. (**Rev. 20:2**.) Doubtless Satan realizes better than we can how the binding or restraining is coming, and is actively maneuvering to avoid it; while God, on the other hand, is willing to permit his activity because it can now serve a purpose--a sifting work--which must reach and touch every class and condition of professed Christians everywhere; to test and prove them. Thus we consider this one of the many delusions of our day. Mark the Apostle's forceful words respecting this day of trial with which this Age ends and the next is ushered in. He says: For this cause "God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." Why? "That they [who fall] all might be [thus] condemned"--be manifested as not right, as out of harmony with God--as unfit to be of the "Bride" class. But why so? "Because they received not the Truth in the love of it," but "had pleasure in untruth."--**2 Thess. 2:10,12**; **Matt. 24:23,24**.

In other words, "Present Truth" has been sent hither and thither throughout the bounds of Christendom that, like as a magnet would attract all the particles of steel within the radius of its influence, so the Truth might attract all the "Israelites indeed," for further schooling and ripening, preparatory to their "change" to Kingdom glory. Meantime, the Lord allows Satan to organize various human agencies, those not of His "Very Elect,"

that such may fall farther and farther from the Truth, until finally none will "stand" except the Elect, and they "on the sea of glass mingled with fire." (**Rev. 15:2**.) All others are to fall more or less, though some will subsequently be rescued from the catastrophe--"saved so as by fire."--**1 Cor. 3:15**.

AN UNINSPIRED RECORD

I have chosen **this especial text** for two reasons: (1) Because it is the one most frequently quoted by those who

advocate the thought that all Christians should be known by the peculiar gifts it specifies, and able to speak with unknown tongues, to cast out devils, to heal the sick, etc. (2) Because I wish the more pointedly to call to your attention the fact that these words are not a part of the original Gospel by St. Mark. It is well known to all critical students that St. Mark's Gospel closed with the sixteenth chapter and eighth verse. From the ninth verse to the conclusion, as shown in our Common Version, was an addition to the original manuscript. This is demonstrated by the fact that these verses are not found in the original MSS. of the New Testament. The oldest Greek MSS. and the most authentic every way, are known as the Vatican MS. 1209, and the Sinaitic MS.--both written somewhere near the year 350. Neither of these contains Verses nine to twenty, including our text. The earliest Greek MS. containing these verses is the Alexandrian, the date of which is credited to the fifth century. It seems rather remarkable to us, therefore, that there should be amongst scholars any who would use the words of our text as though they were of Divine inspiration or Apostolic authority.

However, the conclusions based upon these words deserve our consideration everyway, because of the fact that the Scriptures clearly show that our Lord and the Apostles and some members of the early Church did possess many of these gifts of the Holy Spirit, and did exercise them somewhat after the manner described in

these interpolated words we have taken as our text. We, therefore, invite your attention to what we believe to be the Bible teaching on the subject of the "gifts of the Holy Spirit" and the "fruits of the Spirit."

"GIFTS" IN THE EARLY CHURCH

That our Lord ever spoke in unknown tongues is not stated; but that He cast out demons, healed the sick and awakened the dead is recorded, and also the fact that He sent forth His disciples clothed with power and authority to do the same things is also declared. We are to notice, however, that although Jesus did many wonderful works,

they are expressly stated to have been for signs--"These things did Jesus, and manifested forth [beforehand] His glory"--the glorious work of His Kingdom, which is to completely liberate mankind from the thraldom of sin, sickness, demons and death, in proportion as the laws of the Kingdom shall be obeyed. We are not, then, to understand that it was the Divine will in our Lord's day, nor since, that all sickness should be cured by Divine power, that all demons were to be cast out, etc., but rather that just a sufficiency of this kind of work was to be accomplished to give evidence of the change of dispensation--to testify to Jesus and His disciples--to authenticate their ministry and teachings as Divine.

Nor were these healings merely performed upon those who were converts to the Lord--upon those who had accepted Him as the Messiah, had believed in Him and had become His disciples. On the contrary, the miracles recorded came not to those who were the Lord's disciples, but to those who were pronounced sinners. As an illustration, take the case of the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda. Its five porches were continually crowded with the sick, as we read,--"In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, the blind, the halt, the withered." Yet, to only one of these did the Lord address Himself, saying, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk; and immediately he was made whole, and took up his bed and walked."

SM570

And that this man was not a believer in Jesus is evidenced also by the narrative; as we read, "He that was healed wist not who it was that had healed him." That he was not a saint is also testified by the narrative; for we read that Jesus later said to him, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more lest a worse thing come upon thee." (**John 5:3,13,14**.) Other evidences in the same line might be given, but are unnecessary.

USE AND VALUE OF THOSE "GIFTS"

After our Lord's death, resurrection and ascension came the Pentecostal blessing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. As an evidence or witness to this baptism, but not a part of it, were gifts similar to those which Jesus

had exercised; and these were generally distributed amongst all believers at that time, as we read that a measure of the Spirit was granted to every man in the Church to profit withal--for his profit and for the general advantage of the cause with which all were identified --the establishment of the Church. The Apostle Paul, in writing to the Corinthians (**1 Cor. 12:4-31**), clearly indicates that the Holy Spirit operated in the early Church. Some had the gift of tongues, others a gift of healing, others a gift of interpreting tongues, etc., while some had several tongues or languages at their command, and some, notably the Apostles, apparently enjoyed all of these gifts. The Apostle exhorted the Church in general to not only covet and desire these gifts, but to recognize between them--that some were preferable to others. The Apostle says, "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" "Covet earnestly the best gifts." The Apostle suggests further that one who had the gift of tongues should pray that he might also receive the gift of interpretation of tongues.--**l Cor. 12:29-31**; **14:1**.

The Apostle distinctly foretells the discontinuance of these "gifts," saying, "Whether there be prophecies,

they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away." (**1 Cor. 13:8**.) He clearly intimates the reason for the discontinuance to be that the Church would gradually come into a more developed condition, in which these gifts would no longer be necessary, but give place to a higher, nobler and more certain manifestation of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He says, "We know in part and we prophesy in part, but when [as] that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." He illustrates this by saying, "When I was a child I spake as a child and understood as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (**1 Cor. 13:9-11**.) We have not yet reached the standard of perfection and full membership in Christ, and shall not reach it until our change in the First Resurrection; but as members of the Lord's Body, His Church, His Ecclesia, we properly have made progress from the infantile condition at the beginning

of this age. This is in harmony with the Apostle's injunction that milk is for babes and strong meat for those more developed; and that it is our duty, as the Lord's followers in the School of Christ, to grow in grace and knowledge and love.

These "gifts" in the Church had prevailed for several years at the time the Apostle addressed the saints at Corinth, whom he exhorted that they should desire the best gifts. He found them, like children, interested chiefly in speaking with unknown tongues, and gently reproved them for considering these a high attainment and evidence of great favor with God. Not that He discouraged the speaking with tongues; for, as he explained, he could thankfully say that he could speak with more tongues than they all; but he wished them to realize that they might have these gifts and yet come very far short of being acceptable to the Lord. He would have them understand that the "fruits" of the Spirit were a higher manifestation and better testimony than the "gifts." The

"gifts" were miracles, tongues, interpretations, etc.; the "fruits" were faith, hope, joy, love. When exhorting them to desire the best "gifts" he added the suggestion respecting the "fruits" of the Spirit as still better, saying, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"--an evidence of Divine favor far beyond that of the "gifts."

To demonstrate the better value of the fruit of the Spirit, love in the heart and in the life (with its concomitants of joy, peace, kindness, etc.), he gave an illustration, saying, Though I could speak with the tongues of men and with the angelic tongues also, if I were devoid of love, it would indicate that I had become like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. As a brass horn will make a noise when it is blown, yet have no appreciation of itself, so some possessing the miracles, gift of tongues, etc., might exercise these in a perfunctory manner and be lacking of the real Spirit of the Lord and His Truth. The power to work miracles might be there and operate through them, and yet they might have no more relationship to it than the cymbals have to the power which strikes them. Taking the still higher gifts of prophecy and understanding of mysteries and knowledge, and even rising in the scale of attainment to the position of mountain-moving

faith, all these, as the Apostle declares, would amount to nothing unless the fruit of the Spirit were developed, namely, Love. These various gifts might serve a purpose, but without Love the purpose would only be for others, and not a blessing to the individual himself.

Progressing still further in his comparison, the Apostle shows that even generosity is not sufficient; for though he were generous and self-sacrificing to the extent of giving all his goods to feed the poor and yielding up his body to be burned in his faithfulness to the Lord, yet should he not develop Love, the great fruit of the Spirit, he could have neither part nor lot with the Lord in His Kingdom, and all these other gifts would profit him nothing as respects membership in the Heavenly Kingdom,

SM573

as a member of the Body of Christ. Therefore, he concludes that "Love is the principal thing"--far beyond all gifts, however honorable and useful they may be. Progressing in his argument, he shows that while the gifts would depart, this grace, this fruit of the Spirit, would continue--continue down to the end of the age--yea, and go far beyond into the eternal future. Referring to the "fruits" of the Spirit, which he desired them to cultivate and to esteem as preferable to the "gifts," he says--Now these abideth, faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these [the most important of all] is love, for love never faileth. It will not only be the essential quality without which we cannot gain an entrance to the life eternal and the Heavenly state, but it will continue throughout all eternity to be the quality or characteristic of all that shall enjoy Divine favor forever.

PROFIT OF "GIFTS" IN THE CHURCH

A little reflection will make clear to us the value, yea, almost the necessity of the gifts to the Church in its infantile state. The Apostle explains the character of their religious gatherings: they met and one had a psalm, another a prayer, another an exhortation, another a hymn, another an unknown tongue, another an interpretation of that tongue, another a gift of prophecy. Their meetings were thus made interesting, entertaining and profitable.

The prospect of messages coming from the Lord through unknown tongues, and the prospect of getting an interpretation of these also, would draw the believers together and maintain their interest and help to give them food for thought and discussion. They had no Bibles at first. The New Testament was not yet written; the Old Testament, written on parchments, was not only clumsy to handle, but very expensive, and the Synagogues which could afford a complete copy were considered very fortunate, and these copies were kept with great care and merely read from on the Sabbath day in the hearing of the people who attended. The early Church, cast out of

the synagogues, were really without any particular source of instruction except as they could call to mind the preaching of the Lord and the Prophets as they had heard them in early life. Hence this provision of the Lord for the gifts of prophecy and understanding of mysteries and communication through unknown tongues and the interpretation of the same, were all designed to teach them their dependence upon the Lord and to draw them together for mutual instruction, and show them that the Gospel message was not given to them individually but collectively as a Church. All these good offices were well served by the gifts, and in due time the believers were taught to look beyond the gifts and to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit.

Gradually the New Testament grew--the four Gospels, the Epistles of Paul, Peter, John, James, etc.--and with this growth of written instruction the necessity for the gifts proportionately died away. They were not necessary as at first for the establishment of the Church nor for its instruction. It is quite in harmony with this that in general the Apostolic epistles of the New Testament make comparatively little reference to the "gifts" of the Spirit, but persistently counsel the putting away of the filth of the flesh and the cultivation of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. No intimation is given anywhere that the Lord's people were to expect a repetition or continuance of the Pentecostal blessings, tongues, etc., but rather that they were to go on toward perfection--the perfection which will be attained only in the resurrection, but for which resurrection they were to be prepared by the cultivation

of the fruits and graces of the Spirit. We are to notice carefully that the one baptism of the Holy Spirit which came upon the believers at the first was nowhere promised to be repeated, and that it was separate and distinct from the "gifts" which at first accompanied, but which subsequently were to give place to the fruits and graces of the Spirit, and did give place to these.

SM575

"OPPRESSION OF THE DEVIL"

The Scriptures do clearly teach that Satan had much to do with the bringing in of mother Eve's temptation, which led up to Father Adam's disobedience. He is justly in the Scriptures styled "a murderer from the beginning." Indirectly he is the murderer of the 20,000,000,000 of our race who have already gone down into the tomb. Indirectly, at least all sickness, pain and sorrow may be thus traced back to him. He has still more to do with us through beguilements and temptations of our weakening flesh. He has led the majority of our race from bad to worse, mentally, morally and physically. For it should be recognized that sin in its every form is death dealing--every sinful and impure thought has its reactionary effect upon our minds and bodies, tending to produce therein weakness and disease--dying conditions.

Naturally and quite properly the inquiry comes, Is not the Lord Jesus still interested in releasing all those "oppressed by the Devil"? Like the Heavenly Father, he surely "changes not"; hence he is still interested in the release of our race from the power of sin and death, and of "him who hath the dominion of death, that is, the Devil." (**Heb. 2:14**.) And if so, should not we expect that the healing of disease and expelling of demons would be still the Lord's work throughout this age--irrespective of the fact that now His Church has been established in the world upon a good footing, and has no need of the "gift" for instruction, having instead, in the hands of all, the Bible--both the Old and the New Testament? We answer, Yes--undoubtedly all this is true. Why, then, is it asked, should not the same healing of the sick progress now? Why should not this be one of the main duties and privileges of all believers, after the manner of their Lord

and the Apostles?

We reply that while the Lord proposes a great work as the Good Physician in the healing of the diseases of the world, mental, moral and physical--while He proposes

SM576

that ultimately this shall be accomplished on a much larger scale than anything which He did at the First Advent, yet the time for this is not yet. What Jesus and His Apostles did in the beginning of the age, as we have already seen, affected only a very small fraction of the world--only a very small fraction indeed of those with whom they were in contact. The real work of healing and restitution, according to the Scriptures, belongs to the future, to the Millennial Age, to that epoch which will follow the Second Advent of our Lord--to His work as the Prophet, Priest and King in the lifting up and blessing everyway of all who are of the millions whom He redeemed with His precious blood. The work of this age is not a restitution work except, as already noted, in the early Church it was a foreshadowing of coming good things. The work of this Gospel Age is not a work of healing and restoring mankind.

The Times of Restitution have not yet come, and will not come, as the Apostle points out, until the Second Advent of our Lord. (**Acts 3:19-21**.) Now we are in the time when work the very reverse of this is in operation--a sacrificing work. All will admit that our Lord did not use His healing powers on His own behalf, but that, on the contrary, He sacrificed, laid down, His life in the service of truth and righteousness; that in three and a half years He so spent His vitality--when "virtue went out of Him and healed them all"--that at the time of His crucifixion He was very weak, as evidenced by the bloody sweat and the fact that He was not able to bear His own cross as did the others in the procession. All will admit that the Apostles did not use their powers for their own restoration, nor have we any record of their ever praying for the healing of themselves or for each other to be healed of disease. Even when Trophimus was sick, nigh unto death, the Apostle makes no intimation of prayer for his healing; and when Timothy had dyspepsia, instead of praying for his restoration to health, or sending

him a blest handkerchief or napkin, the Apostle wrote him respecting his diet, "for thy stomach's sake and thy often infirmities." (**1 Tim. 5:23**.) All must admit, then, that the healings were done upon those outside the Church, and evidently were for a time only, and would constitute no basis that the Church should expect miraculous intervention on behalf of its members. Quite to the contrary, these were all exhorted to lay down their lives, to seek not to spare them, save them, which implied not praying for their deliverance from these diseases or ailments which came to them as the result of their self-denials, services, self-sacrifices. Rather they were to delight in these, while exercising a reasonable prudence and care, which would make the most of all earthly advantages as a part of their stewardship to be used in the service of the Master.

We see, then, that in the Lord's order restitution to physical health and strength was not designed either for Jesus, the Head of the Church, nor for the Church, His body, but for the world. We see also that the time is not yet come for the bestowment of this blessing upon the world, but that it delays until the sacrificing of the Church with her Lord shall be accomplished--until the Church glorified, sharers of the Heavenly Kingdom with the Redeemer, shall shower the blessings of restitution, health, mental, moral and physical, everywhere throughout the earth, granting to all the fullest opportunities to come back, to be released from the power of sin and death and from all the dominion of the great Adversary, who will then be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the nations no more until the thousand years be finished. --**Rev. 20:2,3**; **Heb. 2:14,15**.

SM578

CHURCH CALLED TO SANCTIFICATION

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification."--
1 Thess. 4:3.

Christians alone, the fully consecrated, are here addressed by the Apostle Paul. He is inciting them to full development as God's children, to their full setting apart for God. He would remind them that it is not sufficient to make a profession of consecration, to promise to live a sanctified life merely; but that it is of the utmost importance to fulfil their vows to the Lord, to day by day pay that which they have covenanted. Christians are to abound more and more in the fruits of the Spirit, as the context enjoins. The word sanctification means a setting apart to holy service. God is holy; and any instrument that He would use and recognize must also be holy. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," He says to us.

The Only Begotten of the Father was holy; else He could not have been man's Redeemer. The Church must be holy; else God would never deal with them. This principle also applies to the angels; they must be holy in order to have the favor of Jehovah. And so mankind must become holy before they can be pleasing to the Father or have any fellowship with Him. God has a will for the sanctification of the whole world of mankind. But He is not exercising that will at present; He is now seeking only the class which is to compose the glorified Church of the future.

The world cannot be sanctified without the great Mediator. Hence God has provided for them the Mediatorial Kingdom, through which His blessings will be received. The willing and obedient will finally attain to full holiness, full separateness from sin. As many as during the Messianic Reign will take hold of the opportunities then granted will be made blameless by the close

SM579

of that period; and if they then stand their final test, they will be wholly acceptable to the Father. It is because the Father cannot accept them until they have

been made perfect, and then have been tested as to their establishment in righteousness, that He now keeps the world at arm's length and cut off from fellowship with Himself. Only the sanctified can be granted communion with God and recognition from Him.

THE CHURCH'S SETTING APART DIFFERENT

The setting apart of the Church is different from the setting apart to righteousness which will be the world's experience during the next Age. The Church's setting apart, or sanctification, requires the grace of God in large measure; for they are called to a sacrificial death, and nothing but a perfect sacrifice could be accepted. That they may be able to thus sacrifice themselves, a special provision for the covering of their blemishes is necessary. So their perfection is reckoned, not actual. The difficulty with our setting apart at this time lies in the fact that it means to go contrary to our own preferences, because of the present disordered condition of things in the world in which we live--a condition which is manifested in ourselves as human beings. Hence, the sanctification for which God now calls is the doing of His will under unfavorable circumstances, within and without. Those who do His will under these unfavorable circumstances have set before them the high reward of becoming joined in heirship with Christ in His Kingdom, sharers of His glory and power.

This sanctification which begins in us at the time when we consecrate ourselves to the Lord and when we are accepted of the Father by the begetting of the Holy Spirit, thus bringing us into the anointed Body, must increase more and more. As we progress, our sanctification should take in a broader and deeper scope. As a Christian matures, there should be more of him, so

to speak. Day by day the Lord shows us more fully His will--things which we did not see at all at the beginning of our sanctification--because we are growing in grace and in knowledge. This increase in knowledge is not only a good sign that we have made progress in grace, but also an indication that we are more fully set

apart to sacrifice. Thus we have still more grace, then more knowledge, then more sacrifice. The Christian way leads onward to fullness of character development; and the rugged way grows dearer and sweeter as the pilgrim toils along, clasping the hand of his unseen Guide.

Our daily experiences are testing our hearts; and this is by the will of the Lord. He knows that if our hearts are loyal, we will do the best we can to control our flesh; and it is our earnest endeavor, our fixity of will to walk faithfully in the narrow way, that He is watching to see. After we have been set apart, sanctified, as a babe in Christ, we gradually become sanctified on a much larger scale. We become developed in this process of sanctification, growing more and more like our Lord.

NOT CALLED TO LIVE IN A CLOISTER

To be sanctified does not mean, as some have mistakenly thought, that we must separate ourselves entirely from every one else in the world, avoiding any contact with them. Such would have a very improper idea of our real Calling. Their opportunities of service would be very circumscribed; and they would have little or no opportunity to cultivate sympathy with the sinful, suffering world, whom the Church are to judge and assist in the incoming Age.

To be sanctified does not mean the cutting of ourselves off from any contact with the world. If this had been our proper course, our Savior and Lord, would have so done. But on the contrary, He sought opportunity to assist and bless those about Him, to point them to the way of Life. He was the friend of "publicans and

sinners." He never assumed a "holier than thou" attitude. Yet our Lord was sanctified, set apart for God, in the most absolute sense. Those who think they must withdraw themselves completely from their fellows have failed to get a true grasp of the Scriptures. We are to avoid sin as far as possible, but sin could find us in a monastery or in a convent as well as anywhere else.

The Master was constantly mingling with men, striving to uplift and instruct them, yet He was not of them. And so it is with the enlightened children of God, who

are following in the Master's footsteps.

As Christians, our greatest work is in ourselves--subduing our own flesh, conquering and uprooting our earthward tendencies and resolutely, persistently training them Heavenward. And we should be able to see in ourselves continued progress in this direction. The process of bending toward Heaven that which by nature bends toward earth and the things of earth is a painful one; and we often long for rest and complete deliverance. But let us cheer ourselves and one another with the thought that the struggle will soon be over and the victory won, if we faint not. How glad we are that the reign of Sin and Death is almost ended, and the full deliverance of the saints of God is so near!

TWO PARTS TO SANCTIFICATION

The words "sanctification" and "consecration" are not improperly used interchangeably. Both refer to a devotion of both heart and life to the Lord and His service. This devotion, this setting apart, is a continuous matter, which ends only when our sacrifice is consumed in death.

There are two parts to sanctification. The first part is our own, and the second part belongs to God. He sanctifies only those who sanctify themselves. "Sanctify yourselves," and "I will sanctify you." We must first give up our own will and accept His will, setting ourselves

apart for the Lord. In such He is pleased to do a great work. The initial part of that work is the begetting of the Holy Spirit. This makes of us New Creatures in Christ, members of the Anointed Body. Our sanctification is then begun.

When the Master in His closing prayer with His disciples prayed for those "who should believe on Him through their word," He evidently had in mind those who would manifest their faith in Him by a consecration, dedication, of themselves to God. His petition, we see, was not that the Father would use some miraculous power to bring people in general to a conviction of the Truth and to a spirit of devotion to Him. This is not the

thought; for those for whom He petitioned had previously reached that point. His time to deal with the world at large had not yet come.

When the work of sanctification has commenced in us, we are then prepared to grow, and not until then; for before that time there is no embryo New Creature, the new life has not even begun. But after the nucleus of the new nature is present in us, we are ready to make progress, both in grace and in knowledge. Having now come into the family of God, we are to learn of Him as dear children. We are to study--not the laws of gravitation, electricity, the sciences, etc., although all true law and science is of God--but concerning spiritual Truth. The Lord's people must be inducted into a knowledge of God's glorious character and of His will concerning us, His children. Through this knowledge we shall be enabled to grow up into the likeness of our glorious Pattern furnished us by the Father. Thus the work of development leads into all the avenues of our being. "This is the will of God, even your [complete] sanctification." The Spirit of the Lord is to abound in us.

Then, also, the children of God are to edify one another, to build one another up in the most holy Faith. The influence of the precious promises and of words of

counsel have more and more a sanctifying effect upon our hearts and lives. This leads us to a still deeper appreciation of God and His love and of those who are His. Thus we grow in grace, in further knowledge, and in all the precious fruits of the Holy Spirit--"love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. Against such there is no law." (**Gal. 5:22,23**.) This is the complete sanctification which God purposes to accomplish in all those who set themselves apart for Him, providing that they keep their sacrifice firmly bound to the altar until it is completely consumed.

DILIGENT COOPERATION ESSENTIAL

All this preparation is necessary, that the children of the Lord may make their "calling and election sure." It is not sufficient that at the beginning they say, "Here,

Lord, I give myself to Thee." But it is absolutely essential that they develop a strong, enduring Christian character, a crystallized character, which cannot be injured either by the pestilential doctrines of error abounding in this "evil day" or by the fiercest winds of adversity. Thus only can we be fitted for the great work which the Lord has for this anointed class in the future--beyond the veil. So we see clearly that unless this work of sanctification progresses to completion we shall not enter into the Kingdom.

In connection with the Word of Truth, which has such sanctifying power and without which we cannot attain a position with Christ on His Throne, the Lord gives us disciplinary experiences. These are to assist in keeping us in the "narrow way," that we turn not aside into a wrong course. They are also designed to call our attention to our weaknesses, in order that we may correct them as far as possible. They are to develop us, to prove us, to establish us in righteousness. These experiences cause us to realize more fully our need of the power of the Word and of the power of prayer. Thus they drive us to the Source whence all our help comes.

SM584

The more we absorb and assimilate the Word of God, the stronger we shall be in character. To the faithful, the Apostle Peter assures us, the Lord will minister "an abundant entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Whoever neglects to use the means provided for his development is not making progress. The sanctifying power of the Word and of prayer must accomplish their designed work in us; otherwise, we shall never gain the promised reward of the faithful overcomer.

OUR ALL-SUFFICIENT GUIDE

Every child of God should beware of any teaching which is independent of the inspired Word of God, and which claims that Christ or the Holy Spirit speaks to advanced Christians directly. This is a dangerous delusion of the Adversary, which cultivates spiritual pride and boastfulness, rendering powerless the warnings and counsel of the Holy Scriptures. The deluded ones become

possessed of the idea that they have progressed beyond the majority of God's children; and that now the voice of the Lord speaks to their inner ear, guiding them in all their affairs. Satan, taking advantage of this delusion, which he has brought upon them, leads them captive at his will. We have learned of just such cases. All the instruction which we receive from the Lord comes to us through the *written Word.* "The Word of God is *sufficient,"* declares the Apostle, "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (**2 Tim. 3:15-17**.) "Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the Word,"* again declares the same Apostle.--**Eph. 5:25,26**.

We are not ignorant of the devices of Satan and of all the "wicked spirits in high places," which would lead us astray to our downfall. Let us ever be on the alert, and keep close to the written Word, "which is able to

make us wise unto salvation." We are told that God sanctifies the Church, and that the Spirit of God does this work in us. Both are true. It is the Holy Spirit, or power, of God operating through His Word that He has designed shall do this work in our hearts, in our characters.--**2 Cor. 3:18**.

In the contemplation of all that is lovely as embodied in Christ, of all that is pure and holy and beautiful--as shown in the Bible--we are changed little by little into the same blessed likeness, from glory to glory. Let this good work of sanctification go until every grace adorns the spotless robe of imputed righteousness given us by our Father through Christ. Let us mark well the love of the Master, His gentleness, His patience, His meekness, His zeal, His personal integrity, His self-sacrificing spirit. *Mark well;* then imitate His example.

It is by this means that we are sealed, impressed, with the image and likeness of our Lord. This seal, this impression, is to grow deeper as the days go by, until it has become so indelible that nothing can remove it. Let us take diligent heed that we do not by any means mar or blur this precious seal, but that it may remain clear and bright. Let us be very careful not to do anything that will bring smiting of conscience, nothing to

wound our new mind. Let us not grieve the Holy Spirit of Christ in us. Let us keep close to the Heavenly Father by prayer and study of the Word. Thus shall we be wholly sanctified, and "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

I want a godly fear,
A quick, discerning eye,
That looks to Thee when sin is near,
And sees the tempter fly;
A spirit still prepared,
And armed with jealous care;
Forever standing on its guard,
And watching unto prayer.

SM586

DEATH IN ADAM--LIFE IN CHRIST

"Since by man came death, by man also comes the resurrection of the dead; for as all in Adam die, even so all in Christ shall be made alive. But every man in his own order--Christ the First-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's during His presence."--**1 Cor. 15:21-23**. R.V.

Once we considered most unkind, most unjust, the Bible declaration that our Creator condemned all of Adam's race with him, on account of his "original sin." But now, in the light of the clearer unfolding of God's Word, we are privileged to see differently. Now we perceive, not only that God did no injustice to Adam's children, but on the contrary that in this very particular He did them a great kindness--that His act was in the interest of humanity in general. We are aware that this statement will appear paradoxical to those who have not yet gotten the proper focus upon the Divine Plan.

The key which unlocks the difficulty is the proper appreciation of the *penalty* imposed upon Adam and his race. The erroneous, unscriptural view of this penalty, which came down to us from the Dark Ages, teaches that God damned Adam and Eve, and every child born to them, to an eternity of torture at the hands of the devils. This unscriptural, irrational view of the wages of original sin has caused all our difficulty. Indeed, it is safe to say that no other false doctrine held by God's people ever drove so many intelligent minds away from God, from the Bible and from the fellowship of the Church.

Can we fault such people? Surely not! Indeed, in our day matters have come to such a pass that, even if this view be propounded in any congregation of Christian people anywhere, not one in ten would confess to believe it. And it is to their credit that their hearts and their heads have outgrown this theory of the dark past.

SM587

Christian people heartily repudiate these creedal misrepresentations of God and His Word. Nevertheless, the subject is not clear to them; and they fear that to repudiate

this doctrine would be to repudiate the Bible and to become infidels. Just here is their mistake. The majority of professed Christians are not Bible students. They know what they THINK about the Bible, what they BELIEVE it teaches, what they have been TOLD it teaches, and what the catechism SAYS that it teaches. But they have never made a critical investigation of the Bible themselves to LEARN for themselves what it really does teach, to have a "Thus saith the Lord" for their belief.

"THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH"

However we read our Bibles in the past, we read into them from the creeds of a darker time the mischievous error that when the Word of God declares a death penalty for sin it really means the reverse of this--life--eternal life in eternal torture. Who was authorized so to twist the inspired words in such a devilish fashion? Who had the right to add to God's Word and to make void its true teaching in this way? Hear the words of the Apostle: "The wages of sin is DEATH; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (**Rom. 6:23**.) What statement could be more simple? The wicked will not be granted life at all, either in pleasure or in pain. They are under sentence of death--destruction. Eternal life is a GIFT; and it will be given only to those to whom it will be a blessing--to those who will accept it through Jesus Christ our Lord. All others will experience the very death penalty which God pronounced against Father Adam and his race when sin first entered the world.

Let us turn to Genesis and note the statements made to our first parents respecting sin and its penalty. Let us note that, without the twisting of theology, we would have no difficulty whatever in understanding the Divine

sentence, as evidently our first parents had done. The sentence pronounced upon Father Adam for his disobedience was, "Dying, thou shalt die." "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "Cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto

thee;...until thou return unto the ground from which thou wast taken." (**Gen. 2:17**; **3:17-19**.) How beautifully simple, clear and rational! God took from our first parents the privilege of living, because they did not use their blessing in harmony with His Law.

"ALL IN ADAM--ALL IN CHRIST"

There would have been no hope of a future life, good or bad, had not God in His mercy provided the Savior--the Life-giver, as the Syriac renders the word. In God's due time He set before His Son, the Logos, the opportunity of becoming man's Redeemer. The Logos was made flesh (**John 1:14**), and obediently gave Himself in death--"tasted death for EVERY MAN." As by one man's disobedience the sentence of death passed upon the race of Adam, even so by the obedience of "the Man Christ Jesus" unto death, justification to life passed for all the race--the opportunity to return to the original perfection possessed by Adam before he fell. Now we see the wise reason for permitting the sentence to pass through one man's disobedience to all of his posterity. It was in order that one Sacrifice for sin might make possible the reconciliation of the entire race.

Now read our text and drink in its depths of beauty and force. The resurrection of mankind from the sin, death and tomb condition to the full perfection and image of God from which the race fell in Adam, is the salvation which God has provided for all. Whoever shall fail to attain the full recovery from sin and death conditions will have himself to blame for rejection of the glorious arrangements which God has made in and through Christ.

SM589

THE FIRST RESURRECTION

God divides the salvation of mankind into two parts: that of the Church to spirit nature, and that of the world to perfected human nature. The first He is accomplishing during this Gospel Age. The second He will accomplish through Christ and the Church during the Millennial Age--during Messiah's Reign of a thousand years.

The Church, the "little flock" of saints, who are called, tried and tested in the narrow way during this age, are to constitute the "First Resurrection" class and to become the Bride of Christ, "the Church of the First-borns." These are to be associated with the great Redeemer in His future work. These shall be made like Him, changed from earthly to Heavenly nature, sharers of His glory, honor and immortality. After the glorification of the Church, the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens will be inaugurated. Then will begin the blessing, the salvation, the uplifting, the resurrection, of mankind in general from sin and death conditions--not to spiritual conditions, but to perfect earthly life in a perfect earthly home--Paradise restored.

All the willing and obedient shall be blessed by the great Life-giver who, eighteen centuries ago, died, the Just for the unjust, and who during the interim has been selecting those who will be His associates in the work of human uplift. With this Bride class He will reign to bless all the families of the earth. As for the wilfully disobedient, the intelligently wicked, we read: "All the wicked will He destroy." (**Psa. 145:20**.) He will not preserve them in torture or otherwise. They will die the Second Death. But none will die the Second Death because of Adam's transgression. Christ died for that transgression, and will release Adam and all his race therefrom, even while holding them responsible for every wilful transgression, and giving them stripes or punishments therefor, in order to teach them to love righteousness and to hate iniquity.--**Acts 3:19-23**.

SM590

GOD'S OATH BINDS ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

"I have sworn, saith Jehovah...that I will greatly bless thee, and I will exceedingly multiply thy seed as the stars of Heaven and as the sand which is upon the seashore...and in becoming thy seed shall all nations of the earth bless themselves."--**Gen. 22:16-18**.

[At the invitation of numerous Jewish societies Pastor Russell addressed a Jewish mass meeting early in 1911, at Cincinnati. The audience was estimated at above five thousand Jewish men, and crowds were turned away. Ladies were in evidence only in the boxes.

Pastor Russell was introduced to the audience by Attorney Rodimus, Editor of the official organ of the Zionists, "The Nation," who served as Chairman. In a few well-chosen words he presented the speaker as a friend of Israel, whose message of comfort and consolation, based upon his interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, had aroused Zionists to fresh interest in their own Holy Scriptures which promised to give to Zionism a religious propulsion far beyond anything yet expected by the Association. Whether the audience could agree with all of Pastor Russell's deductions or not, they surely would accord him a hearing as their guest of the hour, and weigh carefully his words--especially his references to the Law and to the Prophets.

The occasion of a Christian minister being welcomed by Hebrews to address them on religious subjects is an anomaly in the world's history. This does not signify, however, any deflection of the Jew from the tradition of his fathers; but, quite to the contrary, brings to the world's attention the fact that a Christian minister, an acknowledged student and interpreter of the Bible, has recognized that the Jew still has a part, separate and distinct from the Christian, in the Divine program.]

Men and brethren, it affords me pleasure to address you, and I take this opportunity to thank the numerous

SM591

Jewish societies at whose invitation I am here. I am not a Jew! I am a Christian. But here I am in danger

of being misunderstood. I am not a Christian of the ordinary sectarian type, according to whose creeds every Jew and everybody else except the elect are fore-doomed of God to an eternity of torture, because of not having recognized one of your brethren, Jesus, as the Messiah sent of God. I have not the slightest sympathy with that misrepresentation of the Divine Plan and of my Master's instructions.

My Master and Teacher was one of your brethren, Jesus by name. No other Jew ever made so profound an impression upon the Gentile world. No other Jew ever magnified, and made honorable in the sight of the whole world, the Law of God given through Moses. No other Jew ever more highly honored the prophecies of the Jewish Scriptures. I esteem it a privilege to emulate His example who, in my opinion, was the most wonderful representative of our race. Incidentally, I am glad to note that intelligent Jews the world over join with me in this tribute--that they recognize that none but a great Personality could have made so deep an impression upon the intelligent masses of the world, even though they do not recognize Him as the Messiah.

Once, like many others, I misunderstood the teachings of my Master and His Apostles, and supposed that Moses, the Law Covenant of the Jewish people and the prophecies of your sacred Scriptures were all done away, all canceled, all renounced. But, my friends, a more thorough study of the New Testament has taught me that all of its presentations are founded upon the testimonies of the Law and of the Prophets; and that their teaching is that much, yea, the better part of all of God's glorious promises to your nation are still future and, I believe, now about to be realized. I congratulate you upon the glorious promises that are yours as a people, not yet fulfilled, but amply secured to you by the word and oath

of our unchangeable God. Permit me to refresh your memories respecting some of God's gracious promises.

GOD'S COVENANT OATH-BOUND

I remind you that your nation began with Father Abraham; that the foundation of your nationality, upon which all the hopes which thus far have brought you most wonderfully preserved as a people to the present hour are built, is God's promise to Abraham and His oath of assurance that that promise would be fulfilled. If it seems strange to us that the Almighty should condescend to make oaths to His creatures respecting the gracious gifts of His hand, I remind you that God knew what Abraham did not know; namely, that the promise attested by that oath would linger thirty-nine hundred years without accomplishment.

God foreknew that without His oath to that promise you as His people would naturally feel that He had forgotten it or that something had occurred to alter or amend the Divine program. Hence the oath, and the fact that this great Covenant is called the Covenant of the Oath, in which God swore by Himself, because there was not a greater, saying, in the words of our text, "Surely in blessing I will bless thee and will multiply thy seed, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves; for thy seed shall be as the stars of Heaven and as the sand upon the seashore."

This Divine Promise and the Oath which makes it sure has been the Gibraltar of your faith and has kept you separate from all other nationalities for all these long centuries. And let me say that I am not here today to urge you to join any of the numerous Churches of many denominational names; but, quite to the contrary, I urge you to remain Jews and to strive more earnestly and more intelligently than ever to be worthy of, and therefore to attain, the glorious things which God has promised to you as the natural seed of Abraham--natural heirs of that Abrahamic Covenant.

SM593

JACOB'S PROMISES ALL EARTHLY

I remind you that from Genesis to Malachi nothing in your Holy Scriptures implies a change of nature from human to spiritual. Nothing intimates that you will ever

be like the angels. The prophetic promises, on the contrary, tell us of restitution to the former estate--to human perfection and to an Eden home restored--world-wide. The Jubilee system of your Law once practised taught the same lesson. On the fiftieth year every slave was set at liberty, and every piece of property reverted to its original owners. In this God is picturing man's return to harmony with Himself--his liberation from the bondage of Sin and Death, his restoration to the image of his Creator, from which through sin he fell, and the return to him of the dominion of the earth in its glorious perfection. There your Prophets declare, "Every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree, with none to molest or make afraid." "They shall not build and another inhabit, but long enjoy the fruit of their labor."

I remind you of the wonderful word-pictures drawn by the Prophet Isaiah. He tells how the wilderness shall blossom as a rose and the solitary place be glad; that streams shall break forth in the desert. The blessing of the Lord shall be upon the earth and it shall yield its increase. He tells that then the inhabitants "shall no more say, I am sick"--when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped; when the lame shall leap and all shall be glad. The Prophet Jeremiah tells us that then it shall no longer be necessary to say to one's neighbor or to one's brother, "Know thou the Lord, because all shall know Him, from the least unto the greatest." The Prophets Isaiah and Habakkuk explain that in that glorious time the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the sea. Those blessed conditions, my friends, can not yet come to the world, according to the Scriptures, until first God's blessing shall be upon His people, according

to the Oath-bound Covenant, that through you the blessing shall extend to all the nations of the earth, when the Law shall go forth from Mt. Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

I am sure that I speak directly to your hearts when I say that that glorious picture of human Restitution is far more captivating to your hearts than any suggestions of a Heavenly kind--which you cannot comprehend. We may discuss the earthly blessings in the language of the

Scriptures. But even if we could describe the angelic conditions beyond the veil of human sight, they would seem intangible to you in comparison. And if I had the authority to offer any choice respecting these earthly blessings described by the Prophets and certain spiritual, intangible, Heavenly, inconceivable, incomprehensible things, you would surely say, Let others have their choice, but give me the glorious things promised to the seed of Abraham by the Lord through the Law and the Prophets. And so it is to be, my dear friends. Those blessings are to come to you; for God's Promise and Oath so testify.

Had we the time and were this the opportunity, it would afford me pleasure to discuss with you what I clearly see in the Law and the Prophets respecting your race, and indicating that the fulfilment of those blessings is just at the door. Should you so desire and should this great Auditorium be again placed at our disposal, I will take pleasure in calling your attention to the things that are written in the Bible which, alas! the Jews, as well as the Christians, have neglected to study. What are your prospects, according to the Scriptures? We read, "A King shall reign in righteousness and princes shall execute judgment." Is not that Israel's King? And is not the period of His Reign the time for which you have so long waited, when your nation shall have the Divine measure of blessing and become the Divine channel, not only for your own uplifting, but for the blessing of all other nations, as the Oath-bound Covenant declares?

SM595

A HEAVENLY KING OF GLORY

Possibly some of you have imagined Messiah's Kingdom an earthly one and Messiah Himself a great man. It is but natural that we should pull down to our own level of thought the glorious things of Divine promise. But doing so in this case is a mistake. Messiah, the great King, will not be a man, but a Spirit Being, Jehovah's honored Agent, whose glory and honor will be far higher than that of angels, who will be His ministers.

Do we not remember how it is written in the Book of **Daniel (7:13)** that Messiah, the great King, shall come in the clouds of Heaven? To Him the Ancient of Days

will give the dominion and government and all peoples and nations and languages shall serve Him. Surely we are not to expect Messiah to come as a man and to conquer the world with a Jewish army, with cannons and dreadnaughts. No, my dear friends. God has another method by which earthly powers shall melt before His glorious Kingdom in the hands of Messiah.

Soon the next verse will have fulfilment. The mountains will melt like wax at His presence. From the Heavenly ones will come the message of God's righteousness; and all the people of the world shall see His glory --the glory of the Divine character in the righteousness of the Divine Kingdom. All worshipers of idols of every kind will be ashamed. Those who are worshiping mammon, stocks and bonds, houses and money, will, as Mr. Carnegie has declared, be ashamed of riches which they cannot account for along the lines of the Golden Rule. The next verse, dear friends, tells of yourselves and how this Message of the Kingdom will affect you, saying, "Zion heareth it and rejoiceth; glad are the daughters of Judah because of Thy decrees, O Jehovah!"

Then follows the message that is particularly due today to all, both rich and poor, "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil. He will perserve the lives of His pious ones."

Studying the Bible from this standpoint I am sure

SM596

that, with myself, you will see that the Divine predictions of Messiah's Kingdom indicate that it will have a glory and a power super-human, in the light of which Solomon's glory and riches and wisdom and honor will fade. Indeed, was not Solomon merely a foreshadowing of the great King of Glory, the Heavenly One? And I, too, a Christian, am looking for the same Messiah mentioned by the Prophets. I, too, pray to God continually, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven." Not only so, but all Christian people must surely come to this same position; thus the gulf between the Jew and the Christian grows less and less until the consummation when the same glorious majesty, "the desire of all nations," shall come.--**Haggai 2:7**.

In conclusion, I ask you to note the critical translation of my text which I have given. According to the Hebrew, the nations are to bless themselves in the Seed of Abraham. In other words, after the establishment of Messiah's

Kingdom, when your nation shall have been reorganized and brought into favor with God under the New Covenant (**Jer. 31:31-34**), and when the princes of all the earth under Messiah's direction shall be Israelitish--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the holy Prophets--then the door of opportunity, first to the Jew, will stand open to all nations, that they all may come in, under the gracious terms of that New Covenant, as servants of God, become in this adopted sense the children of Abraham. This is the significance of the words of our text. The nations shall bless themselves in Abraham's seed--by becoming through faith and consecration to God members thereof.

Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning,
Long by the Prophets of Israel foretold!
Hail to the millions from bondage returning!
Gentiles and Jews the blest vision behold.

SM597

CHURCH'S SHARE IN PENTECOSTAL BLESSING

"Ye have an unction from the Holy Spirit, and ye all know it."--**1 John 2:20**.

The Lord's anointed people have much advantage every way. But their anointing does not permit them to know all things at the present time, as the Common Version translation declares; for the Apostle Paul himself tells us, "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (**1 Cor. 13:12**.) What St. John wished to impress upon his hearers is that whoever has received the anointing of the Holy Spirit has received a blessing of which he has evidence and assurance. He is not left to mere imaginings respecting his anointing by the Lord. The word unction, used in our text, is not common today. Therefore the Greek original is better rendered anointing, as in the Revised Version. The thought is the same, however--that of softening, smoothing, oiling--that which characterizes true Christians.

In the Scriptures various expressions are used to represent the blessings of the Lord conferred upon His consecrated people at Pentecost and throughout this Gospel Age. Sometimes these expressions refer to the different phases of the operation of the Lord through His Holy Spirit upon His people. Consequently these different expressions represent different viewpoints merely. For instance, we read that the early Church was baptized with the Holy Spirit; that is, they were immersed in the Holy Spirit--for the entire room in which they were sitting was filled with the Spirit of the Lord, from which a share of blessing, an unction or anointing, was imparted to them. Again, that influence referred to in the Scriptures as a begetting of the Holy Spirit pictures to our minds this same influence or unction or anointing from on High as the beginning of a new life, a new nature.

SM598

This same unction or influence is also referred to as our quickening--another representation of the development of the new life in us as New Creatures. But the clearest and most beautiful illustration of the Holy Spirit's influence upon the people of God during this Gospel Age is that of our text--the anointing. This is the figure or symbol by which the Lord foreshadowed this blessing in the types of the past. The Church which He is calling out from the world to be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord, if so be they suffer with Him, is promised a share of their Lord's glory as kings and priests unto God during the Millennium. They are promised that the work of the Lord begun in them at the time of their anointing of the Spirit, their begetting of the Spirit, will be finished or completed in the First Resurrection. The message is, "Blessed and holy are they that have part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."--**Rev. 20:6**.

THE TYPICAL ANOINTING

Looking back into the Mosaic Law, which St. Paul assures us was "a shadow of good things to come" (**Heb. 10:1**), we find that the high priest of Israel was anointed with an especially prepared anointing oil, and that this anointing constituted the Divine evidence of his call to the priestly office. The oil was of peculiar composition, olive oil being the basis, with perfumes, etc., added; and the Israelites were not permitted to compound a similar oil, to the intent that it might be shown typically that the Holy Spirit thus represented is different from everything else in the world, and that its anointing or authorization is superior to any other.--**Ex. 30:23-33**.

When the high priest was consecrated to his office, the anointing oil was poured upon his head. (**Lev. 8:12**.) In the antitype the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Anointed

SM599

Body, received the anointing of the Holy Spirit at His

baptism--at the very time of His consecration to sacrifice, at the age of 30 years. The anointing oil poured upon Aaron's head is described by the Psalmist prophetically as running down from his head even to the skirts of his garments. (**Ps. 133:2**.) Thus is pictured the complete Christ, Head and Body; and thus we are shown that the same anointing which came to the Head at His baptism must ultimately extend to the very last members of the Body of Christ, down at the close of the Gospel Age. The fact that the Body receives of the anointing of the Head is also illustrated in the type; for the under priests, sons of Aaron, did not receive the anointing directly, being reckoned as members of Aaron's body.

So with the Church of Christ, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which came to our Lord at His consecration at Jordan, continued with Him during His ministry, and was perfected in Him at His resurrection. Not until He had ascended on High and had appeared in the presence of God for the Church did He receive permission, authority, of the Father to communicate the Holy Spirit to all who had consecrated themselves as His disciples, His members. (**Acts 2:33**.) The same Holy Spirit which He had Himself received of the Father at His consecration He now communicated to His followers. It was represented in the anointing oil poured upon Aaron's head and flowing down to his shoulders and over his body. This same anointing of the Holy Spirit has continued throughout this Gospel Age--not that there is a new Pentecost for each individual member of the Body of Christ, but that whoever through faith and consecration becomes a member of the Anointed Body comes under this unction, this anointing, which has continued to be upon the Church throughout this Age, and will continue until the last member of the Body has made his calling and election sure to membership in The Christ.

As Aaron's call to the office of priesthood was signified

by the anointing oil, so with our Lord at His anointing at Jordan, and so with all the members of His Body as they come into fellowship with Him. Their receipt of the Holy Anointing is their call to the Lord's service here and hereafter--a service of suffering, self-denial, etc., in the present time, but a service of glory and honor

hereafter. St. Paul declares, "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that was called of God, as Aaron was." (**Heb. 5:4**.) As our Lord Jesus could not, and did not, anoint Himself, and constitute and authorize Himself to be a priest, so likewise not one of His followers could make himself a priest unto God. No one can have a right to serve in the capacity of a priest unless he be anointed of the Holy Spirit; and as our text declares, all who have been thus anointed know it.

ISRAEL'S KINGS TYPICALLY ANOINTED

Because our Lord and His Church are to be God's representatives, not only in the priestly office, but also in the kingly office during the Millennium, therefore this was also typed. The kings of Israel typified the King of Glory; and of David and Solomon it is written that they "sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord"--typically. In due time, antitypically, The Christ, the greater David, the greater than Solomon, shall sit upon the Throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations, whom He shall separate--the sheep from the goats--during the Millennial Age. This great King of the incoming Age was typified by Melchizedek, who had centered in him both the kingly and the priestly office; for it is recorded that he was a priest upon his throne (**Gen. 14:18**; **Heb. 7:1-3**.) Similarly The Christ of glory, Jesus the Head and the Church the Body, will be the enthroned Priest; or, as expressed under another figure, "we shall be kings and priests unto God, and shall reign on the earth."--**Rev. 5:10**.

To show that the Anointed Company would exercise

the ruling authority as well as the priestly functions, the Lord so arranged the type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that every one who served as king of Israel should be anointed with the holy anointing oil--typical of the Holy Spirit--the same oil that was used in the anointing of the high priests. This type is made still more luminous when we remember that David was anointed to be king over Israel when he was but a lad--many years before the death of Saul. No priest, however, could be

anointed until the time of the beginning of his priesthood. The antitypical teaching of this fact is that Christ and His followers are to begin their work as priests immediately after they receive their anointing. From that moment their sacrificing should commence and should continue until the consummation--even unto death. But the same anointing which they have received as respects the kingly office has a future fulfilment.

Our Lord was anointed to be a King, but He did not at once assume kingly functions. Likewise we, as members of His Body, the Church, have in our anointing of the Holy Spirit a recognition of our coming kingship and joint-heirship with Him, if we remain faithful. But we do not as yet enter upon any ruling mission. That kingly and authoritative work is reserved until we shall have been changed to His image and likeness at the First Resurrection. Then, raised in glory, raised in power, raised spirit beings and thus made like Him, we shall be sharers of His glory as the Priest upon the Throne--the antitypical Melchizedek.

WHY THIS SUBJECT IS LITTLE UNDERSTOOD

However it may have been in the days of the Apostles under their direct and correct instruction, we may be sure that there is a great deal of uncertainty upon this subject today, on the part of very many Christian people respecting their having been begotten of the Holy Spirit. That is to say, some who have been thus begotten do not know it, are uncertain of it. This should not be, and

would not be if it were not for the confusion of mind which has come down to us from the Dark Ages respecting the Holy Spirit of God. Some of the most devout of the Lord's people have been confused by the errors of the Dark Ages which teach that there are three gods; whereas the Bible distinctly enunciates that there is but one living and true God--the Father, of whom are all things; that there is one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things; and that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit or Power or Influence which proceeds from the Father and from the Son--the influence or power with which we are

anointed.--**1 Cor. 8:6**; **John 15:26**; **Acts 2:33**.

Not a text of Scripture anywhere declares a trinity of gods. The unity between the Father and the Son is distinctly declared to be that of mind, purpose, will, not that of person. The ordinary superstition that there are three gods who are one in person seems too absurd for discussion. If three, how can they be one? If one, how can they be three? But when we take the Scriptures as they read, then we obtain a reasonable, proper conception of the subject. Our Lord Himself assures us, "My Father is greater than I;" "The Father sent Me;" "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God." When we then come to consider the anointing which came upon the Church at Pentecost and has continued with it ever since, we find nothing that is absurd or unreasonable, but quite to the contrary. This is the anointing which the Father gave to the Son at His consecration, and which the Son was permitted to extend to all who by consecration became recognized as members of His Body, His Church.

The absurd and confusing thought which perplexes so many minds is the thought that the Holy Spirit is another god, who stays with us and enters into each one of the Lord's consecrated people as a person. Thus the Holy Spirit as a person is supposed to inhabit thousands, yea, millions of people! To any proper mind there is

something altogether incomprehensible in this teaching. As soon as we imagine one complete person so divided up as to inhabit millions of other persons at the same time, we have destroyed all personality. The Scriptures call for no such absurdities, but tell us plainly that the Holy Spirit is the influence or power from the Father and from the Son by which we are anointed, consecrated, recognized as the Lord's people, members of the Body of Christ, the Church of the living God.

For centuries this doctrine of the Trinity was supported by one text; namely, **1 John 5:7**, which now all scholars of all denominations acknowledge to be spurious. Only within the last century have many of the old manuscripts of the Bible been found; and this text is not in any of those written prior to the seventh century. The evidence is so unquestionable that the learned men who

translated the Revised Version of the Scriptures, although all Trinitarians, omitted this verse entirely, recognizing that it was fraudulent, introduced with a view to proving the doctrine of the Trinity at a time when that doctrine was gaining ascendancy and found itself handicapped by the fact that there was no statement of Scripture in its support.

GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT EVERYWHERE

The Scriptures do not teach Divine Omnipresence, as some have assumed and others have declared. Not a word in the Bible from first to last makes any such statement or gives ground for any such inference. What it does teach is much more reasonable and consistent in every way; namely, that God is not everywhere present, but that Heaven is His Throne; that our Lord Jesus is not everywhere present, but that He has sat down with the Father in His Throne of Heavenly glory. But the Scriptures plainly teach that both the Father and the Son are representatively present in believers through the Holy Spirit--the holy influence, the power of God, which is everywhere present.

SM604

However difficult it may have been to realize this in the past, some of our modern inventions should help us greatly to appreciate the declaration of the Holy Writ to this effect. For instance, in my Study there is a long-distance telephone, over which at times I speak to people at great distance in a manner that only a few decades ago would have been considered impossible. Thus I can know definitely what is occurring in another city at a given moment just as well as if I were on the spot and could see with my own eyes. Can humanity under Divine guidance attain such a proficiency in the use of the elements of nature as to possess such a knowledge of things of this world; and shall we suppose that He who formed the ear and the eye, and who gave us our intelligence, is not able by powers of His own to know what is occurring in any part of the Universe as He may please?

What is this power by which the Lord knows? someone may ask. We answer, the Holy Spirit, Holy Power,

Holy Influence. Still another illustration of our times enables us to grasp in some degree an appreciation of the Lord's greatness and His ability to know through His Holy Spirit; namely, wireless telegraphy. And we are even told of a new invention of wireless telephony! How wonderful it seems that even without a wire without any direct connection, we should be able to communicate at a distance! Even likenesses are transferable after this manner! Again we ask, What shall we say of the Almighty and His Holy Power, by which He can know not only of our words and deeds, but also of our very thoughts and the intents of our hearts? Surely we may well bow in humble reverence before this great Divine Power of God! But we only confuse ourselves if we think of the Holy Spirit as another God, limited as to personal presence to one spot at one instant. Let us take God's Word, God's way, and free ourselves from the troublesome confusion of the Dark Ages, which finds no support in the Word of God.

SM605

"ANOINTING FROM THE HOLY ONE"

Be it noted that our text does not declare that we are anointed WITH the Holy One, as though the Holy One became the oil, or influence; but that it teaches clearly that the anointing which we have received came from the Holy One--as the Apostle Peter explains, from the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ. Again, we recall St. Paul's statement that all things are of the Father through the Son. Our begetting to the spirit nature is of (or from) the Father, but by (or through) the Son. The anointing which we have received, we have already seen, was typified or pictured in the anointing oil of old, and signified a Divine blessing to the Lord's Priesthood, who ultimately shall be kings, joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus in the Kingdom.

This holy anointing implies a power and authority; and again we use an illustration. Let an electric car represent a justified believer in the Lord Jesus; let a dynamo suitably connected with a trolley represent our consecration; let a wire represent our Lord's gracious promises given to His disciples when He ascended on High, after

having told them to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from Above. The car standing with the trolley on the wire and with the motor properly connected, etc., will represent the Christians at Pentecost before the Holy Spirit came upon them.

In this picture Heaven itself would represent the power house; and the turning on of the electric power would represent the shedding forth of the Holy Spirit. When it came, it operated upon all who were in contact with the wire; and none others. Such were moved, energized, by the Spirit, the influence, the power from God, and spoke in His name--sometimes in one demonstration and sometimes in another. But in every case the Holy Spirit was the invisible power, however differently it may have operated in various cases and for various reasons; and in every instance the maintenance

of the power of the Holy Spirit upon the individual was dependent upon the continued contact of his faith--just as the relationship of the car and its motor to the current was dependent upon a trolley connection, which well represents faith. Break the connection, break the faith; and the power is gone.

So thus, only as we abide in the Lord through faith, only as we continue to recognize Him as our Head and to heed His Word and to hold fast to the precious promises therein, can we maintain our relationship to the Holy Spirit which He has set forth for all who are of this way. As the electrical current will not take the place of a trolley or of a motor, so the Holy Spirit in us will not take the place of faith or of consecration. But if faith and consecration are in proper order, the Holy Spirit will quicken or energize them for the service we desire to render and the confidence we are seeking to enjoy.

THE EFFECT OF THE ANOINTING

As already intimated, the effect of the anointing will be to energize us in the Lord's service. Our contact with the Lord and His Holy Spirit will not only quicken our mortal bodies, but energize our faith also, and day by day will open wider and wider the eyes of our understanding,

that we may be daily the better able to comprehend the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of the Divine Character and Plan, that we may rejoice therein.

To the Jew this olive oil used in the anointing had a very wide range of usefulness. It served him as a food often, instead of butter. It served him as a medicine. It served for a light. In general, olive oil, olive berries and the olive tree were the symbols of peace. In considering olive oil in connection with such an anointing, therefore, we have several very beautiful and forceful thoughts as respects the blessing conferred by the anointing. In harmony with this, the Holy Spirit is represented as being not only an anointing for our priestly service of

sacrificing now and for our glorious service of the future as kings with our Lord, but also a peace-producing and light-giving influence. And is this not the effect of the Holy Spirit upon all who receive it? Does it not tend toward the enlightenment of our minds, on account of which the Apostle declares of the Anointed Company that they have the spirit of a sound mind? (**2 Tim. 1:7**.) Is it not in line with this thought that he assures us that in proportion as we receive more and more of this Holy Spirit, this anointing influence, it will produce in us the peaceable fruits of righteousness and will grant to us that, the eyes of our understanding opening wider, we shall be able to comprehend with all saints the lengths, the breadths, the heights and the depths and to know the love of Christ which passeth all human understanding?

This influence or power with which we are anointed is designated a Holy Spirit or influence, a spirit of love. Thus it is contrasted with the worldly spirit of selfishness and sin. The latter is of the earth earthy; the former is Heavenly. The latter is common to the natural man in his fallen condition; the former is granted only to the New Creature in Christ Jesus. The latter is a spirit of ambition, envy, hatred, malice, strife; the former is a spirit of joy, peace, benevolence, goodness, mercy, brotherly-kindness, love. Oh, how different are these two spirits! The spirit of envy is not a person; nor is the spirit of love a person. But the father of envy and of murder, the one from whom this spirit first emanated, is Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning. On the

other hand, the new mind, the Holy Spirit which we have received from the Father through the Son, is similarly not a person, but an influence. O blessed influence! Let us be more and more filled with it. As the Apostle urges: "Be ye filled with the Spirit."--**Eph. 5:18**.

The Apostle James points out that this Holy Spirit which the Lord's consecrated people have received is one of wisdom, that it brings blessings which the worldly

SM608

spirit of selfishness, strife, cannot bring. The one, he declares, is Heavenly, holy; the other is earthly, devilish. He explains that the wisdom which comes from Above is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. (**James 3:17**.) It has a smoothing, oiling, unctuous effect upon all who receive it. They become more and more like their Father in Heaven. True, there are some differences of natural disposition by which some are less hindered than are others from receiving the Spirit of the Lord in large measure.

In proportion as we had been able to discern sin and to reject it from our hearts, in that proportion we were able to receive the spirit of holiness appreciatively; and this of course was in different measures as we differ one from the other according to our natural constitutions through heredity. Hence the Apostle Paul exhorts us to be filled with the Spirit--an exhortation which may apply to us all the time. Just as the motor in the car must be connected with the live wire by the trolley, so we should ever be in contact with the Lord and His precious promises. Otherwise we lose the power; we lose the assistance; we lose the strength and grace necessary for our aid, comfort and development.

The Apostle furthermore urges that we put off, empty ourselves of our natural tendencies received through heredity. We are to put away all these: Anger, wrath, hatred, envy, strife--works of the flesh and of the Devil. In proportion as we realize that these are contrary to the Spirit of the Lord, and in proportion as we desire to be filled with that Spirit, will be our earnestness in putting away the wrong spirit, the wrong condition--in emptying our hearts of the things pertaining to the perverted flesh, that they may be filled with the things of the Spirit of

God, that we may be sanctified and made ready for the Master's use in the service of the present time as well as in the future glory.--**Rom. 8:28,29**.

SM609

A BLESSED HOPE FOR SUFFERING HUMANITY.

"We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our Body."--**Rom. 8:22,23**.

Only for a short time will any thoughtful person question the declaration of the Apostle--that the human family taken as a whole is a groaning creation. He does not include the Church for reasons which we shall see shortly, yet he points out that the Church also groans under present conditions. As we pass along the streets, and hear the strains of music which occasionally come to us from public and private performances on instruments of music, as we hear the laughter and see the throngs going to theaters, expositions, ball games etc., we might be inclined at first to say there is a good share of the creation which does not groan much. But as we look more closely at the facts as they come to us in daily course we find that much of the laughter is hysterical and an offset to tears, that much of the music is paid for on business principles to cheer and enthuse others, and some of it indulged in with the desire to drown care.

Similarly those who attend places of amusement do so, not because they are happy, but because they are unhappy. Groaning in spirit, they are seeking something to drive dull care away--to assuage their disappointments and heartaches. We believe that the experiences in life will generally agree with us that childhood is life's happiest hour, and that with the coming of greater knowledge and responsibility come cares, disappointments, heartaches and crosses to the world of mankind in general.

SM610

Let us remember, too, that what we know of the world is in many respects best, most favored and least

burdened section--America.

Looking into the Bible we are informed respecting the angels and the joys of Heaven, and given to understand that no sorrow enters there, nor any tears, nor any dying. We inquire, Did not the same God who created man create the angelic hosts? Why then should there be so wide a distinction, so wide a difference between the conditions in earth and in Heaven, that our Redeemer should teach us to pray that ultimately God's Kingdom should come to earth and His will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven? Why does He tell us that the faithful in the resurrection will be made like unto angels, neither shall they die any more? Why are we not like the angels now? Why do we die? Why are we sick? Why are we imperfect in our mental, moral and physical powers? Why are we deficient in our physical strength? The answer to these questions requires superhuman wisdom. There must be a reason; otherwise the same just, loving, gracious God would treat His human creatures, His human children, as kindly, as generously, as His spiritual. Why is it, that all of our blessings are of hope while all the blessings of the angels are actual and present?

"GOD LOOKED DOWN AND BEHELD"

Still seeking information we inquire of the Bible respecting man's condition, why it is as it is and how it came about. We note the prophetic declaration that God "looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from Heaven did the Lord behold the earth; to hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those who are appointed to death." (**Psa. 102:19-21**.) This is in full conformity with the Apostle's statement, and adds the further explanation that the groaning is because man is a prisoner and under death sentence. But when did he become a prisoner? When did the death sentence come upon him?

SM611

The Scriptures answer that our race was sold under sin--became the slave of sin--and that the experiences of sorrow, degradation, imperfection and death are all parts of the wage of this great taskmaster, Sin. The Apostle declares that "the wages of sin is death," and

personifies Sin and Death, representing them as the great monarchs that are now ruling the children of men. He declares that Sin and Death have reigned, and as a matter of fact we know that the whole race is subject to these monarchs. (**Rom. 6:23**; **5:14,21**.) The tomb, into which both good and bad go, is the great prisonhouse where all are figuratively said to sleep, waiting for the Morning of the blessed Millennial Day when Messiah shall come, shall vanquish Satan, who has the power of death, and shall deliver the captives from the chains of sin and from the prisonhouse of death, Sheol, Hades, the grave.

Mark the Redeemer's words, "I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore and have the keys of death and of Hades [the grave]." (**Rev. 1:18**.) Note again the prophetic statement along the same line, referring to Messiah and the work of His gracious Kingdom when it should be established. We read, "I, Jehovah, have called Thee in righteousness and will hold Thine hand and will keep Thee and will give Thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles--to open the, blind eyes to bring out the prisoners from the prison; and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house." (**Isa. 42:6,7**.) And again, "The Spirit of Jehovah is upon Me, because Jehovah hath anointed Me to preach the good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound."--**Isa. 61:1**.

Our Lord personally preached from this text, and declared Himself to be the One who would fulfil this prophecy--who would release our race from its slavery to sin and its bondage to death. The assurance of the

Word of the Lord is that we have Divine sympathy, and that a Savior adequate to all the conditions has been supplied by the Heavenly Father, and that the world merely awaits the proper time for Him to act, to strike off these shackles, to unlock the prison door and to let all the prisoners go free from this condemnation.

ORIGIN OF MAN'S SLAVERY TO SIN

A matter which is so general as to include every member of the race in this slavery to sin-and-death conditions is very noteworthy, and it is profitable that we hearken carefully to the Word of God for all explanation for it. The Apostle gives the explanation, saying, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as the result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all are sinners." (**Rom. 5:12**.) Turning back to Genesis we find the Apostle's words abundantly supported by the history of Adam and his deflection from obedience to God and his rejection from Divine fellowship, including his expulsion from Eden, that he might be thus subjected to dying conditions because of his disobedience, his sin. There the slavery began; there the groaning and dying of our race had its start. The Creator's words were, "Thorns and thistles shall the earth bring forth to thee; 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."--**Gen. 3:18,19**.

Nothing could be plainer, simpler, more easy of comprehension to those who had no human philosophy and smoke of the Dark Ages to becloud their vision. It is most evident that the groaning began with Father Adam, and that it has continued ever since, as his posterity has lost more and more the perfection of the image and likeness of God in which Adam was created, and has become more and more depraved mentally, morally and physically, until now "there is none righteous, no, not one"; none perfect either in word or deed. (**Rom. 3:10**.) To

will aright may be present with us, as the Apostle suggests, but how to perform all that we will is another matter. As he again declared, "Ye can not do the things that ye would." (**Gal 5:17**.) The difficulty is that the dying conditions have left us imbeciles as respects absolute good, and weakened as respects resistance of the temptations of the Adversary. The explanation is sufficient, as no human speculation on the subject is. Thank God that with the explanation the Bible holds out before us the hope referred to--the hope of the deliverance of

our race from this bondage of the prison-house.

Our context notes these facts, saying, "The creature [humanity] was subject to vanity [frailty, imperfection, weakness], not of its own will but by reason of him that subjected it [by reason of Adam's transgression]." Nevertheless, we read that this subjection to frailty was not without hope, a good hope, a great hope, a blessed hope, and this in the Bible is called

"THE HOPE SET BEFORE US IN THE GOSPEL"

We note the context which declares that although the creature, mankind, was subjected to sorrow, imperfection, dying, through another, through Father Adam, he is not without hope; for "the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption [death] into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." (**V. 21**.) This is a remarkable declaration, for be it noted that it is not referring to the Church, the Elect, the Little Flock, but to the creation, the world in general. Do other Scriptures support this declaration that God proposes ultimately to deliver the human family from bondage to sin and death --from bondage to corruption? Yes, we reply. This was the very statement of the angels promulgated at the time of the announcement of our Savior's birth, "We bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people."--**Luke 2:10**.

Moreover, the Scriptures give us a philosophical explanation not only of why the reign of Sin and Death has

been permitted, but of how and where their reign shall be annulled and humanity be delivered. The declaration is that the Lord Jesus paid the penalty for Adam, and that this works not only a release of Adam himself from Divine condemnation to death, but works also the release of all those who came under Divine condemnation through Adam's sin--the entire groaning creation. All the Scriptures, in speaking of the deliverance of the groaning creation, point to Messiah as the Divine Agency in effecting this deliverance. We have already quoted the declaration of Jesus and the prophets to the effect that He shall open the prison doors and set the prisoners at

liberty. We remember also the words of the angels on the subject of good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, that it was because a Savior had been born--the anointed Lord, Messiah. Thus all through the Scriptures every hope of the race as respects deliverance from sin and degradation to eternal life is based upon Messiah and His work--His sacrificial work finished at Calvary and His work of glory during the Millennial Age, which will be begun at His Second Advent.

"THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD"

In the context which I have quoted the Apostle declares that the groaning creation shall yet be delivered from its bondage to corruption into the liberty of the sons of God. The meaning of this is clear. The corruption came upon all through Adam, the deliverance from that corruption is to come to all through the second Adam. All are to be delivered from such bondage, however they may use the deliverance, or the privileges of liberty. Those who use it rightly will come into harmony with the Redeemer and with the Heavenly Kingdom, and will be blessed eventually with eternal life. Those who reject it after they come to understand fully, and comprehend its lengths and breadths, will thus be choosing for themselves the Second Death. The liberty of the sons of God, their freedom from corruption, death, is here distinctly shown.

SM615

The angels are not subject to, not bound by, such corruption, such dying conditions. They as sons of God are free from corruption, from death.

Adam, in his original perfection, was a son of God, as the Scriptures declare (**Luke 3:38**), but he lost his sonship for himself and for all of his race and received instead degradation and bondage to corruption. The hope for Adam and for his race, then, in Christ is deliverance from the power of sin and death into the liberty proper to them as sons of God. The entire Millennial Age, as the Scriptures show us, will be devoted to this work of setting free the human family from the various bondages of ignorance, superstition, weakness, heredity, and of bringing back all who will by restitution processes to the original

image and likeness of God, and making them again human sons of God like unto Father Adam before he sinned, plus a large and valuable experience gained during the six thousand years of the fall and also through the one thousand years of the raising up--the Millennial Age, the Resurrection Age.

Note the Apostle's argument on this subject in a preceding chapter leading up to our text. After telling that sin entered by one man's disobedience and that it was communicated to all of the race, he declares, "For as by the transgression of one many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound unto many. For if by the transgression of one, death reigned through the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ. So then as through one transgression the sentence came upon all men to condemnation, even so through the one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."--**Rom. 5:12,15,17-19**, R.V.

SM616

How beautifully clear is this statement by the Apostle! We wonder how it was that we so long overlooked the true import of these words. We perceive that our eyes were holden and blinded by the unscriptural theory that when the Church, the "little flock," the saints, should be selected, all the remainder of mankind would be condemned to an eternity of torture! Since we have gotten rid of that delusion, our eyes are opening more and more to behold the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's great plan of salvation, which first deals with the Church during this Gospel Age and subsequently will deal with all of the redeemed--all of the children of Adam condemned for Adam's disobedience and bought with the precious blood of Christ, and to be justified for their condemnation and set at liberty by the great Redeemer when he shall in due time take unto Himself His great power and reign.--**Rev. 11:15-19**.

WHY SO LONG DELAY

The question is frequently asked, Why should God so long delay to bring these blessings to the world? If God's Plan indeed be higher and nobler than any of the plans and theories of men, why has it not yet been demonstrated? Why are there not yet evidences? Why has He permitted the world to remain so long in its slavery to sin and death--4,000 years and more before He sent the Redeemer--nearly 2,000 years since that Redeemer has purchased the world, and yet only a mere handful of the race has as yet even heard of the only name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved? Why the delay? Does it not contradict God's claims of love and sympathy and power? If He has the love which longs to help the world, does He lack the power? Is He unable to accomplish His good purposes? Or if He has the power, does He lack the love, the will?

The Scriptures assure us that the love of God is boundless, and that He has already accomplished for mankind a redemptive work at the cost of the life of our Lord

Jesus. They assure us, too, that God's Love is the same today that it was eighteen centuries ago, that Divine Power is almighty, and that it only waits for the proper time to come to exercise itself for the full accomplishment of the Divine will and for the full blessing of all the families of the earth, through the Messiah, the Redeemer.

The explanation of the delay is fully given in the Scriptures, which assure us that before the Divine Plan shall extend to the world for its blessing and uplift, another work must first be accomplished; that God's purpose to bless Adam and his race is a restitution promise, and that the Millennial Age will be "times" or years of restitution, uplifting mankind from the mental, moral and physical degradation into which it was plunged during the six thousand years of the reign of Sin and Death. It will also be a time for blessing the physical earth, and making it the proper home for the perfect race, the footstool of God, filled with the glory of God.

But before doing this God purposed a work, if possible still more wonderful, namely, the selecting of the Little Flock, the elect Church, who, instead of being restored

to human perfection, will prove her loyalty to the Lord by her self-sacrifice, even unto death, and be granted a share with Christ in the First Resurrection--a change from earthly nature to Heavenly nature--far above angels, principalities and powers, like unto her glorified Redeemer and Head. This work of selecting the Church has been an important one, and has occupied a long period; and those who now have the privilege of becoming members of this elect Church and joint-heirs with the Redeemer cannot esteem the privilege too highly, but should with the Apostle count that any loss or sacrifice would be as dross in comparison with the excellency of the blessings promised.

"WE OURSELVES ALSO GROAN"

Turn again to our text and context. Note again how the Apostle differentiates between the Church and the

world and the groanings of each. Of the Church he says, "We ourselves also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our Body." The world, without God and without hope, groans in doubt and despair, but the Church--having a good hope as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that which is within the veil--cannot groan after the same manner as the world.

But notwithstanding all our hopes, all our joys in the Lord, all our fellowship one with the other, we that are in this Tabernacle do groan, being burdened. All of our joyful anticipations of the future, and our realization of the present that all evil things even are working together for our good and preparing us for the glory to come--all these do not hinder us at times from feeling a measure of the trouble, sadness and discouragement of our earthly environment. Our physical, mental and moral weaknesses at times assert themselves so strongly that we cannot as New Creatures do as we would; we cannot exult in tribulation even though in our hearts we may rejoice. As the Apostle suggests, we are at times "in heaviness through manifold temptations." (**1 Pet. 1:6**.) But ours is not an outward groaning, or should not be. As our text

suggests, we "groan within ourselves." It is a subdued groan, a modified one, because of the offset of our glorious hopes.

Note again that the Apostle shows that while both the world and the Church groan, they are waiting for different things. We are waiting for the deliverance of our Body (not bodies, in the plural); we are waiting for the deliverance of the Church as a whole. Some of the members have gone before, but finally the entire Body of Christ, which is the Church, will be completed. Then we shall see our Lord and will be with Him and share His glory, a united Church, a united Body of Christ, beyond the veil. For this we wait, we hope, we pray.

But the world, the groaning creation, knows not of the

Divine Plan. Its groaning is of a hopeless character; but we may know what God has provided for mankind even though the world be blind and in ignorance of this. We know that through The Christ, during the Millennial reign, all the families of the earth will be blessed with recovery from death, and with enlightenment and restitution assistances to righteousness and eternal life, and that only the incorrigible will die the Second Death.

And so the Apostle says that the groaning creation is "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." We are the sons of God. As the Apostle says, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be [how glorious]; but we know that when Christ shall be revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." (**1 John 3:2**.) We see then that the world's hope is in the glorified Church, whose glorious Head is the Redeemer Himself. When this Church shall be exalted in Millennial glory the world's time of blessing will begin. Then all the groaning creation shall be liberated and have the opportunity of coming out of the corruption of death, mental, moral and physical, and into liberty and perfection of life as the sons of God, all of which privileges have been secured for them through the merit of the precious blood.

How glad we are that in this dawning time of the New Dispensation the true light is shining from the Divine Word, as well as throughout the realm of nature! How glad we are that we no longer must think of the Church

alone as the subjects of salvation and the world as a whole the subjects of condemnation and eternal torture! How just, how reasonable, how loving, are the Divine arrangements! To see these things should draw our hearts near to the Lord in appreciative love, and we should worship with the greatest devotion One whom we thus see worthy of praise and adoration.

We are not, however, to expect the world to be able to realize these things. It is not the Divine purpose that

SM620

they should grasp the Plan. As the Master said to the faithful disciples of old and still says to us, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to outsiders all these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that hearing they might hear and not understand." They will both hear and understand in due time, but now is the time for the calling out of the Elect, the perfecting of the saints, etc.

Let us whose ears and eyes have been blessed of the Lord respond with all gratitude and humility, not merely with outward praise of our lips, but also with our hearts let us confess His loving kindness and tender mercy; and let this appreciation more and more sanctify our hearts and separate us from the world, its aims, its selfishness. Let us fight a good fight against sin, especially in our own mortal bodies; for even though the imperfections of the flesh be not counted against this New Creation, begotten of the Spirit, nevertheless the fact that we possess the Spirit of the Lord should lead us more and more to desire that perfection which is most pleasing and acceptable to Him, and to strive, therefore, to the extent of our ability; not trusting to the attainment of that perfection, but relying upon the merit of that great Atonement Sacrifice, offered once for all and sufficient for the sins of the whole world.

Jesus, our great High Priest,
Hath full atonement made;
Ye weary spirits rest;
Ye mournful souls be glad:
The year of Jubilee is come,
Returning ransomed sinners home.

Extol the Lamb of God,
    The all-atoning Lamb;
Redemption through His blood,
    To all the world proclaim:
The year of Jubilee is come,
Returning ransomed sinners home.

SM621

THE LIVING AND TRUE GOD

"God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."--**John 4:24**.

The structure of the brain places veneration at the very top, and thus by implication conforms the statement of the catechism that "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." However great the depravity of our race in the dark places of the earth, this element of veneration, of an instinctive appreciation of a God and a feeling of responsibility toward Him, constitutes a foundation upon which to build, to reconstruct, to reorganize the depraved elements of character. Without this fulcrum, missionaries and philanthropists might well lose all heart and all hope in respect to the moral and social uplift of the masses and the classes. Whoever, therefore, is intelligently a friend to his race must do everything in his power to maintain this center of mental balance of mind and to utilize it as an essential feature in the Divine arrangement for human well-being. Whoever in any manner or degree undermines this element of the mind is surely doing a destructive work, instead of a constructive one, whether he realizes the fact or not.

But, alas, that we must say it, some of the most intelligent of our most intellectual day are rapidly drifting away from the fundamental truth that there is a living and true God! These intellectuals are accepting the thought of an impersonal God. From our standpoint this is tantamount to saying, "There is no living and true God." This is the position taken, not only by Theosophists and Christian Scientists, but also by many scientific and professional thinkers. Rarely is an attempt made to define the impersonal God. Rather the term God is used merely as a concession to popular sentiment and

SM622

the "ignorance of the unlearned." Those who hold this view often use the word nature as a synonym for God. Their thought really seems to be that there is no intelligent Creator in the Universe; that our sun, stars and

planets are governed by what they term "natural laws," and that humanity prospers and progresses merely as it learns by experience the operation of these laws, and seeks co-operation and avoids conflict with them.

Christian Science, dealing less with the scholastic and more with the ordinary reason, attempts to explain that the word God simply signifies Good. And then with something of a play upon words, which confounds the reasoning faculties of the untrained mind, it tells us that whatever is useful is good and therefore is God. Proceeding with the explanation, it declares that every tree and rock have good or usefulness in them, and hence to that extent have God in them. Elaborating further, it says that God is in the air, because of its vitalizing effect; that He is in the flower because of its goodness and usefulness for beauty and fragrance; that He is in the tea-kettle because of its usefulness; likewise in the table, the floor, the ceiling--in everything. Whoever entertains such views proportionately destroys his faith in a personal God, "the Living and True God," and in the Bible as His revelation.

How could an impersonal God have a purpose, a will, a plan, a program? How could it give a revelation of that purpose or program in the Bible or otherwise? "He that cometh unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." He shall be found of them. "He that seeketh findeth."

But our Christian Science friends meet our objection with the assertion that Buddhists and Theophists hold the same view, and that they represent a large proportion of the human family. Furthermore, they claim that the same thought of an impersonal God is taught in all the principal creeds of Christendom, when they declare

faith in an omnipresent God. Alas! we must admit that the charge is well founded; and that the seed of error on this subject was planted in our minds and confessions of faith long ago. Be it noticed, however, that this inconsistency cannot be charged against the Bible, for although our confessions of faith were ostensibly made to be in harmony with the Scriptures, the truth is that not one word of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, declares Divine omnipresence, but every utterance on the subject

affirms the personality of the Father, and that our Lord Jesus is the "express image of His person."--**Heb. 1:3**.

THE GOD OF THE BIBLE A PERSON

"God is a spirit," but He is a being, a person. The Scriptures distinctly tell us that a spirit has not flesh and blood, as we have; but they as distinctly inform us of the Divine personality, and use the members and qualities of the human body to bring the Creator within the range of our apprehension. The Hand of the Lord (His Divine Power), and the Eye of the Lord (His Divine Wisdom) are in every place. The Ear of the Lord is bowed down to hear the groaning of the prisoner. And the Heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind. Heaven is His Throne and the earth is His Footstool. True, these expressions are pictorial, figurative; nevertheless they figure not an impersonal Creator, but a personal One, who feels, who thinks, who exercises His power; who has displeasure with those who are sinful and who loves those who seek to do His will, to walk in righteousness.

Whoever cultivates this thought of a righteous, personal God, assists in establishing his own heart along lines of corresponding character. He seeks a further knowledge of such a Creator; seeks his compassion and His protecting care, and learns to love Him, as he never could appreciate nor love Nature or any disordered conception of a space-pervading non-entity. He whose mind and heart grasps the Scriptural Personality of the

Heavenly Father catches the significance of our Savior's words, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."--**Matt. 10:29-31**.

Such may worship in spirit and in truth proportionate to their knowledge of the Infinite One, whom they were directed to address, "Our Father, which art in Heaven." Thinking of the Almighty as everywhere present is entirely unsatisfactory to our comprehension, which calls for a God whose Throne is in Heaven. This was the same

thought that our Savior again impressed on the women who met Him after His resurrection. To these he said: "I have not yet ascended to my Father and to your Father; to my God and to your God." Thus the general trend of Scriptural testimony confirms the thought which we receive by nature, and intensifies and elaborates it, by giving location and quality of heart, mind and power. Regardless of the truth of the two theories, the Bible presentation is surely the more helpful to humanity. To have no personal God must eventually signify to the reasoning mind no Law-Giver, no Judge, no Justice, no Love, no Mercy, no personal relationship as between father and child. Thus would be lost the very basis of Christian faith and doctrine.

INFINITELY SUPERIOR TO OUR HIGHEST IDEALS

The Scriptural presentation of the Almighty is, therefore, the one most consistent to our reason and most helpful to us; namely, that He is a great God, infinite in His Wisdom, His Justice, His Love and His Power. His personality has Heaven for His locality, but His influence and powers pervade the Universe. We may but imperfectly imagine the various channels of His information and the innumerable agencies through which He can exercise the Almighty Power. But in the light of present

day invention, we have at least suggestions of it; for cannot man communicate by wireless telegraphy over hundreds of miles? And not only so, but cannot he use the Hertz-waves for the transmission of power? And can he not with the telescope greatly enlarge his vision, and with the microscope see things otherwise indiscernible?

And if puny man, imperfect and fallen, "born in sin and shapen in iniquity and of few days and full of trouble," can thus enlarge his natural powers, what limitations might he justly or wisely set upon the intelligence and powers of his Creator? "He that formed the eye, shall He not see? He that formed the ear, shall He not hear?" He that gave to humans the sense of justice, shall we not consider Him the very embodiment of Justice? He who gave us the power of sympathy, compassion and love, shall we not consider Him, the Author of

our powers, as infinitely superior to our highest ideals?

For our present purpose it is not even necessary that we be believers in the Bible in order to formulate before our minds something of the glorious character and attributes of our Maker. True, correct views of the teachings of the Scriptures will surely aid us in our conceptions; but at this time we are addressing not merely believers in the Scriptures, but also unbelievers. We urge, then, that rational thought on the subject bids us believe that man is the highest type of earthly intelligence, and this teaches us that there must be an intelligent Creator as much superior to us as we are to the crawling worm. Yea, more than this, He who gave us our intelligent being must be separated from us by a still wider gulf than that which separates us from the worm. And it is but a logical process of reasoning that the noblest of our talents and powers are but feeble reflections of the same qualities in our Creator.

From this standpoint, how great is the God which our intelligent reason would picture! How worthy of our reverence, our devotion, our love, our service! The

Scriptures assist us by showing that the blemishes which we find in ourselves and others are the results of disobedience to the Divine instruction.

IGNOBLE CONCEPTIONS OF A DARK PAST

Filled with so noble a conception of Deity, we would naturally hasten to worship and bow down, but are stopped by the voices from the Dark Ages, which misrepresent the Almighty, implying that He is not the embodiment of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power. These voices assure us that, although He has commanded us to love our enemies, and to do good to them that hate us, persecute us and say all manner of evil against us falsely, nevertheless the Almighty, who gave these commands, does not love nor forgive His enemies, but has made preparation for their eternal torture.

There is something wholly inconsistent between these voices from the past and the voices of our reason. It is claimed by many that the Bible substantiates the voices of the Dark Ages, the creeds. But we hold that this is a

mistake, partly attributable to poor translation and partly to misunderstood parables. The reasoning mind surely rebels against the theory which in the Dark Ages held sway and led to the Inquisition and the stake. And it is glad that it has gotten rid of so gross a misconception of the "Father of Lights." A well-balanced and reverential intellect will rejoice to find and to recognize a God who not only is not devoid of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and on a plane lower than our own, but is infinite in these attributes and worthy of reverence and worship.

We assent that the Divine Word, the Bible, has been greatly misrepresented by us all in the past, and deserves reconsideration. If our forefathers read the Bible with smoking lamps and blurred vision, and nevertheless got some blessing, what a power of God it would be to us now if, in the light of the electric arc, we should find it the Store-house of Divine grace and truth, perfectly coordinated and surpassing our highest ideals!

SM627

DUAL PERSONALITY OF THE CHRISTIAN

"For 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**.

Few, even amongst Bible students, discern that the true Church of Christ is wholly distinct and separate from the remainder of mankind; and that the Scriptures speak literally when they declare that the Church is a *New Creation* and its members New Creatures. As with the natural man there is a human begetting and a human birth, so with these New Creatures in Christ there is a spirit begetting, which will culminate in the First Resurrection--their spiritual birth, when they shall "be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," thereafter to be glorious spirit beings, joint-heirs with their Redeemer in His Millennial Kingdom and the great work of blessing all the families of the earth.

On reading St. Paul's words, "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (**2 Cor. 4:16**), the majority, even of Christians, are inclined to apply it to all mankind and to look for an outward and an inward man in all with whom they come in contact. Such a misunderstanding on the part of a Christian is apt to result in one of two things: (1) Scrutinizing himself and recognizing to some extent his own twofold nature, he mistakenly supposes that all mankind are the same as himself; or (2) Looking at the world in general and perceiving no such dual personality as the Apostle mentions, he doubts his own dual nature, and thus fails to receive any profitable lessons from St. Paul's statement recorded in our text.

This confusion is increased by the fact that nominal Christianity includes three classes: (1) A class which claims to be Christian merely because the name is popular;

SM628

(2) A class of justified believers in the Cross of Christ, the scope of whose consecration is merely to avoid sin in its crudest form and to live decent, creditable lives;

(3) A class that has gone beyond that just described, has recognized with appreciation the Divine mercy already received, and in response has made a full consecration of life to the Lord--a consecration even unto death, a consecration to serve the Lord and to walk in His steps whatever the cost, a consecration to sacrifice earthly interests, advantages, privileges, etc., as well as to avoid sin--in the interest of truth, and all those principles of righteousness which represent the Heavenly Father and His Son our Lord Jesus Christ.

This last class is of course that which the Master denominated a "little flock," and which continues to include "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble." But it is this class alone that receives spirit-begetting, the "earnest of our inheritance" of those great blessings which "God has in reservation for those that love Him" more than they love houses or lands, parents or children, husband or wife, or even life itself. These spirit-begotten ones, the smallest section of those who profess Christ, are the only class addressed throughout the New Testament; for these are prospectively "the saints," the "Elect," so frequently mentioned by the Apostles and uniformly addressed in the opening of each Epistle.--**1 Cor. 1:2**; **2 Cor. 1:1**; **Phil. 1:2**.

A CLASS NOT OF THIS WORLD

Some may have thought that the Apostles were exceptions to every rule, and that their sacrifice of earthly interests, their sufferings of persecution in the flesh, and their self-denials in the interests of the Gospel service were not designed of the Lord as illustrations or examples for the remainder of the Church. This is a mistaken view which will, if entertained, hinder us from obedience to St. Paul's injunction, "Be ye followers of me, even as

I also am of Christ"; and his declaration, "Ye became followers of us and of the Lord."--**1 Cor. 11:1**; **1 Thess. 1:6**; **Eph. 5:1,2**.

True, our Lord Jesus was not only the Redeemer, but also the great Shepherd and Guide of His followers. True, He sent forth the Twelve Apostles as His special representatives and mouthpieces in the establishment of the

Church, a mission which entailed upon them special obligations and duties, as well as special privileges and opportunities. Respecting all of His followers, His "sheep," He says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." To them He says, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Again, "If any man will serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant be."--**John 17:16**; **15:18,19**; **12:26**.

That all of our Lord's followers--not only the Apostles, but the very humblest of the sheep--are included in these conditions and in the rewards promised to the faithful, is distinctly shown in our Lord's references to His Second Coming and to the blessings then to be administered to all of His faithful disciples, amongst whom He includes, not only His Twelve Apostles (who are indeed to have the most honorable position in glory), but also every member of "the Church which is His Body." In the parables of the Pounds and the Talents our Lord evidently addresses those who will be alive at His Second Advent, and speaks as if they were the representatives of all of His faithful followers throughout the Gospel Age, to each one of them He has entrusted certain gifts and responsibilities as His servants, as New Creatures in Christ.--**Matt. 25:14-30**; **Luke 19:11-27**.

Changing times and circumstances vary conditions; but the principles enunciated in the Scriptures continue

in force and meaning. In civilized lands it is no longer customary to crucify, to stone to death, to beat with rods or to burn at the stake. The Gospel of Christ has made a deep impression upon the world and its general sentiments, even though the message has influenced only a "little flock" to accept full discipleship and willingness to "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth." It is still true, however, that even in this present Age, "all who would live godly in Christ Jesus, *shall suffer persecution"* (**2 Tim. 3:12**)--more refined, more civilized, but in some respects no less bitter and malicious than that of times past--sometimes causing excruciating pain, sorrow

and heartache.

"YOUR BRETHREN THAT PERSECUTED YOU"

It is still true that as the persecution of our Lord's time came from the nominally religious and orthodox of His day and nation, and as all the persecutions of the Dark Ages were instituted by the professedly religious and professedly orthodox, so likewise today. More of the pain and sorrow, more of the mortification of our flesh, come from the professedly religious, professedly orthodox, professedly brethren, than from any other class. In every instance the difficulty arises from the fact that these nominally religious people who would persecute the members of the Body of Christ do so because of mistaken conceptions of the Divine will and because they lack the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love.

The Scriptures explain that Satan exercises a great influence upon the world, blinding many with prejudice and using them unwittingly as his tools; and that God permits him to do so for the better ultimate accomplishment of the great and glorious Divine purpose. Of those who crucified our Lord St. Peter declares, "I wot, brethren, that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." (**Acts 3:17**.) Of the same class St. Paul says, "Had they known they would not have crucified the Lord

of Glory." (**1 Cor 2:8**.) Similarly, those of the Dark Ages who burned one another at the stake, doubtless thought, as did Saul of Tarsus, that they verily did God service. Blinded as to the real purpose of God, and not appreciating His Spirit of love, they served Satan and sin, while supposing that they were serving God.

Undoubtedly the same is true today of those who after a more refined manner oppose, speak evil of and misrepresent their brethren. Nevertheless, from first to last, God has been so overruling in the affairs of His people that blessing has resulted to those who are New Creatures in Christ. While their outward man has suffered, has been mortified and has perished, their inward man--their new nature--has been renewed, strengthened, upbuilt in

the image of God. Their trials have made them more nearly, as New Creatures, exact copies of God's dear Son.--**Rom. 8:29**.

NEW CREATURE'S BATTLE WITH HIS FLESH

Thus far we have considered only those attacks upon our mortal bodies which come from without, and have seen how, as our text declares, "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." From this viewpoint we realize that all the persecutions, trials, sorrows, pain, which come to our flesh are really blessings in disguise; for our human nature must be utterly destroyed before we as New Creatures can be perfected in the First Resurrection. It may surprise some of the Lord's dear people to note not only the Apostle's exhortation that we endure and appreciate the Lord's providences respecting persecutions from without, but also the fact that our zeal as New Creatures leads us to make an attack upon our flesh from within. St. Paul assures us that there is a continual warfare to be waged between the old nature and the new, and that so antagonistic are their interests that the development and final victory of the *one* means the overthrow and destruction of the *other*. Hence we

are exhorted to "fight the good fight of faith and to lay hold on eternal life."--**1 Tim. 6:12**.

The Scriptures inform us that our courage, our persistency and zeal in the fight against the old self and its natural tendencies, this fight in the interests of the Heavenly Kingdom and its Divine Law means to us either victory or defeat as respects our attainment of the glorious prize set before us in God's Word--joint-heirship with Christ in glory, honor and immortality, the Divine nature. It is to the "more than conquerors" that the blessed promises of the Scriptures apply. Our Redeemer is the Captain of our salvation, the Leader of all these conquerors, without whom they would be unable to gain the victory. But by His grace and assistance, they shall triumph, in harmony with the promise.--**Rom. 8:37**.

This battle between the New Creature and his old

nature is referred to by the Apostle when he exhorts the New Creature, saying, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth"--deaden them. (**Col. 3:5-10**.) First of all, surrender your human will to death, that you may have no will of your own, but may adopt in the fullest measure the mind of Christ, the will of the Heavenly Father, that as the will of the New Creature it may henceforth dominate your life more and more until it shall control every thought, word and deed. This mortifying, or killing, is to grapple with every organ of our mortal bodies and not only to render them dead to sin, but to quicken and encourage them with the holy spirit of the New Creature.

From the time of our spirit-begetting henceforth, our hands and all of their doings, our feet and all of their goings, our tongues and all of their words, our eyes and all of their visions, are to be dead indeed to sin, dead to selfishness, dead to everything except the new mind, the spirit of holiness which, controlling these members of our mortal body, is to use them incessantly in the service of God, the service of Christ, the service of the brethren,

the service of the Truth and, so far as opportunity may afford, in the service of humanity. But let us not forget, however, that the real service of humanity will come during the Millennial Age, and will be granted only to those New Creatures who in the present time fight a good fight against the old man and his natural inclinations and in favor of the New Creature, controlled by the Divine will.

As the natural man perishes, the New Creature is developed. At first the natural man is comparatively strong. But if progress is made, eventually he will be quite in subjection to the New Creature. While the outward man is perishing, the new man is growing day by day. Eventually this will mean a thorough preparation for the complete "change" for the birth of the spirit in the First Resurrection. Since there is no development or schooling in the grave, and since no one can enter the Heavenly condition except those who in the School of Christ in the present life have been "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," it follows that, as St. Peter suggests, all who are spirit-begotten need to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure; for

if they do those things which the Apostle enumerates, they shall never fall, but an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto them into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.--**2 Peter 1:5-11**.

WARNING NECESSARY TO SOME

Here a word of warning seems necessary. Some of the Lord's people have the erroneous impression that actual perfection in every thought, word and deed is the Divine requirement. This is a mistake. Such perfection in the flesh is an impossibility. The perfection which God requires is, according to the Scriptures, a perfection of the heart, a perfection of the will. "Blessed are the pure in heart"--the pure in *desire,* and hence the pure in *endeavor.* God's Elect are selected from various stations in life, and hence are some more and some less noble by nature, some more and some less injured by

the fall of Father Adam. Therefore we are not to expect that all these will reach the same plane of outward self-control in the present life.

The Scriptures point out that the Lord's judgment of His people will not be according to their outward attainment, but according to their inward development. Hence some of them who are naturally noble, and who are held in more or less high estimation amongst men, might in the Lord's estimation be unfit for the Kingdom and its high honors and responsibilities. On the other hand, some of those whom the Apostle denominates, according to the *flesh,* "the mean things of this world," and who according to men might never be highly esteemed in the flesh, might in the Lord's estimation be highly esteemed because of His knowledge of the loyalty of their hearts--their loyalty to Him, to the brethren, to the principles of righteousness--and their fullness of the spirit of love. Undoubtedly there are some great surprises in store for the time when the Lord will make manifest His judgment, His decision, as to who are His Body members.

In conclusion, let us who recognize ourselves as New Creatures in Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit of God, fight a good fight against the old nature, putting off more

and more of the works of the flesh--anger, wrath, malice, hatred, strife--and putting on more and more the character fruits of the Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. The possession of these Heavenly qualities will not make us popular with the world; for the spirit of darkness hates the spirit of light, which constantly reproves the wrong spirit. But these fruits and graces of God's spirit of love constitutes a panoply which will enable us to withstand all the fiery darts of the Adversary and to assist others in the good fight. Finally through the grace of God in Christ these qualities will perfect us as conquerors, yea, more than conquerors, through Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood.

SM635

DEVELOPMENT OF CHRIST-LIKENESS

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith."--**Gal. 6:10**.

Development of character-likeness to our Lord Jesus Christ is the first duty of every consecrated child of God. "Hereunto we were called," as the Apostle suggests, not especially to do something for somebody else, but especially to develop our own individual character--to fight a good fight, to lay hold on eternal life, to get the blessings which God has invited us to have. Nothing that we can possibly do for others should be considered as appropriate for taking the place of the work which He has given us to do for ourselves individually.

Apparently many good people make a mistake along this line. We see the great institutions of the various denominations arranging for the world's conversion and entertainment, but at the same time there is a lamentable neglect to provide for their own growth in grace and in knowledge of the Word of God. All this is contrary to the teachings of the Bible. What God's people are to do for the world is to be merely secondary, merely what opportunity may offer. Their chief work is to be for *themselves.* It is important that we get this thought well grounded in our minds. Otherwise it might be with us as St. Paul points out--that while preaching to others, we might ourselves become castaways.--**1 Cor. 9:27**.

But while we are developing ourselves, and while assured by the Scriptures that in due time we shall reap if we faint not, there is, nevertheless, something we can do beyond ourselves. As we have opportunity, we may do good to anybody, to everybody. These opportunities

SM636

are various. But in choosing what we shall do, we should remember the Apostle's injunction, "As we have opportunity, therefore, let us do good unto all men, *especially* unto them that are of the Household of Faith."

To our understanding, the Household of Faith is composed

of those who have "the faith once delivered unto the saints." (**Jude 3**.) To accept that faith means much more than to say, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do?" It means that one who has the faith as set forth in the Word of God would take the steps which the Master indicated as necessary for membership in the Household. Therefore there are a great many people who have not entered the Lord's Household at all. The Master did not say, "If you wish to be numbered amongst My disciples, you may do thus; or, if you prefer, you may do so-and-so." On the contrary, He said, "If any man will come after Me, let Him deny Himself, take up his cross, and FOLLOW ME."--**Matt. 16:24**.

Addressing the Household of Faith, St. Paul declared, "Ye are called in ONE HOPE of your calling." (**Eph. 4:4**.) The invitation given to the Church of the Gospel Age was but *one* invitation; and those who accepted it are declared to be a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People. (**1 Peter 2:9**.) We learn, however, from other Scriptures that amongst those who accept the invitation and consecrate themselves to God there are two classes, the Little Flock, and the Great Company, the antitypical Priests and Levites. The one class faithfully perform their consecration vow. The other class lose their first love in a measure. While they do not become enemies of God, they live an indifferent life. They are not overcomers. Although they serve in many ways, and although on the whole they are good people, yet they do not come up to the standard set for admission into the priestly class. Therefore they will not have an abundant entrance into the Messianic Kingdom, but must "wash their robes and make them white in the blood of

the Lamb"; for to some degree they have been derelict. (**Rev. 7:9-11**.) They will constitute the antitypical Levite class, who will have a future service to perform in connection with the Royal Priesthood.

WHO CONSTITUTE THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH?

In seeking for opportunities of service, the Lord's people are to recognize that they are to discriminate in

favor of the Household of Faith rather than the world of mankind. Whatever time we do not need for ourselves should be used in connection with the members of the Household of Faith. Should any one ask, "Why should you not give all your time to those who are not of that Household? Why should you not do slum work, etc.?" we reply that those who are engaged in such work are a class who do not understand the Divine Plan. We are not finding fault with them, however; for we sympathize with everything that makes for human uplift.
But first of all should be our own personal uplift; and next should be our work for the Household of Faith. The reason this order of procedure should be followed, is that God Himself is dealing only with that Household at this time.

Those who are doing slum work, etc., have the thought in mind that God is dealing with mankind in general now, and that now is the world's only opportunity for getting eternal life. With the erroneous thought that mankind are in danger of eternal torment, this class feel that they are doing right to neglect themselves and everything else in order to do this work amongst the degraded. If they had the knowledge of God's plans which the Bible gives, they would know that the Lord is not now dealing with the world, but only with the Household of Faith.

This statement is in harmony with the words of Jesus, who prayed not for the world, but for those whom the Father had given Him. (**John 17:20,21**.) Those who came from the sinner class He received--those who had

an ear to hear His message. Whoever accepted that message was treated as a member of the Household of Faith. To such our Lord ministered especially, even neglecting His own temporal interests to do so. We may be sure, however, that He never neglected His own spiritual needs; for the development of Himself as a New Creature was His first obligation--as it is our first consideration. --**2 Peter 1:4-11**; **3:18**.

In the strictest sense of the word, the Household of Faith is the Family of God; those who have offered their bodies to God in sacrifice and have been accepted by Him and have been begotten of His Holy Spirit. All such belong to God's Family. Some of them are making

good progress, growing strong, tall, broad; others are merely "babes in Christ." We might, however, make a distinction between the Household of God and the Household of Faith. The latter seems to be a broader term which includes those who are drawing near to "the faith once delivered to the saints" and are seeking to attain it; those who are prospective members of the Family of God, who will finally become so strong in faith and zeal that they will render a reasonable service and will present their bodies as living sacrifices, "holy, acceptable to God."--**Rom. 12:1**.

We perceive this to be the proper course for development in character-likeness to Christ. First, we are to make our own calling and election sure by cultivating all the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit; then we are to keep on the alert to note and to gladly avail ourselves of all opportunities in the service of God which in His providence are opened up to us. These we are to use primarily in favor of the necessities of the Household of Faith, and then on behalf of anybody and everybody who may need assistance. The helping of those in need does not mean, however, that we should give them luxurious things or enough to last them the remainder of life, but that we should give them enough to assist them

through their stress--a coat, a hat, a dress--whatever we could spare that they might need. If we see anyone who apparently is in condition to have the eyes of his understanding opened to the Truth of God's Word, we might well consider it a good opportunity for us to assist him. Thus we might neglect our temporal interests and spare the time to help such a person. But under no conditions should we neglect our own spiritual growth.

"STUDY TO SHOW THYSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD"

In order to grow in the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit, it is necessary that we study the Word of God. Furthermore, since we have the treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels that are leaky by nature, it is necessary that we study continually. No true Christian, therefore, would think for a moment of ceasing to study the Word,

whether by direct reading of the Bible or by reading THE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, which put the Word of God into a form especially arranged for topical study. A certain amount of spiritual refreshment comes also in connection with the morning hymn, the Manna text and the Vow. This refreshment we recommend to be partaken of every morning before breakfast--if possible as a family; if not, then individually. A few minutes spent in thinking of Heavenly things, in returning thanks to God and in singing a song of praise should result very profitably spiritually. In some way the Lord's people should keep in touch with His Word continually; otherwise the New Creature life will wither.

There is also another kind of study which seems to be overlooked, even by those who study His Word faithfully. The study to which we now refer should be in progress from the moment when we awaken in the morning until we fall asleep at night. We should continually study to *apply* what we already know respecting God, respecting the Bible, respecting His will, respecting our duty toward others and toward ourselves, respecting the

Golden Rule, etc. In other words, every Christian should daily, hourly, continually, be studying more and more how to *put off* anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, evil-speaking, and all other works of the fallen flesh and of the Adversary; and with equal perseverance he should be studying diligently how to *put on* the graces of the Holy Spirit--meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love.

All of the Bible, all that we learn respecting it, all the lessons taught us by Divine providences, and all the advantages we receive from fellowship with the brethren --all these are merely preparations for the great study of life--how best to perform the will of God in thought, word and deed. We emphasize this kind of study for the reason that we perceive that many of the Lord's people do not understand the matter. They seem to think that their spirituality depends upon the number of hours which they spend in Bible study. Thus they are grasping only a fraction of the Truth. The great blessings come from our efforts to *apply* the principles which we have already learned from the Bible. This study

requires, not that we should have our Bibles ever in hand, but that we should continually bear in mind the things which we have already studied from God's Word, in order to make practical application of them in the affairs of life, in our thoughts, words and doings toward God, toward our fellowmen, toward ourselves.

If to the right or left I stray,
    That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let Thy goodness chase away
    All hindrance to Thy love.
Oh, may the least omission pain
    My well-instructed soul,
And send me to the blood again,
    Which makes and keeps me whole.

SM641

THE CHURCH "CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST"

"I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."--**Gal. 2:20**.

In an age when human ingenuity taxed itself to the utmost limit to invent cruelties to torture the victims of public revenge or hate, crucifixion certainly had a bad preeminence. Amongst the Romans it was reserved, with few exceptions, for slaves and foreigners, being considered too horrible and disgraceful for a Roman citizen, no matter what might have been his crime. This mode of death was the greatest possible indignity that could be heaped upon any offender, whether considered in the light of a public disgrace or of physical anguish.

Crucifixion was a slow, lingering process of dying, lasting always for hours and often for several days. Usually the victim was bound to the cross as it lay upon the ground. The hands and the feet were then nailed to the wood; and the cross was elevated and planted in the socket to receive it. This gave the body a terrible wrench; and great was the agony that followed. The hot sun beat upon the naked body and uncovered head--which in our Lord's case was pierced with the additional cruelty of the crown of thorns. The ragged, undressed wounds festered and became inflamed; shooting pains darted from them through the quivering flesh. Added to this the agony of an increasing fever, a throbbing head and a raging thirst; and even the slightest movement intensified the anguish. As death drew near, swarms of flies gathered about to increase the torment, from which there could not be any relief. As no vital organ was directly assailed, life lingered on until the power of endurance was completely exhausted.

SM642

The ultimate physical cause of our Lord's death, however, is believed to have been literally a broken heart. Otherwise He would probably have lingered much longer; for crucifixion seldom produced death within twenty-four hours, and victims have lingered as long as five days.

Pilate and the guard were surprised to learn that Jesus had died so soon. Instead of lingering long, He died suddenly, and before He was fully exhausted; for He had conversed with the thief and had commended His mother to St. John's care. He had declared His great work finished; and then with a strong voice, which indicated considerable remaining strength of both body and mind, He had cried, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and died instantly. In the agony of Gethsemane the heart and the blood vessels had been affected. The palpitation of the heart had been so intense as to cause a bloody sweat--a phenomenon rare but not unknown, produced by intense mental excitement. Already weakened by such an experience, a repetition of the anguish probably ruptured the heart, causing instant death.--**Luke 22:44**; **23:46**.

"CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST" FIGURATIVELY

Since actual, literal crucifixion signifies a torturing, slow but sure death, the figurative crucifixion must closely resemble it; otherwise the figure would have no value. When we say that any one is taking up his cross to follow Christ, we mean that the person is consecrated and is taking the first step of self-denial in espousing the cause of Christ. Even though it be with fear and trembling, he is submitting willingly to painful humbling and contempt in the sight of the world and of the chief priests and their blind followers, in order that he may share with the Master and all the members of the Anointed Body the coldness and scorn of the world and of many whom they seek to bless. Yet in so doing we are not alone, as was our Lord and Head; for we have comfort and sympathy from Him as our High Priest and from our fellow members

in His Body, the Church. With our Lord, however, none could sympathize. He was the Fore-runner on this race course; and of the people there was none with Him.

But, some one may ask, where does our cross-bearing begin, and where our crucifixion? Where does it end? How much does it involve? We answer, Circumstances alter cases to some extent; and each must apply the

matter in his own case. To enable us to do this, let us examine three notable examples of such cross-bearing--our Lord, St. Paul and St. Peter.

"CONSIDER HIM WHO ENDURED"

Born under the conditions of the Jewish Law, our Lord could not begin His service--ministry--until He was thirty years old, although His earlier years were evidently spent in studying prophetic utterances concerning God's Plan and His own share therein. This is made evident in the only record of His boyhood. When but twelve years old He was seeking information concerning the Heavenly Father's business, and was found amongst the eminent teachers asking questions relating to the prophecies.--**Luke 2:42-52**.

At thirty years of age He had His first opportunity to begin the work which He had come into the world to do. Using the figure in our text, we might say that then He took up His cross when He came to John to be baptized of him in the Jordan. This was a cross--a humiliation; for the masses of the people were, like John the Baptist, ignorant of the deep meaning which our Lord attached to immersion as a symbol of death. John and the people used it only as a symbol of washing, cleansing or reformation from sin. Nor was it proper for our Lord then to explain to them a symbol which belonged to an age and a work not to be made known until the Pentecost following His death. Nor would they have understood if He had explained.

But it became our Lord to set the example which, as their Leader, He would afterward expect all His disciples

to follow. Hence, as in His actual death He who knew no sin was counted amongst the transgressors, so in its symbol--the water immersion--He was "numbered with transgressors" (**Isa. 53:12**), who were there figuratively washing away a sinful past to make a new start in life.

For the sinless Lamb of God thus to be misunderstood was doubtless a heavy cross; but it opened the way to a still clearer appreciation of the Father's will, which He had come to perform. Obedience in taking up the figurative cross proved Him worthy of continuing in the

Father's service--even unto death. The Holy Power of God which came upon Him there enabled Him to see more clearly His future pathway down to Calvary; but it also brought clearer and clearer apprehensions of the exceeding riches of Divine favor and of the high exaltation in reservation for Him at the end of the narrow way.

THE VICTORY IN THE WILDERNESS

Under the increased illumination of mind which followed His spirit-begetting at Jordan, our Lord was led by His spirit of consecration into the wilderness, there to consider more fully in private the Father's Plan and His own future course in obedience thereto. There the cross grew heavy as He more fully realized the shame, ignominy and self-abasement to which His consecration would lead. Moreover, the Tempter threw all his weight upon the already heavy cross by suggesting other ways of doing good which were more agreeable to the flesh than was the way of sacrifice. But after counting the cost, our Lord refused any other method, whether Satan's or His own, and chose to have God's will done in God's own way, saying again, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O My God!"--**Psa. 40:5-8**.

With this victory our Lord grew stronger; and the cross seemed lighter as He came out of the wilderness figuratively crucified, willingly delivered up to die--hands, feet, each and every talent and power restrained from self-service--all offered up as a sacrifice to God in

the carrying out of the Divine Plan, whatever that might involve, whether the dying process might prove to be of longer or shorter duration or of more or less pain. Now He more fully understood the meaning of His consecration vow made at Jordan.

As a man, then, when He began His ministry our Lord's will was already dead to every human hope and ambition--dead to His own human plans and control. Yet He was not dead in the sense of being insensible to the scoffs, pains and piercing words which He would encounter, but crucified--delivered up to death. The pinioned, bleeding members--human talents, rights, etc.--

quivered and twitched; but they always remained pinioned --crucified, delivered up to death--to the last, as when He prayed in Gethsemane that the cup of ignominy might be omitted. During all these three and one-half years of our Lord's ministry He was crucified in this figurative sense. That is to say, He was delivered up to death--His will, His talents, His all, bound and pinioned --in harmony with the Father's Plan. And every deed of His by which "virtue [vitality, life] went out of Him" to bless and heal in mind and body the sinners about Him was part of His dying, and finally ended in death--even the literal death of the cross.

ST. PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

St. Paul was not literally crucified, but ended his course by being beheaded--as became a Roman citizen. Yet figuratively he tells us long before his literal death, "I am crucified with Christ." That is to say, "I am delivered up to death. My will, my self-control, my talents and powers, my rights, my lawful ambitions as a man--all these are pinioned and bound by my consecration vow, so that having no will or plan or way of my own, I may be fully able to let the Holy Spirit--or mind or will--of the Master dwell in me and rule my every act to His service. But I am not so dead that I do not occasionally feel a twinging of the flesh and have

a suggestion as to another way and as to what would or would not be necessary. I keep my body under, however, subject to the will of God, saying, as did the Master under similar circumstances, 'Not my will but Thine [Heavenly Father] be done.'"

Many get the idea that our Lord and the Apostle referred only to sinful desires when they spoke of figurative crucifixion. They read the Apostle's words as if he meant, "My sinful ambitions and desires I keep under and crucify." They interpret our Lord to mean, "Not My sinful will be done, O Father, but Thy holy will." This is a mistake. Our Lord was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (**Heb. 7:26**); and as such He could not have a sinful will or desire. He had no

wish to kill, steal, blaspheme, covet the possessions of others, nor to bear false witness, nor to backbite, nor slander, nor do any other sinful thing toward God or toward man. On the contrary, His will was to do good only, to honor God and to bless men.

But as a man, our Lord had a mind, a strong mind or judgment as to HOW good could best be accomplished, as to HOW God could be most highly honored and men most effectually blessed. Had He followed His own judgment and will as to the best methods of honoring God and blessing men, it would probably have been along the line which naturally suggests itself to other GOOD judgments and wills--along the line of political and social reforms, in securing pure government for the people, in meting out justice to the oppressed, in establishing hospitals, asylums and colleges, and in cleansing the religious system of His day. But although such a good will would have doubtless accomplished much temporary good, it would never have worked out the grand deliverance for the race which we now see that God's comprehensive Plan of the Ages is designed to work out. Such a plan did not occur to the mind of even the perfect Man Christ Jesus; for it is beyond the scope of human

thought and reasoning. But knowing that His Father was greater than He, our Lord rightly reasoned that implicit submission to Jehovah's will was the proper course, whatever it might involve.

WHY CRUCIFIXION OF WILL IS PROPER

The nearer a person is to perfection, the stronger is his will and the more difficult to crucify. The more confident any one is that his will is good and for good and blessing to others, the more difficult it is to see good reasons for surrendering it. Thus our dear Lord knew that it was needful for Him to die in order to provide the Ransom-price for the world and shrank not from it; but knowing also that pain, public scorn and contempt as a criminal were not part of the penalty, He questioned their necessity--whether the Father was not asking of Him as the Redeemer more than the penalty of Adam's

sin. Therefore He prayed, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me"--nevertheless I claim no rights; I attempt neither to follow My own ideas nor to exercise My own will; I leave all to Thy wisdom; "Thy will be done."

Evidently our Lord did not see then what for our own advantage and strengthening He has since showed us who are following in His steps, crucifying our own wills, etc.--that extreme trial of obedience, even unto the death of the cross, was both expedient and proper, because of the very high exaltation to the Divine nature, for which His implicit obedience to the Father's will in giving our Ransom-price was to be the test of worthiness.

As followers in our Lord's footsteps we have neither such strong wills to overcome and crucify nor the proportionate strength of character whereby to overcome them. But we have the advantage of knowing clearly why so extreme and exact obedience is necessary in all who would be accounted worthy of a place in that select Body of Christ, the Church, which is to be so highly honored with our Lord Jesus, our Redeemer and Head.

SM648

HOW WE FOLLOW IN HIS STEPS

The Apostle Paul did not mean the crucifying of a sinful will or sinful desires, plans, etc., when he said, "I am crucified with Christ." Elsewhere he refers to the same thing, saying that he desired to be "dead with Him," and to have "fellowship in His sufferings." So, then, if Christ's crucifixion was not the crucifixion of a sinful will and sinful desires, neither was St. Paul's, nor are ours as followers of the spotless Lamb of God.

True, St. Paul and other followers of Christ were by nature sinners and children of wrath even as others, and hence were very much less than perfect, compared with the Undefiled One. But their first step of faith in Christ showed them that they had no right nor privilege to will or to do wrong; and in accepting of justification through the death of Christ, they confessed not only sorrow for sins past, but repentance and change from sin for the future to the extent of their ability, realizing that the imputed merit of the Ransom covered not only

past sins, but also all unwillful weaknesses and errors future. This change of will from sin to righteousness preceded their call to follow Christ, to suffer with Him and to share with Him the high exaltation to the Divine nature. Thus we see that with us, as with our Lord, it is our good human wills, our good intentions and our good plans--not actually perfect as our Lord's, but reckonedly so through His imputed merit--that are to be crucified, delivered up to death with Christ and to share in His sacrifice.

As our Lord set aside and crucified His own will, accepting of the Father's will instead, so we as His footstep followers set aside or crucify our wills or desires--no matter how good and wise they appear to us--to accept instead the guidance and direction of our Lord Jesus Christ, who still delights to carry out the Father's Plan, the perfection of which He can now fully appreciate.

SM649

SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad with exceeding joy."--**1 Peter 4:12**.

While we understand from Scripture that present evil in general shall ultimately be overruled of God and made to minister good, yet we are far from thinking that "all is for the best," or that everything which occurs in the world was foreordained of God and brought about by Him. No; we must remember that since Adam's disobedience, the Paradise whose perfection and blessings were suited to the perfect man has been done away with; and that the sin-cursed race has been condemned to the as yet unfinished and imperfect earth. The Garden of Eden was merely a little spot finished beforehand, in order to provide a perfect trial for the perfect man Adam.

By the time that man has been restored to manhood as represented in Adam, the earth also shall have reached the perfection as represented in Eden. Meantime, the turbulence of nature--cyclones, earthquakes, etc., incident to the unfinished work--continues, and constitutes part of the evil to which the entire race of Adam became subject through the sin of their father, and from which they will shortly be released as a result of the work accomplished by our Redeemer.

But in all this confusion of nature the Scriptures teach us that there is a class under special Divine supervision, and that to these nothing out of God's order can happen. This is the consecrated class, the members of the Anointed Body--The Christ. *We know* that all

SM650

things work together for good to them that love God, to

those who are the called according to His purpose.

WHY CHASTISEMENTS ARE NECESSARY

While it should be a cause of sorrow to us that we should need special chastisements to recall us to duty, yet we must not forget that these are evidences that we are still reckoned of God as amongst His sons; and that such chastisements are thus a demonstration of His love for us and of His desire that we make our calling and election sure to the grand prize for which the consecrated class is running. In view of this fact any consecrated follower of the Master who receives such corrections in righteousness should not think it STRANGE.

But while such trials should not be thought strange, St. Peter in our text evidently meant more than this; for he says, "Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." Our Lord did not suffer because of disloyalty or failure to keep His contract, His Covenant of Sacrifice. He did not suffer because of spiritual drowsiness and conformity to the world. Nor did He suffer because of *self-will* leading Him to ignore the Father's will and word, nor because some plan of His own must be dashed to pieces. The sufferings of Christ were from no such cause as any of these. Hence to the extent that we share His sufferings it must not be as chastisement for evil nor in the renouncing of evil, but a suffering wrongfully--undeservedly. His was a suffering for *well-doing* and for the Truth's sake; and to be sharers or partakers of His suffering, on account of which we may rejoice and anticipate coming glory, we must take heed to the cause of the suffering. We only deceive ourselves if we count sufferings for sin as part of our suffering for Christ, and on that account expect the glory to be revealed.--**1 Peter 4:14-16**.

We are well aware that "this is a hard saying," and that many will not permit themselves to believe it. The terms "sufferings of Christ" and "sacrifice" have long

been misused. Many reckon themselves as *sacrificers* with Christ because they have abandoned some practice which they consider evil--such as profanity, the use of

stimulants, extravagant dressing, dancing, etc. If these things are wrong, then no one ever had a right to them. Hence it cannot be a "sacrifice" with Christ to discontinue anything which is wrong in and of itself.

WHAT THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST INCLUDE

What, then, are the sufferings of Christ which we may endure for His sake? some one may ask. We reply, the word Christ signifies anointed; and hence those sufferings could not have commenced with Jesus until after He had been anointed of the Holy Spirit at the time of His water immersion at Jordan--after John the Baptist had immersed Him in water as a symbol of His consecration unto death. So, too, it is with all of the followers of Jesus in the narrow way of sacrifice. Not one of us could share in the sufferings of the Anointed unless first we had consecrated ourselves to God, and had been accepted in the Beloved and begotten of the Holy Spirit, thus becoming members of the Anointed Company.

The sacrifice and sufferings of Christ Jesus included every item of mental and physical pain and of self-denial experienced as a RESULT of His consecration, until it was completed in death. Therefore it included the denial of all laudable and proper human ambitions which our Lord as a perfect man must have experienced more than could imperfect men. It also included the reproach which He bore from His fellow men for the sake of the Truth, especially from the teachers of the nominal church of His day. It also included His weariness and exhaustion caused not only by preaching, but through the giving out of His own vital energy for the good of others in healing the sick, etc.--**Mark 5:30**.

Similar to these are the sufferings of Christ which His footstep followers may well rejoice to have shared, when the time shall come for the glory to be revealed.

SM652

They begin with the hour of our consecration; and if we are faithful, they will end only with our death. With us as with our Head and Pattern the *sacrifice* consists in denying ourselves things which are lawful and proper, in our endeavors to honor God, to promote Truth and to

help in any way those in need, especially them of the Household of Faith. Apparently, most of the Body of the Anointed Company will, like their Head, spend more of their sacrificed time and substance in supplying spiritual wants of men than in providing for physical needs, although the latter should not be neglected.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SUCH SACRIFICES

Perhaps before your consecration you were ambitious in the exercise of legitimate business talent. But your consecration demanded time and thought for the careful study of God's Word, that you might acquaint yourself with Him and with His will concerning you, and that you might communicate this knowledge to others. To obtain the necessary leisure to accomplish this work, you had to curb your business ambition. Both your time and your talent were yours no longer; for you had consecrated them to the Lord. Hence, although business was still needful, it became secondary; and your Father's business was first. Therefore your former ambitions were restricted to necessity and to the promotion of the Heavenly Father's business.

Perhaps you had taken great pleasure in making home elegant, in dressing yourself and your family in elegance; and you had said that this was right because you had earned your money righteously, and you felt sure that God loves beautiful things and that His Heavenly Home and family are elegant. But now with time and money fully consecrated, you realize something of the pleasure of sacrificing with Christ by denying yourself such luxuries, and by restricting your outlay of the Lord's time and money to the providing of things needful and decent in the sight of all men.

SM653

It may be that you were fond of company, and passed many a pleasant hour in music, social chat, harmless dancing and innocent amusements and games. Now, while not condemning these innocent recreations in the world, your Covenant of Sacrifice with Christ demands that your time, money and influence formerly thus used shall, except so much as may come within the range of

necessities or emergencies, be faithfully accounted for to God; that your rights and privileges in these things shall be sacrificed; and that the time, money and influence be used in the service of God.

Possibly you once were interested in politics, in the temperance question, in the prevention of cruelty to animals, in the subject of international peace, in the prison reform movement, in a labor union, etc., etc. Many an hour, many a dollar, and the full weight of your influence you give to these worthy objects, which you still believe to have been well spent in an endeavor to do good. But now you find that your consecration vow compels you to pursue a different course, and that these plans which were your own will and way for doing good must be sacrificed to God's plans; and you must follow your Leader.

Furthermore, as you mark carefully our Lord's course, you will perceive that although He was in sympathy with every moral reform, yet He used His time and influence wholly in preaching the Gospel--the Glad Tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. And as you came more fully to appreciate the Lord's ways, you realized that these moral reforms, which would be carried forward by the kind and benevolent of the world just as well without you, could never reach perfection until Messiah's Kingdom shall obtain control. Then you realized, as you had not done at first, the necessity of the work in which you should be engaged--that the preaching of the "Good Tidings of good" things to come was God's method of developing you, as well as other consecrated followers of our Lord, for a share in that great

and successful Moral Reform which shall obtain throughout the world when the King of Glory and His Bride are enthroned in power.

OPPOSITION FROM FORMER FRIENDS

Formerly you not only delighted to do generously, giving to everything and speaking favorably of all, but you also appreciated highly the good will and favor of all toward you. This showed a good spirit and a broad heart which none could help admiring; and such admiration

is always sweet. We may be sure that the perfect man Jesus would have enjoyed doing these very things. But under His Covenant of Sacrifice He must and did deny Himself this enjoyment. He must and did rebuke sin, error and hypocrisy; and thus He forfeited (sacrificed) the good opinion and the admiration of the nominal church of His day. Instead of quietly letting the Scribes and the Pharisees alone, He must and did sacrifice His inclination for peace in order to advance the Truth, honor God and bless the people.

So have you found it, also. You could no longer give to everything; for by your Covenant of Sacrifice with Christ you had already given to God ALL THAT YOU HAD. Now you are merely God's agent or steward; and you can give nothing without consulting His directions and ascertaining whether it will go to advance truth or error. You no longer have option or choice; and of course some who once thought you whole-hearted and generous will now consider you narrow-minded, bigoted.

This will be true also in regard to doctrinal matters. Once you carelessly and ignorantly--though benevolently --supposed that all denominations of Christians believed alike, and merely took so many different routes to Heaven, appointed by God, in order that each person might have a choice of form of worship. Then your friends called you a broad-minded Christian. But after your consecration had led you to a study of God's Plan as recorded in His Word, you perceived your mistake.

SM655

You saw that you never had been a Christian in the full sense before, and that many of the doctrines taught by all the denominations are contrary to God's purposes as revealed in His Word. Thus you began to be what the world calls "narrow-minded", and were obliged to oppose certain systems as well as doctrines. Finally, with a further search of your Heavenly Father's plans and purposes, you found that the various systems calling themselves churches and laying down rules and doctrines for faith and practise are ALL OF THEM mere human arrangements, and that their doctrines are self-arranged and self-binding, a mixture of truth and falsehood blinding and confusing to both saint and sinner.

When you found that the Church mentioned by our

Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles is not one of the man-made systems, nor yet all of them together, but that it is composed of the class who, having consecrated their all to God, were accepted through the Redeemer and had their names written in Heaven, then an additional trial came upon you. Would you or would you not *sacrifice* your honor, your social standing, "your good name" and your "broad-minded" reputation for THE TRUTH?

That was one of the severest of your SUFFERINGS; yet with the Master you said, "Father, glorify Thy name." And as you saw the counterpart of this in our Redeemer's sacrifice, you heard Him say, "It is sufficient that the disciple be as his Lord. It has occurred to you as I forewarned you: When they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely (and often ignorantly) for My sake, rejoice and be exceedingly glad; for great is your reward in Heaven." In your rejoicing you no longer think strange of the fiery trials that encompass you. Hereafter let us more and more rejoice in such sufferings --rejoicing that we are counted WORTHY to suffer for Christ's sake now; for whoever thus suffers faithfully unto death shall also be counted worthy to reign with Him in the life to come.

SM656

DIVINE ECONOMY IN THE RANSOM

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time."--**1 Tim. 2:5,6**.

The Ransom is the very center of all the New Testament teachings, the general touchstone by which we may determine what is Truth and what is not Truth in respect to every feature of the Divine Plan. The Ransom may be likened to the hub of a wheel, from which various spokes radiate in every direction to a general periphery, or circumference. In the great Plan of God for human salvation the Ransom constitutes the very central feature, and from it radiate all the doctrines which end in the fullness and completeness of that Divine Plan. Indeed, from whatever viewpoint we look at this subject, it is both beautiful and consistent.

Yet there was a time with you and with me, and doubtless with all the thinking public, when it seemed strange that there could be any necessity for a Ransom; for we had not then come to understand our great Heavenly Father's Character and Plan. At that time we would have been inclined to say, "Oh no! God would never in any sense of the word have a Plan or Program which would necessitate the shedding of blood! He would not wish to have any one die for the wrong doings of another! Such a proposition would be unjust." But in so expressing ourselves we would be reasoning falsely; and this is just what many earnest people are doing today. Many thoughtful people are saying, "I do not believe in this idea of a necessity for a human sacrifice." Nevertheless this thought of a Ransom is found throughout the Scriptures; and when we get the right conception of the subject from the Bible viewpoint, we see such a wonderful

SM657

beauty, such a wonderful consistency, in this whole matter that we are amazed, and long for the time when all the world shall see it.

Different phases of God's Plan strike different individuals amongst His children in slightly different ways.

Some are more attracted by one particular, and others by another. With me it has always seemed very wonderful to note the element of economy exhibited by our Heavenly Father, who apparently never wastes anything. So, also, with our Lord Jesus. After He had, by Divine Power, fed thousands from a few loaves and fishes, He instructed His disciples to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost. (**John 6:12**.) Surely this injunction must have seemed strange to them. Why should the Master, who had power to create on so large a scale, be so careful about the fragments? Doubtless, too, every scientist has marveled at the Divine economy in nature, where all things are balanced, and merely change their form as they pass from one condition to another--whether from solid to liquid or from liquid to gas, etc. Apparently God has a principle of perpetual motion in nature, by which nothing is lost, but reappears in another form.

ECONOMY SHOWN IN RESPECT TO REDEMPTION

This Divine quality of economy is manifested even in the great Plan for human salvation. When first my mind grasped this thought, I exclaimed, "Wonderful! Nobody but our Heavenly Father Himself would have thought about this principle!" Having been reared by Presbyterian parents, I had been indoctrinated in the Shorter Catechism during childhood; and as my parents had never strayed away from the Bible into Evolution and Higher Criticism, I had all the advantages which accrue from the Westminster teachings about the fall of man and original sin. Although we had wrong conceptions as to what constitutes the penalty of sin, nevertheless we had the facts--that our first parents were created perfect and placed in a perfect environment in Eden, that

they had sinned and had come under God's curse, and that somehow the result was that all our race was still under that curse, which we thought was eternal torment. We did not understand the Bible as thoroughly as now.

Later in life, when my mind began to see that the penalty of sin is death--not life in any condition--I began to inquire how it was that, if there is to be a redemption,

one person could die for an entire race; for the proposition did not seem reasonable. In reply my teachers told me that in the three and a half years of His ministry, and especially during the short time of His crucifixion, our Lord Jesus suffered as much as all the human family would have suffered. But the longer I ponder over this statement, the more unreasonable it appeared to me. Finally, I came to understand the meaning of the word Ransom; and then this subject ceased to be a mystery.

A PRICE THAT CORRESPONDS

A careful study of the word Ransom with the aid of an unabridged concordance brought to light the fact that the Greek word thus rendered--*antilutron*--means a price that corresponds. Any one can study the matter out for himself in Strong's or in Young's Concordance. Gradually we began to get the correct idea that our Lord Jesus Christ gave Himself a Ransom, a Corresponding-price, for all mankind. Then we began to understand the Apostle's words, "As by a man came death, by a man came also the resurrection from the dead." (**1 Cor. 15:21**.) There was one man who sinned--Adam, who brought the death penalty upon all his posterity. There was one Man who died, the Just for the unjust--Christ Jesus. Thus we have the corresponding-price.

But we had been taught that there are three persons in the Godhead, that our Lord Jesus was the second of these, and that God cannot die. Again we inquired of our teachers, and were told that being God our Lord could not really die--that His body alone died. So again we were confused. But further study of our Bible began to

clear our heads from all the nonsense and confusion which crept into the Church during the Dark Ages, and we saw that the doctrine of the Trinity is not found in the Scriptures at all. Then we saw that Our Lord was the Son of God, as He Himself had declared, "the Beginning of the creation of God." (**Rev. 3:14**; **Col. 1:15**.) Next we saw that the thought contained in the word Ransom did not call for a God to redeem a man, nor could a spirit being of any rank do so; for there could be no correspondency

between them. Finally the matter cleared up in our mind; and we perceived that whoever would redeem man must himself be a man--the full equivalent of the man who sinned. This thought helped us to understand all that the Bible said about our Lord's having left the Heavenly glory and becoming a man.--**Phil. 2:6-11**; **2 Cor. 8:9**; **John 1:14**.

DOCTRINE OF INCARNATION UNSCRIPTURAL

But we had greatly been troubled about the subject of incarnation, as even some of the Truth people seem to be; for they still misuse this word. There is nothing in the Bible on this subject, and there is no truth in this doctrine. Incarnation means an assuming of a human body. It would mean that our Lord in His prehuman existence assumed flesh--materialized, just as He and two angels did back in the days of Abraham. (**Gen. 18:1,2**.) The three were incarnated. They were still spirit beings, but appeared to Abraham as men, and ate and talked with him. But this was not true with our Lord Jesus at His First Advent. He who was rich became poor for man's sake--not that He merely pretended to be poor; not that He acted as if He were poor and so assumed an inferior body for awhile. On the contrary He "was made flesh"--not assumed flesh. Do you perceive the difference? He was "the Man Christ Jesus," not "appeared to be the Man Christ Jesus." He left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was; He laid it aside; He divested Himself of that glorious condition on the spirit

SM660

plane, and exchanged His life on the spirit plane for a human nature, in order to be a corresponding-price for the man who sinned--Adam.

The Bible explains that it was a perfect man that sinned. Therefore whoever would ransom him must also be a perfect man--a corresponding-price. No matter how great the angel, no matter how glorious the Logos, no one on a higher plane of being would do. Nor would anything below the human plane do. The finest bullock in all the world could not be a real sin-offering or actually take away sin. Nothing higher or lower than perfect humanity

would atone for the sinner. A perfect man had sinned. Only a perfect man could redeem the sinner.--**Psa. 40:6-8**; **Heb. 10:1-10**.

Then came the thought: How could this one Man Christ Jesus by this one death redeem all mankind--Adam and his thousands of millions of children? When my mind perceived the Scriptural teaching on this subject, I received a wonderfully broad thought of God's Wisdom, by which He planned it all in advance, so that only one death was necessary. Then I saw the marvelous economy of the Divine Plan for human salvation. Nobody but God could have thought of such beauty and symmetry. Only one man was tried at the bar of Divine Justice, and condemned to death. By the laws of heredity his condemnation came upon all his posterity, all of whom die because of his original sin. If God had tried and condemned two men or ten men or a hundred men or more, their redemption would have required an individual redeemer for each one.

THE ECONOMY OF THE DIVINE PLAN

Often when a child I wondered why God did not give all mankind the same opportunity that He gave Adam, why all were not permitted to come into Eden and have a fair chance as Adam had. But in later years when I came to see the beauty of the doctrine of the Ransom, the reason seemed very simple. If you and I had been brought

into the world under conditions similar to those under which Adam was, we would have done just as he did, for the same reason that he did--lack of experience. We are therefore not faulting Father Adam and Mother Eve; but we are extolling our great and wise God. He was not taking any chances to see whether one out of a hundred thousand might do differently, and planning to provide a redeemer for every one who did wrong. What confusion such a plan would have wrought!

For instance, suppose that God had placed fifty perfect human beings on trial in Eden at the beginning, and that one half of them had sinned--twenty-five sinners and an equal number of saints; and suppose that there

had been provided a Paradise for the saints and the cursed condition for the sinners. Condemnation on one side of the fence, and blessing on the other--what confusion there would be! Then when it came to the redemption of the sinners, it would require that the twenty-five saints die for the twenty-five sinners. Where would the matter have ended then? "Thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot," is the Law of Justice. (**Deut. 19:21**; **Exod. 21:23-25**.) And God operates His Government along the line of Justice, as the Psalmist intimates.

Should some one wonder why God operates along the line of Justice rather than Love, we reply: In His great mercy God sees best to exercise absolute Justice in order that Love may operate impartially toward all. But because mankind are fallen from their original perfection God instructs us to work along the line of love; for we need to exercise mercy and to learn the great lesson of loving-kindness toward all. Let us not forget that God did not create the imperfect conditions which we see all around us. Imperfection is the result of disobedience. When during the Millennium God shall have brought the human race back into harmony with Himself, and when every creature in Heaven and on earth shall be in full

harmony with Him, all their lessons on right and wrong learned perfectly, and all able and willing to do righteously, then no one will need mercy. All will be able to meet the just requirements of God's Government, and they will not be harmed by His Divine arrangements; for God's Justice is for fair dealings toward every one of His creatures. But now we must make an allowance because we are sinners ourselves and all around us are likewise sinners.--**Psa. 89:14**.

God does not now deal with the fallen race of Adam. If we desire to draw near to Him we must lay hold upon the One who is able to save to the uttermost all who come to the Father through Him--Christ Jesus our Redeemer. All God's mercy is exercised through Christ. God does not exercise mercy directly. He maintains the even tenor of His rule of righteousness, but makes special provision for the sinner race through Christ Jesus. Forgiveness of sin, and everything relating to repentance and reformation

of life, come through our Lord Jesus Christ--
through the Ransom-price which He has provided.

HOW THIS ECONOMY OPERATES

This economical feature of the Divine Plan is a most wonderful thought. By one man's disobedience God permitted the results of that transgression to affect all of Adam's children. All mankind were involved under the original sin of the one man. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." (**Rom. 5:12**.) Then in due time God so arranged that the sin of the one man, Adam, would be met by the Man Christ Jesus; that thus Adam would in due time be freed from the death penalty; and that all his children, who inherited death as well as weakness and imperfection through him, would also be amenable to this one redemption--that the one Ransom-price was sufficient for Adam and all his posterity.

To me this is the most wonderful thought in the whole Plan of God. I have gloried in this thought of God's great

SM663

Wisdom manifested in His arrangement through Christ Jesus, through the Ransom. The more we meditate upon it, the more wonderful it becomes; for it is the very central feature of God's great Plan for human salvation, its very brightest spot. Do you not agree with me that it is a wonderful thing?

RANSOM FAR-REACHING AS THE CURSE

Our text declares that our Lord gave Himself a Ransom-price for all. He did so for all in the sense that eventually its benefits will extend to every member of the Adamic race. The mere giving up of His life did not extend a blessing to all mankind; but the giving up of His life was the basis upon which God will permit Him in due time to establish His Millennial Kingdom and to bring in the blessings of Restitution for the whole race during the thousand years of His Reign. If it had not been for the Ransom, there could have been no Restitution. The

whole race of Adam had been condemned to death in their first father. Therefore it would not have been proper for the Man Jesus to attempt to bring out from under condemnation those whom the Justice of God had sentenced to death.

Adam and his posterity were sentenced to death, not to eternal torment, as some erroneously suppose the Scriptures to teach. (**Gen. 2:17**; **3:17-19**; **Ezek. 18:4,20**; **Rom. 6:23**.) Before there could be a resurrection, it was necessary that this death penalty against the race be met. As by man came death, by a man must come this cancelling of the death penalty, in order to make possible a resurrection, a raising up of the dead. There is no other way by which any may have a future life. Therefore all this great Divine Plan for the blessing of the world hinges upon this first step of the program--the Ransom.

St. Paul says that the Ransom was for all. When the Apostle says that our Lord gave Himself a Ransom--a Corresponding-price--for ALL, his thought evidently is that this was the purpose lying behind the sacrifice of

Christ Jesus. By this we do not understand that our Lord has yet made an application of His sacrifice to all; for God's due time for blessing all men has not yet come. Moreover, it would not have been appropriate for our Lord to make the application of the merit of His sacrifice in advance--at the First Advent--and then to come back later on--at His Second Advent--to deal with mankind. Therefore the whole matter is held over until the due time comes for dealing with the Adamic race. Meantime Adam, who fell asleep thousands of years ago, and others of his posterity can await in sleep for that glorious Day when He who redeemed them shall place the merit of His sacrifice on behalf of Adam and all his race, shall make application of it, paying it over to Divine Justice, and then take over mankind as His purchased possession. Our Lord gave Himself--gave up His life, surrendered His life--with this end in view. This was the program set before Him--that He was to surrender Himself to death, and that this would be the basis upon which He might become the great Mediator between God and men, the great Restorer of mankind, the long-promised Seed of Abraham, to bless all the families of the earth.

WHY THE DELAY OF EIGHTEEN CENTURIES

Just here some one may ask, "Why is it that our Lord did not make application of the merit of His sacrifice at Pentecost? Why this long delay of eighteen hundred and more years before He begins this work of blessing the world?" We reply, If it had not been that God had planned to have associated with our Lord in this glorious work of blessing a Church, an Anointed Body of footstep followers of Jesus, there would have been no delay of eighteen centuries. In other words, if the Church had not been included in God's Plan, then when our Lord Jesus had risen from the dead and had ascended on High to appear in the presence of God, doubtless He would have offered the value of His sacrifice for the whole world of mankind, and at once would have taken over the Adamic

race and begun His Reign for their blessing. But because this was not the Divine Plan, therefore our Lord did what He did--He appeared in the presence of God for US, for the CHURCH, and not for the world at all.--**Heb. 9:24**.

Thus far, then, our Lord has appeared only for His Church. He has not as yet appeared for the world. After the Church shall have been glorified with Him and exalted to the Divine plane of glory, then our Lord will appear for the world. Meantime, however, He is dealing with His Church, taking the Church class out of the world, as He said: "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." (**John 15:19**; **17:14**.) The Church, consecrated believers, have escaped the condemnation which is still on the world. (**2 Peter 1:4**; **Rom. 8:1-4**.) But the world is still under condemnation. As yet our Lord has appeared only for the believer; He has not done anything for the unbeliever. His death, which will be the Ransom-price for all mankind after it has been turned over on their behalf, has not yet been applied for them; but it will be applied "in due time."

You remember that in His prayer the night of His apprehension our Lord said: "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine." (**John 17:9-11**.) Yet a few hours later He died

for the world, and all mankind are included in what our Lord is to do--"a Ransom for all, to be testified IN DUE TIME." But since He knew that it would be more than eighteen hundred years before that due time would come, He could not with propriety pray for something so far in the future. But the Father had given to Our Lord the Church. The Divine purpose was that during this long period of time this class would be gathered out of the world under certain conditions, in order that they might be with the Lord and share His exaltation, might be His companions in His glory, honor and immortality--the Divine nature. Therefore our Lord prayed for them on the night in which He was betrayed, as was right and

proper. He had called His twelve Apostles, and five hundred had believed on His word. The work thus begun would continue until the full number of the Elect would have been called, chosen and accepted in Him.

THE NEXT FEATURE OF THE DIVINE PROGRAM

The Bible assures us that in due time our Lord will pray for the world, and that He will be heard. "Ask of Me; and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." (**Psa. 2:7-9**.) When the first feature of the work, the selection of the Church, shall have been completed, when the Church shall have passed into Heavenly glory, then will come the "due time" for the next feature of the Divine Program. Then our Lord will make application of the Ransom-price on behalf of the sins of the whole world. He will say in substance, "Father, I now appropriate for the world of mankind this value of My death as the offset to Father Adam's death. I now apply it to Adam and all his children, as their Purchase-price; And now I ask for them. I ask Thee to give them to Me according to Thy promise to give Me the heathen--the world of mankind." Then the Father will turn them over to our Lord as His purchased possession.

The fact that He who redeemed the race of Adam is to be the One to give them their trial for life everlasting, during the thousand years of His Reign, is the very best

guarantee that mankind will have a fair, full, complete trial, a just, reasonable, loving trial at the hands of a loving Redeemer, who will do everything proper to be done in order to help them out of their weaknesses and imperfections and to bring them back to the full perfection of human nature, lost through Father Adam's original sin in Eden, but redeemed by our Lord at Calvary.

That is to say, the Redemption-price was laid down at Calvary; and in due time that Redemption-price will be applied, or given over, surrendered to Justice in exchange for the world of mankind. Thus the Ransom work

will have been accomplished, the whole world taken possession of by our Lord, and He shall reign for a thousand years, the "Times of Restitution spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began."--**Acts 3:19-23**.

DIVINE METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE CHURCH

Now, my dear brethren, we have before our minds the Ransom, the necessity for it, the time when the Sacrifice for sin was made, and the time when the merit of that sacrifice is to be applied for the world of mankind. But, meantime, the Church receives an imputation of that merit. We do not have that merit applied to us, however; we do not get the real thing; for that would be Restitution, which is not for the Church at all, not according to our Covenant of Sacrifice. We have covenanted to give up earthly things. The Church will not get Restitution, therefore; and that is what our Redeemer purchased with His death. He did not purchase the Divine nature, but purchased Father Adam and all of his posterity according to the flesh--human nature. The giving of our Lord's human life forms the Purchase-price for Adam and his race--the world.--**John 6:51**.

The Church has given up the human nature in sacrifice, and has been begotten to the spirit nature. Therefore we shall never reach human perfection. But while developing as New Creatures in Christ, we need an imputation of the merit of His Sacrifice to cover our blemishes and imperfections resulting from the original sin and transmitted to us by the law of heredity. Our Lord

did not need any such imputation; for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," and the Father had agreed to accept such a sacrifice for Adam. Our Lord needed no one to make good for Him. He was acceptable to God as a full offset to Adam. As a reward for the work which our Lord was to accomplish for mankind the Father gave Him the promise of glory, honor

and immortality--the Divine nature; and our Lord has attained it.--**Phil. 2:8-11**.

To those who, during this Gospel Age, will surrender their wills to God and permit their lives to go down into Death in obedience to the Divine will, the Father has promised a share with Our Lord in His glory, honor and immortality as His Bride and Joint-heir. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life." (**Rev. 2:10**.) But before we can present our bodies a living sacrifice a difficulty must first be removed; for we are members of the sinner race, and God cannot recognize sinners. We have already been condemned to death in Adam. We are by nature members of that sinner race upon whom the sentence of death already rests. Before we can offer ourselves to God something must be done to release us from the death sentence resting upon us. That something was done when our Lord had "ascended on High and appeared in the presence of God for us"--the Church. There He made an arrangement with the Father by which the merit of His sacrifice has been imputed to those who have followed in His steps, laying down their lives in sacrifice.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IMPUTATION AND APPLICATION

The best illustration I can think of to bring out the difference between imputation and application is that of a note as contrasted with money. Suppose that I had need for a thousand dollars to carry my business through today, but did not have that sum in ready money. But suppose a friend who had the thousand dollars would send word to me, "I will endorse your note for the sum that you need." That endorsement of a note would be equivalent to giving me the money; for the bank would

accept the note as instead of one thousand dollars.

So our Lord does not give us restitution when we present ourselves to Him in sacrifice. Instead, He imputes. That is to say, we give a promissory note--we promise God that we will sacrifice our life and all that we

have now, and all our hopes of the future restitution to perfect humanity; in other words, we give up all our rights as human beings in order to follow in the footsteps of our Redeemer. We figuratively make our note to this effect; and our Lord Jesus endorses it, gives to it a value which it otherwise would not have. This is the imputation of our Lord's merit as it comes to the Church.

This imputation does not excuse us from anything, however; for when we offered ourselves in consecration we agreed to give up everything that we possess. All our claims to restitution are forever gone. If we should fail in what we have undertaken as New Creatures, we cannot receive restitution with the world; for we have relinquished all our rights as human beings. If we become careless in sacrificing our life, it would then be our Lord Jesus' duty, as our Advocate, to see that we are obliged to do what we had agreed to do. This is the secret which has led to the formation of the Great Company class. They do not go forward to lay down their lives voluntarily; and therefore they are pushed, so to speak, by Divine providence into a place where they must suffer. When brought into this position by the great Endorser, the Advocate of the Church (**1 John 2:1**), the really loyal ones will suffer death rather than deny God and His arrangement. But the disloyal ones will draw back from carrying out their Covenant of Sacrifice, and thus do despite to the favor of God. Eventually all such will die the Second Death.

The imputation of the merit of our Redeemer's sacrifice to the Church in advance of its application for the world enables us to lay down our earthly life in order to win the great prize of glory, honor and immortality--the Divine nature. This is the most wonderful opportunity that could come to any member of the fallen race--that our Lord could impute to us that which would enable us to become sacrificers and to attain to joint-heirship with Him in His Millennial Kingdom.

SM670

PSEUDO-APOSTLES OF THE PRESENT DAY

"And thou hast tried them that say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."--**Rev. 2:2**.

For centuries past there has been a class of men in the world who have been claiming to be Apostles, but who are not Apostles, according to our text. The Bible shows us unmistakably that God never purposed more than twelve Apostles of the Lamb. Let us refresh our memories on this point: Our Lord Jesus said to the Twelve, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit in the Throne of His glory, shall also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (**Matt. 19:28**.) There were to be only twelve Apostolic thrones, no more. Again, in **Revelation 12:1**, the Church is shown as a woman clothed with the sun (the Gospel), having the moon (the Jewish Law) under her feet, and having on her head a crown of TWELVE STARS (her Divinely appointed, inspired teachers). We see that there were only twelve of these stars authorized by God, St. Paul taking the place of Judas.

We remind you of another picture of this matter, given by our Lord Jesus to John the Revelator. In **Revelation 21:1-5,9-27**, the glorified Church is pictured as coming down from Heaven to begin her great work of blessing the world. Now note particularly that this glorified Church is shown as having twelve foundations, and in them the names of the TWELVE APOSTLES of the Lamb.

So we see, dear friends, that it is through some very serious blunder that our Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Church of England friends have Bishops claiming to be Apostles. Such claims are unscriptural.

SM671

GOD'S WORD MUST BE SPOKEN FAITHFULLY

Jesus says that those who make claims of being Apostles when they are not, are lying. We are not to follow what the customs of the past centuries have taught us, but what the Lord Jesus Himself says. He is the authority. We have a measure of sympathy for these gentlemen who have dropped into certain positions and have been taught for centuries that they were Apostles, like the original Twelve appointed by our Lord, having the same inspiration and speaking with the same authority. We have sympathy for them in that they are sadly deluded, but we should remember what Jesus said and take the right viewpoint. "Thou hast tried them which say they are Apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." We are not speaking uncharitably, dear friends; for we are to speak the Lord's Word. "He that hath a dream [an imagination], let him tell a dream; but he that hath MY WORD, let him speak My Word FAITHFULLY." (**Jer. 23:28**.) If we hold back for fear of man, we shall share in the sin of adding to the Scriptures.

The great claims once made have been discarded, or at least this class do not attempt to speak with the authority of former days; for mankind are becoming more enlightened and their claims would appear absurd. Yet they still claim that they are the only ones who have the right to authorize any to preach, that if they do not ordain a man, he has no right to speak in the name of the Lord at all. They claim this right because they are "Apostolic Bishops." They are, however, not pressing even this claim with the former vigor. Other church leaders inquire: "Why do you stand aloof from us?" and they do not quite like to tell fully their reasons. They hesitate to say, "We are the Church; we are the Apostles; and you have no right to preach unless we ordain you." Hence they are in a somewhat vacillating condition today.

About four years ago the Bishops of the Episcopal

SM672

Church held a meeting in Detroit, and there passed resolutions that they would be willing to fraternize with other

denominations provided these others were orthodox, which meant, provided they were in harmony with the teachings of the Church of England Bishops. Anybody else would be unorthodox, would have no right to preach.

HOW PEOPLE BECAME DEPENDENT ON CLERGY

These claims of Apostolic Succession in the past got the Church into trouble and confusion from which we have not yet recovered. The great mass of Christian people are still bewildered. Beginning some time before the year 325 A.D., this doctrine of Apostolic Succession had been growing. The bishops were beginning to "lord it over God's heritage." This lording came in very gradually, as such things generally do, and was associated later with the declaration that the people were the "laity," and that the Church was the "clergy." All had the general thought that the Bishops were Apostles and had their authority from the Lord.

We are to remember that until a few centuries ago copies of the Bible were so scarce that a Bible was really worth a fortune, because Bibles had to be printed out by pen, by scholars, of whom there were very few. They had to be printed upon fine vellum parchment, as printing-presses and paper were not then invented. Hence there were very few who had Bibles or who could read at that time. Under such conditions the people were dependent upon the Church Bishops. When these began to claim that they were Apostolic Bishops, they gave the people to understand that they alone had received authority from God to read and interpret the Scriptures.

Jesus said to the Twelve Apostles that whatsoever they should bind on earth should be bound in Heaven, and that whatsoever they should lose on earth should be so considered in Heaven. Their writings were especially supervised by the Lord and their doctrinal utterances inspired. (**2 Cor. 12:7**; **Gal. 1:11,12**.) St. Paul assures

us that "the Word of God is sufficient, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." (**2 Tim. 3:16,17**.) Hence we need no further doctrinal utterances, no more Apostles than the

original Twelve--the Apostle Paul by the Lord's choice taking Judas' place. Since the advent of printing and since the close of the 1,260 symbolic days--1,260 years--of Papal persecution, Bibles have been printed and scattered far and wide by Bible societies, and education has become general. Today Bibles are everywhere and very cheap, so that all can read.

ORIGIN OF THE NICENE CREED

Let us go back to the year 325 A.D. By that time the bishops in the Church were claiming Apostolic authority. They were the living Apostles, whose teachings were the voice of God. But those "Apostles" did not agree among themselves, as did the early Apostles, the real Apostles; for when we read the writings of the Apostles appointed by our Lord we find that they all agree. But in the year 325 A.D. a positive stand was taken as to belief. The Council of Nicea was called by Emperor Constantine. He was apparently a worldly-wise man, and thought be could make a good stroke of policy by joining in with the Christians, who were coming to the front all over the Empire.

The Emperor was not baptized until the day of his death. He merely professed Christianity for policy's sake. While we cannot judge his heart, still the policy idea was there surely, as evidenced all through the matter. In the year 325, he sent out a call throughout the Empire to the Bishops of the churches to come to the city of Nicea for a general convention, offering to pay all expenses. About 384 Bishops came together--far from the entire number. This conference was the first of what was called an Ecumenical Church Council, aside from one held at Jerusalem by the Apostles of Jesus themselves. This was claimed to be another meeting of

Apostles. The Emperor, noting that there was disagreement as to doctrine, and supposing that the Bishops were fully authorized, as they claimed, made the proposition to them that they agree among themselves as to what were the correct, orthodox doctrines, and that thereafter whatever was taught by any that was different from these

doctrines should be heterodox--heresy. He proposed to join the Church, with the understanding that they were to mutually support each other. Then the pagan peoples would flock into the Church by hordes. The Emperor would back up their doctrines and punish all heretics.

Thus the Nicene Creed, the first of the great creeds, was formulated--by these self-appointed Apostolic Bishops. So between the Bishops and the Emperor a heavy hand was laid upon the people, who were uneducated; the Church leaders had them largely at their mercy. That was the end of Bible study; there was no more use for the Bible. They were to follow the Nicene Creed. They had Apostles inspired by God right with them, who could teach them all they needed to know.

BIBLE RESTORED AFTER TWELVE HUNDRED YEARS

From that time on for twelve hundred years the Bible was an unknown Book to the masses. In the year 1526, Professor Tyndale, a scholarly Christian man, not satisfied with the teachings of the Church Bishops, translated the Greek New Testament into English, that the people might know what were the teachings of Jesus and His Apostles. He was compelled to go to Germany to get his translation printed (printing-presses then being in use), because of the adverse influence of the English Bishops. The Testaments were then imported to London. The people were anxious to get them. It was proposed that Bible classes be started and educated men employed to read to the people.

What did the Bishops then do? They heard about the movement, and they bought up the entire edition and burned the books in front of St. Paul's Cathedral. The

spot is marked to this day. And these were Protestant Bishops of the Church of England! They were worldly-wise men and knew what would be the effect if the people learned of the real teachings of the Bible. Their own power and influence would soon be gone. The people would soon be asking uncomfortable questions. Tyndale later suffered martyrdom.

For forty years the people complained, wondering

why the Bible had been taken from them. Finally the Bishops concluded that policy demanded that they let them have the Bible. So they got out a special edition, which they called "The Bishops' Bible." This they gave to the people, warning them of the danger of giving it any other interpretation than that given by the Bishops, assuring them that eternal torment awaited them otherwise. The Catholic Bishops were then practically forced to do likewise, and they issued the Douay Version for Catholics, giving their people the same warnings. Thus the influence of the Bible was largely nullified.

But the Bible could not be fully put down. Later, the entire Scriptures were translated into the various tongues of the people. After the beginning of the Nineteenth Century education began to be much more general, and Bible Societies sprang up. People began to read for themselves as never before. Since then superstition has been gradually breaking down, and people dare to think. Some are still fettered by superstition, but the number is lessening. These creeds are so absurd that no intelligent minister, we believe, would think of defending the creed of his own denomination.

BIBLE FORETOLD THE GREAT FALLING AWAY

It is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that all of their own people are to go to Purgatory at death. No Catholic expects to go to Heaven. They must first have certain experiences in Purgatorial tortures to fit them for Heaven. To be a heretic, from the Catholic standpoint, is to commit the worst of crimes. Heretics

are bound, not for Purgatory, but for eternal torment. So a devout Catholic has great fears of being a heretic. Thus we find but comparatively few Catholics even today who dare to read the Bible.

How much trouble all this nonsense has caused! The Bible foretold it all. The Apostle Paul declared that "many would depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (**1 Tim. 4:1-3**; **Acts 20:29,30**.) It is upon these seducing spirits that we lay the blame--Satan and his fallen angels. We are not

claiming that our Catholic and Episcopalian friends have intended to perpetrate a fraud, nor any of the others. But with the Apostle Paul we claim that they were deceived by the great Adversary. We are beginning to see that a God of Love would never have such a Plan for His creatures as is taught by the creeds. We are living in a day when more light than ever before is due upon God's Word. We are living at the dawning of the glorious New Dispensation. We are nearing the time when, according to the Bible, "all the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears unstopped." Thank God!

ARMAGEDDON NEAR--GOD'S KINGDOM TO FOLLOW

The present great war in Europe is the beginning of the Armageddon of the Scriptures. (**Rev. 16:16-20**.) It will eventuate in the complete overthrow of all the systems of error which have so long oppressed the people of God and deluded the world. All iniquity of every kind will go down. The glorious Kingdom of Messiah is about to be set up in the earth, for the deliverance of the world and the establishment of permanent righteousness. We believe the present war cannot last much longer until revolution shall break out. The nations are rapidly impoverishing themselves.

Great Britain has already expended thirteen billions of dollars in the war, and her minister of finance says that another year of war will require nine billions more. That will make twenty-two billions. At five per cent interest,

this would mean that one billion, two hundred millions would have to be raised each year by the British people just to keep the interest paid, to say nothing of the principal. Do you think they can afford to pay such an amount? Not at all! We believe that all those bonds will be repudiated. The same is true of France and Russia. Germany is impoverishing herself. All these governments are madly attempting to embargo future generations. All are saying, "We *must* conquer!" Well, we shall see how it will all end! We stake our opinion on the Bible. All these nations will soon pass away. There will not be a kingdom left in all Europe.

Then Anarchy will follow.

None of these nations is Christian, as their course unmistakably shows. Every one has violated international law. They are willing to barter away millions of lives of their people for the paltry gain of a little more territory and commercial benefit. Selfishness is rampant. If violation of law is anarchy, then we already have anarchy amongst the nations. They are all under the domination of "the prince of this world"--Satan. The Bible declares what is soon to come--"every man's hand against his neighbor."

How thankful we are that while this awful trouble must come, because of man's sin and selfishness, yet the Word of God points out that upon the ruins of the present order shall come the Kingdom of God's dear Son! Man's extremity will be God's opportunity. The voice of Messiah shall be heard. He will command, "Peace, be still!" and the raging billows of human passion will be calmed, and all tumult will cease. He will bring order out of chaos. When men have reached the point of despair, deliverance will come; for then they will begin to cry to the Lord. And He will be entreated of them and will help them. God's Kingdom will assume full control of the affairs of the world, and will prove to be "the desire of all nations."

SM678

TWOFOLD OBJECT OF GOSPEL PREACHING

"This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."--**Matt. 24:14**.

In the words of our text our Lord Jesus Christ makes a statement as to the purpose of the Gospel Message of the present Age. That purpose is quite different from what Christian people in general have thought it to be. Many have supposed that the object to be attained during this Age has been the conversion of the world. But not so, according to the Scriptures. The end mentioned in our text is not the end of the world, but the end of the preaching of the Gospel. After the preaching of the Gospel has accomplished its work, this kind of preaching will no longer be necessary. The work of this Gospel Age, as laid out by the Master, is not the conversion of the world, but the preaching of the Gospel as a witness to all the nations.

There is a distinction between the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Kingdom itself. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the Message concerning the Kingdom, the Glad Tidings of the Kingdom. When this Message shall have accomplished its work of gathering out a special class from amongst the people to constitute the Bride of Christ, then the Kingdom itself will be inaugurated and will begin its work, which will be for the salvation of the world at large. So we make the distinction between the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Kingdom. The Gospel is the announcement beforehand that the Kingdom is coming. When the Kingdom comes, of course the preaching that it is coming will be at an end; for the entire object of this preaching is to prepare for this coming Kingdom of God "under the whole heavens."

SM679

WHY BUT FEW HAVE HEARING EARS

The Scriptures inform us that since our Lord's ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on High, He has been waiting until the time shall come for the Heavenly Father to make His enemies His footstool. (**Heb. 10:12,13**; **Psa. 110:1**.) In other words, He is waiting until His glorious Kingdom shall be inaugurated for the blessing of all the families of the earth. Meantime, those who hope to reign with Him have an important work to do in themselves, co-operating with their Lord in the preparation of themselves for their great future exaltation. Additionally, they are to proclaim the Gospel Message, preaching it to every one who has an ear to hear, in order that the full number of the Bride class may be gathered in and fitted for their positions in the Kingdom.

But not many will hear this Message of the Kingdom. The great majority of people are filled with their own ideas. Some are engrossed in money making, in pleasure seeking, in art, in music, etc. As a result, comparatively few have an ear for the Truth of God, the Message of the Kingdom. But upon the few who have the hearing ear, this glorious Message has a marvelous effect; for it transforms their entire lives.

In calling out this class God uses no force, no coercion. It is strictly a voluntary matter. The Gospel Message is only for those who appreciate it; and they will receive a great blessing. As the Master said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (**Matt. 13:16,17**.) When our Lord was preaching in Palestine, comparatively few had an ear to hear. The majority were too full of their own ideas and projects. And thus it has been all down the Gospel Age.

However, God is not blaming those who have no ears to hear the Message of the Gospel; and neither should we. We do not smite a blind man because he does not see. On the contrary, we sympathize with him. So we

SM680

should do with those who have no spiritual sight. There are very many who lack spiritual sight, many who cannot

exercise faith in what they cannot see; and according to the Scriptures they are not responsible for their failure. As the Apostle Paul says, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not." For this reason they cannot see. (**2 Cor 4:4**.) Later on, under the Messianic Kingdom, these blind eyes will be opened.--**Isa. 35:5-10**.

So then, we perceive that this Message of the Kingdom was never designed to reach those now blinded by the Adversary. And this class forms the great majority of mankind. God never purposed that the Kingdom Message should convert the world, but that the Kingdom itself should do this work when it is established in the earth. The Message is designed for only a "little flock." "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom," said the Master. (**Luke 12:32**.) Only the Royal Family will get the Kingdom. All others will be the subjects of the Kingdom.

THE PRICELESS PEARL NOW OFFERED

The earth is the one rebellious province in God's Universe. There are only a few members of Adam's race who are inclined to listen to the Word of God and to follow its instructions. By nature our minds are all more or less twisted through the Adamic fall, and not one is fit to be a member of God's Royal Family. But there are some who have a disposition of heart to do right, who hunger and thirst after God and righteousness. It is to such that the good Message of the Kingdom appeals. The Gospel attracts those who have an interest in the things of God, but passes by those who lack such interest.

God is seeking for those who, when they learn of His wonderful Plan for human salvation from sin and death, will become so thoroughly engrossed in it that they will practically forget everything else. Thenceforth His Plan will be the only thing of special value to them. Some

of us have found it even so in our own cases. All other things are but secondary--eating, drinking, the kind of clothing we wear, whether we are poor or rich, etc. We desire merely to be neat in person and to have sufficient

food to give us the strength required for what our Lord has given us to do.

With us the main object in life is the attainment of the great Heavenly treasure to which the Gospel called our attention. We are like the merchantman who was seeking goodly pearls, and who, when he had found one pearl of great price, sold all that he had and bought that pearl. (**Matt. 13:45,46**.) The Kingdom of Heaven, the Messianic Kingdom, with its glory and honor and with its privileges in connection with the world's uplift to human perfection, constitutes the great prize peculiar to this Gospel Age. Never before this Age was this prize possible of attainment; and the opportunity to attain it will end with this Age.

Everybody is seeking something in life. The vast majority have before their minds some object or aim, to the attainment of which they expend their energies. Some are seeking the pearl of large financial influence in their community. Others seek the pearl of great wealth, the finest house in town, etc. Still others bend every effort to become famous musicians or great singers. A young woman may have before her mind the pearl of a cosy home, with a kind husband and little children. So there are pearls of many kinds and sizes. Whoever has no worthy object in life, no high ideal before his mind, is indeed a pitiable creature.

But the Pearl of great price presented to us in the Scriptures far eclipses all other pearls in value. Whoever possesses this Pearl will be in harmony with God. The majority of mankind have no God, although everybody really needs Him; for we were created so. The highest organs in the human head show that worship of our Creator is a natural requirement of man's being.

SM682

But the race is so fallen from its original perfection, and our God has been so grossly misrepresented to us, that few realize their need. What we were told concerning Him was so terrible that we did not care to know anything more about Him. Contrary to our nature, we turned aside because of these misrepresentations of His character. Nevertheless, the first step is to come into harmony with God, to become His child, and to learn that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth

them that reverence Him."--**Psa. 103:13**.

HOW TO SECURE THIS GREAT PEARL

As we examine this Pearl more closely, we see a marvelous beauty that we had not noticed before. We see that God has made a wonderful offer to those who will renounce the world and consecrate themselves fully to Him, to follow in the footsteps of their Redeemer, faithful even unto death. For these the Heavenly Father has in reservation great glory, high honor and a change of nature from human to Divine. (**2 Peter 1:4**.) These constitute the Church of Christ, and the Church will be joint-heir with Christ Jesus in His Kingdom, through which God has purposed to bless the world.

Whoever gets the Pearl will have the privilege of being associated with our Lord Jesus in the work of helping the world up out of ignorance, superstition and sin. For a thousand years this wonderful privilege will be afforded to Christ and His Church--the privilege of raising to human perfection and everlasting life all of the poor, fallen race of Adam who will accept the offer. Who would not rejoice at the prospect of uplifting the world from sin and death conditions to perfection and life! What would not we give thus to bless and uplift all our relatives and friends who are not now interested in the Kingdom! How glad we are that all mankind will have the privilege of hearing and knowing about God!

But this is not all. After Christ and the Church shall have brought the poor world back to perfection,

righteousness and life, the Church will be forever associated with her Lord, to show forth the riches of Jehovah's grace throughout the ages of eternity. (**Eph. 2:4-7**.) Surely this is "a Pearl of great price."

Are we asked what we must give to secure this Pearl? In the parable, the merchantman sold all that he possessed to obtain that Pearl; and so must we. It makes no difference whether we have much or little, we must give our all. We must yield ourselves wholly and unreservedly to God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. In one sense the Pearl is very cheap--practically a gift; for the

most that any of us may possess is as nothing in comparison. Yet in the sense that in order to purchase it we must submit ourselves fully to the Lord, henceforth to have no will of our own in anything, to suffer reproach, scorn, persecution, loss of friends, tribulations--all necessary to our preparation for future service--the cost is considerable. But whoever has once gotten a glimpse of the Pearl will gladly pay the price.

CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING THE PEARL

Whoever accepts this wonderful offer which God has made must enter into a Covenant of Sacrifice with Jehovah. (**Psa. 50:5**.) Day by day he must thereafter carry out his Covenant. He must study the course followed by our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our great Exemplar; then he must walk in the Savior's steps. He must deny himself --put himself fully into the hands of our Lord--and enter the School of Christ, learning daily lessons of faith and obedience.

After we have consecrated ourselves fully to the Lord, all that we have is His; and we are only His stewards, who must render to Him an account for our use of time, influence, means, strength, and all. We have very little to render to the Lord at best. When the time necessary for eating, sleeping, earning a livelihood, etc., is deducted, we have not much left for active service for God. Therefore we are, so far as we are able, to redeem the time

from earthly affairs, spending as little as possible commensurate with duty and necessity in housework, business, etc. Some of the earthly treasures can be relinquished in the interest of the Heavenly treasures, that more time may be given to the study of God's Word, in helping the brethren along the good way, and in proclaiming the Message of grace to others.

The number who will obtain this Pearl is limited. During the entire Gospel Age only 144,000 are to be selected to form the glorified Church class. This number, we believe, is very nearly complete. Therefore if we wish to be winners of the prize we must be up and doing. The time is short; and we must be about our Father's

business. It is the Father's business that we cultivate the fruits of the Holy Spirit--putting away malice, hatred, strife, and putting on meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, love. This is the Father's business; and by so doing we are getting ready to carry on His business by and by. He wishes us to attend to our own education now, and to do all that we can to help others to get their education also. This is not the time to attend to the interests of the world.

This does not mean that we shall do nothing for the world, however; for we are to do good unto all as we have opportunity, especially to the Household of Faith. Seek first the Kingdom of God for yourself; and afterward look after the brethren and those needing your assistance. Be kind and considerate toward all. Watch for opportunities to give a pleasant word or a smile--to your grocer, your iceman, your milkman, your butcher, etc. Do kindly by them. They will see that you are different from others, and that you are not trying to pick a flaw in everything that they have. This does not mean that you are to be willing to be taken advantage of, but that you are showing a kindly spirit towards them. By so doing, you may pave the way for speaking the Gospel Message to them afterwards.

SM685

We cannot know how much good may result from these seemingly small things. Thus doing, we shall be showing forth the Lord's praise, which is to be our constant aim. All of this is preparing us for the Kingdom, laying up treasures to buy this great Pearl. To do so will take all that we have, however much or little. There is no other way to secure it.

With the majority, the sole object of life seems to be something to eat or to drink, a little pleasure, some attractive apparel, etc. Comparatively few know for what they are living or why they are in the world. To live in this way is to live like an animal. Rather than to have our mind in such a state we would prefer to be blotted out of existence. But how glorious it is to lift our thoughts and minds to things Above, to live for God and for the eternal future! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the glories which God has prepared for them that love

Him above all else.

GOSPEL WITNESSING ALMOST COMPLETED

The Gospel of the Kingdom has been preached in all the world as a witness unto all nations. The end of the present Dispensation is at hand. The shaking process, which is to remove everything not in full harmony with the incoming Messianic Kingdom, is progressing. The Bride of Christ will soon be complete beyond the veil. The time of the deliverance of the Church is at hand. The end may come very suddenly. We wish only our Father's time and way. Let us, then, be faithful unto death. Daily we are learning patience, cheerful endurance, submission to the will of the Lord. All this is shown in the faces of the Lord's dear people. Let us continue thus to let our light shine; and soon, we trust, we shall gain the Pearl of Great Price--in the Kingdom.

SM686

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE

"I saw a Great White Throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away; and there was found no place for them."--**Rev. 20:11**.

[November 8, 1914]

The shaking described in **Hebrews 12:27** is now in progress, and will continue until all things are removed which are out of harmony with the Divine standards. As a result of this shaking there will be "a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

Everything false, bogus, inequitable, will be shaken. In financial parlance this is equivalent to saying that the "water" will be squeezed out of all the stocks and bonds. By methods once sanctioned, but now everywhere reprehended, stocks and bonds have been issued for sums far beyond the actual value of the properties. These stocks and bonds have cost their present owners varying sums from nothing up to par; but their actual value is what the properties would cost, plus a reasonable percentage of allowance for right of way and business "good will." In ordinary times these had a market value built upon hope of their future prosperity. Now, however, the general public has become aware of the real situation and is fearful to touch at any price these shares and bonds of over-capitalized companies, and the most sound and solvent of them share the public distrust. Now, in the opening of the New Dispensation, when everything is being "shaken," we are to expect that all such stocks and bonds will be shaken in value until everything like dishonesty and inequity shall have been shaken out.

Forty years ago the world's great bankers and financiers concluded that it would be to their interest to demonetize silver and have only a gold standard. This

SM687

finally accomplished what they foresaw and intended: it curtailed the world's monetary supply and enabled the bankers the better to control the entire situation

throughout the world. By an elaborate banking system (valuable in some respects), it made each gold dollar chase itself and do the work of five dollars or ten dollars, assisted by bank checks and drafts. Thus the profits of the larger banks increased amazingly by reason of higher discount and interest charges, making them rich at the public expense.

The public, of course, acquiesced in the law demonetizing silver and making gold the single standard. But they did it under misapprehension, because they believed the bankers' tale--that this was really the best thing for the people, and not merely a measure in the interest of the banker and at the expense of the people. It is perhaps but fair to say that less than one-half of the bankers understood the philosophy of the matter; the others were guided by the wealthier and more astute, who did fully understand.

The result has been great profits to the bankers, and great power; for without them, railroad stocks and bonds could not be handled successfully. The bankers took over large issues of railroad stocks and bonds, by what is known as the underwriting process. They were capable sales agents for the bonds at a good round percentage of profit, advancing money on the bonds and holding them for sale to the public.

THE DAY OF RECKONING

Now we see fulfilled the Scripture declaration, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." (**Job 5:13**.) How so, do you ask? I reply that the great banks have their vaults well filled with these bonds and stocks on which they had hoped to make large profits; but which, on the contrary, they are now unable to sell at any price. These stocks and bonds reckoned in as part of the banks'

assets, show them to be wealthy, with immense surpluses; but now the "water" is to be taken out of these stocks and bonds. It will show an immense shrinkage in the resources of these banks. They will become suddenly poor without actually losing a cent, by reason of the market value of their securities falling.

This fact is realized by all banks. They realize that if the Day of Reckoning has come, and their holdings--their securities--are to be reckoned at their actual value, it will mean that instead of large resources and surpluses, some of the richest banks will become insolvent and be called upon by the government, either to close their doors or to make good their shortage. And right there will be their difficulty; for the rich men of the world have their capital invested similarly, and the reaction will be bound to unfavorably affect all the great commercial enterprises of the world. As all went well, amazingly well for the bankers and the wealthy by reason of the demonetization of silver, so when the Day of Reckoning shall have fully dawned, things will go especially hard with these same people. And, although the stoppage and the reconstruction will involve the whole world, poor and rich alike, nevertheless in many respects the rich will feel the pressure most.

The liquidating process had already begun before the present European war started. The Hartford and New Haven Railroad, the Chicago and Rock Island, and others, have been called to account. With these the "water squeezing" processes of the law have been threatening, and will undoubtedly accomplish their thorough "shaking." But meantime, the war, waiting not for the more gradual processes of the law and the ordinary business, has brought the financial world to a crisis. The nations of Europe are being shaken. The casualties of the war already amount to a million and a half of human beings, and hundreds of millions of dollars. And it is only begun. Financial values there are greatly impaired, as are

also national credits. The thing wanted is gold, and as in every war, this precious metal has practically disappeared in the nations at war. Their home securities will not be salable for cash, and a general attempt will be made to sell American securities--American stocks, bonds, etc. But who will buy these? America will be practically the only market for them, and as we have already seen, American banks and bankers are loaded down heavily.

When we learn the immense amount of these American shares and bonds held in European hands, we need

not wonder that American bankers pale at the thought of their being dumped upon the American market. Reliable financial authorities declare that Europe has about five thousand millions of dollars invested in American securities. If but one-fifth of these be sacrificed to realize gold, it will mean an avalanche--a financial deluge. American banks, already overloaded with these "securities," cannot purchase all; hence, prices will tumble and wrecks follow.

EFFECT OF SILVER DEMONETIZATION

In view of these matters, is it any wonder that American bankers fear to see the Stock Exchanges open for business? Had the Exchanges not closed promptly when they did, we would have had the most terrible panic ever known. By the closing of the Exchanges that awful panic was *temporarily averted.* By their closing, the owners of the stocks and bonds have been hindered from realizing upon them; thus the face value of these stocks and bonds has been preserved and thereby the banks and bankers have been permitted to continue to count these shares and bonds at fictitious prices which nobody would pay for them today.

Had silver not been demonetized, bankers would not have had as easy a time as they have enjoyed in cornering the financial market, and getting large rates of interest

and premiums; but neither would they be in the same distress at the present time, for the world would have had twice as much money with which to do its business. When we consider that the gold coin of the world is not sufficient for even the paying of the *interest* of the debts, we perceive how the banking institutions have had the people, figuratively, by the throat, and now are being choked themselves by their own device.

The interest upon the debts cannot be paid in gold because there is not enough of it to pay the interest. Hence the only thing remaining to be done is to issue more bonds, payable in gold also, and the interest payable in gold. Now that nobody will buy the bonds, what is to be done? Interest on foreign holdings of American

"securities," estimated at only four per cent per annum, means a drainage of two hundred millions of dollars every year in gold, needed to pay that interest. Now we seem to be coming to a dead stop through this war; and the wheels of finance which worked so favorably for the bankers in the past, are turning in the opposite direction and lacerating them financially.

Apparently our financial "house of cards" is trembling and about to fall. Various expediencies are being tried by the governments and the ablest financiers of the world. We might hope that their skill would accomplish the end they desire, and save the present institutions--financial--from being "shaken" to pieces. But, if we are right in our understanding of the Scriptures--if the great Day of Settlement has come, in which all the shakable things are to be shaken and nothing remain except that which cannot be shaken, then we may be sure that all human effort will fail, and the greatest of all crashes of a financial kind that have ever happened will take place.

It will be noticed that I am saying nothing new--that what I have just said has been said in part at least, by many, and published in the newspapers. I am merely bringing together these things, and showing their relationship

to the testimony of the Bible, that we are now in the great day of "shaking." To some this will be considered a fanatical pessimism, because the vast majority of people have absolutely no confidence in the Bible. Nevertheless, when these things shall come to pass in the very near future, some may be helped to an understanding of the true situation--to a recognition of the fact that the "shaking" upon the nations--financial, social, political and religious--is of the Lord, and not accidental.

Under normal conditions American business should be prospering as never before, because her commercial competitors are at war, and unable to properly attend to their commercial interests. Likewise, American securities should be in demand, because all securities of foreign countries have depreciated by the war. But with the gold standard and an insufficiency of gold, the business of the entire world is stagnated. The world's needs and wants are as great as ever, but it has not the gold

wherewith to purchase. The demonetization of silver seems to be referred to by the Prophet **Ezekiel (7:19)** saying, "They shall cast their silver into the street"--treat it as a commodity and not as money. The Prophet then tells how gold will become scarce and eventually be completely withdrawn by the people hiding it as though it were an unclean thing, as the Hebrew text implies--"Their gold shall be removed." Thus neither silver nor gold will be available.

Railroad magnates, and the bankers who hold their securities, perceive that if it is difficult to raise money for the meeting of the interest on the bonds it will be more difficult to issue new bonds to replace maturing ones, no matter how sound and well managed the railway may be. Is it any wonder that the trepidation of the financial and political princes of the earth is great, as they look into the future! Their well-grounded fears were prophesied by our Saviour as one of the signs of

the present time: "Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things coming upon the earth"--the social order--and because of the shaking of the heavens, the ecclesiastical systems.--**Luke 21:26**.

FEAR HUMANITY'S BANE

Sin made moral cowards of our race. From early infancy fear and apprehension especially in respect to things future, have been impressed upon us. We realize that we are imperfect, that our God is perfect, that perfection is the only standard which He could approve, and that some kind of punishment for sin must be expected. The Adversary, taking advantage of our forefathers, misrepresented the Almighty, and has used our fears to alienate us from Him and to wrest and distort His Message to us in the Bible. St. Paul assures us that this is Satan's general procedure; that he puts light for darkness and darkness for light. Thus it comes that our text, which is really one of the most beautiful and comforting in the whole Bible when understood, has to many become a lash in the hands of their fears.--**2 Cor. 4:4**.

Our text is one of the symbolisms of a Book filled

with symbols. God's people, guided by His Holy Spirit, in due time will appreciate these symbols. For many of them, that due time is already here. The Throne is Messiah's; it represents His Mediatorial Dominion of earth for a thousand years. Its whiteness symbolizes the purity, the justice, of His Kingdom of Righteousness under the whole heavens.

The heavens and earth which will flee from the presence of the great Immanuel will not be the Heavens of God's Throne, nor the earth which He has given to the children of men. The heavens and earth which will flee away, and for which no place will be found, are, of course, the symbolical ones.

In Bible symbology the earth represents established civilization; the sea, the restless, dissatisfied masses of humanity; and the mountains, human governments, kingdoms,

which constitute the backbone of present social institutions. The symbolic heavens represent spiritual influences--Ecclesiasticism, Churchianity. Thus interpreted, our text declares that when Messiah assumes control of the world, the result will be that the social system of today, as well as present day ecclesiasticism will pass out of existence--no place will be found for them.

SATAN NOW THE PRINCE

Some may ask, Whatever may be said of the four thousand years before the coming of Christ, may it not be claimed that He has been reigning ever since His ascension to the right hand of God? We answer, If the Redeemer of men has been reigning as the King of earth for the past nineteen centuries, there should be something in the Bible to so teach.

On the contrary the Master's own words tell us that Satan is the Prince of this Age; that Christ's Kingdom is not of this world (Age); that He will come again and receive His followers to Himself; that He went into a far country to receive title to His Kingdom and to return to take possession of it; and that at His Second Coming He will be the great King of Glory.--**John 14:16,30**; **18:36**; **Matt. 21:33**; **25:14,31**.

When we scan the pages of history during the past eighteen centuries, we are convinced that Messiah has not been King. To think of Him as such, with the omnipotent power we accredit to Him, would be to charge Him with responsibility for bloody and atrocious persecutions, for wars, famines and pestilences. Surely, no right-minded person, after mature consideration, can rationally accept the theory that we have had the glorious Messianic Reign of Righteousness for the blessing of the whole world, the uplifting of humanity.

No one can think that the Reign of the great Mediator is in the past. We must agree with our text that it is in the future; and that, when established, its effect upon present institutions--political, social, financial, religious

SM694

--will be such that they will flee away; no place will be found for them. From this standpoint alone there is hope for the world.

Today we are living at the climax of civilization. Yet we behold more clearly than ever before that the deeply-ingrained selfishness of humanity is a blight upon all our blessings. Selfishness is to be found everywhere. Although a semblance of righteousness is insisted upon and violators of that standard are styled criminals, nevertheless it seems impossible to legislate equity, justice. Men's keen intellects find opportunities for circumventing the laws and committing theft, murder, etc., without danger of punishment.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Neither Jehovah God nor His Representative, Messiah, can in any sense or degree be a party to injustice or inequity. The fact that injustice has been permitted, that inequity has been the rule for centuries, is to be accounted for by the fact that during all this period the world has been under the reign of Sin and Death, the reign of Satan, "the Prince of this world," and of the darkness of selfishness and evil--all of which his name represents; that the world has not been under the dominion of Messiah, the Representative of Jehovah and His righteousness, and love.

The New Dispensation which Messiah's Kingdom will usher in is pictured in our text. It will be the world-wide dominion of purity, holiness, righteousness, justice, truth--a Great White Throne. No wonder we read that the symbolical heavens and earth, representing the old order of things--social, ecclesiastical--will vanish away!

But let no one think for a moment that ecclesiastical princes, financial princes and political princes will voluntarily acknowledge that the hour has come for a full surrender to Messiah and to all the principles of His absolute righteousness. On the contrary, these privileged

members of our race will be more and more drawn together for mutual protection--for the preservation of the special privileges which have come into their possession. Even now we see the prophecy of the **Second Psalm** fulfilling. We are in the very time when the Lord, through the Prophet David, calls the great ones of earth to recognize the true situation of our wonderful day--that the Day of Messiah has arrived, and that He should be recognized and His principles of righteousness obeyed.

But no! The prophecy declares that we are in the day when the people, the masses, will have foolish imaginations --when they will think that by their own strength they can inaugurate a reign of righteousness along the lines of Socialism, or by anarchy. The people must learn that their help is in the Lord and not in their own frail arm. They must see the force of the words, "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Messiah."

"BE INSTRUCTED, YE JUDGES!"

On the other hand, the money kings, earthly rulers and ecclesiastical princes are taking counsel together for the preservation of present inequities of the world, by which they are profiting. The Lord declares that in this they are banding themselves against Him and His newly-appointed King, Messiah. For over a century human liberty has been making progress, despite every endeavor to restrain it. Earth's potentates perceive the rising tide of human intelligence and of demands for equal rights. They perceive that unless something be

done to counteract this general movement, the special advantages of the privileged classes will disappear. Even now they are taking counsel together how to break the restraints which the people are putting upon them, and how to reinaugurate a reign of autocracy, such as prevailed a century ago, but upon a higher plane, controlled by brighter wits, restraining more intelligent masses.

Would that the cultured and influential princes of earth could take the proper view of the situation and

SM696

realize the fallacy of their counsels, the impossibility of averting the great changes which are upon us by reason of the time having come for Messiah to take unto Himself His great power and reign! Could the wise of earth realize the situation and fully submit themselves to the Divine requirements of absolute justice and truth, what a blessing it would be to the world! If these princes would turn their attention from the grasping of power and money to the enlightenment and uplifting of the people, they would become ministers of the New Dispensation, which would be ushered in with rejoicing. But the Lord informs us that this will not be the case; and that as a result Messiah's Kingdom will be ushered in by "a Time of Trouble such as was not since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:1**.

God is no respecter of persons. Hence, before His Judgment Throne punishments will be meted out to small and great, when found to be violators of the principles of justice. Would that I could impress this upon many of the lower classes who are crying out against injustice in high places, while practicing similar injustices themselves. Let it be remembered that the Great White Throne speaks blessings only to those who love righteousness and hate iniquity.

The Master said, "My Word shall judge you in the Last Day." The books then to be opened will be the words of Jesus, of His Apostles and of the Prophets of old. Then all shall see the oneness of the Divine Message of righteousness, and each who would have everlasting life must conform his living and his thinking to those standards therein contained. At the end of Messiah's Reign, those whose names will have been written upon the *new* Book of Life will be found worthy of everlasting

life; those whose names are not therein written will be destroyed in the Second Death.--**Rev. 20:11-15**.

SM697

THE BROTHERHOOD OF CHRIST

"Love as brethren; be tender-hearted, be humble-minded, not rendering evil for evil, reviling for reviling, but contrariwise blessing. For hereunto were ye called, that ye should inherit a blessing."--**1 Peter 3:8,9**. R.V.

It is praiseworthy that the founders of the city of Philadelphia named it as they did, the "City of Brotherly Love," thus implying the good intentions of their hearts, their love of peace, of brotherhood, of mutual welfare. And who can doubt that the benedictions of those founders have to some extent exercised a beneficent influence in the affairs of this great city? Nevertheless, none of us can be unaware of the fact that unbrotherly words and deeds have wrought sorrow, bitterness, woe and death to many within its precincts. We may at first be inclined to wonder why this should be so, why sin seems to be so much more contagious than righteousness, and why as the Scriptures declare, our entire race is prone to sin as the sparks fly upward. Shall we suppose that those who gave the name were so much better, so much nobler, so much more God-like than their progeny of today?

We would not be disposed to make so sweeping a statement. We believe that there are some today as good and noble and true as ever lived of Adam's race. Nevertheless, we remember the words of the Apostle respecting our day and the end of this Gospel Age, to the effect that "evil men, and leaders astray, shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." (**2 Tim. 3:13**.) Again he says, "This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, lacking natural affection, truce-breakers and slanderers, without self-control, fierce, despisers of those who are good, traitors, headstrong,

SM698

puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof." --**2 Tim. 3:2-5**.

The newspaper testimonies and the court records show a vast increase in the criminal tendencies which fully correspond to those prophetic statements; and naturally these conditions raise before the mind the query, Why should the world be giving such evidences of increasing depravity, whereas many have hoped that the spread of general intelligence and the multiplication of Bibles would by this time have converted the world?

It is just about a century since most of the large Bible and Tract Societies were organized, and missionary effort amongst Protestants was undertaken with fresh zeal and hope. The century past is notable in the world's history for its religious zeal, its missionary effort and its general dissemination of the Scriptures, far in excess of any other. Yet today we find from statistics that, with the largest possible allowance for heathen professions and counting as Christians all who make any pretension toward civilization, regardless of their faith in Christ--still, where there were 600,000,000 of heathen a century ago, there are now 1,200,000,000. Where a century ago the colleges and theological seminaries of the world were almost without exception loyal to God, to the Bible and to Christ, there is scarcely an institution of learning today in which the doctrine of human evolution and the Higher Critical teachings in opposition to the Bible are not publicly taught, and even amongst the very few where these are not taught, we challenge the naming of a single one whose professors are all loyal to the Bible, so that they do not in private oppose the Word of God and the Divine Plan therein set forth. And it is in line with all these things that we behold so alarming an increase of selfishness and injustice, wickedness, crime.

"BECAUSE ALL ARE SINNERS"

The explanation of the situation is found in the

SM699

Apostle's words, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because all are sinners." (**Rom. 5:12**.) For four thousand years this inward, downward course, has prevailed, carrying mankind in some parts of the world into very deep degradation, and as a result,

as the Prophet says, "Darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the heathen." (**Isa. 60:2**.) The light that was started by our Redeemer nineteen centuries ago conflicted with the darkness, and the children of the light overcame it, meanwhile spreading a refractive light and influence wherever the Lord's saints reside.

But within the last half century, under the Lord's providence, inventions have brought to the world marvelous machinery, which the Scriptures inform us belong to the "Day of His Preparation" for the on-coming Millennial epoch. These inventions have quickened the minds and bodies of those coming in touch with them, stimulating their ambitions for knowledge, for improvement of their temporal affairs and for the accumulation of wealth. While in many respects there has been a great benefit and blessing connected with these, the fact that they appeal to the selfish propensities of humanity, already over-developed, has caused the blessing to operate injuriously to many. The increase of knowledge, combined with the increase of selfishness and with the high tension at which people are now living, affects the increase of crime and the decrease of brotherly love we have already noted.

A TESTING TIME FOR CHRISTENDOM

Various Scriptures point out the present and immediate future as a time of severe testing upon Christendom. It is the time for the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom of God's dear Son, not along the lines anticipated by many, the conversion of the world, but along contrary lines, the completion of the Church, her glorification with her Lord, the Bridegroom, as His Bride, and

then the inauguration of a Reign of Righteousness, justice, equity, for the blessing and instruction of the world, and for the uplifting out of sin-and-death conditions of all who will hearken to the message of that glorious Day for which the world has waited so long.

As suggested, the new era will be inaugurated in a manner totally unexpected by Christendom; and hence her testing at this time will be the more crucial. It will be here with Christendom as it was with the Jews in the

time of our Lord's First Advent, of which our Lord Himself said, "Ye know not the time of your visitation." (**Luke 19:44.**) If Christendom today would awake and realize the true meaning of present conditions, it would mean a great change to the comparatively few who have made full consecration to the Lord--but others would not be able to believe or receive the lesson; for it is written, "None of the wicked shall understand."

As for the consecrated, as the Scriptures declare, the New Dispensation is coming upon them as a thief in the night. Only such as are living up to their consecration vows will be granted Divine assistance in the understanding of the present situation. The others of the consecrated will go on in partial or complete ignorance until brought to their senses by the complete collapse of present institutions, political, social and religious, which the Scriptures show will precede the inauguration of the Millennial Kingdom. As for the world in general, and particularly the educated, they are rapidly dropping the thought of a personal God and a Divine Plan in respect to human affairs. They are rapidly reaching a rationalistic standpoint of thought--worshiping Mammon, wealth, station, education, etc., with merely a form of godliness without its power.--**1 Thess. 5:1-6**.

In these words the Scriptures call our attention to the fact that while the great Millennial Morning of blessing for all mankind is nearing, there intervenes a dark period, a short season of terrible trouble and anarchy. This

comes as a just retribution upon those who, having had a knowledge of God and His righteousness, appreciated more the things of Mammon. The lesson to them will be a very severe one, but in the Lord's providence, a very profitable one eventually, as the trouble of that awful period which is nearing will plow deeply their hearts and prepare many, we trust, for the blessing of the Millennial Kingdom, which will follow.

Already we see a great struggle between the nations, between capital and labor, between the Word of God on one hand and the creeds of the Dark Ages and the various forms of new theology and agnosticism on the other. Everywhere the Scriptures predict that the crash will be with terrible force; but with equal plainness they

assure us that following that awful experience God will turn unto the people the pure Message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent. (**Zeph. 3:9**.) They assure us that when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (**Isa. 26:9**.) If Divine Wisdom says that this is the best manner for giving mankind the needed lessons preparatory to the introduction of the Kingdom of Light and Blessing, all of God's consecrated ones will say, "Amen! True and righteous are Thy judgments, Lord God Almighty! Who shall not come and worship before Thee when Thy righteous acts are made manifest?"--**Rev. 15:4**; **16:5**.

CHURCH NOMINAL--CHURCH REAL

Considering Christendom, or the civilized portion of the world, as the Church of Christ in name--including all denominations and all associated or connected directly or remotely--we have seen that the difficulty on account of which the great trouble is coming upon them is that love has given place to selfishness. There was enough selfishness in all by nature, but it has been enormously exercised and enlarged in influence amongst the civilized in recent years; and the terrible anarchy in which the

present age is about to close will be the fruitage of that selfishness. The Scriptures point this out, not only in these passages I have just quoted, but in others which declare in so many words that in the coming trouble every man's hand will be against his neighbor and against his brother--everyone for himself. But now let us turn from this view of the Church nominal and the trouble coming upon it and seek for that true Church hidden in the nominal mass that bears the name of Christian.

Christendom nominal is estimated at 400,000,000 and represented by several hundred creeds and organizations. In this great mass the Lord's faithful few, styled the "little flock," may be rather difficult to discern. We are to look for them everywhere--in all denominations and outside of all. We are to remember that the Lord has not left Himself without a witness, but today it would be true as in Elijah's time when the Lord said to the

Prophet, "Yet I have seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal." (**1 Kings 19:18**.) We may surely hope for a still larger number who are not bowing either to sectarianism or to the golden calf of Mammon. How shall we know these true followers of Jesus, of whom it is written, "The Lord knoweth them that are His"? What are some of their characteristics? In what are they peculiar and different from the nominal mass? By what name are they to be known? Are they a coterie of the rich or of the learned or of the great? The Scriptures answer, No! and assure us that amongst them will be found not many great, not many wise, not many learned, but chiefly they will be of the poor of this world, rich in faith, heirs to the Kingdom. We must look then for some other sign, some other characteristics by which we may know them.

"BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW"

Our Redeemer's words give the key suggesting the characteristics for which we should seek. He says: "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye

have love for one another." (**John 13:35**.) He emphasizes this, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." (**John 13:34**.) Ah, we get the thought that the Church is a blessed brotherhood of all those who not only love God supremely, so that they delight to do His will, even at the cost of self-interest, but who also love one another as Christ loved them, which signifies to the extent of willingness to lay down their lives for one another! We look in vain for such an organization amongst men. We perceive various bundles or organizations under various names, all professing love, but none of them even dreaming of union with such bonds of love. We are not forgetting the Masons, the Odd Fellows, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Episcopalians, the Lutherans, the Roman Catholics, etc. But none of these claim to be such a brotherhood as our Lord has described. They do indeed claim to give special attention to each other's interests, and to have certain reverence for God, but not to the extent that our Master intimated--not to the extent

of laying down their lives in doing the will of the Father and in their love for the brethren.

The Apostle Peter in our text points out that the Lord's followers should love as brethren--as proper brethren--as true brethren ought to love. He points out to them that this will mean tender-heartedness, humble-mindedness and forbearance to resent injuries and revilings. That the proper brotherly love would not only submit to all this without retaliation, but on the contrary would return a blessing. Oh, such love--such a high standard of love! How many of us, how few of us, have ever realized the standard of brotherly love that would be appreciated by our Lord--the standard that He demands as a condition of our being His brethren, the standard He implies in the prayer that He taught us, saying, "Forgive us our transgressions as we forgive those who trespass against us"!

SM704

The same Apostle points out that to be of the Lord's true disciples not only means an exercise of faith in God, and in the Lord Jesus Christ and in the forgiveness of our sins through Him, but that it means more than this. "Seeing that ye have purified your souls in your obeying of the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (**1 Peter 1:22**.) Ah, there it is, dear brethren! We not only believe and receive forgiveness of the Lord, but we receive a knowledge of the Truth, a knowledge of His will; and then it is for us to put that knowledge into practice, to weave it into our thoughts and words and doings, to obey it to the extent of an unfeigned love for the brethren. This is to be before our minds as the proper, grand outworking of the Truth which the Lord grants to us. The Truth is designed to sanctify, as our Lord declared, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth." As this Truth gains control of our words and thoughts and doings, it will cast out the spirit of selfishness from our desires and create in us new ambitions, desires, and love for the Father, for the brethren, including our Elder Brother, Jesus, and that will gradually become more and more fervent. It will not be merely an outward courtesy, a feigned love, but an inward heart sentiment.

Hearken to the Apostle John on this subject. He says: "Marvel not, brethren, if the world hate you." We are not to expect any special sympathy from the world, but rather that they will misunderstand us. But we are to expect something different from amongst the brethren, as the Apostle proceeds to show: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." Whoever then does not love the brethren cannot be sure that he has passed from the death condition to the free condition of mind and heart. How anxious we should be to be able to have this testimony of the Apostle corroborate our hopes that we are New Creatures

SM705

in Christ, that we have passed from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, and from a condition of condemnation and death, to a condition of justification to life. But the Apostle continues, "He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." Crucial words these for the brethren! Let us not lose their import, their value, let us test our hearts, our standing with the Lord, by our love or our lack of love for the brethren, as the Apostle here by inspiration directs. But the Apostle is not through with this subject; he caps the climax by saying: "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us, and we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."--**1 John 3:14,17**.

WHO ARE THE BRETHREN?

If by their fruits we shall know them, there are not many brethren of this kind in the world. The early Church showed some noble examples of such brotherhood, Jesus Himself being the Elder Brother who laid down His life on our behalf. The Apostles and many in humble stations followed closely in the Master's footsteps; and some we believe all the way down through the centuries have similarly been found; and some today, we also believe, are to be found in all denominations and outside of them who have this general character-likeness--but they are few. The Apostle comments of our Lord, "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." (**Heb. 2:11**.)

Like Him they have consecrated their lives to the Father's business, the service of the Truth.

Recognizing that God is now taking out of the world people for His name, it is their chief concern in life to be co-laborers together with God in the finding of this elect class and in assisting them to make their calling and election sure. Neither time nor influence nor money is too precious for these to spend in this service--yea,

SM706

life itself with them as with the Master and the Apostles is being gradually used up along this line--"This one thing I do." These brethren indeed must eat, sleep, and to this end must not be slothful in business; but their chief employ and joy and fervency of spirit is in serving the Lord by serving the brethren.

True, some of these brethren, with loving hearts and noble desires, striving to follow the Pattern, fail to copy it perfectly because of "weakness of the flesh." St. Paul, one of these, declared what is true of all, "I cannot do the things that I would." Our ideals and our standards are superior to anything to which we can attain. We continually find that the meanness, the selfishness, which is a part of our old nature, still lurks in the crannies of our mortal flesh and requires to be dealt with and sometimes takes advantage of us; for to will is present with us, but how to perform the will of our new minds is another matter. Hence, with some of the most loyal of the brethren there is occasionally a necessity for humiliation in confessing that in an unguarded moment a word or act had misrepresented the real sentiment of the heart. But even such a failure and confession may be overruled of the Lord for a blessing and the experience may prove to be valuable in strengthening the mind, in guarding the lips for the future and in developing also the meekness and humility which in God's sight are characteristic elements of great value.

"WHAT MANNER OF PERSONS!"

The Apostle urges the importance of our new relationship of brethren in Christ and sons of God, and impresses it upon our minds, saying: "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness--looking

for and hasting unto the day of Christ!" (**2 Peter 3:11,12**.)
How true! When we remember our own imperfections
and blemishes and how much the Lord must overlook
and forgive in us, how generous it should make us in
our sentiments toward the brethren who are with us seeking

SM707

to walk contrary to the course of this world, a self-sacrificing,
self-denying life! How their weaknesses
should appeal to us! How their struggle should call
forth our sympathy and words of encouragement! How
we should realize that they, like ourselves, have the opposition
of the world, the flesh and the Adversary! And
how we should resolve that by the Lord's grace they
should have amongst the brethren everything to console
and uplift and encourage the new nature and nothing to
discourage it! How kind our words and deeds, how
thoughtful for their welfare this should make us!

Let us more and more approximate this glorious
standard set before us in the Gospel. And let us remember
furthermore that while this love of the brethren is
specially emphasized and specially to be considered a
criterion for the Lord's Household, yet there is another
step just beyond; namely, to love our enemies, to do good
to them that despitefully use us and persecute us. Indeed,
some of the strongest of our difficulties sometimes come
from brethren--more or less blinded and deluded by the
Adversary, who sometimes take such a position as Saul
of Tarsus before his eyes opened to the facts of the case.

We must have such a love of the brethren that if they
say all manner of evil against us falsely we will still
not render evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrariwise
blessing, as our text directs. To follow this
Divine instruction will bring to us polishing such as
could come from no other quarter, no other experience,
such as will make us more and more conformed to the
image of God's dear Son, who had such experience at
the hands of His brethren according to the flesh and the
professed Church of God, and in those experiences he
was followed by the faithful ones of the early Church.
And similarly today let us not marvel if the trials and
persecutions and opposition come chiefly from those who
have named the name of Christ--some of them nominal
brethren and some of them doubtless true brethren.

SM708

"THE VESSELS OF A POTTER"

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"--**Rom. 9:21**.

In our text you will note what the Apostle here calls attention to, that from the same lump of clay the skilled potter can make a graceful ornament--a vase, for instance, for the mantel and for the holding of flowers, or a loving cup, or a ewer for the carrying of water, or a slop urn, a receptacle for filth. All of these vessels are useful, hence in one sense of the word they are all honorable, all valuable. Nevertheless there is a dignity, an honor that belongs to the vase, the cup, the ewer, that does not attach to the slop urn. The clay is the same for all of these, but the choice or election as to which shall be which is with the potter. This is the lesson of our text. It points us to God as the One who has begun the good work in us, and who, if we submit ourselves to Him properly, will complete that good work unto the Day of Jesus Christ, when it shall be finished in the First Resurrection in the Millennial Morning.

The Apostle declares that as the potter has the power or right to make such vessels as he may please, so God has the right or power to do what He will with His creatures. As to what the great Divine Potter will make of the human clay must be left to Himself; and only as we learn the real character of God can we judge of what would be His good pleasure in respect to the varieties of His handiwork. Knowing Him as we do--as He reveals Himself in His Word to us--as a good God who delights not in iniquity, but delights in the truth, and all of whose works glorify Him, we have this assurance that His work is perfect, and when brought to completion the variety of more honorable and less honorable vessels of His creation

SM709

will all be found to His praise. The remainder He will destroy--all that will not be praiseworthy, all who refuse

to have His good work accomplished in them.

So, then, we may expect that eventually God's great work in humanity will show a variety of vessels, some to more honor and some to less honor; but that amongst His works will be none evil, none devilish, none bad. The Scriptures nowhere intimate that Satan and his associates, the demons, are adversaries of God because they were created thus. On the contrary they tell us that, while God's work was perfect, these fell from their first estate of harmony with God by disobedience to Divine regulations--in other words, that they defiled themselves. Similarly our race, the Scriptures inform us, was created perfect, upright, in the image of God, in the person of Father Adam. The sin, the imperfection, the blemish we see, we are distinctly told is not the work of God, but the work of the Adversary and the penalty for disobedience.

"OUT OF THE SAME LUMP"

The Apostle is not discussing the good angels nor the fallen ones, but merely mankind. Adam and his race are the clay in the hands of the Potter in the Apostle's illustration. The unfitness of this human clay for any purpose through Adam's disobedience is the teaching of the Scriptures, but they also teach us that God Himself provided the great remedy for the healing of this unfitness, so that now as the great Potter He can deal with the clay and fashion it as it has pleased Him. It is from this standpoint that the Apostle discusses the subject, the standpoint of redeemed humanity.

Of the same lump, of the Adamic family, the Lord made choice first of all of the nation of Israel, Abraham and his seed. That lump of clay was specially mixed, ground, reground and made more and more plastic during the centuries in which they were specially under the Divine handling, to make them ready for the moulding

and shaping influences of the Holy Spirit, which came at Pentecost. Indeed, vessels of a certain kind, quite honorable, too, were formed during the Jewish Age, as the Apostle points out to us in **Hebrews 11**, when recounting those whose lives were shaped by their faith in God and in His promises. Honorable vessels were they--

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets. But really the great work, and in some senses of the word the first work of the great Potter, began with our Lord and His Apostles and has proceeded throughout this Gospel Age. During this time the Divine Potter has been making His artistic vessels, the vessels to the highest honor--vessels of glory, honor and immortality. These vessels of glory and honor are represented in the Scriptures under various names--members of the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the Lamb's Wife, the Little Flock, the Heirs of God, the heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant promise, the more than conquerors. Of these the Apostle writes, "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." These, then, are pertinently mentioned in our text as--

"VESSELS UNTO HONOR"

The great Potter will not exhaust His skill in His preparation of these vessels of honor; but having use also for other vessels to lesser honor--vessels, however, of great usefulness in His plan and purpose--He will proceed during the coming Age to the preparation of these other vessels, and their preparation indeed will proceed much more rapidly than has the work of this present Gospel Age. Why? Because, first, the work that is now in progress is a much more delicate one, requiring special skill and care, as each vessel of honor receives peculiar shaping and forming for its own position of honor in the Heavenly Kingdom. On the contrary, the work of the coming Age in dealing with humanity in general as clay will be along more mechanical lines; as, for instance,

articles of utility for menial service not only receive less care at the hands of the potter, but are turned out very largely by machinery which the potter merely superintends. So it will be with the great Potter in the handling of the human clay during the Millennial Age; the machinery, the patterns, the grinding of the clay, etc., will all be very largely accomplished in advance of the introduction of the Millennial Day, and the shaping of humanity under the laws of the Kingdom will be a uniform

and a comparatively rapid work. General laws will govern, and each will make his progress as he conforms to those laws.

Now, however, the Lord deals with His Church as with sons. He considers our frame, He deals with us not according to the flesh, but according to our individual minds, spirits, intentions of heart. Each son, each vessel of the class now being developed, has his own special fitting and preparation, his own special place in the glorious Kingdom to which he has been invited. It is God that worketh in us, not only to produce the new mind, the consecrated heart, through the promises of His Word, but also works in us to do, to accomplish so far as in us lies, His good pleasure. The same influence, the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, operate by faith upon these special vessels of honor now being produced under the Potter's hands.

"THE FLAMES SHALL NOT HURT THEE"

Not only does the choicer product of the ceramic art receive a special moulding and shaping of the potter; but after all of its lines and curves have been studied carefully and fashioned it is specially fired, burned. Indeed, it is not exposed to the flames at all, but is carefully covered with an earthenware case or sagger. How this speaks to us of the special moulding and fashioning care with which the Heavenly Father deals with every son whom He receiveth during this Gospel Age, forming, shaping, transforming, conforming the lines of his character

likeness in harmony with those of the great Pattern which He has set for us. And this transforming work is not done by might or by power, by force or compulsion, but "by My Spirit, saith the Lord."--**Zech. 4:6**.

The fiery trials which must try these for their perfecting, for the fixing of their character, for their completion, are all subject to the Divine supervision, and the assurance is given us that all things shall work together for good to these because they love God and because they have been called according to His purpose to be vessels of highest honor and kingly glory with their Redeemer during His Millennial Reign. These, styled

the Lord's jewels or precious ones, whose number will be completed and who will be gathered at the beginning of His Second Advent, have required a long time for their development--more than eighteen centuries--notwithstanding the fact that they are in all but a Little Flock, 144,000, who will stand on Mount Zion, having their Father's name written in their foreheads. The Apostle inquires, Shall the clay say unto the potter--

"WHY HAST THOU MADE ME THUS?"

The intimation of the Apostle is that the clay, whether formed by the potter into a vessel of honor or one of less honor, has no right whatever to complain. Whatever the potter shall do to the clay will be an honor to the clay. Without the exercise of his power and skill it would never be anything more than clay; and to be made into a vessel of more or less honor would be a blessing indeed. Hence the bulk of humanity with whom the Lord will deal during the Millennial Age and by the machinery and laws of the Millennial Kingdom, will be shaped and fashioned along the lines of restitution to human perfection, will have no cause whatever to complain or murmur against the great Divine Potter that they were not elected vessels of highest honor and distinction--that they were not of the Elect Church, called during this Age to be the Bride of Christ and Joint-heir with Him in His Kingdom.

SM713

On the contrary, mankind will have everything to be thankful for, and so the Scriptures indicate that eventually every knee will bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God, His work of grace, truth and restitution. They declare that ultimately, when the plans of the great Potter shall be fully accomplished, every creature in Heaven and in earth shall be heard ascribing praise and thanksgiving, honor, dominion, majesty and might to Him that sitteth on the Throne and to the Lamb.-- **Rev. 7:12**; **5:12,13**.

That great Millennial Day and its great work of fashioning humanity according to the designs of the great Creator will be very different in many respects from the present Age; but instead of a fiery trial for each individual, Satan, the great Adversary, will be bound for the

thousand years and be permitted to deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. The grinding, humbling and preparing of the human clay for that glorious epoch are being accomplished now, when the forces of evil through the reign of Sin and Death are causing the entire human family to suffer, to groan, so that the Apostle speaks of the world as a "groaning creation"--groaning and travailing together in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.--**Rom. 8:19,22**.

The manifestation of the sons of God signifies the manifestation in glory of the vessels of honor which the Lord is now preparing, His Little Flock, the Church. When these shall shine forth with Jesus in the glorious Kingdom of the Father, the world's groaning and travailing in pain shall be ended; for the Adversary will be bound and the curse will be lifted. Henceforth none shall suffer except for his own wilful wrongdoing, and the restitution processes of moulding and fashioning mankind shall gloriously progress throughout that epoch.

But will there come any burning day and fiery trials upon those of the Millennial Age? Yes, we answer; the Scriptures clearly point out that at the close of that Day

the whole earth will become a furnace of trial to humanity in general. The Scriptures inform us that Satan will be loosed from his prison-house and go forth to tempt, to try, to test, all those that dwell upon the whole earth, whose number will be at that time as the sand of the sea--thousands of millions. The test will be applied to all; for it is the Divine purpose that such should be tested. Those in perfect accord with the Potter will stand the test, and prove their characters to be strong, crystallized by this test, while others not in fullest harmony with the great Potter shall be melted under the fiery trial of that time. The proportion of those who will stand to those who will then fall is not indicated in the Word of God; and we must not be wise above what is written. It is sufficient for us to know that every true and loyal member of the race, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, will have the fullest opportunities for becoming a vessel of the Lord to some honorable purpose and service if he wills, and that those whose wills are not fully submissive to the Lord will be ultimately destroyed

from amongst the people and not be preserved for torture.
--**Rev. 20:7-10**.

"VESSELS OF WRATH FITTED FOR DESTRUCTION"

Following **our text**, which speaks of the vessels unto honor and unto less honor, the Apostle speaks of vessels of wrath, saying, "What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore ordained to glory, even us?"

The Apostle's showing that the fact that God has refrained from manifesting outwardly either His love for the Church or His wrath against evil doers is no argument against the lesson He is teaching. It is true the riches of God's grace for the Church called to glory and being prepared for glory has not yet been made manifest,

but this is no proof that this will not be made manifest in His own due time. Similarly, the fact that the Lord has denounced those who love and work iniquity, but has not yet manifested His opposition to them and is not now fighting against them, but really allowing them in many respects to prosper--this is no argument against the ultimate fulfilment of His designs. He awaits the revelation of His glory in the Church, and of His wrath, His displeasure, against those who are His opponents. But the tarrying time both of glory and of wrath is sure to end, and the purposes of the Lord are sure to be accomplished.

We have seen who constitute the vessels of glory, that they are the very Elect, the saints, the Royal Priesthood of this Age. Who then constitute the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction? The answer will be apparent to all familiar with the potter's art--they are the vessels which, after experiencing the potter's care and skill, prove defective, blemished, unfit for his use. These represent such as receive the grace of God in vain, or such as the Apostle describes as dogs who return to their vomit, as sows that return to their wallowing in the mire after being washed.--**2 Peter 2:20-22**.

This same class St. Paul describes in **Hebrews 6:4-6**; **10:28-31**, as falling away from the grace of God after they had received mercy and forgiveness, and the begetting of the Holy Spirit and instruction from the Lord, being made partakers of the Holy Spirit. For such, the Apostle says, "There remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins--nothing but a certain fearful looking forward to judgment and fiery indignation which would devour them as adversaries" --utterly destroy them as vessels fitted for destruction. We are to remember, however, that these vessels fitted for destruction include none of those whose hearts are right toward God, and whose difficulties are merely of weakness of the flesh through heredity, besetments and temptations. No; the Lord has made full provision for these, and all their blemishes according to the

flesh are covered from His sight. He is dealing with them not according to their flesh, but according to their spirits, their minds, their wills, their intentions. So long as they are at heart the Lord's and seeking to fight the good fight of faith and to have His will accomplished in them, so long they are His; and nothing shall by any means pluck them out of His hand.

The vessels fitted for destruction are not condemned because of any unintentional weakness, but because of disloyalty of heart through pride or ambition or intentional preferences for sin. The decision of the Lord in respect to both of these classes will be manifest at the close of this Age, when the vessels fitted for destruction will be recognized as having gone to the Second Death, and when the vessels of mercy fit for glory shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father as joint-heirs with their dear Redeemer.

"VESSELS OF A POTTER DASHED TO PIECES"

Our Lord (**Rev. 2:27**), pointing to the time of His Second Advent and the establishment of His Kingdom, declares that the nations of that time will come under the rule of His iron rod, under the Reign of Justice and Divine Law, and that they all shall be dashed to pieces as potters' vessels. In many respects this is a different figure from the one we have just been discussing. Nevertheless

there is a relationship, as we will show. While the Lord as the great Divine Potter has been moulding and fashioning the vessels of mercy and of glory to be the Kings and Priests of the world during the coming age, the Adversary has undertaken to be a potter, and, cooperating with human tendencies and ambitions, has created some wonderful vessels. These are found in high positions in Babylon, in the Church and in the seats of popes, cardinals, bishops, kings, princes, financial magnates, etc., etc. The work of the Adversary seems to be much greater, much more glorious, much more honorable, than the work of God, who, describing His vessels of

mercy, declares that amongst them are not many wise, not many learned, not many great, not many noble, not many rich, according to the course or judgment of this world.--**1 Cor. 1:26-29**.

On the contrary, Satan has found and exalted many of the rich and worldly great as his vessels. The kingdoms of this world make a great show in many respects, a show of power, a show of strength, a show of virtue. But from the Lord's standpoint they are all unfit for His purposes, are in His way. He purposes the establishment of the Heavenly Kingdom as instead of these, and in the context under consideration shows that when His time shall come for establishing His Little Flock, for establishing the Reign of Messiah and his faithful saints, the Royal Priesthood, the power shall be exercised in the hands of the great Redeemer, which will utterly dash in pieces all the existing institutions, that seem so great and so wonderful, those vessels of the Adversary potter. They shall be broken to shivers. The Holy Spirit foretold this long before our Redeemer's birth, using through the Prophet David the very same words. (**Psa. 2:9**.) The Prophet Daniel refers to the same great events, and calls that period of dashing to pieces earthly institutions a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation; and our Lord, after quoting that prophecy, supplements it with the statement, "No, nor ever shall be." (**Dan. 12:1**; **Matt. 24:21**.) He thus gives us His assurance that the Time of Trouble upon the whole world, which is nearing, which will wreck present institutions and establish the Kingdom of God, will be the end of all such troublous

times--the poor groaning creation shall never again pass through such an experience.

The Apostle Paul, pointing down to this same Time of Trouble and to the overthrow of present institutions in conjunction with the establishment of God's Kingdom, tells us that that will be the time for the inauguration of the New Covenant, under which God will have mercy

upon the whole world of mankind and forgive the transgressions of the past that are properly attributable to Adamic weaknesses, and begin through Christ the glorious work of restitution, in harmony with all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy Prophets since the world began. (**Heb. 12:18-29**; **Acts 3:19-21**.) He says that the introduction of this New Covenant will correspond to and be the antitype of the introduction of the Law Covenant; that as in the introduction of the Law Covenant there were fearful sights and sounds, the voice of trumpets and of words, and the entire mountain shaking until all the people were in fear, so the antitype of this will be still greater, when not only the social structure (the earth) would be shaken, but also the ecclesiastical structure (the heavens). He declares that all things that can be shaken will be shaken, and then adds that we, the Gospel Church, the vessels of mercy prepared for glory, will receive the Kingdom which cannot be shaken, intimating that all other things will be shaken and overthrown. Our Kingdom alone will stand the tests of that time; in it alone God will be well pleased, and its influence will then begin to be felt throughout the whole earth, to the glory of God and to the blessing of mankind.

Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be? Seeing that present earthly institutions will come to naught very shortly because not pleasing to the Lord, what should be our course? Ah! as the vessels of mercy being prepared for glory, we should see to it that we are fully submissive to the moulding and fashioning influences of the great Potter, that our words and thoughts and doings be all conformed to harmony with His perfect will, that we be so thoroughly plastic in His hands that He can form us into vessels of the highest honor and glory and usefulness in His Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come!"

SM719

JESUS ADVOCATE OF BELIEVERS ONLY

"I write unto you that ye avoid sin. Yet if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is a propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."--**1 John 2:1,2**.

In the past we have not been sufficiently discriminating in our study of the Word. Failing to notice that the salvation of the elect Church is a matter separate and distinct from the world's salvation, we have applied the various Scriptures dealing with sin and its forgiveness in a loose manner, which has failed to bring us clear-cut views on the subject. For instance, with the gradual opening of the eyes of our understanding we note in our text the declaration that our Lord's sacrifice is a propitiation, satisfaction for our sins, the Church's sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. We perceive that in this text the Lord sharply differentiates between the Church and the world, between our salvation and the world's salvation.

True, at one time there was no difference, for we were all "children of wrath even as others" still are; but we who have heard the voice of the Heavenly Father speaking peace through Jesus Christ, we who have accepted that Message, we who have been reconciled to God through the death of His Son, are no longer of the world, but, from God's standpoint, constitute a separate and distinct class, a small minority, "a little flock." The Scriptures tell us that we are called, chosen, separated from the world. Our Master's words are, "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you."

SM720

OUR ADVOCATE, THE WORLD'S MEDIATOR

At another time we hope to take up the subject of Christ the Mediator, and to then show that it will be during the Millennial Age that Christ will act as Mediator between God and man: that as He has already laid the foundation for the great work of reconciling the world unto the Father through the sacrifice of Himself, he will during the Millennial Age complete that work by reconciling the world to the Father--as many of the world under favorable opportunities will be glad to come to a knowledge of the Divine character and plan and to obedience to the Divine requirements. The Scriptures properly enough speak of our Lord Jesus as already the Mediator, from the standpoint that He has already been honored by the Father and indicated as the One who shall perform that great work of mediation--the One who must reign until He has put all enemies under His feet, and caused every knee to bow and every tongue to confess to the glory of God the Father. (**1 Cor. 15:25**; **Phil. 2:9-11**.) The time for doing this work, however--the time for exercising His power as the Mediator and putting all things into subjection--is still future.

Just now we wish to emphasize the thought that our Lord Jesus is not the Church's Mediator before the Father, but the Church's Advocate. There is a sharp distinction to be drawn between the two thoughts. A mediator implies a hostility between two principals, requiring the intervention of a third party; and this is not the case with the Church. We are not rebels. We are not alienated from God, but now through faith in the blood we are children of God, and our Redeemer assures us, "The Father Himself loveth you." (**John 16:27**.) Even before the time came in the Lord's plan when the Kingdom would be established, the rebels subdued, we were glad to hear the Father's voice speaking peace through Jesus Christ, and we came to Him. Surely, then, there is no need of a Mediator between the Father who loves His

SM721

children and the children who love their Father. However, the basis of our acceptance with the Father was our

hearty renunciation of sin and our acceptance of the sacrifice of Jesus as covering our blemishes and condemnation of the past, and our acceptance of the Father in Christ was on condition that we would henceforth walk in His steps--not after the flesh but after the Spirit, as set forth in the perfect Law of Liberty, the Law of Love to God and man.

It may be asked then, If we are children of God and the Father Himself loveth us and has accepted us in Christ through the merit of His atoning blood, why should we need an Advocate with the Father? We reply that the Father's requirement that our hearts be perfect in love to Him and to all is beyond our ability--not beyond our desires, our endeavors, our intentions, but beyond our accomplishment, because we have the treasure of the new mind in earthen vessels--in imperfect bodies, born in sin, shapen in iniquity, on account of which the Apostle says, "We can not do the things that we would." (**Gal. 5:17**.) This constitutes our need of an Advocate with the Father; otherwise we should lose the standing already granted to us through faith.

"FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES"

This brings up the subject of forgiveness of sins. Some are inclined to say: If our sins were forgiven once why should we repeat the matter at the Throne of Grace? Why should we continue to acknowledge ourselves sinners when the Word of the Lord assures us that our sins and iniquities are covered from His sight, that we are justified freely by His grace from all sin? There is a measure of correctness in this argument, but in other respects it is incorrect. So far as the original sin is concerned--our share in the Adamic condemnation that passed upon all men--the Scriptures assure us that we have escaped the condemnation which is on the world.--**Rom. 8:1-4**.

To whatever extent, therefore, we believe the testimony

of the Lord's Word that our sins are covered, that we are escaped from that condemnation, it would not be proper for us to reiterate to the Lord prayers for forgiveness of our share in original sin. That is all past

and gone, and the proper attitude of faith in God's assurance forbids that we should repeat requests along that line. However, it would always be proper for us to acknowledge the Lord's goodness in having forgiven us for our share of original sin, and to thank Him for having lifted our feet out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay of sin and its condemnation, for having placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and having put in our mouths the new song of rejoicing, thanksgiving and praise, which is our privilege and our joy since we have passed from condemnation to justification, from being children of wrath to joint-heirship with Jesus our Lord.

There are more sins than our original sin. These in the Lord's prayer are designated trespasses; and these should be considered, should be mentioned at the Throne of Grace daily. As New Creatures we have entered into a covenant with the Lord to walk in Jesus' steps in the narrow way, according to the Law of Love. And we all find continually that, however sincere and loyal our hearts are to the principles of righteousness and love, we come short of the perfect standard because of weaknesses, blemishes and imperfections of the flesh. These trespasses against the Law of Love should be mentioned at the Throne of grace. It is to these that the Apostle is referring in our text. In the preceding context he is directing us how we should maintain fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, that, so far from our imperfections separating us again from the Father and from the Son, our joy may be full, our fellowship complete. He tells us that as New Creatures we must walk in the light according to the new nature, according to truth, according to righteousness: we must not walk in sin, in darkness, according to the fallen human nature.

SM723

But since we have the treasure of the new mind in a blemished earthen vessel, since our spotless robe of Christ's righteousness must be worn continually, and thus be brought in contact with the world, the Apostle intimates that it would be impossible for us to preserve it without spot or wrinkle. Nevertheless our wedding-robe must be without spot or wrinkle if we would be acceptable at the end of the age as members of the Heavenly Bride at the Marriage Feast. How then shall we do? What

must be our course in view of these apparently contradictory conditions? The Apostle explains that the blood of Christ not only met first the obligations of the past, satisfying, setting aside the condemnation which was against us as members of Adam's race--but that the same merit of the same sacrifice of Christ may be used for the cleansing of every spot, every imperfection, every blemish. He says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us [keeps cleansing us] from all sin." (**1 John 1:7**.) Thus and thus only can the Lord's children in the present time continue to abide in fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and be prepared for the glorious change of the First Resurrection.

"IF WE DECEIVE OURSELVES"

The Apostle, surmising that some would claim that they had reached perfection and that their daily life was perfect, puts in a warning word, saying, "If we say that we have no sin [that we are free from any breaches of the perfect Law of Love toward God and man] we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." We make God a liar, and indicate that His Word is not in us--that we have not properly studied or understood His Word. There is no more serious condition for the Lord's people to get into than to imagine that they are perfect in the flesh. It implies that they are blind to many of their own failings. We may be sure that their neighbors and friends and kindred can discern blemishes in them, and that much more the Heavenly Father discerns, as He declares in His

Word that they come short of glorifying Him--that they come short of the full glory of perfection which the perfect Law of Love demands.--**1 John 1:8-10**.

While, therefore, faith in the Lord and a knowledge of His Word shows us clearly that we are purged from our old sins, that from the Divine standpoint these are all covered for the Household of Faith by the robe of Christ's imputed righteousness, we see on the contrary that daily imperfections crop out, notwithstanding our best endeavors to walk as nearly up to the standard of the Divine Law as possible--we see that we can not do the things that we would.

More than this, as year by year we grow in grace and knowledge and love we see ourselves more clearly, so that after making progress in the Christian way for years, the best of the Lord's people will see more of their own blemishes than they noted in the beginning of their Christian experience. They daily see more clearly than before the lengths, breadths, heights and depths of the Divine Character and of the Divine Law; and as they look into the perfect Law of Liberty they discern more clearly day by day, and behold as in a mirror their own natural imperfections and shortcomings. Such would be completely discouraged did they not realize the significance of the Apostle's words in our context. He says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Apostle, we see, is not referring to the question of mortal sin again, and the applying for a new robe of Christ's righteousness. All that was done in the past. That robe is now ours, and must never be laid off if we would abide in Divine favor. But our robe must be spotless, and hence the gracious provision of the Father through the Son that the blood of Christ may upon our application be applied to cleanse us from all sins, even the slighter ones. Thus has the Lord provided that we may keep our garments unspotted from the world by

making use of this privilege granted us of coming with courage to the Throne of Heavenly Grace that we may obtain mercy (in respect to our shortcomings or trespasses) and find grace to help in time of need.--**Heb. 4:16**.

Nothing in this, properly understood, suggests any carelessness on the part of those who would keep their garments unspotted from the world. Imbued with the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, with a love for righteousness, they are, as the Apostle suggests, to "hate even the garment spotted with the flesh" (**Jude 23**), and strive continually and with growing persistency and carefulness to avoid such blemishes and the necessity for confessing trespasses. But although this necessity grows less and less as we grow stronger and stronger in the Lord and in the power of His might, nevertheless, so long as the New Creature must operate through the earthen vessel, we must not feel discouraged with our best endeavors

for righteousness, but the more earnestly wait for and hope for the glorious resurrection change, in which we shall receive glorious spirit bodies, which our Lord has promised to the faithful--perfect in every particular. Thenceforth we shall know no sin, and need no further to confess trespasses; for that which is perfect shall have come, and the new mind, the New Creature, thenceforth will be able to express its high and glorious sentiments of obedience to righteousness perfectly.

"THEY WASH THEIR ROBES"

The Lord brings to our attention the fact that there will be two classes saved during this Gospel Age, as well as another class that will be saved during the Millennial Age. All saved during this age are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, "justified through faith in His blood." (**Rom. 5:9**.) But the classes saved during this Gospel Age do more than believe, do more than repent, do more than seek to live righteously. Both classes make a covenant with the Lord to follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Both classes receive the white robe of justification as a

result of such faith and consecration. One of these classes we have already referred to--the class which seeks to live up to its consecration daily, hourly, and which keeps its garments unspotted from the world, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." This class in the Scriptures is designated a "little flock."

The other class is designated the Great Company. Concerning the latter company note the statement, "These are they who come out of great tribulation, having washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." (**Rev. 7:14**.) This class, failing to keep their robes unspotted, failing to go to the Lord in prayer with every discovery of trespass, get their robes sadly bedraggled through contact with the world. They were vexed with the first spot, and with the second, and so on, but gradually they became more careless and less and less appreciative of the absolute spotlessness of the robe. For this reason they will not be accounted worthy of the high honor which the Lord proposes to give to the "little flock." But before they can obtain any honor or any

place in the everlasting Kingdom it will be necessary that they should pass through fiery experiences, disciplines, for their correction, for their purification. In some parts of the Scriptures this trial is referred to as the "fiery trial which shall try you." (**1 Pet. 4:12**.) Its primary reference is to a great tribulation in the end of this Age, through which all except the Little Flock may be expected to pass.--**Luke 21:36**.

In this tribulation time there will be a general cleansing, a general turning to the Lord on the part of these consecrated ones and an acceptance by the Lord; for we read that they shall come up out of the great tribulation and be granted palm branches, and be permitted to serve the Lord in His Temple before His Throne. We notice, however, that the Little Flock, who keep their garments unspotted by daily, hourly, applying for their share of the precious blood for this purpose--these receive the higher

honor; and instead of being before the Throne are in the Throne as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. Instead of having palm branches, representing victory, they have crowns, which represent victory on a higher, grander plane, approving them as "more than conquerors" through Him who loved them and bought them with His precious blood.--**Rom. 8:37**.

In other words, the Great Company mentioned here are chastened through tribulations to the point of the abjuration of sins and the cleansing of the robe, and attain to the spiritual nature and will be highly honored servants of the Lord during the Millennial Reign, while the Little Flock will be joint-heirs with their Lord in that Kingdom. The two classes are represented to us in **Psalm 45**. The Little Flock is the Bride, all glorious with raiment of fine needlework and gold, representing the embroidery of the fruits of the Spirit and the gold of the Divine nature, while the Great Company are represented by a larger company--"the virgins, her companions, that do follow her" into the King's presence.

The little flock in this symbolization of **Revelation** are pictured as 144,000, 12,000 out of each tribe of Israel. Natural Israel, as we have previously seen, was a typical people. The real Israel of God is Spiritual Israel. The promises and opportunities, however, went first to Natural

Israel; and as many out of all the tribes who were of right condition of heart and received the Master were granted the liberty to become members of the House of Sons. (**John 1:12**.) The remainder of that nation were cast off from participation in the chiefest blessing--to subsequently have an opportunity in the Millennial Age of attaining to an inferior blessing. Their casting off left vacancies in the appointed numbers of the twelve tribes; and it is to those vacancies that the Lord during this Gospel Age has been inviting those who have an ear to hear the Truth and who have earnest desires of accepting it. Many more will be called than will be chosen to this

SM728

place. The world in general is not called, but only those who have an ear to hear. The Great Company, although called, failing to respond with full appreciation, fail to secure membership in this Spiritual Israel class, the Little Flock. Yet, as we have seen, they will come through much tribulation and disciplines of the Lord to a grand position, but far inferior to that of the "Very Elect."

"WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE"

The world has no advocate with the Father, but "we have." The consecrated Household of Faith is represented in Heaven itself by Him who redeemed the whole world. After our Lord had finished His sacrifice at Calvary, been raised from the dead on the third day, spent forty days with the disciples, establishing them and preparing them for the work before them, He then ascended up on High, there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf, as today's text declares, to be our Advocate. (**Heb. 9:24**.) The figure is a peculiar one. An advocate, an attorney, appears to answer for his client, not to answer for others; and so, although our Lord has laid down the Ransom-price for the sins of the whole world, or, as today's text says, is a Propitiation for the sins of the whole world, nevertheless He did not appear for the whole world. The world has not retained Him as an Advocate. Only believers have come into this relationship, and consequently only for these does He appear, only for these has He made satisfaction. Only these, therefore, have been brought into covenant relationship

with the Father, as the Scriptures indicate.

The same Jesus, on the basis of the same Sin-offering finished at Calvary, will in the next Age take up the cause of the world--not as an Advocate, not as appearing before the Father for them and having them justified through faith, but as a Mediator between God and man. God stands for His own Justice. Mankind in general, the world, are in more or less of a rebellious attitude, lovers of sin, blind to their true interests. The Mediator undertakes

a work on their behalf, to bring in reconciliation between God and these His rebellious subjects, and to recover the latter by opening the eyes of their understanding, by giving them valuable lessons and experiences respecting the blessings of righteousness and the undesirableness of sin, and thus to bring back as many as possible to fellowship with the Father, and to restore them mentally, morally and physically to the original likeness of God. By the end of that Millennial Age the Mediator will be ready to introduce the perfect members of the race to the Father, blameless and irreprovable; for all those rejecting His ministries of reconciliation will have been cut off in the Second Death. Thenceforth there will be no more sorrow, pain, sighing, crying, dying, because all the former things will have passed away. The Mediator will have effected His grand work of destroying sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness.

How precious the thought that, while the world is mentally, morally and physically poisoned by sin and blind to its own best interests, the time shall yet come when they will be blessed with the opening of the eyes of their understanding and with all the assistances necessary for their recovery! And how the Lord's words resound in our ears, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." (**Matt. 13:16**.) We may well thank God that the light of the knowledge of His goodness has shined into our hearts; and that we no longer need to wait for the Mediator's work to reconcile us, but that now in advance turn to the Lord promptly, as soon as we have heard of His grace in Christ. And how gracious is His provision in all respects, for our adoption into His family, our begetting of the Spirit to a new nature, that we may become heirs of God and joint-heirs

with His Son in the glorious Kingdom, which is to bless the world--"all the families of the earth."

SM730

THE LORD'S HOUSE OVER ALL

It"It shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."--**Isa. 2:2**.

Our text has not yet been fulfilled, but we believe the beginning of its fulfilment to be near. It pictures Messiah's Kingdom, for which Christian people have long been waiting and praying, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in Heaven"--the same Kingdom for which the Jews so long waited and are still waiting. Our text relates, not to the spiritual part of the Kingdom, but to that which belongs to the natural seed of Abraham. A great mistake has been made by many of us in the past, in that we have not discerned and acknowledged the two Israels, Spiritual and Natural, and the separate rewards and blessings apportioned to these by the Divine promises of the Scriptures. Both are to be used of God in fulfilling the promise made to Abraham --in blessing all the families of the earth.

Only a "little flock" is to be selected during this Gospel Age and tried, fitted and polished and eventually changed from human to spirit nature, "like unto the angels." These with their Lord and Head, will constitute the great Mediator of the New Covenant, under which all the families of the earth will be blessed. After the completion of Messiah, Head and Members, on the plane of glory, the New Covenant will be inaugurated with Israel, as the Scriptures distinctly teach. (**Jer. 31:31-34**.) Our text, therefore, waits for its accomplishment until the last member of the elect Church of Christ shall have passed beyond the veil.

SM731

ISRAEL THE EARTHLY REPRESENTATIVE

In the symbolic language of the Scriptures a mountain always symbolizes a Kingdom. Hence the Mountain of

the Lord's House means the Kingdom of God, and that Royal House or Family recognized by Him. For instance, we read that David sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord, and that God made a Covenant with him, "even the sure mercies of David," viz., that none but his seed, his posterity, would ever be recognized as the Divinely appointed representatives of God in kingly authority and power. In other words, Messiah was to be the offspring of David, the great antitypical David (Beloved) who must "reign from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth." Under this power or rule Israel will be exalted amongst the nations and used as the Divine channel of blessing for all people, that eventually all the families of the earth may come to the true knowledge of God and to a full opportunity of becoming children of Abraham by faith and obedience.

The Messiah--King on the spirit plane, the Son of God (and like God invisible to men, as are also the angels)--is the antitypical David and the antitypical Solomon, the wise, the great, the rich. In the days of His flesh He was the Son of David according to the flesh, though begotten of a Divine life not tainted by any human imperfection. He was, therefore, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. His faithfulness to the will of the Father made Him subject to all the experiences of a life of suffering and death, as expressed in His own words, "The cup which My Father hath poured for Me, shall I refuse to drink it?" His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, demonstrated His loyalty to the last degree and He received the high reward apportioned. "Him hath God also highly exalted and given a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow both of things in Heaven and things in earth."

SM732

Exalted to the right hand of Divine favor He waits only for the Father's time to take to Himself His great power and reign. (**Rev. 11:17**.) Meantime, in harmony with the Divine will, purposed before the foundation of the world, He acts as Advocate for such as have the hearing ear and the obedient heart, and will now respond to the special invitation of the Gospel Age. That call is to leave the world, its sins, its pleasures and its hopes,

and to walk by faith in the exceeding great and precious promises of God--the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man. These are the Heavenly things promised them as the Bride and Joint-heir with their Redeemer in His glorious Kingdom to come and its blessed work of uplifting Israel and the world.

IN THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAINS

We have before our minds the antitypical House of David, Messiah's kingly household, the Royal Priesthood, Divinely prepared. As a Kingdom it will be at the top--above all the kingdoms of earth. Not only will this be true of the spiritual Kingdom (invisible to men as the angels are invisible), but it will include also an earthly Kingdom composed of "Israelites indeed." At their head as princes in all the earth will stand the resurrected Ancient Worthies, perfected as men and samples of what all mankind, by obedience to the laws of the Kingdom, may attain to with eternal life. Those Ancient Worthies are enumerated in the Scriptures--Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the Prophets, etc., and described by St. Paul in **Hebrews 11:38-40**.

To these belong the earthly promises of the Old Testament. They never heard of the Heavenly or spiritual promises. Their loyalty will find its reward in the fact that they will come forth from the tomb no longer blemished and imperfect, but fully, completely restored to the perfection originally enjoyed by Father Adam. Additionally, these will have the special guidance and instruction

of Messiah (Head and members) in all the affairs of mankind. Thus as the Master said, speaking of that time, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Prophets in the Kingdom." (**Luke 13:28**.) The world will have contact with them and will be blessed by their instruction. But the world will never see Messiah, except as they will see His mind, His disposition, His character, through these, His earthly representatives in the Kingdom. He fully meant it when He declared before He died, "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more. But ye shall see Me." (**John 14:19**.) The Apostle

assures us that we shall see Him as He is, because we shall be like Him. The Church will experience the First Resurrection change from earthly to Heavenly nature.--**1 Cor. 15:50**; **1 John 3:1,2**.

ALL NATIONS FLOW UNTO IT

God's Kingdom will be represented in the earth by Israel--especially by these saintly men of Israel, resurrected perfect, who will be the special appointees and representatives of the glorified Messiah's Rule. As it is written, "instead of the fathers [the ancient saintly ones were styled "the fathers," as Jesus was styled the Son of Abraham and David] shall be Thy children, whom Thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (**Psa. 45:16**.) These princes, acting under and continually in contact with the spiritual Kingdom and rulers styled in the Scriptures "the Royal Priesthood" will, of course, be so superior in their wisdom and power as to command the obedience of the whole earth. The nation of Israel, with whom they are related, would naturally respond more quickly than others to the new order of things, which is just that for which they have been waiting and praying for more than thirty centuries.

In these words the Lord through the Prophet assures us of the wonderful success which will attend the establishment of the New Empire of earth, the dominion of the Prince of Light, which supersedes the dominion of

the Prince of Darkness, when Satan shall be bound for a thousand years, that he may deceive the peoples no more. Messiah's Kingdom will be high above all other Kingdoms, not only in its grandeur, majesty and authority, but also in the lofty principles which it will represent. Thus it is written, "He shall lay righteousness to the line and justice to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies." (**Isa. 28:17**.) Nevertheless, as the world shall come to appreciate the new order of things all nations shall flow unto it, *flow up* to it--contrary to the downwardness of fallen human nature. It will make manifest such wonderful rewards for righteousness and obedience to God, and it will so make manifest the stripes that must attend all wilful disobedience

to the Divine arrangement, that the Scriptures will be fulfilled which declares "that when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness."--**Isa. 26:9**.

For six thousand years humanity has been learning "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," its downward tendency in every sense of the word. Every form of government has been tried in an endeavor to secure the greatest amount of blessing. But the uniform results have been that those exalted to place and influence and power have proved themselves unequal to the opportunities and temptations of the positions and have abused them selfishly. Whoever is acquainted with history realizes the truthfulness of all this. If some of us have hoped that the general education of the masses and the general enlightenment of the race would abolish sin and selfishness and demonstrate the truthfulness of the proverb, "Honesty is the best policy," we are willing to confess that this has been a mistake. We perceive that the greater the wisdom and intelligence granted to a selfish mind and heart the greater will be its opportunities for evil.

As a consequence the world is losing confidence in itself. All, whether politicians or judges or governors,

great or small, of one party or another, of one nationality or another--all are accused of being "tarred with the same stick" of selfishness. The Bible clearly indicates that this distrust is not without reason and that the great Time of Trouble soon to come upon every nation (**Dan. 12:1**) will be the direct result of this loss of confidence. The Bible description of the matter briefly summed up is that every man's hand shall be against his neighbor. (**Zech. 8:10**; **14:13**.) It will be after that great Time of Trouble shall have thoroughly sickened humanity as respects itself and any hopes it might have had of bringing about a Millennium by its own efforts--that God will manifest His Kingdom in the top of the mountains--higher than all other kingdoms every way, and all people shall flow toward it. As it is written, "The desire of all peoples shall come."--**Hag. 2:7**.

This is described in the verse following our text which reads, "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the Mountain [Kingdom] of the Lord, to the

House [Temple] of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion [the spiritual, unseen Kingdom of Messiah] shall go forth the Law and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem [the seat of earth's empire to be]. And He shall judge among the nations [rewarding and punishing justly], and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

All Christians agree that these words apply to the Messiah's Kingdom. They tell us clearly and distinctly of how the judgments of the Lord will be abroad in the earth, causing wars to cease and the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep. (**Isa. 11:9**.) Notwithstanding, therefore, the picture of the intervening trouble, which Divine Wisdom sees necessary for the humbling of human pride let us

rejoice in the glorious arrangement God has made on mankind's behalf. And let the Church of Christ specially rejoice in the favored position offered to her in connection with the world's salvation--a seat with the Redeemer in His glorious spiritual Throne and share with Him in the great work of blessing Natural Israel and all the families of the earth.

O HOUSE OF JACOB, COME!

We have already noted that this prophecy belongs to Natural Israel and not to Spiritual Israel. As the first verse declares, it concerns Judah and Jerusalem. By the time this prophecy will have begun to be fulfilled, Spiritual Israel will be beyond the veil. It is in full harmony with this that we read in the fifth verse, "O House of Jacob, come ye and let us walk in the light of the Lord!" This is particularly the time when this message to Natural Israel should go forth. We understand the Scriptures to teach that during the next few years the Lord will have special dealings with Israel in connection with this call. He will point out to them the way of righteousness and the great privileges that are theirs as a people, because of Divine promises to their fathers,

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, etc. But only those who respond by turning to the light of God's Word to walk in it will be in the proper condition of heart and obedience to promptly get the blessing at the beginning of Messiah's Reign. Those most prompt to respond will get the greater blessing.

Verses 6-10 portray some of the reasons why God's favor has been withdrawn for a time from Natural Israel --aside from the fact that His special favor was for the time to be given to Spiritual Israel. Then follows a description of the Time of Trouble, in which present institutions will succumb, to be followed by Messiah's Empire. Let us read some of these verses and note their applicability to our day and the correspondence between these statements and very similar pronouncements in the

Book of Revelation, applicable also to the time in which we are living. We will quote and paraphrase.

WHAT THE TROUBLE WILL ACCOMPLISH

The lofty looks of man shall be humbled and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that Day. One of the greatest obstacles in the pathway of humanity, hindering approach to truth and righteousness, is pride. The Almighty God is not sufficiently reverenced. The very learned men of all our colleges seem more and more to doubt that there is a God and that the affairs of earth are subject to any other regulations than those of chance, except as the learned can regulate them. The Time of Trouble, when the various theories of man will be tried and found wanting, will demonstrate most thoroughly that the wisdom from Above is neglected in favor of earthly wisdom. The Lord says in another place, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent men shall disappear." This will go from bad to worse; and all the Wisdom of the learned and the methods to which they have trusted will prove futile. The result will be the glory of the Lord and the humbling of human pride.

For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be heavy upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one

that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low, and upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up (the ecclesiastically great) and upon all the oaks of Bashan (the politically strong); upon all the high mountains (the kingdoms of the world) and upon all the hills that are lifted up (the smaller princedoms); and upon every high tower and upon every fenced wall (representing human organization for strength and protection) and upon all desirable prospects and ideals of earthly ambition, the arm of the Lord will be heavy. The result will be that the loftiness shall be bowed and the haughtiness shall be made low and the Lord alone shall be exalted in

that day; and the idols shall be utterly abolished. (**Isa. 2:12-18**.) God must be first under the new order of things. No peace or blessing will otherwise result.

HIDING IN ROCKS AND CAVES

Those in distress and perplexity will in that Time of Trouble flee to the holes and the rocks and the caves of earth in fear. As **Revelation (6:16**) expresses it, They shall call to the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the Throne." We are not to understand this more literally than its context. It does not signify that people will be so foolish as to literally pray for rocks to fall upon them, when they could more easily destroy their lives in another way. The thought is the very contrary of this--that they desire protection, shielding, hiding, covering from the trouble of the coming Day of the Lord. These shelters of the rocks and caves of the earth symbolically represent the attempted protection of human organizations, insurance companies, secret societies, etc. But none of these will be able to protect from the trouble which is coming and which will be world-wide, involving every earthly thing and interest, religious and secular, financial and political.

This will take place when the glory of the Lord and His majesty are manifested in connection with His standing up to assume command of the world and when He will shake terribly the earth (society), that everything contrary to righteousness and holiness may be uprooted and overthrown. St. Paul pictures that same

Time of Trouble and declares that the only thing that will not be shaken will be whatever is in harmony with God's Kingdom of righteousness.--**Heb. 12:26-29**.

Though round about Him clouds and darkness
Obscure the beams of dawning day,
Above the clouds, upon the mountains,
The Watchers see the morning ray.

SM739

NEARING THE DESIRED HAVEN OF REST

"So He bringeth them unto their desired haven."--**Psa. 107:30**.

Our context seems to describe the Church of Christ and her billowy journey from Pentecost down to the time when the last member of the Church, which is the Body of Christ, shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye and when all together united with Him He shall present them faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. (**Jude 24**.) That certainly is the desired haven of all those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, who have been taught of God and who have learned something at least respecting the things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him.--**1 Cor. 2:9**.

It is of that desired haven that the Prophet speaks representing Christ and the Church, saying, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness." (**Psa. 17:15**.) O dearly beloved, we may be content whatever lot we see, since we realize that we are under the guidance and leading of our Lord and since we know that all things are working together for good to them that love Him, to the called ones according to His purpose! We may be content in the midst of all the sufferings and trials and difficulties of life, but we are not satisfied. We are content because our Lord assures us that present lessons, experiences and disciplines are necessary for our fitting and preparing for the Heavenly Kingdom and for the future glory. But we shall be satisfied only when we get those eternal verities of which now we have only the promise, or hope. But what a hope is ours; what a glorious hope! No wonder the Apostle referred to it as that "blessed hope" and connected it with the glorious

SM740

appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ at His Second Advent.--**Tit. 2:13**.

More and more, as we study our Father's Word and come to understand the deep things of the Divine Plan,

do we find this hope to be a blessed one, the one our dear Redeemer had in mind when He said, "If I go away I will come again and receive you unto Myself." (**John 14:3**.) The Apostle again refers to this "blessed hope" of ours, saying that it is to our souls an anchorage, sure and steadfast, entered within the veil, because we believe in Jesus. Faith is the cable by which that glorious promise or hope that the Lord has given us holds us fast and secure, not moved amidst the storms and trials of life. I remind you that this hope, as the Apostle explains, was originally set forth in God's promise to Abraham--the promise which He not only repeated but made oath to--the only promise made with an oath, secured and held fast by the most solemn declaration imaginable, the word and oath of Jehovah God.

"WHICH HOPE WE HAVE"

This promise which constitutes our hope, our anchorage in Christ, is contained in the Word of God to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." What a hope we may entertain for the world of mankind in general! If they are all to be blessed they are not in any hopeless position or condition. They have indeed gone down into the silence of the tomb, into Sheol, into Hades; but He whose word cannot be broken and whose oath is inviolate declares that they yet shall all be blessed. And this we see signifies that they must all be awakened from the sleep of death. No wonder the Apostle exhorts that we should sorrow not as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again let us also believe that all who sleep in Jesus will God bring from the dead through Him. (**1 Thess. 4:13,14**.) Ah, yes, we are glad that which would have been

death in the most absolute sense, in the sense that it applies to the brute creation, is not God's ultimate provision for mankind. How glad we are that in His love and sympathy He provided even before our fall that we be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ! How glad we are to know that the precious blood was in due time shed to make reconciliation for iniquity and to bring in everlasting righteousness!--**Dan. 9:24**.

"SOME BETTER THING FOR US"

How glad we are that the ultimate results of that precious sacrifice and of our Lord's consequent resurrection to power and great glory as King Immanuel mean eventually the blessing of all these sons and daughters of Adam who have gone down into death; that their death condition has been turned into what is figuratively sleep, a period of unconsciousness, from which they will awaken in the glorious Resurrection Morning! Who that has sympathy for his fellow-creatures, the groaning creation, could help rejoicing to know of so great salvation that God has provided for the world! Indeed, we need not sorrow as others who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died, that He rose again, that in due time He is to be King of kings and Lord of lords, and that He must reign as Immanuel, God with men, until He shall have put down all insubordination and until the last enemy, even Adamic death, shall be destroyed and the whole world of mankind shall have been lifted out of it back to all that was lost in Adam and was redeemed by Jesus Christ our Lord--excepting only those who wilfully, intelligently and of their own responsibility, when they shall have been given those glorious opportunities, reject them and die the Second Death.--**Acts 3:23**.

But if our cup of blessing overflows with the thought of all the blessings that are coming to all the families of the earth when during the Millennial Age the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, when Immanuel

shall reign for the blessing of waking and uplifting of all from sin and death, and when Satan shall be bound, our joys are made superabundant when we appreciate the fact that God has called us in advance of the world, not only privileging us to know of His gracious purpose for mankind but offering to us a special share, a special salvation still higher, still grander, one which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man,--even joint-heirship with our Redeemer in his glorious Kingdom as His Bride. No wonder the Apostle speaks of lengths, breadths, heights, depths of

the Love of God, which passeth all understanding! What was there in the world of mankind that should attract Him to grant mankind a redemption, an opportunity for restitution, and what was there in us whom He has now called in advance that we should be called the sons of God, that we should be made joint-heirs with His Son! We can only wonder and be in amazement at the Love of God which passeth all understanding.

THE CHURCH ON A STORMY SEA

So, then, dear friends, we have a double hope, a hope for the world and a special hope for ourselves, for even as many as the Lord your God shall call, even as many of them as shall make their calling and election sure by faithful response to the terms and conditions of the call. These hopes all center in that Abrahamic promise, the world's share being that they shall be blessed through the Seed of Abraham, and the Church's share that she shall be associated with her Lord as the Seed of Abraham, in harmony with the Apostle's words, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise."--**Gal. 3:29**.

When we think of the Church of Christ we must drop from our minds the various churches of men. We must remember that there is but the one Church of Christ, and that it includes all who are truly His through faith, consecration and obedience. Sectarianism, great or small,

has no part in the Divine arrangement as revealed in the Scriptures. The Church which the Lord recognizes is the "Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven." (**Heb. 12:23**.) Consequently no church history gives the record of the experiences of the true Church. What we know of it must be based upon the testimonies of the Lord's Word, and our own experiences and inferences drawn from these. The Lord said that whosoever would live godly would suffer persecution, that whosoever would faithfully be His disciple would find crosses, trials and would be hated of all men for His sake. Our own experiences will doubtless corroborate these Scriptural declarations. We all agree that the Christian course is a strenuous one, conflicts with foes

within and without, battling, struggling, fighting for life, for the life eternal, for the life which has already been begotten in us of the Holy Spirit and which must seek to grow, to develop that it may be perfected in the First Resurrection.--**Rev. 20:6**.

The Scriptures tell us something of the experiences of the early members of the Church that they "endured a great fight of afflictions partly whilst being made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst being companions of them that were so used." (**Heb. 10:32,33**.) We have every reason to believe that similar conditions have prevailed with this same consecrated class all the way down from the Apostle's day to the present time. Furthermore, we have every reason to believe that similar conditions will continue to the very close of the Church's experience on this side the veil, until the last member shall have finished his course and until the Church shall be exalted beyond the veil, perfect, satisfied, having reached their desired haven.

We see, then, that these stormy experiences apply both to the whole Church and to each individual member. It is true that there are certain storms, difficulties and trials common to the whole world of mankind; and, as the

Apostle says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now,...waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." But these storms which come to the Church are specially peculiar and different in some respects from all that come to the world. They come to us because we are not of the world, because we are separate from the world and its spirit, its aspirations, and are following the new aspirations and leadings of the Lord. Notice the Master's words, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (**John 15:18,19**.) So to speak, when we leave the world we start on our voyage to our haven of rest, the glorious Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem.

With some the beginning of the journey is peaceful and conditions are favorable, so there is more or less of a temptation to coast about and to feel at home on the

ocean instead of steering straight for the haven of rest. With others the stormy winds blow from the very start, suggesting the impossibility of the journey, in order that we might be affrighted and turn back, having concluded that as the cost of our home going would be too great we must abandon the project. These two influences are very successful with many; and they turn back after they had once concluded to take the journey in harmony with the Lord's invitation to follow Him, to endure hardness, to separate themselves from earthly interests and to seek His blessing and favor.

Our appeal is to those who have not been turned back by the allurements of peace and calm, who have not been discouraged by the storms and threatening aspects, but who have started with full courage upon the course to the Heavenly port. Of such we confidently assert that they had not been long in the way until storms and billows assailed them and the Adversary threatened to overwhelm

them with opposition or with temptation and allurements. This is the experience of the Lord's people in general, and the one which the Scriptures warrant us in expecting for all, "The servant is not greater than his Lord"; and the experiences of the Master are to be, in a considerable degree at least, the experiences of all those who will walk in His footsteps.

In our context the Prophet describes graphically some of our trials, difficulties and experiences, picturing them as the stormy troubles of the sea, saying of these mariners, "They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble, they reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then they are glad because they are quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven," through such experiences of storm, trial, difficulty, the seeking of the Lord in prayer, waiting upon Him and trusting Him, experiencing quiet and relief and enjoying His presence and blessing. Then another storm arises --more trouble, adverse winds, prayer again, drawing near the Lord, having His sustaining strength further

manifested, new hopes, new courage, new wisdom from on High. Thus by these various storms of life and the various blessings of sunshine and favor and the various lessons which we are thus learning, our Heavenly Father and our Lord are gradually bringing us to the desired haven, gradually instructing us in the right way, gradually fitting and preparing us for His presence and glory!

Indeed, we are assured that these lessons are absolutely indispensable to all those who will attain to the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them. The Apostle likens us to human sons and asks, "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not," and suggests that if the chastening be thus necessary and if we receive

none, it would indicate that we are not really sons but bastards, not really in the Father's love and favor. It is a part of the great lesson of faith and trust that we shall be able to recognize the hand of the Lord in all of our difficulties, to see the silver lining in every cloud of trouble, and to realize that all about us are the protecting powers of our God; that He holds us, as it were, in the hollow of His hand and that nothing of evil or trouble can by any means hurt us if we abide in trust, faith and obedience under His protecting care, seeking to learn the lessons which He would teach us. Thus He is bringing us to the desired haven. He is bringing us to that condition of heart and character which He can approve as worthy of life eternal, the glorious reward of the inheritance of the saints in light.--**Col. 1:12**.

"NO LION SHALL BE THERE"

We have remarked that the world indeed has its tribulations now, but they are not of the kind that come to us who have joined the standard of the Lord and made consecration of our lives to be soldiers of the cross and to fight a good fight under His banner. Neither will the world ever have similar experiences to ours. The Lord's dealings with the world in their Judgment Day, the Millennial Age, will be along different lines entirely from those which He pursued in dealing with the Church, the Body of Christ. It is because the Church is called to so high a station, joint-heirship with her Lord, that it is

required of all who would attain to that glory, honor and immortality that they shall be able and willing to endure hardness as good soldiers of God; that they shall overcome the world, the flesh and the Adversary and come off more than conquerors through our Lord's assisting grace.

But notice that while the Church's trials are crowded into a few years of experience, the world's trial day is to be a thousand years long, and the conditions will be very different. That which makes our voyage stormy is largely the opposition of the world, the Adversary, and

our own fallen flesh brought into temptation by its surroundings which are not favorable to us as New Creatures and which cause us continual distress. In the next Age, in the Millennium, when Satan is bound and the Reign of Righteousness is instituted, the world of mankind, then on trial for life eternal or death eternal, will find everything in every way more favorable to the way of righteousness than at present.

How grand a time that will be for the world! What a blessed thought it is that earth's millions who have known so much of sorrow, pain and trouble will then know so much of blessing and of the Lord's favor, and that He will wipe away all tears from off all faces and bring in everlasting righteousness, and that all those found faithful to the end shall ultimately not only reach the human perfection lost in Adam and an earthly paradise for a home, but life eternal through the dear Redeemer and the operation of His glorious Kingdom!
How glad we are for them that such blessings are awaiting them! We are content, however, to have the storms and billows in the present time, and the tribulation necessary for our development, that we may be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord.

A SYMBOLICAL PICTURE

Call to mind the night in which our Lord sent the disciples by boat across the Sea of Galilee while He remained in a desert place to pray! Call to mind the storm which arose, and the great distress in which they were! Call to mind how later on they beheld Jesus walking on the water! Call to mind how their hearts

were at first affrighted but afterwards calmed as they realized that it was indeed their Lord and that He was present with them and had all power! Then call to mind how Peter at this time became so courageous that he even suggested a willingness to walk on the water if our Lord would consent! Call to mind his fear when he saw the billows tempestuous! Call to mind that finally

SM748

our Lord Himself entered into the ship, and that immediately it was at the land and there was a great calm!
Perhaps this narrative was given us as a picture of the experiences of the Church individually and collectively. Individually we have such experiences. The Lord, although not forgetting us, hides Himself for a time and permits the storms of life, the billows of trouble, to assault us. Then He manifests Himself; and the storms no longer cause us dread and fears. We are able to endure them because of our realization of the Lord's presence and care.

Some of us might even essay to ignore the storms, and yet this, perhaps, is rash, as illustrated in St. Peter's case. But from the time we have the Lord's presence we have peace, and ultimately He brings us to the desired haven of Heavenly rest. Applying the picture to the Church collectively it is equally fitting: Storms and trials have beset the way of the Lord's faithful all through the journey from Pentecost until now. In the morning watches He has appeared. In the light of His Word we discern His presence. Our hearts are comforted; the storms and billows of life have no terror for us in the presence of our Master, in whom we trust. As He takes His seat in our midst we find ourselves at the close of the journey, at the desired haven. We have not yet fully reached that consummation except by faith. We are still nearing the port; but the realization of the Lord's favor and presence is our comfort and our strength. Let us continue to the end of the journey, and presently we shall effect our landing on the other side the veil. That will be glory for us, that will be satisfaction, that will be more than heart could wish or tongue could tell. "We shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness," when we share in His glory, when we shall be like Him and see Him as He is, when we shall participate with

Him in the glories of the Millennial Kingdom for the blessing of mankind!

SM749

"EVEN THE WINDS AND THE WAVES OBEY"

"What manner of man is this? For even the winds and the waves obey Him."--**Matt. 8:27**.

Our text is taken from the Gospel narrative of the storm on the Sea of Galilee, during which Jesus was asleep in the hinder part of the vessel, until the sturdy seamen, appalled by the storm, cried to Him, "Master, carest thou not that we perish?" Then the Savior arose and rebuked the storm; and there was a great calm. When the fishermen-disciples beheld this they said, "What kind of person is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him!"

We have great sympathy for the fellow-countrymen of Jesus who, failing to understand Him, caused his execution, considering Him a menace to their institutions. His wonderful words, His wonderful words of life, of which it is recorded that the public declared, "Never man spake like this man," and in general His wonderful personality seemed really incongruous with His general demeanor. Not claiming to be Jehovah, not claiming to be His own Father, as some now teach, but on the contrary declaring, "My Father is greater than I." He, nevertheless, claimed a special relationship to God; and this He demonstrated by such miracles as the one of our lesson. Had He done and said those things as a member of one of the popular sects of His day, He would have been reverenced. Had He joined in with the Pharisees and winked at their interpreting the Law in one way for the people and in another manner for themselves, He would have received much honor from the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant. But He antagonized all these by His humility in mingling with the common people, accepting some of them as His special disciples and sending them out as His representatives.

SM750

This specially branded Him as foolish in the eyes of the worldly-wise. This specially discredited Him, not only as a man and a teacher, but particularly as one who claimed to be the Messiah, the King of Glory, who was to

set up an Empire. We can well see why worldly-wise people of that day or this day would consider such a person a fraud, a pretender, a deceiver. Appearances were against Him.

"ART THOU A KING THEN?"

Picture the Great Teacher walking with His twelve Apostles, a nondescript crowd of those who heard him gladly--not many great, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble. Hear Him telling them--those who acknowledged themselves to be ignorant and unlearned (**Acts 4:13**)--that, if faithful to Him, He would grant them to sit with Him in His Throne judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The statement surely seemed fraudulent; and He had not the heart to condemn the Jews who so misinterpreted Him. St. Peter did not condemn them, but distinctly said, "I wot, brethren, that in ignorance ye crucified the Prince of Life, as did also your rulers." --**Acts 3:15-17**; **1 Cor. 2:7,8**.

Can we wonder that the learned Jews of that day were confused? They did indeed hear of His miracles--His recovering of sight to the blind and of strength to the withered hand of the impotent man; and, in the case of Lazarus, at least, they had demonstration of His power over the dead. They perceived that these miracles were having an influence upon the masses--that they detracted from their own esteem amongst the people. They knew that many of Jesus' sayings were wonderfully wise, and that His criticisms of their own inconsistencies were remarkably sharp. Yet withal they said, "We know that He is a fraud, because of His peculiar claim to be the Messiah and the Son of God. This claim of His discountenances all of His teachings and mighty works. It

cannot be true that He is the Messiah that our nation has waited for these more than sixteen centuries. God would surely send Messiah a sufficiency of demonstration of glory and power to convince the most intelligent of our nation, the Scribes and Pharisees and Priests. What they all dissent from and denounce, must be false."

FOR THE GOOD OF THE NATION

The Jewish wise men of eighteen centuries ago concluded that a man who set the masses agog with anticipation of Himself as the Messiah-King, yet who was without an army and without financial backing for a campaign, would present their nation to the Romans in a ludicrous light. As a result they might have taken from them at the word of the emperor the civil and religious privileges and rights they were enjoying. They took counsel and determined that in the interests of the peace of the nation this golden-tongued Miracle-worker should either be exposed as a fraud or be killed. They tried first to expose Him by trapping Him in His language in the presence of His followers and the multitude. But His intellect was keener than theirs; and the thrusts they made at Him rebounded to their own discomfort and established His own standing in the estimation of His followers and in the eyes of the people. One of these efforts to show up the hollowness of His claims and their fraudulency and to discourage His followers is worthy of particular notice, as it furnishes us the key to the sentiment of the rulers and also to the real facts of the case, which those rulers failed to discern.

"THE KINGDOM IN YOUR MIDST"

The influential Jews said, "Let us question this fraudulent Messiah respecting His pretensions, not with any hope of correcting Him, but with a view to opening the eyes of His followers to the weakness and fallacy of His teachings. Then they will see the hollowness of the hopes they are entertaining and their foolishness in leaving

their various avocations to become His followers, in the hope of sitting with Him in His throne. They will see that He has no prospect of ever securing a throne, and that they are merely deluded by Him in such expectations." They inquired of him, "When will your Kingdom appear? How long will it be before you sit upon your throne and have followers with you in the throne? How long before this Messianic Kingdom will rule in Palestine and extend from its borders to the ends of the

earth? After you have answered us this question we will ask you others respecting your financial support and resources--your own qualifications, and your subordinate officers; the arms for your soldiers and the supplies necessary for such a world-campaign as you are about to begin, according to your teachings."

The great Teacher's brief answer entirely silenced every objection. His teachings, had these men been "Israelites indeed," would have been so deeply impressed upon them that they would have followed up the matter with an entirely different line of questioning than at first contemplated. But they were insincere. Hence when their questions, intended to entrap the Teacher and Master, were answered and foiled, they merely acknowledged their defeat by their silence. The answer was not, as imperfectly translated in our Common Version--the Kingdom of Heaven is *within you*, hypocritical Pharisees, but, My Kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven, of which I am the King, will not *appear* at all. It will be an invisible Kingdom--it comes not with observation or outward show. Ye shall neither say, Lo, it is here, nor, Lo, it is there; for it will be everywhere in the midst of you, amongst you, invisible but all-powerful.--**Luke 17:20-22**.

Truly, what manner of man was this, and what manner of message and Kingdom was His, so different from anything the Jews had ever expected! Can we wonder that only a comparatively small proportion of them were in the heart attitude to receive this message respecting a

spiritual Kingdom? We cannot wonder! Even His most intimate disciples did not grasp the depth of His teaching until after His death and resurrection they, at Pentecost, received the special enlightenment foretold.--**Joel 2:29**.

ISRAEL'S HOPES MERELY DEFERRED

Then understood they the true depth of the teachings of Him who spake as never man spake. Then they comprehended that He was the Only Begotten Son of God who, in obedience to the Divine Program for Israel and the world, had left the Heavenly courts and glory of the spirit nature and been made flesh--"The Man Christ Jesus." (**1 Tim. 2:5**.) Then they understood, not only

that He was a perfect man, but that through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which came upon Him at baptism, He was indeed God's Anointed, the antitypical Priest, antitypical Prophet and antitypical King--not that He was these in the flesh, but that the new spirit nature begotten in Him through that anointing, was perfected in the resurrection, and that it is the glorified Christ on the spirit plane who will accomplish all the great things predicted through the Prophets, blessing all Israel and all nations, in God's due time. Then they understood the meaning of the Master's words to the Roman Governor, "My Kingdom is not of this Age; for if it were, then My servants would fight for Me and I should not be delivered to death." Then they perceived that His Kingdom will be not the less real and powerful, but the more so, because a Heavenly one, a spiritual one, which, in due time, in the Age to come, will operate through the nation of Israel, just as was originally promised and expected.

The Apostles discerned that the hopes of their nation were not blasted, not destroyed, but will all have fulfilment, though the time of fulfilment was deferred. And they see two reasons for the delay:

(1) In order to make the Messianic blessing as great as God designed that it should be--world-wide and unto eternal life--it was necessary that a great sacrifice for

sins should be made--a sacrifice typed for centuries in Israel's Atonement Day sacrifices--a sacrifice in two parts. These two parts are shown in Israel's Atonement Day--the bullock of the sin-offering and the Lord's goat of the sin-offering. Jesus Himself fulfilled the first of these, the merit of which has been applicable to the saintly few of Jews and Gentiles who have, during this Gospel Age, made a full consecration to walk in the Redeemer's footsteps. The secondary part of the sacrifice, the offering of the goat, pictures the sacrificing company of the Lord's faithful disciples throughout this Age. These, under cover of His righteousness, suffer with Him sacrificially.--**Heb. 13:11-13**.

Their reward is to be a share with the Redeemer on the Heavenly, spirit plane, participating in His glory, honor and immortality and in His great work of dispensing the Messianic blessing to Israel and the world.

How ashamed will all men be when the Times of Restitution mentioned by St. Peter (**Acts 3:19-23**) shall be ushered in! How astounded all will be at the goodness of God and His faithfulness in respect to all His promises! How the eyes of all humanity will look back to the days of Jesus in the flesh, when He appeared amongst men to lay a foundation for His glorious Messianic Kingdom by offering Himself in sacrifice for the sins of all the people, that thereby He might purge from sin all who ever will come to the Father through Him, and will thus have the right to restore the willing and obedient to full perfection and to destroy the rebellious in the Second Death. Ah, then all will know, as never before, the force of the words of our text, "What manner of man is this?" They will know Him as having been a man, The Sent of God. They will know Him as the now Highly Exalted One, far above men and angels, rewarded with the very highest reward which Jehovah could give to His Beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased and by whose stripes Israel and we all are healed.

SM755

DECISION IN CHARACTER BUILDING

"Choose ye this day whom ye will serve....As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."--**Josh. 24:15**.

Indecision is one of the greatest foes to character building, while the liberty or privilege of choosing, exercising our wills, is one of the grandest blessings accorded to humanity, and is an important element of man's likeness to his Creator. True, we see will, decision of purpose, manifested on every plane of life, even by the crawling worm or snail. But the human will, more richly endowed by the Creator, has a higher range, which includes, especially, decision in respect to the higher moralities, taking hold of questions of justice and love which affect and influence all of life's affairs. Look where we will we find that the people who are successful in any department of life are those who have purpose and will and determination--whether it be good, bad or indifferent. We see also that those who have no fixity of purpose, will, intention, are unsuccessful. As the Scriptures declare, "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways"; and if we look into the teachings of history we find this same lesson taught by all the past. It may, therefore, be well settled in our minds that one of the chief difficulties of the majority of the race is lack of decision, indecision of purpose.--**James 1:8**.

Worst of all, observation shows us that the vast majority of our race are in this very condition of uncertainty, indecision--they have no positive aim, no fixed purpose in life. As a consequence they are unhappy, discontented, and, like the chaff, ready to be blown hither and thither by every wind. These discontented ones, purposeless, aimless, half awake, are the dangerous element of society, which will very shortly bring to the world the awful

SM756

anarchy which the Scriptures clearly show will close the present age and usher in the New Dispensation.

USHER IN THE MILLENNIUM

Many as they pass through the streets can read in the countenances of their fellow-creatures the indecision, the lack of a fixity of purpose or real aim in life. Some look sour, sullen. They feel a grudge against their neighbors, who, because of purpose and decision, are more successful in the various affairs of life. Others have a resigned and despondent look, which intimates that they see no prospect in the future, and are merely enduring the present existence through a fear that the future may be worse. Other faces show eagerness--a desire to find a successful path, a realization that it is difficult to find and a hope that they may be amongst the favored few. Still other faces indicate that the mind is thoroughly dormant, that the individual merely eats, sleeps, talks and walks after the manner of the brute creation, without so much as desiring a purpose or inquiring, "What was the object of my creation? How may I best attain that object? What will tend to my intellectual and physical welfare and what to my injury?" Still other faces show intenseness of purpose, endeavor; but the eager, anxious, careworn countenance indicates that the ambition or purpose is not on a high level, but a low one, on a selfish plane--"Me and my wife, my son John and his wife: us four, no more."

How few faces indicate that their owners are well-balanced in mind, that they have a purpose in life, and that it is a noble, honorable, exalted purpose, generous and benevolent toward others! This, however, should be esteemed the ideal face, the one which indicates that the higher elements of the mind are in control, that the animal instincts for food and raiment have not run away with the manly qualities created originally in the image and likeness of God. Whoever recognizes this as the proper, the ideal condition, should search diligently to find the secret of it. That secret will be found to be a fixity of

purpose an establishment of mind and will, along the lines of wisdom and righteousness, and in opposition to sin, injustice, etc.

CHOOSING WISELY AND UNWISELY

While it is very important that we make a wise choice, come to a correct decision, follow right principles, in many instances there are certain particulars in which even a poor choice, an unwise purpose, might be more desirable than none. For instance, a determination to be rich cannot be classed as a good or honorable or trustworthy ambition. Nevertheless, by occupying his time, awakening his energies, stimulating his brain, it may prove a source of much rest and comfort to the one who makes such a decision and who lays out his life for its accomplishment as a goal. Whether he accomplish his aim or not, it at least gives him a purpose in life which, by engaging his talents, gives him refreshment, ministers to his comfort, and makes him ten-fold more useful to society than the purposeless man. Not that we are commending such a course as a worthy one, but merely noting that though unworthy it is better than none.

When we consider that the average of life is thirty-five years, and that remarkably few of the race attain to seventy years, and that to the majority the present existence is but the vestibule to a future life, when we note the present tendency on the part of the entire civilized world to strive for money, wealth--not merely for the necessities, comforts and luxuries for themselves and their dependents, but for the accumulation of wealth which neither they nor theirs can ever hope properly to make use of--when we perceive that to gain wealth the majority are willing to sacrifice almost everything of virtue and character, time, energy, relationship and communion with God and even life itself--we realize that this choice indicates a serious unsoundness of mind, an unbalance which amounts almost to monomania. Nevertheless we repeat that such an unbalance, such a monomania,

is preferable to no choice, no decision of the will, no purpose in life.

All reasonable people, then, will agree (1) that there is an advantage in making a choice, in reaching a decision in life as to what we will do with our time, our talents, our influence; (2) that the choice may be a wise or an unwise one, and (3) that we all need counsel in respect to

what would constitute a wise choice, a wise decision, so that we may make the most of our opportunities and attain the largest degree of blessing out of life in its present condition and also its hope for the future. To such a one comes the query, Where shall we obtain the counsel, the assistance so necessary to us--so necessary to our prosperity in the life that now is and in that which is to come?

Children should properly look to their parents for assistance and guidance in this matter. Yet, as we have just seen, the parents themselves have generally reached no decision, and are therefore quite incapable of instructing those for whom they are naturally responsible. Both parents and children, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, need counsel upon this subject, and are beginning to find this out. They are looking about in various directions, taking note of the examples of the good and the great, but are as apt to copy the wrong as the right.

THE SCRAMBLE FOR WEALTH

To the majority today comes the desire for wealth, and the suggestion that to acquire wealth they should copy the methods employed by the wealthy. One thing is evident; namely, that no man could accumulate millions, much less hundreds of millions, of money by his own toil on any adequate basis of distribution amongst men, as a reward for services rendered to the world. We are not meaning to suggest that there is an equality of value for services, but simply that the inequality is not so great actually as the differences in wealth would imply. Common report, discounted one-half, would leave

the majority of people to suppose that the wealthy attained their stations by partly dishonest or disreputable means. Such thoughts add to the general discontent.

To the beginner, who sets out to be a worshiper of Mammon, the lesson is that to succeed he must not be too particular in respect to the justice, truthfulness and honorableness of the means he will employ in acquiring wealth. This signifies a bad start, with the intention to fight against the voice of conscience throughout the remainder of life. Near by stand the advocates of religion

and science calling for recruits and assistance, but both assure the inquirer that they will appreciate him the more if he has a backing of wealth and influence amongst the wealthy. And in answer to his queries they frankly tell him that it is true that to come to them under these favored conditions will mean that he must not be thoroughly religious, thoroughly truthful, thoroughly conscientious. And as he investigates the possibilities along the lines of science, he finds that while the word science is synonymous with truth, yet really some of the most renowned scientists have gotten their reputations by mere guesses and pretensions rather than by their knowledge and presentations of facts. If the inquirer has not something to guide him in the matter, this also speaks to him of the necessity of bowing not to conscience--of being worldly-wise. In other words, "the end justifies the means."

If next he turn to religion, his ears are saluted with a Babel of confusing advice: creeds from the Dark Ages and some more modern appeal to him, telling him of three gods in one person or of "the same substance." This he cannot understand; for it is not understandable. He cannot believe it in the true sense because no one can properly believe what he cannot understand; but he is solemnly told that to doubt this will mean his eternal condemnation in torment at the hands of demons. He is told that God is Love, and in the next breath that He created a place of

torment for the great masses of humanity even before He created them, and that fire-proof devils and fuel for all eternity have long been provided. When he doubts how a God of Love could have devised such a plan, he is again threatened that to deny that such a procedure is a loving and a just one would surely be a ground for his condemnation to suffer that eternal torment. He is urged to confess these matters which he cannot understand or believe, and to call himself a Christian, to go out into the world and make money as honestly as possible and to contribute liberally to the Church, and is told that he will be granted a free pass to eternal happiness in the future.

The whole matter seems so unreasonable, so preposterous, that the majority of thinking people cannot take this proposition seriously; nevertheless, through

fear they treat it as though they partially believed it. Ostensibly they serve the Lord, in reality they serve Mammon, selfishness in their churches, in themselves, in their families.--**Matt. 7:21-23**.

THE "STILL SMALL VOICE"

Aside from these voices there is another, which, however, very few can hear. The majority hear only the Babel of unreason. The few harken to the Word of the Lord, with its testimony that the great Creator of all things is just, wise, loving and powerful; that the present condition of humanity, moral and physical decrepitude, is the result of original sin, and is in effect the outworking of its sentence, the death sentence, upon the race; that there is no hope of a full recovery from these adverse conditions except as God Himself shall render the aid. His message through His Word is that while His Justice has condemned the race as a whole, His Love met the requirements of justice--that the Son of God left the glory of the Father, became a member of our race, and, as such, redeemed it from the death sentence and made possible, not only an awakening from the tomb, but also a full restoration back to the original perfection, the image and

likeness of God, lost by Father Adam and by us all through his disobedience. The still small voice through the same Word of God tells us that Divine Wisdom is controlling in the matter, and has set the Millennial Age in the future as the time in which Almighty Power will be exercised for the deliverance of the world from its bondage to sin and death and its restoration to Divine favor.

Wisdom assures us that Divine Power will be exercised at that time for our relief, and will be quite sufficient. Wisdom also explains that in the interim between the time when Christ died for our sins and the time when He will inaugurate the Millennial Age for the blessing of the world, it is the Divine Plan to select from amongst men a Little Flock of peculiar character, of peculiar loyalty to righteousness, to truth, to God and to all that are in accord with Him; that this Little Flock is to constitute the Bride of Christ, His joint-heir in the Millennial Kingdom, participating with Him in His work of blessing,

restoring and uplifting mankind. The same voice explains through the Word that only by accepting Christ and the assistance He will gladly grant, can any ever attain to the eternal life conditions which Divine Wisdom has provided for us--that all who refuse the Divine favor will be cut off in the Second Death, from which there will be no deliverance.

CHOOSING THE BETTER PART

All this is reasonable, God-like. How strange it is that so few have an ear to hear this glorious Message! How strange that they do not reject as unworthy the various substitutes offered them! Why do they not listen for the still small voice of the Lord? Why should they not expect that He who created us in His own image and likeness would have a purpose respecting us which would be worthy of His own character, and which He would not be ashamed to reveal to His people? Now they can understand why St. Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, and why our Lord declared that He had come to

seek and to save that which was lost.--**Rom. 1:16**; **Luke 19:10**; **1 John 2:2**; **John 1:9**; **Luke 2:10,14**.

What now shall he choose whose eyes of understanding are opened to this glorious vision of God's goodness, mercy and love, which will ultimately bless all the families of the earth? The effect of this glorious picture will be to cheer and encourage his heart. He can surely from this standpoint realize that for him, no matter how adverse his conditions and environments in the present life may be, God has a glorious epoch in reservation, with blessed possibilities for all. This view of matters may satisfy him for a little while--some may be so contented therewith that they will make no further inquiry; but others on the contrary will be so overpowered with the glorious vision of God's real character and Plan that they will bow their hearts before Him in wonder, admiration, love, and their cry will be as was that of the Apostle Paul when his eyes were opened, "Lord, what will Thou have me to do?" (**Acts 9:6**.) It is this class that the Lord is seeking during this Gospel Age. Others receive the grace of God in vain now, and will miss the

special calling of the Elect Church, and have their portion and opportunity with the world in general.

The bowing of the heart to the Creator and Redeemer signifies the renouncement of the human will and preference and the acceptance of the Divine instead. No other course imaginable is so safe, so sane, so reasonable as this--to acknowledge our continued dependence upon our Creator, to acknowledge our own unwisdom and that of our fellows, to seek the wisdom from Above to make the wisest and best use of the fragment of the present life yet at our disposal, and to make sure of the eternal life which the Lord has promised to them that love Him. It is insufficient that we consider these matters and think favorably of them. They will not be ours unless we come to the point of definite self-surrender. Many make a great mistake there. They want to be the Lord's,

SM763

they want to accept His promises, they want to have His peace in the present and in the everlasting future, but they shrink from definitely covenanting themselves to the Lord. They tell us sometimes that they fear to do so lest they should not be able to keep the agreement--lest they should make no better success at it than some nominal church members with whom they are acquainted, whose lives belie their professions. We reply that the Scriptures clearly intimate that we are not sufficient of ourselves for such a covenant, and that God does not even propose to make a covenant with us except as the Lord Jesus is recognized as the Endorser of our promises, and His endorsement which He proffers us is accompanied by His guarantee of assistance in every time of need; that He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, but will with each temptation provide a way of escape, and cause all our experiences to work together for our highest good.--**1 Cor. 10:13**; **Rom. 8:28**; **John 16:27**.

FAITH IS ESSENTIAL

It is in accord with all this that the Scriptures assure us that faith in the present time is indispensable to our acceptance with the Lord and our continuance in His favor. Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot be

of the faithful class now being the recipients of His favor. Those who can and do exercise faith, hold to the Divine promise, walk to the best of their ability in the footsteps of the Lord, and trust to the covering of the merit of our Redeemer--these only inherit all things --these only are to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, the Very Elect.--**Rom. 8:37-39**.

Following faith comes confession, and it also is indispensable. We are assured that with the heart man believeth, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (**Rom. 10:10**.) Those who can exercise the faith, but are restrained from telling to others the joy that they have found, their relationship to the Lord and the

glorious prospects of the future, are not of the kind whom the Lord will count worthy of a share in the Little Flock, the Kingdom class. His own words are, "He that is ashamed of Me and My Word, of him will I be ashamed." Manifestly such will not be fit for the glorious position to which the Lord has called us if they are so weak of character as to be ashamed of the Lord and His Word of grace. They are not overcomers in the Scriptural sense of the word, but must be laboring under the fear of man that bringeth a snare. Such may receive a blessing in the future, but cannot be granted the great blessing that is now being offered and which will be dispensed to the worthy in the First Resurrection.

As choice, decision, was necessary in the accepting of Christ at all, even by faith in our hearts, so another step in decision, determination, is reached and tested by our willingness or unwillingness to confess the Lord and His Word before others. But the first decision in the heart is the most important step of all. After we have fully and irrevocably given our all to the Lord, it is a comparatively easy matter, if our hearts remain faithful, to confess Him and His Word of grace. If it be asked how we shall confess the Lord, we reply that the Scriptural program for these is baptism in water, which symbolizes our full consecration even to death, and by which we are symbolically raised to walk in newness of life in our Redeemer's footsteps. This was not to be done for us by our parents when we were infants, nor by our godfathers or godmothers standing sponsors for

us, but was to be our own individual act after making our consecration and coming to an understanding of the Lord's arrangement.

"ME AND MY HOUSE"

Joshua, who uttered the words of our text, properly understood himself to be the head of his household, their representative under Divine arrangement. His consecration, therefore, meant the carrying of a consecrated

man's influence to every member of his trusting household. It meant that as a proper father he would have a large and good influence over all the members of his family, and that this influence would all be turned to the Lord--into channels of righteousness in all matters and affairs of the family. It must have meant, therefore, that Joshua would thenceforth honor the Lord by worship in his household and in all his ways acknowledging Jehovah. It meant the reverence of the entire household for religious things; it meant the influence of the head of the family in connection with the Almighty in leading his family to make similar individual consecration to the Lord. And a similar course is a proper one for every one of us. First of all we must see to our own hearts, reach a positive decision, get right with God, come under His blessing and care, and the promise of His Word through Christ. Then the business of life should be to bring our families and neighbors and all with whom we have influence, who have ears to hear and hearts to appreciate the Divine Message, into similar accord, similar consecration.

Let us choose, let us decide today, dear friends, if we have not already decided this most important of all questions. If in the past our course has been a double-minded one, let it not be so in the future. If in the past we have chosen unworthy, selfish ambitions, or foolish ones founded on our own surmises or those of others, let us not be content with any of these, but realizing the foundation of truth and of grace let us choose wisely, put our affairs in the hands of the One who is able to bring order out of confusion, and to speak peace to our troubled souls, and harmony to our discontented lives,

and whose Message by and by is to cause the assuaging of all the storms of passion and avarice which are now raging in the world, and to bring in that everlasting peace which the Lord, has promised under the reign of Him who will be the Prince of Peace.

SM766

"THERE IS A SIN UNTO DEATH"

"If any man see his brother sin a sin not unto death, he shall ask and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."--**1 John 5:16**.

The Lord's proposition to mankind is life or death--life on condition of their hearty acceptance of the Divine will and obedience to it; death on condition of their rejection of the Divine will, their love for sin and failure to be responsive to the Divine requirements. Life and death from the Scriptural standpoint are finalities--life everlasting or death everlasting. All mankind are to be judged to ascertain which shall be the portion of each--which shall enter life everlasting, which shall be consigned to death everlasting. The assurance of the Divine Word is that those who attain to life everlasting will attain bliss everlasting; that is to say, that God has made no provision for the giving of life everlasting under any except the absolutely perfect conditions that will insure joy, blessing and happiness. There is no provision in God's great Plan for an everlasting condition in woe, sorrow or pain or trouble. Hence the assurance is freely given that those who come into harmony with the Lord shall have all tears wiped away from all faces and that there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, for the former things shall have passed away.--**Rev. 21:4**; **22:3**; **Ezek. 48:35**.

On the other hand, the death everlasting will be the penalty inflicted upon all who do not eventually come into the fullest heart harmony with the Lord. They shall be as though they had not been; or, as the Apostle Peter declares, they shall be utterly destroyed from amongst the people; or, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, they shall be destroyed with an everlasting destruction; or,

SM767

as the Lord expressed the matter in a parable of the sheep and goats, they shall go into everlasting punishment. (**Ob. 16**; **Acts 3:23**; **2 Thess. 1:9**; **Matt. 25:46**.)

The punishment for sin being death, it would in the case of such be an everlasting one, and in that sense of the word different from the blight of death which for the past six thousand years has rested upon the whole human family. What we now know as death is in the Scriptures designated sleep, because God has made provision for the awakening of all from the present death-sleep in the glorious Morn of the Resurrection. Without such a resurrection such a death would be everlasting, for as the Prophet has declared, "There is neither wisdom nor device in the tomb whither thou goest."--**Eccl. 9:10**.

THE CROSS THE CENTER OF HOPE

And were it not for the redemptive work of Christ, begun at His baptism, finished at the cross, there would be no release of humanity from the tomb; for God by His own edict has closed every avenue and channel of hope, so that the eyes of the whole world might be turned to the Crucified One, even as the serpent-bitten Israelites of old were all caused to look at the brazen serpent, which prefigured our Lord and His payment of our penalty.

But some will say, Why did our Creator pronounce a death sentence on our race, under which we have suffered for the past six thousand years as a "groaning creation," and then provide a Ransom for all in the person of His Son, and then make a provision for a Second Death for some? We answer that the matter is entirely clear from the Scriptural standpoint. God dealt originally with our first parents when they were perfect, in His own image and likeness. They were on trial. If obedient to God they might continue to live; if disobedient they would die and return to the dust whence they were taken. This was the just edict--that none were worthy of life everlasting except as they would be obedient to the

Creator, whose laws are righteous altogether, and in the interest of all who love righteousness. Our Creator foreknew that the death sentence working in Father Adam would impair his entire race, and that none of them, therefore, would be worthy of life everlasting. Hence the sentence against Adam prevails against all of

his posterity, inheritors of his weaknesses and blemishes, which indeed have increased continually during the six thousand years of the reign of Sin and Death.

THE DIVINE PURPOSE

The Divine purpose, foreseeing the fall, arranged in advance for the redemption accomplished at Calvary, to the intent that Adam and all of his race, having had an experience with sin and a taste of the exceeding bitterness of its results, might be granted another trial for life. There is no partiality with God, and this privilege of a fresh trial is alike to every member of Adam's race as well as to Adam himself. In his case the fresh trial constitutes a second trial, or a second chance of obtaining eternal life. But in the case of his posterity this chance for opportunity for attaining eternal life will be the first chance, except as they might be reckoned as having shared with Adam in the fall, and thus in the losses of that original or first chance. Individually, however, the chance or trial for life or death which comes to each member of the human family will be practically the first and only chance that any of them will have.

Since our God is just, it stands to reason that if He has provided a way of mercy and salvation for Adam and his family--if He purposes to give to each of them a chance for life eternal--then we may be sure that it will be a righteous, a fair, a full opportunity. The fact that it is the Almighty who has purposed this great opportunity for life to our race, sentenced to death in Adam, guarantees us that every member of our race, therefore, shall come to an accurate knowledge of the Truth and

to a full opportunity of embracing righteousness on fair, equitable and reasonable terms; and that only such as have enjoyed such terms and opportunities and knowledge have had their trial for life. Others, who have not yet enjoyed full, fair opportunities of clear knowledge and of opportunity for obedience, have not yet had their trial for life. Of this class is the great mass of mankind, the heathen world, and in all lands the infants who die before reaching years of knowledge and discretion, and the mentally unbalanced, the idiotic. None of these

surely have had the opportunities of deciding for themselves the question of life or death by an intelligent acceptance of the Lord and His way of righteousness.

"IN THE WORLD TO COME"

The Apostle speaks of the world to come--that is, the Age to come in which righteousness will prevail. (**2 Pet. 3:13**.) And we are assured that it is there, in that Day, that these classes enumerated, which constitute the great majority of mankind, will have their opportunity and testing, to determine whether they shall have life everlasting or death everlasting--whether they shall enjoy an eternity of Divine favor or whether they shall be utterly blotted out, extinguished.

Since the great majority of mankind have not possessed the opportunities of testing and trial for life or death in the present life or in the "present evil world," as the Apostle designates the epoch during which sin and ignorance and superstition prevail as darkness over the earth and as gross darkness covering the people (**Gal. 1:4**), it therefore follows, that the time of God's provision for the great majority of mankind is in the "world to come"--the Age to come--the Age or epoch in which Christ shall reign and God's will shall be done on earth as in Heaven. That Kingdom Reign of the Redeemer will insure to the great mass of mankind, therefore, a most equitable test to determine their worthiness or unworthiness of the life eternal which is the gift of God.--**Rom. 6:23**.

SM770

But now we come back to the civilized and intelligent and the educated; and we say, Are not all who live in civilized lands on trial for life or death in the present time? We answer No! the great majority of them are not. The great majority who reside in Christian lands are blind and deaf as respects the Divine character and Plan, and are thoroughly incompetent to make a choice as between good and evil. They are not all alike blind. Perhaps none of them are totally blind as to what constitutes right and wrong on some questions. There are few, for instance, who do not know it is wrong to commit murder; but apparently there are few who recognize that it is murder from God's standpoint to speak evil of a

neighbor. Their eyes are holden, more or less darkened by custom and heredity; and they are depraved. If they were judged according to their present light, while under the domination of present weaknesses of the flesh, the great majority would certainly be condemned as imperfect. Even if their actions were left out of account altogether they would be imperfect in their ideals, imperfect in their endeavors, imperfect in their wills, and hence would be subjects of the Second Death, unworthy of life eternal, the gift which God has provided only for those who attain to a heart-likeness to Himself.

"IF WE SIN WILFULLY"

In view of the foregoing, the Apostle's words are perfectly plain, when discussing this question of the sin unto death. He does not indicate that murderers, thieves and blackguards of the world as being the subjects of this death. They are not on trial yet. We do not know what will be the verdict in their cases. God has chosen a certain order in which He will give the opportunity for attaining life eternal. Some are granted this opportunity in the present life; others, the great mass, will be granted the great opportunity or trial or test in the world, the age, to come, under the Kingdom

conditions. It might be suggested that the conditions of the Kingdom in the future will be much more favorable than the conditions of the present time. To this we answer, in some respects, Yes. However, the Lord has a method of compensation which seems to overcome all the difficulties, and guarantees to every member of Adam's race a full, fair, kind, generous, impartial test respecting their worthiness or unworthiness of the gift of God, eternal life.

First, the Lord seeks for the class known in the Scriptures as the "Very Elect." They are chosen according to two conditions: (1) Their faith; (2) Their loyalty to God and His Laws. These are chosen in the present time when sin is still permitted to have great influence and power, while the whole world is still blind and serving Mammon, selfishness. Those invited to be of this elect class are such as have been favored of the

Lord with more of a hearing ear than the majority of the race possessed. Indeed, they "have much advantage everyway," amongst others the testimony and the Divine revelation through Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets. The knowledge enables them in advance of the world to discern the principles of righteousness and to strive for them. Their weaknesses do indeed hinder them from doing what they would. But the Lord has arranged a compensating feature by which He deals with them not according to their weaknesses and imperfections, but according to their intentions and efforts, so that, with the best of intentions and loyalty to the Lord, their imperfect works are accepted as though they were perfect and they are credited accordingly in the Divine records.

These, justified by faith, covered with the merit of Christ's righteousness, consecrated to the Lord's service even unto death, are the Lord's special treasure, His jewels. These have the assurance of eternal life; and if they continue faithfully in the same way in which they have begun they are in no danger at all of losing it. But

SM772

if they turn from the way of righteousness they are the very ones who could sin the sin unto death. In a word, they are the only ones who at the present time, through justification and Divine favor and knowledge, are really upon trial for life or death everlasting. They have entered the race for the life eternal which God has offered; and only through failure will they miss it--and the failure, we are assured, cannot be one of ignorance or weakness, but must be a wilful one. In other words, the Lord has so taken this class under His supervision that all things necessary to their attainment of eternal life are guaranteed them; and only by their wilful, intelligent neglect and refusal of the terms and assistances can they cut themselves off from the Lord and from the everlasting life which is His gift to all who maintain their relationship to Him.

DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL SIN UNTO DEATH

None of the Lord's people are righteous in the perfect, absolute sense that in thought, word or deed they

come up to the Divine standard. But all of the Lord's people may be righteous under His gracious arrangement; namely, that if their hearts be true, loyal and perfect toward Him, none of their blemishes or imperfections of the flesh shall count for anything. So, then, the sin unto death must be a sin against light and knowledge, and must be committed with a reasonable degree of wilfulness--otherwise it would not be unto death. The Scriptures speak of this as a sin, as though it were simply one transgression or transaction. Nevertheless the context shows that we are not liable to sufficiently stumble into this condition of alienation and opposition to God; but that rather the matter comes on gradually, little by little, until the heart is completely turned away from the Lord. It behooves us, then, to be on the alert for the beginnings of evil in our hearts, which might ultimately lead later on to the complete alienation which would mean for us the Second Death.

SM773

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the Apostle seems to indicate that the sin unto death should be looked for to approach us in one of two forms. The first of these he describes in **Chapter 6:4-9**; the second he describes in **Chapter 10:26-32**.

In the first of these he seems to picture a moral retrogression in the words, "As touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come if these fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, seeing that they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put Him to open shame." The context here seems to indicate a falling away in the sense of falling into sinful practices--giving away to besetting sins, ceasing to resist the Adversary and his works, ceasing to avail themselves of the grace of God provided in Christ for their deliverance from bondage to sin. There was a hope of recovering them from all manner of evil and sin through the Message of the Gospel, through the power of the Holy Spirit. But if after having enjoyed all the privileges and mercies which the Lord has provided, they then turn to their wallowing in the mire like the sow (**2 Pet. 2:22**), it gives evidence

that they have not the real heart-love for truth, purity and righteousness, and that they are not worthy of the life everlasting.

But while giving this warning, the Apostle in the very next verse assures his hearers that he is persuaded better things of them--things which must accompany salvation and without which salvation to life eternal would be impossible. He is persuaded of them that they desire to be in accord with the Lord, and that they will avail themselves of the opportunities provided them through His Word, through the fellowship of the Spirit and through the assistances of the brethren. And so, dear brothers and sisters, we assure you today that

SM774

when we point out this matter of the Second Death, and that we who are the Lord's consecrated, spirit-begotten ones alone could commit this sin unto death, nevertheless we are persuaded of you all that, so far from desiring to see how near you could go into sin, you on the contrary, do not love sin but hate it as your foe, and are striving to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. I can assure all such that the grace of the Lord is sufficient for us, that His strength is made perfect even in our weakness.

The second, or doctrinal, deflection which might lead to the Second Death is very explicitly stated to be a rejection of the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer from sin and death. Of course those who have never seen these things, those who like the world are blind to them, could never sin against them. Those who know not what the Ransom is, who see not into the Divine Plan, could neither gain the life now through faith and obedience nor could they be condemned now to the Second Death on the score of rejecting that which they have not seen.

ATTAINMENTS MEASURE RESPONSIBILITY

We, dear brothers and sisters, by the grace of God, have had the eyes of our understanding widely opened to see the grace and mercy of God toward us and toward the world in the great gift of His Son, of our Redeemer. We have seen how He "tasted death for every man,"

and how eventually this is to be available to all. If by any circumstances or means we shall now be turned aside from this faith, from this trust, it would mean that we had previously rejected the Lord's leading; that He had ceased to be our Guide; and that it was under the leadings of the Prince of Darkness that we could get into such an attitude, where we thus do despite to the spirit of grace, favor, in rejecting the only name, the only sacrifice, the only means by which there is forgiveness of sins and fellowship with the Father.

The Apostle specifies, "If we sin wilfully after we

SM775

have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sin." Again we see that it is we who have tasted, we who have received, we who have had knowledge, we who have already benefited by the sacrifice to the extent of being justified by faith in the blood. This passage, therefore, does not refer to the world, who have never seen, never known, never been justified. Their trial is future. It refers to the saints, who are now on trial. The Apostle proceeds to speak of what this sin might be, saying that those who committed it trampled underfoot the Son of God and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were once sanctified as a common thing, doing despite to the Spirit of God's favor, which was manifest in the great Gift at Calvary. (V. 29.) Alas, that we must say it, but on every hand we have evidences that many, many are rejecting the Atonement work of Christ, renouncing it and even in some cases denouncing it, counting the blood of Christ, the death of Christ, as a common thing, as an ordinary death, and not as a special holy sacrifice valid for the cancellation of our sins. Many both in pulpits and pews are rejecting the mediatorial work of Christ and all the promises of God to the effect of forgiveness of sins through faith in the blood.

Our hope is that many of these are merely tares, who never knew really of the grace of God, who only imperfectly at any time trusted in Christ. Our hope is that they were never justified through faith in His blood; and that therefore their opportunity for hearing correctly, understanding and appreciating fully lies beyond in the world to come--the Age to come--the Millennial

age. Nevertheless, while it is not for us to judge the hearts, it is for us to warn, to caution, all those who ever have appreciated the grace of God in Christ to hold the same confidence of their rejoicing firm unto the end. It is for us to warn all who are even thinking along the line of rejecting the precious Sacrifice of Christ to look

SM776

well to what they do, to reconsider the matter, to consider that probably they have gotten into their present attitude of unbelief because of unfaithfulness, because of coldness, because of inattention to their vows to the Lord. We counsel them that no one ever got into that position suddenly or without some previous deflection along other lines, and that they should, therefore, look carefully to the pathway over which they have been going to see where they switched off, where their hearts became cold toward the Lord, that they may return to their first love, to fidelity to the Lord, and to an appreciation of the great redemptive value of the blood, the Sacrifice of Christ.

It is also our duty, dear brethren and sisters, to warn those who are still holding fast the previous Word, still trusting in the precious blood, still appreciating the grace of God and still sanctified, that they take heed against insidious sin, insidious errors, lest by these they should be gradually switched out of the way and gradually find their course leading farther and farther away from harmony with the Lord and fellowship with those who are His in the appreciation of His Word. The switch on the railway track has a very small beginning, but it steadily turns the car aside in a very different direction. And so with our minds, our hearts, our attitude toward the Lord--a little deflection on some point seemingly not so important, may lead farther off, eventually to alienation from the Lord.

"MUCH SORER PUNISHMENT"

The context proceeds to call attention to the fact that those who despised Moses and his law died without mercy. Then it adds that those who have heard the voice of the antitypical Moses, if they despise that voice and

that Law, will have "much sorer punishment" than did the typical Israelites who despised the message of the typical Moses.

The word "sorer" here does not signify more painful;

but in the old form of language in which the Bible was written it simply signifies severer or more weighty punishment. The Scriptures inform us in line with our subject of today that the punishment of sin, the wages of sin, is death, the Second Death; and that this Second Death--which results to those who despise God's Plan in Christ after they know it, have benefited by it and appreciated it--will indeed be a sorer, a more severe death penalty than the one which came upon those who rejected Moses and his message; for those executed for disobedience to Moses were merely types of those who will suffer the Second Death.

They merely suffered a temporary suspension of life. They are all included in the world redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; and they will all, therefore, at some time have a glorious opportunity of coming into full accord with the Lord and, if fully obedient to Him, of attaining life everlasting. Their death, therefore, did not mean everlasting death, but merely temporary death, and sleep of death. The punishment that will come upon those who wilfully and intelligently reject the Ransom and count the blood of the covenant a common thing, will be a Second Death, a much more severe and terrible punishment than that shown in the type, as the antitype is always on a larger and weightier scale than the type. Those who thus reject Christ's work fall out of the hands of Mercy, which God provided, into the hands of Justice; and the sentence of Justice against all imperfection is described as everlasting destruction--the Second Death.

LITTLE FOXES SPOIL THE VINES

After stating the matter thus plainly the Apostle exhorts us to confidence and loyalty, saying, "Call to remembrance the former days when, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly whilst ye were made a gazing stock both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions

of them who were so used." The Apostle thus urges us

to look back to the beginning of the way, and to maintain the zeal and love which then began and which should be increasing day by day as the years go by. He exhorts that we cast not away our confidence; that while seeking to go on in the way of the Lord we keep well in line with all our blessed experiences of the past. Thus, for instance, our appreciation of the redemption accomplished in our Lord's Sacrifice for us will only be enhanced as we grow in grace and knowledge along the proper lines. Growth in grace and knowledge will not deprive us of the original joy and favor which came to us through the mercy, love and grace of God, but will rather enhance the value of these. And thus pressing on continually, maintaining the foundation and adding the superstructure of faith and obedience, we shall be found by the Lord when He comes to make up His jewels.

Let us not only be on our guard against the great sins that we have considered, the open enmity against God through wicked works or through falling away from the doctrines of His grace, but let us remember that it is the little deflections from the Divine Word that lead astray. Let us take heed to our steps lest we be switched off by the great Adversary, who every here and there along the pathway is permitted of the Lord to test us, to prove us, and thus, if we are faithful to the Lord, to make us more and more strong in faith and in obedience and more ready for the Kingdom. The least deflections from the teachings of the Word are very sure to bring us into trouble. Let us, therefore, take more and more heed to all the jots and tittles of the Master's Word, not only for the exhortations and instructions given us by Himself, but also those given through the Apostles, especially appointed to be our guides in the way to the Heavenly Kingdom. He who is faithful in the little things will be faithful in the great. He who is unfaithful in the little things and inattentive to the Divine messages will more than likely fail to make his calling and election sure.

SM779

JEHOVAH'S GOOD PLEASURE SHALL PROSPER

"When thou shalt make His soul an Offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."-- **Isa. 53:10,11**.

Our text pictures our dear Redeemer as the Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief, who poured out His soul, His being, unto death--who made His soul an offering for sin, for the redemption of Adam's soul, which was forfeited because of sin, and incidentally for the redemption of Adam's race, involved in sin and its death penalty through him. The Apostle reminds us that it was through one man's disobedience that sin entered into the world and death as a result of sin. (**Rom. 5:12**.) He thus assures us that there would have been no such thing as death in the world aside from sin; and that thus sin and death constituted the curse which has blighted and blemished everything of an earthly kind.

Our Lord tells us that the whole world was thus lost through Adam under Divine sentence of death, and that He came to seek and to recover that which was lost--to restore it to its former condition. All will concede that our dear Redeemer was moved by a most noble impulse when He responded to the Father's gracious Plan of Salvation and gave Himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (**1 Tim. 2:6**.) None will deny that it was a great humbling of self for the "chiefest among ten thousand" to humble Himself to a lower nature, the human nature, and take our form and be born in the fashion of men, that He might redeem mankind. But the proper enough question arises, Has the great Sacrifice realized a proper return? Do the results justify so great a cost? What has been accomplished by His death?

SM780

In our context the Lord through the Prophet foretold this offering of our Lord's soul as the Corresponding-price, the Ransom, for Adam's soul, being, life, existence, as the payment of the penalty for original sin. It foretells the results of this Sacrifice with equal clearness, stating that, "He shall see His seed, shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." In considering this matter we must remember that the Church of this Gospel Age is nowhere spoken of as the "seed of Christ," the children of Christ, but on the contrary are styled His "brethren," or His "espoused." The Apostle Peter notes our relationship to the Lord when he says, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten you." (**1 Pet. 1:3**.) Hence we who are thus begotten of God are directly the children of the Father, and not the children of our Lord Jesus. He is our Elder Brother. This agrees well, too, with His own declaration on the subject, saying to Mary after His resurrection, "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God."

But that our Lord is to be a Father is distinctly prophesied. One of His titles, whose meaning will be most explicitly seen by and by in the Millennial Age, is the "Everlasting Father," who bestows upon His children everlasting life. We see the Scriptural picture then, that the sins of the world, atoned for by the Lord Jesus, will in due time all be canceled, and every sinner in due time be brought to a full knowledge of the Lord, that he may avail himself of the blessing of forgiveness and restoration to Divine favor provided in the "only name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved."--**Acts 4:12**; **Isa. 9:6**.

This blessing comes in advance to consecrated believers of this Gospel Age, who are justified by faith and granted the privilege of being begotten again by the Holy Spirit to a new nature and to joint-heirship with Jesus in His Kingdom and its glorious work. But for the world

SM781

in general, the time for God's blessing to reach them will be by and by, when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth, and they that

hear (obey) shall live--shall be gradually brought up out of sin-and-death conditions to the full perfection of life and human nature. That class, the world, dealt with during the Millennial Age under the terms of the Kingdom, will not be begotten of the Spirit to a new nature as are we of the Gospel Church, but attain instead, by obedience, restitution to the perfection of human nature.

Because Jesus gave His life, His soul, in exchange for Adam's life or soul, thus purchasing the race from the control of sin and death, therefore the restoration to be effected during the Millennium for the world is indicated as being the direct work of our Lord Jesus Himself and not the Father's work, although the Father was the Author of the entire Plan of Salvation. It is because the life that will be restored to mankind was the direct purchase of our Lord Jesus at the cost of His own life or soul, that the giving of this life to the world during the Millennium by the resurrection and restitution processes is accredited to our Lord Jesus as His own work; and that He, therefore, is styled the Father of the world, the second Adam, who will take the place of the first Adam, having purchased him and his posterity by His own blood, His own sacrifice, by making His own soul an offering for their sin. As the second Adam He is to be the world's Father, the Giver of everlasting life to all those who will obey Him. He is not the Church's Father; for the Church does not receive back the forfeited human life, but instead is begotten to the spiritual higher nature by the Holy Spirit, as already shown.

GOD'S PLEASURE TO PROSPER IN HIS HAND

This feature of our text has not yet been fulfilled. Who will say that the pleasure of Jehovah is now being fulfilled in the world? Who will say that the present reign of Sin and Death is the good pleasure of the God of love

and mercy, who declares that He has no pleasure in our dying? Only in a very limited sense could it be said that any part of Jehovah's pleasure has been accomplished by our Redeemer. It pleased the Father to put the Son to grief, to permit the dire troubles and calamities which

came upon Him in connection with our redemption. This does not signify that the Lord took pleasure in the sufferings of the Redeemer, but that it was the Lord's plan that our dear Redeemer should be tried, tested and proven worthy, and thus prepared for the glorious honors of His exaltation and for the great work which He is yet to accomplish for the uplift of mankind. It was the Father's Plan rather than the Father's pleasure that our Lord fulfilled in His obedience even unto death, even the death of the cross.--**Rev. 5:1-7**.

Similarly we may say that the Father's pleasure, in the sense of plan, is being fulfilled throughout this Gospel Age in the sufferings of the Church, which is the Body of Christ--in the trials and afflictions which came upon the Apostles and upon all the faithful in Christ Jesus from their day to the present time, to the end of the Age. The Scriptures assure us that the Lord counts the sufferings of the faithful ones--endured for the sake of righteousness and their loyalty to God, His people and His Word-- as very precious, as a sweet odor, as an evidence of their love, their devotion and their faith in Him and His promises. In this sense God's good pleasure, His good Plan, is outworking gloriously, and from this standpoint all who are the Lord's people may with the Apostle declare that they glory in their tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and helps to develop the various fruits and graces of the Spirit in heart and in life. From this standpoint all these may rejoice in tribulation, and count it all joy when their names are cast out as evil, realizing that they are partakers of the sufferings of Christ, that by and by they may with Him also share His exceeding glory.--**Eph. 5:1,2**.

SM783

From this standpoint, the Church, which is the Body of Christ, under Jesus its Head and Redeemer, is a sharer with Him in His entire work present and future, as the Apostle declares. If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him; if we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him. (**Rom. 8:17**; **Col. 3:4**.) From this standpoint, the brethren of Christ, His members, His Body, the Church, are filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of The Christ. (**Col. 1:24**.) From this standpoint the entire Church is pouring out its soul unto death

in harmony with the Apostle's exhortation, "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies living sacrifices to God, which is your reasonable service." (**Rom. 12:1**.) Hence, aside from the redemptive work, the value of which proceeded from our Lord alone, and was necessary to every member of the human family --aside from this, the Church of Christ, as His Bride, is a sharer in all of His sufferings and will be a participator in all of His joys and blessings.

JOINT-SACRIFICERS AND JOINT-HEIRS

Thus, as our text declares, it will be true of all those who lay down their lives in harmony with the call to sacrifice, that they shall all, nevertheless, prolong their days--gain through the sacrifice immortality, and in them all the Father's glorious Plan shall prosper. It prospers in their present sacrificing and in their present development of character; and by and by it will prosper in the entry of the great King, when He shall take to Himself His great power and reign. When He shall sit upon the Throne of His glory during the Millennial Age, then we shall sit with Him in His Throne as His Bride; and before that Throne for a thousand years all people shall be gathered to be guided, to be assisted, and by all these experiences to be judged and to enter into the everlasting conditions beyond the Millennium--all others as goats, as adversaries, being destroyed in the Second Death, the punishment which God has already declared must come

to all who will ultimately, wilfully, intelligently, refuse His offer of eternal life upon His terms of obedience to righteousness. Then "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

So far as the world is concerned the pleasure of Jehovah God has not in any sense of the word been accomplished in them. The Apostle reminds us that "the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain together" --"waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (**Rom. 8:19,22**.) This surely is not the pleasure of God--the sufferings of His creatures; for although He may be pleased that His consecrated, spirit-begotten ones

should suffer for a time, this is because the sufferings in their case are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (**2 Cor. 4:17**.) But in respect to the world this is different. The weight of sin, degradation and sorrow is upon the world, and Divine displeasure is still their portion. They have not yet heard of the only name given under Heaven and amongst men whereby they must be saved. As the Apostle declares, the whole world lieth in the Wicked One. God's pleasure respecting them has not been accomplished.

As to what the Divine Plan or purpose or pleasure is on the world's behalf we must note the prophetic declaration of the oath-bound promise made to Abraham, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." The blessing of all the families of the earth is still future; for the development of the Seed of Abraham is not yet completed--the last members of the Body of Christ have not yet suffered with Him; the afflictions of Christ have not yet been made full. Hearken to the Apostle, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise." (**Gal. 3:29**.) We see, then, that the spirit-begotten Seed of Abraham must first be developed through trials, disciplines, testings, sacrifices, before it can be used as God's agency in dispensing His blessings to all the families of the earth.

SM785

"TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME"

There is a due time connected with every feature of the Divine arrangement. "In due time God sent forth His Son," "in due time Christ died for the ungodly," in due time this favor of God shall be testified to all mankind. That due time has not yet arrived. Hence the testimony thus far has been only to those who have the ears to hear and who have been called according to the Divine purpose to be of the elect Seed class. But so surely as one part of the Divine purpose has been accomplished we may be confident that the other features will be. The Divine Word is sure, "the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand." With the close of this Age, with the completion of the Body of Christ, which is the Church, the great Redeemer will take unto Himself His great power and reign--to subdue everything

evil, including the binding of Satan, and to liberate and scatter abroad everything favorable to truth and righteousness, so that the darkness of sin and degradation may all be scattered by the glorious sunlight of Divine grace, truth and power.

Referring to that time when Jehovah's pleasure shall prosper in the hands of The Messiah, The Christ, the Apostle tells us that He must reign until He shall have put all enemies under His feet. He also explains to us that all the power and authority of that Reign will be granted to The Christ by the Heavenly Father, and that at the close of that Millennial Reign The Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom of God, even the Father, that He may be all in all--to Him who did put all things under Christ, whose was the Plan, whose was the Power, and to whom shall be glory forever.

Accustomed to the reign of Sin and Death and to the non-interference with these on the part of the Lord, many are unable to conceive how the Millennial Age could be so different from the present one--so much more favorable to truth and righteousness. What we need to do is to

take the Lord's Word for it. Most explicitly has He shown that the trouble in the present time is ignorance; that this ignorance is largely the work of the Adversary --"the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not," that mankind are more or less willingly ignorant and have had much to do with the blindness that has come upon themselves; that they were not so created in the beginning, but that their degradation has come as a result of their failure to appreciate the Lord and respect His Word. The assurance is that the remedy for all these ills will come with the Kingdom for which, we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven." With the establishment of that autocratic Kingdom under the direct supervision of the Lord and His glorified Church, the "Little Flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom (**Luke 12:32**), will come the greatest reformation the world has ever known--from the reign of Sin and Death mankind will be transferred to the Reign of Righteousness, with its reward of life eternal to all those who will obey the laws of that righteous Government.

What a glorious prospect this holds out! This indeed will be the pleasure of the Lord as ultimately accomplished in the world. Then, as our Lord declared through the Prophet, none shall need to say to his neighbor, Know the Lord, for all shall know Him from the least even unto the greatest; then there shall be no more curse, no more sighing, no more crying, no more dying, because all the former things shall have passed away. (**Jer. 31:34**; **Rev. 21:4**.) Then every creature in Heaven and in earth shall be heard acclaiming praise to Him that sitteth on the Throne and to the Lamb. (**Rev. 5:13**.) Oh, how different it will be when the Lord's good pleasure shall have prospered at the hand of His Anointed One, The Messiah!

Our Lord states the matter moderately. We may know assuredly that the grand results of the great Divine Plan of redemption and restitution will much more than

merely satisfy the Redeemer--will much more than merely compensate Him for the travail of His soul, for His humiliation, His suffering, His death. Ah, yes! Our Lord Himself declared that He would be thoroughly satisfied if, after He had served the Father according to the Divine Plan faithfully, even unto death--if then He should be received back where He was before. His prayer was, "Glorify thou Me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." (**John 17:5**.) He asked no more. But God, who is rich in mercy and rich in His rewards to all those who diligently seek and serve Him, would not be content to give back to the Redeemer merely the blessings He had previously enjoyed and laid aside to be our Savior. No! We are dealing with a King whose are the riches of grace and loving kindness.

The Apostle assures us that our Lord Jesus was personally exalted very highly in His resurrection, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named. (**Eph. 1:21**.) He has already received personally much more than a requital for His sacrifice. And He will be privileged to awake the sleeping thousands of millions of Adam's race--whom He purchased with His precious blood, and who have been preserved in Sheol, Hades, the tomb, in the sleep of death--to bring these to a knowledge of the Truth after their awakening, and to grant them then of the opportunity for reformation and

harmony with God and the attainment of eternal life. Oh, how great a reward all this will be for Him who loved us and bought us! Surely He will be more than satisfied with the Heavenly Father's bountiful provision for His personal glory and exaltation, and for the honorable work which He will do for Adam and his race.

And let us still remember that what is true of the Lord is also true of the Anointed Body, His Church. Let us remember that He calls us His Royal Priesthood, and that He has declared through the Apostle that our resurrection change shall also bring us to glory, honor and immortality

SM788

and make us His joint-heirs in the Kingdom and sharers with Him in all the glorious future work. We hear the testimony again, through the Apostle John, that we cannot now know what great things we have been called to, but that we have the assurance that in our glorious change we shall be made like Him and see Him as He is. Shall not, therefore, we also as His faithful followers, be satisfied--more than satisfied with God's gracious arrangements and provisions as they shall thus be worked out on our behalf and through us on behalf of the world?

The Apostle's words recur to us again, "What manner of persons ought we to be?" How can we be thankful enough for the great things God has done for us? How can we appreciate highly enough the wonderful privileges we now have of laying down our lives for the brethren, and realizing according to the Lord's Word that this is accepted as though it were a sacrifice on our part and constitutes us joint-sacrificers with our dear Redeemer, under whose robe and merit we have forgiveness of sins and the Divine blessing and favor!

Let us remember that the time is short. If we have not yet made our full consecration to the Lord it is time we are doing it, as the door to this high calling will soon be closed, and the door then be opened by which the world of mankind will attain restitution blessings, honors and privileges. Let us be prompt to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, and to do with our might what our hands find to do and what His providences may open for us. Our present experiences are likened to a schooling. If we are already in the School of Christ, how

prompt and earnest we should be in learning the lessons that we may be ready for the graduating day! The trials and testings cannot last long in any event. A little while and they will all be over; a little while and we shall see Him and shall triumph in His grace!

SM789

MORNING COMETH--NIGHT ALSO

[Pastor Russell's last written sermon]

"Watchman, what of the night? The morning cometh, and a night also!"--**Isa. 21:11,12**.

The literature of the world shows that intelligent men have refused to believe that the Divine purpose in the creation of our earth has yet been attained. Continually we find references to the "Morning of the New Day"--to the Golden Age, etc., etc. Not to the longings of men's hearts, however, but to the promises of our God, do we look for real instruction on this subject.

The Bible most emphatically declares that the entire period of human history thus far has been a night time. The Prophet David explains, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the Morning." (**Psa. 30:5**.) Thus prophetically we are assured that there will be a Morning whose glory, brightness and blessing will fully compensate for all the dark shadows of the night time past. Our text is another prophecy along the same line. The message of the Lord is: "The Morning cometh!" St. Paul writes that up to his time the world had been under a reign of Sin and Death, and not under a Reign of Righteousness and Life. (**Rom. 5:21**.) He also points out that the Day of the Lord will come gradually and stealthily, taking the world unawares--"as a thief in the night."--**1 Thess. 5:1-6**.

All of the Apostles assure us that it is not God's purpose to permit the reign of Sin and Death to continue forever. They tell us that the Divine Program is that Messiah will, in the Father's appointed time, take unto Himself His great power and reign King of kings and Lord of lords--putting down sin and every evil thing, and lifting humanity up, and granting a Divine blessing where for six thousand years there has been a Divine curse.

SM790

The Bible writers explain that this does not signify a change in the Divine Program, but that God had purposed this thing in Himself from before the foundation of the world; and that although He had permitted sin to enter

and death to reign over the children of Adam, He had also made fullest provision for the Redeemer to die for our sins and eventually to become the Restorer and Life-giver to Adam and his race--to as many of them as will accept everlasting life on the Divine terms.

The Apostles tell us that during the night time, since Jesus' death, God has been doing a special work--selecting from mankind a special class, a saintly few, "the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven." These are not taken from any one nation or denomination; but this "little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, is composed of all the saintly followers of Jesus who walk in His steps in the "narrow way" during this Gospel Age. Their experiences are to qualify them for association with their Redeemer in His Messianic Kingdom. Their trials, their obedience and their sufferings for righteousness' sake are to work out for these a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Suffering with the Master for the Truth's sake in the present life, they are to share His glory, honor and immortality in the life to come and to be joint-heirs with Him in His Kingdom.

THE KINGDOM SUNRISE NEARING

Among the Lord's people even, few yet understand that Jesus distinctly teaches that the "Sun of Righteousness" which will arise, and whose light will constitute the New Day, will be composed of the Church of Christ--glorified--changed from human to Divine nature by participation in the "first resurrection." Jesus tells this in the parable of the wheat and the tares. He declares that in the end of this Gospel Age all of the wheat class will be gathered into the Heavenly Garner and--"then shall the

righteous shine forth as the SUN in the Kingdom of their Father." (**Matt. 13:43**.) We must not think that this signifies the Church without the Redeemer, but must remember that "Jesus is the Head of the Church which is His Body."--**Eph. 1:22,23**.

How wonderful, how beautiful and how appropriate are the word-pictures of the Bible! Ah, they are inspired

pictures! No one but the Lord knew of the great Divine Plan; no one but Him, therefore, could give these pictures of its development. The Bible, in various terms and similes, attempts to give us a little glimpse of the glorious conditions of that New Day. It and the Kingdom will be the desire of all peoples. In that day the righteous will flourish and evil-doers will be cut off from life. During that thousand-year Day of Messiah's Kingdom Satan is to be bound, "that he may deceive the nations no more." (**Rev. 20:2,3**.) Landlordism will come to an end; for--"they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat the fruit thereof...but shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (**Isa. 65:22**.) The earth is to yield her increase. Streams are to come forth in the desert places; the solitary places are to be made glad. The entire earth is to become like the Garden of Eden. It is God's foot-stool, and He declares that He will make it glorious. It is not to be burned up with literal fire, as we once supposed. It is to "abide forever." (**Eccl. 1:4**.) "He formed it not in vain; He formed it to be inhabited."--**Isa. 45:18**.

WONDERFUL FOREGLEAMS OF LIGHT

But the most wonderful thing the Bible tells us respecting that New Day is the great intelligence and enlightenment which it will bring to every creature. "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep." (**Isa. 11:9**.) "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know Me, from the least

of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (**Jer. 31:34**.) Ultimately every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess, to the glory of God.

What an enthusing prospect the Bible holds out before the Church and so many of the world as can exercise a measure of faith to believe! The world indeed sees to some extent that great blessings are coming; but just what these are and how they are to come, mankind know not; for "the world by wisdom knows not God." The worldly wise have rejected the Bible, and do not trust it

as a Revelation from God. Thus the wise are caught in their own craftiness. Their boasted wisdom ensnares them and blinds them to the Divine Revelation. Nevertheless some of our great thinkers, Mr. Edison and others, are rapidly seeing that the world is just on the verge of the most wonderful inventions and knowledge, which will transform the face of the earth and the people thereof. They are corroborating the Bible unwittingly; for they believe it not and know not of its messages.

THE DAWNING BEGAN IN A.D. 1874

Let us not stop now to discuss the darkness of the Night and its weepings. Let us awake, and take note of the fact that the dawning of the New Age is already here. We have been in it and enjoying many of its blessings for the past forty-two years. But these blessings came so stealthily, like a thief in the night, that few recognize their import. Some few have been calling attention to the fact that we have been in the Millennial dawn ever since the year 1874. Bible chronology quite clearly teaches that the six thousand years from Adam's creation have ended--six great Days of a thousand years each, mentioned by St. Peter--"a Day with the Lord is as a thousand years." (**2 Pet. 3:8**.) Now the great Seventh Day, also a thousand years long, has commenced. We have been enjoying its dawning. It is to be a grand Day! What wonder if the dawning be remarkable!

SM793

It may surprise some to be told that the past forty-two years mean more to the world in increase of education, increase of wealth, increase of all manner of labor-saving inventions and conveniences, increase of safeguards and protections for human life, than did all the six thousand years which preceded them--many times over. The world has probably created a thousand times as much wealth during these forty-two years as during those entire six thousand years preceding. Yet these changes came so gradually that few have noticed them.

FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY EVERYWHERE

Forty-two years ago man labored from sun to sun; today we are rapidly reaching an eight-hour day. Forty-two years ago nearly all the labor of the world was done with sweat of face; today it is nearly all accomplished by machinery. Forty-two years ago the sewing machine was just reaching perfection; today it is everywhere indispensable. So with the thousand household conveniences! So with nearly all of our sanitary and plumbing arrangements! So with the farm implements, reapers and binders, mowers, automobiles and gas engines, etc., etc., all belong to these forty-two years. In our cities our modern conveniences are wonderful! Solomon in all his glory never dreamed of such things as the poorest human being in America may enjoy!

Prophecies respecting streams in the desert and the wilderness blossoming as the rose are having fulfilment --not miraculously, but in harmony with the Divine order of an increased intelligence amongst men. Artesian wells are being drilled, irrigating canals constructed, not only in the western part of the United States and Canada, but also in far-off Mesopotamia. The results are marvelous. Land previously not worth fencing is valued today at $500 per acre. The increase of knowledge has been supplemented by governmental arrangements for the distribution of that knowledge amongst the people. The soils

of various localities are being analyzed at public expense, and the tillers of the soil are given knowledge as respects what kind of fertilizers are required to bring satisfactory results. Under these conditions it does not surprise us to know that as much as 156 bushels of corn have been raised to a single acre, and that 600 bushels of potatoes and over are not an uncommon record.

Is not the Bible being fulfilled? Who can dispute these facts? What do they signify? We answer that they exactly corroborate the Divine declaration which describes our day: "Many shall run to and fro; knowledge shall be increased; the wise [of God's people] shall understand, and there shall be a Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation."--**Dan. 12:4,10,1**.

INCREASE IN WORLD-WIDE DISCONTENT

We are in the Morning mentioned in our text. Ah, what a glorious Morning! How changed the human conditions from those of our grandfathers! How thankful the whole world should be! Paeans of praise should be rising from all people of the favored lands of civilization, and helping hands should be outstretched to carry the same blessings to heathen lands. But is it so? Are the people happy and rejoicing and appreciative of the New Day--the gift of Divine providence?

No! in proportion as the blessings of God have come, the discontent of humanity has increased; and unbelief, not only in respect to the Bible as the Divine Revelation, but in many instances in respect to the very existence of an intelligent Creator. Notwithstanding the great increase in the world's wealth, and the fact that there are some noble souls who are using their share of the wealth in praiseworthy manner, nevertheless the general operation of the law of selfishness prevails; and all the legislation which has been enacted, or which can be enacted, fails to restrain the great giant institutions--corporations --of our day, fails to hinder them from the exploiting of the masses in the interests of comparatively few.

SM795

Did God know all these things? What will He do about them? Will He bring in the Millennial blessings, and risk that men shall take for granted that they have won the secrets of nature by their own wisdom and perseverance, and forget God entirely? Will they become more discontented? Would a Millennium of discontent be advantageous? What will God do about it?

THE DARK NIGHT ALREADY SETTLING

According to the Bible God foreknew of the conditions of our day as we are now reviewing them; and in our text He gives a key to the solution--elsewhere in the Scriptures made very plain. Through the Prophet God tells of the dark night coming--after the Morning Dawn had well ushered in--a dark storm-cloud just at sunrise. This dark hour is described in Daniel's prophecy and also

in Jesus' prophecy, to be "a Time of Trouble, such as never was since there was a nation."

Bible students see this great Time of Trouble already beginning in the letting loose of the winds of strife in Europe. In the light of the Bible they perceive that the result of this war will be great weakening of the nations --governments of the earth, and increased knowledge and discontent amongst the people. The next phase of the trouble, according to the Bible, is to be the great "earthquake" such as never was since man was upon the earth-- not a literal earthquake, but a symbolic one--a revolution. Then the third great phase of the calamity, the darkest of all, will be the symbolic fire of anarchy, which will destroy utterly our present civilization. And then, in the midst of that most awful Time of Trouble, Messiah, the great King, will take His great power and exercise it, with the result that the raging waves of the sea of human passion will all be quieted; the fires of anarchy will all be extinguished, and the Reign of Righteousness and Peace will begin.

Cannot we see the wisdom of the great Creator's

Program--that He will allow mankind to convince themselves of their own impotency; of their need of a God and that there is a God and that His glorious purposes for humanity are revealed in His Word? Ah, no wonder that the Bible speaks of that revelation of the Lord as "the still small voice of God," speaking to mankind through Messiah's Kingdom! No wonder the Lord declares that "then He will turn to the people a pure Message, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve Him with one consent"!--**Zeph. 3:9**.

We rejoice that such glorious things are coming--even if it is necessary that the world reach them through the tribulation of the Time of Trouble. Happy are those whose eyes and ears of understanding are open now, and who are in such heart relationship with the Lord that He can make known to them in advance something of the riches of His grace and loving kindness and tender mercies, and can show them how all the troubles that are coming are intended to work out blessings for the human family. Surely as we come to the knowledge of the Divine character and Plan, our perfect love for God casts out all

fear; and we are able to rejoice in all of His prophecies and promises.

Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See, its glory fills the earth.

Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, will earth's sorrows cease,
And God's will on earth be done?
Traveler, yes, the Prince of Peace,
Earth's appointed King, has come!

SM797

INDEX OF SERMONS

Page

Abrahamic Covenant, God's Oath Binds..... 590
Advocate for Believers Only..... 719
All Are Debtors to Grace Divine..... 375
Appalling Lack in Everyday Life..... 349
Ark a Type of Christ..... 341
Armageddon, Forces Mustering for..... 232
Atonement Necessary, Blood..... 69

Babylon Mystic, Destruction of..... 404
Beginning of the Creation of God..... 491
Binding of Satan..... 94
Blessed Hope for Suffering Humanity..... 609
Brotherhood of Christ..... 697

Character-Building, Decision in..... 755
Chief Source of Persecution..... 216
Christ and His Church, Sufferings of..... 649
Christ-Likeness, Development of..... 635
Church Called to Sanctification..... 578
Church Crucified with Christ..... 641
Church's Share in Pentecostal Blessings..... 597
Church, The True..... 120
Confidence in God's Word, Need of Great..... 176
Covenant, The Oath-Bound..... 527
Covenant with Death..... 107
Creation of God, Beginning of the..... 491
Creed Idols of Christendom..... 443

Death in Adam..... 586
Decision in Character-Building..... 755
Desire of All Nations..... 499
Destruction of Mystic Babylon..... 404
Development of Christ-Likeness..... 635
Distress of Nations with Perplexity..... 412
Divine Economy in the Ransom..... 656
Divine Justice in the Deluge..... 61
Divine Plan Hidden in Abraham's Family..... 200
Dual Personality of the Christian..... 627

"Even the Winds and the Waves Obey"..... 749

"Filthiness, Put Away All"..... 388
Forces Mustering for Armageddon..... 232

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SM798

Page
God Preparing for the Harvest..... 184
God's Oath Binds Abrahamic Covenant..... 590
God's Plans versus Man's Plans..... 77
God's Secrets, Who May Know?..... 5
God's Standard Is Perfection..... 428
Gospel Preaching, Twofold Object of..... 678
Great White Throne..... 686

Haven of Rest, Nearing the Desired..... 739
Head Must Rule Members of the Body..... 356
Health, The Science of..... 322
Heathen--Messiah's Inheritance..... 435
Heaven and Earth Being Shaken..... 316
Hereafter..... 538
Hope for Suffering Humanity, A Blessed..... 609
Humanity Deluded by Demon Doctrines..... 128

Imprisoned Spirits, Preaching to..... 192
Infinite Wisdom and Love..... 168
Israel's New Covenant..... 208

Jehovah's Good Pleasure Shall Prosper..... 779
Jerusalem the Holy City..... 396
Jesus the Advocate of Believers Only..... 719
Judgment Day Pictured by Jesus..... 224
Judgment Day, The World's..... 148
Justice in the Deluge..... 61

Kingdom, Seeking First the..... 364

"Lazarus, Come Forth!"..... 35
Light, The True..... 240
Living and True God..... 621
Love, The Principal Thing..... 272

Melchizedek Priesthood..... 136
Messiah's Inheritance--The Heathen..... 435
Messiah's Sharp Arrows..... 50
"Morning Cometh--Night Also"..... 789

Need of Great Confidence in God's Word..... 176
New Covenant, Israel's..... 208
Noah's Ark a Type of Christ..... 341

Oath-Bound Covenant..... 527
Overthrow of Satan's Empire..... 546

4YHWH.com

Page
Passover in Type and Antitype..... 557
Peace, The Secret of True..... 262
Peace Desired--War Necessary..... 451
Pentecostal Blessings, Church's Share in..... 597
Persecution, Chief Source of..... 216
Preaching to Imprisoned Spirits..... 192
Pseudo-Apostles of the Present Day..... 670
Purpose Hidden in Abraham's Family..... 200
"Put Away All Filthiness"..... 388

Queen in Gold Attire..... 251

Ransom, Divine Economy in the..... 656

St. Peter's Keys..... 459
Satan, Binding of..... 94
Satan's Empire, Overthrow of..... 546
Science of Health..... 322
Seas in the Hollow of God's Hand..... 467
Secret of True Peace..... 262
Seeking First the Kingdom..... 364
Sign of the Son of Man in Heaven..... 420
Sin unto Death, There Is a..... 766
Sufferings of Christ and His Church..... 649

The Deceptive Way..... 156
The Lord's House Over All..... 730
"There Is a Sin unto Death"..... 766
To Hell and Back. Who Are There?..... 516
Tongues of Fire..... 565
Two Distinct Salvations..... 42
Twofold Object of Gospel Preaching..... 678

Unprofitable Servant Punished..... 507

Vessels of a Potter..... 708

Way, The Deceptive..... 156
When God Was Alone..... 483
Where Are the Dead?..... 18
Who May Know God's Secrets?..... 5
Who Then Shall Be Saved?..... 303
Wolves in Sheep's Clothing..... 286
World's Judgment Day..... 148

Zionism in Prophecy..... 475