

JESUS CHRIST

The Only Begotten Son

A Book of Devotions



*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
John 3:16*

After I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 1:15-23

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**Scriptures in the heading of each meditation are in the
New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.
Excerpts have been taken from the writings of
C. T. Russell, author of *Zion's Watchtower*.
Articles are noted with Reprint numbers after each entry.**



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INTRODUCTION

For six thousand years the Lord has maintained [His] original position—has refused to sanction sin or permit sinners to live. Such an unchangeable attitude at first seems severe, especially when we consider that we were born in sin and shapen in iniquity, infested by weaknesses and surrounded by evil influences. It seems severe on God's part to insist upon perfection, when all of our experiences teach us that it is impossible for fallen humanity to attain absolute righteousness in word and deed and thought. Indeed the Scriptures confirm our experiences, declaring, "There is none righteous, no, not one." —Rom. 3:10

The goodness of God is not seen in the severity, but, wholly separated, it stands side by side with it. God's goodness, his generosity, his mercy, kindness, love, which are not manifested in the sentence and in the execution of its penalties, are manifested in the great gift of his love—the Lord Jesus and the Redeemer provided in him—a redemption coextensive with the fall and with the condemnation. The Apostle expresses the matter pointedly in the words, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9.) God's love was not previously manifested; for over four thousand years only the severity, the justice of the divine character was manifested, though a hint was given to Abraham and subsequently through the prophets, that God had kind sentiments toward the fallen and tainted race, which in due time would bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

The period between the first advent of our Lord and his second advent is in some respects a parenthesis in the divine plan, during which the Church is specially dealt with. The redemption of the world and its reconciliation with God, based upon divine goodness expressed in the death of the Redeemer, wait for its further expression to the world until the end of the Gospel age and the opening of the Millennial age—"the world to come." When the morning of that new day shall dawn, the goodness of God will be seen more distinctly than ever by mankind. Indeed it may be said that the world as yet has seen nothing of the goodness of God; it has merely seen his severity, his justice, executed against the entire human family for the last six thousand years.

In that new dispensation the facts will all be made clear. The blessings then coming to the world—peace, righteous government, helpful influences, the restraint of evil, the knowledge of the Lord and understanding of his gracious arrangements and purposes—these will all be most convincing proofs to mankind of God's sympathy and mercy in Christ. R. 3321

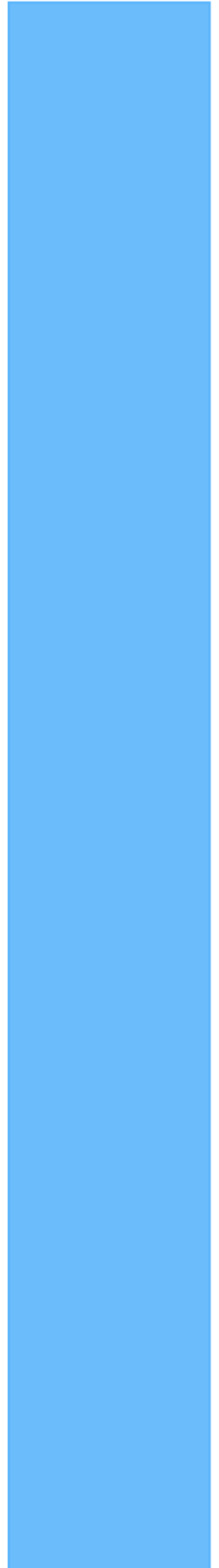
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*May these writings serve as a source of personal reflection and devotion,
as a reminder, an encouragement and an inspiration to the reader.
While the words were written over a century ago, they still hold true today
more than ever as the establishment of Christ's Kingdom approaches very near.*

May these words serve to confirm your faith.

THE LOGOS



In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

– John 1:1-2 –

“In the beginning”: These same words introduce us to the Bible as the record of the world’s creation in the book of Genesis, but here the reference is to a beginning long before the creation of this earth. To what beginning, then, could it refer—a beginning of what? We answer that it was not the beginning of the divine being, for respecting the heavenly Father, Jehovah, the Almighty, we have the distinct statement that from everlasting to everlasting he is God—he had no beginning. Hence the beginning mentioned in our text refers neither to man, nor to angels, nor to the Father: it does refer to the “beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14), a name or title given to the only begotten of the Father, who subsequently became our Redeemer and Lord, Jesus. This original or beginning or first creation of God in our text is called the Word of God—the Logos.

[This expression, **Word**, in the Greek is **Logos**. The thought behind the word Logos is that in olden times a king, instead of speaking his commands directly to his people, sat behind a lattice work, and his **Logos**, or messenger, or word, or representative, stood before the lattice work, and gave the message of the king to the people in a loud tone of voice. The king himself was not seen by the people—the **Logos** was the one seen. So this is the picture the Scriptures give us of how Jesus was the express representative of the Heavenly Father, the One through whom the Heavenly Father made Himself known—the Word, or the **Logos**. So we read in the first chapter of John.]

The first verse, although not a bad translation, fails to give to the English reading the force, the significance of the Greek, and gives the implication that there are at least two Gods, whereas the Scriptures declare that “there is one God, the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 8:6.) Nowhere in the Scripture are these said to be equal in power and glory. On the contrary, whether we take the words of the apostles, or the prophets, or of the Lord Jesus himself, they all declare in harmony that the “Father is greater than I.” “I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 14:28; 6:38). When we read, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God,” that makes two, the Word and the God whom he was with or represented, and then the statement that the “Word was God,” we are thrown into confusion. How could the Word and God be God? It is here that the Greek gives the relief and makes the matter plain. It reads, “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with **the** God and the Word was **a** God; the same was in the beginning with **the** God.” If we accept this just as the Greek gives it, with the emphasis of the Greek article in the one place and not in the other, then all is straightened out—is clear. Then we can see that originally there was but the “one God, the living [self-existent] and true God”; that the glorious personage in this verse called the Word or Logos was the beginning of the Father’s creative work.

“The same was in the beginning with the God” clearly implies a certain time recognized as the beginning, but so far as the heavenly Father himself is concerned, the Scriptures declare, “From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” (Psa. 90:2.) In other words, while it may be beyond our comprehension, it is the Scriptural presentation that the Father alone was without beginning, and that the Son was the beginning of the Father’s creative work—created before angels as well as before man. R. 3474, R. 4106, R. 4963

For to which of the angels did He ever say: “YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU”? And again: “I WILL BE TO HIM A FATHER, AND HE SHALL BE TO ME A SON”?

– Hebrews 1:5 –

God has “many sons,” and one “only begotten Son.” Our Lord before he became a **man**, was a spirit being, as “God is a spirit,” and angels are spirits; and he was the “first born of every creature,” or “born before all creation,” as some translate it—the **beginning** of Jehovah God’s creative work. —Rev. 1:8; 3:14. And since he is both the **first** and the **last**, the beginning and ending of Jehovah’s **direct** creative work, it is very evident that he was the **ONLY** Son of God thus directly begotten of the Father. And since it is clearly stated that “all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3), it becomes the more evident to every reasoning mind that **His** creation was more **directly** and specially the Father’s work than that of any other creature, or Son of God —man or angel; for though it was the Father’s power and vitality that was given to angels, to men, to beasts, and birds, and creeping things, yet with none of these was the begetting a direct work of Jehovah, as in the case of the one Son distinguished forever among the sons of God by the title, “only begotten Son.” R.1005



He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things and in Him all things consist.

– Colossians 1:15-17 –

Genesis goes back to the beginning of things earthly; but this [verse] goes back to the beginning of all beginnings, when God was alone. The very beginning of Divine operation was the Logos—“the Beginning of the creation of God”—“the First-born of every creature.” —Rev. 3:14; Col. 1:15. We must recognize that our Lord is the One who was the beginning of the creation of God and the end of it, the One by whom are all things, the One who is next to the Father, His very Representative in everything pertaining to the affairs of the Universe. (Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14; John 1:1-3; 1 Cor. 8:6.)

In other words, Jesus was the direct Creator of all things. He was the Divine Power, Agent, Word, Messenger, the **Logos** of Jehovah. He did all the great work of creation; but He Himself was the first of God’s direct creation, the First-born of all creatures, that in all things He might have the pre-eminence—the first place. R. 5351, R. 5991, R. 4963

Proverbs 8:22-31

22 The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old.

23 I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth.

24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water.

25 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth.

26 While as yet He had not made the earth or the fields, or the primal dust of the world.

27 When He prepared the heavens, I was there. When He drew a circle on the face of the deep.

28 When He established the clouds above, when He strengthened the fountains of the deep,

29 when He assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters would not transgress His command. When He marked out the foundations of the earth,

30 then I was beside Him as a master craftsman. And I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him,

31 rejoicing in His inhabited world, and my delight was with the sons of men.

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

– John 1:3 –

[This] verse is a grand, comprehensive statement, which gives us a glimpse of the great honor and dignity of the Son of God, “the Only Begotten” of the Father, the “beginning of the creation of God.” “All things were made by him,” by the Word—angels, worlds, mankind—all things: “Without him was not one thing made that was made.” How grandly, how gloriously, the dignity and honor and position of our great Lord looms up before us as we think of how highly the Father honored him, even before he came into the world, even before he manifested his obedience to the Father’s will even unto death. R. 3474

There is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we for Him, and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

– 1 Corinthians 8:6 –

The power was of the Father, but it was exercised through the Son, the beginning of his creation, and hence “without him was not anything made that was made.” What a beautiful testimony! How honoring to the Father! how honoring to the Son! The Father used the Son as his active agent in every creative work—nothing whatever was done without him. Is not this a sufficiency of honor for our dear Redeemer? Is it not as much or more than he ever claimed? In his humility he said nothing about his high honor, which he left to be our Redeemer. R. 4106

I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an earth. Then I was beside Him as a master craftsman, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him.

– Proverbs 8:23,30 –

It was mutual love that delighted to manifest and express mutual confidence, that gloried in the same loving and benevolent purposes, that sympathized fully with each other’s thoughts and feelings, and that delighted in the close and blessed relationship of Father and Son. The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated. This scripture together with John 1:1-18 not only shows his intimate acquaintance with Jehovah and knowledge of his plans, but exhibits him as his honored agent in their accomplishment. When we consider the length of time that must have elapsed during the creation of the material universe and that our Lord was the “beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. 3:14) before angels as well as before man, and Jehovah’s agent in the creation of angels as well as men, we may have some idea of our Lord’s intimate and long acquaintance with Jehovah and his plans. R. 3160 and R. 1059

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

– Revelation 1:8 –

In no other way can we understand Jesus to be the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, as he claims in his revelation to John, (Rev. 1:8; 3:14; 21:6; 22:13) than as the Scriptures harmoniously teach, that as Jehovah's agent he is the beginner and finisher of the wondrous plan, though not its author. In a word, he was the **only direct creation** of Jehovah, all other creations being through him as his agent or representative; as we read: "To us there is but one God—the Father—**of whom** are all things and we in him: and one Lord—Jesus Christ—**by whom** are all things and we by him." (1 Cor. 8:6.) R.445

He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world.

– 1 Peter 1:20 –

This great work of **actual** justification, salvation, or restitution, is the work which God purposed to do for the world; and to this end both the death and the resurrection of Christ are all-important. The kingdom of the world, to be given to the perfected and worthy ones of the redeemed race at the close of the Millennium, is clearly distinguished from all others by being called the kingdom prepared for them "from the foundation of the world," the earth having been made to be the everlasting home and kingdom of perfect men. But the kingdom bestowed upon Christ, of which the Church, his "bride," becomes joint-heir, is a spiritual kingdom, "far above angels, principalities and powers," and it also shall "have no end" —Christ's Millennial Kingdom, which **will end**, being merely a beginning of Christ's power and rule. (1 Cor. 15:25-28.) This endless heavenly, spiritual kingdom was prepared long before the earth was founded—its inception being recognized in Christ, "the beginning of the creation of God." It was intended for Christ Jesus, the First Begotten; but even the Church, his bride and joint-heir, was chosen or designed also, in him, **before** the foundation of the world. —Eph. 1:4. R. 1246 and R. 2607

**For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things,
to whom be glory forever.**

Romans 11:36

See also from the chapter *Jesus The Perfect Man*: John 6:38

See also from the chapter *Jesus' Last Week*: John 17:5

See also from the chapter *Words From The Master*: John 8:58

I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.

– Psalm 40:8 –

The Master always had this disposition of reverence for the Father and of full trust and confidence in the Divine Wisdom, Love, Justice and Power. Hence, when the time came that the Father had purposed—when He would send a Savior into the world, first to redeem it and later on to become its King and Deliverer—and the proposal to render this great service to God and to men was proffered to the great Logos— "the Only Begotten of the Father"—it was promptly accepted. "I delight to do Thy will, O My God!" was the response of the chiefest of all God's creatures. This involved a great humiliation—leaving the dignity of the chiefest on the spirit plane, to become a human being—a man amongst men— "the Man Christ Jesus"—not a sinful man, but a perfect one, in the image and likeness of God, as was the first Adam originally— "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." R. 5846

Being in the form of God, *did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of men.

– Philippians 2:6-7 –

[The Apostle] points out to us that when our Lord Jesus was a spirit being, before He stooped to take our nature and to bear the penalty of our sin, He was in "a form of God"—a spirit form, a high and glorious condition. But instead of being moved selfishly and ambitiously to grasp for higher things than God had conferred upon Him—instead of seeking to set up a rival Empire, as Satan did—He did not meditate **a robbery of God** to make Himself the Father's **equal** (Satan's course), and say, "I will ascend above the stars [the bright ones, the angelic hosts], I will be **as the Most High**" [His peer, His equal]. Quite to the contrary of this, our Lord Jesus, "the beginning of the creation of God," was willing, in harmony with the Father's plan, to **humble** Himself, to take a **lower** nature and to do a work which would involve, not only a great deal of humiliation, but also a great deal of pain and suffering. R. 4928

**did not meditate a usurpation to be like God (Diaglott)*

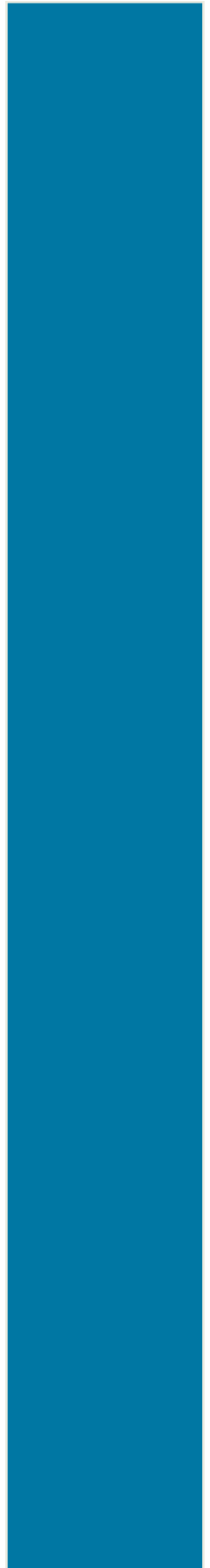
Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

– Hebrews 12:2 –

Thus, the Scriptures inform us that the coming of the Logos into the world was a voluntary matter. He did this "for the joy that was set before Him," by the Almighty. The Father set before the Son that if He would suffer the ignominy of the transference of His being from the higher plane to a lower, a human plane, in order that He might redeem the lost race of Adam, He should be highly exalted, next to Jehovah; He should be made a partaker of Jehovah's nature—the **Divine** nature. All this was the inspiration of our Lord's course—the joy of doing the Father's will and of having His approval; the joy of restoring mankind and of being exalted to His Father's glorious nature. He who thus humbled Himself to become a man and die the ignominious death of the cross, has indeed been highly exalted as promised, and has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. —Heb. 1:3. R. 5429

**The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst,
from your brethren. Him you shall hear.
Deuteronomy 18:15**

SEED OF HOPE PROMISED

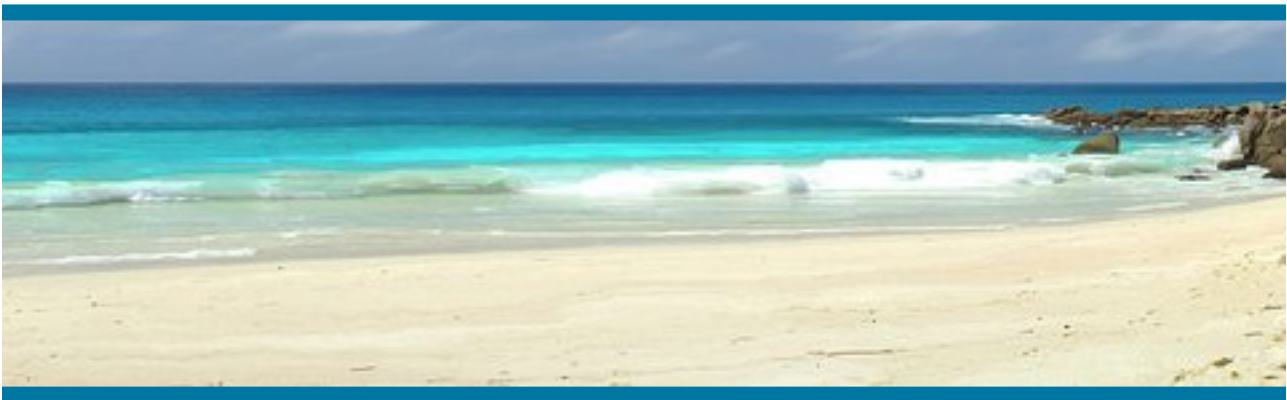


I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.

– Genesis 3:15 –

Our heavenly Father said to our first parents—and this was the first intimation that He gave them of a deliverance—that “The Seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent’s head.” The **serpent** in this expression means **Satan**—all the powers of evil, everything adverse to humanity, everything adverse to the blessings which God had given them, and which they had lost by disobedience. But the promise was vague and they understood little about the “Seed of the woman” and “bruising the Serpent’s head.” It merely meant in an allegorical way a great victory over Sin and Satan, without explaining how it should come.

Although [Satan] would be permitted to bruise the heel of humanity, ultimately a mighty son of mankind, the seed of the woman, should deal the fatal blow upon his head. It is the seed of the woman that shall do this; for he is to be the Son of God, born of a woman, and not a son of Adam, in which case he would have been an heir of his taint and penalty, and could not have redeemed us by a spotless sacrifice in our room and stead. God was the life-giver, the father, of the immaculate Son of Mary; and therefore that “holy thing” that was born of her was called the Son of God, as well as the seed of the woman; and because thus, through her, a partaker of the human nature, he was also called a Son of man—of mankind. R. 4963 and R. 1610



Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand, which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

– Genesis 22:17-18 –

God’s sympathy was manifested; and we read that, “He looked down and beheld that there was no eye to pity and no arm to save” and with “His own Arm He brought salvation.” This is what was promised to Abraham—that one should come from his posterity who would be the **Savior of the world**; and because this promise was made to Abraham and to his Seed, they were marked out as separate from all other nations and peoples. To the Jewish nation alone belonged this great honor—that through them should come this salvation. Hence, from that time onward the Jews spoke of themselves as God’s people, the people whom God had promised to bless, and through whom He would bring a blessing to all others. Therefore, all other people were called **heathen** (or **nations**, which the word means). Israel was thus separated because God’s Covenant was with them, and not with the others. But God’s Covenant with Israel was for the blessing of all the others: “In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” R. 4963

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, “SURELY BLESSING I WILL BLESS YOU, AND MULTIPLYING I WILL MULTIPLY YOU.”

– Hebrews 6:13-14 –

The Scriptures over and over again refer to God’s words with Abraham, not only as a promise, but as a Covenant. As, for instance, before it was made, God said to Abraham, Come out of thine own land into a land that I will show thee, and I will make a Covenant with thee. It was in harmony with that promise that Abraham removed to the land of Canaan, where God declares that he did make a Covenant with him, to the effect that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. The prophet tells us that that Covenant was confirmed three times to Abraham with an oath—again to Isaac and again to Jacob. (See Gen. 17:19; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14.) This which the Apostle styles **The Promise** (particular and special above all promises) is also called a Covenant thirteen times in the Book of Genesis alone, besides numerous other references. R. 4496



When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever.

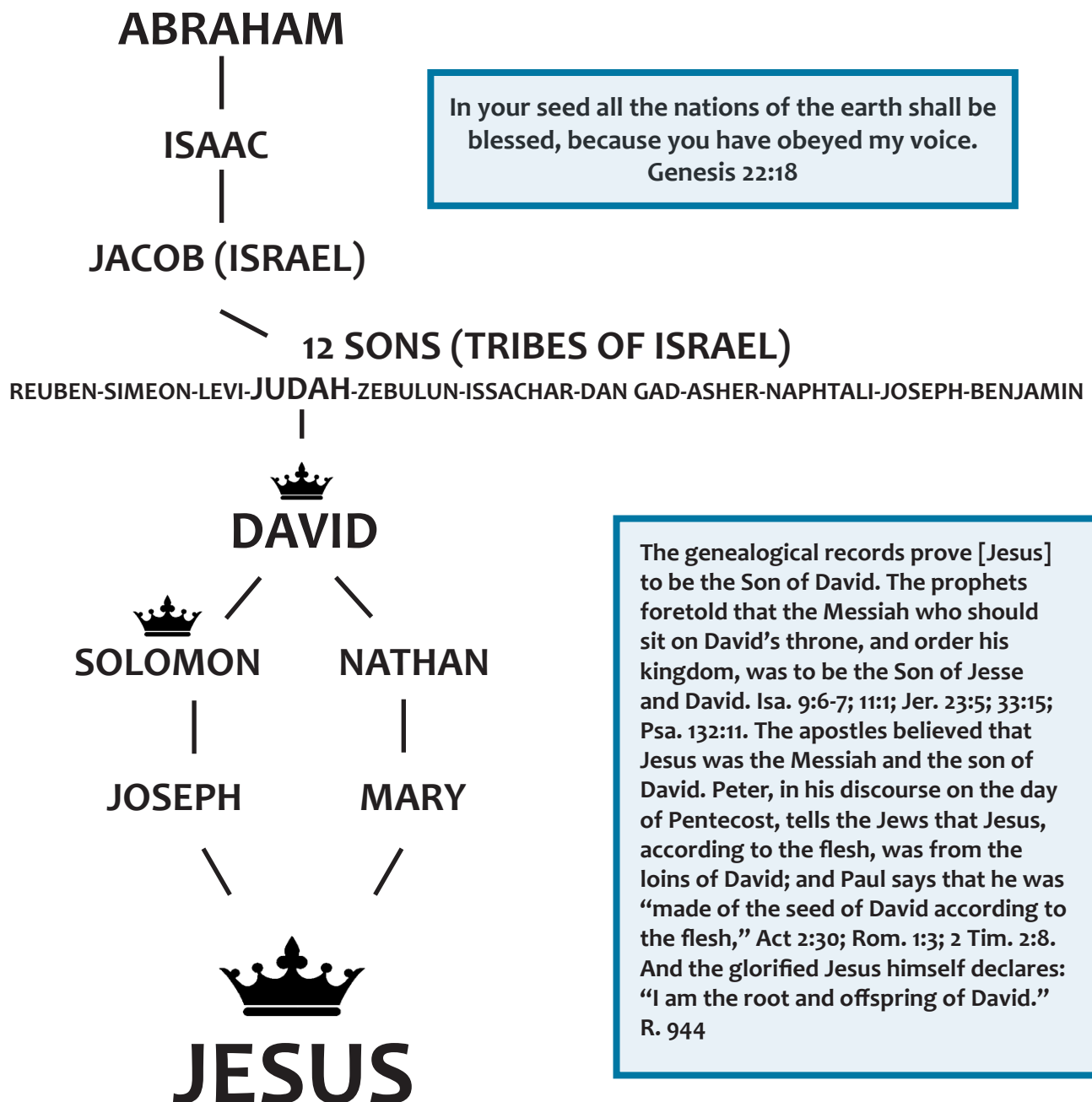
– 2 Samuel 7:12-13,16 –

This prophecy seems, indeed, to have a fulfillment in Solomon, but only because Solomon was a type of the greater son of David, who was also the son of God. Solomon indeed built the **typical** house of the Lord, but Christ, the antitypical son of David and Son of God is now building the true, the antitypical Temple, the Church which is his Body, a temple of the holy spirit, a house of sons. David himself prophetically grasps the truth of this promise, saying, “Jehovah hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from him; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.” (Psa. 132:11.) The Apostle Peter, moved by the holy spirit on Pentecost, refers to this same promise, and definitely applies it to our Lord Jesus. —Act 2:30. R. 2372

In that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, who shall stand as a banner to the people. For the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious.

– Isaiah 11:10 –

In [this prophecy] the Lord pictures natural Israel as entirely cut off, leaving nothing behind but the root of divine promise, and yet he shows that out of this root shall ultimately come all the blessings originally promised to Abraham, and confirmed unto Isaac, unto Jacob, and unto David. [Here] our Lord is not spoken of as the root out of David, but as the root out of Jesse, David's father; because David himself is a type of Christ, his name signifying **beloved**. Hence also the fact that in many prophecies our Lord's Millennial reign is spoken of as the reign of David, the reign of the Beloved.
R. 2372



**Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you—
The sure mercies of David.**

– Isaiah 55:3 –

The New Covenant, the everlasting Covenant, the sure mercies of David [the beloved], is to be proffered to all. That New Covenant, as the Apostle points out, is the divine agreement to be merciful—to forgive, to cancel sins that are past— "I will put my law in their minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people.... I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and iniquities I will remember no more." (Heb. 8:8-13; Jer. 31:29-34.)

"The sure mercies of David" are the mercies guaranteed to Israel and the world through his greater Son, our Lord. The real David (the real Beloved) shall be the divine channel for the outpouring of the blessings and mercies of the Abrahamic Covenant. R. 3597

“Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness. A King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.”

– Jeremiah 23:5 –

The Messiah was to be the seed of David, according to the Prophets, and the genealogical records as given by Matthew and Luke, prove that Jesus was the Son of David, with whom Jehovah made an everlasting covenant, saying, “His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me,” Psa. 89:36. The genealogical records prove him to be the Son of David. The prophets foretold that the Messiah who should sit on David’s throne, and order his kingdom, was to be the Son of Jesse and David. Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1; Jer. 23:5; 33:15; Psa. 132:11. The apostles believed that Jesus was the Messiah and the son of David. Peter, in his discourse on the day of Pentecost, tells the Jews that Jesus, according to the flesh, was from the loins of David; and Paul says that he was “made of the seed of David according to the flesh,” Acts 2:30; Rom. 1:3; 2 Tim. 2:8. And the glorified Jesus himself declares: “I am the root and offspring of David,” Rev. 22:16. Jesus the Christ was the Son of Man, not in the sense of simply being a **man**, but because he was the son of the man David, with whom Jehovah made an everlasting covenant, that the throne and kingdom of Israel should belong to him and his seed forever. R. 944

**I have made a covenant with
My chosen. I have sworn
to My servant David:
Your seed I will establish forever and
build up your throne to all generations.
His seed shall endure forever and
his throne as the sun before Me.
Psalm 89:3-4,36**

Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne.

– Acts 2:29-30 –

A throne is the seat of a priest or a king, and it is often used as the emblem, or symbol, of sacerdotal or regal authority. [This] covenant mentioned in the Scriptures as an unconditional one was that made to Israel's king, David—that his throne should be established forever—that of the fruit of his loins he would raise up a great one to sit on his throne in perpetuity. God could make this covenant without any limitations whatever, because he had already arranged that Jesus, according to the flesh, should be born of the house, of the lineage, of David and that his throne should be forever. David's throne, we are to remember, was the throne of the Lord, as we read, "Solomon sat upon the throne of the Lord in the room of his father David." God never acknowledged any throne in Israel except his own. It was entrusted to David for a time, and after him for a time to his posterity according to the flesh: it has been "overturned" during "the times of the Gentiles," but eventually, "he shall come whose right it is," and the Lord will give it unto him—the throne of the Lord, the throne of David. Indeed, even the name of David was a synonym for Immanuel, since its meaning is "Beloved." Christ is God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleased, and to whom, therefore, he has appointed the honors, dignities and authority of the Kingdom which is to bless all the families of the earth, according to the promises made to Abraham. R. 1283 and R. 3108



Thus says the Lord GOD: "Remove the turban, and take off the crown! Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him."

Ezekial 21:26-27

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.

– Luke 1:32-33 –

That celebrated promise, which was made known to the virgin Mary by the angel Gabriel, may be taken as a sample. The throne of David is the emblem, or symbol, of David's reign, or kingdom; and David's reign, or kingdom, is a type, or figure, or shadow, of the reign, or kingdom, of David's Son and Lord. To the same effect is that memorable testimony which was given by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne." (Acts 2:29-30).

Our Lord in the flesh, as a descendant of David, was the legitimate heir to that crown of authority and dominion, that Kingdom of David which should have no end.

R. 1283, R. 3687

**The LORD has sworn in truth to David. He will not turn from it:
"I will set upon your throne the fruit of your body."**

Psalm 132:11



You, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting.

– Micah 5:2 –

The Scriptures explain to us that Mary, our Lord's mother, and Joseph, her husband, were both of the lineage of David, and that in a seemingly accidental manner the prophecy was fulfilled which foretold that Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. — Micah 5:2. R. 3700

Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name JESUS."

– Luke 1:26-27,30-31 –

The Bible explains to us very distinctly that [Jesus] was not begotten of an earthly father. Although Joseph was espoused to Mary, yet this child was not the child of Joseph. The Bible explains that this child was specially begotten by Divine power, in the mother, though she was still a "virgin" when she brought forth the child. This is the Scriptural proposition; and while it may not seem clear to some, yet the Word of God standeth sure. If the Redeemer was not perfect then He could not be the Savior of the world. The promised redemption implied that Jesus would be perfect; it implied that He would be as the first man was before he sinned. "For since by man came death, by man shall come also the resurrection of the dead"; "As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive." So this one must be, as the Apostle declares, "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) He must be entirely distinct and separate from humanity so far as sinful features were concerned. R. 4963

**She will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS,
for He will save His people from their sins.
Matthew 1:21**

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you. Therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."

– Luke 1:35 –

Such a man could never come into the world as the seed of Adam, since all of Adam's posterity inherited his condemnation; but such a one was promised as the seed of the woman. (Gen 3:15.) And the Son of God was that one. Begotten of God and born of a woman, he thus partook of the human nature without its condemnation. This was indicated in the angel's message to Mary—"That **holy thing** which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35.) Since by man (Adam) came death, by man also (the man Christ Jesus) must come the redemption and consequent resurrection from the dead. —1 Cor. 15:21. R. 1246

Mary's Prayer

My soul magnifies the Lord,

And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant.

For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.

For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.

And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with His arm.

He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones and exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy,

As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.

Luke 1:46-55

The people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not.

– Luke 3:15 –

Why were all men in expectation of Him at the time of His birth? What was to be peculiar about Him to lead Israel to expect His birth? The answer to this question is that God had made a certain promise centuries before and the promise had not been fulfilled. This promise contained the thought that a holy child would be born, and that in some way, not explained in the promise, this child would bring the blessing the world needed. Therefore every mother amongst the Israelites was very solicitous that she might be the mother of a son rather than a daughter, that perchance she might be the mother of this promised child. Thus the matter went on for years until, finally, the child was born.

The promise back of the expectation was that which God made to Abraham, saying, **“In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the**

earth be blessed.” From that time forward Abraham began to look for the promised Seed—the promised child. He looked first of all to his own children, and was finally informed that it would not be one of his children direct, but that through their children, at some remote date, this child should be born—the Seed of Abraham. From that time onward, all the Israelites were waiting for the birth of the child that should bring the blessing. R. 4963

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever.

Isaiah 9:6-7

“And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.

– Malachi 3:1 –

The Israelites, discouraged with their failure to keep the Law and to get the blessings promised therefrom, were encouraged by the Lord with the promise that someday a great Messiah would appear—greater than Moses, with whom God would make a New Covenant on their behalf. The New Covenant would be superior to the old one in that it would have a better Mediator, for Israel already had God’s perfect law. The New Mediator would not relax the Law, either. The advantage to accrue through Him would be that somehow His Covenant and Sin-Offering would be more efficacious than that which Moses instituted, because it would put away sin forever and give willing Israelites a new heart, a heart of flesh, after which they would be given everlasting life on condition of their maintaining their relationship with the Almighty. R. 4930

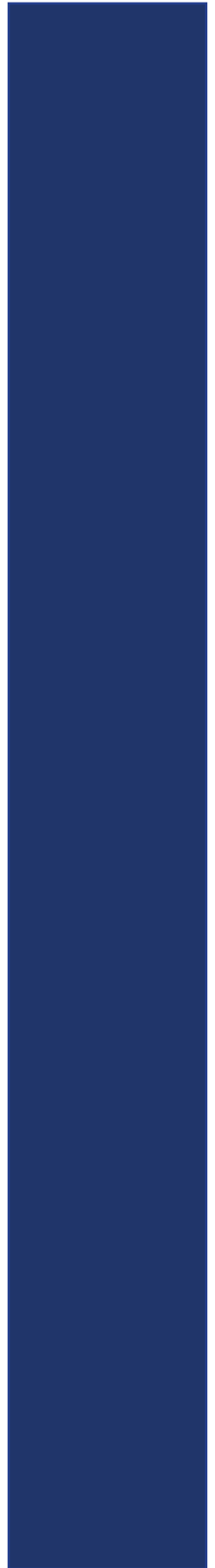
**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.
I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.
Ezekiel 36:26**

Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: “Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest, for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us. To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

– Luke 1:67-79 –

St. Peter distinctly tells us respecting the Old Testament Prophets, that “Holy men of old spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” He intimates that frequently they uttered deeper and broader truths than they themselves comprehended—truths which only the future would fully reveal. This is true of the prophecy of Zacharias. Verses 68-70 constitute the first division of this prophecy; praise to God, the Fountain of every good and perfect gift, comes first. To Him all honor and praise are to be given for the fulfillment of His gracious promises of old, “for He hath visited and brought redemption to His people; He hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David,” in harmony with the promises. Here, after the usual manner of prophecies, the thing about to be accomplished is spoken of as though it had been done. The second section or strophe of this prophetic poem runs from verse 71 to 75. It relates to the deliverance of God’s people from the power of their enemies. The third section or strophe of this prophetic poem tells us of a work to be accomplished before the grand consummation of the destruction of all enemies and the lifting up of all accounted worthy to be sons of God. This is recorded in verses 76-79. It tells how John the Baptist would be the forerunner of the Lord’s special Servant, Jesus, to pave the way for His great work. That great work would be to give the knowledge of salvation to thousands who were already God’s people, to show them the “high calling” of this present Age. Thus in God’s tender mercy the Church sees and is enlightened by the “Morning Star” or “Day Star” before the Sun of Righteousness arises to scatter the darkness of mankind during Messiah’s reign. This lesser light of the present time shines into the hearts of believers with sanctifying power and sets them afire with zeal for the Truth. They in turn shine forth upon those who are sitting in the shadow of death. This “Day Star” guides the feet of the saints in the way of peace, even while still in the time of trouble and before the New Dispensation is ushered in. R. 4940

**THE SON
OF GOD
MADE FLESH**



For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

– John 3:16 –

The birth of Jesus, to be rightly understood and esteemed, must be considered from the standpoint of a Gift of Love Divine. From the beginning God in the Divine Plan contemplated that the Only Begotten of the Father, the Logos, the active Agent of Divinity in the work of Creation, should be granted the great privilege of being man's Redeemer, and thereby securing a great reward— "Glory, honor and immortality," the Divine nature, through a resurrection from the dead. "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift!" That Gift is our Savior, our Redeemer. In this connection it is impossible for us to tell the riches of Divine grace toward us—the numberless blessings and mercies which are ours through our Lord. He represents to us the very fullness of every Divine provision for our eternal welfare. R. 5135 and R. 5926



We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels.

– Hebrews 2:9 –

Jesus in his pre-human existence, was, we are told, "in a form of God," i.e., he was a spiritual form or being, but since to be a **ransom** for mankind, he must be a MAN, and of the same nature as the sinner whose **substitute** in death he was to become, therefore it was necessary, for him to **change his nature**; and Paul tells us that he took not, or changed not, to the **nature of angels**, but to the **nature of men**—he became a man. (Heb. 2:16.) Now notice, that this teaches not only that angelic nature is not the only one on the spiritual plane of being, but that it is a lower plane or nature than that which Jesus was before he became a man. And Jesus was not then so **high** as he is **now**, for—Him hath God highly exalted: (Phil. 2:9), because of his becoming our RANSOM. He is now of the highest form of spiritual being—a partaker of the **divine** (Jehovah's) **nature**.

Man, who was thus degraded and defiled by sin and its penalty death, working in him, is to be restored to his original perfection of mind and body, and to glory, honor, and dominion, during, and by, the Millennial reign of Christ; because his ransom has been found in the person of Christ; and "as in (or by) Adam all die, even so, in (or by) Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15:22.) The things to be **restored** by and through Christ, are those things which were lost through Adam's sin. (Rom. 5:18-19.) Man did not lose a heavenly, but an earthly paradise. Under the death penalty, he did not lose a spiritual, but a human existence; and all that was lost is **purchased** back by his REDEEMER. R. 329

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.

– Luke 2:4-5 –

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

The noting of these little incidentals by which divine providence prepared for our Savior’s birth and for the sending forth of the Gospel message, are strengthening to the faith of the Lord’s people. Realizing God’s care in the past over even the little things, gives a foundation for confidence in his wisdom and provision for the features of his plan which are yet future—the fulfillment of all the exceeding great and precious promises which centered in him who was born in Bethlehem. And so also a realization of the divine providence in the larger affairs of the divine plan stimulates faith also in the Lord’s providences as respects the personal and more private affairs of his people. Let us more and more realize that, as even the smallest incidents connected with the birth of our Savior were ordered of the Lord, so also he is both able and willing to order all of the affairs of his spiritual children. Let us reason with the Apostle that, if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so as to make such careful provision for our redemption, much more now that we are no longer rebels, aliens, strangers, foreigners, but have become his sons, fellow-heirs with Christ and all the saints, we may have confidence in his love and in his providential care, that according to his promise all things shall work together for good to them that love him—to the called ones according to his purpose. —Rom. 5:8-10; 8:28. R. 2556

In Jewish genealogies it was customary to reckon lineage through either parent. According to their custom, and indeed, among all civilized people to-day, at marriage the wife becomes a sharer in the interests of the husband; she leaves her father’s house and name to share that of her husband. Mary was thus a sharer with Joseph when Jesus was born (though not when he was conceived—Matt. 1:18) hence, the genealogy of Joseph is given in Matt. 1:1-16—the son of Solomon the son of David.

Another custom of that day was to reckon the genealogy through the wife’s ancestry and treat her husband as in her stead the son of her father. (To-day we would call such—a son-in-law.) The seed of Abraham and David is thus traced, through Mary’s ancestry, in Luke 3:23; and here Joseph is called the son of Heli, Mary’s father, who was the son of Nathan the son of David. R. 453

When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

– Galatians 4:4 –

Our God is a God of order. Everything that God does is in accordance with a definitely pre-arranged plan, and the times and seasons are no insignificant part of that plan. Notice that Christ was born on time— **“In the fullness of time”** God sent his only-begotten Son. (Gal. 4:4). Not before, nor after, but just when the time was full. Christ’s first sermon was on time. He came preaching and saying, **the time is fulfilled** ...repent and believe the Gospel.” (Mar. 1:15). “In due time, Christ died.” (Rom. 5:6). He rose again the **third day**, according to the Scriptures.” (1 Cor. 15:4). During his ministry they frequently sought to take him, but could not “because his hour was not yet come.” And just as sure as there is a **due time** for the Second Advent, and if now be the due time, the Spirit will guide God’s faithful children into the truth on this subject. We would have none fail to observe the evidences of the Lord’s preparatory overruling providence in so shaping the world’s affairs as to accomplish the purposes of his plan at that time.

(1) The world was then for a time at peace, and quiet, the Roman dominion having brought all the world under its powerful control; and as all men were in expectation of Messiah’s advent (Luke 3:15) according to the Jewish prophets whose fame had gone out into all the world, the sudden announcement of his birth attracted wide attention, as it would not have done in less peaceful times.

(2) The Greek language, noted by all scholars as the most nearly perfect, exact and precise medium for human speech, had at that time been fully developed and widely disseminated. Thus was prepared **in due time** the very best medium for the communication of the gospel of the new covenant.

(3) The Old Testament had been translated into the Greek language three centuries before Christ (This version is called the Septuagint); and the Jews had been dispersed among all peoples, carrying the O.T. with them and bearing witness to its prophecies of a coming Messiah.

(4) It was a time, too, of increased intellectual activity, which was ready to operate on this and every other question of public interest. Thus the circumstances of the time were peculiarly adapted to the announcement of this wonderful event,—the advent of the world’s Redeemer. The fullness of time had come, and, under the overruling providence of God, the conditions were ripe. R. 598 and R. 1673

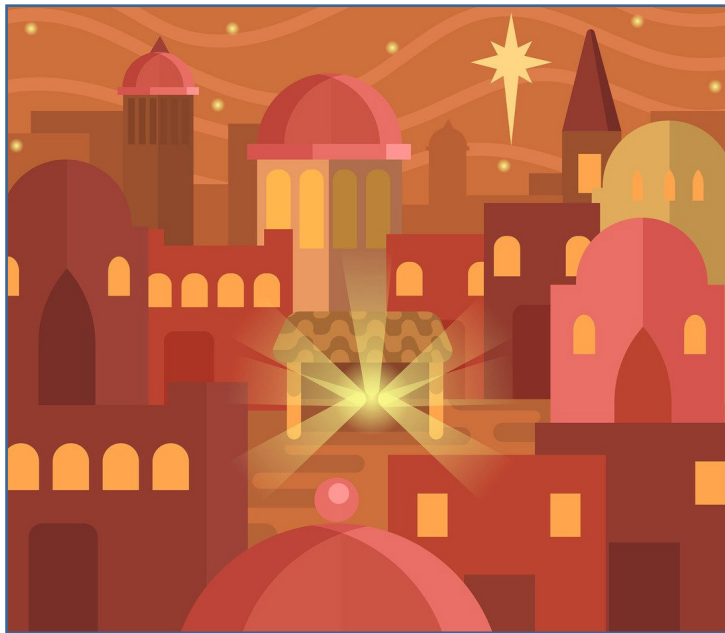
Of the four records, only John’s attempts to trace our Lord’s genealogy to the heavenly source, and to show us that before he was made flesh he was a spirit being with the Father and a sharer of his glory—a god with the God. But all of the Evangelists are clear in their statement that he “was made flesh”—not that he remained a spirit being, and assumed flesh as clothing in which to appear to men, but, however explainable, that the life power of the spirit being, the Logos, became the life power of the human being, born of a woman and under the Law, subject to all the conditions and circumstances of the Jews. R. 2555

So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

– Luke 2:6-7 –

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

The city of Bethlehem still exists, and probably is not so dissimilar to what it was in that day, for in that land customs seem to have changed but little in centuries. A certain grotto is claimed to be the one which nineteen hundred years ago was the stable of the inn, and a certain stone manger is shown which, it is claimed, was the one in which the Babe Jesus was laid. Over this has been erected a Catholic church, and various ceremonies are continually performed in and about and connected with "the sacred manger." With such ceremonies we can feel little sympathy, believing them to be rather of the nature of idolatries. To us the center of interest is not the holy ground on which our Savior trod, nor the holy manger in which he lay as a babe, nor his holy mother; yea, though we reverence his flesh, and are deeply interested in all that pertains thereto, especially in all its experiences, from the time of its consecration



to death, at baptism; nevertheless, our still greater interest is in our risen Lord, the new creature perfected, the spiritual One, far above manhood, far above angels, principalities and powers and every name that is named—next to the Father, and exalted to his right hand of power. The Apostle voices this sentiment well, saying, "Though we have known Christ

after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more"—our knowledge of him as the risen and glorified Lord and Savior thoroughly outshines all of our interest in his earthly life. (2 Cor. 5:16.) And yet his earthly life is interesting and profitable to us, as we have seen and shall see.

Had the people assembled at Bethlehem realized who this was that had come to their city—that he was from the heavenly courts, that he was the Logos made flesh, that he had come to "save his people from their sins"—how gladly they would have welcomed him into the inn and have given to his use and comfort its choicest apartments! But they knew him not, and hence lost this great privilege of ministering to him. Similarly, in every city and town where the Lord's people are (his true saints), there are many who would make them welcome and give them the best at their disposal, did they but recognize them as the messengers of Jesus and of the Heavenly Father; but as the Apostle says, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John 3:1.) R. 2556

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given. And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever.

– Isaiah 9:6-7 –

Many are the names of the Son of man—the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The first name given in the list of the Prophet is called Wonderful, and is surely appropriate. His is the most wonderful career and the most wonderful character of which we have any knowledge. Who else than he left the glories of the heavenly state for human conditions? as he himself said, “No man hath ascended up to heaven save he which came down from heaven.” (John 3:13.) He alone left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; he alone exercised that wonderful faith in the Father which permitted him to sacrifice everything with joy, delighting to do the Father’s will, with confidence that in due time the rewards of the Father’s favor and love would more than compensate for every sacrifice. Wonderful, too, was his life amongst men, the Light shining in the darkness, the darkness comprehending it not. More and more as we come into the light ourselves we are able to comprehend this Wonderful One. As the Apostle suggests, the eyes of our understanding being opened we are able to comprehend with all saints the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God which passes all understanding, such love being manifested, exhibited, illustrated in this Wonderful One. Wonderful also was his resurrection, the “first that should rise from the dead,” “the first-born amongst many brethren,” “highly exalted, given a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.” —Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15; Col. 1:18; Phil. 2:9-10.



The seventh verse gives another precious assurance, and that is that this Kingdom once being attained by our Lord will never be surrendered to another, never pass into other hands. Of his government and of his peace which he will establish there will be no end. Not only Israel, but all mankind have been witnesses that the best of kings as well as the worst of kings have at times surrendered their dominions, and that the best of kings might be followed by the worst. How appropriate then the suggestion that when the Kingdom of this great King of kings and Lord of lords shall have conquered the world and have subdued all things unto him and brought all things into harmony with the divine will, it shall never again be overturned by evil. R. 3912 and R. 3468

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

– Luke 2:8 –

It is worthy of notice that the announcement of the Savior's birth was not made to an assembled world, in whose most vital interest he had come; nor even to assembled Israel, the chosen people of God; nor yet to all of those who, like Simeon and Anna, with devout hearts had long been looking for the hope of Israel. But it was made to only a few devout shepherds who were watching their flocks by night. The grand truth was one to be received **by faith**; and it was sent through humble, but trustworthy, human agents, who were the honored instruments in God's hands. And any who proudly despised the instruments were unworthy of the good tidings....The Angels' message was, "**good tidings of GREAT JOY TO ALL PEOPLE**; for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

It was the custom at that time for the shepherds to remain with their flocks by night as a guard against thieves as well as against wild beasts. It was in this vicinity that David (afterward king), when a shepherd-boy protecting his flocks, slew on one occasion a lion and at another time a bear. The shepherds as a class were not particularly well educated people as respects schools, and yet many of them were thoughtful and thus secured, in their leisure time while watching their flocks, by reflection and by conversation, considerable knowledge, so that they might be termed an intellectual and thinking class of people—their minds being turned more to reflection on large subjects than are the minds of some who are constantly immersed in trade and mechanics. The shepherd whom God honored in making him king of his typical kingdom, was a great poet, and evidently much of his time while shepherding was given to the muse, and one of his most beautiful poems (Psalm 23:1-6) represents Jehovah himself as the Shepherd of his people, —his flock, for which he cares. It was to men of this thoughtful class, and no doubt men familiar with David's Psalms, and with the Messianic hopes therein set forth, that the Lord sent the first message respecting his Son made flesh.

R. 1673 and R. 2556

And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid.

– Luke 2:9 –

The description of the appearance of an angel, and of the fear which the brightness of his countenance engendered, is both simple and natural. All mankind more or less feels instinctively a fear of the supernatural, a trepidation at the very thought of being in the presence of the holy angels. And this is proper as well as natural, for all realize their own imperfections through the fall, fearing more or less that the results to themselves would be unfavorable if divine justice were laid to the line and to the plummet in respect to their affairs. All seem instinctively to realize their need of mercy at the hands of him with whom we have to do. And so it was with these shepherds; they were affrighted as they beheld the heavenly visitor in their midst; but his message was not one of justice nor in any sense of condemnation, but of divine mercy.

Can we wonder that joy took the place of fear in their hearts as they heard the gracious words? Surely not. And so it is with all who from that day to the present time have heard this true Gospel message, not merely with the outward ears, but truly, with the ears of their understanding—comprehending it. R. 2556

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people!
– Luke 2:10 –

It will be observed that the blessedness of these tidings is cumulative: first it is “good tidings;” then it is “great joy;” and then the crowning feature of it is that it is “to all people” —not only to you shepherds who are this night looking for the hope of Israel, but for all your friends and relations and neighbors far and near; and to all their friends and relatives and neighbors, both to those who now live and to those who shall live, as well as to all those who slumber in death.

Blessed tidings!

The angels did not declare that our Lord came to bring universal and everlasting salvation to all people; but they do declare that the good message of joy, of privilege, love, hope, shall extend to all people. The explanation of this is that a Savior had been born—a deliverer of the weak, the helpless, the dying, able to succor to the utmost all who would come to the Father through him; able to open the blind eyes and to unstop the deaf ears that all may come to an appreciation of the goodness of God shining toward them in the face of the Lord Jesus.

The tidings are of redemption and restitution and everlasting life for all who will accept this blessing on the terms on which it is offered; —viz., faith in Christ as the Redeemer, and full repentance from sin, which of necessity implies the forsaking of sin and the cultivation of righteousness. Christ was born to be a Savior by subsequently giving his life a ransom for all. These good tidings—this miracle of divine goodness and mercy to fallen and doomed men—met a marvelously cold and indifferent reception. The world in general, though apprised of the fact and its import, manifested no faith nor interest in it, while it is written that he came unto his own people (the Jews), and they received him not. But the jubilant heavenly hosts, who were capable of appreciating what fallen men could not appreciate, and will not until their blind eyes are opened and their deaf ears unstopped, broke out in a rapturous strain of heavenly melody, saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” R. 2556, R. 1478, R. 3114, R. 1673



For there is born
to you this day
in the city of David
a Savior,
who is Christ the Lord.
– Luke 2:11 –



And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

– Luke 2:12 –

Noble shepherds those must have been to whom the Almighty sent the angelic message respecting the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, which has rung down the ages and reached our ears—the message which thrills us the more in proportion as we are able to grasp its meaning. The messenger states the philosophy of the divine plan, “Unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ [Messiah] the Lord.” There we have the key to the entire Gospel statement of how God could be just and yet be the justifier of sinners who accept Jesus. The word “Savior” here signifies life-giver, and how beautiful is the thought that as death is the wage of sin, the curse upon the race, this Messiah who was born is to be the one who will rescue the race from the sentence by giving them life again.

The angel gave the shepherds an intimation of the humble conditions under which this great King of earth was born into the world—as a babe, wrapped in swaddling bands and lying in a manger. This was necessary, not only to their identification of Jesus, but necessary also to bring down their thoughts from the great and grand **results** to its humble **beginnings**, lest they should be misled in their expectations. And as it is with every part of the divine plan, so also it should be in respect to all of our proclamations of the same. We are not only to tell of the future glory and greatness and grandeur, but we are to tell also of the present humiliation—not only of our Savior who humbled himself to take a low estate amongst men, and to die for our sins, but also to point out that the “elect” are called to walk in his footsteps, under similarly humiliating circumstances—to suffer with him, if they would reign with him; to die with him, if they would live with him. And thus also the prophets spoke not only of the glory that should follow, but also of the sufferings of Christ (head and body), which must precede the glory. (1 Pet. 1:11.) R. 3701 and R. 2557

The message of the angels to the shepherds on Bethlehem’s plains sounds more and more precious to each child of God in proportion as he grows in grace and knowledge. As his eyes and ears of understanding open more widely to the lengths and breadths of God’s great plan of the ages, that prophetic message is the more highly esteemed as an epitome of the entire Gospel. R. 3700

Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.

– Luke 2:13-14 –

It was a fitting climax that, after the one angel had told the surprised shepherds of the good tidings of great joy for all people and was ready to depart, he should be joined by an angelic host, singing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” This was but a reiteration of the Gospel message already delivered. It declared that the work which should be accomplished by the babe just born, should redound to the highest glory and honor of Jehovah God, his Father. It declared also that through this work to be accomplished by Jesus should come to earth divine good will and consequently peace,—and all that these would imply in the way of blessings of restitution and privilege of attaining everlasting life.

Truly the more we see of the divine plan for our salvation, which began to take shape in the birth of Jesus, the more we feel like shouting with the angelic choir praises to the God of heaven, thankfulness for his mercy to the children of men. It mattered not that the babe born in Bethlehem was the Savior only in prospect, that he could not even be anointed to do his work until he reached manhood’s estate thirty years later; it mattered not that even then it would be necessary for him to lay down his life gradually through three and a half years of his earthly ministry, to be finished at Calvary; it mattered not either that the resurrection was still three days after that, and his ascension forty days later, and that the blessing in general would be deferred for nearly nineteen centuries thereafter. As the angels could sing and rejoice at the first budding of the divine plan of salvation, so also can all who have faith in the ultimate outcome rejoice with joy unspeakable and give praise to God in the highest and to his Son our Lord. R. 2557 and R. 3701



No wonder after this message had been delivered, the Lord permitted an angel host to serenade the proclamation, and incidentally to prophesy also of the grand results yet to flow from the great work of redemption, which was then only beginning in the birth of the Redeemer! Properly the anthem begins with praise to him that sitteth upon the throne, to him who devised the great and wonderful plan of redemption and who sent his Son, our willing Redeemer; glory to him in the highest—in the highest strain of heart and voice, with fullest appreciation of him as a Savior! Next came the consequences on earth; namely, peace;—not such a peace as men might patch up between themselves and between nations and parties, and that under present conditions would be sure very soon to be scattered to the winds; but a peace with God, a peace which comes from a restoration to the race of the divine good will. But now, glory to God in the highest! because peace has been established upon a firm foundation—the lifting of the curse through the payment of our penalty by the Lord’s own arrangement! R. 3115

They came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

– Luke 2:16-18 –

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

It matters not that December 25th is not the real anniversary of the Savior's birth, but probably the anniversary of the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, the anniversary of the Virgin Mary's conception, our Lord being born nine months later on the calendar, or about October 1. One so great, whose birth, death and resurrection from the dead means so much to the human family, may be remembered and celebrated any day, every day, by all who appreciate what he has done for our race. Since, then, the majority of Christian people have become habituated to the celebration of December 25th as our Lord's birthday, we need make no protest, but join with all in celebrating that day with

rejoicing of heart, giving gifts and remembrances one to another, thus copying divine favor, which gave to mankind the Son of God as a gift of mercy and love for our redemption.

R. 2558 and R. 3700



.....
 • *Respecting the date of*
 • *Jesus' birth, please see*
 • *MILLENNIAL DAWN,*
 • *VOL. II., pages 54-62.*
 •

**Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.
 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God
 for all the things that they had heard and seen.
 And when eight days were completed for the circumcision
 of the Child, His name was called JESUS, the name given
 by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.
 Luke 2:19-21**

There was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into



the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

– Luke 2:26-32,34 –

When Jesus was forty days old, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem and presented Him in consecration in the Temple. This was in accordance with the custom which related specially to the first-born in each family. An aged Prophet came forward and took the babe Jesus in his arms and praised God. The record is that in some manner God had revealed to him that the accomplishment of the gracious promises made to Abraham was nigh, and that he should not die until he had seen the Deliverer of Israel. By some power Divine this aged Prophet recognized Jesus, and, after saying, "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation"—the way in which Thy salvation shall come to Israel and to all the families of the earth—he proceeded to say, "which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all people—the Light of the world and the Glory of Thy people Israel."

Simeon, addressing Mary, declared prophetically that the Child was "set for the fall and the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign [mark or standard], which shall be spoken against, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." How wonderful a prophecy! It reminds us of the words of St. Paul, that our Lord is "a stone of stumbling and rock of offence" to many in Israel, that many stumbled, being disappointed. And St. Paul told also of the rising again of many who stumbled. He declares, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded"—stumbled—turned aside from Divine favor. (Rom. 11:7.) Nevertheless, he assures us that as soon as "the elect," the Church of Christ, shall have been completed, by the power of the First Resurrection, then Divine favor shall return to natural Israel, through Elect Spiritual Israel: "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy." —Rom. 11:25-33. R. 4942

Coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

– Luke 2:38 –

A saintly woman, Anna, a Prophetess, over a century old, resided in Jerusalem and in the precincts of the Temple courts. She, also, moved by the Holy Spirit, recognized the Babe and gave praise to God and mentioned the matter to the saintly ones who were waiting for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise—“for the consolation of Israel.” If the seeing of Jesus as a babe was worthy of praise and thanks, still more was it a cause of gratitude to God for those who beheld Him at the age of thirty, consecrating Himself a living sacrifice even unto death, and who realized that He had been begotten again by the Holy Spirit to be a New Creature, of the divine nature. Those who saw the Master’s faithfulness in performing the sacrifice of His consecration during the three and a half years of His ministry beheld still more for which to give God praise. And when He had finished His course at Calvary and was raised from the dead the third day, and forty days later ascended up on high where He was before, happy were they who recognized that further development of the Divine Plan for man’s salvation—the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Still more blessed were those who at Pentecost received the Holy Spirit as a begetting power and those who since have received the same, evidencing that they are the children of God, and, “if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ” their Lord to the great inheritance—to the oath-bound promise made to Abraham, that through them all the families of the earth shall be blessed. R. 4942

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem.

Matthew 2:1

Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.

– Matthew 2:2 –

The inquiry of the wise men betokened a proper condition of heart— (1) It showed that they had respect and reverence, and that they desired to render homage to the mighty God of Israel, and to his messenger to men. (2) It showed faith in the divinely inspired prophecies which had been irregularly interwoven with their own vague ideas and traditions. (3) It showed their zeal as truth-seekers, and their humility of heart in leaving their own philosophies, etc., and coming to inquire of the God of another nation. They seemed to desire truth on the great subjects of God and of human destiny, regardless of all other considerations. And they accordingly declared their disposition to render the homage due to the appointed ambassador of Israel’s God, when they should find him.

R. 1674

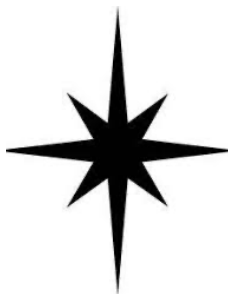


When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'BUT YOU, BETHLEHEM, IN THE LAND OF JUDAH, ARE NOT THE LEAST AMONG THE RULERS OF JUDAH. FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.' " Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." When they heard the king, they departed. And behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

– Matthew 2:3-10 –

Expecting a king, the wise men naturally came to the palace of Herod, who, although called the King of the Jews, was the representative of their conquerors, the Romans. Herod was the founder of the House of Herod and naturally had great expectations, not only with reference to the duration of his own dominion, but also with a view to the establishment of his posterity in the power and office which he enjoyed. No wonder, then, that he was "troubled." The prospect of a rival either in the power or in the esteem of the people was not to his liking. "And all Jerusalem [was troubled] with him." Political influence takes in a wide circle. There were connected with Herod's government or benefited by it, directly or indirectly, many whose plans, hopes, etc., might be very much disarranged by any change of the government. Herod evidently knew of the Jewish tradition respecting Messiah, for he at once sent for those who were learned in the Scriptures to demand of them where the prophets indicated that Messiah should be born. The scribes and Pharisees were evidently quite familiar with the subject, had looked it up, and apparently without hesitation gave the name of Messiah's birthplace as Bethlehem, and quoted from the prophet in support of it.

The star which seemingly had led these wise men toward Jerusalem, and which then apparently had vanished, and left the searchers to arouse the curiosity and interest of the people of Jerusalem, again became their guide as they left the city, leading them to Bethlehem, which is only a short distance, and the star appears to have indicated even the very house in which they found the new-born King.



The promise of God to Abraham of a great "Seed," a great king and ruler who should bless the world with a righteous reign, it would appear, was carried by the Israelites into all the then civilized world. Leading some to expect a Jewish Messiah, it led others through a feeling of pride to declare that they were as able as the Jews to produce the desirable government and ruler for the world. Hence, we find that the idea of universal dominion began to prevail. R. 4098

When they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

– Matthew 2:11 –

That even the Gentile world was in expectation of the coming Messiah (Luke 3:15) is manifest from this visit of the wise men (Greek **Magi**, sages) from the east—possibly from Persia. The term originally belonged to a class of priests among the Medes and Persians who constituted the king's privy council and who cultivated astrology, medicine and occult and natural science. Ancient authors make frequent reference to them. Later the term was applied to all eastern philosophers. In the far east, the Chinese and Japanese and other nations have cherished a very ancient tradition that God would descend to the earth in visible form, to enlighten men and to redeem them from their sins.

Tacitus, Suetonius and Josephus all testify that there prevailed throughout the entire East at this time an intense conviction, derived from ancient prophecies, that ere long a powerful monarch would arise in Judea and gain dominion over the world. Virgil, who lived a little before this, tells that a child from heaven was looked for who should restore the golden age and take away sin. Confucius, in China, about B.C. 500, prophesied the appearance of such a deliverer, and a deputation of his followers going forth in search of him was the means of introducing Buddhism into China. Zoroaster taught the Persians that a pure virgin would bring forth a child, and that as soon as the child would be born a star would appear, which he added, "follow wheresoever it leads you, and adore the mysterious child, offering your gifts to him with the profoundest humility. He is the Almighty Word, which created the heavens."

These expectations doubtless arose from the intermingling of the Jews with foreign nations. The Prophet Daniel was himself associated with some of their wise men. (Dan. 2:48.) His prophecies were made known to them, and the calculations by which he pointed to the time of Messiah's advent. These in course of time were woven into their literature. Nearly all of the ancient religions are confessions of human need: and in their blind gropings in the dark, they reveal the depths of man's degradation and misery.



The miraculous star in the east, for which some of the Gentile wise men had been taught by a mere vague, groping superstition to look, finally made its appearance, and guided those blind feelers after God to the wonderful light of the world. Thus kindly God condescends to human ignorance and weakness. "A bruised reed will he not break, and smoking flax will he not quench."

All men will in due time have full, clear testimony to establish their faith in the Holy One of Israel and all who love righteousness will gladly accept him. Those who now can walk by faith have all the evidences which hopeful, loving faith requires. But none the less shall all the doubting Thomases and all the now blinded world in due time have the more tangible evidences in store for them. But more blessed are those who can now walk by faith. —John 20:29.

Thus even in his infancy this light that was to lighten the Gentiles began to shine into some waiting and devout Gentile hearts. R. 1674

Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

– Matthew 2:12 –

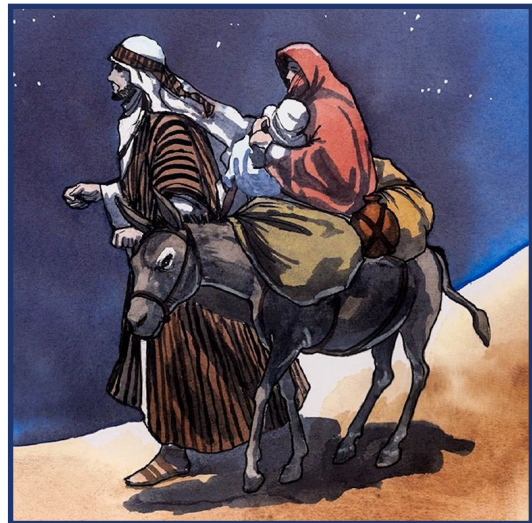
The cunning art of Herod, by which he hoped to learn who was this divinely designated Prince and heir to his throne, is appreciated only when we remember the sequel to this narrative: how, when he found that the wise men did not return to give him the information and permit the destruction of the child Jesus, he determined to kill all the children of the city of Bethlehem of two years old and under; thus he might be sure, he thought, that he had outwitted the divine plan and protected his own power.

The weeping and lamentation for the slaughtered infants who did not escape the wrath of the king, was but another note of the long wail of distress of the groaning creation, of which the Lord has not been unmindful, but which his far-sighted wisdom permits for the wise and benevolent ends, until the “restitution of all things.” R. 4098 and R. 1682

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry, and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

Matthew 2:16

Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word, for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON.”



– Matthew 2:13-15 –

The faith and prompt obedience of Joseph and Mary to the warning and counsel of the angel of the Lord is notable. They did not hesitate nor question, but immediately acted upon the command of the Lord; and his blessing and protection went with them. It is also worthy of notice that in protecting the infant Redeemer, God's course did not interfere with the existing order of things. Although all power was in his hand, he did not strike Herod dead, nor overturn nor interfere with his authority and power. God interfered only so far as to protect his Son in whom the plan of salvation centered. R. 1681

His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it. It was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed, and His mother said to Him, “Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously.” And He said to them, “Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father’s business?”

– Luke 2:41-43, 46-49 –

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

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

Quite possibly the mind of the boy Jesus, while investigating the subject of his own responsibilities toward the Heavenly Father and his plan, had wondered whether or not his mission might not in some degree begin with his thirteenth year, since at that time he was recognized as a “son of the law.” Quite possibly some of his questions before the Doctors of the Law were along this line, and quite probably he had finally about reached the conclusion that the types of the priestly office indicated clearly that his mission would not begin until he was thirty years of age. His reply to Mary’s chiding was along this line: Did you not expect me to be about my Father’s business? Did you not know that I had reached the age when I am a “son of the Law,” and that therefore certain responsibilities have come upon me in respect to the Heavenly Father and his Word and his plan? And then, as though remembering the conclusion that he had just reached in discussing the subject with the Doctors, he broke off the conversation, yielded himself to their wishes, and accompanied them to Nazareth, making (so far as recorded) no further suggestion of any other than the ordinary course of life until he had attained the age of thirty years. This is expressed in the words, “And he was **subject** unto them.” R. 2558

Joseph and Mary realized clearly that the boy was more than ordinary, very extraordinary indeed, yet they did not fully comprehend the situation nor fully grasp the import of his words. Nevertheless, Mary treasured this with the other peculiar testimonies respecting him in her heart. R. 2558



At the tender age of twelve [Jesus] was intellectually more than a match for the mature and learned doctors; and he did not assume to be a teacher, but with becoming modesty he heard and asked questions—questions, however, so keen and penetrating as to indicate a very superior comprehension of the law and the prophets. As a perfect human being his mind was active and strong, his reasoning powers were astute, his perceptive awake to every educating influence with which he came in contact, his moral perceptions always

discarding every thing that was evil, and his memory treasuring up all that was worthy of a place in his mind. Thus he grew and waxed strong and was filled with wisdom. R. 1682

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

– Luke 2:52 –

[This verse] relates to the period of his life from twelve years of age upward to the time of his presentation to Israel in his thirtieth year as the Lamb of God. Apparently not Mary only kept the things which she had heard and seen in her heart, pondering how they would develop and how the words of the angel Gabriel would be fulfilled in her son, but Jesus also kept the whole matter a secret with himself up to the proper time, when he entered publicly at the earliest moment upon his ministry. The perfect babe became the perfect boy; the perfect boy became the perfect youth; the perfect youth became the perfect man, and at thirty years of age was ripe and ready to be offered as an acceptable sacrifice of sweet savor to God, on behalf of mankind— “the Just for the unjust.”

R. 3711 and R. 495

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

– John 1:4 –

In him, in this Only Begotten of the Father when amongst men, there was life, absolute life, perfect life, because his life had not come from Adam through an earthly father but was directly transferred from his pre-human state or condition to the womb of Mary. Thus born he was indeed partaker of a human organization but without any impairment of his life rights; hence, as the Scriptures declare, he was holy, harmless, separate from sinners—separate and distinct from all the race of Adam, peculiarly different because of his different begetting. Needless to say light is here used in a figurative sense: it signifies hope, intelligence, instruction. Our Lord’s life as the “man Christ Jesus,” his holiness of heart, his full obedience to the Father’s will, his loyalty to every principle of righteousness, his manifestation of divine character, no less than the words of instruction that he spoke as never man spake—all these attest that indeed he was a great light amongst men—a light which ever since has been shining, not only through his recorded discourses and instructions but also through the lives of his disciples, and that in proportion as they were and are truly his. R. 3474

That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

– John 1:9 –

As he was the Father's Word or Messenger he was also the Father's Light, whose mission it was to reveal, to make known, the Father's love, that thereby those who had eyes to see might be attracted, drawn, blessed. Alas, how many were blind! Eyes had they but they saw not, and understanding had they and appreciated not. Those who did see, who did appreciate, what a blessing they received!—not only those who saw the Lord personally but those who have since seen his glory, his light, through the words of his faithful messengers under the guidance of his holy Spirit. "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." What a blessed thought lies half hidden in the Apostle's words—in the declaration that this true Light shall enlighten every man born into the world! What a ray of hope this lights up in the sympathetic and Christian heart! All who have the Spirit of God, who so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son to be its Redeemer, are sure to be sympathetic with the world in its lost and blinded condition. To such this promise is a reassurance of all the glorious privileges and messages sent by the Lord through the prophets telling of the age of glory, when the Messiah shall be the Sun of Righteousness to scatter the darkness and miasm of sin and death and to bring in everlasting righteousness and life to the world—to whomsoever will accept the same. R. 3474

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

– John 1:14 –

St. Paul tells us of how He who was rich on the spirit plane for our sakes became poor, leaving the Heavenly comforts for the scenes of this world, darkened by sin and death. (2 Cor. 8:9.) And so our lesson tells us also. (v.14.) "The Logos became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." St. Paul also corroborates this, declaring that our Lord stooped from His high position, took the bondman's form and was found in fashion as a man, of the seed of Abraham. (Phil. 2:7-8; Heb. 2:16.) But lest we should get the wrong thought, that He had become a sinful man, we are guarded by the assurance that He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26.) We are also assured that His body was especially prepared, separate and different from others of our race, all of whom were of Adamic stock and all tainted with sin and the seeds of death. —Heb. 10:5-9.

Let us make no mistake in the reading of this message on this important subject; let us take it just as it is written, without twisting. The lesson is that the great One, the beginning of the creation of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, came down from that glorious condition as a spirit being and was made flesh and dwelt among us, as the Apostle says. "The man Christ Jesus" was not an incarnated being, but was himself the One who had been with the Father, and whose nature as a spirit being had been changed, exchanged for human nature as a fleshly being.

R. 5351 and R. 4106

JESUS THE PERFECT MAN



Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him.

– Matthew 3:13 –

The long period of eighteen years of our Lord's life, from the time of the incident of [being found in the temple at twelve years of age] to the time of his baptism, was spent in the performance of the ordinary duties of life. What a thought this gives us with respect to our Lord's development of **patience**—patiently waiting until the Father's time should come and he should begin his ministry; patiently studying meantime, as best he could, to know more and more of the Father's will and plan; patiently waiting for the baptism of the holy spirit, which would enable him to fully comprehend the situation and his own personal relationship to it. What a lesson there is here for all his followers, and every one of us may well realize the truth of the words, "Ye have need of patience," and again, "Let patience have her perfect work." What a lesson there is for us also in the thought that we



are not to attempt to hasten the divine plan, but to wait patiently for its unfolding—not to attempt to begin any work for the Lord unless we are sure that his time has come, and that he has called us to do it; then, like our Lord, to be instant in season and out of season, when convenient and when inconvenient, under favorable and unfavorable conditions; to do with our might what our hand has found to do,—what the Lord has called us to do.

Our Lord Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and hence...he had no sins

to wash away, and consequently...for him John's baptism of reformation would have been worse than meaningless; it would have been a contradiction of fact and contrary to faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is **sin**." Hence it would have been wrong for our Lord Jesus to have been baptized for the remission of sins—John's only understanding of baptism. We may be sure, therefore, that since "in him was no sin," his act of baptism was the first of a new order of baptism—practiced by his followers after Pentecost. (Acts 19:4-5.) Our Lord, being free from sin, required no justification by another, and when he had reached manhood's estate, presented himself wholly, unreservedly, to do the Father's will. At the moment of **consecration** his earthly life was yielded up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world,—and this was symbolized by his immersion in water. R. 2559 and 2565

It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.

– John 1:27 –

Other Scriptures show us that for some time the nation of Israel had been looking for Messiah and that false Messiahs had arisen from time to time, and one record is that "all men were in expectation of him." Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the Jews urged the leaders of their nation, priests and Levites, to go to John and interview him and advise them respecting his message. Our lesson recounts the visit and the testimony John gave. Apparently it was the expectation of the questioners that John would claim to be the Messiah himself, and it was probably with surprise that they learned from his own lips that he made no such boast—"he confessed and denied not." Their next question was, "Art thou Elias?" (the Greek form of the word Elijah), and he replied, "I am not." Remembering the prophecy of Deuteronomy, "A prophet shall the Lord raise up unto you like unto me [Moses]," they next inquired whether or not John were that prophet, and he answered, No.

Surprised they then asked, “Who art thou, then? We must make some report respecting you.” Humbly and faithfully John declared that he was merely a nameless voice calling attention to the great Messiah, heralding his coming: he was like a voice in the wilderness declaring that a way must be prepared for the coming of the Kingdom, for which Israel had been hoping and longing and praying for centuries.

In disclaiming this honor for himself John compared his own work and the work of the coming Messiah and showed them the difference. Referring to himself he claimed great inferiority. And his own work he described as only a preparatory work, —“I indeed baptize you with water, but...he shall baptize you with the holy spirit and with fire.” [Luke 3:16] It is very manifest that all of the multitudes who were baptized with water were not baptized with the holy spirit. The baptism of the holy spirit came at Pentecost after the Lord was glorified, but only upon a small minority of the Jewish nation. The baptism of fire came later—in the end of the Jewish harvest (A.D. 70) when Jerusalem was destroyed and their national existence terminated in the midst of a great time of trouble. [Luke 3:17] is in reference to the great separating work of the Jewish harvest and the gathering of the worthy remnant into the garner of the Gospel age, and the fiery judgments upon the unworthy chaff.

By and by, when the Master’s views of matters shall be expressed, he will show that those who sought to exalt themselves failed of his approval, while those who humbled themselves, seeking only the privilege of service, have his approval. Directing their minds away from himself to Jesus, John declared, “There standeth one in your midst whom you do not recognize: him I declare, him I introduce as so great, so honorable, that I am not worthy even to be his servant, to loose the strings of his shoes.” Similarly humble feelings should pervade the hearts and testimonies of all who are true members of the antitypical Elijah, witnessing to the Lord of glory, who is about to establish his Kingdom. Alas, that self love and self-pride should at times hinder the testimony. Alas, that some seem to draw attention to themselves rather than to the King. Let us, dear brethren and sisters, in proportion as we have opportunity for witnessing, be careful, be faithful. R. 3477 and R. 1917

When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water and behold, the heavens were opened to Him.

– Matthew 3:16 –

When Jesus received the begetting of the Holy Spirit at His baptism it was the begetting to the divine nature, and with it came great enlightenment to His mind, as represented in the words, “And the heavens were opened unto Him,” literally, **rent asunder**. Forthwith He could see clearly into the Divine arrangements and purposes respecting Himself in a manner not possible to Him prior to His consecration. And so it is with all those who follow in His steps. The deep things of God are revealed to them gradually, as they are able to receive them, but never until after they have made their consecration vows to the Lord. With His followers as with Himself, the trial or temptation or testing as to loyalty comes more particularly after consecration than before. Hence the importance of Jesus’ injunction: “Sit down first and count the cost.” —Luke 14:28-33.

In Jesus’ case the opening of the heavens—the enlightenment of His mind respecting the Divine Plan—was a much more wonderful matter than it is with us, because with His perfection of brain and of heart He was able to realize instantly the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of His undertaking, in a manner only partially attained by us after years of progress and study. At once the Master realized the full import of the Day of Atonement sacrifices, of the Passover Lamb slain, of the prophecies that spoke of Himself as being led as a lamb to the slaughter, and of the type which pictured Him as the Antitype of the brazen serpent, lifted on high for the healing of Adam’s sin-bitten race. R. 4969

And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, “You are My beloved Son. In You I am well pleased.”

– Luke 3:22 –

A dove was a favorite figure with the Jews as an emblem of peace and salvation. Indeed, Noah's dove, with its olive branch, seems to have become a symbol to all civilized peoples. It was most appropriate, therefore, that since some figure was to be used as an outward evidence of divine blessing, the dove should be that figure. Yet we are not to suppose that the holy spirit is a dove, nor that it has bodily shape like a dove, but as instructed in all the Scriptures, that it is a divine power or influence. The dove represented fittingly the meek and quiet spirit which is one of the striking ornaments of all those who possess the spirit of holiness unto the Lord. Such experiences as these which our Lord enjoyed are not granted to his followers nor to be expected today, —neither the voice nor the opened heavens, nor the dove. We are not informed that the people saw the heavens opened, heard the voice and saw the dove; on the contrary, the records seem to indicate that only Jesus and John saw and heard, and that the latter was granted the privilege to the intent that he might bear witness to the fact. R. 2565

Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.

– Luke 4:1 –

How proper it would be that all of the Lord's people, when they have made a consecration of themselves to the divine service, should be impelled by the new mind, the new spirit, to go apart first and to commune with the Father, and to study his Word respecting how they should render their lives most acceptable in his service! Were this course pursued how many lives would be totally different from what they are; how many failures and changes and turnings, hither and thither, would be avoided! Our Lord expressed the matter in one of his parables, when he said that anyone taking up his cross to follow him should sit down first and count the cost—learn what the Father's will would be, as well as the results to be sought. And if any of God's dear children have neglected thus to seek the right path at the beginning of their consecration, we refer them to the example of our dear Master, who was wise in this as in all things, having not only the spirit of a sound mind, but a sound mind itself, through which that spirit operated perfectly. R. 2565

He was there in the wilderness forty days tempted by Satan.

– Mark 1:13 –

Our Lord was indignant that it should be thought for a moment that, having left the heavenly glory to do the Father's will, He would now prove traitor to His covenant, and for fear of the cross and the shame and the death He would enter into a confederacy with the great Arch-enemy of righteousness—Satan. He answered, “Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written: Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.” I will not serve you nor co-operate with you in any sense of the word. “Then the Devil leaveth Him.” Then by Divine arrangement angels came to the famished Overcomer and ministered unto Him—strengthened Him, revived Him. How glad we are to note the loyalty which triumphed over every temptation! With the angels we acclaim, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!” R. 4969

**They were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.
(KJV)**

– Luke 4:32 –

In this power our Lord Jesus came up from the wilderness into Galilee. How did he obtain this power? He obtained it in the same way his followers may obtain it; viz., by entire consecration to God, faithfulness to that consecration, and by communion with him in prayer and meditation upon his Word. The complete consecration our Lord had made and symbolized at Jordan; and while carefully studying the law and the prophets in order to an exact knowledge of the will of God, he had just endured a most subtle and severe conflict with the powers of darkness for forty days alone in the wilderness. Through implicit faith in the wisdom, love and power of the Father, he came off that battlefield victorious, and filled with the power of that holy spirit which had given him the victory. Thus he was equipped with power from on high for the great work upon which he immediately entered. R. 1917

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

– John 1:29 –

It was with full propriety that John announced Jesus as the “Lamb of God”—meek, gentle, patient, unassuming, the passover sacrifice for Israel and for the whole world. In the ears of the unregenerate such a title as lamb would not sound very dignified: amongst the coats of arms of chivalry, wolves’ heads, bullocks’ heads, lions’ heads, serpents’ heads, etc., are freely used to represent the strength and the prowess of the families, but where will we find anyone taking a lamb as a symbol of dignity? To the Lord’s consecrated people, however, the lamblike quality of our dear Redeemer and his patient and willing sacrifice on our behalf are beautifully represented in this symbol of a lamb—the Lamb of God, God’s Lamb, provided by him as the sacrifice for our sins, as the price of our redemption from the curse or sentence of death.

While our Lord’s strength and majesty are symbolically referred to when he is styled the “Lion of the tribe of Judah,” thus picturing his mighty power as the Millennial King, the picture of a lamb is certainly very appropriate to him in connection with his earthly ministry and sacrifice for our sins. His submission to the Father’s will in every particular and ultimately even unto death, even the death of the cross, was very lamb-like. Furthermore, he was God’s Lamb in the sense that his offering for our sins was the divine arrangement, the Father’s plan. The Scriptural declaration is that God gave his only begotten Son to be man’s Redeemer, that he sent his Son into the world—the Son delighting to do the Father’s will. All these thoughts beautifully blend together in this expression,

“The Lamb of God.”



R. 4112 and R. 3477

The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

– John 1:37 –

The two disciples to whom John the Baptist made the remark, “Behold the Lamb of God,” at once concluded that if they had found the Messiah whom John was introducing it was time to seek his fellowship, and if possible identify themselves with his ministry. John the Baptist [does not] seem to have offered the slightest remonstrance against their leaving off cooperation with him. The name of one of these is given in the narrative, Andrew; the name of the other is omitted, but it is presumed that it was John, the writer of this Gospel, whose modesty in such matters is indicated by the withholding of his name on another occasion also—when he refers to himself as “that disciple whom Jesus loved.” How beautiful this modesty, how much it endears the character of John to all of us. A less modest man in writing of the matter would probably have told of how he first thought of following Jesus and invited Andrew to accompany him. But we can not only have much more love for John because of this characteristic of humility, but it gives us correspondingly more confidence in all he has written—that ambition did not warp or color any of his descriptions of the matters recorded by him.

The modesty of the two men is further exemplified by their course of conduct in following the Lord instead of approaching him boldly and saying, “Sir, we have the honorable distinction of being amongst the most prominent disciples of John the Baptist, and now introduce ourselves to you.” On the contrary, they followed quietly, wondering where our Lord resided and how they might have an opportunity without obtruding themselves to become acquainted with him. Their reverence for him and their modest opinion of themselves restrained them from improprieties. However, after they had followed the Lord probably a considerable distance on his journey toward his abode, he turned to them saying, “What seek ye?” or, as we might translate it into the form of today, “Is there anything I can do for you?” Taken by surprise, they merely answered the Master, “Rabbi, we are wondering where you reside.” Our Lord answered, “Come and see,” and they went with him and spent the remainder of that day (for this was about four o’clock in the afternoon) in his company. Their queries and our Lord’s answers during that afternoon and evening are open for our imagination, for no record is given us. Doubtless they explained to the Lord what they had heard respecting him from John the Baptist, and made inquiries regarding his future work and Kingdom. We may be sure that our Lord told them only part of the truth, in harmony with his subsequent statement to all of the disciples, “I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now.” —John 16:12. R. 4115

"Follow me."

He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).

– John 1:41-42 –

With this message they greeted their brethren, and, as explained in [these verses], the Hebrew word Messiah corresponded to the Greek word Christ. They knew that for long centuries Messiah had been promised, and that their whole nation, through varying vicissitudes, had been looking, hoping, praying for his coming and for the blessings which he would bring to their nation as their king, delivering them from all evil and exalting them with the power of God to be the light of the world, and thus through them shedding blessings upon all nations. The afternoon spent by these two with

Jesus had convinced them that the words of John the Baptist were correct, that Jesus was “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

It is not explained how Peter received the message, but judging him from his subsequent course of conduct, we must assume that he came with haste to see, to know, to judge for himself on the subject. The nature of the evidence given him by Jesus is not related, but he believed, became a disciple, received a new name—an added name. He was Simon Bar-Jona, or Simon, son of Jonah; now, henceforth, he would be more particularly known as a disciple by the name of Simon Peter, that is, Simon, a stone. Thus early did Jesus indicate his knowledge of the man, recognizing him as one of the living stones for the glorious Temple of the future, as this Apostle himself afterward explained. —1 Pet. 2:4,5. R. 4116

**Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”
Philip said to him, “Come and see.”**

– John 1:46 –

Nathanael was apparently a man of keen intellectual power. He felt that his friend Philip had accepted something too hastily, and that he was being deceived by a pretender, and his prompt objection was, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” As though he had said, “That is a mean city of itself; no great people of any reputation would ever come from thence; no prophecies, so far as we know, make any reference to that city. What you tell me of your Messiah rather tends to prejudice my mind against him.” R. 4116

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”

– John 1:47,49 –

Nathanael, although he realized that he was an honest, true Israelite, seeking for whatever God had to give to his faithful, was not satisfied with this testimony—such an expression might be given by another in flattery. He would cross-question the Lord, and he said, “Whence knowest thou me?” You have made a statement; what is your authority for it? I do not know that we have ever met before. Jesus replied, “When thou wast under the fig-tree, before Philip called thee, I saw thee.” Ah, well did Nathanael remember how he had crept under the low-spreading boughs of the fig-tree and how he had prayed to the heavenly Father for wisdom and for the proper evidences on the subject of concern. Here he had the very answer to his prayer. The one who could know about that prayer and could thus answer it and reveal himself must indeed be superhuman—all that he claimed, the Messiah. Nathanael’s faith operated quickly, and he responded, “Rabbi [Master], thou art the Son of God: thou art the King of Israel.” R. 4117

This, the first of His miracles, Jesus performed at Cana in Galilee, and thus displayed His glorious power, and His disciples believed in Him. (Weymouth)

– John 2:11 –

Jesus' mother seems to have had some intimation of his power to help the friends out of the difficulty and ignominy of a feast in progress and the supplies run short: and yet she could not have known of the Lord's power to turn water into wine from any previous experiences during the thirty years of her acquaintance with him; for, contrary to all apocryphal stories, the boy Jesus did no miracles, nor did the young man Jesus do miracles, but, as here declared, the miracle at Cana was the beginning of his miracles.

Nevertheless, his mother had considerable confidence of some sort, else she would not have instructed the servants to give heed to anything Jesus might command. While he had, in every sense of the word, been a dutiful son for thirty years, he had now reached the period of manhood, according to the Law, and was now devoted, consecrated, to the Lord. No doubt he and his mother had talked the matter over previously, and he was thus reminding her that his life being consecrated now she could not expect him to be under her direction to the same extent as formerly—the time had fully come that he must now be about his Father's business. This miracle was evidently not only designed to establish faith in our Lord by his disciples, and amongst the people in the vicinity of his home, but also, was particularly designed to manifest in advance the still future glory of Messiah's great work. R. 2418

This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?”



– John 3:2-4 –

Such a question was desired by our Lord, and gave opportunity for the explanation that the first birth which all experience, viz., the birth of the flesh, by which mankind is born to human nature, and with a **flesh body**, is a type, a figure, an illustration of a higher spiritual birth, to a spiritual nature with a **spirit body**. “That which is born of the flesh is **flesh**, that which is born of the spirit is **spirit**.” As a man cannot see trees, houses, flowers, etc., nor enter into the enjoyment of these, until after he has been born of the flesh, so likewise no one can either see or enter into, the heavenly Kingdom, except he be born of the spirit. In other words, a human being can see earthly things, but only a heavenly or spirit-born one can see and share in the heavenly things: and the long promised Kingdom of God, the Millennial age, for which Israel was waiting, is to be a spiritual Kingdom and not an earthly one, composed of spirit beings and not flesh beings; and only those born of water and of the spirit would ever see or enter into that Kingdom. R. 2572

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

– John 3:14-15 –

The extent of the love of God is the extent of the world; the proof of the love of God is the gift of his Son; and the purpose of the love of God is that the world might have life. These were all matters of fact over eighteen hundred years ago; but that does not put the world into possession of this life. There is a definitely prescribed medium through which this life is communicated to man; and every man has to use this medium for himself. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Israelites sinned against Moses and against God. They were bitten by fiery serpents, and were perishing in consequence. By divine command, Moses made a brazen serpent and set it upon a pole. That brought it within the range of their vision; "and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." (Num. 21:4-9.) It was not when the serpent was made that the serpent-bitten men lived, nor was it when it was elevated: it was when they looked that they lived. Even so, it was not when "the Word was made flesh" that sin-bitten men lived, nor was it when the Son of Man was exalted, but it is when they look that they live. The serpent-bitten had to look with their physical eyes, and the sin-bitten have to look with their mental eyes. In each case the divinely-appointed medium of communication is looking, and that is indispensable. Looking with the eyes of the understanding is expressed by the word believing; and as this is the indispensable medium of communication it is imperative that there be no vital mistake respecting it. Recklessness will not do, nor will ignorance, nor superstition, nor credulity: it must be genuine faith. R. 1328

"THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO HEAL THE BROKENHEARTED, TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO THE CAPTIVES AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET AT LIBERTY THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE ACCEPTABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

– Luke 4:18-21 –

Our Lord brought home to his audience the meaning of his text, saying, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your hearing." It had been written centuries before and read hundreds of times, but now, in the harvest of their age, for the first time it could be said that it was fulfilled. The holy Spirit had come upon the Lord Jesus about a year before, after his consecration at Jordan. It constituted his anointing. The Jews were accustomed to this thought of anointing: their high-priests were anointed, as representing the Lord's power or spirit upon the priest, to authorize him to perform the sacrifices and to mediate between God and the people. Their kings were anointed, representing that divine power and guidance was upon them, and that they were specially authorized to represent the Lord in the government of the people.

The promise was that the Lord's anointed, the Messiah, should by and by come and establish a reign

of righteousness in the earth, and now our Lord announced himself as the anointed of the Father. He did not do this in any coarse or rude manner, saying, "I am the Messiah. I am the anointed of Jehovah, with authority as priest and king;" but he did it in a quiet, unassuming manner, by calling attention to the prophecy and declaring that its fulfillment had now taken place. The announcement was not that the Lord had anointed him to rule, but that the first part of his mission was to preach, to declare, to be the mouthpiece of God to humanity. He had a great message, which should ultimately be unto all people, but which at that time was only for so many as had ears to hear.

The proclaiming of liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound, our Lord's hearers probably did not understand. Their thoughts may have gone out to John the Baptist, who at this time was in prison, and they may have wondered whether Jesus would take any steps for his release. They probably had little conception of the real meaning of this Scripture—that it signified the liberation of Satan's captives from the bondage of sin, and ultimately the release from death and its bondage of the millions who have gone down into that great prison-house, the tomb.

"The acceptable year [time, period] of the Lord" mentioned by the prophet was not understood either. Blessed are our eyes that we now see that this acceptable year or acceptable time or acceptable period is the entire Gospel age, during which God is willing to accept all that come unto him through Christ—willing to accept them as joint sacrificers with Jesus, as members of the great Royal Priest. True, by and by, at the close of the Millennial age, the Lord will be willing to accept so many of the world of mankind as the great Redeemer shall have brought into heart-harmony with him, and, by restitution processes, back to the image of God. But that acceptance of the world, after restoration by Christ, is a very different one from the acceptance of the Church in this present time.

This wonderful prophecy which our Lord declared was being fulfilled in his own person is still in process of fulfillment in the persons of his truly consecrated followers—the members of his body. This was shown in the type. The holy anointing oil was poured upon the head of Aaron, but ran down even unto the skirts of his garments, thus anointing in the figure each member of his body. So it is with us. We are members of the Anointed One, and that which was true of our Head is true in a measure also of each one of us. We are all anointed to preach, all authorized of the Lord to declare the good tidings of the coming Kingdom to all the meek and broken-hearted. R. 3300

Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

– Matthew 4:23 –

Palestine at the First Advent consisted of four provinces. Judea was the principal one, with Samaria to the north and Perea to the east and Galilee further north, beyond Samaria. While Jesus preached in Judea and did some mighty works there and in Perea, his principal ministry was in Galilee; so much so that he and his disciples were known as Galileans. Although born in Bethlehem, he was reared in Nazareth, "that he might be called a Nazarene"—that he might not have the honor of the "City of David," but the odium of "a mean city." Compare Luke 23:5-6; Luke 23:49; Luke 23:55. Thus the vast majority of our Lord's miracles and teachings were to the Galileans. And his principal ministries in Judea were in connection with his annual visits to the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. As for Samaria, its people were Gentiles with an admixture of Jewish blood. Jesus warned his disciples not to preach in that province, saying, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5-6.) The Galileans, disesteemed by the Judeans as inferior members of their race, the expression, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" applied to all Galilee. R. 4556

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

–Isaiah 9:2 –

That the light of the Gospel should first shine in Galilee was intimated through Isaiah’s prophecy. The word Galilee signifies **circle**; hence the prophecy implied that this land would be encircled by the Gentiles. And so it was; the Samaritans to its south cutting it off from Judea. Its people, thus separated from the great religious center of their day, were in greater darkness than their brethren, in the very shadow of the death-darkness that was upon the Gentiles. Nevertheless on this very account they were more amenable to the teachings of Jesus than were many of their more religious, more enlightened and more priest-ridden brethren of Judea.

The great light which flared forth in Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin and Nazareth, the chief cities of Galilee, exalted these places to heaven figuratively, in the sense of bestowing so great honor and privilege upon them. But they were in turn cast down to **hades**, the grave, because they received not the message. (Matt. 11:20-24.) The light shined in darkness and blessed and gathered some, “the elect,” and passed onward to bless and gather others, as it has continued to do throughout this Gospel Age.

The Galilean Jews, in close contact with the Gentiles, could readily see the need of the long-promised Kingdom of God, and they were more ready to give heed to it than the Judean-Jews. The latter, in contact with the showy formalism of the temple service and an earthly priest with gorgeous garments and a magnificent temple more grand than that of Solomon, were less inclined to hearken to the offer of a spiritual kingdom. To the latter the outward and showy prosperity of their system was a delusion and a snare which hindered them from seeing. Thus it has always been. The message of God’s grace finds some of its most earnest friends amongst the poor and despised. Moreover Capernaum was more closely in touch with the Gentile world—its good and its evil—than was Jerusalem. R. 4557



Then His fame went throughout all Syria, and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics and He healed them. Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

– Matthew 4:24-25 –

As the fame of Jesus increased, because of his miracles and teaching (Luke 4:14-15; Luke 4:33-37; 5:12-15,19,25,26; 7:16,17; 8:1-4; Matt. 4:23-24; 9:18,26,35; Mark 1:27-28; 3:20), the opposition to him became more and more pronounced, especially from the Chief Priests, Scribes and Pharisees, as they were brought into competition and unfavorable comparison with him as public teachers; and the indications were that all the people would be drawn after him, and that they would soon be left out of their official positions and the accompanying honors and emoluments. For such a change they were not in heart-readiness, although the prophet had foretold that “unto him [the Messiah] shall the gathering of the people be.” (Gen. 49:10.) They did not have the humble, unselfish spirit of John the Baptist, who meekly said, “There standeth one among you, whom ye know not: he it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose:...he must increase, but I must decrease.”—John 1:26-27; 3:30. Instead of manifesting such a spirit, they allowed pride, envy and malice to fill their hearts and actuate their conduct, and sought by every means in their power to obstruct and counteract the Lord’s teaching. In this way they shut the door of the Kingdom of Heaven against themselves and against all those into whom they infused the same evil spirit. (Matt. 23:13.) R. 1735

The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.” Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

– John 4:25-26 –

The mind of the Samaritan woman swept forward in thought. She recalled the expectation of her own people and of the Jews that God would provide a great Messiah, an Anointed One, who would be all-wise and all-powerful to the relief of all perplexity and to lift out of all difficulty. She wondered whether the Messiah could be more wonderfully wise than the prophet, the teacher, to whom she talked. She did not like to ask the question direct, but suggested it sidewise, saying, “I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.” (v. 25.) Seeing her readiness of mind, our Lord expressed to her—more plainly, perhaps, than to any other person during his ministry—the great fact that he was the Messiah.

The disciples, returning at this time, marveled that he talked with the woman, but had too great respect for him to question him; and many since, all through the Gospel Age, reading the account, have marveled at the Master’s humility thus displayed. It has brought a good lesson to many of the Lord’s followers—that they are not to despise opportunities for service, for preaching of the Truth, even though they have an audience of but one. And indeed the opportunity of speaking to one earnest listener should be esteemed far greater than that of addressing a thousand inattentive ones. Doubtless our Lord saw in this woman something that indicated her worthiness of the time and energy thus bestowed upon her. R. 4131

The Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

– John 5:18 –

The Jews never claimed to be sons of God, neither are they referred to in the Scriptures as such. No greater dignity than that of being servants of the Most High God could possibly have been dreamed of up to the time when our Lord himself announced the privilege of adoption to the new nature. In evidence of this we remember that the Jews sought to stone our Lord simply because he claimed to be a son of God.

It was some time after our Lord's death that [the Apostle's] faith began to grasp this privilege [of calling God their Father]. The Jews would have been afraid to call themselves sons of God, or to call Him their Father. If they had spoken of themselves as sons of God, they would have thought that they were doing something reprehensible. When Jesus spoke of Himself as the Son of God, they said that He was a blasphemer. R. 5219

He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons.

– Mark 3:14-15 –

Concerning this choice of the twelve, we learn that, while under various circumstances the Lord called each individually to forsake all and follow him, which they promptly did, (See Matt. 4:17-22; Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19; Luke 5:9-11.) there was also a special occasion upon which he dedicated them to their office as apostles. Of this Luke gives an account, saying that prior to this event our Lord withdrew to a mountain to pray—evidently to take counsel of God with reference to the interests of the prospective Church; and that he continued all night in prayer—“And when it was day, he called unto him his **disciples** [Greek, **mathetas**, learners or pupils]; and **of them** he chose **twelve**, whom also he named **apostles** [**apostolos**—ones sent forth].”—Luke 6:12-13. Thus the twelve were marked as a distinct and separate class among the Lord's disciples. After their ordination the twelve were fully under the Lord's direction and much in his company; and they were careful students of his character, his gospel and his methods.



The commission of the apostles was, in the main, the same as the commission of the Lord and of the whole Church. It was to preach the gospel of the Kingdom. (Compare Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:17-21; Matt. 10:5-8; Mark 3:14-15; Luke 10:1-17.) But in addition to this general commission to preach the gospel of the kingdom, the Lord by and by showed the twelve that he was preparing them for a special work in the future—that they were to be **his witnesses** to bear testimony of him after his death. They must be witnesses, too, upon whom the people could rely as having been with him from the beginning of his ministry, and therefore manifestly acquainted with his doctrine and purpose. (John 15:27; Luke 24:48.) R. 1521

The people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

– Matthew 7:28-29 –

For this reason jealousy of Jesus sprang up amongst the Doctors of the Law. To them he was a rival teacher, and accordingly they sought to entrap him, with a view to exposing him to ridicule before his followers, whom they recognized as “unlearned men.” But in no case did they succeed; in every instance recorded the Lord’s wisdom was too great for them—he entrapped them in their own arguments. R. 3803

The whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him and healed them all. (KJV)

– Luke 6:19 –

Although the Great Teacher healed all manner of diseases, it is a mistake to suppose that this constituted his mission as a whole or one of its most important features. His healings were performed with three ends in view: (1) To draw attention to his message. 2) To be illustrations of his great Work of the future when in Kingdom power and glory he shall heal all diseases, uplifting mankind out of sin and death conditions completely. (3) They were tests of the Master’s own faithfulness to his Consecration Vow. Throughout his healing ministry he laid down his life, so that after three and a half years of ministry, the Perfect One had so exhausted his vitality that he could not carry his own cross, as could the thieves who accompanied him. His great sacrifice was thus partially laid down before he reached Calvary, where it was “finished.” Thus our Lord’s miracles were performed, as the prophet declares, at his own expense, his own sacrifice—“Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.” Every healing performed, to a proportionate extent decreased the Lord’s vitality. R. 4576

Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, “A great prophet has risen up among us,” and “God has visited His people.”

– Luke 7:16 –

Our Lord, the disciples and quite a multitude of followers were approaching the little city of Nain, when forth from the gateway of the city came a funeral procession, a widowed mother and mourning friends, pall-bearers, and a bier or litter on which lay a dead young man, the widow’s only son. Our Lord was touched with compassion as he saw the widow’s tears, and he said to her, “Weep not,” and, approaching, the pall-bearers stood still and Jesus touched the bier and said, “Young man, I say unto thee arise.” The dead man stood up and began to speak. In a manufactured story it would be considered the proper thing to suppose that the widow fell at the Lord’s feet, praised him in a loud voice, and that the whole multitude would join in acclaiming him; but in the simple narrative of our lesson, “there came a fear upon all”—a realization that God was very near to them as represented in the power of Jesus. The very thought of the imminence of God is very sure to bring awe to mankind as they realize the holiness, the absolute perfection of the Almighty and their own blemishes and imperfections in contrast. The multitude glorified God, not with loud hosannas, but with a reverential appreciation of the fact that a great Prophet, a great Teacher, was in their midst, and that God was thus with him, saying, “God hath visited his people.” R. 3756

John, calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to Jesus, saying, “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things you have seen and heard: that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

– Luke 7:22-23 –

While Jesus was performing many miracles, making numerous disciples, and meeting with comparatively little opposition, things were going very differently with his cousin, John the Baptist. Yet this was only in accordance with what John himself had prophesied, saying, “He must increase, but I must decrease.” John was in prison, about 120 miles from where Jesus was laboring so successfully. To be shut up in a dark dungeon of the kind usual at that time, and to have our Lord proceeding with his work, and raising no voice of protest on his behalf, and exercising none of his mighty power for his deliverance, probably seemed very strange to John—especially in view of his expectations respecting the work of the Messiah—that he would be a great earthly general and king, in harmony with the general Jewish expectations.

We see how readily John might have permitted doubts and fears to enter his mind. He might have said, This whole matter is a fraud, and Jesus and I have been deceiving ourselves. He might have lost all faith in God’s providential dealings in the past and all heart and hope for the present and for the future; but notwithstanding the great disappointment he felt, his faith continued its firm hold on the Lord. This is indicated in his sending of his disciples to Jesus, to make inquiry, and also in the character of the inquiry. He does not say, Is this whole matter a farce, and are we deluded? but on the contrary his question was a sound one, and expresses the conviction that thus far the Lord has been leading, and that the only doubt in the prophet’s mind was whether or not, as he was the forerunner of Jesus, Jesus in turn, greater than he, might be the forerunner of some one else still greater and yet to come. And strictly speaking this was exactly the case; for Jesus in the flesh was indeed the forerunner and preparer of the way before the still greater glorified Christ of the second advent, who will accomplish the great and wonderful things foretold by all the holy prophets since the world began. —Acts 3:21-23.

Our Lord, it will be noticed, did not answer John’s question directly—he did not say that there was not another coming and still greater work than that which he was performing, but he did give John to understand distinctly that the work he was then doing was the very work which had been foretold in the prophets, and the proper thing to be done at that time. While John’s messengers were with Jesus a number of miracles were performed in their sight, and Jesus sent them back to John with instructions that they bear witness to him of the work of the Lord progressing in his hands, and to say to John that while the opportunities to stumble at Jesus, his work and his words, were many, and while many would stumble at these, as the prophet had declared (Isa. 8:14,) yet a special blessing would rest upon all who would not stumble, but whose faith in the Lord would continue, despite various disappointments of expectation respecting his work and their fulfillments—through misapprehension of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, which, as the heavens are higher than the earth, were higher than human conception could have foreseen.

R. 2620

He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him.

– Luke 8:1 –

[Jesus'] one Message was the Good Tidings of the Kingdom of God. This is still the Good Tidings, and any of the Lord's people who have not yet learned that the Kingdom of God is the very center and essence of the hope of the Church and the hope of the world, have not profitably read and believed the Bible. The same Good Tidings were heralded by those angels who proclaimed the Master's birth, saying, "Behold, we bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people!" Thus far it has been Good Tidings only to God's servants and handmaidens, the Church. But it shall be Good Tidings to all when all the deaf ears shall be unstopped and when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and they shall see the glories of Messiah's Kingdom. R. 5370

He who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

– Matthew 13:23 –

From a boat our Lord taught a most wonderful lesson respecting the method used by the Almighty in the selection of the "little flock," whom he invites to be members with Christ Jesus in the administration of his Millennial Kingdom. The Kingdom message or invitation is the "seed" which is under consideration in [this] parable, which, under favorable conditions, germinates and brings forth the required fruitage of character-development. Our Lord was the great Sower of this good seed of the Kingdom, and after him came the Apostles. Since then he has used all of his faithful people more or less in this seed-sowing. The fact that most of the "seed" of the Divine message seems wasted is no proof that the message is not good and desirable. This parable shows that the real fault lies in the soil—in the heart. If all hearts were right the message or seed would bring forth much fruit everywhere.

In this parable the **good** ground varies in its productiveness—thirty, sixty and an hundred fold. The larger the returns, the greater will be the Father's pleasure and the Savior's glory. Nor is the statement an extreme one, as some might suppose. The new "miracle wheat" sometimes produces more than two hundred grains from one. This parable seems to imply that the responsibility for the fruitfulness of the heart and life and character depends very greatly upon the individual and how he receives the message of the Kingdom. Those in whom the fruits will be the most abundant will be such as grasp the invitation most intelligently and earnestly. "He that heareth the word and **understandeth it**" and whose heart is in a condition of loyalty to God and who frees himself from hindrances and worldly ambitions and aspirations and, like the Apostle Paul, can say, "This one thing I do," will surely gain the Kingdom.

It is not sufficient that we **hear the message** of the Kingdom; it is not sufficient that we have **good hearts** or **good intentions** in respect to it; it is additionally necessary, as the Master says, that we should **understand** the Kingdom message. The time and effort thus consumed in character development for the Kingdom are wisely spent, and the harvest of thirty, sixty or a hundred-fold illustrates the degree and intensity of our earnestness. The **rewards** in the Kingdom will also be proportionate. "As star differeth from star in glory, so shall it be in **the** resurrection of the dead." Varying degrees of glory in the Kingdom will be manifested, yet none will be acceptable to the Father who shall not have brought forth fruitage in good measure. R. 4634

All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables, and without a parable He did not speak to them, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES. I WILL UTTER THINGS KEPT SECRET FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD."

– Matthew 13:34-35 –

What the prophet had declared of him was true, "He shall open his mouth in parables and dark sayings." It is important that we remember this. Many noble Christian people have inferred that our Lord's words were all simple, and that they presented the truth in a manner easily understood by everybody. Nothing is further from the truth. If our Lord's parables and dark sayings be taken as plain, literal statements of truth, they will lead to all kinds of errors and misapprehensions. Let us remember, therefore, the Apostle's declaration, "Without a parable spake he not unto the people."

There is absolutely nothing in the words of Jesus without a deep significance. How many have stumbled over our Lord's parables by taking them to be literal statements of facts! How glad we are to find the **key** to these symbolic statements—these parables! How glad we are that by the use of this key the parabolic figures become reasonable and beautiful! What a silver lining there is to the dark cloud of trouble which is now looming up before the world! How glad God's people must be to learn that just beyond the clouds and shadows comes the glorious Millennial day!

Evidently some wise and gracious purpose stands connected with the hiding or secreting at present of the Divine purpose from mankind in general. While the Scriptures declare it is a mark of special favor to the Lord's people that they are made acquainted with the Divine Purposes, yet nowhere do they declare that all those from whom God's plans are secreted are doomed to eternal torture, or to everlasting destruction. Thus our Lord Jesus prayed: "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

However dark and parabolic were our Lord's teachings, nevertheless, rightly understood, his message is one that is spiritually helpful and life-giving to those who can and do understand it. It is this quality of our Lord's message which makes the religion of the Bible different from that of all the heathen. It is a message of life as well as a message of holiness. It is a message of forgiveness as well as a message of condemnation. It is a message of love as well as a message of justice. His wonderful words of life—they are charming, beautiful, forceful! We may read them over year after year and we see still more beauty in them, still deeper significance, and that in proportion to our own growth in grace, our growth in knowledge, and in the spirit of our Master. R. 4644

Behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”

– Luke 10:25 –

One of the Doctors of the Law, evidently thinking that our Lord’s teachings along the lines of love and mercy were contrary to the rigid lines of justice as laid down in the Law, thought to entrap our Lord by a question. Possibly this lawyer raised his question in connection with some discourse in which our Lord held forth that he himself was the Bread of Life, of which, if a man eat, he may live forever—or in which he had been representing himself as the Good Shepherd, who would give his life for the sheep; or as the Redeemer who had come, that God’s people might have life, and that more abundantly—eternal life.

Our Lord answered this Scribe thoroughly out of his own mouth: he said to him, “You are a teacher of the Law; give us your statement of what the Law says respecting how eternal life may be obtained?” This was a pointed reply, and the lawyer was fully prepared to answer it, for, What saith the Law? was a common question amongst the Jews who quoted from the Law. (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.) The lawyer evidently repeated a well-known formula of the Law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.” Jesus replied, “Thou has answered right: this do and thou shalt live”—have eternal life.

Why did Jesus thus refer to the Law? Why did he not avail himself of this opportunity for preaching the Gospel? Why did he not say to the lawyer—“The only way to obtain eternal life is through faith in me, followed by a full consecration to walk in my footsteps as my disciple”? Why did he not tell the lawyer, “There is no other name given under heaven whereby men must be saved but the name of Jesus”? Why did he not tell him, “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son shall not see life”?—Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:12. We answer that this would have been too strong meat for the lawyer in his condition of mind. It was necessary that first he should realize his own inability to keep the full letter of the divine Law, so that he might be prepared to look for divine mercy through Jesus. The difficulty with the Pharisees and Scribes was that they were pretending to keep the Law, pretending that they were justified by it, pretending to gain eternal life by it, although they very well knew that they all died like other men, and knew also, when they would reflect upon the subject, that the divine Law was so high, so grand, so complete, that in their weak and fallen condition they were unable to meet all of its requirements perfectly. R. 2683 and R. 3803



Be of good cheer! It is I. Do not be afraid.

– Mark 6:50 –

The disciples in their fishing boat experienced contrary winds and found the rowing toilsome. In the night they saw what they supposed to be an apparition, a spirit manifestation in human form, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass by their boat. They cried out, for all saw it and felt troubled. Then they heard a voice saying, “It is I, be not afraid.” Jesus got into the boat with them, and the wind ceased, to their amazement, for they had already forgotten the lesson of the previous afternoon—the feeding of the five thousand with the five loaves and two fishes.

In addition to seeing in this a further manifestation of Divine power operating through the Redeemer, we may see a further suggestion of a spiritual lesson. No doubt, after the Master’s ascension, the disciples felt themselves very much alone in the midst of a contrary people, and found progress difficult and all of their experiences stormy. No doubt it helped them to look back to this occasion and to remember the Master’s ability to come to them on the troubled seas, and how His coming brought peace and quiet. R. 5095

Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” So He said, “Come.”

– Matthew 14:28-29 –

St. Matthew gives an additional feature of this lesson not recorded by St. Mark. He tells us that when St. Peter learned that it was Jesus who walked upon the sea, he requested the Lord to sanction his walking on the water to Him. The Lord consented, and St. Peter had the wonderful courage to make the effort. Had his faith continued, doubtless he would have been sustained, but the Lord’s rule with His people seems to be, “According to thy faith be it unto thee.” We are not to encourage **credulity** in ourselves or others, but we are to remember that **faith**, which has a true foundation, is very precious in the Lord’s sight. In St. Peter’s case it was entirely proper that he should attempt to go to the Lord, because the effort had been sanctioned. It would have been credulity for him to have supposed himself able to walk on the water, without the Lord’s sanction and invitation. But when he saw the boisterous waves his faith failed, he began to sink; and then it was that he cried, “Save, or I perish!” How true it is of all God’s people that like St. Peter they would like to do some wonderful thing to show their faith in the Lord! And how like St. Peter’s are their experiences, often! They would utterly fail did not the Lord interpose for their rescue. However, as the Lord found no fault with St. Peter for his effort, we are bound to admire the degree of faith and courage which he manifested.

R. 5095

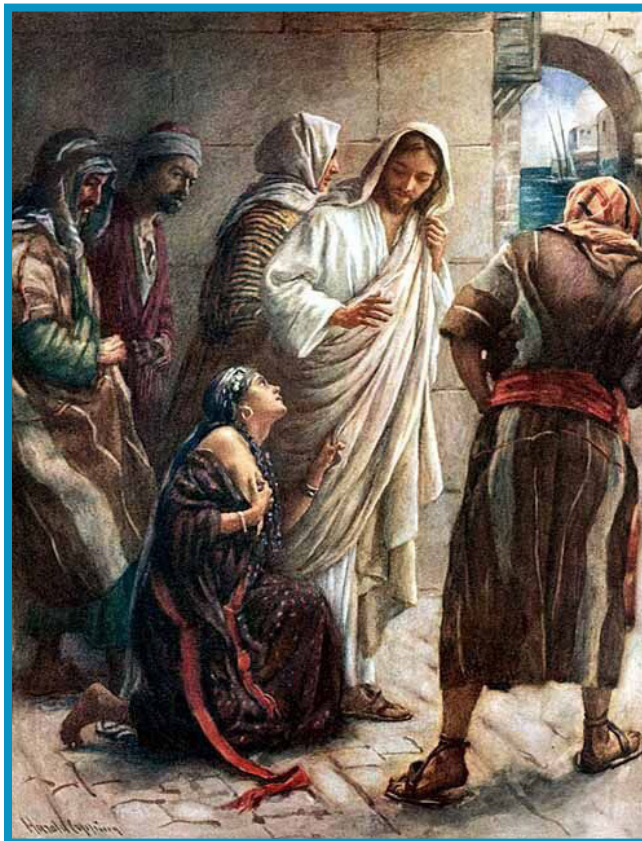


When they came out of the boat, immediately the people recognized Him, ran through that whole surrounding region and began to carry about on beds those who were sick to wherever they heard He was. Wherever He entered, into villages, cities, or the country, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged Him that they might just touch the hem of His garment. And as many as touched Him were made well.

–Mark 6:54-56 –

There must have been a great strain continually upon the Great Teacher and Healer, for He was continually expending His vitality in both directions at once. In healing the sick, virtue, or vitality, went out from Him and He healed them all, we read. And all His public teaching cost considerable vitality, especially when He addressed large multitudes. Thus was fulfilled in part the saying of the Prophet respecting Him, “Himself took our sicknesses and bore our infirmities.” Nevertheless, we find Him ever ready, ever alert about the Father’s business, and looking after the welfare of, and instructing all who gave evidence of being, or of ever becoming, children of God.

When the ship reached shore in the morning, the people recognized Him and ran round-about that whole region, and began to carry about on beds those that were sick, to where they heard Jesus was. And wheresoever he entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, they laid



the sick in the public places, and besought Him that these might touch if it were but the corner of His garment; “and as many as touched Him were made whole.”

The healings which our Lord gave forth during His ministry were physical. As we have already seen, none but Himself had yet received of the Holy Spirit in its begetting power. But did we not hear His word saying, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the Age”? And have not God’s consecrated people throughout the past eighteen centuries realized a blessing also—a spiritual blessing—as Jesus passed their way, as they came to a knowledge of Him, as by faith they reached out and touched the hem of His garment, realizing Him to be the Son of the Highest, the Redeemer of the world, the Head of the Church which is His Body, and shortly to be the King of Glory, reigning for the blessing of all the families of the earth? R. 5096

He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: HE HIMSELF TOOK OUR INFIRMITIES AND BORE OUR SICKNESSES.

Matthew 8:16-17

Jesus said, “Who touched Me?” When all denied it, Peter and those with him said, “Master, the multitudes throng and press You, and You say, ‘Who touched Me?’” But Jesus said, “Somebody touched Me, for I perceived power going out from Me.”

– Luke 8:45-46 –

Our Lord (who came to ransom the race of sinners), being free from sin, was free also from pain, sickness and death: so whatever he experienced of these had to be by his own consent,—a sacrifice on our behalf. The penalty of our sins was death, the sickness and pain being only incidentals; hence our redemption price was fully paid by our Lord’s death. But it pleased Jehovah to bruise him [to allow him to have an experience with pain, sorrow, etc.], as well as to make his soul [being, existence] an offering for sin. (Isa. 53:10.) And since he could not suffer pain and sickness because of sin, being without sin, he was placed for a time among sinners, where his full, generous, loving sympathy for the poor and sick and miserable would lead him to spend for others his own vital energy. And as “virtue [vitality—healing vigor] went out of him” to the sick (Luke 6:19 and 8:46), so their weaknesses and pains bore down upon him. And it was in this way that “himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses.” (Matt. 8:17; Isa. 53:4-5); and thus he was “touched with a feeling of our infirmities” and is able perfectly to sympathize as a great High Priest,—now on behalf of the church or under-priesthood, and by and by, in the Millennial day of trial and blessing, on behalf of “all the people.” R. 2000

Now when the woman saw that she was not hidden, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, she declared to Him in the presence of all the people the reason she had touched Him and how she was healed immediately.

– Luke 8:47 –

On the way to Jairus’ home a woman in the crowd surrounding the Lord touched the hem of his garment, believing in his greatness and power and that thus she would get a blessing. The thrill of life and strength immediately came into her body, just as the touching of the storage battery with a wire would draw the electric current. Our Lord was full of vital energy. He was perfect, not only free from sin, but free from sickness and death conditions. He noticed the loss of vitality and, turning, inquired, “Who touched me?” The poor woman was fearful that she had stolen a blessing, of which she felt herself unworthy. But soon she was assured by the kindly words and look of the Master. This incident teaches us clearly that our Lord’s miracles drained upon his vitality. Thus from Jordan to Calvary he willingly, gladly, responded to the needs of those about him—laying down his life. R. 4588

**Daughter, be of good cheer.
Your faith has made you well. Go in Peace.
Luke 8:48**

So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.

– Luke 5:16 –

Our dear Master's constant attitude of prayer did not hinder His more particular devotions when He turned aside from the busy affairs of His life to converse with the Father in secret—sometimes briefly and sometimes spending the entire night in prayer in the mountain solitude. The very isolation of the Lord from all human help drew Him the nearer and the oftener to the Father in prayer and communion. So it is, or should be, with all the true followers of the Master. As we grow in His character-likeness we will, like Him, pray without ceasing, in everything giving thanks, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord, recognizing Him as the center of all our hopes and our joys. R. 5480

I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

–John 6:38 –

The spotless purity, the marked intellectual superiority, the humble dignity, the meek gentleness, the bold and uncompromising sense of right, linked with benevolence and untiring self-sacrifice, marked Jesus as a man peculiar and separate from all other men. In his day “he taught as one having authority,” and men said, “Never man spake like this man.” Whatever others may think or say of him, he claimed to be the sent of God, saying, (John 6:38), “I came down from heaven.” “I am the living bread which came down from heaven.” (verse 51.) The Jews disbelieved this claim, and said, “How can this be?” And many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, “This is a hard saying, who can hear it?” (verse 60.) “When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if you shall see the Son of Man **ascend up where he was before?**” But “from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him” (verses 61-66), because of this claim of heavenly origin and pre-human existence. R. 445

They were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”

– Mark 7:37 –

[Jesus] healed all manner of diseases and cast out demons, and thus gave evidence that in God's due time, as the great Physician, he will be armed with the abundant power which will completely restrain Satan and all the fallen angels from all work of evil in respect to the human family, and when he will lift up the poor, the lame, the deaf, the blind, the dumb, out of their present tribulation. And moreover, this temporary release which he brought to those who by faith accepted his favor, illustrated still higher blessings, labors and privileges—the opening of the eyes of the understanding, the curing of the leprosy of sin, the returning of the withered powers, as well as the awakening of the dead—that all might see and hear and know of the righteousness which God approves and of the life everlasting which will be its reward, and that all might be helped out of the present bondage to sin and imperfection, etc., into the full liberty of the sons of God. Thus the Lord brought life—everlasting life—to the view, to the knowledge, of those who hear his message of the Kingdom and the blessings to flow from it. R. 3337

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.” So He commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And He took the seven loaves and the fish and gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His disciples, and the disciples gave to the multitude. So they all ate and were filled, and they took up seven large baskets full of the fragments that were left. Now those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children.

– Matthew 15:35-38 –

The Gospels give us two distinctly different miracles of feeding the multitude in the wilderness places. On one occasion the number fed was five thousand and in the other four thousand. In the one case it was a lad who provided five small barley cakes and two fishes; in the other the disciples themselves had seven loaves and a few fishes. In one instance twelve baskets full of fragments were gathered after the repast; in the other seven baskets full. St. Matthew’s Gospel records both of these miracles. In each instance there was a seeming necessity for the miracle, and the necessity prompted our Lord’s compassion and the use of the Divine power. It will be noticed that in these instances the Master used for the benefit of others the special powers communicated to him at the time of his baptism through the descent of the holy Spirit; but we recall that Jesus refused to use this same power selfishly for his own comfort, even when he hungered after having spent forty days in the wilderness at the outstart of his work, studying the Scriptures to know the mind of the Lord, how he should suffer and become the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Not all, even of those who associated with our Lord, understood, appreciated, believed in his wonderful miracles. Where there is a desire to disbelieve there is also a possibility. Indeed, the Scriptures are evidently quite true in their assurances that faith is a difficult matter at the present time; and that for this very reason it is specially appreciated of the Lord in those who profess to be his followers. The Scriptures intimate that faith is a gift of God, while at the same time it is a matter of our own exercise. It is for God to set forth the facts and bring them to our attention. It is for us to be able to appreciate those facts and to exercise the corresponding faith. As the Scriptures declare, “All men have not faith”; “Without faith it is not possible to please God”; “According to thy faith be it unto thee.”



[Here] is the lesson of Divine power; a lesson also that Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, through whom that Divine power was exercised. This lesson leads us onward to the thought that this same Jesus is appointed of the Father to be the Savior of the world. Thus far merely the Church, the elect, his Bride, has been selected, along lines of faith. Shortly the new dispensation will usher in the reign of knowledge and glorious opportunities for the opening of the eyes of all to see, to know, to appreciate, things Divine and to come, if they will, into the condition in which they may enjoy “the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” R. 4617

He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

– Matthew 16:15-16 –

Then followed a blessing, a prophecy of coming usefulness, partly, at least, the result of this good confession, as it was the result of a proper condition of heart:—“Thou art Peter [**petros**, a stone, a rock] and upon this rock [**petra**—this great stone or rocky mass—the great truth which you have confessed, namely, my Messiahship] will I build my Church.” The Lord did not propose to build his Church upon Peter, but upon the great truth which the Father had laid as a foundation for his plan and had revealed to Peter and which Peter had so nobly expressed. But Peter, indeed, might be one of the living stones of the spiritual temple erected upon this great foundation-fact.

Peter himself gives us this interpretation of the matter in his Epistle (1 Pet. 2:4-7), assuring us that the whole Church as a building of God is growing more and more complete through the addition of each member, who, as a living stone, is built up into and under the headship of Christ, the great chief corner-stone and capstone of the whole—the figure being that of a pyramid. R. 2656



Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but My Father who is in heaven.”

– Matthew 16:17 –

Our Lord’s answer distinctly acknowledges the correctness of Peter’s statement. We are struck with the modesty of our Lord Jesus in respect to this proclamation of himself as the great Messenger of the Covenant. How beautiful a lowly mind is! and if it was beautiful and appropriate in our Lord, how much more appropriate it is for us who are his followers and who have nothing of ourselves—nothing that we have not received through him. How appropriate the Apostle’s words, when, after speaking of how Jesus humbled himself to become a man, and to be obedient unto death, he exhorted us saying, “Humble YOURSELVES, therefore, brethren, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.” Indeed, we may be sure that none will share with the Lord in his exaltation who do not learn at heart this lesson of humility. “The Lord abhorreth the proud but giveth grace to the humble.” R. 3339

I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 16:18-19

Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

– Matthew 16:20 –

Jesus charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Messiah. This was an item of truth intended only for themselves as yet; and to have proclaimed it in a general way might have created more or less of insurrection, and might have hindered the carrying out of the divine arrangement respecting his ignominious death. They could still proclaim the Kingdom of heaven at hand, they could still speak of Jesus as the great Teacher and man, they could still wonder as to whom he might be; but the proper time for making him known as the Messiah would be after he had finished the work of sacrifice which the Father had given him to do. Indeed he could not be the Messiah except by accomplishing this work. He must purchase the world of mankind before he could become its Lord and Life-giver, its Restorer, its Messiah. R. 3339

From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

– Matthew 16:21 –

Now for the first time Jesus began to teach his disciples to expect his ignominious rejection by the Jews, his ultimate death, and his resurrection on the third day. Matthew's account makes this still more explicit, saying, "From that time he began to teach them these things." What a sifting, what a testing of the hearts of his apostles, and yet how wisely it was done! They must be prepared in advance for his shameful death, else it would prove such a shock to their faith that they could not recover from it, neither believe in his resurrection. But now, after nearly three years of experiences, and when they had just confessed him to be the Messiah, and by so confessing had crystalized the thought in their own minds, it must have been a severe blow to all their hopes and aspirations to be told of his ignominious death. How could he be the Messiah, and yet suffer death at the hands of his enemies? How could he bless all the families of the earth, and yet be put to death as a malefactor?

These things must at first have appealed to them as inconsistent; but all the more the announcement would prepare their hearts for the explanation of the Scriptures which Jesus was ready to impart. The statement that he began to tell them about his coming death implies that thereafter this was frequently a subject for discussion and consideration between him and them. The same Lord, with no less wisdom, is still guiding in the affairs of his Church, and still teaches us line upon line, precept upon precept, as we are able to bear the Truth, and our preparedness for it will be proportionate to our nearness and fellowship with him. R. 3339

Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord. This shall not happen to You!” But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God but the things of men.”

– Matthew 16:22-23 –

Our Lord uttered this statement respecting his rejection and death openly—before the entire twelve apostles; but Peter, possibly elated by our Lord’s words of commendation that the Father had revealed the matter to him, took our Lord aside privately to whisper to him that such sentiments should not be introduced nor expressed before the apostles—that it would be discouraging to them all, and that anyway there was certainly a mistake about the matter, for such things could never happen to him—must not happen; he must so order his speech and his conduct that these things would not happen. He must not violently antagonize the chief priests or elders, to thus lead them to conspire for his death. Allowance must be made for Peter, in that he was not only the eldest of the apostles, but quite a good deal older than our Lord, and that he was of a very ardent disposition, strong and impulsive. However, Jesus—who had a few moments before commended Peter for his appreciation of the fact of his Messiahship—now rebuked him, not privately, but in the presence of all the apostles. He probably knew that this would be the best method of correcting Peter’s sentiments, which, should they spread amongst the apostles, would be very injurious to them all. Hence, our Lord’s rebuke was pointed, sharp, and made known to all the apostles. He said, Get thee behind me, Satan—adversary; thy words are not in accordance with divine wisdom, but in accord with human wisdom. We are not to understand that Peter was turned into Satan, nor that Satan got possession of him, but rather in taking such a position he was becoming an opponent of the divine arrangement, as Satan was and still is. R. 3339



Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.

– Matthew 17:1-3 –

The occasion will be remembered. Jesus had foretold His death, quite contrary to the previous expectations of the Apostles, and now He sought to draw their minds gradually to a realization that His death would not mean a repudiation of the promise of the Kingdom and its glory but a fulfillment of their expectations on a higher plane. Jesus took them to the mountaintop and was transfigured before them. His flesh and His garments shone and glistened white, after the manner of angels, the vision thus representing the Lord after having experienced His resurrection change from earthly to heavenly conditions. Then with Him “talked two men,” says St. Luke, “who appeared in glory”—radiant, but less so than Jesus. In some manner they recognized these two men of the vision as Moses and Elijah.

We have St. Peter’s words (2 Pet. 1:16) in corroboration of the text here, that what they saw on the mountain represented the Royal Majesty of Messiah—the Kingdom of Messiah. St. Peter’s words fully satisfy us that the transfiguration scene was a vision of the coming glory of Christ —“We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty, that the promised Kingdom will eventually come. The vision on the mount confirms this to us. However, the prophecies of old, which foretold Messiah’s coming and reign, are still more authentic, “more sure,” they cannot fail; the Kingdom merely awaits the sufferings of those who will be the members of the Body of Christ. Then, at the Second Coming of Jesus, these will be blessed and glorified, and the class represented by Moses will also be blessed and used as instruments of the Kingdom. Thus in the vision the entire Kingdom was represented: first of all, by Jesus Himself, second by Elijah, who represented the Church class, and third by Moses, who represented the faithful on the earthly plane, through whom the Heavenly blessings will pour out upon humanity.
R. 5121



We did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

2 Peter 1:16

While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”

– Matthew 17:5 –

The essence of the entire vision was to impress upon the minds of the apostles the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, that he was worthy of being heard, that he was the mouthpiece of God, that he that honored him honored the Father also. This voice was heard from the cloud, which represented the darkness and trouble which would be permitted to come upon the Lord’s followers in the midst of all the trials of the dark days that were coming upon them in connection with Jesus’ rejection by the Jews, his scourging, dishonor, crucifixion, death, burial. In all this they were to remember the voice of the Father, “This is my beloved Son,” and were not to be discouraged nor allow their faith to grow faint. Similarly throughout this Gospel age the Lord has frequently permitted the same dark cloud to come over his faithful ones, that they might be the better prepared also to listen to his Word, his message, “This is my beloved Son,” and this vision of the Holy Mount is an assurance respecting the glorious Kingdom which he will establish, which will be the end of darkness and trouble. As the apostles were overpowered by the brilliancy of the vision and feared when they entered the cloud and heard the voice, so we in our weak and imperfect conditions sometimes find it difficult to grasp the glorious things which God hath set before us. The picture of the things unseen as yet is so wonderful as to amaze us. The fact that we have been invited to be heirs of God and associates with Jesus Christ our Lord in his Kingdom is too wonderful for us to grasp. We begin to fear lest we should fail in so great an undertaking. R. 3794

When the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, “Arise, and do not be afraid.”

– Matthew 17:6-7 –

It required our Lord’s kind words and touch to relieve the Apostles of their fright, and looking up they saw no one but Jesus. His transfiguration had vanished, and it was the Master, just as before. If, momentarily, they thought that Jesus had entered into glory, they now perceived that they were mistaken. Another account tells us that as they were coming down the mountain side Jesus charged them that they should not tell the vision to any one until after his resurrection from the dead. He thus explained to them that the whole matter was a **vision**, an apparition. This was a fulfillment of what he had told them in his last words of our lesson of a week ago, “There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom.” These three disciples had been standing in his presence at the time those words were uttered, and now they had seen the Son of man in his Kingdom glory—in vision. R. 4649



When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.**– Matthew 17:8 –**

It is well for us under the circumstances that the dark cloud of trouble and opposition is permitted to keep us very humble, that we may indeed fall on our faces in the dust. It is well that we should listen to the voice from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son: hear him.” It is well that we should hear the Son assuring us that all things shall work together for good to those who love God. It is well that we should exercise faith in him that speaketh from heaven, lest we should become weary and faint in our minds. It is well that the Master teach us as he taught his disciples, and that looking up we should see Jesus only, that we should realize that in him alone is our help, that God hath laid help upon one who is mighty to deliver, and that so realizing that all of our help is in Christ Jesus we should hold fast to the relationship which we have already secured through faith in his blood and through consecration to him. R. 3794

**Let us run with steadfast endurance the course that is marked out for us
and, as we do so, let us keep our gaze fixed on Jesus. (Barclay)
Hebrews 12:1-2**

Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.”**– Mark 9:23 –**

When Jesus and the three favored Apostles came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, where they had been enjoying the vision of coming glory, they found the other nine Apostles at the foot of the mountain surrounded by a multitude. They had made several inefficacious attempts to cast out a demon from a boy whose father had brought him for the purpose.

So it is with some of the Lord’s people; occasionally by faith they go up into the mountain, into the Kingdom; by faith they see the glory of the Lord revealed, and hear afresh that they must suffer with the Lord if they would enter into His glory. Then, coming down from the exalted heights of contemplation of things glorious, they face the realities of the present time—the Adversary is in possession of the world still; many are his slaves and dupes; no earthly power seems sufficient to cast him out; they are back with the remainder of the Church. But if the Master be with them, victory will ultimately be achieved.

And Jesus answered, “O faithless generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring the boy to me.” And they brought him, and immediately the spirit caused him to fall to the ground, wallowing and foaming.

How great stress the Lord lays everywhere upon the exercise of faith in the Divine Power! “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Those who cannot exercise the faith cannot have the blessing which others may have who do exercise faith; and our blessings increase in proportion as we will exercise our faith. Thus the Lord puts a premium upon this element of character, and makes it essential to His favor. R. 5128

Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

– John 8:12 –

Christ brought LIFE to light by explaining to those who had ears to hear that he had come into the world to “give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45) He explained further that the time would come when all in their graves should hear his voice in kingly authority, and awaken from the sleep of death—come forth from the prison house of the tomb. The people even then might have wondered what advantage there would be in such a release from the tomb if they would still be subject to the pains and aches and demon oppositions of the present time. Our Lord fortified the testimonies of the prophets respecting the Millennial age, which they declared would be a period of universal blessing, with nothing to hurt or destroy in all the holy Kingdom. He showed how this could be by the various miracles which he performed; for he not only preached the Kingdom of God, taught his disciples to look forward to it and to pray for its coming and blessing and power, but in the various miracles which he performed he illustrated that its powers would prevail amongst men for their blessing. R. 3337

Toward the conclusion of our Lord’s ministry the opposition of the rulers of the Jewish Church became very bitter, causing Jesus to leave Judea for Berea. He remained for some little time near the place where John was preaching at the time of his own baptism. It was while he was there that word was received from Martha and Mary at Bethany, saying, “Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick.” From this we know that Lazarus, their younger brother, was a very dear friend of Jesus. The message was brief; it did not urge him to come nor ask a miraculous intervention; it merely stated the fact. In some respects it was a grand model of a Christian prayer. The Lord’s people may always go to him with full confidence in his sympathy and loving interest in all of their affairs, temporal and spiritual. At first they may feel disposed to ask that their own wills be done on earth if not in heaven, but subsequently, if their spirit of consecration and growth in grace continue, they should reach the place where, like Mary and Martha, they would be content to state their troubles to the Lord and wait for him, thankfully accepting as wisest and best whatever he may be pleased to grant. R. 4160

He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.” Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”

– John 11:11-14 –

When, two days later, Jesus proposed returning to Bethany in Judea, and the disciples were fearful, our Lord indicated to them that there would be no particular danger. He foreknew all the circumstances and perceived that the miracle he intended to perform would disconcert his enemies long enough to permit of his return to Berea a little later. He explained to them the reason for the visit saying, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.” Later he brought this statement down to their comprehension by saying to them plainly, Lazarus is dead. R. 4160

When Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.” Jesus wept.

– John 11:32-35 –

It was the custom of the time to have a funeral service of mourning for seven days. Apparently Martha and Mary and Lazarus were of a wealthy, influential family and on the occasion of their bereavement many friends came to sympathize with them, to mourn with them. Jesus did not consider it the part of wisdom to go to the home, which he knew would be crowded with mourners, and then go to the tomb, so he remained a little distance from Bethany and sent word. When the word came that Jesus was nearing, Martha went out to meet him; but Mary, bowed with her grief and perhaps disappointed that the Lord’s word, “This sickness is not unto death, but unto the glory of God,” had seemingly failed, still sat in the house, went not to meet him, as though by her actions she would say, “We hoped much, Lord, down to the very last, but now it is too late; you allowed the favorable opportunity to pass. We are in the midst of our sorrow. How could anything now avail us? Lazarus is dead.” Martha’s greeting, when she came to the Lord, was, “Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died; but I know that even now whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, he will give thee.” There was in this remark something of a suggestion of chiding, as though she had said, “Why did you not come? but still I have faith in you, I realize that you are the Messiah. Our Lord’s reply was, “Thy brother shall live again.” R. 4160

Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

– John 11:43-44 –

Jesus did not say, Lazarus, come down from Heaven, nor did He say, Lazarus, come up from below. Lazarus was a very dead man; for he had died four days before Jesus came. Yet from the Divine standpoint he was asleep, as the Master declared; that is to say, his soul was not destroyed. According to the Scriptures, the soul can be put out of existence. On one occasion our Lord said to His disciples, “Fear not them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna” —the Second Death. —Matt. 10:28. The awakening of Lazarus from the “sleep” of death was but a foreshadowing of the power and purpose of God for the liberating of all the prisoners of Sin and Death in his own appointed time, through Christ and his Kingdom. R. 5611 and R. 1744

Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs.”

John 11:45-47

JESUS' LAST WEEK



Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, “Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. For He will be delivered to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. They will scourge Him and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again.” But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken.

– Luke 18:31-34 –

Jesus again brought up the matter of the shame, ill-treatment and death which was to come upon Him. This time He included the thought of His resurrection from the dead on the third day. However, the matter was incomprehensible to the disciples. They could not comprehend the meaning of the Master’s words; these thoughts seemed so different from what they had been expecting! How could they receive them? Not until after Pentecost did they get the full grasp of the situation and of what Jesus had told them. There the Holy Spirit began to make plain the Divine arrangement—that the sufferings of all the Church must come first before the glories of the Kingdom would be revealed and the blessing to the world begin. R. 5483

The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

– Matthew 20:28 –

Our Lord came not to be ministered unto. He did not come into the world to have servants and to get all that He could in return for the expenditure of a small amount of His own energy. He came not from any selfish motive whatever, but to serve others—to do good. As He Himself testified, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man **lay down his life** for his friends.” This He did in harmony with the Father’s Plan.

We do not understand, however, that our Lord refused to have any one serve Him. He accepted service from others. The thought of our text is that He came to render a service; not that He might be served; and in order that He might carry out His purpose it was necessary for Him to become a servant. Had there been no need for that service, we cannot think that the Lord would have humbled Himself and taken the bondman’s form, or have undergone the severe trials of His earthly existence. But He came to render a service that was necessary to the well-being, happiness, yea, the very life of the entire human family. R. 5375

*Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany,
where Lazarus was, who had been dead,
whom He had raised from the dead.
There they made Him a supper, and Martha served,
but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.
Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard,
anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair.
And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.
John 12:1-3*

A woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table.

– Matthew 26:7 –

Wisdom tells us that we should not delay in bringing our alabaster boxes of ointment and pouring their contents upon our dear ones of the body of Christ, the feet of Christ. No matter if they do not notice us, or think of us, or pour any upon us as members of the feet; let us do our part, let us be of the Mary class, let us pour out the sweet perfume upon others, and the house, the Church of the Lord, will be filled with the sweet odor, even though some disciples might mistakingly charge us with being extravagant with our love and with our devotion, not understanding that the Master by and by will say again, "Let her alone, she hath done what she could." Our Lord's estimate of this spikenard and anointing is that it is all that we can do—nothing could be more or better. It indicates love, great love—and "love is the fulfilling of the law."

Let each one of the Lord's true people as he studies this matter conclude that by the grace of God he will join the Mary class, and purchase spikenard very costly and lavish it upon the feet of the body of Christ—the Church—the true members. This will mean love, sympathy, kindness, gentleness, patience and assistance and comfort. It will mean large and growing development in all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, whose combined name is Love.

Dear readers, let us each remember that while it is impossible for us to do as Mary did in this lesson, it is the privilege of each to do still more important things for each other, for the brethren of Christ now in the world, the feet members of his body. Hers was a literal perfume and in time lost its virtue; but the little acts of kindnesses and helpfulness which we may render one to another will never lose their merit in the estimation of our Lord, and never lose their fragrance to all eternity in the estimation of each other. The little things of life, the little words, the little tokens, the kind looks, the little assistances by the way, these and not great things are our possibilities, our perfumes, the one for the other. R. 3535

She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.

– Mark 14:8 –

The use of such expensive perfumes was very rare: indeed, even the emperors used it sparingly, but when used it was generally poured upon the head. Mary followed this custom in pouring it upon the Lord's head, as Matthew and Mark recount; but having done this, she proceeded to his feet and anointed them with the perfume, and then wiped his feet with the long tresses of her hair. What a picture of loving devotion is here given us! The feet, always recognized as the humblest and lowest members of the human frame—the hair of the head, especially of woman, always recognized as a special treasure and glory to her—here thus brought together in a way which signified that Mary esteemed her Lord and Master as infinitely above and beyond her. She had recognized him first as the most wonderful of men, speaking as never man spake; she had

The memory of her unselfish love

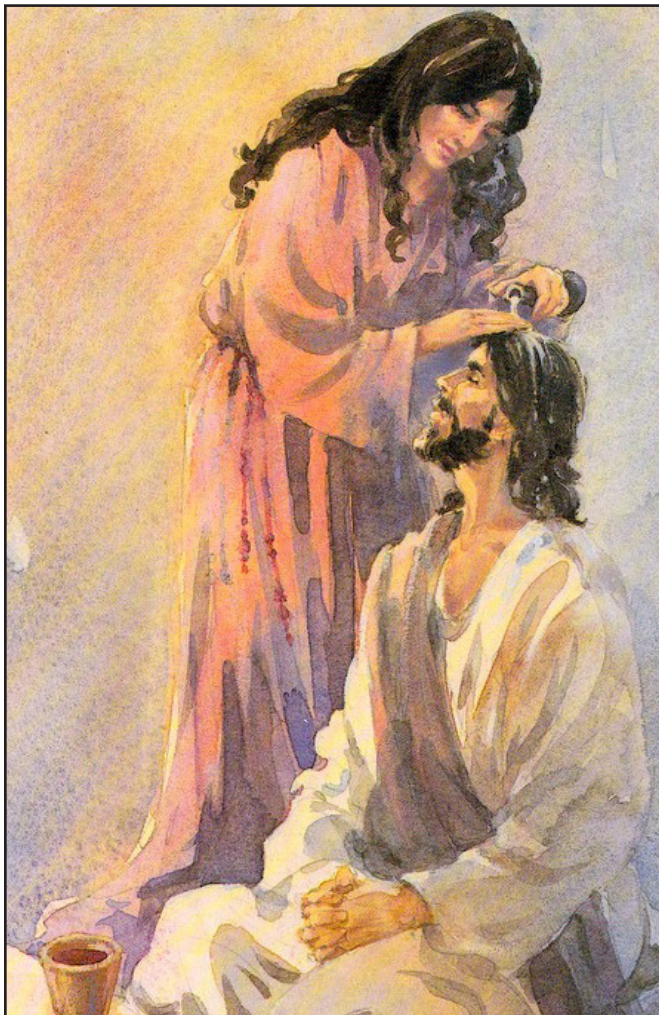
Lingers on like her perfume rare,

A memorial of her unselfish love,

She hath done

what she could for him there.

From *I Will Sing!* p.93



come afterwards to understand that he was a great teacher, especially sent at a special time; and finally, through the awakening of Lazarus from the sleep of death, she had evidence that the power of the Almighty was in him, that he was none other than the Son of God, and she appropriately did him the reverence due to his exalted station.

She could not put him on the throne of earth, but she would show that she was his devoted servant forever; she could not glorify him before all the people of Israel, but she could glorify and honor him in her own home; she could not tell his praises and sing his worth, but she could sing and make melody in her own heart, and pour upon him a perfume which not only filled her home with its sweet savor, but which has yielded a tender fragrance to the honor of womankind in general from her day to the present time. "She hath done what she could," said the Lord—she has shown her devotion to the best of her ability. How true the remainder of our Lord's prophecy on the subject, "Wherever this Gospel is preached, this thing shall be told as a memorial of her." R. 3534



Let her alone. She has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.

– John 12:7-8 –

The opportunity for honoring the Lord was limited—a little while and his sufferings would be ended and he would be glorified, beyond the evil, beyond the power of human attention. It was appropriate then, when viewed from the right standpoint, that Mary should spend a great price upon her Lord—that the head upon which fell the slanders and anathemas of the chief priests and doctors of divinity of that day, and upon which shortly the crown of thorns would be placed, should now be honored by one amongst a few of those who realized his true worth, his true grandeur, his Kingship, that he was indeed the Son of God. It was appropriate, too, that those feet which had trodden the valleys and hillsides of Palestine, and that were so weary at times, and that symbolized the feet of consecration treading the narrow, rugged way, and that so soon would be pierced with the nails on the cross, should now be highly honored by one who appreciated and trusted them, who loved them and who was seeking to walk in the Master's steps.

[This] Mary represents one of the most beautiful elements of Christian character amongst the Lord's people from that day until the present. For be it remembered that the entire Church of Christ in the largest sense is the "body of Christ," as expressed by Jesus and also by the apostles. The Mary class, who would rather purchase perfume at a great cost whereby to serve the anointed Church, the body of Christ, than to spend the same upon themselves, is still with us, and has been of the Church for these eighteen centuries. Not only was the Head of the body anointed, perfumed, honored, comforted, cheered, but all of the members since have likewise received a blessing from this class, this spikenard Mary class. It is composed not always of the orators, the wealthy or the wise—its ministry is unostentatious and to many, especially of the world, it seems foolishness and waste—but the Lord appreciates it, and so do the members of his body who are comforted and refreshed thereby. Blessing be upon this Mary class! R. 3535

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you. He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

– Zechariah 9:9 –

The Jews were familiar with this prophecy, and for long centuries had been waiting for Messiah to fulfill it. It was necessary, according to the divine program, that our Lord should literally, actually, do what the prophets had foretold, that Israel might be without excuse in their rejection of him: so that in the future, when their blindness shall be turned away, when the eyes of their understanding shall be opened, when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and mourn for their rejection of him, they will find themselves without excuse. They were not in the condition of heart to receive their King.

The due time, having come, and that to the very hour, [Jesus] deliberately planned his triumphal procession, instead of, as previously, hindering it. He sent some of the disciples for the ass and colt, manifesting his superhuman power by designating where and how the animals would be found. An ass was used rather than a horse, and tradition tells us that so all the kings of Israel were accustomed to ride to their coronation.

Some of the Pharisees had come along, perhaps through curiosity or perhaps to act as spies—perhaps some of those with whom Judas was conferring, and who were endeavoring to decide when and how the Lord should be taken, not realizing that their powers were limited until his hour was fully come. These spoke to the disciples, requesting them to call to the attention of Jesus the language of the multitude, and to suggest that it was not appropriate for him to permit them to thus proclaim him the Messiah and King. We are to remember that Jesus did not sound a trumpet before him, prominently announcing himself as the Messiah, as impostors were in the habit of doing. For three years he had preached the Gospel, gathering his disciples, performing his miracles, but had said nothing about his being the Messiah. He allowed his disciples to wonder and the public to wonder. To [the disciples] it seemed that, so far from his death being near, the very reverse was true. Some of the people were just getting awake to his greatness and power, others were just finding out that Messiah had really come—it could not be, they thought, that their Master would be crucified. They considered this one of his dark sayings.

But Jesus would not bid the multitude stop. Their shouts were but a fulfillment of a prophecy made centuries before by Zechariah. Furthermore, by way of emphasizing the matter, by way of

convincing his disciples that he was the very one mentioned by the prophet, he declared that if the multitude had not broken forth in a shout the very stones of the ground must have shouted, because thus God had caused it to be written aforetime in the prophecy, and not one jot or tittle of the divine declaration could fail. A little later on, when our Lord and his followers had reached the Temple, the shoutings of “Hosanna” were renewed; and in that connection it is particularly mentioned that the children joined in the shouting, in accord with the words of the Scripture— “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained praise.” R. 3850, R. 2745, R. 3537



A very great multitude spread their clothes on the road. Others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!”

– Matthew 21:8-9 –

The word Hosanna is an acclaim of praise and confidence and expectancy and very closely resembles in thought the word hallelujah. Collecting the different exclamations of the people as given in the different Gospels we have these: “Hosanna,” “Hosanna to the Son of David,” “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,” “Blessed is the King,” “Blessed is the King of Israel, that cometh in the name of the Lord,” “Blessed is the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord,” “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest,” “Hosanna in the highest.” Our Lord, of course, understood the whole situation—“He knew what was in man.” He knew the depths of the sincerity behind these exclamations and acts of reverence; he knew, too, of the forces of evil and their power to make light appear darkness and darkness appear light.

He knew that he was to be the Passover Lamb, and that within five days another multitude, led by religious teachers, would be crying “Crucify him! Crucify him!” He knew that this shout now around him, gladly hailing him as the Messenger of the Covenant, would be disconcerted by the wolves—that they would be fearful of their own lives and interests as they would realize the power of the rulers and the mob under their control. He realized that with their little knowledge they would not dare to trust their own judgments as against those of their religious teachers; he knew that the



Shepherd was about to be smitten and the sheep to be frightened and scattered, yet he said nothing; he allowed the divine program to be enacted; he was going as a sheep to the slaughter, but he opened not his mouth to appeal for aid, to defend himself, to explain the true situation. He could, but he would not, deliver himself out of the hands of those who sought his life; for this very purpose he had come into the world—to die, to be sacrificed for sins. R. 3537

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, “It is written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER,’ but you have made it a ‘DEN OF THIEVES.’”

– Matthew 21:12-13 –

The Great Teacher’s entry into Jerusalem caused considerable commotion. He went directly to the Temple and ordered from it the money-changers and dove-sellers, who had no right within its hallowed precincts. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy, “The zeal of thine house has consumed me.” The poor, the blind, the lame, again had his ministries. Again the chief religionists of the times were vexed and considered him an intruder upon their arrangements, and were displeased with the multitude’s shouting his praise as the Messiah, the Son of David. They rebuked the Teacher, who answered, Scripturally, “Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.”

—Matt. 21:16; Psa. 8:2. R. 4669

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate.

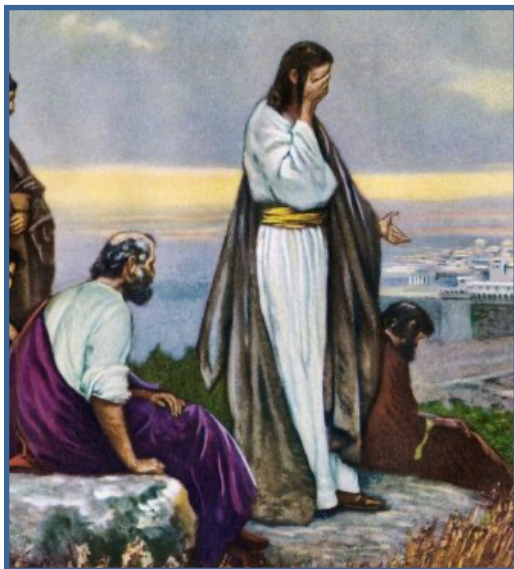
– Matthew 23:37-38–

[At] the knoll of the Mount of Olives, which overlooks Jerusalem, the Master stopped and the multitude with him, their attention riveted upon the city and the King. They knew not the importance of the moment, they realized not that the great clock of the universe was striking, that a new dispensational change was taking place, that the favor which God had for centuries bestowed upon Israel as a nation was about to pass from them, because they were not as a nation in heart readiness to receive the blessings and privileges proffered to them.

The Master saw all this, and as it was the marked-out divine plan he murmured not in any particular, and yet he wept as he beheld the city, as he thought of the privileges that were about to be removed from Israel as a nation, and how instead of blessings there would come upon them as a consequence of their rejection of their opportunities a “great time of trouble,” awful trouble. He felt now as he expressed himself a few days later as they wept with him on the way to Calvary, “Weep not for me, weep for yourselves.”

The Pharisees professed entire consecration to God and great holiness. Jesus told them that they made broad their phylacteries, and enlarged the borders of their garments; that they took the chief seats in the synagogues, and for a pretense made long prayers; and that they paid tithes even of the smallest seeds, mint and anise and cummin, but omitted the weightier matters of the Law, and that theirs was merely an outward, perfunctory observance of that Law. (Matt. 23:5-6; Matt. 23:14; Matt. 23:23-25.) He declared that the Law commanded that they should love their neighbor as themselves. And He charged that they “devoured widows’ houses”; they were ready to take advantage of the fact that these had no natural protectors. He told them that it would be foolish to think that by offering prayers on the street corners, etc., they were keeping the Law.

They as the House of Servants were not worthy of a continuance of special favor at that time. For three and a half years there had been a certain kind of favor shown to them; the Gospel was preached in their midst. But the Gospel did not appeal to the nation; only to the “Israelites indeed” from among them, the faithful **remnant**. After the three and a half years which ended the “seventieth week,” the Lord’s favor to the Jews terminated, and from that time the door was thrown open to the Gentiles. And ever since then the Jews have had no preeminence over others.



All true Israelites should have recognized the change of dispensations; or, as the Scriptures declare, they should have known “the time of their visitation.” The difficulty evidently was that many of them were overcharged with the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, the honors of men and their sectarian prosperity. And so it is here in this harvest time: the test comes along similar lines. Fidelity to the voice of him that speaketh from heaven through the Bible means, in the clearer light now granted us, an opposition to the errors and false doctrines long cherished as truths by ourselves and forbears and friends. Now as then this increase of light, this hearing of the voice of the Lord, brings a test—the separation of those who are the true sheep from others who do not belong to this flock. “My sheep hear my voice and they follow me.”

R. 3538, R. 5470, R. 3883

Our Lord continued his teachings in the Temple daily after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the ass, —going to Bethany at night, and returning to the Temple each morning during the few days that intervened prior to his arrest and crucifixion. It was at this time that certain Greeks sought an interview with Jesus. It was probably after the interview with the Greeks had ended, and while the hearts of the apostles were beating fast with anticipation that finally the world was waking up to recognize their Master in his true light, and would shortly exalt him to the high position foretold for the Messiah, and while their hopes on their own behalf were also running high that they should be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom, that Jesus uttered the words [in John chapter 12]. It was a good opportunity for him to show them how his sufferings of the immediate future were the foundation upon which all the future glory must rest. He well knew what bitter disappointments and heart-aches would come to his faithful few when they would realize the literalness of what he had already told them respecting his death. R. 2757

The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

John 12:23

Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.

– John 12:27-28 –

“Now is my soul troubled” —my feelings are turbulent; I am in a commotion. Shall I pray, Father deliver me from this hour? Shall I not, on the contrary, remember that for this very cause I am come to this hour, that I might endure, and that willingly, rather than ask to be delivered? I might ask the Father for a certain kind of deliverance which would not invalidate the engagement which I made, that I would give my life in obedience to his will. I might ask him to permit some calamity to befall me which would result in my death and thus save me from the peculiarly trying and ignominious conditions incident to my apprehension and execution as a criminal—as the worst kind of a criminal, a blasphemer against my Heavenly Father. Such a deviation would seem to me not an unreasonable concession for one who has shown his faithfulness to the Father’s will in all things. And yet I will not ask even this concession. Rather, I will submit my will to the Father’s will most absolutely, and carry out to the very jot and tittle the spirit as well as the letter of my covenant. Let the Father’s will be done in every particular; it must be the wisest and best, else it would not be his plan. It is for this very purpose that I came to this hour, that I might manifest, demonstrate, to the Father my devotion, my most implicit obedience to his will. Proceed, Father! Glorify thine own name and in thine own way, at whatever the cost to me!

Then a voice was heard, a voice which some understood and which others misunderstood, as is always the case with the voice of God. The world heareth no message; believers hear the message partially; but the begotten sons, in perfect accord with the Father, hear and understand fully. No doubt our Lord received a blessing through this message from the Father, and yet he assures us that it was not specially sent for him, but rather as a demonstration for the benefit of the disciples—that they might note that God attested his teachings. R. 2758

The people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.”

John 12:29-30

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?” They said to Him, “The Son of David.” He said to them, “How then does David in the Spirit call Him ‘LORD,’ saying: ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES YOUR FOOTSTOOL” ’? If David then calls Him ‘LORD,’ how is He his Son?” And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

– Matthew 22:41-46 –

Some of our day, like the Pharisees of old, too indolent and too indifferent to search, are not able to answer this question, and are provoked by having such questions asked—and they are not slow to brand such as “controversial and unprofitable questions.” But let it be remembered that the Lord himself asked this question, and implied that in such an appreciation of the subject as would enable us to answer it lay a key to a clearer appreciation of himself and his mission.

When we come to examine the Lordship of Jesus referred to by him in the text under consideration, we find that it has reference to a Lordship much beyond any of these suggestions. The sense in which it is used is made clear by Rev. 22:16, “I am the root of David,” that is the father or progenitor of David. Jesus became the new shoot, stem, or BRANCH out of David when born of a virgin; but it was in his death, burial and resurrection that he became the ROOT by whose vitality David and all the withered, dying Adamic sprouts will be RESTORED—brought to all the perfection of existence which the original root, Adam, failed to bring to them through his own blight. Hence, Jesus is called the Life giver, the Restorer; and the time in which this, his great work, shall be accomplished, is called “The times of **restitution.**”

Thus seen, Christ becomes the Father of the human race during the Millennial age, for a life-giver is a father. Then he shall be called the “Everlasting Father” by the restored human race. Thus, he who **as a man**, was a son or offspring of David, becomes the root, the Father, the Lord of David, and as truly of others, as of David.

Looking at the words of Jesus, we can see how he was David’s Son, and yet is to be David’s Lord or Father. And noting the prophecy referred to by Jesus in this connection, and also referred to by the Apostles (Matt. 22:4; Heb. 1:13), viz., “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool,” we see that this refers the Lordship of Jesus to a time **after** his sufferings and trials were ended. After he had been accounted worthy of exaltation, then he was exalted, and before that time he could only be called David’s Lord prophetically. Jehovah would not, could not, justly give him the dominion and subdue it under him until it had been released from the curse, bought with a price: And that just price he paid, and is therefore now rightfully LORD, by Jehovah’s appointment. R. 808

**A Psalm of David.
The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,
Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”
Psalm 110:1**

Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

– Hebrews 5:8 –

If our Lord had determined for Himself the time and the manner of His death, then **He** was pouring the cup. If the Jews had determined these points, then **they** were pouring the cup. But neither our Lord nor the Jews did so, for both time and manner were foretold by the Prophets. Our Lord took the cup and accepted it **as the Father's providence for Him**. If the Father's providence had led to His death a year sooner or two years sooner, if the Father's will had been expressed in our Lord's crucifixion at an earlier time, even then it would have been well with Him. But He "learned obedience by the things which He suffered." —Heb. 5:8; 2:10.

At Jordan our Lord was shown to be perfect and to have made a perfect consecration, both by the descent of the Holy Spirit and by the voice of Jehovah. (Matt. 3:16-17.) He had also a perfect body—though it was earthly—in which the New Creature operated. But His **obedience** must be **tested**—His **loyalty even unto death**. Whatever the degree of testing to which our Lord might have been subjected, it was just the **right amount**, according to the Father's wisdom. R. 5080

The absolute perfection, both personal and official, of our great High Priest, and the fact that he was ordained of God for this office, is the strongest possible demand and incentive for the Church's obedience to him, just as the heavenly Father's perfection and office were the all-sufficient reasons to our Lord for his obedience to the Father. God has not set over us a novice, nor one actuated by selfishness, nor by any ignoble motive; but he has made us a great High Priest whose every command is wise and good and in love calculated to lead us on from grace to grace until we also, like him, shall be established, strengthened, settled.
R. 1808

You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

– 2 Corinthians 8:9 –

Transformed from a nature and station so exalted to our human nature, which is of the earth, earthly, and the scope of whose powers is limited to its precincts, we see that even as a **perfect** man, which he was, his humiliation was very great. And though the earth was his, and the fullness thereof, he claimed not a foot of it. And though all the silver and gold were his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, he claimed nothing. The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. He was born of humble, human parentage—born in a manger, cradled with the beasts of the stall in the little town of Bethlehem and reared in the despised city of Nazareth. And when at thirty years of age he emerged from obscurity and began to declare his mission in the world, he was despised and rejected of men. He came unto his own people (the Jewish nation), but his own received him not. And finally they put him to an ignominious death as a criminal; and none mourned him save a few humble people who had in meekness and simplicity of heart received his teaching, and who hitherto hoped that this was indeed he that should have redeemed Israel. (Luke 24:21.) R. 1246

The Last Supper

You know that after two days is the Passover, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified.

– Matthew 26:2 –

The feast at Bethany, followed by our Lord's triumphal entry on the ass amid the shoutings of the multitude, his several days' preaching in the Temple to large crowds, and the coming of the Greeks to inquire for him, all seemed to indicate a growing popularity; and the disciples, thoroughly unable to comprehend the Master's declaration that he was shortly to be put to death by the chief priests, were full of ambitious thoughts respecting the future—respecting their identity with the Lord, and how his exaltation as a king would bring them into prominence and honor with him, as well as confer upon them the coveted opportunity of accomplishing a large amount of good, blessing a larger number of people, etc.

The thirteenth of Nisan apparently was spent by our Lord in quiet retirement, and the evening following, beginning the fourteenth, was the time appointed for the celebration of the Passover Supper in the upper room. Some of the apostles had, by the Lord's instruction, made ready beforehand; and now, as they assembled without a host to appoint them their places at the Supper, a discussion as to their prominence and their rights to the most honorable places, nearest to the Master, is not surprising. Our Lord twice before had rebuked them on this very line, assuring them that unless they cultivated and attained a spirit of meekness like little children they could have no part in the Kingdom. And only a week before, while en route to Jerusalem, James and John had made the request that in the Kingdom, when established, they might sit the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the Master, in closest proximity to his person. It was this spirit that controlled on this occasion, and led up to our Lord's washing of the disciples' feet as a lesson of humility and willingness to serve one another even in the humblest capacity. R. 3542



If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

– John 13:14-16 –

Because of his love he laid aside his glory and became a man; because of his love he devoted himself as the man Christ Jesus; because of his love he was now anxious to help his dear disciples over a difficulty which, if not conquered, would hinder their usefulness as his followers both in the present and future. This love not only led our Lord to administer the reproof necessary, but led him to do it in the wisest and best and kindest manner.

[Jesus] waited until the supper was being served (not ended, as in our common version;) then arising from the table he laid aside his outer garment or mantle and took a towel and girded himself—that is to say, tightened the girdle worn around the waist, which would hold up the flowing under-garments and keep them out of the way of his activity. We can well imagine the consternation of the apostles as they watched this procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one and another as they protruded from the couches on which they reclined. Apparently the apostles were so astonished at our Lord's procedure, and so felt the condemnation which his course implied, that they knew not what to say, and so silence reigned until it came Peter's turn. He objected to having his feet washed by the Lord, saying, "Dost thou wash my feet?—It is not appropriate, Lord, that one so great as you should serve a person of my standing, a poor fisherman." But our Lord answered that although Peter did not discern the full meaning of the matter, he would explain to him later when he had finished the washing of all.

In their fear to be the least, all the disciples had shunned the opportunity of service for the Master and for each other. Our Lord, their acknowledged Head and Master, the Messiah, had humbled himself to serve them all, and had thus rebuked their inhumility, and at the same time set them an example that would apply to every affair of life, namely, that they should be glad to serve one another on every proper occasion, in the high things or in the common affairs of life. This washing of one another's feet we may readily see applies to any and every humble service of life, any and every kindness, though specially to those services and kindnesses which would be along the lines of spiritual assistances and comfort.

The Lord realized what the apostles evidently did not, that even a very little prominence may become a dangerous snare unless it be coupled with great humility. Hence the warning to the disciples, and especially to Peter, against the ambition for self-exaltation and preferment. The warning lesson was given by an apt illustration, Jesus himself, their Lord and Master, performing for them the most humble service, washing their feet. (Compare Luke 22:1; Luke 22:24; John 13:1; John 13:13-17.) To the illustration he also added his words of counsel, showing how different must be the disposition among his disciples from that which characterizes the godless world. R. 3542 and R. 1987

If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

John 13:17

Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail, and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.

– Luke 22:31-32 –

Peter, while considering the question of superiority with some measure of self-complacency, little knew how great a trial would in a few hours put the metal of his character to the test. Nor did the other disciples comprehend the critical hour to which they had come. But the Lord fully realized it, and endeavored to prepare them for it.

The other brethren would also need strengthening, and Peter's hopefulness and fervent devotion and leading characteristics would be of great service to them; but not until he himself should first come into the proper attitude. But Peter, still unconscious of his weakness and his need, though full of loving loyalty to the Lord, replied, "Lord, I am ready to go with thee into prison and to death." But Jesus knew his weakness, and said, "I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me"; and it was so. So great was the trial that all the disciples were in dismay, and though they loved the Lord, yet in fear they all forsook him and fled (Matt. 26:56); and while Peter, loth to leave him, followed him afar off, yet by and by his devotion succumbed to his fears so that he openly denied him.

How much Peter needed the Lord's prayer and warning, and how graciously the Lord considered his need! But while we thus view Peter's error and Peter's need, as well as the needs of all the disciples, let us not forget our own; for we also are men of like passions: a very little exaltation, a very little success or praise or preferment, often serves to engender a pride of heart which becomes manifest to others in unbecoming self-inflation and self-exaltation. Let us guard against these tendencies by prayer and by the cultivation of humble, sober thought, remembering always the inspired teaching, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth"; and with the apostles, let our rejoicing be this,— "the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom [the wisdom of this world which depends on self and takes credit to self], but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." —2 Cor. 1:12. R. 1987

Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I WILL STRIKE THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK WILL BE SCATTERED.'" Matthew 26:31

The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled at the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and plotted to take Jesus by trickery and kill Him.

– Matthew 26:3-5 –

Caiaphas filled the office of high priest at the time of our Lord's condemnation. It was he who had already expressed himself to the effect that it was "expedient that one man should die for the nation, that the whole people should not perish" (John 11:50; 18:14), thus illustrating how God may at times use the thoughts and intentions of wicked men to express prophetically profound truths. He perceived the growing interest of the multitudes in Jesus of Nazareth. He realized that even the most learned of the scribes and Pharisees were no match for Jesus in doctrine and logic, and that the teachings of Jesus were so opposed to his own and the general traditions of Judaism that their acceptance must mean a religious revolution. This, he reasoned, would mean the loss of the prestige of the nation with the Romans, and the abrogation of all the rights and privileges accorded to them. So far as Caiaphas was concerned, his mind, his judgment, was already made up in respect to Jesus, and he merely sought opportunity to carry it into effect—to kill him.

Caiaphas evidently was the ringleader in the conspiracy against Jesus. It was he and his associates who bargained with Judas; it was the under-priests and under-officers of his court and household and his servants who had been sent with Judas to arrest our Lord in the night, when he would be away from the multitudes; and we may presume that it was by his orders that our Lord was taken first to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, a man of great influence amongst the Jews, who had previously been high priest. R. 2780

When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."

– Luke 22:14-15 –

The Passover was, and yet is among Israelites, one of the most important of their religious observances. It was the first feature of "the Law" given them as a typical people. The ceremony, as originally instituted, is described in Exodus 12:1-51. A lamb without blemish was slain, its blood was sprinkled on the door-posts and lintels of the house, while the family within ate the flesh of the lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. On that night (the fourteenth of the First month, Jewish time), because of the sprinkled blood and the eaten lamb the first-born of Israel were passed over, or spared from the plague of death which visited the first-born of the Egyptians. On this account, and because on the next day Israel marched out from Egyptian bondage—free—therefore, by God's command (Exo. 12:14), they commemorated it every year. The Israelite saw only the letter of this ceremony, and not its typical significance. So, too, might we have been in similar darkness had not God given us the key to its meaning by inspiring the Apostle to write (1 Cor. 5:7): "CHRIST OUR PASSOVER IS SACRIFICED FOR US." Our attention being thus called to the matter, we find other scriptures which clearly show that Jesus, "the Lamb of God," was the antitype of the Passover lamb, and that his death was as essential to the deliverance of "the Church of the first-born" from death, as was the death of the typical lamb to the first-born of Israel. Thus, led of the Spirit, we come to the words and acts of Jesus at the last Passover which he ate with his disciples. R. 839

For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

– 1 Corinthians 5:7 –

Our Lord Jesus fully identified Himself with the Passover lamb. On the same night that He was betrayed, and just preceding His crucifixion, He gathered His disciples into the upper room, saying, “With desire have I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” It was necessary that as Jews they should celebrate the Passover supper on that night—the saving of the typical first-born from the typical “prince of this world.” But as soon as the requirements of the type had been fulfilled, our Lord instituted a new Memorial upon the old foundation, saying, “As often as ye do this [celebrate the Memorial of the Passover season—annually] do it in remembrance of Me”! (1 Cor. 11:24-25.) You—who recognize Me as the Lamb of God, who in God’s purpose has been slain from the foundation of the world—who recognize that I am about to give My life as the world’s Redemption-price—will note this Passover season with peculiar and sacred significance that others cannot appreciate. Henceforth you will not celebrate any longer the type, but memorialize the Antitype, for I am about to die as the Lamb of God. R. 5640

Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year.’

– Exodus 12:3,5 –

Just five days before his crucifixion Jesus presented himself to Israel as their king, to be received or rejected, when he rode to the city on the ass, fulfilling the prophecy, “Behold, thy king cometh unto thee” (Matt. 21:5), and fulfilling, at the same time, that feature of the Passover type which provides that the **lamb** must be received into the houses five days before the time of its killing (Exo. 12:3). Thus Jesus made his last and formal presentation to Israel as a nation, or house, five days before the Passover, as we read: “Then Jesus, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany. ...On the next day [five days before] much people that were come to the feast, when they heard Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,... went forth to meet him (John 12:1; John 12:12-13). Then it was that their king came unto them “sitting upon an ass’s colt.” Then it was that unreceived, he wept over them and declared, “Your house is left unto you desolate.” “Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” Matt. 23:38-39.

Alone, treading the narrow way which none before had trod, and in which he is our Fore-runner and Leader, what wonder that his heart at times was exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. When the hour had come they sat down to eat the Passover, and Jesus said unto the disciples: “With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” (Luke 22:15-16.) Doubtless he longed to have them understand how it would **BEGIN to be fulfilled**, a little later on in that very day, by the slaying of the real lamb. R. 839

Now as they were eating, He said, “Assuredly I say to you, one of you will betray Me.”

– Matthew 26:21 –

It was while they were at supper that Jesus, appearing very sorrowful, gave as an explanation that it would be one of his own chosen twelve that would betray him and thus become accessory to his death—one of those who dipped with him in the dish, partaking of the same supper, the same bread, the same roasted lamb. Then he pointed out that although this was all written, and thus no alteration would be found in respect to the divine plan, nevertheless it signified a very gross breach of friendship—one sad to contemplate. It really made no difference to the Lord, so far as his intention and consecration were concerned, whether he were apprehended by the rulers without any betrayal or whether the betrayal were by a comparative stranger or by a disciple: the fact would make no change in the divine arrangement; but it was a cause for great sorrow that it should be one who had been a bosom friend and disciple. John tells us that our Lord was “troubled in spirit,” manifested emotion, at the time he said this. His emotion was not caused, we may be sure, by the matter of his betrayal, for he evidently foreknew the particulars as well as the fact of his death. The cause of his sorrow, we may reasonably suppose, was the thought that one of those whom he had so tenderly kept and cared for should now prove so ungrateful, unthankful, unholy;—evidently his sorrow was for Judas. R. 2771 and R. 3363

**Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted,
who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.
Psalm 41:9**

And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, “Lord, is it I?”

– Matthew 26:22 –

While hating such a character [as Judas’], loathing it, despising it, and seeking to go as far as possible in an opposite direction in our own characters, we are not to overlook the fact that there are many amongst the Lord’s disciples who, in a less degree, commit a crime very similar to that of Judas—they sell the Lord, they betray him, while professing to love him. True, this cannot be done in the same personal and literal way today; but the spirit of it may be seen occasionally, we regret to say; we find some who really believe in Jesus, some who have consecrated their lives to be his followers, some who have been engaged in the ministry of his truth, as Judas was there, who are willing to sell the Lord for a mess of pottage—for good things of this present life—for a salary, for social position, for honor amongst men, for popularity, and titles—who are willing to sell even their lips, as Judas did, so that, while professing to honor and to serve the Lord, they are willing to join with those who misrepresent his character, his plan, his Word—willing to rejoice with those who seek to assassinate the Lord. Ah, how well it is that each one ask himself the question raised upon the night of the Supper, “Lord, is it I?” and let none be too ready to excuse himself, but let each search earnestly his own heart and life and conduct, to see that he is not sacrificing in any way the truth and the life for any consideration whatsoever. R. 2778

**Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him.
Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”
John 13:27**

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. As I have loved you, that you also love one another.

– John 13:34 –

Speaking of the spirit of the Law, applicable to angels, to the world of mankind and to Christians, Jesus declared it to be briefly comprehended in two commandments. The first of these is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, being and strength.” The second is, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”

At first it would appear that these two commandments itemized by Jesus would include everything that could be required by justice; and so they do. Justice requires nothing more than what these two commands include. Why then did Jesus give another command—a third one—a new one, over and above anything that the Divine Law required? We reply that this third commandment is not applicable to any except those who become the disciples of Jesus. This third commandment the Father did not put upon Jesus; He voluntarily put this regulation upon Himself, and laid down His life sacrificially—a thing which no law could justly demand. The Father did not require that Jesus should do this in the sense of commanding Him to do it; but He did require it in the sense that He promised glory, honor, immortality, the Divine nature and the Messianic Kingdom to the saintly One who would enter the Covenant of Sacrifice.

The New Commandment [here given] by our Lord is not the Father’s commandment at all, but the command of our Head, our Teacher, to all those who have entered the School of Christ and who are hoping to become “members” of the Anointed One—members of the Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King of the new dispensation. Justice could not give this new command: all that Justice could command is expressed in the Law given to Israel, namely, supreme love for God and love for the neighbor as for one’s self. This **new** commandment which the Lord gave applies only to the Church of this Gospel Age. In effect it is this: If you would be my disciples, if you would share my throne and glory and immortality, you must have my spirit. You must **do more** than keep the Law. You must be **more** than just. You must be self-sacrificing. If you would share my glory I command and direct that you love one another **as I have loved you**. (John 15:12.) I have loved you to the extent of laying down my life for you sacrificially. You must have this same spirit and cast in your lot with me in self-sacrifice, or you cannot be my disciples, nor share my glory, and associate in my work as the Mediator for the blessing of Israel and mankind. Whosoever will be my disciple must take up his cross and follow me, that where I am there shall my disciple be. Surely no one can doubt the Savior’s meaning—my disciples must die with me. R. 5947 and R. 4549

As they were eating Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, “Take, eat. This is My body.”

– Matthew 26:26 –

Apparently it was just when the regular Jewish Passover Supper was ended that our Lord took some of the left-over unleavened bread, blessed it, broke it into pieces, and gave them to his disciples saying, “Take, eat; this is my body given for you; this do in remembrance of me.” —Matt. 26:26; Mark 14:22; Luke 22:19.

Taking our Lord’s words in their simple obvious sense, how beautiful is their lesson. Unleavened (pure) bread henceforth would at this Memorial represent our Lord, the bread from heaven, of which we may eat and have everlasting life. The next thought is that this heaven-supplied “bread” must be “broken” in order to be appropriated. And so we see that it was necessary not only for our Lord to come from heaven as the “bread;” but necessary also that he be broken in death—sacrificed for our sins—ere we could appropriate his merit and enjoy everlasting life.

God’s object in **justifying by faith** the Church during this Gospel age in advance of the justification of the world through works of obedience, in the Millennial age, is for the very purpose of permitting those who now see and hear and appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on our behalf, to present their bodies living sacrifices, and thus to have part with our Lord in his sacrifice—as members of his body. This additional and deep meaning of the memorial our Lord did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of the things to which he referred, saying, “I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, and show you things to come.”

The spirit of truth, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the matter of this secondary and very high import of the memorial, for he says, writing to the consecrated Church: “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the **participation** of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the **participation** of the body of Christ?” —to share with Christ as joint-sacrificers even unto death, that thereby they may be counted in with him also as sharers of the glory which he has received as a reward for his faithfulness. “For we being many are one **loaf** and one body.” (1 Cor. 10:16-17.) Both views of this impressive ordinance are important: it is necessary that we should see, first of all, our justification through the Lord’s sacrifice. It is proper then, that we should realize that the entire Christ is, from the divine standpoint, a composite body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head, and that this Church as a whole must be broken, and that in this respect each member of it must be a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of his sacrifice.

R. 3526 and R. 2771



Then He took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, “Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

– Matthew 26:27-28 –

The “fruit of the vine” was next introduced as a part of this Memorial of our Lord’s loving sacrifice. He explained that it represented his blood—“The blood of the New Covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matt. 26:28.) What a reminder this is of the **ransom-price** necessary and paid on behalf of the sins of the world. The broken bread taught a part of the lesson, the “cup” taught the remainder of it. We not only need nourishment, strength, assistance to come back to God and his favor, but we need the precious blood—the life of our Lord as our redemption price to release us from the condemnation of Justice. The Lord’s disciples must, by faith partake of (appropriate) both the “bread” and the “cup,” or they cannot be one with him.

Our Lord when discussing his sacrificial sufferings, referred to them as his “Cup.” In the Last Supper, the memorial of his death, referring to this Cup symbolically, he said, “This is the blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins: drink ye all of it.” (Matt. 26:27-28.) That **Cup**, which symbolized our Lord’s death, our Lord’s sacrifice of his earthly rights, was sufficient of itself to have sealed the New Covenant. He needed not to ask the Apostles, or us, or anybody, to become his disciples and to share his sufferings, to share his Cup, and to share the rewards of these—his glory, honor and immortality. But he passed the Cup along, passed the merit to us; or, rather, passed the merit of his sacrifice **through us**, his disciples, his followers. He did this because it was a part of the Divine program; for, as St. Peter declares, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us.” He who foreknew Jesus foreknew us also by Jesus. This was no change of the Divine program. It was surprising to us merely because it was a **Mystery** not previously made known—that we should be made fellow-heirs with Christ in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow. R. 3526 and R. 4453



In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

– 1 Corinthians 11:25 –

The apostle uses the word “As oft,” in the sense of **whenever**. “Whenever ye do **this**,” carries the mind to the context to see **what** is referred to. We find Paul in the context referring to the “same night in which he [our Lord] was betrayed,” and the bread and wine there and then instituted by our Lord as his remembrancers, to take the place of the typical passover eaten by the Jews. Paul wrote to those who well knew the Jewish custom and **how** often it was celebrated, so that “as oft,” or **whenever**, to them signified each time, each anniversary.

The Lord’s Supper was designed to supplant the annual commemoration of the typical passing over of Israel’s first-born, whose lives were saved through the blood of the typical lamb. Such an event could only be properly celebrated on its anniversary, which our Lord and his disciples and all the Jews strictly observed. They no more thought of celebrating it at any other time, than Americans think of celebrating the signing of their Declaration of Independence on any other day than the fourth of July.

But let no one misunderstand us to teach, that those who have commemorated the Redeemer’s death at inappropriate seasons are therefore condemned of our Lord. No, thank God, the Gospel church is not placed under Law, but under grace, in this as in every matter. And those who in heart sincerity have so partaken of the emblems of our Lord’s body and blood, while they may suffer loss in the sense that the occasion by its too frequent remembrance has lost **some** of the power it was designed to have on their hearts, have nevertheless not been spurned by him whose **sacrifice for sins** they thus confessed. But surely, when the intent of our Lord’s words is grasped, all the fully consecrated will gladly comply with his arrangement, assured that it is best and most appropriate; as well as most acceptable to him of whom it is a remembrancer.

We, as Christians, do not celebrate the Jewish Passover and its deliverance from Egypt, nor do we kill and eat the typical lamb. With the Jews the lamb, its selection on the 10th day of the month and its killing on the 14th day were separate from the Passover **festival**, which began on the 15th and lasted for a week. The Jews celebrate specially the festival: we memorialize the death of the great Lamb of God, and understand the Jewish seven days **festival** to be only typical of the complete and everlasting joy resulting from our present eating of our Lamb with the bitter herbs of persecution during this Gospel night, waiting for deliverance early in the Millennial morning. Surely when the blindness of fleshly Israel begins to turn away, nothing will appeal to them more forcibly than that Christ is the antitype of the Passover lamb, and that the blessings flowing from his death are the antitypes of the Passover blessings. R. 1014 and R. 1787

As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

– 1 Corinthians 11:26 –

Since our Lord who instituted the Memorial Supper placed no limit upon its observance, this expression by the Apostle is not to be understood as limiting the length of time in which it will be appropriate to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, our Ransom-Sacrifice, and our consecration with Him to sacrifice. Rather, he is showing that it was not to be considered a limited arrangement, for a few years, but was to be continually observed until the Lord's Second Coming. Looking down to and speaking of the Second Coming of our Lord, the Apostle includes in his expression the gathering and exaltation with Christ of His Church, or Kingdom, to rule and bless the world. This is even yet a common and proper way of speaking of matters so closely identified and so dependent one upon the other. The Christ, Head and Body, is **coming**, to rule the world in power and great glory. The presence of the Lord or Head is necessary first; then comes the change of the sleeping members of His Body, the sifting of the living members, and their gradual gathering together unto Him.

Even though the Kingdom may be considered as **begun** from the time the King began the exercise of His great power (Rev. 11:17) in 1878, it will not be "**set up**," in the full sense of the word, until the last member of the Kingdom has been changed or glorified—until the breaking of the Loaf, The Christ, Head and Body, is completed. While one member suffers, the Body suffers; while one member is unglorified, the Kingdom is not fully come into power and dominion.

It is the Coming of Christ, as **including the full exaltation of His Church or Kingdom**, that the Apostle evidently meant when he said, "As often as you may eat this [Passover] bread and drink this cup, you declare the death of the Lord [as your hope and confidence] till He come." The same thought of the Kingdom glory being the end of the symbol may be gathered from our Lord's own words on the occasion of the institution of the Memorial—"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that Day when I drink it new with you in My Father's Kingdom."—Matt. 26:29.

R. 5193



Whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

– 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 –

As from the intelligent appreciation of the fact symbolized by the Memorial Supper a great blessing comes, and a joy proportionate to the participator's faith and obedience, so also a condemnation attaches to an unworthy, improper participation in the Memorial. None are to participate except those who have come into relationship with the Lord by consecration of their hearts—their all—to Him and His service.

None can come into this consecrated condition except as they have recognized themselves as sinners and the Savior as the Redeemer from sin, whose merit is sufficient to compensate for the defects of all those who would come unto the Father through Him. All such should partake with a great deal of joy. Remembering the sufferings of the Master, they are to rejoice in those sufferings and in the blessings that these have brought to their hearts and lives. None are to drink of the fruit of the vine on such occasions except those who have appropriated the merit of the sacrifice of Christ and who fully realize that all their blessings are through Him. None are to drink of the Cup except those who have given up their all to the Lord, for this is what the Cup signifies—it is the Cup of suffering, the Cup of death—a full submission to the will of God.

We urge that none neglect this annual privilege, for any reason. There is a special blessing in its observance. If you incline to feel discouraged, go partake of the broken loaf, asking the Lord for a fresh realization of your justification, and a fresh appreciation of your consecration to be broken (sacrificed) with Him, as members of the one Loaf—His Church, His Body.

Let us not forget that the Memorial is meaningless or worse unless thus accepted and appreciated. But let nothing hinder us—neither sins, nor coldness, nor feelings of unworthiness. Go to the Lord and make a clean breast of all your shortcomings. Go to your brethren, or any whom you have wronged—make full acknowledgment, whether they acknowledge faults toward you or not.

Get yourself right with your Lord...

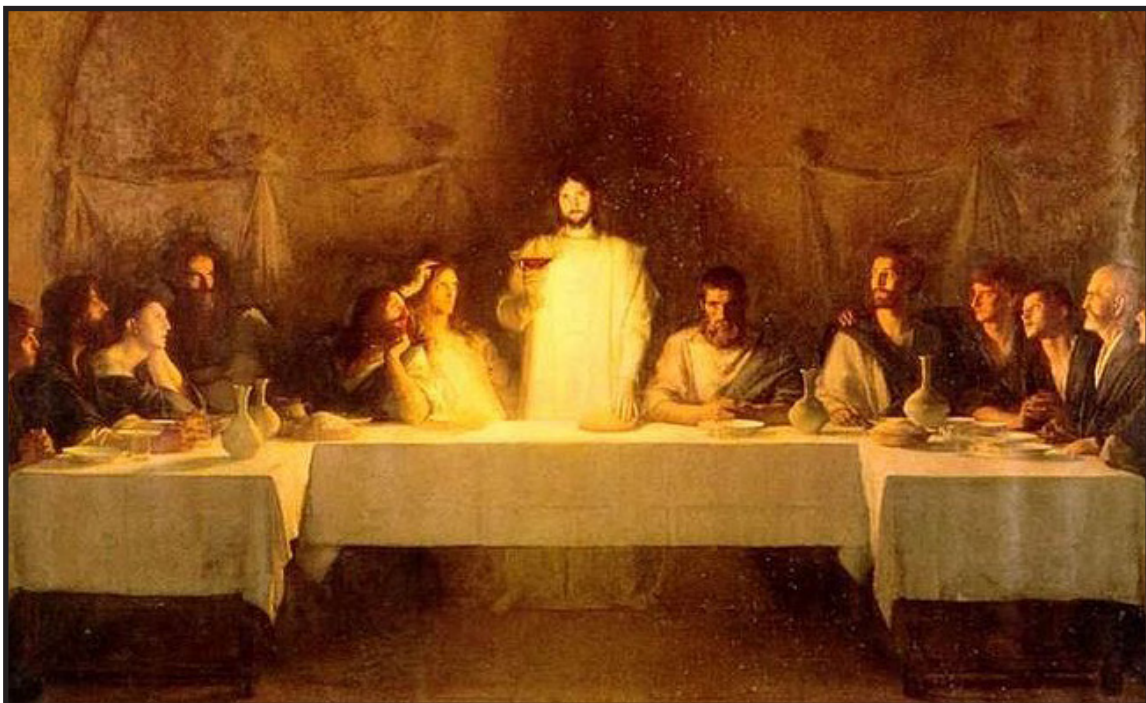
...and so far as possible with every man, and then eat—yea, feast upon the rich provision the Lord has made for all who accept, now or in a later “due time.”

Such a heart-searching and cleansing, we remember, was shown in the Passover type given to the Jews. Before they gathered to eat their Passover lamb they searched everywhere throughout their habitations, for anything containing leaven or putrefaction, bones, crusts, everything. These all were burned—destroyed. So must we fulfill the antitype, and “put away the old leaven” of anger, malice, hatred, strife. —1 Cor. 5:7,8. But remember that this kind of leaven of sin cannot be thoroughly put away unless it be burned; and only love can burn it out—Heavenly love, the Love of God. If we have that love shed abroad in our hearts, it will consume everything of the opposite character—jealousy, hatred, evil speaking, etc. Put off all these, urges the Apostle, and put on Christ and be filled with His Spirit. Do not be discouraged. But learn the lesson and start again with fresh resolutions and increased appreciation of the fact that of yourself, without the Master's aid, you could never gain the prize. He knows this better than do we, and says, “Without Me, ye can do nothing.” It was because of our need that the Father thus arranged for us. “Be of good courage!” is the Master's word to all who are longing and striving to be of the class called “conquerors.” R. 5420 and R. 5193

**I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.
– Matthew 26:29 –**

Our Lord was here contrasting two great Days—the Day of **suffering** and the Day of **glory**. This Gospel Age has been the Day of suffering. The Millennial Age will be the Day of glory, and is especially spoken of as “the Day of Christ.” Our Lord indicated that He would no longer drink of the Cup; nor did He. His work, His drinking of the Cup, was finished the next day, on Calvary. There He completed the drinking of the Cup which the Father had poured for Him. The Father has poured the same Cup for all the followers of Jesus; and they must drink of His Cup, as well as partake of the merits of His broken Body, if they would be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom, soon to be established.

The Father marked out for our Lord Jesus in His earthly experience a certain specific course. This course constituted His Cup of suffering and death. But the Father promised Him that after He had drunk this Cup faithfully, He should be given a different Cup, a different experience—glory, honor and immortality. And then the Savior was authorized by the Father to make the same proposition to those who might desire to become His followers—that if they would suffer with Him, would drink His Cup of death with Him, then they should participate with Him in His future Cup of Joy. R. 5643 and R. 5542



Jesus Comforts The Disciples

After washing the disciples' feet, and after the sop had been given to Judas, and he had gone out; and after telling the disciples that they all would be offended that night because of him, and answering Peter that he would deny him thrice before the cock crew, we may well suppose that the hearts of the eleven were heavy, disturbed, troubled with fearful forebodings. Had they indeed been deluded, or had they misunderstood the Master when he told them that he was the Messiah, the heir of the Kingdom, and that they should sit with him in his throne? How could they interpret his language, seeing that only five days before he had received the hosannas of the multitude as the Son of David, the King of Israel, when riding on the ass? What could it mean that the Master was now "exceeding sorrowful" and spoke of betrayal, and of their dispersion and of his own death?

It was in answer to these their troubled thoughts that our Lord spoke to them the beautiful words of comfort and consolation recorded in the 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th chapters of John's Gospel, beginning:

Let not your heart be troubled. You believe in God, believe also in Me.

– John 14:1 –

The apostles were already consecrated to God as his servants, before they came in contact with Jesus; they already believed in God, trusted in him, were Israelites indeed without guile. They not only knew and trusted God, but knew and trusted also the promises of God respecting the Kingdom and the blessing that should come to all the families of the earth through it. The whole question before their minds was respecting Jesus: —Was he indeed the Messiah, or had they built some false expectations upon his wonderful words and deeds?

Our Lord began by reviving in them their faith in the Father and in his plan, saying, Ye believe in God, —believe also in me: recognize the fact that all of the Father's plan will be accomplished, and inasmuch as you have seen my loyalty to the Father in word and in deed, and inasmuch as you have seen the Father's power unto good works manifested in me, let faith's anchor hold; continue to trust me, continue to have confidence, and you shall have a blessing; wait for the development of the divine plan, and it will more than satisfy your highest expectations. R. 2453

In My Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am there you may be also.

– John 14:2-3 –

The Father's House is really the Universe, and figuratively speaking heaven is his throne, the earth his footstool. Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the Church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the Church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the Heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the Bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold— "in raiment of needlework." The members of the Body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you"—in the Divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no Church of Christ amongst these. The Church of Christ is invited to occupy a place next to the Lord, next to the Father, higher than all the other planes of spirit beings. At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of His merit to the Church class, by imputing His merit to them and permitting them to become participators with Him in His sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with Him in the divine nature. Thus He prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine. R. 2453 and R. 4973

And where I go you know, and the way you know.

– John 14:4 –

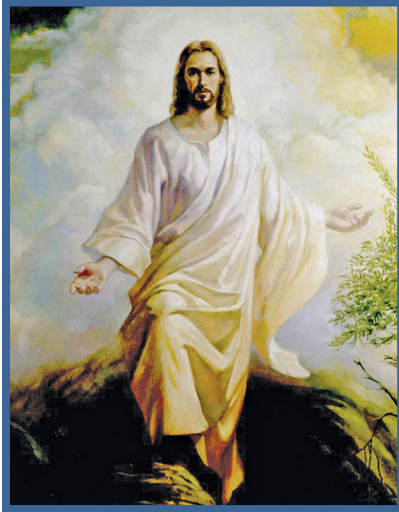
For three years our Lord had been making himself known to his disciples, and also making them acquainted with the Father's character; and hence, when he now informed them that he was going home to the Father, they were to feel that they knew the Father better than ever, and could better than ever appreciate such a home of righteousness and true happiness as he would provide and maintain. Moreover, their experience with the Lord, and under his instructions and leading, had made them acquainted with



the way to God, even though they did not recognize it as such. Hence our Lord's declaration, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life—no man cometh to the Father but by me." R. 2453

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

– John 14:6 –



Our Lord was the “Way” in that only through his sacrifice, the “ransom,” imputing his merit to sinners, could they be made acceptable to the Father or be received back again into fellowship with him. He was the “Truth” in the sense that only through his words, his instructions, his guidance, could there be any hope of coming into harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of truth. He was the “Life” in that all the race was dead, under divine sentence—had forfeited the rights of life—and none could come again into life conditions except through him—through the life which he gave for ours. Thus he is our Ransom, or Way; our Teacher or Instructor in righteousness, in the truth, and our Life-giver;—“Neither is their salvation in any other.” “No man cometh unto the Father but by me” —no man need hope for any place in any of the mansions of the Father’s house by any other way, by any other truth, by any other life. —Acts 4:12; John 14:6.

And so also Christ will be the Way, the Truth and the Life to the world of mankind in the Millennial age. And as the Lord, by his sacrifice and offering, opened for the Gospel Church, his bride, an abode in the heavenly division of God’s mansion, or house, so by the same sacrifice he redeemed and will restore and give to mankind (to as many as obey him—Acts 3:23) a home in the earthly divisions of the Father’s house, which will then again become a Paradise of God. R. 2453

If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. And from now on you know Him and have seen Him.

– John 14:7 –

Much as the apostles esteemed the Master, it was difficult for them to grasp the thought of his perfection—that he was the very image of God in flesh. (1 Tim. 3:16.) They had heard him tell, and indeed knew also from the Law, that “God is a spirit”—not flesh, and hence not visible. They had heard him declare previously, also, “No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son,...he hath **revealed him.**” (John 1:18.) But they had never grasped the thought that in seeing Jesus they saw the most that was possible to be seen of the divine character—its likeness, its **perfect image** in flesh. It was therefore necessary that the Master should call their attention to this fact.

He did not mean them to understand that he was the Father, for this he had distinctly disclaimed repeatedly, telling them that the Father was greater, and that the works which he did were done by the Father’s power. (John 14:28; John 14:10.) Nor did he mean them to understand that in seeing him they had seen an invisible being, as God is invisible. He did mean them to understand that in seeing his character, his motives, his love, they had seen a true expression that most faithfully represented the Father in all these particulars.

He would have them understand the unity subsisting between the Father and himself, his will was buried into the Father’s will, he would have no other; “Not my will, but thine, be done.” He would have them understand that the Father, by his power, by his spirit, dwelt in him also, so that his words and works fully and completely represented the Father. He declared to them that the works which they had witnessed during his ministry fully attested this power of the Highest resting upon him and operating through him. And this seems to have fully satisfied the apostles, and to have brought rest to their hearts. R. 2453

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also, and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

– John 14:12 –

As a further explanation of the necessity for his going to the Father, our Lord declares that as a result of his going his followers should do greater works than he had done. It may perhaps be proper to think that some of these “greater works” will occur after the Kingdom has been established—the great work of awakening the world of mankind from the sleep of death and restoring the willing and obedient to the full perfection of human life. That, truly, will be a greater work than our Lord Jesus accomplished at his first advent, for then his greatest work was the awakening of the sleeping ones without bringing them to the full perfection of human nature.

But in our opinion this is not the only sense in which the Lord’s followers are to understand that their works shall be greater than those of the Master. The Lord’s works were on a fleshly plane as a matter of necessity. The holy spirit had not yet come—could not come until after he had given the **ransom price** and had presented it to the Father, and it had been accepted. Consequently, those to whom he ministered (even his disciples, not being begotten of the spirit) could not be instructed from that standpoint. Their ears were heavy as respected earthly things, but in regard to heavenly things they could understand nothing; for, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” It is since Pentecost that “God hath revealed them [spiritual things] unto us by his spirit,” which “searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” —1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Cor. 2:14; John 3:12.

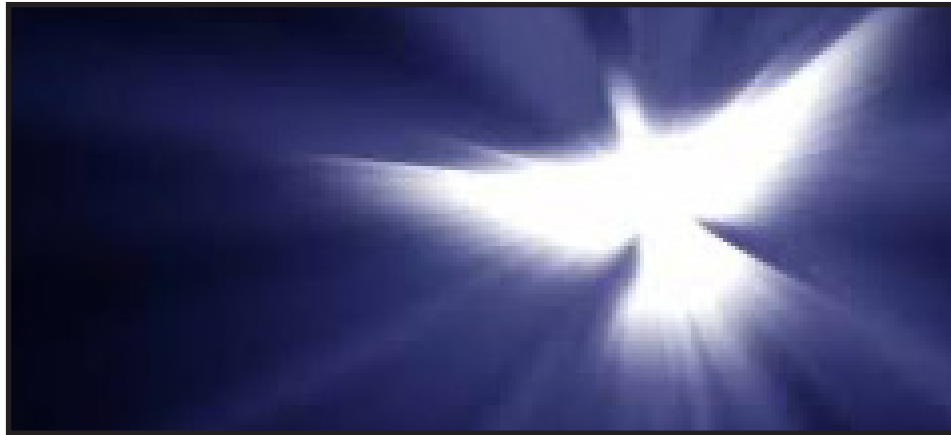
In the midst of the house of servants, not yet begotten of the spirit—not yet granted the privilege of sonship (John 1:12), our Lord could do and teach on no higher plane than the earthly, except as he “spoke unto the people in parables and dark sayings,” which in due time the Church would understand, under the leading of the holy spirit. It was in consequence of this that our Lord’s miracles were all physical, and his plain understandable teachings were all on a plane appreciable by the natural man.

But when the holy spirit was come, after Pentecost, the Lord’s people, in his name, and as his representatives, began to do greater, more wonderful works than those which he himself had performed. Did the Lord open the eyes of the blind? His followers were privileged to open the eyes of men’s understandings. Did the Lord heal the physically sick? His disciples were permitted to heal the spiritually diseased. Did the Lord cure physical leprosy? It was the privilege of his followers to heal spiritual leprosy, sin. Did our Lord revive the dead? It was the privilege of his followers to preach a Gospel by which many “passed from death unto life” in a much higher sense. And these privileges of these still greater works are yet with the Lord’s people. Blessed are those who appreciate their great privileges, and are about the Father’s business with energy, with zeal. R. 2453

Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

– John 14:13 –

As indicating how fully he would still continue to be the active agent of the Father in all things relating to the Church, our Lord assures us that such things as we ask of the Father, he (**Jesus**) **will do for us**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. The Father hath committed all things into the hands of the Son; nevertheless, in everything the Son acknowledges the Father and gives glory to his name. R. 2453



I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. (KJV)

– John 14:16 –

Continuing his discourse to his troubled disciples at the time of his instituting the Memorial of his own death, our Lord not only promised to come again and receive them to himself in due time, but additionally he promised the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, during the interim of his absence. The holy spirit would be another Comforter, but the comfort would be of the same kind. Indeed, our word “comfort” does not properly represent the thought of the text, which rather is, to strengthen, to sustain: the holy spirit would not be merely a consoler of woes, a soother of fears, in the sense of our word comfort, but it would quicken their understandings, strengthen their zeal, and energize them for doing and enduring such things as divine providence might permit to come upon them for their correction in righteousness, and in order to make them “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” The holy spirit or holy influence that should come to the Church and abide with it through the age, to supervise and direct in the interest of the faithful, was to be a representative of both the Father and the Son.

Thus it is that those who receive the holy spirit, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the spirit of the Father, the spirit of Christ, are enabled to **see** Jesus, and have a new life begun in them. (Vs. 19.) They **see** with the eyes of their understanding, and do not walk in darkness. They **hear** the voice of the Lord, saying, “This is the way; walk ye in it.” They **taste** the good Word of God, and realize that he is very gracious. They **feel** the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, producing in them love for the brethren and all the good fruits of the spirit—meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly-kindness, love. —Isa. 30:21; 1 Pet. 2:3; Rom. 5:5; Col. 3:12-13. R. 2455

A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

– John 14:19 –

You are perplexed because I said that I am going away—going to the Father, but let me explain to you that my going is in your interest: I go to prepare a place for you in my Father’s house of many apartments; and as surely as I do this I will come again and receive you unto myself, that we may henceforth be together forever.

The hope was that by his obedience to the divine will he should not only redeem Adam and his race by the sacrifice of himself, the man Christ Jesus, but that he would be raised from death to a new nature on a higher plane—the divine nature. Thus it was necessary that he should go away from them as the man Christ Jesus, and that they should see him no more as the man, but that in due time, at his second coming, they also should be “changed” from human conditions to spirit conditions, and “be like him and see him as he is.” —1 John 3:2.

Thus, in a few words, the Master declared the work of the Gospel age, pointing to his second advent and the glorification of the Church at the end of the age. He did not here stop to give them detailed explanations of the trials of faith and of patience through which they must pass; this he had done on other occasions, warning and cautioning them (Matt. 24:1-51); now their hearts were troubled, and he would merely console them with the assurance that his going away was necessary, that his second coming would be certain, and that the gathering of all to everlasting fellowship with him in the mansions prepared was assured. R. 2453



But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, which the Father will send in my Name shall teach You all things and remind you of all things which I said to you. (Diaglott)

– John 14:26 –

The Master had particularly assured them that if faithful they should sit with Him in His Throne. However, He had not told them that His Kingdom would be a spiritual one, and that they would need the change of the First Resurrection before they could be sharers of it. He had not yet made clear to them the fact that a whole Age would intervene before they would be sharers in the Kingdom, and the Kingdom itself be established amongst men. But he had hinted all this. He had said, “I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when the Spirit of Truth is come, it will bring My words to your remembrance and show you respecting future things.” R. 5483

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

– John 14:27 –

With abounding compassion and tenderness our Lord, on the last night of his earthly life, bestowed upon his beloved disciples his parting blessing, his legacy of **peace**. It was the richest legacy he had to bequeath, and was of priceless value. It was the promise of that tranquility of soul, that rest and ease of mind which he himself possessed—the **peace of God**. It was the same peace which the Father has always enjoyed, even in the midst of all the commotion which the permission of evil has brought about; but it was not derived from the same source. In Jehovah, this peace is self-centered, because he realizes **in himself** omnipotence and Infinite wisdom; while the peace of Christ was centered, not in **himself**, but in **God**, through faith in **his** wisdom, power and grace. So also, if we would have the **peace of God**, the peace of Christ (“my peace”), it must, like his, be centered in God, by faith.

How beautiful, how consoling to their troubled hearts, and how refreshing to ours, is the legacy of love and peace left to us by our dear Redeemer. This is not worldly peace, not the peace of indifference and carelessness, not the peace of sloth, not the peace of self-indulgence, not the peace of fatalism; but it is the peace of Christ— “my peace.” Looking back we can see that the Master preserved his peace with God under all conditions. It is a peace which implicitly trusts to the divine wisdom, love, justice and power, a peace which remembers the gracious promise made to the Lord’s faithful—that nothing shall be any means hurt his faithful, and that all things shall work together for good to them that love God. This peace can accept by faith whatever divine providence permits, and can look through its tears with joyful expectancy for the ultimate blessings which the Master has promised, and of which the present peace and joy are merely foretastes. R. 4817 and R. 2455

When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

– Matthew 26:30 –

Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives—to the Garden of Gethsemane and to fresh trials upon all of the disciples. So it has seemed to us that with every recurrence of the Memorial season, and every fresh symbolization of our pledge to the Lord, come fresh trials, fresh testings, fresh siftings upon the Lord’s people. Who shall be able to stand? Let us hold fast the confidence of our rejoicing firm unto the end, hold fast the faithful Word, hold fast the exceeding great and precious promises, hold fast to our Passover Lamb, our Deliverer! R. 3363



The Garden of Gethsemane was not a wild woods nor a public garden, but an olive orchard. The name seems to indicate that upon the premises was located an oil-press for the extraction of the oil from the olives. R. 3885

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine. You are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him bears much fruit, for without Me you can do nothing.

– John 15:1,4-5 –

The Lord announced himself as the true Vine and his Father as the true Husbandman who planted the true vine, and his followers as the true branches of that vine.

It is good to be a little shoot, it is good to have buds of promise, it is good to grow as a branch and put forth tendrils, but however large or small the branch may be, however old or young, we must remember that the sap which produces the fruit can only be obtained by **continued** union with the Vine and its root of promise. If ever separated, all hopes must wither. Only as we are in Christ, and through him heirs of God, have we part or lot in this matter; and only so can we bring forth the fruits which the great Husbandman seeks. The fruits are described by the Apostle as the fruits of the Spirit. The Spirit of the Vine must permeate all the branches, and the fruit of the Vine must be in every branch. These fruits of the Spirit are enumerated—meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love; if these things be in us and abound, says the Apostle, they make us to be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior

The Vine and its branches have such a oneness that wherever we touch a branch we touch the Vine itself. It is one Vine **composed** of branches, and so is the body of Christ one body, composed of many members. Wherever a member or branch of the body of Christ is found, all the various characteristics of Christ himself are found—in spirit, in intention, as “new creatures.” This oneness in Christ is the secret of the power and of the fruit-bearing and of the acceptableness of the branches with the Father, the Husbandman. R. 3544 and R. 2464

As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you. Abide in My love.

– John 15:9 –

Love is the crown of all graces, “the fulfilling of the Law.” Without a fervent, glowing love, it will be impossible to render obedience or to stand the tests for development and crystallization of character arranged for by Divine Love. Our Lord tells us that He was beloved of the Father; and the Father Himself declared, “This is My beloved Son.” We can readily see why our **Lord Jesus** was greatly beloved, for He expressed and fully manifested the Father’s love. But it **astounds** us to know that this same love is exercised by the Father toward **us!** “Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon **us**, that **we** should be called the **sons** of God!” “The Father Himself loveth you”!

—1 John 3:1; John 16:27.

Our Lord points out that His continuance in the Father’s love, as the well-beloved Son, with all which this implies, was because of His **obedience** to the **Father’s will**; and that following the same line, He must require that **we** should be obedient to Him if we would **abide** in His **love** and share His Throne and glory. —John 15:10. Those who give surest evidence of living nearest the Lord well know that obedience to the Lord’s words, together with the privilege thus obtained of abiding in Him and His love, is the greatest joy, a joy which wholly outweighs all the trifling pleasures which the world has to offer. It is the joy and peace which “passeth all understanding,” which rules in the heart, and which brings with it the promise, the assurance, “not only of the life which now is, but also of that which is to come.” —1 Tim. 4:8. R. 5080

If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

– John 15:10 –

There is no suggestion in [this or in any] other Scriptures that mere outward formalistic obedience and piety count anything with the Lord. The Lord “seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth” —such as have the spirit of righteousness, love for righteousness, love for truth, love for all the qualities of the divine character, and a desire to conform thereto in thought, word and deed. Nor are we to make the mistake that some have made, of supposing that the commandments referred to by our Lord are the Ten Commandments upon which hung the covenant which God made with the Jews. We are not Jews, and hence have nothing whatever to do with their covenant, given through Moses, its mediator, at Sinai, nor with the Law upon which it was based. We are Christians, and have to do with a better covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ our Mediator, and based upon a still higher law than the Decalogue—a law which instead of saying, “Thou shalt not” do this, “Thou shalt not” do that, is positive, and declares what we shall do, saying, “**Thou shalt love** the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and **thou shalt love** thy neighbor as thyself.” This is a higher law, of which our Law-giver, Jesus, said, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love,” and of which the Apostle said, “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” The Apostle John says, “He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.” —1 John 4:8; 1 John 4:16. R. 2648

Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

– John 15:13 –

We should notice that the Law of God demands not only justice, but also love—love supreme to God, and love to our fellowmen. It demands mercy, kindness. Let us note the injunctions along this line which God gave to natural Israel under the Law. Let us see how far-reaching they were. “If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him.” “If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; if he be thirsty, give him water to drink; for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee.” (Exo. 23:4-5; Pro. 25:21-22.) If love so broad and so comprehensive as this is demanded by God's Law, and was obligatory upon Natural Israel, to what degree should Spiritual Israel possess and manifest this noble quality!

The Love of God and of Christ, as manifested in the great Plan of Redemption, was a **sacrificial** Love. So those who are invited to become members of Christ's Body are to have this same love. It is not merely the love demanded by God's perfect Law, which is incumbent upon all His intelligent creatures on whatever plane; but it is more. It is a love which will gladly lay down the life purchased for them by the death of Jesus. This life is laid down as a sacrifice with their Lord and Head. We lay down our lives in service for the brethren, and this sacrifice is acceptable because the merit of Christ is imputed to us, making us reckonedly perfect before God. As the Apostle says, “We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” The brethren could not demand this of us, nor we of them; but we should all do so gladly, as we have opportunity. —1 John 3:16. R. 5643

I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

– John 15:19 –

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism to the light of Truth, and consequently when his people lift up the light— “Let their light so shine as to glorify their Father which is in heaven,” who has called them “out of darkness into his marvelous light” —the effect upon the darkened world is to awaken opposition, antagonism, and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently, those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform, cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel. They much prefer a measure of darkness. —John 3:20. In consequence of this conflict between light and darkness, our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God; and who had, at least, a little light. Similarly, all down through this Gospel Age, those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted chiefly (almost exclusively) by those who had some light, but whose light was **darkness** in comparison with the great light of the holy Spirit shining in and through the Lord’s fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord’s testimony, “If they hated me they will also hate you.” R.4813

Remember the word that I said unto you. The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:20-21

You now have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

– John 16:22 –

What are our joys which no man taketh from us? and which persecution and affliction and trouble can only deepen and widen and make more sweet? What joy is this? This joy is a foretaste of the blessings to come, an earnest of our inheritance. It is inspired by confidence in him on whom we have believed: confidence that he is both able and willing to perfect the work which he has begun and which we desire shall be perfected in his own best way: confidence that so long as we are firmly holding to his gracious promises with the arms of our faith, he will not permit us to be separated from him. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation and persecution? Our confidence is that “no one is able to pluck us out of the Father’s hand,” and that “the Father himself loveth” us, and will not turn us away so long as we desire to abide obediently in his love. Yea, we are confident that all things are working together for good to those who love God; confident that he who is for us is more powerful than all who can be against us. Such confidence is sure to bring joy beyond the world’s comprehension, and a peace of God that passeth all understanding, which keeps the heart. R. 2232

Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

– John 16:24 –

Our Lord said, on one occasion, that the Heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. (Luke 11:13.) He did not mean that we must necessarily use the words, “Give us the Holy Spirit,” or that we should pray for a Pentecostal blessing, as do some well-meaning friends; but that we should ask for the spirit of the Truth, of a sound mind, for the wisdom which comes from above. We are not wise enough to guide our matters aright. We are instructed, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” (James 1:5.) This wisdom seems to be especially necessary to us as the servants of God, that the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts may be acceptable in the sight of the Lord. —Psalm 19:14.

Our Lord instructed His disciples, “Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek); for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” (Matt. 6:31-32.) His words seem to imply that we are to be different from the world. They would be ready to ask and pray for every imaginable blessing—different kinds of food, houses, money, and what not! They could not pray for spiritual things; for they have no appreciation of such gifts. Be not like them. R. 5202

**I came forth from the Father and have come into the world.
Again, I leave the world and go to the Father.
John 16:28**

The Father Himself loves you because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.

– John 16:27 –

Is not this the essence of the Apostle’s declaration to the Church— “All things are yours, for ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s”? Again we hear the Apostle saying, “It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?” (Rom. 8:33.) Again we hear the Master’s word to the same class, “The Father himself loveth you.” (John 16:27.) O, what rest and comfort it brings to our hearts, amongst the trials and vicissitudes of life, to realize in the depths of our hearts that these are not merely words but truths.

But these [loved ones] do need what the Scriptures declare them to have, namely, an Advocate. The world, which needs a mediator and his mediatorial Kingdom, will find God’s provision for them to that effect. The Church, which needs an Advocate, finds that God’s provision has already supplied this need. “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1) But we (the Church) have no mediator with God—a mediator would be entirely out of place, an interference in the precious relationship of the Church acknowledged both by the Father and the Son.

R. 3944 and R. 4516

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

– John 16:33 –

Our Lord's words should comfort us, as they have comforted his people for the past eighteen centuries. With deepest interest he watches our course, and rejoices with us as the time draws near for our union with him in glory. Every trial we cheerfully and lovingly bear for his dear sake—the Truth's sake, endears us the more to him, and brings us into closer union and fellowship.

The peace promised is not the short-lived peace of the world, which is sometimes enjoyed for a little season; but "my peace," the peace of God which Christ himself by faith enjoyed, who, "Though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor" (2 Cor. 8:9); who lost friend after friend, and in his last hour was forsaken by all of the few that remained—the peace that endured through loss, persecution, scorn and contempt, and even amidst the agonies of the cross. This peace is something which none of the vicissitudes of this life can destroy and which no enemy can wrest from us.

The peace promised is not such as the world can always recognize and appreciate, for the possessor of it, like the Lord and the Apostles and Prophets, may have a stormy pathway. They did not have peace outwardly. They were beset, harassed on every hand; they were persecuted and obliged to flee from place to place; some of the saints of old were stoned to death; some were sawn asunder. Yet the peace of God, abounding in their hearts, enabled them to endure all these trials joyfully. Indeed, that it must be so with all the faithful until all the purposes of God in the permission of evil are accomplished, we are distinctly forewarned, but with the assurance that through all the storms of life this peace shall abide— "In the world ye shall have tribulation," but "in me ye shall have peace."—John 16:33. It is in view of this promised aid that we are exhorted to "be of good cheer." "Greater is he that is for us than all they that be against us." Not only will victory be ours, but, more than this, it is ours already. "Nothing shall by any means hurt you." What may seem to others to be injurious to us, must, under Divine supervision, work out blessings. R. 847, R. 4417, R. 4817

Jesus Prays for His Faithful Followers

There is a touching pathos in this prayer of our Lord for his disciples as he was about to leave them, which draws us very near to his loving heart. These words, we remember, were uttered by our Lord on the night of His betrayal. The prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel was offered while our Lord was on the way from the Memorial Supper to the Garden of Gethsemane. From the prayer we learn that it was offered for the Apostles and all those who through the Word of the Lord should become His disciples, or followers. The ones He evidently prayed for were the twelve Apostles, or rather the eleven, by this time; for in conjunction He says, "I have lost none of them, save the son of perdition." But the context shows that His prayer includes His faithful followers all the way down the Age. He says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for all those who shall believe on Me through their word." He prayed that His followers might be one, even as He and His Father were one—the same kind of oneness, a oneness of mind.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the Church, we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness of love, a oneness of honor, and a oneness of mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described as already existing between himself and the Father, but so far as his disciples are concerned it was and still is only prospective; and its full accomplishment is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to aspire.

Let us study this exemplified oneness more closely that we may be enabled the more fully to enter into it. R. 3160, R. 5319 and R. 5358



Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You.

– John 17:1 –

In the first place we notice that the one purpose which is common to both the Father and the Son is the Father's purpose, which was gradually revealed to the Son in due time and order, whose it also became by adoption. Since Jesus himself said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" only (Mark 13:32), it is manifest that the revelation of that plan to him was a gradual one; and that he was led into the knowledge of its various features as they became due to be worked out through his instrumentality. Thus he was allowed to grow in knowledge; and thus, too, he was spared the sad spectacle of subsequent trouble which also lay along the pathway of the divine plan. Thus, while he joyfully worked out the grand plan of creation (John 1:3; Pro. 8:22-31), he probably knew nothing of God's purpose for the subsequent permission of evil and the necessity for the great work of redemption. Before he came to that test of faith in God his confidence in his almighty power, wisdom and love had been firmly established by the experiences of the past. For centuries he had seen his mighty works, marked his wondrous wisdom and experienced his tender love. Could he doubt him, then, when another feature of his plan made manifest the great work of redemption and restitution, and gave to him the privilege of undertaking this work also, for the joy that the Father set before him? No; doubtless he did not at first realize the depths of humiliation and sorrow through which he must pass; but, step by step, along the painful way of humiliation and suffering, his faith in the Father, founded upon his previous experimental knowledge, sustained him, as it is written— "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." —Isa. 53:11.

We next notice between the Father and the Son a beautiful oneness of confidence. The Son trusted the Father fully—at first, because it was easy and natural. Created in the likeness of God, trust in the Being who brought him into existence was spontaneous, and experience served but to develop and establish it. And the Father trusted the Son fully—first, because he recognized in him the inherent principles of righteousness and truth and filial loyalty which he himself had given him; and, as the course of time and experience developed and the more firmly established his Son in righteousness, his confidence in him became firmly established. And so strong was the Father's confidence in the subsequent fidelity of his beloved Son, that he did not hesitate to declare the results of his faithfulness thousands of years before he even began the work of redemption. He even declared all the special features of the work, by the mouth of his holy prophets at various intervals for four thousand years before he began the work. And still he declares that the work shall in due time be gloriously accomplished. How wonderful and how beautiful is this mutual confidence! R. 3160

How blessed the fellowship! It was a fellowship of joy and a fellowship of suffering—of joy in a common anticipation of the future glory; and of suffering in mutual participation of the preliminary trials to secure that end. The Son suffered in his humiliation and his dying agony; and the Father suffered in giving his only begotten Son—an intensity of suffering which the loving, yearning hearts of devoted parents can best imagine and appreciate. R. 3160

As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

– John 17:2 –

We see in our Lord the manifestation of the perfection of restitution life, and we see in his sacrifice how he secured that restitution life for all who will have it at his hand, for the entire human family, but what did he provide for the Church? Ah, we answer, the great Deliverer has provided some better thing than restitution life and blessing for the Church—wonderful, grand, as are those provisions for the world in general. For the Church he has provided immortality, the highest form or condition of life, the divine nature, life on the divine plane. This thought is too wonderful for us, it is incomprehensible; we must merely take it without hoping to grasp it or comprehend it fully as yet. It is a testimony to the unspeakable gift of God through Christ Jesus our Lord to all those who obey him, to all of his Little Flock. It is this, the very highest conceivable plane of life, to which our Lord is inviting his followers now, and everything in the divine plan is being made to wait until the Very Elect shall have been gathered from the four winds of heaven, until the Bride of Christ shall have made herself ready, until the polishing processes shall have made the jewels meet for the Master's use, and then by the resurrection change these may pass to glory, honor and immortality. R. 4154

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

– John 17:3 –

It is to those whom the Father gives him—to those whom God's truth and providence have the effect of drawing to Christ and to righteousness—to those whom the Father approves, under the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus—to such shall be granted a full appreciation of God's character. Such will be heirs of lasting life under God's arrangement, and their knowledge, their intimate acquaintance with God, will be one of the evidences that they are the friends of God to whom he has promised lasting life, and that they are not his enemies, whom he declares shall be destroyed from among the people, and shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous. —Acts 3:23; Psa. 1:5-6.

To **know God** means more than to know something of His loving Plan and character; it means to know God in the sense of **personal acquaintance** and intelligent appreciation of His character; and no one can have this except as he partakes of the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. And this spirit of holiness and love cannot be acquired instantly; it is a growth; and its development is the **chief business** (and **should be the chief concern**) of all who hope to know God in the complete sense which will be rewarded with life eternal. R. 1235 and R. 4836

I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

– John 17:4 –

We further notice a oneness of sympathy between the Father and the Son. The Son glories in the Father's plan, saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." He delighted in it because he discovered therein the worthy features of his Father's glorious character; and though his faith may have been temporarily tested by the permission of evil, his knowledge of God's character and resources, and of the depth of his wisdom did not permit him to doubt, but held him still in loving trust in his infinite goodness and grace, and, therefore, in readiness to acquiesce fully in the measures proposed for the final triumph of righteousness and truth.

The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated—i.e., as the truth became meat in due season to him. And, in turn, the Son did not serve the Father as a hireling, but as a son with a common interest. The Father declared, "This is my beloved Son;" and the Son said, "I delight to do thy will." R. 3160

Now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

– John 17:5 –

He prayed that the Father would restore Him to the glory which He had with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5.) In His humility He asked no higher glory. [But] our Lord's words would not signify that He had no knowledge of His prospective share in the divine nature. He had the assurance of the Scriptures, one of which was that He should be very high; another that the Lord would give unto Him the Kingdom; another says that Jehovah God would "divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12); still another says, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Psa. 110:4.) He was to be both a Priest and a King of very high state and honor.

Probably our Lord knew these things fully after He was begotten of the Holy Spirit, even as St. Paul was caught away to the third heaven and received knowledge of wonderful things "which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Cor. 12:4.) And so it is most probable that our Lord Jesus had some special revelation; for we read that He said that "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself" (John 5:26); thus indicating His knowledge of the fact that both He and the Church would share in the divine nature and inherency of life.

He did not say to the Father, "Do not forget to pay Me; do not forget what Thou didst promise." No. He did the Father's will without any thought of compensation connected with it. So with us. Anyone who looks for the divine nature merely as a reward and feels that it is due him, is taking an improper view. We should feel that to be on the side of righteousness and to be identified with our Lord Jesus is a great privilege, if there be no reward of the divine nature at all; but the thought of the reward is a great incentive to run patiently for something super-abundant, exceedingly beyond what we could have asked or thought. R. 5748 and R. 5066

I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

– John 17:9 –

His first work for dealing with the world of mankind—before He would become the world’s Savior and the Mediator of the New Covenant—was the election of the Church. This was the work which He had now begun, and He was committing to them the testimony. He desires that all the Church have a oneness of purpose, a oneness of will with His will. And we can see that this could be obtained only in the one way—by fully surrendering our will. And this, the Scriptures declare, is done by becoming dead. At the very beginning of our discipleship, the first thing is to see that we are dead as respects our will, and alive toward the Lord Jesus Christ. All who do this He calls New Creatures. He grants them the Holy Spirit, that the new mind, the new will, may be theirs. In proportion as they obtain the new mind, the new will, in that same proportion will the oneness with one another exist. R. 5358

All Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

– John 17:10 –

It is blessed to mark this oneness between Christ Jesus and the members of His Body. Our Lord does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for Himself. On the contrary, with loving solicitude He marks the progress of His Body-members as they develop in character-likeness to Himself, and says, “They are Mine; and I am glorified in them” (John 17:10); and He would have them all bound up together with Himself in the Father’s Love. He would also have them with Himself, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father has conferred upon Him as a reward for His loyalty and obedience throughout all the crucial testings which came upon Him. R.5212

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

– John 17:12 –

The Lord honored the twelve and their words and prayed a blessing upon us all through them—upon “all who would believe on him through their word.” (John 17:20.) He declared furthermore that whatsoever they would bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatsoever they would loose on earth would be loosed in heaven—thus giving us to understand that their words would be guided with particularity, so that what they would enjoin we might understand would be a divine injunction, and what they would tell us respecting our liberties in Christ we might understand to be a divine message also. Furthermore we are to remember how greatly the Lord used those channels of blessing for the comfort and edification of his Church. We are to remember how they were specially given to him of the Father as he declares, “Thine they were and thou hast given them unto me, and I have lost none save the son of perdition” —Judas. We see that the Apostle Paul was the divine selection to fill the place vacated by Judas’ deflection, and we see that in the Lord’s providence through him God has sent to the Church the larger proportion of the New Testament message—the explanation of the divine plan as a whole. R. 4097

I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

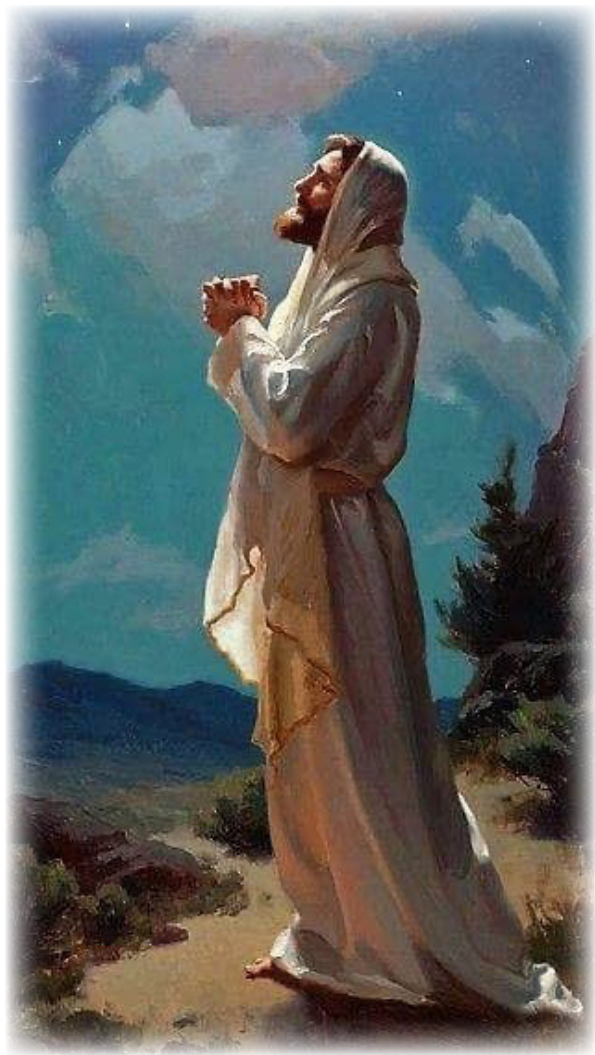
– John 17:14-16 –

His prayer represents his disciples as being a small minority in the world, hated of the world, opposed by the world, misunderstood by the world, not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many rich, not many noble—chiefly the poor and altogether a “little flock.” The characteristics of the disciples whom Jesus personally gathered were to be expected in all who should afterward be gathered to him as his true followers.

Notwithstanding the great array of Christian nations and Christian sects, the Lord “knoweth them that are his;” and in harmony with this prayer he has not during the age separated his people from the world, but left them in the world, merely separating them so far as the heart is concerned —“I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.” We are not to say that the evil is good, we are not to say that the world has become saintly; it is still evil. Christendom is practically in the same condition to-day that Judaism was in when it crucified the Lord and persecuted his followers.

It is much the same to-day; there is an outward gloss or veneer that in many cases is hypocritical, an outward form of worship, a drawing near with the lips while the heart is far from him, busy with fashion and dress and pleasure and money-making idolatries, if not with grosser sins.

Our Lord prayed that his true followers might be kept by heavenly power free from such conditions —out of sympathy with them, not of them. And we believe this has been true all down throughout this Gospel age. We believe that the Lord’s prayer has been fulfilled, and that his scattered little flock, the branches of the true vine, have flourished in heart, spiritually, keeping up a separate life entirely from the nominal system, which is only a part of the world. R. 3551



Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

– John 17:17 –

The word **sanctify** has the significance of **set apart, made holy**. There are two parts to this work of sanctification. The first is that which **we** do, in the very beginning, when we **set ourselves** apart, with the desire to know and to do the will of God. The second is that part which comes gradually—the teachings and instructions which set before us things that we did not perceive before—certain principles of righteousness which we did not previously recognize. This is a **deeper** setting apart, and is done by **God**, inasmuch as it is done by the Father's arrangement.

This deeper meaning of sanctification is the one signified in the text. Hence, our Lord prays the Father to do this work. The disciples had left all to follow Jesus, and were set apart in the sense that they desired to know and to do the will of the Father. Our Lord prayed that the work of Divine instruction might go on in them, as it is written: "They shall all be taught of God." The Master desired that the disciples should come under Divine, providential instruction, which He indicated would come through the Word of God. This sanctifying Truth is not to be viewed from the standpoint of general knowledge, for this Truth is not for the world—is not **intended** for them. It is for the consecrated—for those who have become God's children. It is the kind of truth that God gives His family.

There is a sanctifying that takes place before the **real** sanctifying begins. The Lord said to the people of Israel, "Sanctify yourselves and I will sanctify you." This would be their setting of themselves apart by a certain hope. But the setting of **one's self** apart is one thing, and **God's** sanctifying him is another. We see that God called us with a new call. The real object and purpose of our call is to fit and prepare us to be His New Creation. The Apostle Paul says that God has called us according to His purpose, that in the end He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7.) R. 5319

As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

– John 17:18 –

It is evident enough how the Father sent the Son, who left the glory which he had with the Father before the world was made flesh and dwelt amongst us; but in what sense are we sent into the world, we who are born of the world? Of course the apostles were specially sent once, but all the Lord's followers are sent in a sense or degree. We are not sent until we are separated from the world to be his in heart and in truth. Then he gave us a commission or a message, a work to do in the world in his name and for the cause which he represents, namely, the cause of righteousness. So, then, the true followers of the Lord are ambassadors for God, representatives for Jesus. As he was in the world, so are we in the world; hence he calls upon us to walk as children of the light, to oppose sin in ourselves, and to use our influence in all proper ways in opposition to sin and in favor of righteousness and truth and right. R. 3552

For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

– John 17:19 –

This [verse] seems to carry with it the thought, elsewhere suggested in this prayer, that our Lord had by this time come to a full realization of the Father's plan, namely, that his disciples were to be developed for the purpose of becoming his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, sharers in his glory. At first thought such a sharing of the great glory of the Kingdom might appear to be a lessening of the great glory of Jesus, just as the appointment of the seventy elders of Israel to be associates with Moses in judging Israel seemed at first to be a contraction or diminution of the dignity or authority of Moses.

But as Moses in the type was very meek, and gladly welcomed all the elders to joint-service, saying, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29), so the Lord Jesus, so far from feeling that the gathering out of the Church to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom would diminish his glory, joined heartily in the divine plan, and declares here that he set himself apart, he separated himself from that feature of the glory and dignity of the Father's reward that his followers might have a share in it, that they might become his joint-heirs, being set apart and brought to this honor through the Truth, through the great and precious promises bestowed upon them. R. 3552

I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they all may be one, as You, Father are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one.

– John 17:20-22 –

Our Lord's prayer, "That they all may be one," has been fulfilled throughout the age. All who have been truly his have had a oneness of heart, a oneness of purpose, a oneness of spirit, with the Father and with the Son—a fellowship divine which cannot be produced by earthly creeds and fetters. So it is to-day, and so it is always between those who are truly the Lord's. They know each other not by outward passwords or grips or signs, but by the touch of faith and love which it gives and which each recognizes. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, in that ye have love one for another." "We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." True, we love all men and seek to serve all as we have opportunity, but, as the Apostle explains, "especially the household of faith," especially those who love the Lord and are trusting in the precious blood, and are fully consecrated to him and, so far as they are able, doing his will and seeking to further know that will day by day.

This union between those who are the Lord's people is evidently not the union of person. The Lord's followers are not one in person but in spirit. And this is the illustration which the Lord gives of the oneness which exists between himself and the Father—they are not one in person but one in spirit, purpose, will; for our Lord declares that he always does the Father's will, those things which are pleasing in the Father's sight. And thus we abide in his love and abide in him by doing his will, which is the Father's will, and thus Father and Son and the Church, the Bride, are all one—in spirit and in truth. R. 3553

I in them, and You in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them as You have loved Me.

– John 17:23 –

When the world shall have come to understand the matter fully, they will know the truth of our Lord's words, in His last prayer with His disciples, that the Father loves the Church as He loves the Lord Jesus Christ. This is a very astounding statement. It shows that there is nothing selfish in our Lord. He did not say, "They will always be inferior to Me. They will never have the glory that I shall have."

On the contrary, the Lord Jesus knows that the Heavenly Father will exercise His Love along the lines of principle, character. And all who will be members of the same glorious company must have the same glorious character that our Lord had; that is to say, they must be loyal to the core. They must have demonstrated that they loved righteousness and hated iniquity. We read, "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9.) So He was anointed to be the Head of the Church class. But the Church class are declared in this Scripture to be His associates—not of inferiority, but of common fellowship, being on one plane. And the world will then know that the Father loved the Church as He loved Jesus. We understand that the Church will be on the same plane with her Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we are to keep in mind that God "made Him to be Head over all—God blessed forever!" The Church will never be on an equality of position with Christ.

The love of God pervades our hearts so that selfishness has no room there, and thus it was that our dear Redeemer, instead of feeling jealous that any others should be exalted to the divine nature, participators in the Kingdom, in this prayer to the Father declares his full acquiescence in the plan, his hearty cooperation, his joy to have it so. What a thought this gives to us as the prospective Bride, already espoused to the heavenly Bridegroom. He is pleased to exalt us from our lowly estate to be one with himself in his Kingdom, in his throne, in his Father's love.

Wonder of wonders! Where will the divine compassion cease! While we were yet sinners, under divine condemnation of death, we were loved and redeemed at a great price; and now, having been redeemed, we hear the voice celestial saying, "Come up higher," yea, even to the throne, to joint-heirship with the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Could we keep ever before our minds this grand display of love and unselfishness how thoroughly it would scatter from the minds of all who are seeking to be copies of God's dear Son every thought of rivalry one with another. How it would cause us to rejoice in the growing usefulness and advancement in the Lord's service of every member of the body. How we should more and more feel what the Scriptures describe as "in honor preferring one another," and which rejoices in the prosperity of a brother, in his growing usefulness in the Church, in the growing evidences of his favor with God and man. Those who can thus rejoice in the prosperity of the fellow-members of the body have another evidence of their growth in the likeness of our great and glorious Head. Those who are without this sentiment should strive for it and be very discontented until it is attained. R. 5358 and R. 3553

Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

– John 17:24 –

This is not a petition, but a declaration of the Lord's will, as though he were saying, Father, I understand that this is thy will in respect to these my followers, and I will it also, acquiescing in this great and liberal arrangement which thou hast made. I will be glad to have my followers ultimately on the same plane of glory with me, and that they may there be blessed by seeing and sharing the glories thou hast conferred upon me whom thou hast loved always even before the foundations of the world—even before the arrangements were made for these my disciples.

The closing words of the prayer are beautiful and give us an insight into the Lord's confidence in the Father and fellowship with him. He knew the Father, and so he has declared respecting us that this is the highest evidence that could be granted us of our acceptance with the Father and of our participation in the life eternal which he has provided, namely, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Our Lord declares, "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me." And I have made known unto them thy name, thy character, thy greatness, thy goodness, thy love, thy benefactions, and will make known still further as they are able to bear it, as they grow in knowledge of the Truth, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them.

How wonderful is this love of God and love of Christ! How impossible it seems for us to measure its lengths and breadths and heights and depths! Those who have accepted the Lord as their Redeemer and have entered into covenant relationship with him, giving him their little all and accepting from him a participation in all these blessings of his provision, if ever cast down because of weakness or opposition or what not, should call to mind this great love which the Father has for us and which the Son shares, the love which not only redeemed us while we were yet sinners, but which since then has called us to such wonderful blessings and privileges, making us joint-heirs with Christ our Lord, if so be we suffer with him;—this love will not be lightly turned away, this love would chasten us rather than permit us to fall away into the second death; this love will finally deliver, either in the little flock or in the great company, all who continue to trust in Jesus and continue to hold the faithful Word. But in proportion as this love of God dwells in us richly, in proportion as Christ is enthroned in our hearts, in that same proportion we will have a responsive love which will delight to do those things which are pleasing in our Father's sight and acceptable to our Lord, and in the same proportion we will be loth to do anything which would bring a cloud between the Lord and our souls. Let us, then, have fresh courage because of what we discern of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of love divine, and let this love of God constrain us to greater zeal and devotion to him and to his cause. R. 3553

We are also assured of the same love from our heavenly Father which he exercises toward our Lord Jesus. The statement seems almost startling; but yet, hearken to our Lord's prayer—"I pray for them ...that they may be one...that they may be made perfect in one...that the world may know that thou hast...loved them as thou hast loved me." (John 17:20-23.) In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father; a son who gloriously reflected his likeness; but it has not been so with us: we were sinners and had nothing in us worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in his sight who is able to read the heart. And, as he sees us with a perfect heart—a perfect purpose and intention—striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do his will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which he has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of his love. And so our Lord Jesus gives us clearly to understand that the Father loves us, even as he loved the Son.

And not only is this equality of the Father's love for us as for Christ Jesus thus declared, but it is also manifested; for we are called to be joint-heirs with his Son, and partakers of his glory; and even as all things are his, they are also said to be ours. —Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

While such is the oneness between the heavenly Father and all his anointed sons, it is blessed also to mark the same oneness between Christ Jesus and his anointed brethren. The Lord Jesus does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for himself, but the rather with admiration he contemplates their acquired worthiness and says, They "are mine and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and he would have them all bound up together with himself in the Father's love. He would also have them with him, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father had given him from the foundation of the world—the glory of his mighty creative works, with all the other evidences of his Father's love. —John 17:22-24.

Thus all the divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression (verse 21)— "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee" [thy spirit or disposition and purposes and aim being common to us all]. Hence, he would have us adopt the same Father's spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will. R. 3160

Amen, so let it be.

John 17

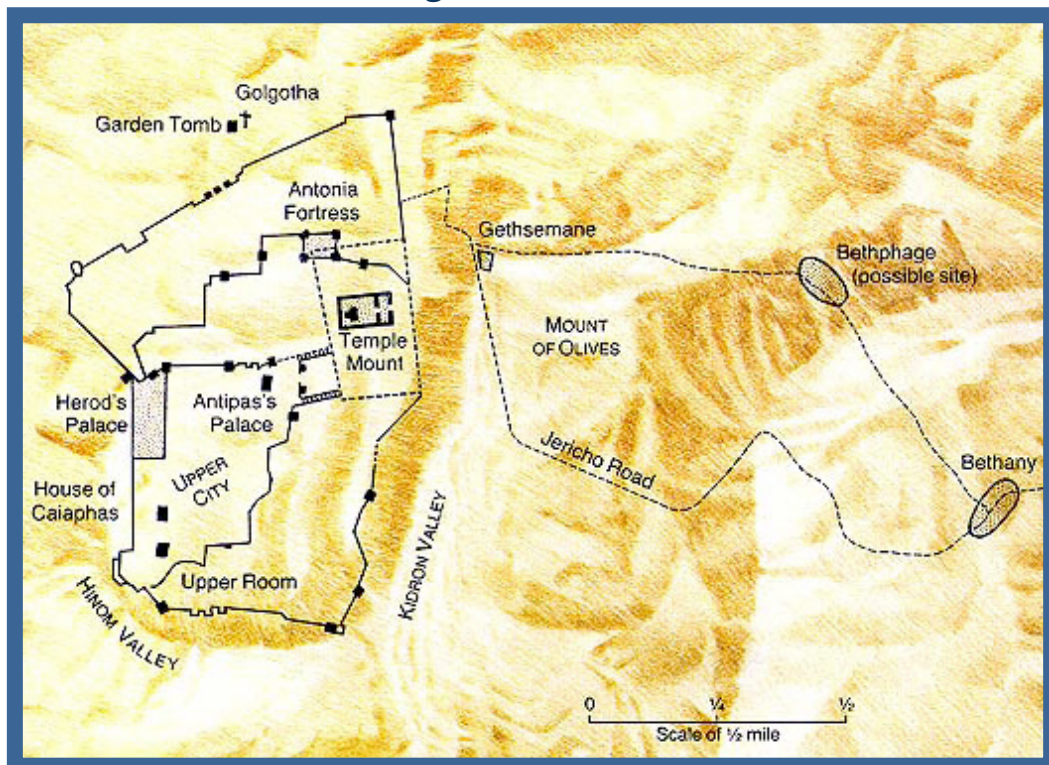
1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said:

Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. 6 I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. 7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. 8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. 9 I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. 10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. 12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. 20 I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. 24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. 26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.

About Midnight

Three chapters of St. John's Gospel record the incidents of the intervening time between the leaving of the upper room and the arriving at Gethsemane, the place of the oil-press. "And Judas also, who betrayed him, knew the place, for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples." (John 18:2.) Then, probably about midnight, Jesus, with the eleven, passed outside the gate of Jerusalem, crossed the little brook called Cedron, and on the farther hill above it entered the olive orchard known as the Garden of Gethsemane: perhaps it was a public garden, or possibly the property of some one friendly to our Lord.

JERUSALEM and Surrounding Area



Meanwhile Judas, who some days before had engaged with the high-priest to betray Jesus, and who left the upper room immediately after the Supper to carry out his nefarious plan, had received of the chief priests and Pharisees a band of men, with a person in charge as an officer, whose mission it was to arrest Jesus in the night and to secure his execution before the Passover. We must wholly disagree with the common thought that this "band" consisted of an army of three to six hundred Roman soldiers. They certainly acted very differently from soldiers ordinarily under such circumstances. Besides, the record by all of the Evangelists is that this band was sent, not by Pilate, nor by Herod, the Roman representatives, but by the chief priests and Pharisees, who we know had no command whatever of the Roman garrison. To our understanding this band which apprehended Jesus was very similar to the one mentioned in John 7:32-46. R. 4707 and R. 2467

In The Garden

Our Lord probably had two reasons for going forth as he did that night. First, realizing that he would be arrested by the traitor Judas and the band he would bring, our Lord probably did not wish to bring commotion or trouble upon the friend who had so kindly permitted him the use of the upper room. Secondly, he desired the still quiet of midnight, out upon the hillside where he could be alone with God, to pour out his soul in prayer and obtain the strength necessary for the ordeal at hand.

This was the most memorable night of the Master's experience. He knew perfectly the meaning of every feature of the Passover. He knew that he was the Lamb of God, antitypically, whose death was to be accomplished on the following day by crucifixion. R. 2773 and R. 4707

He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.

– Matthew 26:37 –

While talking with his disciples and praying for them our Lord seemingly was full of good courage: while exhorting them that their hearts be not troubled evidently his own heart was not cast down. But as the little company wended its way to Gethsemane we may well suppose that a great weight fell upon our dear Redeemer's sensibilities. We can imagine him saying, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. 26:38.) The present visit to Gethsemane, therefore, was evidently very different from previous visits. Some appreciation of the momentous occasion was no doubt inspired in the hearts of the Apostles by the Master's dejection, and yet they probably but slightly comprehended what was about to come to pass.

Arrived at the Garden, we glean from other Evangelists that our Lord left eight of the Apostles near the gate, taking Peter, James and John, his closest companions, a little farther with him, and cautioning them all to watch and pray, because it was an hour of special trial. These he wished to have nearest to himself in this time of anxiety. And yet, on this occasion, he desired to be still more alone in his prayer, for even these truest friends could not appreciate the situation: "of the people there were none with him." Hence he left these and went a stone's throw further, where he prostrated himself upon his knees, and with his face to the earth, as the various accounts show, and thus, alone, he communed with the Father in secret. His feelings were not and could not be shared even by his beloved disciples; they could not appreciate the trial through which he was passing; they had not yet been begotten of the spirit. Thus in his most trying hour Jesus was alone.

The disciples, perplexed, astounded, by the things that they had heard from his lips, did not comprehend the true situation. They evidently thought that there must still be something parabolic in his utterances. They would indeed watch with him, but they were weary and sank into slumber. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. R. 2467 and R. 2773

My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.

– Matthew 26:38 –

The different accounts of our Lord's experience on this occasion, grouped together, show us that mental anguish seemed to come upon him here with a force of poignancy he had never before experienced; and that the load became increasingly heavy—"sorrowful even unto death," a sorrow which almost crushed out his very life, says Matthew. Mark says (14:33) that he was "sore amazed," as though the sorrow had come upon him unexpectedly, as though he were bewildered. Luke, who was a physician, says that he was "in an agony," a contest, a struggle, the language used in the Greek implying a struggle of increasing force and severity, so that "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood;" and this bloody sweat is not unknown to physicians today, although very rare. It marks an extreme tension of feeling—sorrow nigh unto death. *

We are glad that Jesus was not one of those cold, stoical icebergs, but that he was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and sensibilities; and that we can realize consequently that he is able to sympathize with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which he had placed himself, in laying down his life on our behalf; because the more perfect the organism the more sensitive and high-strung the feelings, the greater the capacity for joy and the greater the capacity for sorrow: and our Lord being absolutely perfect must have been immeasurably more susceptible to the influences of pain than others.

There [also] can be no doubt that the thought of the extinguishment of life was an important factor in our Lord's sorrow. The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (Heb. 5:7), "Who in the days of his flesh... offered up prayers and supplications, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death, and was heard in [respect to] that he feared" —extinction. Intent continually upon doing the Father's will, day by day had passed in self-sacrifice, until now, in a few hours, the whole would be complete; and the thought of this brought with it another thought, viz.: Had he done the Father's will perfectly? Could he claim, and would he receive the reward promised him, a resurrection from the dead?

Had he failed in any particular to come up to the exact standard of perfection his death would have meant extinction; and although all men fear extinction none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could he who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of his previous glory with the Father before the world was. For him the very thought of an extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon him now so heavily as an astonishing sorrow unto death. R. 2773

**Prof. Tischendorf shows that this account of our Lord's bloody sweat is not found in the Vatican MS., and that although it appeared in the original Sinaitic MS. it was crossed out by a later critic. The passage is therefore doubtful, or at least questionable.*

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.

– Matthew 26:39 –

Though our Lord submitted himself to death at this time because he recognized this to be the hour foretold by the prophets, he did not seem to understand clearly why so much public disgrace and torture of mind and body should accompany it. Hence his prayer, “O my Father, **if it be possible**, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Matt. 26:39.) He well knew that baptism (immersion) into death, was his mission, and not for one moment could he think of avoiding it: and he knew too that with it must also come a bitter cup of suffering and shame: but not until his hour was almost come, did he seem to fully realize how bitter would be the dregs of that cup. Seeing that **death** was the penalty for our sins, and not shame and misrepresentation, left room for our Lord to question the Father’s wisdom and love, in apparently asking him to endure more than was **needful** to redeem mankind. But he bowed to the Father’s wisdom and love in it all, saying



—Thy will, not mine be done! In the light of the Apostle’s words we can see that the perfect “man Christ Jesus” was not only redeeming men, but by his obedience even unto death—even the death of the cross, he was proving himself **worthy** of high exaltation to the perfection of the divine nature, which because of this implicit and even blind obedience he has now attained. (Phil. 2:9.) So too in his last moments, in being treated exactly like the sinner whose **ransom** he was giving, when mental communion with the Father was interrupted and he felt for the moment alone, separated from the Father, cut off and condemned **as the sinner** whom he represented, it was more than he could bear—He cried with a loud voice My God! My God! **Why hast thou forsaken me?** This was more severe than all else, the very dregs of this cup of suffering. Not until afterward was the necessity and wisdom and love of this part of the Father’s plan made manifest. Up to that hour he had communion with his God. —See John 16:32

What a lesson on obedience was thus furnished to every creature of God, in every age, and on every plane of existence—an obedience which bowed in loving submission to the will of God even in blindness as to **why** it should be so, and even under the most heart-rending trial. What a glorious character for our example and imitation! perfect submission to the will of God and perfect confidence, which implicitly trusted the Almighty Father where it could not trace him.

The evangelist declares that Jesus knew in advance all things that would come upon him. We are elsewhere told that while he prayed, “There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.” (Luke 22:43.) This ministry may have consisted in informing him of the Father’s will in respect to what things he should suffer, and how they were to be expected, and this knowledge that the matter was settled, and the assurance that the Father would overrule it all, strengthened his heart and gave him the great calmness which we observe in all his subsequent course. R. 959 and R. 2467

When He rose up from prayer and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow.

– Luke 22:45 –

After praying awhile he went to the three disciples, in whom he had greatest confidence, and who, more than any others, were his tried and trusted companions, but he found them asleep. Luke explains that their sleep was the result of sorrow. The night and its lessons had been impressive; the memorial supper, which they did not fully understand, nevertheless left a weight of sorrow upon them, as the Master had intimated that it represented his death, and had further intimated that one of their number would betray him. The reaction from the sorrow brought a measure of stupor. Very gently our Lord upbraided them: "Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." It is not merely that you need to watch on my account; you need to be in a watching attitude on your own account. An hour of severe trial is upon us all; watch and pray lest ye fall in this evil time.

Then our Lord went to pray again. We are told that his prayers were in the same words; that is to say, that the same sentiments were expressed; and again a third time similarly: the one matter was weighing upon his heart. Could he rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father's will, that having finished his course, he had done it acceptably? Could he have full assurance of faith that God would save him out of death by a resurrection? In answer to his petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort him, to assure him, to strengthen him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace, and that he brought assurances that our Lord's course had the Father's approval, and that he would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before him; and from that moment onward we find him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. R. 2774

I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one was with Me.

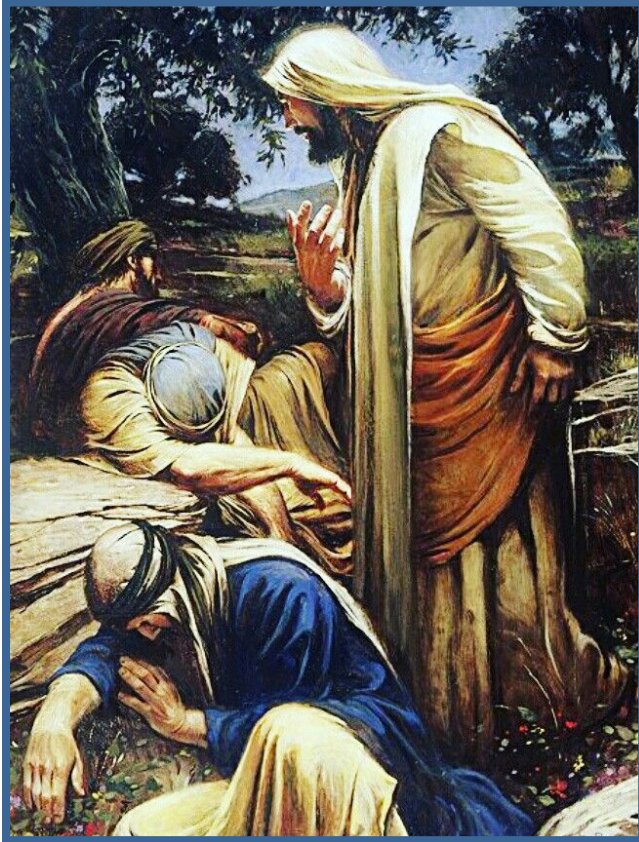
– Isaiah 63:3 –

His disciples and followers loved him dearly. Still he was alone, because he alone had been begotten of the holy Spirit. His followers could not feel so blessed nor be Spirit-begotten until after his sacrifice had been finished nor until he would appear in the presence of God for them to apply his merit imputedly to them; to permit them to join with him sacrificially in the sufferings of this present time, that they might share with him also in the glories to follow. St. Peter, referring to the foregoing experience of our Lord, declares that he offered up strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in respect to that which he feared.

In his very saddest hour, when he most needed comfort and consolation, it was not possible for even the closest and dearest of his earthly friends to enter into his feelings or sympathize with him. R. 4707 and R. 3886

Then He came to His disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.”

– Matthew 26:45 –



Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Matthew 26:41

During that hour of intense mental agony our Lord prayed and prayed again, and in the interim came to his disciples, doubtless craving such sympathy as they would be able to give; but he found them asleep, their eyes being heavy from sorrow, says the Evangelist. The hour was midnight; they were sharing his sorrows, but unable to appreciate them rightly. The Master chided, probably especially Peter, when he said, “What, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” The noble Peter had but a short time before declared, “Lord, though all men forsake thee, yet will not I,” and even now he had the sword which he subsequently used

in seeking to defend the Lord, and yet he did not realize the importance of the hour; he knew not, as the Master did, how serious were the testings and how close; he knew not that it was a very short time until the Master’s words would be fulfilled. “Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice.” Ah, had he realized as the Master did the trials that were near, how vigilant he doubtless would have been! And is it not so with us today? Are we not as the Lord’s people in this harvest-time drawing close to the Gethsemane hour of the Church? Are we not already in the hour of temptation to a considerable extent? Will not the last members of the body soon follow the Head unto complete sacrifice? How ready are we?

“Sleep on now, and take your rest,” were not meant as sarcasm, but in very truth he wished that they might get a little rest, refreshment, in view of the ordeals of the day approaching. But not long did they rest until the trial was upon them. R. 3885

Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand.

– Mark 14:42 –

It is presumed, and apparently on good grounds, that this company seeking Jesus, under the guidance of Judas, went first to the upper room which our Lord and the Apostles had left probably less than an hour before. Finding that Jesus and the eleven were gone, Judas knew that he would be most likely to find them in the Garden of Gethsemane, for “Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.” John’s account omits the particulars of the betrayal given by the other Evangelists: possibly the loving disciple felt so much ashamed of the facts that he preferred not to mention them. Certainly very few acts of treachery ever paralleled this one, and all mankind, even in their perverted condition of mind, seem to realize that the position of traitor is amongst the most despicable on the calendar, and such treachery as that of Judas, against such kindness and love and goodness as that of his Master, we may be thankful is not so very common. And yet there are correspondencies in the experiences of the Lord’s people, “in perils amongst false brethren.” It behooves us each to look to it that we permit nothing akin to the spirit of Judas to rankle in our hearts. Our Lord puts the “members of his body” in such matters on a plane with himself, and assures us that whoever shall injure one of the least of these his brethren, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. —Matt. 18:6.

Judas had been doing some of this sowing of evil thoughts for a considerable time before his thoughts took outward shape in evil acts. He was covetous of wealth and of influence; he became the treasurer of the little group of disciples, and the intimation of the Scriptures is that he purloined to his own private uses a portion of the contributions. As usual, his love for money increased the more he exercised it, until he was willing to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver.

It is quite possible, indeed probable, we think, that Judas was seriously disappointed in respect to the result of his betrayal. Apparently he expected that our Lord would deliver himself by miraculous power from the hands of his enemies. This is the most charitable view we would know how to take of his treacherous conduct: it relieves the blackness of the act only a very little, however, for he who would be willing to despitefully use his best friend, even temporarily, for a money consideration, gives evidence of having prostituted every good and noble sentiment of his being to his love of money. Indeed, the love of honor may have had considerable to do with the matter, for he may have hoped by bringing about this crisis that our Lord would be compelled to set up the long-promised Kingdom, or else to own that all his claims and promises were fraudulent.

Let us all who have named the name of Christ take heed and watch and pray lest there should be in any of us any of the elements of this vile character. And let us remember that there are various secret ways, as well as the more outward ones, in which we may betray the Lord and the “brethren.” R. 2468

And while He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, with a great multitude with swords and clubs, came from the chief priests and elders of the people.

– Matthew 26:47 –

Judas guided a multitude seeking for Jesus—not Roman soldiers, but a multitude, a rabble of the curious, with certain servants of the High Priest, who was also a Judge. These, then, were court officers, an impromptu sheriff's posse, that came upon Jesus in the garden and arrested him by night, fearing that an arrest in daylight would create a disturbance at a time when the city was full of visitors to the Passover, and when disturbances were rather to be expected, and by the officers of the law sought to be carefully avoided. Judas either knew the garden as a spot frequented by Jesus and the disciples, or had learned at the Supper where the company intended to go subsequently. When Satan entered into him and he resolved to earn the thirty pieces of silver by betraying the Lord, he left the gathered company at the Passover Feast and went to the chief priests and bargained with them, and now, as the result of that engagement, he came forward in advance of the multitude mentioned to meet Jesus and to indicate to the soldiers the one they wished to apprehend. As he approached he saluted, saying, "Hail, Rabbi," and kissed him. The Greek indicates that he kissed him repeatedly. Jesus received these expressions that belong to love, and knew that they were traitorous, yet made no evil retort. Instead he most kindly and respectfully said, "Friend, do that for which thou art come." The word "friend" does not signify loving friend—it is not from the Greek word **philos**, beloved, but from **hetaire**, which signifies comrade or partner. R. 3885

Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

– Luke 22:48 –

The band of men whom Judas led out for our Lord's arrest were not Roman soldiers, but merely under-officers and servants from the high priest's household, armed with such weapons as they could command, sticks and swords, etc. The Roman military authority, represented in Pilate, took no cognizance of Jesus and his work until the next day, when the priests, chief rulers, and a multitude of incited servants and people, brought him to the tribunal and demanded his execution.

It is difficult for any noble-minded person to read the account of Judas' course without feeling a deep sense of righteous indignation—a sense of the baseness of character which could thus betray, for thirty pieces of silver, the one whom he recognized as the noblest of men, whether or not he was sure that he was the Messiah. It may not be amiss that we notice here that Judas did not reach this depth of iniquity suddenly, but rather that the disposition had grown upon him during the three years of his intercourse with the Master, when the reverse disposition should have had control. At the time when he was chosen to be an apostle he evidently was a good man, so far as outward appearance at least was concerned; and his name, which signifies "Praise," would seem to indicate that his parents had been of a religious cast of mind, and had wished, and, so to speak, prophesied of him, that he would be a messenger of God to sound forth his praise. And what a privilege and opportunity he enjoyed in this direction! R. 2778

I am He.**– John 18:5 –**

The “band” sent to apprehend him evidently expected that they might be obliged to seek for him in the shadows of the trees, etc., and hence they were provided with torches and lanterns. Unquestionably they were greatly surprised that our Lord, instead of fleeing from them, advanced to them, and inquired whom they sought. Quite possibly some of those in the “band” had previous knowledge of the Lord—of his miracles, power over devils, etc., and this may have been the reason for their manifestation of weakness in retreat and falling to the ground. Or it is possible that our Lord exercised over them a superior mental power which produced this effect, for the purpose of showing that he had full power to resist them if he had chosen to use it.

After this one manifestation of power, as indicating his full ability to cope with that multitude, and indeed his power to have more than twelve legions of angels to defend him, had he so desired (Matt. 26:53), we find our Lord fully submitting himself to capture, merely making condition that the disciples might go their way. How grand the character which at such a moment, under such trying conditions, could so fully forget self and feel interested merely in the welfare of others! How like what we should expect of Him! R. 2468

“Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,” that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

– John 18:8-9 –

We understand the writer to mean that here again in the Master’s course we find an exemplification of his care for his disciples, as enunciated in his prayer just before leaving the upper room. While the thought of his prayer was chiefly in respect to their spiritual interests, that none of them should be lost, we do well to notice this as a corroborative illustration of our Lord’s care of the physical interests of all who become his disciples. Not a hair of their heads shall fall; nothing shall be permitted to injure them—every event and affair of life will be overruled for their highest good. —Matt. 6:32-33.

R. 2468



Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?

– John 18:11 –

[This verse] expresses most beautifully, most concisely, most forcefully, the principles which underlay our Master's obedience to the Heavenly Father, and which enabled him in all things to come off conqueror and "overcomer;" and all who are seeking to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, to be his disciples indeed, will do well to ponder the thought expressed in these words: "The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" The thought is clear: It is that he recognized the circumstances and conditions in which he found himself, as being not of those of his own making, nor yet those made for him by his enemies. He recognized the divine supervision of all of his affairs, and knew that nothing could possibly come upon him except as the Father would permit; and because the Father had so arranged it, had poured out this cup for him, therefore it was duty on his part to drink it.

We are to remember that one of the Evangelists records that our Lord instructed the apostles to take swords with them, and that when two were found he said, "It is enough." (Luke 22:36; Luke 22:38.) Our Lord had no thought of having his disciples war a carnal warfare on his behalf, as he subsequently stated, "If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (John 18:36.) The two swords were sufficient to show that our Lord's apprehension was not because there were no means of defence, nor because of cowardice on the part of his disciples, but merely because of his submission—knowing that his hour was come, and that thus it behooved him to suffer for our sins and to enter into his glory. —Luke 24:46.

It was probably when Jesus began to be bound that Peter drew his sword in his defence; perhaps he remembered the Lord's words of a few hours previous, to the effect that his followers would all forsake him, and his own promise, "Although all shall be offended, yet will not I." (Mark 14:29.) Noble, zealous Peter! We love him for his noble expression of sentiment, and for his heroic defence of the Master with the sword against superior numbers. It is the custom of many to decry Peter's action, as another of his rash errors. We are to remember, however, that the Apostles had not yet received the holy Spirit and therefore could not clearly appreciate the fact that the Kingdom to which they were called is a spiritual Kingdom. Besides, as we have seen, he was merely following the Lord's counsel in taking the sword with him, and evidently also carrying out the divine purpose in using it. We see nothing to blame, everything to commend. It was a sign of larger import than Peter and the others there realized.

But having permitted the matter to go thus far, our Lord restrained Peter, saying, "Suffer yet thus far. Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" And so saying he touched his wounded enemy and healed him. The disciples were to see, understand, be fully assured, that our Lord, in delivering himself to his enemies, did it voluntarily, and hence the proceedings were so pantomimed as to enforce this lesson. R. 2778 and R. 2468

Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and you did not seize Me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

– Mark 14:48-49 –

The binding of our Lord seems to have been entirely unnecessary, except as the “band” might desire to make an exhibition of their prowess to those who had sent them. Our Lord seems to have remonstrated in respect to this. It was then that the eleven forsook him and fled. Judas continuing with the band went to the house of Annas the priest, who doubtless had bargained with Judas, and no doubt it was at this time that the thirty pieces of silver were paid over, Judas having now shown a fulfillment of the contract. Poor wretched man! So with the members of the body of Christ: it must needs be that offences come—it is a part of the divine plan that the body of Christ should fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of the Head (Col. 1:24)—but this makes none the less sinful the conduct of those who have to do with such betrayals—especially if they be “false brethren” who have enjoyed some knowledge of the truth. In every instance, however, it will be observed that although the trials worked out blessing for the Lord and will do so also for all the faithful who suffer with him, the rewards of unrighteousness sought by those who take Judas’ course never yield them the honors and blessings they coveted, and for which they sold themselves to work evil. R. 2468

Our Lord, his hands bound, was led away to Annas and Caiaphas. Although it was night time, about one o’clock, some of the chief officers of the Jews and the Sanhedrin had gathered, being informed that the arrest would take place that night, that one of his disciples would pilot the officers to take him, and the matter was urgent, so that his death could take place as quickly as possible on the next day, before the people in general learned about the matter and before the Passover week would begin. It was not lawful to try a man for any capital offence between sundown and sunrise, and hence this trial was in one sense an informal one—it would be required to be ratified by the Sanhedrin after sunrise. They were willing, however, to come as near as possible to breaking the Law that thus they might accomplish their purposes. R. 3366



I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing.

John 18:20

Jesus Man of Sorrows

He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him. He was despised and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted.

– Isaiah 53:3-4 –

What meant all this? Why should the King of glory, the Sent of God, the heir of all the promises, be thus the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief? Ah! says the prophet, I perceive surely that it was our griefs that he bore, our sorrows that he carried, not his own. We thought that he was stricken of God, that he was afflicted by the Almighty, and that this was an evidence that he was not in divine favor. We misunderstood the entire matter. Now we see that his wounds were for our transgressions, that his bruises were for our iniquities, that our peace with God was secured by the stripes, the chastisements, the penalties of the divine law inflicted upon him. We perceive that by his stripes we are healed, —that the punishment or stripes due to us were laid upon him, that the death sentence that was against us he bore, dying the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. R. 3589

He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

– Isaiah 53:5 –

The penalty of divine justice has been borne by the Shepherd for his sheep, Jehovah hath laid on him—charged up to him, accepted of him—the iniquity of us all. How gracious is this message! Those who received it first from Isaiah, having the guidance and enlightenment of the holy Spirit, could not appreciate his words to the full, but, nevertheless, must have to some extent appreciated them —must have drawn some blessing and hope from them. But now, we of this Gospel age, living since the redemption price was paid, may now rejoice in these things so hard for the Jew to understand, and equally impossible for the natural man of the Gentiles to comprehend. Truly our Lord's words are refreshing and explanatory— “To you it is given to know of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God;” to all others these things are “spoken in parables and dark sayings.” —Luke 8:10; Matt. 13:10-15; Matt. 13:35. R. 3589

**All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned, every one,
to his own way, and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.**

Isaiah 53:6

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.

– Isaiah 53:7 –

He was oppressed, as a lamb he was led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb; yet he opened not his mouth. The fulfillment of this we see in the case of our Lord. Had he chosen to open his mouth, to argue his case, to defend himself, we may well suppose that the Scribes and Pharisees, high priests and doctors of the Law, Pilate and his soldiers and the Jewish rabble, would have succumbed to the eloquence of him who spoke as never man spoke. Thus he might merely have defended himself with his tongue, and righteously, too, without ever moving a finger in his own defence or exercising any of the divine powers deposited in him, or calling for any of the legions of angels who would have responded to his prayer. He did indeed reply to a question of the High Priest and also to a question by Pilate, but he was dumb so far as making any plea or endeavoring in any manner to deliver himself from the death which he perceived was upon him and which he knew was permitted of the Father. R. 3591

It pleased the LORD to bruise Him. He has put Him to grief. When You 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.

– Isaiah 53:10 –

All these things, apparently so unjust and so unreasonable and so contrary to anything mankind could have expected, Jehovah was pleased to permit. To have exacted such sufferings from Jesus as our penalty would have been an injustice, and this would have been an impossibility to God; but it did please him to allow his only-begotten one to demonstrate his loyalty and faith even unto death, even the death of the cross. It pleased him that the Son should thus be temporarily injured and put to grief because he foresaw the glorious results both to Jesus and to mankind. To his Son he would give more than compensating honor and glory and dignity and power, yea, eternal life, when to his hands would be committed all the remaining features of the divine plan. R. 3589

He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53:11-12

Consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

– Hebrews 12:3 –

The narrative of our dear Redeemer's shame, endured so patiently on our behalf, is most touching, and perhaps the relation of it and the reading of it have brought more hearts to repentance than almost anything else. Nor does it lose its power with those who have already accepted our Lord and the redemption which his blood effected: it mellows our hearts every time we consider him who endured such great contradiction of sinners against himself, when we remember that it was unmerited by him, and that it was a part of his sacrifice on our behalf. The Apostle points one of his most forcible lessons with this subject, urging that all of the Lord's followers should consider the meekness, patience and sufferings of Christ, endured most unjustly, lest we should be weary or faint in our minds, when enduring comparatively light afflictions, while seeking to walk in his footsteps. Yea, consider him, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." He left us an example that we should follow his steps. R. 2312 and R. 1721

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth", who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return. When He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously, who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness ---by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Peter 2:21-24

Through The Night

As he stood before the high priest, and as his enemies brought witnesses and the trial progressed, our Lord may be said to have made no defence; it would have been useless anyway, as they were intent on finding a charge of some kind—they had murder in their hearts. The charge they sought to establish was blasphemy, one of the few charges the penalty of which under the Law was death, and it was his death they wanted. The blasphemy against God was declared to be proven in that he claimed to be the son of God, and blasphemy against the Temple was claimed to be proven in that some had heard him say that if the Temple were destroyed he could rear it again in three days. A decision was reached, but nothing could be done until day light. Meantime the petty officers of the court spat upon the Lord, blindfolded him, and struck him, saying, “Prophecy, now, who is he that smote thee?” and thus the weary hours passed till daybreak. The Jews thought it a trial of the Lord, but his trial was all in the past. It was the trial of their high priests, of the court officers and of the members of the Sanhedrin and of the Jewish nation. It was a trial of whether they loved truth or a falsehood, righteousness or unrighteousness. They decided for unrighteousness. R. 3366

But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, “I put you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!” Jesus said to him, “It is as you said.”

– Matthew 26:63-64 –

The most devout Christians have believed the words of Jesus, when he said, “The Father is greater than I;” and, “As the Father hath sent me, so send I you.” They recognize the oneness between the Father and the Son as being, not a oneness of person, but a oneness of heart, of mind, of purpose, according to our Lord’s own declaration in his prayer for his people, when he said, “I pray for them... that they may be one, as we are [one].” (John 17:11.) The most devout Christians acknowledge that the only one, “the man Christ Jesus,” was the perfect representation of the Heavenly Father, so that he who saw the Son (who was the express image of the Father’s person) saw the Father also, —in the only way in which it would be possible for mankind to see “the **invisible God**,” “whom no man hath seen nor can see,” but whom the Only Begotten of the Father hath revealed to men perfectly. —John1:18.

Thoughtful and **intelligently devout** Christians, when they examine the words of our Lord in this connection, can see nothing in them whatever to the effect that our Lord Jesus here contradicted the other plain statements of his testimony, but rather they find it in full conformity. Nor did the Jews for one moment think that our Lord meant that he was the Heavenly Father. This was not the question asked: they had no expectation that Messiah would be Jehovah, but Jehovah’s representative, and agent, the Son of God, “The Messenger [servant] of the Covenant, whom ye delight in.” (Mal 3:1.) The charge of blasphemy against our Lord was based upon his claim of being a Son of God—not the Father himself. The charge was made on a previous occasion (John 10:29-36), when the accusers expressly declared his crime was that of calling himself a son of God;—that thus he was placing himself on a parity with God, as being of the same kind or nature. On that occasion Jesus answered their quibble by quoting them from the Psalms, where all of the Lord’s consecrated people, the Gospel Church, are called “sons of God;” and he pointed out to them that he merely claimed the same title that was there freely given to those who would come into that relationship, through justification of faith, whereas he himself had always been a Son of God in full harmony with the Father. R. 2780

With sunrise the Sanhedrin met officially, and, accepting the testimony of the high priest, that he had examined witnesses and that it had been proven that Jesus had blasphemed God and the Temple, the verdict was reached that he should die. Then, they held a private consultation respecting how they should present the matter before Pilate, the Roman governor. They well knew that he would pay no attention whatever to their charges of blasphemy and would tell them that was not a crime under the Roman law. They determined that the charge against our Lord before Pilate should be treason against the Roman government. In support of this charge of treason they said that he declared there was another king besides Caesar, namely, himself, the Messiah; and to seemingly corroborate this they declared falsely that he had forbidden to pay taxes to Caesar's government, whereas when they tried to catch him on this very subject two days before he had answered to the contrary, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Moreover, he had paid taxes himself, Peter being sent for the fish to pay the tax for them both. But this false allegation would seemingly prove the truth of the original charge of treason. Now Pilate's time had come for trial. He stood as judge, and the principles of right and wrong, truth and untruth, righteousness and unrighteousness, in this case were for him to determine.

We are to remember that Pilate was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a heathen man—without God and having no hope in the world. We are to remember that he did not believe in the Jews' religion, whatever he may have believed. He did not believe in Jesus, nor had he any respect for the Messianic promises. He was filling the office of governor as the representative of Caesar's government at Rome. He had his own pleasures and self-gratifications distinct from the Jews and their festivals, etc., for which he cared nothing. He was amenable not to our God, for he knew him not, but merely to Caesar, and Caesar expected nothing of him except that he would preserve the peace and quiet of the city and maintain the dignity and authority of Rome. Rome cared not if one or ten or hundreds of innocent persons were put to death, if only the peace of the country were maintained. It was, therefore, Pilate's first duty as Roman governor to keep the peace in Jerusalem.

Pilate did not readily accept the charges of the Pharisees: he knew them to be hypocritical, and really we may here say that the worst wickedness in the world at any time, at every time, in its history has been that form of wickedness which parades under the cloak of religion, which does evil in the name of that which is right, true, good. Pilate asked for specifications respecting the treason, and this seems to have surprised the chief priests, who presumed that their word would be taken on that subject without proof. If they thought a Jew had been worthy of death for treason then Pilate should certainly so suspect and so believe, for they were not supposed to wish the destruction of any fellow-Jew on such a charge. Pilate looked at Jesus and saw in him no criminal appearance, saw that he did not look at all like one who would become a leader of sedition; that, instead, meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, love, were marks of his features. Pilate inquired of Jesus respecting this charge,

"Art thou the king of the Jews?" R. 3366

You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.

– John 18:37 –

This was the good confession which our Lord witnessed before Pontius Pilate, to which the Apostle refers. (1 Tim. 6:13.) He confessed his kingship and its divine authority. We are not to wonder that Pilate was incredulous of our Lord's claims to kingship, and that he probably thought him a fanatic. We are rather to remember that remarkably few of those who have heard of Jesus have recognized the truth of this statement that he is a King. How few, even amongst professed Christians, recognize the kingly office of our Lord! Many who realize that Jesus was indeed the Man of Sorrows, acquainted with grief, and some who realize that he died for our sins, have never yet seen that he purchased not only man but the empire originally given to the first Adam. Many can realize our Lord in the attitude of Priest who fail to realize that he is also to be a King, and that throughout the Millennial age he will be a Priest upon his throne, "after the order of Melchizedec," his Church and Bride being associated with him and sharing in both his priestly and his kingly offices. R. 2470



**He who is the blessed and only Potentate,
the King of kings and Lord of lords.**

1 Timothy 6:15

Pilate said to Him, "Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?" But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.

– Matthew 27:13-14 –

Concluding his brief interview with Jesus, Pilate approached the wide-open doorway of his courtroom, outside which the people were crowding, and publicly and openly declared,

"I find no fault in this man."

Then our Lord, publicly accompanied by a squad of Roman soldiers, was sent to Herod, who had a curiosity to see him; he had heard many things about him. As Pilate had turned the prisoner over to Herod, declaring that he himself found no cause of death in him, Herod returned the compliment by remitting the prisoner again to Pilate. R. 3895

The case returning to Pilate, and the chief priests evidently fearing some slip of their plans, were very persistent in demanding the death of Jesus and in inciting the multitude to clamor for it. Some six times in all Pilate declared the innocence of Jesus, yet under the circumstances already narrated he hesitated to absolutely refuse the demand of the Jewish priests and multitude: especially did he feel the point of the argument made by the priests, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend," which meant, You are an enemy to Caesar and to the government of Rome.

At this season of the year it was the custom for the Roman Governor to release a prisoner as an act of magnanimity and an adjunct to the general joy of the occasion. Pilate reminded them of this, and suggested that after scourging Jesus he would be the prisoner whom he would release, but the multitude cried out against this with united voice, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." We cannot doubt that the priests and rulers had more or less to do with this—that they were still inciting the people against Jesus. And when we think of the Jews we are appalled at the condition of heart which it reveals. Barabbas was a seditionist in fact and had been imprisoned for murder—and this was the choice of the people as against Jesus! Truly they showed the murderous condition of their hearts: although outwardly a moral people, respecting the Law, inwardly they were filled with the spirit of the Adversary—they hated the Light and the great Light-Bearer.

Meantime Pilate's wife sent a message to him urging that he do nothing against this man, for that she had had a dream in the night to this effect. Under the circumstances Pilate evidently did everything that could be expected of a worldly man in the times and under the conditions in which he lived. R. 3895 and R. 3366

So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him. And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe. Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.

– John 19:1-3 –

It was either a respect which Pilate felt for our Lord's personality or the influence of his wife's dream of the preceding night that led him to strive with the Jewish rulers for the release of Jesus. Many another man in his position would have used the opportunity to curry favor with those under his control, and would have executed Jesus simply to please them—just as we see that Herod did on another occasion.

The scourging incident should be viewed from this standpoint: Pilate wished to placate the mob spirit which he perceived at his court gate: if Jesus were scourged, and thus demeaned, the people would probably be better satisfied and more likely to let the incident drop than if the Lord were turned free without chastisement. We esteem then that it was with a good motive rather than a bad one that Pilate condemned Jesus to be lashed on the back. R. 3896

It was in connection with his endeavor to free Jesus from those who sought his life that Pilate stood Jesus forth so that they might see him. The impression we get is that Pilate himself was struck with the quiet dignity of our Lord in his facial expression, in his composure under trying conditions. His words seem to mean, Look at the man you are talking about crucifying! Why, Jews, you have not such a man in all your land. I doubt if there is any man his equal anywhere! But it was all of no avail; the multitude had become excited and were clamoring for our Lord's blood. R. 3366

Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"

– John 19:5 –

Pilate came again before the Jews, and caused our Lord to be led forth, weak, exhausted and miserable-looking, from the trying experiences of the night, supplemented by the painful and weakening influence of the scourging just received. With his crown of thorns and soiled purple robe he must have been a pitiable sight indeed, and yet the noble outlines of his perfect manhood must still have been striking, and no doubt suggested the words of Pilate which have echoed down the centuries since,

"Behold the man!"

Pilate evidently was impressed with our Lord's personality; never before had he seen so splendid a specimen of the human race. He was such an one as any people might have been glad to honor as their king. He evidently hoped that some impression would be made upon the clamoring throng which accused Jesus. But he was mistaken; they clamored so much the more, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" R. 2470



“Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer. Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You and power to release You?”

– John 19-9-10 –

In considering the events of those solemn hours which followed the Memorial Supper, let us follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane, and behold Him “with strong cryings and tears” praying “unto Him who was able to save Him out of death” —expressive of our Master’s fear of death lest in some particular He might have failed to follow out the Father’s Plan, and therefore be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We note that our Lord was in some way comforted with the assurance that He had faithfully kept His consecration vow, and that He would surely have a resurrection as promised. We behold how calm He was thereafter, when before the high priest and Pilate, and Herod and Pilate again. “As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth” in self-defense. We see Him faithful, courageous to the very last; and we have His assurance that He could have asked of the Father and could have had more than twelve legions of angels for His protection. But instead of petitioning for aid to escape His sacrifice, He petitioned for help to endure it faithfully. What a lesson is here for all His footstep followers! R. 5869

You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above.

– John 19:11 –

The charge against our Lord before Pilate was a totally different one from that on which he had been condemned by the Jewish Sanhedrin. It was of three counts:

- (1) Sedition, raising a tumult, stirring up the people to a rebellion;
- (2) that he taught the people that they should not give tribute to Caesar;
- (3) that he himself claimed to be the king who should receive the tributes.

The charges were so evidently untrue that Pilate speedily discerned the animus of the Jewish rulers who formulated them. He saw that it was the religious power of the rulers that was in danger, and not the civil power of the Roman government. The multitude standing outside the gates shouted the accusations riotously, incited so to do by their religious teachers. Jesus made no reply, so that even Pilate marveled at his quietness, self-possession, non-resistance and lack of vindictiveness and refusal to defend himself, even though he was manifestly a person quite able to plead his own cause. Pilate even asked him if he were not aware of the fact that he had power either to set him at liberty or to inflict the punishment desired by the people. Our Lord’s answer was serene, that Pilate could have no power at all except as it was permitted him by the heavenly Father. Ah, this was the secret of our Lord’s composure! He had given his life, his all; he had surrendered to the Father his every interest; he had confidence in the Father’s love and wisdom, and was willing, therefore, to drink of the cup which the Father had poured, rejoicing to do the will of him that sent him and to finish that work. R. 3895

**He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth.
He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep
before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth.
Isaiah 53:7**

So they cried out again, “Crucify Him!” Then Pilate said to them, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they cried out all the more, “Crucify Him!”
Mark 15:13-14

When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person.”

– Matthew 27:24 –

Pilate had made up his mind definitely that there was no danger whatever to the Roman Empire from the meek and lowly person whom he had interviewed—he was surely not an anarchist, not an insurrectionist of any kind. “I find no fault in this man.” (Luke 23:4.) And Pilate’s decision has been the decision of all honorable, fair-minded people throughout the world from his day to the present. The priests, etc., [however], felt that matters were getting desperate, and they must bring to bear upon Pilate every influence they could; hence their intimation that if he would not crucify Jesus they would report him to Caesar at Rome as being a friend of traitors against Roman authority—an enemy of the Emperor. This was a forceful argument, and Pilate realized it. Were such a report to be sent to Rome, signed by the leading officials of the Jewish nation, it would not be without weight, and the authorities there would wonder, at least, why the life of any poor, obscure individual would be spared to the alienation of the leading men of the nation and at the risk of an insurrection. Pilate decided that the only reasonable and proper course for him to pursue would be to let the Jews have their way, [and he] finally gave sentence that the will of the people should be done. As an indication of his dissent, and as clearing himself in the sight of all from the responsibility, Pilate called for water to be brought, and in the sight of the multitude poured it over his hands as a symbol of his own disagreement with the death-decree which they were compelling him to render. Thus washing his hands he said, both in symbol and in words, “I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man, see ye to it.” (Deut. 21:6-9.)
 R. 2785, R. 3895, R. 3366



So Pilate, wanting to gratify the crowd, released Barabbas to them, and he delivered Jesus, after he had scourged Him, to be crucified.

Mark 15:15

Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him. And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

– Matthew 27:27-31 –

Jesus was now delivered over to Pilate’s soldiers, to be made ready for crucifixion, and they, heartless and brutal, as we might expect, made sport of the Master’s adversities. Putting upon him a cast-off royal robe and a crown of thorns, they jeered him upon his claim to kingship, without a surmise, of course, of who he really was, and how he is yet to be a King upon the holy hill Zion, to whose sceptre every knee shall bow and to whom every tongue must confess. It will be a surprised awakening to them some day, when they amongst others shall come forth from the dead to find Messiah’s Kingdom established, and to realize that he exercised mercy toward his enemies, and that his death prepared the way for the blessing of themselves and all the families of the earth. How thankful we may feel that our dear Redeemer was not controlled by passion and revenge, but by the Father’s will and word, so that he endured the abuses of his tormenters in meekness and bowed his will to the will and plan of the Heavenly Father. R. 2315

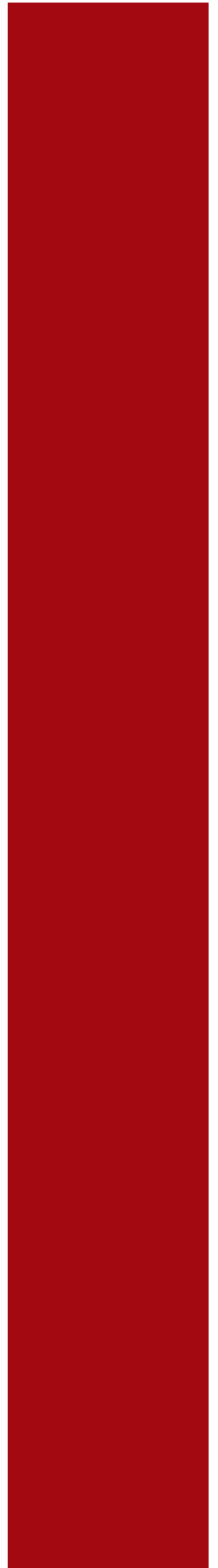
I gave My back to those who struck Me and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard. I did not hide My face from shame and spitting, for the Lord GOD will help Me. Therefore I will not be disgraced. Therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed.

– Isaiah 50:6-7 –

It is well that we should note that selfishness lies at the foundation of almost every sin and every crime, that is and ever has been committed. Let us, as the Lord’s people, be specially on guard against this insidious evil, which is ours by heredity, and which needs to be destroyed, eradicated, and to be supplanted with love, as the governing impulse of our hearts and lives—love, which thinketh no evil, which is not puffed up, which seeketh not her own advantage at the expense of justice to the interest of others.

As no novel could present a more eventful life, so likewise none ends more tragically than did this great real drama set upon the stage by the Almighty, as an exhibition both to angels and to men of his Justice and Love combined. How strikingly depravity of fallen human nature was illustrated in those who witnessed our Lord’s many wonderful works, and then his unresisting sacrifice for our sins, coldly [and] without appreciation. R. 2785 and R. 2315

**JESUS
CRUCIFIED**



CRUCIFIXION was the horrible method of execution in olden times for the vilest of criminals—its severity being intended to intimidate and deter evil-doers, rather than as a gratification of cruel sentiments. Farrar says of it: “Death by crucifixion seems to include all that pain and death can have of the horrible and ghastly—dizziness, cramp, thirst, starvation, sleeplessness, publicity of shame, long continuance of torment, horror of anticipation, mortification of untended wounds—all intensified just up to the point at which they can be endured at all, but all stopping just short of the point which would give to the sufferer the relief of unconsciousness. Such was the death to which Christ was doomed.”

The envious and murderous chief priests and doctors of Judaism desired just such a public denunciation of the great Teacher who so fearlessly had exposed their hypocrisies and inconsistencies, and who was fast making an impression upon the common people. According to Mark’s account (15:25) the death-warrant was signed by Pilate about nine o’clock in the morning—the trial of Jesus, and Pilate’s various attempts to secure his release from his enemies, having occupied three hours. At once they started, the two robbers bearing their crosses, and Jesus bearing his cross, taking the place of Barrabas, who was to have been executed, but who was released. It was the custom in olden times to compel the convicts to bear the instruments of their own torture. Apparently even the hardened soldiers took pity upon him, and meeting Simon the Cyrenian on the way, they compelled him to relieve Jesus.

The place of crucifixion was called Golgotha, the Hebrew word signifying a skull, the Latin name for a skull being Calvary. This name was given to the locality probably because the general contour of the hill, which was just outside of Jerusalem, closely resembles a skull when viewed at a distance. It was on the way to this place, Golgotha, Calvary, that some of the charitable women of Jerusalem, according to their general custom, offered the condemned ones sour wine mixed with bitter myrrh—a draught which had a tendency to stupefy the nerves, thus rendering the execution the less agonizing. The two robbers quite probably drank of the potion, but Mark (15:23) declares that our Lord refused it—having learned that his experiences were the Father’s will, he would do nothing whatever to hinder himself from receiving them to the full.

R. 2473



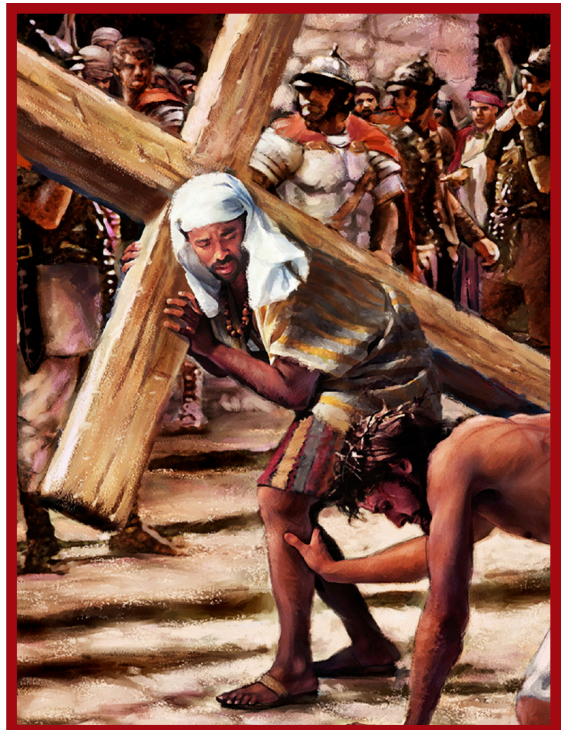
As they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross that he might bear it after Jesus.

– Luke 23:26 –

It was not Divinely intended that our Lord should be stoned, but that He should be treated as a cursed one—hanged upon a tree. (Deut. 21:22-23.) “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” (John 3:14-15.) So through fear of the multitude or from lack of authority from the Roman Governor, the Jews failed to stone Jesus. Since they could not bring the charge of blasphemy before a Roman Court, they were obliged to bring a different charge—that, while they were loyal to the Roman Emperor, Jesus was disloyal to the Roman interests. Pilate washed his hands of the affair. He wished to be free from any guilt. But under stress of the Jews, and willing to keep peace, he caused the charge to be made that our Lord was crucified because of claiming to be King of the Jews.

It was a part of the custom of these crucifixions that the culprit must bear his own cross; and so we read that Jesus bore his until, faint from the nervous strain of the preceding twenty-four hours, without sleep and probably with but little nourishment, and under great strain and exhausted from the beating, he sank under the weight of the cross. He had [also] suffered from the bloody sweat in the Garden of Gethsemane, and had endured different trials—before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, and before Herod. After this He was flogged! We can imagine that a person who had undergone so much would be scarcely able to walk, let alone carry a burden. Furthermore, in our Lord’s case we are to remember that he had been sacrificing his life for three and a half years; that vitality had been going out of him for the healing of all kinds of disease. This loss would tend to weaken him. In other words he had been dying for three and a half years and was now on his way to Calvary to finish the matter of surrendering his life in harmony with the Father’s will.

Some of our Lord’s disciples were onlookers (John, at least, was one). In the emergency the soldiers found a countryman on the route whom they compelled to bear the cross after Jesus. This expression might have meant to walk after him, to relieve him of part of the load; or it might have meant for him to carry all the load while the Lord walked on before. But we do know that this enforced task upon Simon was a very precious privilege. How many of the Lord’s followers since have almost envied him the opportunity enjoyed! Tradition says that Simon ultimately became a Christian, that his name was known to the Apostle John and also the part of the country whence he came. The mention of the names of his sons gives strong corroboration to the tradition. —Mark 15:21. R. 5221 and R. 4171



Then they compelled a certain man, Simon a Cyrenian, the father of Alexander and Rufus, as he was coming out of the country and passing by, to bear His cross.

Mark 15:21

Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For indeed the days are coming in which they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren wombs that never bore and breasts which never nursed!’ Then they will begin ‘TO SAY TO THE MOUNTAINS, “FALL ON US!” AND TO THE HILLS, “COVER US!”’ For if they do these things in the green wood, what will be done in the dry?

– Luke 23:28-31 –

Probably Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joseph, the mother of James and John, and Salome, the wife of Cleophas (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40) and others of the friends of Jesus, by this time gained courage and mingled with the women who offered the wine and myrrh, so that Luke says, “There followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.” —Luke 23:27-28. This he said in reference to the atrocities which should mark the overthrow of their nation and the destruction of Jerusalem, which would display the same wicked spirit which was then being manifested toward him. And it was even so; for the troubles upon that people were not alone from enemies without, but also from civil strife; for every man’s hand was against his neighbor. It is said that at the time of the siege of Jerusalem hundreds of Jews were crucified at once, and left hanging in sight of the city walls. R. 2473 and R. 1815

**And they brought Him to the place Golgotha,
which is translated, Place of a Skull.**

Mark 15:22

It was customary to have four soldiers attend each prisoner to execution; foremost went one who bore a white board on which was written the crime for which the prisoner was to be executed, and which was fastened above his head on the cross; then followed three soldiers with the hammer and nails, etc., and these all were under the command of a captain or centurion. The board placed above Jesus, on the cross, declared him to be the King of the Jews, and was written in three languages—in Hebrew, the language of the country, in Greek, because it was the language of the visitors and of the educated from all quarters, and in Latin, because it was the language of the empire and of the soldiers. There is a slight difference in the statements of the different Evangelists respecting the words used on this tablet, which may be accounted for by supposing that the words differed slightly in the different languages, and that the Evangelists quoted from the different originals. R. 2473

**Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was:
JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

– John 19:19 –

It was probably with irony that Pilate wrote out the inscription that was placed above our Lord's head on the cross, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." He knew that the rulers of the Jews had delivered Jesus to death because they were envious of his influence as a teacher; and since the charge that they brought against him was "He maketh himself a king," claiming, "We have no king but Caesar;" and since by this hypocritical course they had forced Pilate to crucify him, on the claim that it was necessary to the protection of the throne of Caesar, therefore Pilate now retaliated and used their weapon against themselves. But little did he think, of course, that this was the true title of the wonderful man Christ Jesus, whom they caused to be put to death. Another evangelist tells us that the leading Jews objected strongly, but that Pilate refused to alter the inscription.

Little did Pilate comprehend the great truth which he set before the world in the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Few yet realize the truth of this statement that Jesus is a King; comparatively few have yet rendered him allegiance, bowing the knee of their hearts in sincerity and truth: and yet so surely as the Lord has spoken it, the time is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess him Lord, Master, King, to the glory of God the Father.

R. 2315 and R. 2473

Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.

Psalm 2:6



When they had come to the place called Calvary, there they crucified Him, and the criminals, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

– Luke 23:33 –

Arrived at Calvary, Golgotha, the wooden crosses were laid upon the ground, the victims stretched thereon, and nailed by hands and feet; then the soldiers lifted the crosses and set them into already prepared holes or sockets. The torture of these experiences can better be imagined than described. It was a most cruel death. That vilest sentence or curse against sinners under the Law Jesus bore, that he might not only be the Redeemer of the world in general but also the Redeemer of the Jew, as it is written, "He was made a curse for us" —experienced the sentence of the accursed ones under the Law.

The greatest transaction ever made, the purchase of all (over fifty billions) of the slaves of the great task master, Sin, was not appreciated in its day, and has not been appreciated since, except by the very few—in all a "little flock." The masses of mankind since have been doing just what the people did upon the day of our Lord's crucifixion. Some looked, but sympathized little, and appreciated not; others derided and blasphemed; others made sport of it, and still others with rude jest gambled over his raiment. They knew him not; they knew not the value of the work which he performed on their behalf. They appreciated his life to some extent, though very imperfectly, but as for value to his death, they could see none in it. The Apostle, by inspiration, calls attention to their condition, saying that the god of this world had blinded their minds, so that they could not see. False theories, false expectations, false reasonings, and a lack of true consecration to the Lord, have blinded the eyes of many since, not only of the world, but also of those professing to be disciples of Christ.

R. 3901 and R. 1988

They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.

– Psalm 22:18 –

The four soldiers who had Jesus in charge, after they had set the cross in place, began to look after his personal effects, his clothing, which became their portion according to usage. It was the custom to count the personal property of an executed person the perquisites of the soldiers performing the execution, and in Jesus' case we read that, having divided his garments amongst them, his outer robe, his head dress, sandals and girdle—enough to give one piece to each—they assigned by lot “what each man should take.” One piece remained, namely, his tunic or under garment, reaching from the neck to the feet, “woven throughout and seamless.” This they could not divide advantageously, and hence “for his vesture they did cast lots.” —Psalm 22:18; John 19:23-24. Little did they think as they divided his garments, and then cast lots for his seamless tunic, which was the most valuable article, that they were thus fulfilling prophecy. Just so it is with the whole world; matters are moving on from day to day, prophecies are being fulfilled, many of us have part in them, but few can see and understand, because only a few have the guidance of the holy Spirit. R. 3370 and R. 3901



I wil divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong because He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors.

– Isaiah 53:12 –

How it happened that two robbers were awaiting execution at the same time is not stated in the account. We may presume, however, that they had been in custody for some time under sentence, and that the chief priests may have suggested their execution at the same time. Their thought may have been to detract from the injustice of their own course and to throw a measure of justice into the proceedings as a whole, or their object may have been to demean Jesus in making him a companion of outlaws. But whatever the circumstances the matter was foreseen by the Lord and foretold by the Prophet— “He was numbered with the transgressors.” R. 3370

And sitting down they watched him there.
– Matthew 27:36 –

Sitting down, they watched Him there,
Watched Him, fairest of the fair,
Gazed with cold, unpitying eye,
While the jeering crowd passed by;
For His vesture cast a lot (Seamless robe, without a spot);
Watched the “Man of Sorrows” there,
Who the world’s great sin must bear;
Watched while darkness veiled the sun,
Watched until He cried, “Tis done!”

God of Heaven! forbid that I
Thus should gaze with pitiless eye
On a suffering child of Thine,
Watch him while his foes malign,
Watch him while his life-blood flows,
Watch until the dark day’s close;
Grant me, Lord, a heart of love,
Make me like a tender dove;
Let me bring him strength and peace,
Until death shall send release!

–G. W. SEIBERT, R. 5836

For the mouth of the wicked
and the mouth of the deceitful
have opened against me. They
have spoken against me with
a lying tongue. They have also
surrounded me with words of
hatred, and fought against me
without a cause. In return
for my love they are my
accusers, but I give myself to
prayer. Thus they have
rewarded me evil for good,
and hatred for my love.
Psalm 109:2-5

The crowd stood around gaping, and the rulers joined with them in deriding the one who so recently had ridden upon the ass as the King of the Jews. They made light also of his miracles of healing, of awaking the dead, saying, “He saved others, let him save himself.” Let him save himself if he be the Messiah of God, his elect one. How deceived they were, and what a lesson it should teach us of the fallibility of human judgment and the necessity for looking deeply, especially in matters pertaining to God and his Word.

Our Lord’s statement of a few days before was remembered by some, but either misunderstood or deliberately falsified in their raillery. He had not spoken of destroying their Temple, but had said that if they destroyed the Temple it would be reared again within three days (antitypical). The Temple construction had required about forty years, and our Lord’s declaration they considered bombastic, and said, It will be much easier for him to show his power by coming down from the cross. The fact that he did not do so was esteemed an evidence of the falsity of all that he had previously said and done. To a sensitive mind, like that of our Lord, we can readily suppose that such a charge of falsification and misrepresentation would be a severe burden upon his heart; yet he bore it patiently. O, we are so glad that Jesus did not come down from the cross, and thus leave us in our sins—the whole world unredeemed! R. 3901 and R. 3370

Psalm 22

To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Deer of the Dawn." a Psalm of David.

1 My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me and from the words of My groaning? 2 O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear, and in the night season, and am not silent. 3 But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel. 4 Our fathers trusted in You. They trusted, and You delivered them. 5 They cried to You, and were delivered. They trusted in You and were not ashamed. 6 But I am a worm and no man, a reproach of men, and despised by the people. 7 All those who see me ridicule Me. They shoot out the lip. They shake the head, saying, 8 "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue him. Let Him deliver him, since He delights in him!" 9 But You are He who took me out of the womb. You made Me trust while on my mother's breasts. 10 I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been my God. 11 Be not far from me, for trouble is near, for there is none to help. 12 Many bulls have surrounded Me. Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. 13 They gape at Me with their mouths, like a raging and roaring lion. 14 I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It has melted within Me. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to my jaws. You have brought Me to the dust of death. 16 For dogs have surrounded Me. The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet. 17 I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. 18 They divide My garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots. 19 But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me. O My Strength, hasten to help Me! 20 Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. 21 Save Me from the lion's mouth and from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. 22 I will declare Your name to my brethren. In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. 23 You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him and fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! 24 For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, nor has He hidden His face from Him. But when He cried to Him, He heard. 25 My praise shall be of You in the great assembly. I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. 26 The poor shall eat and be satisfied. Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! 27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. 28 For the kingdom is the LORD's, and He rules over the nations. 29 All the prosperous of the earth shall eat and worship. All those who go down to the dust shall bow before Him, even he who cannot keep himself alive. 30 A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation. 31 They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has done this.

And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

– Matthew 27:25 –

Alas! poor Jews; with what judgment you judged, you have been judged. And although the true followers of the Nazarene have never injured you, his nominal friends have often brought vengeance upon you at the hands of Pilate’s successors. You cried, “We have no king but Caesar,” and were taken at your word by the Almighty. Oh, poor Jew, there is no way to escape your self-pronounced curse of his blood, except by accepting his blood, freely offered to you as to all mankind as the blood of sacrifice, the blood of atonement which sanctifieth (maketh holy to God) all to whom it is applied by faith. It is the “blood [seal] of the New Covenant.”

The chief priests and scribes pursued their victim to the cross—neglecting, doubtless, important matters in their eagerness to make sure that he did not escape them. They were more blameworthy than the common people, yet they sought to justify their course in the same manner. If they had any qualms of conscience these apparently were satisfied as they beheld Jesus on the cross, helpless and dying. Here was certainly a test, they said. If he were the Messiah undoubtedly he would not thus suffer ignominiously, but would come down from the cross; hence they said, We have proof that our course has been a wise and proper one in ridding our nation of a disturber of its peace, whose teaching would ultimately have overthrown our priestly authority and control of the people. Similarly in the harvest of this age, with antitypical nominal spiritual Israel, the Truth is stranger than any fiction, and the masses, in a wrong condition of heart, not guided by the Spirit of the Lord, are blind to it.

Alas, how little they understood his power! He could indeed have come down from the cross, could have refused to die, could have resisted their insults, could have had “more than twelve legion of angels” for his defense. But this would not have been in accord with his consecration, nor in accord with the Father’s will, and would have left us as the race of Adam under the sentence of death, without hope of a future life. How we may rejoice that the dear Redeemer did not when he was reviled revile again, when he was maltreated resent it and do injury to his executioners. How we may rejoice in his faithfulness and love, which enabled him to present the acceptable sacrifice on our behalf. How we can exult also in the great glory, honor, dominion and power everlasting which have come to him as a reward and as a token of the Father’s approval, and what a hope it gives us that we also by his grace and assistance may attain to joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

Near the cross stood the Apostle John and Jesus’ mother and others who loved him, and whose hearts were breaking with sympathy as they beheld his ignominy and suffering and were unable to fully appreciate the necessity for this. It was about noon that Jesus, seeing his mother and John standing near, said, “Woman, behold thy son,” and to John, “Behold thy mother.” We thus see that, in the extremity of his pain even, our Lord was thinking less of himself than of his disciples and of his dear ones. It was about this time that darkness began to settle, beclouding the scene for about three hours. R. 3109, R. 3370, R. 2313

**Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said,
“He saved others. Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel,
let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.
He trusted in God. Let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him, for He said,
‘I am the Son of God.’ ” Even the robbers who were crucified
with Him reviled Him with the same thing.**

Matthew 27:41-44 *He reviled Him with the same thing.*

From that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

– John 19:27 –

With the Lord in his dying hour were four of his very special friends: his mother, her cousin the wife of Cleopas, Mary Magdalene and John. We are not to think too severely of the apparent lack of courage on the part of the others of Jesus' friends. The popular bitterness which had led to the crucifixion of Jesus had extended in considerable measure to his followers. It was natural that they should be afraid; it had even been hinted that Lazarus would be put to death also. The three women with him might reasonably feel themselves free from danger of molestation notwithstanding their manifestation of interest in the suffering one; and as for John, we remember that he had a friend in the High Priest's household, who permitted him to be present when Jesus was first brought before the High Priest and when Peter was afraid to be known even in the outer apartments. Quite probably the High Priest's servant was present at the time of the crucifixion to give a report of the whole proceedings. John's courage to be present may have been influenced by these circumstances. It was at this time that Jesus, although in great pain, commended his mother to his disciple's care—"Woman, behold thy Son;" and to the disciple, "Behold thy mother." We cannot show our sympathy at Jesus' cross, but we can lend our presence and aid to dear "members of his body" in their dark hours; and he will count it as done to himself. R. 3560

Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness. I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.

– Psalm 69:20 –

Our Lord realized that the end of his course had come. It was probably at this juncture that the Father's fellowship was withdrawn from him for a moment; that for a little space at least he should experience all that the sinner could ever experience of the withdrawal of divine favor; for he was being treated as the sinner for us that we on his account might be treated of God as righteous. Of all our Lord's experiences we believe that this moment, in which the Father completely hid his face from him, was the most trying moment, the severest ordeal, and the one apparently which our Lord had not foreseen. Bereft of every earthly comfort and favor, privilege and blessing, up to this moment he possessed a realization of fellowship and communion with the Father; but now for that to be taken away, that upon which his whole life had depended, that was the severest trial. In agony he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! What have I done to cause a cloud to come between thee and me? Have I not been faithful even unto death?" He probably soon realized the meaning of this experience, that it was necessary for him thus to fill up the cup of suffering and to demonstrate to the very limit his loyalty and obedience and to thus fully and completely meet the penalty against our race. Probably still under this cloud but with this realization he cried, "It is finished!" and died. R. 3560

The different accounts give altogether what are known as

The Seven Words on the Cross

R. 2473

1. Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do.

Luke 23:34

While these words undoubtedly represent truly our Lord's sentiments as respected his enemies, nevertheless it is proper here to remark that the oldest Greek MSS. do not contain these words.

2. Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise.

Luke 23:43

3. Woman, behold your son!...Behold your mother!

John 19:26-27

4. MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?

Mark 15:34

5. I thirst.

John 19:28

6. It is finished.

John 19:30

7. Father, INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.

Luke 23:46

The Apostle John had grown bolder as the day advanced, and while our Lord was crucified he drew near and was within speaking distance—quite possibly encouraged by seeing “the wife of Cleophas,” who is supposed to have been a relative. It was a sorrowful gathering for these whose hearts went out with sympathy for the Master whom they loved but were powerless to comfort or relieve. They were weeping and sorrowing while others jeered and taunted, saying, “If thou be Messiah, come down from the cross” —thinking doubtless that our Lord’s crucifixion by his enemies was the best possible proof that his claim to Messiahship was a fraudulent one,—proving that he was an impostor.

With the members of the body of Christ it has been true at times also that the Father has permitted experiences to come to them in such manner as might imply that they did not have his favor, and were really impostors. But as the true disciples had a heart-union with the Lord, which outward circumstances and misfortunes could not break, a love which adversity could not chill, so with all his “brethren,” those who are in heart-harmony, in oneness of spirit, will be found faithful under the most trying circumstances and adversities, because they have one spirit, a spirit of love for the brethren, by which they are enabled to identify one another as members of the one body.

How it gives us an insight into our Lord’s sympathetic nature, to find him thinking in the interest of others at the very time when he himself is overwhelmed in trouble! His own agony did not hinder him from thinking of his mother, and making provision for her comfort, commending her to the care of the loving disciple John. We note the choice of John: it was doubtless because, first of all, of his loving tender disposition; secondly, his zeal for the Lord and the truth, and thirdly, his courage in pressing near to be with his dying Master in his closing hours, at the risk of his own life. Let us note these characteristics, as being those which the Lord approves, that noting them we may cultivate them in ourselves, and be granted special opportunities for service by this same Master.

“Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Luke 23:46.) These our Lord’s last words were a quotation from the Scriptures. (Psalm 31:5.) In other words, it had already been declared of him that thus he would commend himself to the Father’s grace and truth. Our Lord was finishing laying down his human life a ransom for many sinners, but the Father had promised him a new life on a higher plane, as a reward for his faith, obedience and sacrifice. This new life, or life as a “new creature” was reckoned as begun at the time of our Lord’s baptism when he received the holy Spirit; this new life was reckoned as continuing and growing during the years of his ministry while he was daily dying according to the flesh; the outward man was perishing, but the inward new creature was being renewed day by day. Now the outward man was about to cease entirely—fully surrendered, the sacrifice finished. R. 2473

They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

– Psalm 69:21 –

Another Scripture remained to be fulfilled. Doubtless, with a fever raging such as would be induced by the crucifixion, he had been thirsting for quite a while, but now the time was come to express the matter, to give occasion for the fulfillment of the Scripture respecting him. Gall and vinegar was given him, not as an injury but as a kindness. It was supposed that the mixture would assuage thirst to some degree. R. 3560

Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there. And they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!”

And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

John 19:29-30

Now it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. Then the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was torn in two. And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ ” Having said this, He breathed His last. So when the centurion saw what had happened, he glorified God, saying, “Certainly this was a righteous Man!” And the whole crowd who came together to that sight, seeing what had been done, beat their breasts and returned. But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things.

– Luke 23:44-49 –

Our Lord's crucifixion took place at the sixth hour, nine o'clock in the morning—appropriately as represented in the type, for this was the hour of the morning daily sacrifice, and his death occurred six hours later, at three o'clock in the afternoon which, according to the Jewish reckoning, was the ninth hour. This also was appropriately represented in the type, for the daily evening sacrifice was offered at this hour. It was fitting also that nature should veil her glories before such a scene, and that there should be darkness. We are not, however, to suppose that it was a dense darkness, but simply darkness, as stated. Nevertheless, it must have been supernaturally dark for, as it was the full of the moon, a solar eclipse could have lasted but a few minutes at most.

It was now that our Lord uttered those agonizing words, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” He had borne, with wonderful fortitude, the contradictions of sinners against himself, and Peter's denial, and the fact that all of his disciples fled from him, and that his last hours were spent amid the jeers of his enemies; but when the moment came that the Father's fellowship of spirit was withdrawn from him, that was more than he could bear, and it is claimed that he died of a literally broken heart.

His commitment of his spirit to the Father's care implied therefore that he knew thoroughly just what death is—a cessation of being—yet had confidence in the Father that he would not be permitted to remain forever in death, but would be granted again, in resurrection, the spirit of life which he now laid down in harmony with the Father's will. R. 2316

When Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘INTO YOUR HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT.’” Having said this, He breathed His last.

– Luke 23:46 –

Our Lord Jesus, faithful and trustful to the last, commended his spirit in his dying moments to the Heavenly Father, whose promises supported him during his eventful life, and now were his strength in his dying hour. Nevertheless, from another account we have the record that at the very last moment the Heavenly Father withdrew from our Lord this support, and left him, probably but for a moment, alone; and his last experiences were those of utter loneliness and complete separation from the Father. This we may know was not because of the Father’s displeasure; for he had the full assurance that in all things and always he pleased the Father, and the Father subsequently testified to this in raising him from the dead, as said the Apostle Peter. (Acts 17:31.) That experience was necessary, however, because he was taking the place of the sinner. The sinner, Adam (and we all in Adam), had forfeited not only our rights to life, but also to fellowship with the Father; and in being our ransom-price in full, it was necessary that our Redeemer should not only die for us, but that he should die as a sinner, as a felon under sentence of death; and it was appropriate also that he should taste of the proper experiences of the sinner in being fully cut off from the Father’s favor and communion. This last experience would seem to have been the most trying through which our dear Redeemer passed. It was then, as on no other occasion, that his soul sent forth the agonizing cry, “My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?” R. 1988

The ultimate physical cause of Christ’s death is believed to have been literally a broken heart. Otherwise he would probably have lingered much longer. Crucifixion seldom produced death in less than twenty-four hours, and victims have lingered as long as five days. Pilate and the guard were surprised on learning of Jesus’ death 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 the care of John; he had declared his great work finished and then with a loud [literally, a strong] voice which indicated considerable remaining strength both of body and mind he cried, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and instantly died. R. 959

Although the Scripture narrative of our Lord's crucifixion is told in a most simple and artless manner, and without apparent attempt at embellishment to give it tragic effect, nevertheless in its simplicity it is one of the most touching narratives of history. As no novel could present a more eventful life, so likewise none ends more tragically than did this great real drama set upon the stage by the Almighty, as an exhibition both to angels and to men of his Justice and Love combined. R. 2316

He guards all his bones. Not one of them is broken.

– Psalm 34:20 –

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, “NOT ONE OF HIS BONES SHALL BE BROKEN.” And again another Scripture says, “THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED.”

John 19:31-37

Not only was the death and resurrection and exaltation of Christ thus necessary to God's plan of salvation as viewed from a philosophical standpoint, which the Lord would have us thoughtful enough to observe, but as viewed from the standpoint of prophecy the necessity is also clear; and we should not be slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. How minutely all of these [prophecies] had been fulfilled! R. 1394

On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.” Pilate said to them, “You have a guard. Go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

– Matthew 27:62 –

The narrative of the sealing of the sepulchre and the setting of the watch, lest the disciples should steal away the Lord's body, seems to show conclusively that the religious leaders of the Jews were thoroughly blinded, and that our Lord's character, works and teachings, had no influence whatever upon them; —that they had not the slightest suspicion of who he was, nor of the fulfillment of his prediction that he would arise from the dead. Their only thought was that a fraud might be perpetrated by his disciples. But their evil suspicions were overruled by the Lord for good, and became a testimony of the truth, and an assistance to faith on the part of believers. R. 2318

Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

– Philippians 2:8 –

Our Lord Jesus, “the beginning of the creation of God,” was willing, in harmony with the Father’s plan, to **humble** Himself, to take a **lower** nature and to do a work which would involve, not only a great deal of humiliation, but also a great deal of pain and suffering. The Apostle points out how the “Only Begotten” proved His willingness and humility by complying with this arrangement; and that after He became a man He continued of this same humble spirit, willing to carry out the Divine Plan to the **very letter** by dying as man’s ransom-price; and not only so, but when it pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, perhaps beyond the requirements of the ransom merely, He did not draw back, but said, “**Thy will, not Mine**, be done,” and stooped even to the ignominious “death of the cross!” Here we have the **most wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that ever was manifested or that could be conceived of**. And this is the pattern the Apostle points out that we should seek to copy. “Let this same [humble] mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.” —Phil. 2:5-10. R. 4928

“We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor [the perfection of human nature]; that He by the grace [favor] of God should taste death for every man.” (Hebrews 2:9.) We see the broad basis of God's Plan laid in the redemptive work at Calvary. We see that it must be the Redeemer's life that would be the price of human redemption.

So, then, “God manifest in the flesh” was clearly exhibited in the Man Christ Jesus, in His perfection. But God was specially and more particularly manifest in the flesh of Jesus when He presented Himself to John at Jordan, as He reached the period of thirty years of age, and there gave Himself sacrificially. “Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God.” There He offered Himself without spot, in harmony with God's will.

From the time of Jesus' baptism God dwelt in Him in a peculiar manner; as the Apostle John says of the Church, God dwelleth in us and we in God. (I John 4:16.) The Father took up His abode in Jesus, and qualified Him to make known the Divine Plan. Our Lord said, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” —Luke 4:16-21; Isaiah 61:1-3.

As Jesus went about doing good, healing the sick, and preaching to the people, everything was in perfect conformity to the Father's will. If the Father had been there incarnated in a fleshly body, He could not have done His own will more perfectly. But Jesus was not incarnated. The incarnation of our Lord is only a theory invented during the Dark Ages. For He humbled Himself to become a man, and “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” R. 5291

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

– Romans 5:8 –

The love of God here does not supersede his justice. There is no genuine love where there is not absolute justice. God so loved the world that he GAVE his only begotten Son. The proof of God's love here is not in what he taught, or felt, or willed, or said, but in what he **did**: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his **only begotten Son** into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is **love**, not that we loved God, **but that he loved us**, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2; 4:9,10.) R. 1328

This gift of divine love was [an] indication of the cost to our heavenly Father of his great and marvelous plan. Not only did he behold the fall into sin of a large proportion of his family, but their recovery cost the sacrifice of the dearest treasure of his heart, and the subjection of this beloved one to the most abject humiliation, ignominy, suffering and death. Again the illustration of a parent's love assists us in comprehending the cost of this manifestation of Jehovah's love. With what tender and yearning emotions of love must he have made this sacrifice of his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased. In addition to all the graces of his character manifested since the very dawn of his being was now added the further grace of full submission to the divine will, even when the pathway pointed out was one of pain and humiliation.

Ah, did the Father let him go on that errand of mercy without the slightest sensation of sorrowful emotion? had he no appreciation of the pangs of a father's love when the arrows of death pierced the heart of his beloved Son? When our dear Lord said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and again, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt," did it touch no sympathetic chord in the heart of the Eternal? Yea, verily: the unfeigned love of the Father sympathetically shared the Lord's sorrow. The principle taught in the divine Word, that true love weeps with those that weep and rejoices with those that rejoice, is one which is also exemplified in the divine character. The immortal Jehovah could not himself die for us, his divine nature being proof against death. And, even if he could have died, there would have been no higher power to raise him out of death, and all creation would have been left forever without a governor, and only disaster and ruin could have ensued. But God could and did sacrifice at great cost to his loving, fatherly nature, the dearest treasure of his heart, and thus he manifested (1 John 4:9) the great love wherewith he loved his deceived and fallen creatures. If this sacrifice cost him nothing; if it were impossible for his mind to realize any painful emotion, even under such a circumstance; then the gift of his Son would be no manifestation of love; for that which costs nothing manifests nothing.

Our Lord Jesus also manifested his great sympathy for the Father in the misrepresentation of his character which he has so patiently endured for ages. It was the one effort of his life to glorify the Father and to rectify among men the false impressions of his glorious character—to show to men his goodness, benevolence, love and grace, and to lead them to love the merciful God who so loved them, even while they were yet sinners, as to seek them out and to plan for their eternal salvation. R. 1833

Philosophy of The Ransom

For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.

– 1 Corinthians 15:21-22 –

If it were well that the facts respecting our Lord's death should be clearly set forth as a part of the Gospel, it is well also that all of the Lord's people should fully recognize the fact of this death, and the necessity of it, and its value as the offset or corresponding price for the redemption of Adam, and indirectly the redemption of all those who were in Adam when the sentence of death came upon him, —all redeemed by the one sacrifice, offered once for all.

It is important to the true Christian's faith that the fact of our Lord's death be not only fully established by the statements of the Scriptures, but that the Christian's faith therein be fully and thoroughly grounded; because only those who realize that our Lord's death was for the time an extinction of his being can realize how his death was the payment of father Adam's penalty. Father Adam's penalty was death, extinction, and this penalty fell by inheritance upon all his posterity; "Christ **died** for our sins" —he suffered the death penalty for father Adam (and incidentally for all those who had come under the death sentence through Adam's transgression). R. 2476



PERFECT MAN ADAM

PERFECT MAN JESUS

For 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 Timothy 2:5-6 –

If Jesus during His First Advent had merely **appeared** as a **man**, but had all the while been **really** a **spirit being** veiled in flesh—“**incarnate**”—He could not have been the Redeemer at all. The Scriptures say that Jesus **was** a man, “the Word was **made flesh**, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14)—not that He **pretended** to be a man. To be the **Redeemer** of **man** it was necessary for Him to **become** a **man**, not to **pretend** to be one. He must be **really** a **man**; otherwise He could not have been a ransom-price for Adam; for the Divine Law required **like** for **like**— “life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.” —Deut. 19:21.

The word Ransom (**antilutron** in the Greek) signifies a corresponding price. And so Jesus **actually** left the Heavenly glory—not merely **pretended** to leave it. He who was **rich** for our sakes became **poor**, so that He was truly that which He appeared to be—the Man. He was the perfect Man who presented Himself at Jordan—the only one who could be the **corresponding** price for Adam. R. 5622

You shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

– Exodus 21:23-24 –

There was no human being that had such a body as would be a sufficient sacrifice for the sins of mankind, because all were sinners. Had there been a **perfect** man he might have given his **perfect** life a ransom, but there was no perfect man. Therefore, as represented in the Psalms, “no man could give a ransom for his brother.” Hence it was necessary for God to find one who would have the ability, who would have the necessary thing to offer for man. The Lord shows us through the Law that his law calls for “a life for a life, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”; that this was the basis of Justice on which God was operating in this matter. And so, because it was a man that had sinned, the death of an angel could not be his redemption price; it must be a like, or corresponding price. It was a human life that was lost, and it must be a human life given to constitute the redemption price. It was not sufficient that there should be bulls and goats slain during the Jewish time, because these, the Apostle explains, were only figures and types of the “better sacrifices” which God intended in due time to present.

So the Apostle assures us that the man Christ Jesus came to our relief. He left the glory of the heavenly nature and took the human nature, for the very purpose of sacrificing it in order that he might be our Redeemer; because Justice required a man’s death to redeem the man (Adam) who had sinned. R. 4426

Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.

– Romans 5:18-19 –

Jehovah's first great and marvelous work of condemnation was, after four thousand years, followed by another great and marvelous work; viz., the work of redemption. How stupendous this work of the ransoming of all Adam's race of hundreds of millions by the sacrifice of one man! How great and wonderful indeed this act, and how just and true, and how fully in harmony with every feature of divine justice and love! Even the philosophy of the ransom is explained to the Lord's people,—how that all mankind were included in one man's sentence, to the intent that in due time the penalty of sin could be paid on behalf of all mankind by the one sacrifice for sins, “the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.” (1 Tim. 2:5-6; Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:18-19.) Was not this a great and marvelous work? Who that realizes the lengths and breadths, and heights and depths of this manifestation of divine justice and divine love, can do aught else than sing this song of Moses and the Lamb, declaring to all who have ears to hear it, “Great and marvelous, just and true are thy ways, Lord God Almighty.” R. 2713

The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.

– Mark 10:45 –

Life and immortality were not brought to light until Jesus came. (2 Tim. 1:10.) The great Message of salvation which before was only hinted at was in due time clearly stated by Jesus. He came to give His life a Ransom-price, to give a life that corresponded to the life that Adam lost. We see the beauty of the whole arrangement, that as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead. Whereas “by one man's **disobedience** many were made sinners, even so by the **obedience** of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. 5:19) —made free from the death penalty—and ultimately shall have a resurrection.

Those who get the first benefit of this provision in Christ are the Church. The Apostle says that we are risen with Him to walk in newness of life. And we have faith that God is able to fully complete this resurrection as He has promised. We do not claim that we do not die, which is contrary to all the facts and to the Scriptures. We, on the contrary, admit that we die. But we believe that He who raised up Jesus from the dead will raise us up also by Him. Jesus has effected an atonement for the sins of the whole world, upon the basis of which those who believe **now** may have reconciliation with God. And by and by the world will have the benefit of Christ's atoning work, and opportunity for reconciliation. R. 5418

We are not to think of the **Ransom** and the **Atonement** as being the same thing. We are to remember that the Sin-Offerings **are not** Ransom sacrifices. We are to remember the Ransom sacrifice was not the Sin-Offering. They are two separate propositions. R. 4426

It pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

– Colossians 1:19-20 –

Yes, his blood became the basis for the forgiveness of our sins, made peace for us, opened up the way to reconciliation, and transferred us from the domain of sentenced culprits, back to sonship in the family of God. So says the great Apostle Paul—Col. 1:20; Heb. 9:12; 10:19; 13:12; Rom. 3:25; 5:9; Eph. 1:7; 2:13; Col. 1:14 and Acts 20:28-31. So declares the great Apostle Peter—1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:19. So testifies the beloved Apostle John—1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 7:14. Forty-three **inspired** testimonies on the subject declare unitedly, not that our Lord shed his blood **for** himself and as an example to all men to shed their blood for themselves and thus reach perfection, but that, whatever blood symbolizes, it is **his blood** that **cleanseth us** from all sin.

The **blood** is the **life**. (Gen. 9:4-6.) “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have appointed it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls [lives, beings]: for it is the blood [sacrificed life] that maketh atonement for the soul [or being].” —Lev. 17:11; Lev. 17:14.

By accepting God’s definition of what blood signified, in all the sacrifices, as well as in the case of the “one sacrifice for all” which our Lord Jesus presented, all confusion disappears. As blood represents the life, the shedding of blood represents the loss of life—death. So then, the expressions—the Lamb slain, the cleansing blood of the Lamb, the precious blood of Christ, no more refer to literal blood than to a literal lamb, but to the **death of Christ**. True, our Lord’s side was actually pierced and blood flowed out, but the expression, “He hath redeemed us by his **blood**” (by his **death**), would have been equally true and proper, if not a drop of his literal blood had passed from his veins; for it merely signifies that he redeemed us by his **death**—by the sacrifice or **loss of his life**. Thus it is written, “He poured out his soul [being—life] unto death;” and again that he made “his soul [being—life] an offering for sin.” —Isa. 53:12; Isa. 53:10.

*There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.*

The hymn expresses well and beautifully the very thought of the Prophet:
**In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David
for sin and for uncleanness. (Zech. 13:1) R. 1229**

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

– 1 Peter 3:18 –

When our Lord “died, the just for the unjust,” it was that he might bring us to God; not only that he might bring us, the Church, to God, but that he might bring to God all of humanity who might desire to come to God. But his **death** did not bring us to God. His death was merely the laying down of the price, and that price was necessary to be found first. To illustrate: Suppose you had an obligation to meet—five thousand dollars. And suppose that you owned a property worth five thousand dollars, which you could sell. The price, or value, of the property would be a price exactly corresponding with the debt that was owing. You sell this property in order that you may have its value as a ransom price. But when you sold the property, you had not cancelled your obligation; you had merely sold the property, and obtained the price, which later you could apply.

Such was the effect of our Lord’s death. When he “died, the just for the unjust,” he laid down “a corresponding price.” Thus it is stated that “by one man’s disobedience sin entered the world and death as a result of sin,” and thus the death sentence and all its concomitants passed upon Adam’s race, because all were infected by the disease of sin, and therefore were all under the sentence of death. Our Lord, in order to redeem us, laid down our Ransom-price, his own life. That Ransom-price was a **sufficient price** for Adam, or for any other member of Adam’s race, or for all—just as he might subsequently apply it. No less than that would have paid for any one. If the Lord had purposed to redeem one individual alone and leave all the remainder of us out, it would still have taken his life, and nothing short of it; because it was man’s life that was forfeited, and man’s life must be the penalty.

Because this condemnation came through the one man, Adam, therefore in meeting the penalty for one it could be so applied as to take in the whole human family. So we see the philosophy of this great doctrine of the redemption, and how God had fixed the matter purposely so he might be able to settle the debt to his own Justice by the one sacrifice of his Son. R. 4426



The true view of the cross recognizes that while Jesus is indeed the Teacher of the Church, the Head of the Church, the Bridegroom for the Bride, the Church, it is the Lord who obtained not only the rightful authority to be our Teacher and by and by to be King of the world, but also by the same sacrifice, by the same ransom price, he bought the Church and the world, securing for all mankind release from the original sentence of death, release from the "curse," thus making it possible for God to be just and at the same time the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus. It is when the death of Christ is recognized as the ransom price for Adam, and incidentally for all of his family who lost through his disobedience, that we see its real signification, and how it was impossible under the divine arrangement for the baptism into death to be omitted by our Lord. At the same time we see how all who will be members of his glorious Bride class must also share with him in this baptism into death, and that without the shedding of his blood there could be no remission of sins, no reconciliation to the Father, no resurrection out of death, no reattainment of everlasting life. With the true view before us we have not only feelings of sympathy for our dear Redeemer's sufferings at Calvary, but we have joy also in his faithfulness, which means our redemption and ultimately through him, in the resurrection, our deliverance from the power of sin and death. R. 3900

**JESUS
THE SAVIOR
OF THE
WORLD**



**We ourselves have heard Him and we know that
this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.
John 4:42**

**He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but
also for the whole world.**

– 1 John 2:2 –

When we come to see that our Lord Jesus' sacrifice was "a propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins] and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," and that this "ransom for all" is "to be testified in due time" to all, and made available to all, that ultimately all may benefit thereby if they will, and return to harmony with God and to eternal life, --from this standpoint only can we see the greatness of that transaction, finished at Calvary, and how it is a "memorial" of God's abundant goodness. And only such as see this can heartily and loudly proclaim it, and sing joyfully of the righteousness of God, which not only was manifested in the righteous penalty against sin, but which again manifested itself in the righteous payment of that penalty on behalf of every creature. R. 2713



**We have seen and testify that the Father has
sent the Son as Savior of the world.
1 John 4:14**

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
– John 3:16 –**

The Divine Plan is purposely arranged so that none can obtain everlasting life except through a personal relationship to Christ, the Redeemer, and the exercise of faith in His redeeming blood and obedience to His counsels. This being true none of the heathen are saved yet. None of those who lived before Jesus came into the world are saved. And the great mass of our friends and neighbors, yea, of our own families, are still unsaved, because they have not come into vital relationship with the Savior. “He that hath the Son hath life”; “he that hath not the Son shall not see life.” —1 John 5:12; John 3:36.

St. Paul, commenting upon the fact that Jesus died for all—a Ransom-price for all—declares that this is to be testified in due time. (1 Timothy 2:5,6.) God’s due time for the testimony to reach the world evidently has not yet come. The testimony began when Jesus “brought life and immortality to light through His Gospel.” As we read, “So great salvation began to be spoken by our Lord.” —Heb. 2:3.

Since then, a few here and there have had the hearing ear, have heard of the grace of God and have seen something of His Divine providences. Jesus congratulated this class, saying, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.” The great mass of mankind see not and hear not, because, as St. Paul explained, the God of this world hath blinded the minds of those that believe not, that thus he might hinder them from seeing the true light of the grace of God, as it shines in the face of our Lord Jesus. —2 Cor. 4:4-6.

God has permitted this blindness, but declares that it will soon end; that under the blessed influences of Messiah’s Kingdom the true light shall shine everywhere; and not only so, but He also assures us that “all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped.” What a blessed vista this opens before us on behalf of the poor world! We see that God has special grace and blessing for His faithful Church, the Little Flock, the saints; but now we perceive that He has a blessing also for the world, although a different blessing from that which He has provided for the Church. R. 5356

**For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world,
but that the world through Him might be saved.**

John 3:17

The Free Gift

If by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:15-17

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

– Ephesians 1:7 –

The word grace signifies favor—particularly unmerited favor. Acts of grace are thus to be clearly distinguished from acts of justice and from obligations. The Scripture presentation of the matter does not overlook the law of retribution—that sin of any kind, the transgression of any law, will surely bring its penalty, whoever may be the sinner and whatever may be the conditions. And the propositions respecting divine grace, rightly understood, are not in conflict with this universal law of retribution: the proposition of grace is not to prevent fire from burning, but to provide a healing balm; not to prevent the wages of sin from following transgression, but to succor the repentant who desire to reform, and to help him back to divine favor and full recovery, along the lines of strictest justice; —by a willing ransom-price. And since this succor is wholly unmerited on man's part and without just obligation on God's part, it is purely of divine favor—"grace." Indeed, if it were not for sin and its retributive punishments, there would be no room for grace: it is man's necessity for grace that constitutes the divine opportunity for its exercise. Grace, however, operates in harmony with the divine laws, and not in violation of them. R. 2283

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

– Romans 3:24-26 –

The Apostle is here showing the immense importance and value of the death of Christ, to both Jews and Gentiles, both of whom are alike under the dominion of sin and condemned to death: the Jews in that they were unable to keep the Law of Moses, the Gentiles in that they were unable to live up to the law of their own conscience; so that every mouth is stopped from self-justification, and all the world stands guilty before God. The Jews had vainly hoped to justify themselves before God by keeping his Law; but this the Apostle shows they did not, and could not, do; for the Law uttered only condemnation to all that were under it, its only office to them being to convince them of sin, and to show them how far short they had come.

But though salvation could never come by the Law, Paul shows that God had a way provided, apart from the Law, whereby men could be saved—not merely Jews, but all men who would come unto him in his appointed way—by faith in Christ Jesus, “whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation [place of satisfaction], through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” The one condition of this salvation is a grateful acceptance of it, by faith, as the free unmerited gift of God through Jesus Christ, which also implies an acknowledgment that we all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, that we are under just condemnation to death, and that we need a redeemer. Thus this Bible plan of salvation requires on our part:

(1) the acknowledgment of the Bible account of the fall of man, and of his just condemnation to death; (2) our dependence upon the grace of God to rescue us from that condemnation, and (3) faith in his appointed means of doing it, with a grateful, humble acceptance of the favor. R.1582

We love Him because He first loved us.

1 John 4:19

God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).

– Ephesians 2:4-5 –

Our recovery did not begin with something in ourselves,—good resolutions, good works, etc. We did not improve ourselves, and thus commend ourselves to God: on the contrary, God was the prime mover in our release and recovery. He was inspired to give us aid by the benevolence of his character, for he is “rich in mercy.” He is rich in all of his attributes, rich in wisdom, rich in justice, rich in power, rich in love; but it is with the attribute of love and its corresponding benevolence, or mercy that the Apostle is here dealing. How necessary it is for us to get this thought of God’s richness of mercy well rooted and grounded in our hearts—that we may never doubt his generosity, his kindness, his sympathy, his mercy toward all those who desire and seek to know and to do his will!

Although this sympathetic love was toward the whole world, it has not yet been made generally known—it has not yet been practically exercised toward the world, but only toward a comparatively small proportion of the whole. R. 3165

By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.

– Ephesians 2:8 –

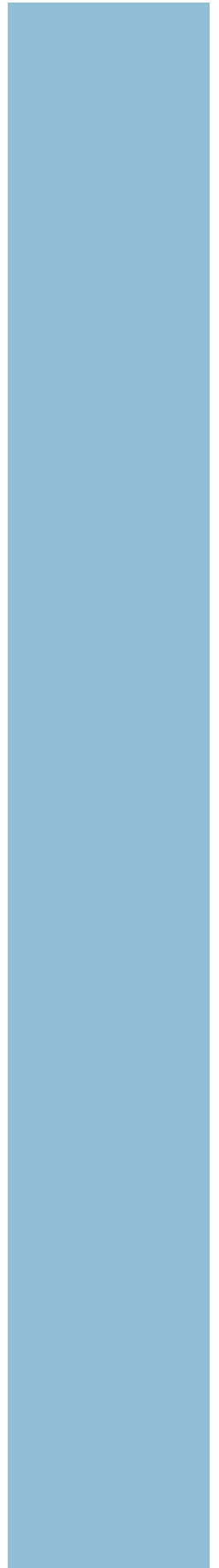
All this blessing has come to us, not of our worthiness, nor of our work, but by divine “grace are ye saved”; we reached this position in the new life, this reckonedly saved position, by faith;—delivered from the sentence of sin, saved from the darkness and delusion of the Adversary, saved from the wrath of God, and brought, instead, into his loving favor. Oh, how great is the salvation which accompanies a complete conversion and full consecration to the Lord! What a wonderful change it brings to us, in thought, in word and in act! And yet this is only the beginning of our salvation, or what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as being “saved by hope.” (Rom. 8:24.) While thus saved by grace now, we are still waiting for a further salvation, by grace— “for the grace [salvation] that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” —the First Resurrection. R. 3165

In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

– 1 John 4:9-10 –

The Apostle assures us that God had great love for us, even when we were dead in sins—when we were corrupt. It is difficult for us to think of God’s greatness, purity and splendor of character, and of man’s fallen condition—his corruption, mental, moral and physical—and then to understand how the holy Jehovah could have love for his fallen creatures. We may be sure that it was not the love of affection, such as he has for us now, as his sons, newly begotten of the spirit, but merely the love of sympathy. He beheld our miserable condition, and realized that an offer of release from our corruption, and of return to holiness and harmony with himself, would be joyfully appreciated and accepted by some—let us hope, by many; —and it was, undoubtedly, in view of such a response to his goodness and mercy that our Creator opened up for the world of mankind “a new way of life,” in and through the Lord Jesus and his redemptive work. R. 3165

**JESUS CHRIST
RESURRECTED**



This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid. Then they returned and prepared spices and fragrant oils. And they rested on the Sabbath according to the commandment.

Luke 23:55-56

Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared.

– Luke 24:1 –

The women, whose office it was to complete the work of embalming the body of Jesus, went very early in the morning of the first day of the week, “while it was yet dark,” to perform their loving service. Our Lord was crucified on Friday, the sixth day of the week, and buried probably about four o'clock. This left no opportunity to complete the embalming arrangements, because, as Jews under the Law, they were obliged to keep the seventh day (Saturday) as a rest day, and in it do no work of any kind; but the seventh day closed at sundown, and we may presume that immediately the preparation of spices began, and that all arrangements were completed, and that they were on their way to the sepulcher as early as possible.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the mother of James the Less and of Joses, were there (Matt. 27:56), and Mark and Luke tell us that shortly afterward came Salome the mother of John, Joanna the wife of Chuza, and other women, who brought spices for a more thorough embalming of the Lord's body than was possible on the night of our Lord's burial, on account of the lateness of the hour and the approach of the Passover.

On their way they had been wondering who would roll away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre that they might enter with their spices to complete the embalming work which was discontinued two evenings before because of the Jewish Sabbath then beginning. To their surprise the stone was already rolled away. They tarried awhile wondering, and then in the dim light they perceived that the Lord's body was not there. R. 2794, R. 3905, R. 4176

And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men.

Matthew 28:2-4

The angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.”

– Matthew 28:5-6 –

How great was the reward of these devoted women—last at the cross and first at the sepulcher, anxious to bestow upon the lifeless remains of their beloved Lord the last tokens of their esteem and love. They sympathetically lingered near the cross, beholding his dying agonies; they were the mourners that accompanied him to the tomb at night; and they were there again before break of day with their precious ointments. In their eagerness to do this loving service, they forgot the great obstacle of the stone at the door. But the sweet incense of their devotion arose to heaven, and God sent his angel to remove the obstacle, and their zeal was rewarded with the richest tokens of his grace. Theirs was the honor of personally receiving the heavenly benedictions—of the angel and of the risen Lord, —and of first bearing the glad tidings of the resurrection to the other disciples. R. 1816

But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

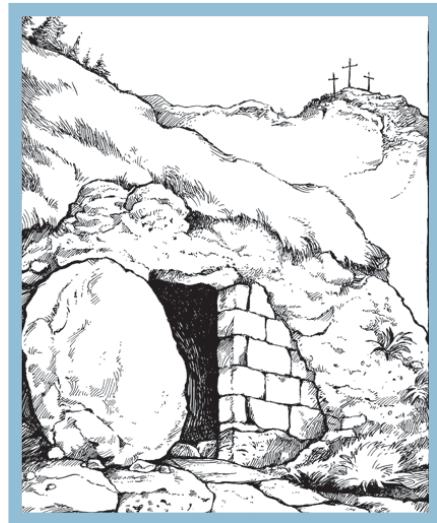
And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, Why do you seek the living among the dead?

Luke 24:2-5

He is not here, but is risen!

Luke 24:6



The removal of the crucified body from the tomb which was also miraculous, for it did not see corruption, nor was a bone of it broken (Psa. 34:20; 16:10) was necessary to establish in the minds of the disciples the fact of his resurrection. Had it remained there it would have been an insurmountable barrier to their faith; nor could the astonished guards, nor the Jews, nor the world, have believed that he was risen; because they could understand nothing of the spiritual nature and the mysterious change.

To presume that Christ's glorious body is but the reanimated body of his humiliation, is to deny the assertion of the Apostle that "it doth not yet appear" what a spiritual body is (1 John 3:2); and to claim that that "glorious body" is ingloriously marred with the wounds of spear and spike and cruel thorns; and that the flesh which he gave for the life of the world—as our ransom price—he took back, thus rendering null and void the finished work on Calvary; and it is in direct contradiction of the statement of the Apostle that, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more." R. 1816

“And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee. There you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to bring His disciples word.

– Matthew 28:7-8 –

They were fearful and surprised when they received the angel's message that Jesus was risen; yet they grasped the fact by “intuitive faith.” The angel, so terrible to those out of harmony with the Lord, spoke graciously to those who were his friends, assuring them that Jesus was risen, and directing them to go quickly and tell his disciples, also assuring them that Jesus would go into Galilee, and intimating a general meeting of his friends there, which later took place. En route they met Jesus, who sent the same message to his disciples. Seemingly the Lord recognized that woman can exercise faith more readily than can man, and here he used them as his servants and mouthpieces to bear his message—to prepare his disciples, to assist them more readily to accept the truth of his resurrection. R. 2317 and R. 3905

Perplexed by their further loss Mary hastened to the home of John, with whom Peter was lodging, and related these facts. The two apostles ran to the sepulchre. John, the younger, outrunning Peter, arrived there first. But by this time the other women had departed to communicate the news to the other disciples. Awe stricken, John had stooped down and looked in, but Peter, on arrival, still more courageous, went in followed by John. They found things as Mary had described them, the body gone, the linen cloths there. Troubled and perplexed they went their way. Although the indication is that they both believed, their belief was not that the Lord had risen, but that Mary's story was true, that his body had been removed, "for as yet they knew not the Scripture that he must rise again from the dead." —[John 20:9] R. 4176

Here is seen the development of the Gospels as they are arranged in the New Testament. Matthew announces that Jesus is risen; Mark, that he is risen and ascended; but Luke goes further and adds the promise of the Holy Spirit; while John is beyond them all in declaring Christ's promise to come again.

--W. W. Clark. R. 1046

Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there, yet he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb, and he saw the linen cloths lying there, and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also, and he saw and believed. For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

– John 20:2-9 –

Now they began to think of the words which our Lord had spoken respecting his resurrection on the third day, and John tells us of himself that looking at these evidences “he believed”—yet no doubt with much confusion of thought at first. The two disciples went to their home, but Mary remained at the sepulcher, weeping, and looking in, she saw what Peter and John had not seen—two angels. They were doubtless there when Peter and John went into the sepulcher, but as we have heretofore seen from the Scriptural testimony, angels are invisible to human sight, except as a miracle may be performed. Such as a miracle was performed in this instance, and the two angels assumed human form and white raiment, and asked, “Why weepest thou?” intimating that there was no cause for weeping and thus no doubt helping to prepare Mary for the next step of our Lord's revelation.

While she told them that she was weeping because some one had taken away the Lord's corpse, she heard as a footstep near her; a noise or perhaps a shadow called her attention backward, and turning [she] saw what she took to be the gardener, the keeper of Joseph's garden in which this tomb was....
R. 2477 and R. 4176

After the apostles received the holy Spirit they understood matters connected with our Lord's death and resurrection which they did not understand before. It is similar with us; when we receive the holy Spirit we come to a deeper appreciation of the features of divine truth. R. 4175

Our Lord's resurrected being was a direct gift from the Father, and not something which our Redeemer held over from a previous existence. When he left the glory of the spiritual condition and became the man Jesus, he had a **right to life**, under the divine law, because he had always fulfilled the conditions of life. In harmony with this the Scriptures assure us that his degradation from a higher nature to the human nature was not as a punishment, but of his own volition; not in obedience to a command of the Father, but in obedience to the will of the Father. As a man also he had a right to life, because the divine law guaranteed life to all who obeyed it; hence in no sense of the word was his human life forfeited. On the contrary, he **gave** it, he **sacrificed** it, he **offered** it, in harmony with the Father's plan, as man's **ransom-price**. But there he lost all right to life: that was the very thing which he surrendered or "offered" on man's behalf. And having surrendered on man's behalf his rights to life he had no such rights remaining, and consequently could plead no right to a future life by a resurrection on that score—he had given his rights for Adam and his race. R. 2477

Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

– Acts 2:24 –

It was not possible, because he had kept the divine law perfectly, and thus, according to divine arrangement and promise, he had accomplished two things: (1) The giving of the ransom price for the human family; (2) the attestation of his own fidelity and his worthiness of high exaltation to the divine nature and glory— "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (John 5:23.) The same justice which had operated for four thousand years against Adam and his race because of transgression was now operative on behalf of Jesus for his deliverance from death, into which he had voluntarily gone as man's redemption price. When we come to see matters from the divine standpoint and arrangement we can well rejoice that the Father's character is unchangeable, and our Lord's resurrection becomes an evidence, or, as the Apostle says, an "assurance," of the carrying out of every feature of the divine plan, all of which centered in him and was made dependent upon his faithfulness even unto death, even the death of the cross. (Acts 17:31.) R. 2794

This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

– Acts 2:32 –

When his existence terminated in death the only begotten Son had ceased to exist—was dead. But in his resurrection, his re-creation, he was again the only begotten Son of God, for no agency was called into service to accomplish his resurrection, but, as when first created, he was the direct workmanship of Jehovah, who so arranged that not even this distinctive title and honor of "only begotten" should be lost by his obedient Son. Hence no agency of man, nor even of the angel Gabriel, was permitted in the work of our Lord's resurrection: no **agencies** great or small were employed, but it is written "Whom God hath raised from the dead"—"God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." —Acts 2:24; 3:15; 4:10; Rom. 4:24; 6:4; 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; Col. 2:12; I Thes. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:21. And since his resurrection was a re-creation of the same being or individuality first created, it can still be said of him that he is the first and the last, the beginning and the ending of the creation of God, the Only Begotten of the Father. —See Rev. 1:18. R. 1005

Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all, but the life that He lives He lives to God.

– Romans 6:9-10 –

The Scriptures nowhere intimate that our Lord Jesus did or could raise himself from the dead. If it were merely his body that had died, and if he were more alive than ever, of course he could just as easily quicken his own body that had died as he could quicken the body of Lazarus, and it be no more of a miracle, and no more of a proof. But if, as the Scriptures declare, it was **his soul that died** then he was wholly dead, and could have no power whatever to resuscitate himself. To this the Scriptures agree, declaring in so many words that “God the Father raised him from the dead.” (Gal. 1:1.) Nor is this an exceptional statement of the matter. It is the united testimony of the Scriptures, in proof of which note the following: Acts 2:24; Acts 2:32; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30,34; 17:31; Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thes. 1:10; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:21. The Scriptural proposition is that our Lord’s sacrifice was once for all, and that Christ dieth no more, death hath no dominion over him (Rom. 6:9), and the Apostle shows that there could be no need of a further atonement sacrifice than that which God has already provided. It is able to make perfect and that “unto the uttermost” those who would approach to God. R. 2794 and R. 2821

And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

– 1 Corinthians 15:14 –

So important is this doctrine in the estimation of the inspired Apostle that he emphatically declares that, if it be not true, then there is no hope for any one beyond the present life, the preaching of the Gospel is in vain, those who preach it are false witnesses, the faith of Christians is vain and their hope delusive. Moreover, he urges that their life of sacrifice, in view of the resurrection and its rewards, merely robs them of what little enjoyment and advantage they might have in this present life, which is all they would ever have; and that those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished –if Christ be not risen from the dead.

Those who get the proper grasp of the importance of the resurrection of Jesus will perceive the necessity for the very explicit description thereof given us in the Gospels, because without faith in the resurrection of Jesus we must be without faith in the merit of his death, in the sufficiency of his sin-offering on our behalf and consequently uncertain in respect to our own resurrection, the salvation which shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:13.) This accounts for the minuteness of detail. Moreover, not only is it to be remembered that the apostles and the five hundred brethren, converts to our Lord’s teaching at the time, were natural men and needed such proofs as would appeal to the natural mind, but it should be remembered also that the message of our Lord’s death and resurrection would go to natural men all the way down the Gospel Age and must be so plain and distinct as to be understood by all. R. 5882 and R. 4175

So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body 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 a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

– 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 –

It was our Lord the New Creature who was the heir of all things, the High Priest whose privilege it was to sacrifice. He sacrificed his flesh, his earthly nature, which he covenanted to the Lord at his baptism. He finished the work of sacrificing at Calvary; for parts of three days he was dead, but when the resurrection moment came and the Father raised him up by his own power, he raised up not the sacrificed flesh but the New Creature, the “it” to which the Apostle refers, the “it” which was sown, buried in the flesh, in dishonor, with the wicked and the rich. It was raised the third day to glory, honor and immortality, the divine nature. In other words the New Creature was perfected by being given a new body. Thus seen all of the Lord’s people, as was their Lord, are dual beings. They as New Creatures have a reckoned existence while their mortal bodies are reckoned dead. By and by when the mortal flesh is actually dead the New Creature will be perfected by being granted a new body, a resurrection body. Let us remember the Apostle’s words and apply them to ourselves, I do count all things but loss and dross that I may win Christ...that I may know him and the power of his resurrection [sharing it], being made conformable to his death. —Phil. 3:8-10. R. 4177

To this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

– Romans 14:9 –

The soul is that individuality which God has decreed shall have an opportunity of coming to a knowledge of everlasting life. All this opportunity is in Christ. He lived as a man, and died that He might thereby have the right to control all those who have gone into the prison house of death. Therefore the Scriptures tell us that there **must** be a resurrection of the dead.

Our Lord says that **all** will hear His voice and come forth from the tomb. (John 5:28-29.) In 1 Cor. 15:1-58, St. Paul explains how this can be. He points out that the death of Christ is for all: “As all in Adam die, even so shall all in Christ be made alive—every man in his own order.” Then he proceeds to show that the first to come forth will be the Church class. He also declares that if there is no resurrection of the dead, our preaching is vain and our hope is gone. He concludes that since Christ is **risen from the dead** there is therefore an **assurance** of the **resurrection**.

All the blessings of everlasting life God has made provision for through Messiah. Messiah is to have a Kingdom; and this Kingdom is to rule the world in righteousness (see Psalms 96, 97, and 72), blessing not only the living, but also those who have fallen asleep in death. (Isaiah 25:6-9; Hosea 13:14; Romans 14:9; 8:20,21, Diaglott.) Many Scriptures declare this in unmistakable terms. Indeed this is the tenor of the entire Word of God. The Divine Plan runs like a golden chain through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments. R. 5612 and R. 5706

He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.

Acts 17:31

Appearances and Parting Words From The Master

He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

– Acts 1:3 –

It should be remembered that out of fewer than ten appearances during the forty days between our Lord's resurrection and ascension, He only twice appeared in a form similar to that which they had seen, and bearing the marks of crucifixion; and that on both of these occasions He appeared while the doors were shut, and later vanished while the doors were still shut, in order that His followers might learn a double lesson:

- (1) That He was no longer dead, but alive, resurrected;
- (2) That He was no longer flesh, but Spirit— "Now the Lord is that Spirit." R. 5415

It was years after this that Paul wrote, "Last of all he was seen by me also, as of one born before the time." He was seen of the other apostles as the gardener, as a stranger, as the Crucified One, etc., etc., but when Paul, the last of the apostles, saw him it was not so, but as we shall see him by and by when we are changed to his likeness---he saw him as one of premature birth. The Church of the First-Born are at the resurrection changed to be like their Lord and see him as he is. Any special revelation of the Lord might have been withheld from the Apostle Paul until the same time except that it was necessary that the apostles should be "witnesses," testifiers to the fact that Christ had not only died but had also risen from the dead; and in order that Paul as an Apostle might thus testify he was granted the vision of the glorified one. He saw him as we shall see him in that he saw him in the brightness of his excellent glory and not as the others, veiled in the flesh. R. 3905

Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee. There you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.

– Matthew 28:7 –

After his resurrection we find our Lord promptly taking up his work just where it had been broken off by his death—the work of still further preparing the apostles, his chosen witnesses, to bear reliable testimony to the whole Church. We find that while he appeared to many other disciples besides the apostles, and to upwards of five hundred at one time (1 Cor. 15:5-8), he was specially careful to very clearly establish the fact of his resurrection to the apostles. We find him carefully looking up each one of "the eleven"—sending the women who were first at the sepulcher to communicate the fact of his resurrection to each of them, and specially mentioning Peter, lest he should be overcome with discouragement on account of his previous unfaithfulness (Mark 16:7); opening the understanding of the two (Luke 24:27; Luke 24:32) on the way to Emmaus; satisfying doubting Thomas with tangible evidence; specially re-affirming Peter's commission; and fully convincing all and sending them out into the work again. —John 20:26-28; 21:15-17; Acts 1:1-2; Luke 24:52. R. 1522

Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping?” She said to them, “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.” Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.” Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).

– John 20:15-16 –

Jesus, who had hidden his identity by appearing in “another form,” like a gardener, in different clothing from that which was parted amongst the soldiers, and different also from that in which he had been shrouded, revealed himself through the tone of his voice which she so well knew, uttering her name only. In a moment the truth flashed upon her mind and she cried, Rabboni, my Master, my Lord! With us as with Mary, sorrow sometimes fills our hearts and we see not the streams of joy and everlasting blessing which the Lord has for us; not until we hear his voice, his word, do we appreciate the truth. But all who know the Master truly know his voice, know his message, know his spirit, his disposition; as he himself expressed it, My sheep hear my voice and they follow me, they recognize not the voice of strangers. —John 3:5.

In her ecstasy Mary was apparently about to grasp the Lord by the feet. Her thought evidently was, This is a vision, which will pass away and I will see my Lord no more; I will hold him tightly; where he is I must be. But Jesus taught her otherwise, and the lesson is a good one for us also. He would have her remember that he had already said, “It is expedient for you that I go away.” Why, then, should she detain him? Besides, she was not ready to go with him, she had lessons to learn, experiences were to still further develop her character, to fit and prepare her for the Kingdom blessings. He must go, she must stay.

Our Lord gave Mary a message for the apostles, a service she could render him and them—and the intimation is that she should rather have been thinking of such a service instead of holding him by the feet; she should be exercising faith and accepting divine providence and hastening to spread the good tidings of his resurrection to others. The lesson for us is obvious. We, too, have heard of the death and resurrection of Jesus and additionally have learned of God’s grace through him, and it is our privilege to carry the message to all of the brethren wherever they may be, to all who have the hearing ear. R. 3564 and R. 4175



The honor of being the first witness to whom our Lord manifested himself after his resurrection came to Mary Magdalene, who at one time was possessed by evil spirits, but who, being freed from their domination became a faithful and loyal follower of Jesus. This was not the Mary, sister of Lazarus and Martha, neither was it Mary the "sinner," who washed our Lord's feet with her tears in the Pharisee's house. She is called Mary Magdalene, probably because her hometown was Magdala. R. 3564

Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father, but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'

– John 20:17 –

We are not surprised that Mary did not know her Lord until he revealed himself by speaking her name in as a familiar manner. Then how quickly her faith surmounted every obstacle; with as a woman's intuition she stopped not to inquire why there were no marks of the nails in his hands and in his feet but crying, "Master!" she clasped him by the feet with as a fervency that meant, Now that I have found you again I will not let go of you! Her love, her devotion, her persistence, gained for Mary the great honor of being the first to whom the Lord revealed himself after his resurrection. She had been forgiven much, and she loved much, and our Lord manifested his appreciation of her devotion. Nevertheless, he must tell her that she was neglecting a great privilege and as a great duty, for under divine providence it had fallen to her to be the first to announce to the disciples positively that the Lord was alive again. Instead of holding the Lord tightly by the feet, and thinking never to leave him, she should rather gladly become the servant both of the Lord and the apostles, and carry the good tidings.

Our Lord's declaration, I have not yet ascended to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God, emphasizes the fact that he went not to heaven when he died, but into the tomb, into the state of death. It emphasizes also the fact that he is our Elder Brother, our forerunner into the Father's presence and into the glories which God hath in reservation for all those that love him, that love him to the extent of willingness to follow in the footsteps of Jesus at any cost along the rugged narrow way. R. 2477 and R. 4175

To find her Lord alive when she had supposed him dead meant to Mary a joy such as the Apostle Peter expressed when he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." We may well suppose from our own experience in such matters, that every time Mary told the good tidings to others and made their hearts rejoice also, it brought her a fresh increase of joy. The Master similarly sends all who recognize him as "he that liveth and was dead, and is alive forevermore," to go forth and tell others of the glorious fact that we have a living Savior, whose love and interest extends to every interest and affair of our lives, and who not only is full of sympathy and compassion, but is able also to succor those who are tempted, who are in trial, who are in distress of any kind; —one who is able to bring us off conquerors, to give us strength to endure hardness, and who by and by will receive to himself all the faithful. R. 2796

**They said to one another, “Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road and while He opened the Scriptures to us?”
– Luke 24:32 –**

Two disciples (not apostles: see Luke 24:18,33) were earnestly discussing the sad events of the last few days, which so perplexed them all. They had trusted that he who had just been crucified was the true Messiah foretold by the prophets: he had seemed to fit the descriptions of the prophets so perfectly, but now he was very generally esteemed as “smitten of God and afflicted.” Their sad and perplexed faces were indexes of their minds. They had loved the Lord and trusted in him, and they delighted to call to mind his sweet spirit, his wise counsel, his wonderful teaching and his great love for each of them personally. How strange it seemed that such a one should so perish!

Yes, they loved the Lord, and delighted to speak one with another, and to think upon his name; and the Lord hearkened and heard it (Mal. 3:16-17): he was beside them all the while though they knew it not, and soon he seemed to overtake them, and gave them a stranger’s greeting. Then followed the marvelous opening up of the Scriptures to them. How familiar the stranger seemed to be with the law and the prophets; and how wonderfully he wove together the web of logical and Scriptural argument, to prove it necessary that Messiah must suffer these things before he could enter into his glory! Surely enough, it was all there in the sacred writings, but they had never seen it so before. How reasonable, too, when thus viewed!



Then they told him of the strange news they had heard of his resurrection that very morning; and as he further explained how this also was so to be, as foretold by the prophets, they drew near home and the stranger was therefore about to take leave of them. But their interest in the conversation was too deep to part thus abruptly with him, and they urged him to tarry and partake of their hospitality.

Earnest inquiry and generous hospitality were strong incentives to the Lord, as they always are. So he accepted the invitation; and soon they were made cognizant of the fact that the Lord himself was indeed their guest. And his blessing sank deep in their hearts, and they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us by the way? Let us take to our hearts the precious lesson of this incident, that we may enjoy more and more of the blessings of communion with the Lord and with each other. If our hearts are humble, earnest and true; if our delight is in the Lord and his truth; if our actions are guided by the noble principles of truth and righteousness; and if our candid, thoughtful endeavor is always to find the purest principles and the exact truth to the end that we may conform our lives thereto, then indeed the Lord will be pleased to dwell with us and to manifest himself to us as he does not unto the world. —John 14:21. R. 1823

Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.

– John 20:21 –

“My peace I give unto you,” were our Lord’s words on the night of his betrayal, at the supper, and “Peace be unto you,” were his words when first he met the disciples together after his resurrection. He is indeed the Prince of Peace, and the grace of peace which he gives to his faithful disciples is a blessing beyond all measure, such as the world can neither give nor take away; but this peace is based upon certain conditions of the heart: first, faith, trust in God; secondly, obedience, on our part, endeavoring to do those things which are pleasing in God’s sight.

Our Lord’s words imply that we as his disciples are to be engaged in the same work that he is engaged in. He did not finish the work completely, but merely finished one part of it—the part which he was to perform in the flesh, the redemption. Another great part of the work is to be accomplished at his second advent in power and great glory; viz., the blessing of all the families of the earth with a knowledge of divine grace and an opportunity for returning into full fellowship with the Father and to eternal life. His commission covered this entire work, as represented in the promise of God to Abraham, “In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” and our Lord explained to the two brethren on the way to Emmaus that it behooved him to suffer for the sins of the world before he should enter into his glory, and ultimately begin the work of their blessing, because he could not have the power or the authority to bless until first he redeemed from the sentence of death.

And this is the commission which our Lord and Head has in turn committed to his followers. We are sent on the same mission, and hence it is declared that we are to suffer with him in the present life—to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ”—and then to share with him in his glory in the blessing of all the families of the earth. How grand a commission! What a great privilege to be invited to walk in his steps—of trial and suffering now, and of glory, honor and immortality by and by! Whoever appreciates this privilege will show his appreciation, not only in words, but in deeds, in truth, by laying aside every weight, and the easily-besetting sin, and running with patience the race set before us in the Gospel. R. 2802

SO SEND I YOU

*So send I you to labor unrewarded,
To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown,
To bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing,
So send I you to toil for Me alone.
So send I you to bind the bruised and broken,
O'er wand'ring souls to work, to weak, to wake,
To bear the burdens of a world a'weary,
So send I you to suffer for My sake.
So send I you to loneliness and longing,
With hearts a hung'ring for the loved and known,
Forsaking home and kindred, friend and dear one,
So send I you, to know My love alone.
So send I you to leave your life's ambition,
To die to dear desire, self will resign,
To labor long, and love where men revile you,
So send I you to lose your life in Mine.
So send I you to hearts made hard by hatred,
To eyes made blind because they will not see,
To spend, tho' it be blood, to spend and spare not,
So send I you to taste of Calvary.*

As the Father hath sent Me, so send I you.

During the forty days after His resurrection, Jesus appeared and disappeared some ten or eleven times, mostly for a few moments each. During these visits to His faithful He gave them instructions. He did not appear to them as a spirit being to strike them down with the glory of His presence, shining above the brightness of the sun, as He subsequently appeared to Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 26:13.) On the contrary, He appeared as a man, sometimes in one form and sometimes in another form---as a gardener, as a traveler, etc. On two occasions He appeared in bodies similar to the one in which He had been crucified, showing the spear marks and the nail prints. These bodies were materialized in the upper room when the doors were shut; and of course clothing was materialized at the same time, for He was not naked. These manifestations of Jesus were for the purpose of demonstrating unquestionably to His disciples the fact that He was no longer dead. His appearance in different bodies was to prove that none of these bodies was His real spiritual body, but merely a manifestation. R. 5830

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

– John 20:24-25 –

There are some people who are naturally very cautious. St. Thomas seems to have been one of these. We cannot think that the Lord is displeased with such characters. From our standpoint, indeed, the person who is inclined to be somewhat critical is rather to be approved. We would naturally incline to disapprove those who are too easily credulous, too easily persuaded. We are even to think highly of those who are of the mental attitude of St. Thomas. We are glad that there was one such hard thinker as this Apostle.

Our Lord’s followers today, as then, differ constitutionally to a considerable extent. Some find it easier to exercise faith than do others. It was right that Thomas should take care not to be deceived in the matter, but it was wrong that he should be so deficient in faith as to stand out stoutly in disbelieving when he had his evidence from so many of the brethren whose honesty he could not doubt. However, the Lord is very patient and long-suffering toward us all, and so he was with Thomas to the extent of granting him the very evidence which he had said would be satisfactory.

We cannot doubt that in this incident the Lord has given to all of His followers a very helpful lesson. Had none of the Apostles even seemed to doubt the Lord’s resurrection, they might have failed to bring out convincing proof of the fact. They might afterward have thought to themselves, “Why did we not make further investigation?” But here we have evidence of the investigation. R. 2804 and R. 5236



After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands. And reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"* Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

– John 20:26-29 –

A whole week passed without any manifestation of the Lord to any of the disciples; however, the next first-day of the week (Sunday, "the eighth day," the Jewish method of counting including both days) found the Lord's followers gathered in hope of some further reports, evidences, etc., connected with his resurrection, when Jesus again "appeared," and we may well suppose them full of interest and suppressed excitement not unmixed with disappointment, and fear that they might see him no more. Immediately our Lord addressed Thomas, thus indicating his thorough knowledge of his doubts and fears; he invited him to come forward and have the very evidences which he had declared would be necessary.

Our Lord did not reprove Thomas for his hard-headed determination to have indubitable proofs before he would believe; but he did tell him of a more excellent way,—that while it is good to believe upon the basis of physical sight and physical touch, there is a still higher attainment of faith than that, which is able to see things that cannot be seen with the natural eye, and to feel things which cannot be felt with the natural touch. He would have Thomas and us all realize this well; so that we might the more cultivate this spiritual sensibility: not that he would have us credulous and ready to believe without evidence or testimony, but so filled with true faith and confidence in the Father's mighty power, and in Christ's own promises, that we would be ready to believe certain things upon the evidence of others, yea, to expect those things.

And this has been the condition of acceptance with the Lord throughout this Gospel age. We have not seen Jesus except with the eyes of our understanding; we have not heard his voice except as we have heard with the ears of our hearts; yet this is the more blessed faith; —the kind more appreciated by the Lord himself than the kind which would be satisfied with nothing but a tangible demonstration. A time is coming in which God will give to the whole world of mankind tangible evidences respecting all the features of the divine plan. Faith will then be swallowed up in sight, but when that time shall have come the rewards of faith which are now held out will no longer be open. Other rewards will be given, rewards of obedience; but they will not be so great as the rewards of faith.

The Lord said in this connection, "Because thou hast seen, thou hast believed. Blessed are those who have not seen, and yet have believed." There might be a question as to what the Lord meant by these words. He may have meant, Do not congratulate yourself that you were not easy to convince; or He may have meant, There is a special blessing for those who have faith—who believe without seeing. In God's arrangement, faith has been made the very center of Christian progress—faith in the things He **has done**, faith in the things He has **promised** to do. Faith is the thing which, by God's grace, enables us to avail ourselves of the wonderful opportunities of this present time. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." R. 2804 and R. 5236

* We are not to suppose that by this expression Thomas meant that he recognized the risen Jesus as being the Heavenly Father, as some would suggest: on the contrary, we are to remember that amongst the Jews the word "god" signified mighty one, and was sometimes applied to angels, and sometimes to great, influential men, as well as to the All-mighty One, Jehovah. God, mighty one, was an appropriate title to apply to our Lord Jesus. R. 2804

That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea. But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish. Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread. Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have just caught.” Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three, and although there were so many, the net was not broken. Jesus said to them, “Come and eat breakfast.” Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, “Who are You?”

---knowing that it was the Lord.

John 21:7-12

Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?

– John 21:15 –

The context shows that these words were addressed by the Redeemer to St. Peter on the occasion of His third manifestation to His disciples after His resurrection. The delay in giving this third manifestation was evidently for the purpose of testing the faith of the Apostles and of leading them to reach a conclusion respecting their future course, which Jesus wished to correct. So far as we can understand the record, at least two Sundays passed without any further manifestation of Jesus to His disciples, and then, giving up hope, they decided to return to the fishing business and did so.

During all those thirty days the mental attitude of all the Apostles and the other disciples can be better imagined than described. They were perplexed, they had indeed had evidences of the Master’s resurrection; they had had the Scriptures called to their attention which proved that this was necessary and that God had previously so arranged. They had hoped for further conferences with Jesus and that He would have told them definitely what to do.

Instead, left to themselves, the disciples were thoroughly disheartened. They had left all to follow Him, to tell the people that He was the Son of God, the long-promised Messiah, and that He would soon set up His Kingdom. Now apparently all of these hopes were dashed, frustrated. How foolish they thought it would seem for them to try to convince the people that a man, crucified as a malefactor, as a blasphemer, was indeed the Messiah! How foolish it would seem to tell of His resurrection! They felt that they could do nothing else than abandon the ministry as a lost cause; and the resumption of the fishing business was the logical conclusion.

Their first night was a discouraging one—they caught nothing. It looked indeed as though God was punishing them for the course they had taken in becoming disciples of Jesus—that everything was going wrong. But not so; they were merely being taught needed lessons. In the morning they beheld a stranger on the shore who beckoned and shouted to know if they had any fish for sale. They replied, No, they had made no catch. The stranger suggested casting the net on the other side of the boat. And, although the suggestion seemed a foolish one, having been so unsuccessful, yet they did so, and immediately the net was filled with fishes! It did not require long for them to learn the lesson. They knew instinctively that the unknown stranger upon the shore was none other than their Master.

Thrice had Peter denied the Lord—though under extreme temptation—and the denial was sincerely repented of with bitter tears; and now thrice would the Lord have him reaffirm his devotion to him,

and receive three additional assurances of his ample reinstatement in his love and favor. The question arises, With what did our Lord bring himself into comparison in Peter's mind when he said, "Lovest thou me **more than these?**" Evidently with the fishing tackle and the business prospects represented in them. Once, in obedience to the Lord's call, he had left these to follow him; and then, in the interval of perplexity since his resurrection, not knowing what else to do, he had gone back to the old business. So the Lord inquired how he felt about it now, since the reproach of the crucifixion. It was as though he had said, Are you willing again, Simon, in the face of all the public prejudice and hate and the reproach of the cross to leave all your business and social prospects and go out again to preach the Kingdom of God and the return in glory and power of the crucified One? Are you willing, too, to incur the additional reproach and persecution which zeal and faithfulness in my cause are sure to bring?

Peter's prompt affirmative answer indicates nothing of either embarrassment or boastfulness, but instead, a loving sincerity, which was glad of the opportunity to respond promptly and warmly—"Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." The question thus addressed to Peter—"Lovest thou me more than these?" is the question addressed to every consecrated follower of the Lord, without a single exception. If we have given ourselves unreservedly to the Lord, the necessities of his work are before us, to prove the sincerity and strength of our love. Nor has the reproach of the cross yet ceased: indeed, in this end of the age, as in the beginning, the reproach of the cross is bitter and determined; and it is more and more so every year as prominent ecclesiastics lead the way toward the ditch of open and avowed infidelity.

So to each of us comes the testing question, "Lovest thou me **more than these**" --more than the business pursuits and prospects, more than the social ties and pleasures, more than ease, or comfort, or friends, or fame, or wealth, or a good name, or any earthly good? R. 5052 and R. 1823

Ah! it is truly a test question, and a question which no one can sincerely answer in the affirmative who has not the inspiring incentive of love in the heart. But pure, fervent love to Christ does quicken zeal, and enable those who have it to respond gladly and promptly:

"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."



**Feed my sheep.
John 21:17**

For forty days our Lord was with his disciples before his ascension, yet he revealed himself to them, according to the records, not more than eleven times in all—and some of these instances are probably duplications. His interviews with the disciples lasted but for a few moments each, and were surrounded by circumstances and conditions which said to them in thunder tones that a great change had occurred to him—that he was no longer the same being, although he evidently had the same loving interest in them as before. He was still their Lord and Master, this same Jesus, although no longer Jesus in the flesh. He was "the Lord, that spirit." R. 3905

ON THE DAY OF THE RESURRECTION

- 1) Sunday morning early—to Mary Magdalene—near the sepulchre at Jerusalem. —Mark 16:9; John 20:11-18.
- 2) Sunday morning—to the women returning from the sepulchre—near Jerusalem. —Matt. 28:9,10.
- 3) Sunday—to Simon Peter alone—near Jerusalem. —Luke 24:34.
- 4) Sunday afternoon—to the two disciples going to Emmaus—between Jerusalem and Emmaus. —Luke 24:13-21.
- 5) Sunday evening—to the apostles excepting Thomas—at Jerusalem. —John 20:19-25.

All five of these were on the first day, the resurrection day, the remaining six appearances being scattered through the remaining thirty-nine days of our Lord's presence, as follows:

THE NEXT SUNDAY — THE EIGHTH DAY

- 6) Sunday evening, a week after the resurrection—to the apostles, Thomas being present—at Jerusalem. —John 20:26-29.

Following this was a long interval apparently in which there was no appearance whatever, and the disciples, discouraged, perplexed, resolved to go back to their homes in Galilee and there to reengage in the fishing business, considering that the Lord and his mission had been a failure. Our Lord evidently expected just such a process of reasoning on their part, and his delay was undoubtedly to help them over the difficulty and to start them afresh as servants of the Kingdom of God on a higher and still grander plane than their previous ministries had been—under the ministration of the holy Spirit.

APPEARANCES IN GALILEE

Quite probably three weeks intervened without the slightest communication. Meantime the apostles had reengaged in the fishing business, when our Lord appeared to them on the shores of Galilee.

- 7) As a stranger on the shore Jesus called to seven of his disciples who were fishing —John 21:1-13.
- 8) Shortly after the manifestation on the shores of Galilee Jesus appeared to the eleven disciples on a mountain in Galilee. —Matt. 28:16-20.
- 9) Very shortly after this he again appeared to a general company of his followers gathered together by previous appointment, "above 500 brethren at once" —in Galilee. —1 Cor. 15:6.

LAST APPEARANCE IN JERUSALEM

- 10) At the close of the forty days our Lord appeared to the Apostle James only, probably at Jerusalem. —1 Cor. 15:7.
- 11) At the end of the forty days our Lord appeared to all of the apostles at the time of his ascension. This was at the Mount of Olives. —Luke 24:50,51; Acts 1:6-9. R. 3905

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

– Matthew 28:18 –

These were our Lord's words after his resurrection. They were true then. They have been true throughout this age and they are still more completely true today, because we are now living in the time of which it is written, "He shall take unto himself his great power and reign." His reign has in some senses of the word already begun. He has already marshaled forces which will complete the overthrow of everything opposed to his Kingdom and its righteous laws. And we may be sure that the members of his Body still in the flesh this side of the veil are no less subjects of his providential care than is the world and its affairs. We may be sure that nothing is transpiring, either in the nominal Church or amongst the kingdoms of the world; amongst socialistic or political parties or in the financial world contrary to what will best serve our Lord's purposes in connection with the events just before us and the outworking of the same in fullest accord with the prophecies.

Oh, that we could get this thought rightly settled in our minds! Yea, as the Scriptures say, "Settle it in your hearts" —that our Lord is at the helm superintending all of earth's affairs at the present time in a much more practical sense than ever in the past. And have we not seen his graciousness towards the Church? And can we doubt his continued supervision of the affairs of his betrothed to the grand consummation? "He who hath begun the good work in us is able to complete it," and he who has thus far conducted the Harvest work is able still to direct it, order, bless it and use it to his own praise and to the blessing of his people. R. 4378

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.

– Matthew 28:19-20 –

We see that, while the testimony of the apostles was at first restricted to the Jews, the Lord, after his resurrection, taught them that repentance and remission of sins must be "preached in his name **among all nations, beginning** at Jerusalem." And then he added, "And ye are **witnesses** of these things;...but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."... "Ye shall receive power after that the holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, **both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria**, and UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH." (Luke 24:48; Act 1:8.) Since "the uttermost part of the earth" —America, for instance —could not be reached and thus ministered to during the life-time of the apostles, it is manifest that the major part of this witnessing was to be done **through their writings** and after their death. Thus they testify to us, and we consider this commission from the Lord to them to do so, and the particular training they received from him, as the best possible endorsement of their testimony and guarantee of its reliability. R. 1522

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you. But tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.

– Luke 24:49 –

In obedience to the command to wait for the promised power, the apostles and the other disciples, about a hundred and twenty in number, tarried in Jerusalem, assembling together in an upper room, and waiting in prayerful expectancy from day to day until the day of Pentecost brought the promised blessing—the “power from on high,” the baptism of the holy spirit. (Acts 1:14.)

The Apostle tells us that the sending of the holy Spirit at Pentecost became a witness or sign of God’s acceptance of our Lord Jesus’ sacrifice, and thus a sign of his acceptance of the Church and household of faith, whose sins alone were covered by that sacrifice. His words are, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the holy Spirit of promise, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” This was the seal of the Father’s approval of the sacrifice of Jesus, and of the forgiveness of sins of those for whom his precious blood was applied; as the Apostle Paul declares, “He ascended up on high there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf—as the Advocate of believers, but not as the world’s Advocate.” —Acts 2:33. The record is that the apostles did tarry at Jerusalem until they received the Pentecostal blessing, and the lesson to all the Lord’s disciples from that day to the present time is that none except those thus endued with power from on high—none except those who come under the blessing of the Spirit of the Lord, the holy mind of Christ—none others are qualified to be the ambassadors for God and his representatives before men. R. 1522 and R. 3910

John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

– Acts 1:5 –

In obedience to the command to wait for the promised power, the apostles and the other disciples, about a hundred and twenty in number, tarried in Jerusalem, assembling together in an upper room, and waiting in prayerful expectancy from day to day until the day of Pentecost brought the promised blessing—the “power from on high,” the baptism of the holy spirit. (Acts 1:14.) In this great blessing, specially promised to the apostles, apparently all of the faithful souls present with them shared. “They were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” However, from Acts 2:7 it would appear that “the eleven” (all of whom were Galilaeans) were the public speakers. It evidently brought to their minds clearer visions of divine truth, filling their hearts with joy and praise; so that out of the abundance of their hearts they spoke the wonderful words of life as the Spirit miraculously gave them utterance in the various languages of the peoples represented there. And as a result of that power three thousand souls were converted that day. While all of the faithful waiting ones shared the special outpouring of the Spirit that day, and the same Spirit was also poured out upon the Gentiles later (Acts 10:44-47), and has continued with all the consecrated and faithful ever since, we are particularly assured that all of “the eleven” were there, and that not one of them failed to receive this gift of the Spirit without which their apostleship could not be recognized. —See Acts 1:13-14; 2:1. R. 1523

Let us then not only see to it that we have come under the anointing which has been on the body since Pentecost, but see also that we abide in this condition, that we grieve not the holy Spirit, and that thus we shall be qualified to be witnesses for the Truth, ambassadors for God, servants of the Most High, co-laborers in the vineyard. R. 3911

Jesus Ascended

“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.” Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

– Acts 1:8-9 –

We are to remember that our Lord when on earth was in the fullest sense the Representative of the Father in the flesh. He was indeed “God manifest in the flesh.” And those who were of the right attitude of heart were able to see the character of the Father in the Son. Those who believed on Jesus were accepted and treated in many respects as though they had been already fully received of the Father. The Scriptures, however, declare that the Holy Spirit had not yet come. We see that the Spirit could not be given in begetting power until Jesus had died, and had entered into the presence of God to make reconciliation for the sins of the Church. Forty days after the resurrection of Christ, He ascended to Heaven to present His merit, imputing it on behalf of all who would become His disciples during the Gospel Age, the period of the High Calling. R. 5832

**He led them out as far as Bethany,
and He lifted up His hands and blessed them.
Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that
He was parted from them and carried up into
heaven. And they worshiped Him
and returned to Jerusalem with great joy,
and were continually in the temple
praising and blessing God.
Luke 24:50-53**

*See also
p. 359*

Those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

– Acts 3:18 –

Our confidence in Jesus that he was the sent of God, the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Deliverer of his people, rests not merely upon the testimony of the apostles in the New Testament records, wonderful and convincing as these testimonies are: they gain nine-tenths of their weight and importance from the fact that they evidence the fulfillment of promises, types and prophecies given by the Lord with more or less explicitness from time to time throughout the preceding 4,000 years. He who does not discern something, at least, of the divine plan of the ages in connection with our Savior, his birth, his three and one-half years’ ministry, his sacrificial death, his resurrection, his ascension, etc., fails to get the real strength of the divine revelation, designed by the Lord to be the firm foundation for his people’s confidence in him and in all the glorious things which he has promised he would yet accomplish through this great Savior. R. 3114

**JESUS CHRIST
GLORIFIED
AND
EXALTED**



For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.

– 1 Peter 3:18 –

The entire tenor of Scripture is to the effect that when Jesus left the Heavenly glory and was made flesh, it was not the Divine intention that He should remain a fleshly being forever, but quite to the contrary—that He took this earthly condition for the suffering of death and would not need it afterward. Adam was a fleshly, human being; and, in order to be the Redeemer of Adam and his race, Jesus needed to be a perfect human being—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” (Heb. 7:26.) But there could be no reason why He must continue to be a fleshly being and out of touch with all the Heavenly conditions.

When we remember that the perfect Adam was a little lower than the angels, we must see that the perfect man Jesus was also a little lower than the angels. But that He did not keep this lower condition is fully asserted by St. Paul, who, after telling about His faithfulness even unto death, declares, “Wherefore God hath highly exalted Him, and hath given Him a name above every name.” (Phil. 2:9-10.) The exalted Jesus is a spirit Being of the very highest order—“of the Divine nature”—who sat down at the Father’s right hand, on the Father’s Throne, waiting for the time when He would take His own Throne, establish the Millennial Kingdom and associate the Church with Him in His Throne as His Bride. “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. R. 5830

Who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

– Hebrews 1:3-4 –

With amazement we inquire, Upon whom shall this high honor and distinction be conferred?—Upon angels, or cherubim, or seraphim? No; but upon his Son—his specially first-born and only begotten Son, that he who was always his obedient Son should in all things have the preeminence. But before he could be so highly honored he must be tested, proved “worthy” of so great a distinction and so high an exaltation “above his fellows.” This test was in view when the sentence of death was pronounced upon Adam and all his children in his loins: it was that he, Christ, should lay down his life as a ransom price for the life of Adam and all who lost life in his transgression. And he was equal to the test and gained the prize of “the divine nature,” “life in himself,” “immortality.” R. 1879

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

– Hebrews 12:2 –

Look at our Lord Jesus, and the cross which he bore—not the literal cross of wood which he bore to Calvary, amid shame and jeers, but the cross-bearing which he practiced continually throughout the three and a half years of his ministry from the time of his consecration at Jordan. Note how faithfulness to the truth, in testifying respecting his mission, the Kingdom that he was establishing, and the terms and conditions of membership in it, being misunderstood by the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees, led to opposition continually, so that they not only maligned his name, but in their hatred sought his life and finally obtained it.

[Note that] the Scriptures inform us that the coming of the Logos into the world was a voluntary matter. He did this “for the joy that was set before Him,” by the Almighty. The Father set before the Son that if He would suffer the ignominy of the transference of His being from the higher plane to a lower, a human plane, in order that He might redeem the lost race of Adam, He should be highly exalted, next to Jehovah; He should be made a partaker of Jehovah’s nature—the **Divine nature**. All this was the inspiration of our Lord’s course—the joy of doing the Father’s will and of having His approval; the joy of restoring mankind and of being exalted to His Father’s glorious nature. He who thus humbled Himself to become a man and die the ignominious death of the cross, has indeed been highly exalted as promised, and has sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High. —Heb. 1:3.



Paul tells us that our Lord’s great exaltation, which included, not only his change to the divine nature, but also his official elevation to the right hand of God, was granted to him as a reward for his atoning sacrifice—“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. **Wherefore**, God also hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.” This full exaltation, it is manifest, could not have been experienced until the sacrifice had been, not only made, but presented as well, as the fulfillment of this part of the divine plan. This full exaltation was that “glory” to which the Lord referred when he said, “Ought not Christ [according to the Scriptures] to have suffered these things, and **to enter into his glory?**” (Luke 24:26.) R. 2616, R. 5429, R. 1829

God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth.

– Philipians 2:9-10 –

As a reward for his perfect obedience to the Father's will and plan, even unto death, he was **highly exalted** and given a name above every other name. His obedience to the divine will proved him an overcomer of evil in the highest degree, and he was honored with a seat with the Father in the throne or dominion of the Universe. Among the other favors conferred upon our great Redeemer after his sacrifice and at his resurrection was this **divine** quality of having "**life in himself**;" not dependent on supplies of food, etc., the gift of Immortality. Indeed, if our Redeemer had possessed this kind of life before, he **could not** have been our Redeemer; for he could not have died for us. To any one possessing immortality, suffering and death are **impossible**. Thanks be to God that Christ died for our sins—**once** for all. But he will never die again: he is now immortal and cannot die. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more: death hath no more dominion over him." —Rom. 6:9.



It is proper to remember that it was not the pain which our Lord endured, not the agony, which constituted our ransom-price; —it was his death. Had he died in a less violent and ignominious manner our ransom-price would have been equally well paid; but the trials, sufferings and contradictions which our Lord endured, while no part of our ransom-price, were expedient, in the Father's judgment, as being a part of his testing. The patient endurance of these proved his loyalty to the Father and to righteousness to the fullest degree: and thus proved his worthiness of the high

exaltation which the Father had prepared as his reward. It was in view, not only of his humiliation to man-nature and his death for our sins, but in view also of the cup of shame and ignominy which he drained, that it is written, "**Wherefore** God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth." —Phil. 2:9-10.

The authority of Christ to teach, and rule, and judge, extends over all heaven, all earth and all hades. Limitarians would have us ignore the words— "under the earth" —or blot them out of the inspired testimony; but hades is a part of Christ's dominion, and as indispensable as either earth or heaven. Christ has authority to reckon with every enemy of God and man; and wherever man is, his fealty will one day be claimed. "Every knee" is to have the opportunity of voluntarily bowing at the name of Jesus, and "every tongue" is to have the opportunity of voluntarily confessing that the Savior Anointed is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Neither death nor hades is an insurmountable barrier to this, because he holds the keys of both (Rev. 1:18), and will liberate every captive in due time. R. 1283, R. 1642, R. 2315

Every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God.

– Hebrews 10:11-12 –

This refers to the fact that the Jewish priest offered the sacrifice continually and yet never accomplished anything with it. “This Man” is the glorious High Priest, Jesus, the Head, who, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God.

But His offering was in **two parts**; the first of which was at Jordan, when He offered up Himself; and the second was at Pentecost, when He “appeared in the presence of God for us”—for us living today, as well as for those living then. At that time He accepted the Church as joint-sacrificers and offered them; and in offering them He offered the one antitypical goat. So His offerings were really completed at the time of Pentecost. What is He waiting for? The Scriptures say He has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High, waiting for the time to come when His enemies shall be made His footstool. —Heb. 10:13. R. 5053

Being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

– Acts 2:33 –

The ascension of our blessed Lord to the right hand of power signifies more even than this: it signifies his ability now to “give gifts unto men.” At the appointed time—the times of restitution of all things—he comes forth from that holy of holies, heaven itself, whither he hath entered for us, and he will lift up his hands and bless the people (Lev. 9:23), and there will be a thousand years of his glorious reign. But this is not all; for as soon as he had ascended up on high and presented his sacrifice on our behalf, he sent the Comforter, the holy spirit of adoption, into the hearts of his disciples (on the day of Pentecost), whereby they were enabled to cry, Abba, Father. It was with reference to this gift that Peter said on that day, “Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.” (Acts 2:33.) And this gift has continued with the Church ever since. It was sent according to his promise —“It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart I will send him unto you.” This gift, the Apostle John shows, could not be given to the disciples until after the Lord’s ascension. “For the holy spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” —John 7:39.

With some idea at least of the necessity of the Lord’s departure in their interest, and assured of his coming again in glory and power, we can understand the rejoicing of the disciples as they returned to Jerusalem after his ascension. They were comforted and blessed, not only by the hope of his return, but also by the promise of the Comforter, as a token of his love and of the Father’s favor, not many days after. R. 1829

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens.

– Hebrews 7:26 –

What does it signify to us that our Lord was thus exalted so far beyond even our comprehension of the glory? Oh, it signifies much! it signifies that “when he ascended up on high, he led captivity [death] captive;” for he that ascended thus into the heavens is he, the very same Jesus, “that descended first into the lower parts of the earth [the grave]; [and] he that descended is the same also that ascended up, far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” (Eph. 4:8-10.) It signifies that we have now “a great High Priest, **that hath passed into the heavens** [one who is now on the most intimate terms and in the closest possible favor with the Sovereign of the whole universe],... and not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but [one who] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;”...“a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people;” and “in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” It signifies that, “if any man sin, we have **an advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;” and therefore, we may “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:14-16; 2:17,18; 1 John 2:1.) His very presence there in the glory of his enduring priesthood is the only appeal that is necessary on our behalf; for Jehovah himself loveth us—the dear purchase of the precious blood of his Anointed One (John 16:27); in fact, the whole plan of this reconciliation was of God, and is wrought out in Christ. Yes, praise the Lord! R. 1829

According to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Ephesians 1:19-21

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

– Revelation 3:21 –

The inference is plain, therefore, that our Lord was exalted as Jehovah’s Prime Minister in the throne of universal dominion, for which exalted office he was also duly qualified, being made a partaker of the divine (immortal) nature, a dignity never before conferred upon any created being. Such has been the honor and glory of our blessed Lord ever since he ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us. R. 1829

I have set the LORD always before me. Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices. My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life. In Your presence is fullness of joy. At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.
Psalm 16:8-11

David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, “SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, TILL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES YOUR FOOTSTOOL.” ’ Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

– Acts 2:34-36 –

Realizing that his hearers did not understand the prophecy which he had just quoted from the Psalms (Psalm 16:8), Peter proceeded to prove to them that David could not have been speaking these words respecting himself; but that his words were an inspired prophecy respecting the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead. In proof of this he called their attention to what they would all very readily admit; namely, that David was dead and in his sepulcher; that David was not risen; that David had not been exalted and made to sit at God’s right hand; and that consequently some one else than David must have been meant; and he proceeded to show that Messiah was referred to by the prophet.

The character of this discourse by the Apostle Peter is not only worthy of notice and remembrance, but worthy of imitation, by all who would preach the true gospel with power. His discourse was not to the effect that this manifestation of power was the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his Kingdom and glory; but to the very contrary of this he shows from David’s prophecy that Jehovah said to Christ, David’s Lord and Master, “Sit thou on my right hand [that is, occupy the chief place of my favor and power] until I make thy foes thy footstool.” This implies that the Heavenly Father has engaged to honor the Son and to bring all things into subjection to him. In his discourse the Apostle does not intimate that this has already been accomplished and that all foes are overthrown, but merely that the first step in this programme has been accomplished; that Christ had suffered, that Christ had been raised from the dead, that Christ had been exalted to the right hand of power. This he emphasises by saying, “Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” Peter’s discourse was not about the stars, nor about the leaves, nor about politics, nor about finances, nor about eternal torment; but about the great central features of the gospel, that Messiah had come, had suffered the just for the unjust, and had been glorified and was yet to be recognized Lord of all. Nor did he fail to point out the responsibilities of the Jews before him, as a part of the nation, for the death of Christ. R. 2089

**The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand,
till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”**
Psalm 110:1

**I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore.
– Revelation 1:18 –**

Our text comes to us as fresh as though delivered yesterday from the lips of the risen Redeemer—his special message to his people. How much there is in these few words! They affirm with positiveness that Jesus really died, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring mankind back from sin and condemnation to harmony with God. With equal force they tell us that he is dead no longer, that although unseen to our natural eyes, our faith may recognize the fact that he arose from the dead and ascended up on high, there “to appear in the presence of God for us.” —Heb. 9:24.

Our Savior laid down his life, surrendered it to the Father, in obedience to the Divine suggestion. As a reward he was highly exalted, given a name above every name on the spirit plane. Not having forfeited his human rights by sin, but merely having laid them down, in obedience to the Father’s wish, he has these to dispose of, to give as a bequest or testament to humanity.

If we may thus see clearly an inestimable value in our Redeemer’s sacrifice of himself, a glance will show us that his resurrection was of equal importance. Had the Father not raised him from the dead, it would have implied some unfaithfulness, some failure on our Lord’s part. And if he had not arisen, how could he have made application of his human rights on our behalf? So, then, upon the death of Jesus and his resurrection hang the resurrection hope of the Church and of the world. R. 4587



Although the Scriptures nowhere place the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God on an equality with Jehovah himself, either while he was here on earth, nor while he was the Logos, before he was “made flesh,” they do assure us that now, in his highly exalted condition, the Logos still, Christ Jesus still, he is partaker of the divine nature, glory and all power in heaven and in earth; and accordingly we are instructed that “all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” (John 5:23.) R. 2408

**WORDS
FROM
THE MASTER**



‘YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

– Matthew 22:37-40 –

Our Lord here made a quotation from the Old Testament. (Deut. 6:4-5.) How wonderfully comprehensive the statement! Who today, hundreds of years afterwards, could more completely epitomize the great truth of this text? Heavenly Wisdom was manifested in its first statement. The same Heavenly Wisdom was manifested in our Lord’s reference to it. He added nothing, because nothing could be added. Jesus proceeded beyond the question, and declared that the Second Commandment stands related to the First; namely, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” Again we stand all astonished with wonder at how much is stated in very few words.

The Bible stands out distinctly separate from all human creeds and superstitions, and tells us that God is Love, that He is the Father of Light and Mercy, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift. The Bible, too, tells us of the Divine forgiveness, Divinely arranged for through the precious blood of Christ from before the foundation of the world. It tells us also that this forgiveness of sins is not merely for the Church, the Elect, the little handful now being called out from the world; but that eventually the Love of God will be manifested to all of His creatures.

The expression of the divine law given at Sinai was exactly suited to the house of servants to whom it was given: it was a series of instructions, --Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not. The expression of the law of the New Covenant is very different, and implies much more liberty. It simply tells those who are God’s sons, and who therefore are begotten of his spirit, You may do or say **anything** in harmony with love. Pure love for God will lead not only to obedience to his will, but to the study of his will, in his Word. Pure love governing our conduct toward our fellow-men and the lower animals will seldom work to their injury. It will come more and more under the guidance of the Lord’s Word, and thus we will be perfected in love. But from the first it is a safe law: it is a “law of liberty,” in that it requires us merely to act out, according to our own judgments, that which we voluntarily consecrate ourselves to do, our own wishes as new creatures.

But the law of love, while it is a law of liberty and an “easy yoke” to such as have the Lord’s spirit, is nevertheless a most searching law—discerning, scrutinizing, judging the very thoughts and intents of our hearts—as well as our actions and words. In that one word, Love, is expressed the very essence of the divine law. Love to God implies full obedience, full recognition of divine character—wisdom, love, justice and power: full harmony with and service of God, and the exercise of those qualities of character in all our thoughts, words and deeds. R. 5521 and R. 1729

Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.

– Matthew 4:19 –

He has called us also to be fishers of men, and we have responded to his call and left all to follow him, to be his disciples, to share his experiences and whatever ignominy may come as the result of faithfulness to him and the truths which he proclaimed. To us also he has displayed his powers, permitting us to see and know things which are kept secret from those without. To us he has given the good tidings of the Kingdom to encourage us, to inspire our hearts with love and loyalty. Blessed were those disciples of old, and blessed are the disciples of today! It was Peter, James and John, who were the most zealous of the apostles, that had the special favors when such were to be given. And so it is today; those who most cheerfully, most zealously forget self and earthly ambitions, aims and projects, and who most fully give themselves to the Lord and to his service, these may walk nearest to the Lord at all times; these may go with him to the Mount; these may be special witnesses of his powers, and these in special times may be close to the Lord. Some, like John, may not only sit at meat with him, but sit next to him—in his bosom. R. 3334



If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me.

– Matthew 19:21 –

Ah, how the Lord knew to put his finger on the sore spot! The young man had come to him very boastful, very sure that if any one in the world was seeking to be in harmony with the Divine arrangement he was that one. He came for the Master's approval, that he might hear him say, "You are the one exception to the rule." The Lord did not say, "If you love your neighbor as you love yourself you will at least put forth an effort to make that neighbor as comfortable as you desire to be comfortable." He was content to be very rich, while some of his neighbors whom he thought he loved as he loved himself were very poor—abjectly, sorrowfully so. When Jesus discovered to him the difficulty of his situation, he grasped it at once. He saw himself as never before. It became a new test with him. Thus it is with all. A previous lesson showed us the Kingdom as a great prize, a pearl of great value, a treasure, which to possess, will cost all that we have; and this lesson points out the same fact. R. 4658

What do you seek?

– John 1:38 –

There is peculiar force in this query, and no doubt our Lord used it with the intention of awakening this very thought in these two [disciples, Andrew and John,] who first sought his companionship. It is a good question for each one of us to put to himself, and for us to suggest at a proper time to all others who are manifesting any interest in Present Truth. What are we seeking? What are we looking for? We know what the world is seeking—wealth, honor, fame, ease, etc.—and we know that many who turn toward the Lord still have the spirit of the world. They would like to be the Lord's disciples and still have and cultivate and enjoy the hopes and ambitions that are more or less worldly. It is appropriate that we should give heed to the Master's words as though they were addressed to each of us individually,

What are *you* seeking?

Let us answer our Master in our own hearts and in prayer; and before we make answer, let us consider well that it may be a truthful one, for we might indeed deceive ourselves, but could not deceive him with whom we have to do. It is right that we should seek the Kingdom and that we should know that there is a great honor and glory and dignity associated with it by divine arrangement, and that thus we should “seek for glory, honor and immortality.” But in conjunction with this seeking of the Kingdom we should remember our Master's words on another occasion, that we should seek chiefly the Kingdom of God and **his righteousness**.

We are to remember that the Kingdom is not to be reached by an unrighteous path, that injustice, iniquity, lawlessness, self-indulgence, selfishness in any form are paths which lead in other directions. We are to remember that the Master by word and by example indicated to us that to live godly in this present time would involve us in a measure of persecution, as it did him, and that the servant must not expect to be above his lord in the world's favor. Hence to say we are seeking the Kingdom means that we are taking the path leading thereto—the narrow way of self-denial. It means that we have enlisted under the banner of the Lord, with a full knowledge that our loyalty to him will mean to us opposition from the world, the flesh and the Adversary, as we seek to be good soldiers of the cross and to endure hardness in fighting against sin. It is those who seek the Lord with sincerity, with honesty, without guile and without selfishness, who find him, have fellowship with him and become his true disciples, and eventually will have joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom. R. 4116



If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

– Matthew 16:24 –

Our Lord wished, evidently, to draw a sharp line of distinction between all other classes and those followers who would walk in his steps, bearing their crosses after him. It is of this class that he declares, “No man having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62.) This special class must be thoroughly imbued with a zeal for God and for righteousness; must gain some reasonable conceptions of the good things which God has in reservation for them; must have some appreciation of the Kingdom privileges, else they will not be persevering enough, nor zealous enough, to “fight the good fight of faith” and overcome the spirit of the world, with the Lord’s assisting grace. It will require these qualities of heart, in addition to the grace, mercy and strength which the Lord has promised, to enable them to take up their cross and follow the Lord in the narrow way of self-sacrifice. And it was not only a kindness on the Lord’s part to make clear and definite the terms of the sacrifice, but it was reasonable also that he should not inveigle any into taking such a course contrary to the true zeal of their hearts. It was eminently proper that he should put the matter just as he did put it and that we, as his followers and mouthpieces, should present the matter to each other and to all who purpose to become his disciples in the same straightforward manner. R. 3236

Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.

– Matthew 7:13-14 –

Our Lord came as the **world’s** Redeemer, but before dealing with the race as a whole he selects the **Church** class—disciples. The love and loyalty of these is tested by their call to walk contrary to the general tendencies of the world—upward along the narrow way, at the end of which they are promised eternal life—glory, honor, and immortality and association with the Redeemer in his great work of the Millennial Kingdom. Then he will deal with humanity now going down on the broad road to death—recovering them and giving them glorious opportunities secured by his sacrifice.

The present call to discipleship is through the narrow gate of full consecration, even unto death, in the footsteps of the Master, and few there be who find and willingly walk this way. Thank God that the masses of humanity on the broad road were redeemed and will yet be blessed, though they will miss the great “prize” now offered to the “elect,” who walk the narrow way.

Whoever is now blessed with the hearing ear, whoever now hears the call of discipleship, whoever now accepts the call and becomes by consecration a follower of Christ, has the opportunity of erecting a faith structure which will stand all the storms of life, because built upon the Rock. Christ is this Rock of Ages. He is not only the great Redeemer, but to those now called, he is the great Exemplar, in whose footsteps all shall follow who desire to become joint-heirs with him in his Heavenly Kingdom. R. 4568

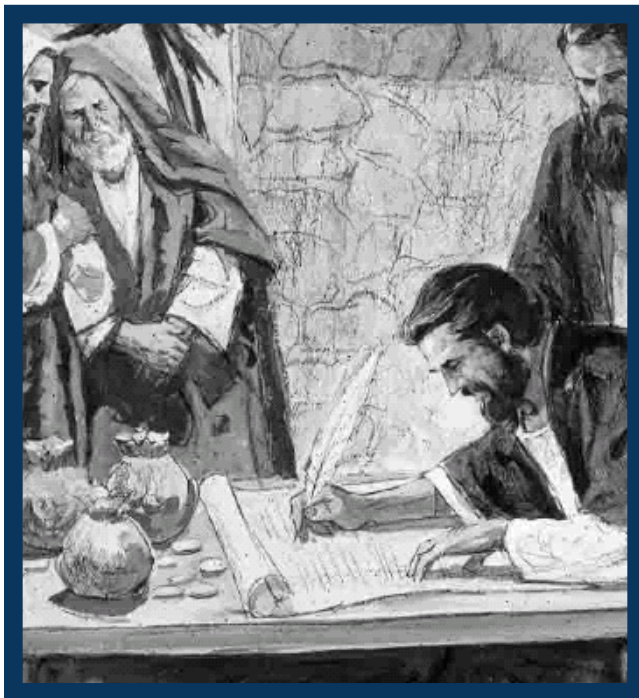
Follow Me.

– Matthew 9:9 –

Here we have Matthew's own account of his acceptance to the apostleship. He had undoubtedly been acquainted with the Lord and his work, and the Lord acquainted with him, prior to this call. The Lord had evidently seen in his heart an honesty of intention that made him worthy, not only of the truth, but of this great favor—the apostleship. It is worthy of note that Matthew tells us of himself that he was a publican (Matt. 10:3), while none of the other evangelists make this comment, doubtless because the occupation of a publican was considered a very dishonorable one—unpatriotic.

The term "Publican" in Jesus' day was applied to Jews who served the Roman Government as tax collectors in Palestine. The name was a reproach because the Jews held to the Abrahamic promise that the whole world should be blessed by them as God's peculiar people. They held that this meant that they should not only be free from all other governments, but that they should be the masters of the world. And if so, all other nations should be paying them tribute and they should pay tribute to none. The most public-spirited Jews, therefore, declined to be the agents of the Roman Government in the matter of collecting tribute or taxes, and the tribute-takers or publicans were looked upon with disdain as being unfaithful to their religion and to their nation.

Hence, for Matthew to tell us of his previous occupation as a publican may be esteemed an evidence of his humility, and his desire not to represent himself more honorably than was truthful. On the other hand, our Lord's choice of a publican to be one of the favored apostles indicates the impartiality of his selections; and implies that Matthew could not have been one of the dishonest publicans. It shows us also that our Lord passed by no Israelite indeed merely because there was prejudice amongst the people against him or his class. As an evidence of the detestation in which the publicans were held by their Jewish brethren, we note the fact that they were classed with sinners and harlots in New Testament usage, and that the Hebrew Talmud classes them with murderers and thieves, and regards their repentance as impossible.



Matthew was known by the name of Levi, while he was the publican (Luke 5:27), but his name was changed when he changed his occupation and became a member of the Lord's company. His new name, Matthew, signified "the gift of God," just as Simon, the son of Jonas, had a new name given to him, namely, Peter, "a rock." But how great a change the gospel of the Kingdom produced upon Matthew, to lead him to forsake all—the profitable income of his occupation, leaving it to others—and to become a follower of the despised Nazarene!

The influence of the fact that our Lord would accept a publican to be his disciple, was far-reaching, and no doubt inspired an interest in our Lord amongst the degraded and outcast classes. We are not surprised, therefore, when we are told shortly afterward, that many publicans and sinners resorted to our Lord, and gave ear to his teachings. Nor did he treat them after the

manner of the scribes and Pharisees, but on the contrary received them as the children of Abraham—as some of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. R. 2260 and R. 4986

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.

– Mark 2:17 –

The implication [is] that the physician had a right to go to and mingle with those whom he sought to relieve, and might mingle with them in whatever manner he saw to be expedient for their cure. This language does not imply that the Pharisees were not sick, and that they did not need our Lord's ministry, though the fact was that not admitting that they were sin-sick they were not disposed to receive his good medicine of doctrine. Anyone who considered himself to be righteous would be beyond the call of repentance. His first lesson would be to learn that he was not righteous, not perfect; hence our Lord went chiefly to those who admitted that they were not righteous, and whose hearts therefore were better soil for the truth than others. Our Lord intimated this in his parable of the publican's and the Pharisee's prayers, assuring us that in God's sight the publican had the better standing, because of his acknowledgment of imperfections and his petition for mercy. R. 2591

Go and learn what this means:

'I DESIRE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE.'

– Matthew 9:13 –

Our Lord here evidently quoted from Hosea 6:6. The lesson the Pharisees should have learned from this was that in their particularity respecting sacrifices, self-denials, tithing of mint, anise, cummin, etc., the very things in which they boasted as evidences of their holiness were things which God did not appreciate nearly so much as he would have appreciated mercy. They should have had compassionate feelings toward their fellow Jews, the yearning compassion which would have delighted to have lifted them out of sin and brought them nearer to the Lord and nearer to righteous influences. Instead of having this spirit of mercy, which would have been very pleasing in God's sight, and would have prepared them to be recipients of his mercy, they had instead a loveless sentiment which despised others and boasted of self, —a self-satisfied and complacent condition of mind and heart, very reprehensible to the Lord—a condition of heart unready to be blessed with divine mercy. R. 2591

**For I desire mercy and not sacrifice,
and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
Hosea 6:6**

No one puts a piece from a new garment on an old one. Otherwise the new makes a tear, and also the piece that was taken out of the new does not match the old. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins, or else the new wine will burst the wineskins and be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins, and both are preserved.

– Luke 5:36-38 –

It was difficult for the Savior's hearers to get a proper focus upon His teachings. They could understand John the Baptist's preaching of repentance and reformation; but when Jesus declared, "The Law and the Prophets were until John, and since then the Kingdom of Heaven is preached"—this was so radical a proposition as to be difficult for the masses to grasp. What could be higher than the Law and the Prophets? What door could be opened to the followers of Jesus which had not been open to their forefathers? Was not their Jewish nation God's Kingdom? Did not King David sit "upon the throne of the Lord"? Was it not promised that Messiah should sit upon David's throne?

Sympathetically we must concede that it was difficult for the Jews to understand that before the blessing could come to natural Israel, another, spiritual Israel, must be selected. By way of emphasizing this thought, our Lord gave two parabolical illustrations, saying, No man sews a piece of unshrunk cloth upon an old garment, because the shrinking of the new cloth would pull away the old and increase the difficulty. Likewise, no one would think of putting new wine which had not yet finished its fermentation into old wineskins, whose elasticity had been exhausted, for the old wineskins would be burst by the fermentation of the new wine.



These illustrations show that the Gospel teaching is not a patch upon the Jewish Law, but is a new proposition. And the new wine of the Gospel Dispensation must be put into new wineskins that will be able to stand the stress of the fermentation sure to come. Thus our Lord did not attempt to engraft His teachings upon the Jews, but called out of Judaism a special class, which the Scriptures denote as "New Creatures in Christ." It is to these that the new wine of the Gospel Message is committed, and these are to experience the fermentation incidental to the preparation for the Kingdom—trials, disciplines and testings. R. 4987

**The law and the prophets were until
John. Since that time the kingdom of
God has been preached, and everyone
is pressing into it.**

Luke 16:16

Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.

– John 4:14 –

Before anyone can come to the Lord he must thirst, he must have an appreciation of that which the Lord has to give—the water, the refreshment, of eternal life. This means that he must learn that he is a sinner, and under sentence of death, and that there is no hope for a future life except through Christ. The coming to the Lord is the approach of faith. Our thirst is our desire. We drink, or appropriate to ourselves the divine message. “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth” (John 17:17)—and water is the symbol of truth. The promise of a blessing to those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” is in full accordance with this. And the promise is, “They shall be filled.” He pours into their cup blessings rich and satisfying, and fills the cup repeatedly, even while they are in their present tabernacle. Let us appreciate more and more the Truth, the water of life, and let us see to it that we get it pure from the fountain, and that we recognize no other fountain than the Lord



Jesus, however much we may appreciate the channels through which the supply may have come to us.

This satisfying water of life can be obtained from no other source than our Redeemer, and all who have received it well know it and can never be sufficiently thankful for it; for in it they have the peace of God which passeth all understanding ruling in their hearts. Instead of thirst for honor amongst men, they have the thirst for fellowship and honor with the Heavenly Father and the Redeemer. Instead of a thirst for earthly wealth, their transformed desires now thirst for heavenly treasures. Instead of thirst for sensual pleasures, their desires are transformed so that

their chiefest joys and desires are for spiritual pleasures. And all these thirsts are abundantly and continually satisfied through the refreshment of the Word of Truth, and the holy spirit of the Truth—the water of life which is communicated to us by our Redeemer, and is in each one a perennial living fountain.

Of course the Samaritan woman did not grasp the meaning of our Lord’s words, nor could we, under the same circumstances, for we are to remember that the well from which our Lord gives us to drink is deep, and that neither the Samaritan woman nor we have anything to draw with. We however, living under the new dispensation of the holy spirit, have been abundantly supplied, for, as the Apostle declares, “The spirit searcheth all things, yea, the **deep things** of God....That we might know [appreciate, be satisfied with] the things that are freely given unto us of God.” —1 Cor. 2:10; 1 Cor. 2:12. R. 4132 and R. 2575

**He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said,
out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.**

John 7:38

The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

– John 4:23 –

[Jesus] pointed to the fact that a great dispensational change was imminent, in which all distinctions and barriers of place and manner would pass away, and that under the new dispensation of this Gospel age, any and all having ears to hear and eyes to see God's grace would be permitted to worship God anywhere, but only in spirit (with the heart, sincerely), and in truth, in harmony with the divine arrangement, in the true way—through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and by whom alone there is access to the Father—the Messiah, the procurer and dispenser of the water of life.

That hour began after the Jewish house had been left desolate, after the new dispensation had been inaugurated, and it still continues. Believers do not have to go to a certain place, a certain mountain, a certain city, a certain house, but may approach the living God, through the great Redeemer, at any place and find him. That coming hour had already begun, since our Lord himself was the first of the Spirit-begotten ones; and his disciples, accepted of the Father through him, were taught to pray, to seek, to knock, to find. Those who worship under this Spirit dispensation will not be accepted along the lines of former worship and places—not in families, or nationally. Their acceptance will be as individuals, and because they come unto the Father through his appointed way, the Redeemer, and come “in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” (v. 23.) During past times he did indeed prescribe forms of worship and times and places, but now all that come unto the Father “in spirit and in truth” through Christ are accepted.

While it is most absolutely true that forms and ceremonies are not commanded, but the true worship of the heart, nevertheless we feel that some still maintain too much of a relationship to forms and ceremonies, and thus lose much of the spiritual blessing of prayer and communion. But, on the other hand, we seem to see a danger into which some of the Lord's dear people fall, through ignoring all regularity in prayer, and sometimes through too little formality in approaching the throne of heavenly grace, without a sufficiency of humility and reverence for him who has granted us so great a favor as to receive us into his presence and to hearken to our petitions. While thankful that we can call upon the Lord in every place and at any time, let us approach his courts with reverence, with an awe of heart befitting to us in our humble, lowly condition, and to him in his great exaltation. Thus we enter into the real spirit of prayer, which should recognize our complete dependence and the greatness of the Almighty.

It is those only who have come into proper relationship with God as children of the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord, who can worship in Spirit and in Truth. These and these only will receive the fulfillment of the exceeding great and precious promises. R. 2575, R. 4131, R. 5321



A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’ But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, ‘I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.’ And another said, ‘I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.’ Still another said, ‘I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.’ So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind.’ And the servant said, ‘Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room.’ Then the master said to the servant, ‘Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.’

– Luke 14:15-24 –

The feast of this parable is one to which only a select number are invited. It is a feast which was announced as ready at the beginning of the Gospel age. John the Baptist first announced it to the Jewish nation, saying, “Repent ye; for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 3:2.) And after him came Jesus of Nazareth, saying, “The time is fulfilled [—“all things are now ready”] and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel [the good news of the great feast now ready].” (Mark 1:15.)

The parable shows three classes called: (1) Those originally invited; **i.e.**, those of Israel who, having respect to their covenant, were striving to keep the Law, and thus to attain to all that God had promised (the "elder brother" class of the parable of the prodigal son). To this class **belonged** the Kingdom favors by divine covenant, **if** they had appreciated and accepted them; but the strait gate and narrow way repelled them and they excused themselves, and were excused. (2) The class of the streets and lanes of the city represents the publican and sinner class of Israel—the prodigal-son class, of which some came, and, accepting the terms, left all to follow the Lord. But that remnant was not sufficient—not the full number which God had foreknown and predestinated should be the elect number to constitute the Kingdom class of joint-heirs with Christ. Hence (3) the Lord sent forth the message to the Gentiles—outside the city, outside of Israel—in the highways and hedges **urging*** a sufficient number of them to come to complete the elect number. Truly so precious an invitation is worthy of our strivings and self-denials to attain it; and the truly appreciative will lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset, and run with patience the race for this great prize.

Only those are invited to this table of the Lord—this feast of spiritual blessings, of communion and fellowship with God, of a knowledge of the deep things of God, the exceeding great and precious promises, and of joy in cooperating with him in his plan of salvation—who desire to forsake all other tables; for “Ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table and of the table of devils.” (1 Cor. 10:21). Only deeply appreciative ones are desired at this feast—those who will gladly forsake all to enjoy the favor. It is their blessed privilege to know and realize their relationship to Christ as his prospective bride and joint-heir, and, as his betrothed, to hold sweet communion with him here. And they may feast continually upon the glorious hope of living and reigning with him, of seeing him as he is, and being made like him, and of inheriting with him the spiritual phase of the Kingdom of God.

Thus we appropriately read that the Lord’s people of the present time have an especially prepared

table, where they may partake even in the presence of their enemies. That will not be true in the future; for no enemies nor anything to hurt or injure shall then be permitted. (Isa. 11:9.) But how true it is that the Lord's consecrated people, even when misunderstood, misrepresented, defamed and opposed, are still privileged to feast at the Lord's Table! The table represents God's provision for their needs—the promises of God, the assurances of His favor. R. 1957 and R. 5654

*“Compel” in verse 23 is better rendered *constrain* or *urge* as in the *Diaglott*. The Lord never compels the acceptance of his favors, but he does constrain by his love and grace and promises those who love righteousness and truth. —2 Cor. 5:11; 2 Cor. 5:14-15.

**You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil. My cup runs over.
Psalm 23:5**



Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do, for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does, and He will show Him greater works than these.

– John 5:19-20 –

The conduct of the Jews, in wishing to kill one who, according to their own testimony, had done nothing amiss, but had done much good, simply because he differently interpreted the Law, and disregarded the “traditions of the elders,” is a parallel to the opposition which is sometimes manifested by present-day Christians—sectarians of the strictest sort. They might not indeed seek literally to kill the one who would do violence to their theories and traditions, but many of them would have very little hesitancy in assassinating his character, if thereby they could defend the falsities of their systems.

Our Lord’s reply respecting his authority angered them the more: not because he declared himself to be Jehovah, the Father, as many seem to think, but because he declared himself to be the Son of Jehovah, who had been given a work to do by the Father. Nor did the Jews misunderstand him in this; their anger was because, in claiming to be the Son of God, he was claiming an honor and place so much higher than themselves—a place which implied a closeness of relationship and of nature to Jehovah, a claim which they considered blasphemous. The successors of the Pharisees in our day go far beyond our Lord’s claims, and claim for him what he never claimed for himself; viz., that he is the Father, and that he always has been the Father as well as the Son, and that the two are one in person, and not merely two persons of one harmonious mind, purpose, sentiment, will. These take great offence at any of the Lord’s “brethren” of today who claim to be sons of God, and who apply that term in its Scriptural force and significance.

The declaration that “the Son can do nothing of himself,” if it were not backed up as it is by a score of other testimonies from the same interested and inspired Teacher, is a contradiction to the common thought of Trinitarians, that the Son is the Father: it is in direct conflict with the statement of the catechism, that they are “equal in power and in glory.” Nevertheless the Father “loveth [filio—has affection for] the Son,” and as a consequence of this affection has shown, is showing, and will show forth through him greater marvels, greater wonders. And our Lord Jesus has promised us that, as the Elder Brother (of the Gospel house of sons), whatsoever the Father shall make known to him he in turn will make known to us. This is brought forcibly to our attention in the Book of Revelation, which expressly declares that it is— “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass.” (John 15:15; Rev. 1:1.) Our Elder Brother, our Bridegroom, our Captain, has promised further, that in due time we also shall share with him in doing greater works than any which he performed at his first advent. —John 14:12.

R. 2434

**All should honor the Son just as they honor the Father.
He who does not honor the Son
does not honor the Father who sent Him.
John 5:23**

The Sermon on The Mount

(Matthew Chapters 5-7 and Luke 6:20-49)



The sermon was addressed, not to a promiscuous congregation of saints and sinners, but to his earnest and faithful disciples who had left all to follow him—who had forsaken business and business prospects and home and friends and reputation, and who, in lieu thereof, had cheerfully accepted the reproaches that fell upon the Master, as well as the necessary toils and privations incident to such a life. Consequently its teachings apply, not to the world, nor to mere professors of Christianity, but only to those consecrated souls who have likewise left all to follow the Master whithersoever he goeth. The occasion was one of those seasons when, wearied with exhaustive labor, he withdrew from the multitudes who sought his healing touch and anxiously listened for the wonderful words that proceeded out of his mouth —“And seeing the multitudes [and being too weary to minister to them] he went up into a mountain, and having sat down, his disciples came up” (verse 1), and he opened his mouth and taught them. R. 1493

The beatitudes—or the blessed—designate the particular graces necessary to our Lord’s followers, if they would receive the blessings which the Father designed they should enjoy through Christ. These constitute the text as it were of our Master’s great “Sermon on the Mount.” It is supposed to have been delivered from a site known as the Mount of Beatitudes, sloping gradually, about sixty feet in height and situated about seven miles South-west from Capernaum where Jesus had taken up his residence. At this time our Lord’s ministry was fully inaugurated: he had collected his first disciples, had performed some miracles, and the multitudes began to follow him, saying truly, “Never man spake like this man.” With his disciples nearest to him and the multitudes surrounding, he began his celebrated discourse. R. 2249

Happiness describes the joyful moods which come to mankind from time to time, but blessedness relates to that permanent joy and comfort which are the result of the attunement of character to harmony with the divine. The people of the world may at times be happy, and at other times downcast, mournful and troubled; but to those who become followers of the Lord Jesus, and who as pupils in the school of Christ are taught of him, there is a peace of God which passes all understanding ruling in their hearts, bringing comfort and rest even under most adverse outward conditions. The [Beattitudes describe] to us the condition of heart necessary to the possession of the peace of God. In proportion as we get before our mental eyes the true conception and then strive to attain that ideal, in the same proportion will be the degree or progress of blessedness which will come into our hearts and lives to rule there and to keep us in the love of God. R. 3733

The Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

– Matthew 5:3-12 –

The eight Beatitudes illustrate the difference between the teachings of Jesus and all other teachings from every other quarter. He had a new view of what to present. His is a different Message from all other messages to this day. While other teachers instructed the people to hold up their heads, to remember noble ancestors, etc., and thereby be blessed, Jesus encouraged His hearers to realize that the poor in spirit, the humble-minded, would receive the great blessings.

While other teachers held forth the rich, the great, the learned, the mighty, the influential amongst men as the patterns to be copied, if happiness would be attained, Jesus, in these beatitudes, sets forth the reverse. His prescriptions for happiness have indeed been followed by a few, and these alone appreciate their merit and are finding the blessings promised, both for the present life and for that which is to come.

The contrast between the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic Law and the eight Beatitudes declared by Jesus on the Mount, illustrate in considerable degree the difference between the Law Dispensation, and the Dispensation of Grace. The Law commanded the “house of servants” what they should and what they should not do. “Moses was faithful as a servant over all his house.” (Heb. 3:5-6.) He delivered to the “house of servants”—typical Israel—the Divine Law, by the keeping of which they might be blessed and used in the Divine service.

But the Gospel Message is a still higher one. It does not ignore the Law given by Moses to the “house of servants.” It recognizes the Law as just, and holy, and good, and that Israel did not obtain that which they sought, because unable, through the weakness of heredity, to keep the spirit of God’s perfect Law. The New Dispensation, which Jehovah inaugurated through Jesus, provides a full Ransom sacrifice for all sinners, and proposes ultimately to bless and to assist all out of all the weakness of heredity—not only Israel, but the entire race of Adam. R. 5003

Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”

– Luke 6:20 –

This sermon of our Lord to the disciples, and specially to the twelve apostles whom he had just ordained, is a very precious one to all who are endeavoring to walk in their footsteps. The twelve, specially, had left all their earthly prospects, ambitions, possessions and friends to follow the Lord through evil and through good report, with no hope of earthly gain, but, on the contrary, forewarned of hardship, persecution, pain and loss, yet with the eye of faith fixed upon heavenly things.

—Matt. 19:27-29.

Considering the fullness of their consecration, the Lord looked tenderly and approvingly on them (verse 20), and out of the fullness of his heart sought to impress upon their minds a sense of blessedness of their privilege of service and even of suffering, saying—“Blessed are ye poor,”—who have nothing to call your own; and ye that “hunger now”—for righteousness and truth; and that “weep now”—in sympathy with the groaning creation; and that are “hated and persecuted” and “reproached” and have “your names cast out as evil, for the Son of man’s sake,”—for the kingdom of heaven is yours; your hunger shall be satisfied, and your sorrow shall be turned into joy. All these things are occasions for great rejoicing, in view of the new order of things to be inaugurated at the appearing and kingdom of our Lord and Savior. —“Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in heaven.” R. 1735

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

– Matthew 5:14,16 –



We are still in the time when darkness covers the earth [civilized society] and gross darkness the people [the heathen]. True, there is a measure of light in the world: True, also, that light emanated from our dear Redeemer, his words and his works, and still shines forth from all those who are truly his and whose hearts are illuminated by his promises and his spirit. But this is not the light of the world scattering all of earth’s darkness and causing all to appreciate the glory of God. It is merely “the light that is **in you**,” in believers; it is a light of faith, a light of hope, a light of love ignited in the hearts of the little flock, who shine as lighted candles in the world. Our Lord’s light shone into a little corner of the world called Palestine, and from his lamp many followers have lighted their lamps.

R. 3685

Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

– Matthew 5:17 –

There is a distinction between **fulfilling** the Law and **keeping** the Law. The Jews did **neither**. They partially kept the Law and **endeavored** to do still further than they were **able** to do. But they could not fulfill the Law; for it is so great that it is beyond the power of man to fulfill all of its requirement.

The Law consists of two different parts. The one is a regulation of the morals—the duty of all toward God and toward fellow-men. In this sense of the word, the Law stands for justice—for what is right. The Jews endeavored to do right and thus to keep the Law, but were unable to do so on account of hereditary weaknesses.

Our Lord Jesus, however, kept the Law in this sense. By so doing He earned the right to everlasting life on the human plane. This the world will do in the next Age. They will be enabled to keep the Law and will get everlasting life, the reward of obedience to the Law. But Jesus did more than keep the Law of Justice. He also **fulfilled** that part of the Law which was applicable to Him, and He is **still fulfilling** the Law.

The other part of the Law consists of the ceremonial features, which constitute the types and shadows mentioned by St. Paul. (Heb. 10:1.) These prophetic features of the Law represent the Divine will in respect to the means by which mankind will be restored from the plane of degradation, sin and death to Divine favor. This prophetic fulfilling of the Law consisted in the carrying out in antitype of one important feature—the Passover institution. The killing of the lamb, the sprinkling of the blood and the eating of the flesh, were prophetic—typical.

Jesus fulfilled His part of the type when He was put to death. It was only by virtue of His sacrifice of His will entirely to the Divine will that He was able to fulfill the prophecies, for these were not commands to mankind in general. In these was a suggestion of things which were not commanded, but which God desired to have accomplished at some time through some one, and through which the Redemption of the human race and the Restitution of all things lost by Adam would be effected.
R. 5164

For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Matthew 5:18

The two tables of the Law given to Israel were a requirement of Justice, but Jesus and His followers take a still higher plane and, waiving their own rights, they become sacrificers of their own comforts, preferences, desires, to the doing of the Divine will, to the serving of the brethren and mankind in general. Justice never requires sacrifice. Thus discipleship and attainment with Jesus of a share in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow mean something more than merely rendering to every man his due, for no one has a right to render to another less than his due, nor to do injury to another. Jesus not only did no injury, but, additionally, He sacrificed His own rights on behalf of mankind, and He set His disciples an example that they should walk in His steps. —1 Pet. 2:21. R. 5005

But I say unto you who hear:

Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.

Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.

To him who strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also.

From him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold your tunic either.

Give to everyone who asks of you.

From him who takes away your goods do not ask them back.

Luke 6:27-30

And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.

Matthew 5:41

You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

– Matthew 5:43-44 –

The Law of God, the Law of Christ, goes much further and deeper into such matters, naturally, than do the laws of men; for it deals not with men, but with the “new creatures in Christ Jesus”—transformed by the renewing of their minds, and under special Covenant relationship, and bound by the law of Love, which “worketh no ill to his neighbor,” under any circumstances, under any provocation, but, on the contrary, returns “good for evil,” “blessing for cursing.”

Ah! indeed, a Christian after the Lord’s pattern, a graduate of the school of Christ and prepared to teach others, is one who not only outwardly, but inwardly also, is clean—separated, washed by the water of Divine instruction, from the meanness, the filthiness of the flesh. He is no longer the slave of sin, controlled by the desires and weaknesses of his fallen flesh and its spirit of the world, bearing fruits unto unrighteousness—anger, malice, hatred, strife, slander, evil-speaking. (Col. 3:8; 1 Pet. 2:1,2.) From his high standpoint of appreciation of the Divine law, the advanced Christian sees that in the Lord’s sight hatred is **murder**, slander is **assassination**, and the destruction of a neighbor’s good name is **robbery** and rapine. And any of these things done in the Church, among the professed people of God, is doubly evil—the assassination and robbery of a **brother**. —Compare 1 John 3:15 and Matt. 5:21-22. R. 4705

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

– Matthew 6:1-2 –

The Master tells of proper and improper giving of charity. He extends the subject and explains proper and improper prayers and finally proper and improper fasting. In all these He denounces hypocrisy, theatrical display. His followers are to be actuated solely by a desire to please the Heavenly Father and have His approval. There may be times and places where the giving of charity in the presence of others would be perfectly proper, or praying in the presence of others would be entirely right, and where fasting might come to the knowledge of others without reproach.

The point which the Great Teacher makes is the motive actuating us. If we are actuated by a selfish motive, if we are seeking show and applause or earthly gain, the procedure cannot bring Divine approval or blessing —“Blessed are the pure in heart.” We may be **seen** to do good or to pray or to fast, but we are not to do our charities, our praying and our fasting **to be seen**. Of such the Lord says, “They **have received** their reward” —nothing more is coming to them; they get the publicity sought.
R. 5021

When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

– Matthew 6:6 –

The spirit of this injunction was carried out by our Lord when he withdrew from his disciples into a mountain alone for prayer, and we have several records of his spending a considerable portion of the night thus in communion with the heavenly Father. One lesson to us from our Lord’s example would be that if he in his perfection needed to have spiritual fellowship and communion with the Father in order to carry on the assigned work, we, his disciples, imperfect according to the flesh, and every way lacking the wisdom, etc., which he possessed, have much more need to look continually to the Lord for the guidance and comfort, the sustenance needed in all the trials and difficulties of life in the narrow way.

It is a very great favor to be permitted to approach the Supreme Ruler of the Universe with our petitions. We should come, therefore, in the spirit of deep appreciation, of earnestness and humility and reverence. We all realize at times the inability of even our dearest ones to enter fully into and appreciate our sorrows and our needs. They are unable to sympathize with us fully in our struggles and our trials. This realization should send us, as it did our dear Lord, the more frequently to the Throne of Grace, where we are always sure of having the ear of One who understands us perfectly and can make all needful allowance for our frailty; who knows the limit of our ability to do and to be, in our imperfect flesh; and who can give us the perfect sympathy which none other can give. He never fails to hear and to heed the cry of His children, even though He may for a wise purpose in love defer for a time a visible answer to their pleas. R. 3351 and R. 5480

When you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

– Matthew 6:7 –

The Lord wished his followers to pray intelligently and realize that they were approaching an intelligent and reasonable God who knows already, far better than we, what things we have need of; and who is more willing to give them to us than earthly parents are to give good gifts to their children. Hence to repeat our petitions over and over is not only **vain**, in the sense that it will profit us nothing, but it indicates a low degree of spiritual development, very imperfect ideas respecting God, and a very imperfect relationship with him. The Christian neither needs to repeat certain prayers indefinitely, nor does he need to take up in prayer all the affairs of the world and the affairs of the Church, to tell God all about them and how they **ought** to be regulated. We have heard public prayers which implied that the worshiper had as much or more wisdom than the Almighty; because in them he undertook to tell the Almighty how, when, where and what should be done the world over, at home and abroad;—how many should be converted at the meeting in which he was praying, and how the heathen everywhere, the world over, should be dealt with. R. 2252

Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

– Matthew 6:8 –

The Christian's prayer therefore is not for the purpose of giving information to God, nor for the purpose of calling attention to matters which he might overlook or forget; but on the contrary he is enjoined to pray and required to pray, because it will benefit himself: God withholds many of his blessings until we approach to ask them in prayer, in order that **we may realize our need** of his aid, and our dependence on him. Our prayers therefore are not to induce God to give us things which he desires to withhold from us, but are merely to secure the things which **he desires us to have** and has promised to us, and is more willing to give than to withhold. And how wise is this divine arrangement: how many of God's people have realized great benefit from this divine arrangement that we must ask if we would receive, must seek if we would find, must "knock if it be opened unto us." And thus, in addition to the favors asked and received, the very necessity of prayer itself has brought us into close fellowship with the Lord—into the enjoyment of one of our greatest privileges and blessings. R. 2252

Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.

– Matthew 21:22 –

The trouble with many is that they do not avail themselves of the great stock of divine grace set apart for the benefit of those who, abiding in Christ, and his word abiding in them, do ask, do seek and do find. Let no one suppose that all prayer must be selfish. Quite to the contrary, we have a wide field of prayer-liberty in full accord with the Lord's Word and will.

Every trial of faith and patience is an occasion for prayer for the promised succor. Every failure to gain victory is an occasion for a prayer for forgiveness, and as well for divine blessing, that the lesson of our own weakness may be deeply impressed, so that in the next similar trial we may promptly apply for and lay hold upon the "grace to help" promised. Every victory over self is an occasion for prayer that we be not high minded and puffed up, but kept humble and watchful for the next attack from the great Adversary. Every service for the truth becomes an occasion for a prayer of thanks for the privilege of serving the Great King and mayhap to have suffered something for his cause; and a cause for supplication for further opportunities of service and grace to use them wisely. R. 2005

The Lord's Prayer

In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power

and the glory forever.

Amen.

Matthew 6:9-13

We are not to suppose that the disciples had never prayed when they asked the Lord to instruct them in the matter. On the contrary, we are to suppose that they had, in common with the Jews in general, and in harmony with our Lord's example, been accustomed to go to God in prayer. They seem to have realized that, as our Lord's teachings were considerably different from those of the Scribes and Pharisees on various points, so also his conception of prayer was probably different, and they desired to have instruction on this subject along the lines of his advanced teaching. Several instances are recorded in which our Lord Jesus prayed in the presence and in the hearing of his disciples—a sufficient number to preserve us from the error of some who claim that public prayer is improper. Nevertheless, apparently our Lord's usual method was to go to the Father privately. It was probably on our Lord's return to his disciples from such a season of private fellowship with God that they asked him respecting prayer, as recorded in our lesson. Had he been much in the habit of praying with them audibly we may presume that they would have known to take his style of praying as proper copy for their own.

What is generally styled “the model prayer” was given merely as an example. We are to pray after that manner, but not necessarily in those words. The order of the prayer is beautiful. How properly it opens by addressing “Our Father in heaven” and by expressing desire that the great name of God be hallowed, revered, honored, by all, and therefore by the petitioner also. It proceeds to express a desire that the Divine will may be accomplished on earth as in heaven and the confidence that this can come about only through the establishment of God's Kingdom—by Messiah's Millennial reign of righteousness, which will be enforced for the blessing and uplifting of mankind and the bringing of **all the willing** from sin and death conditions to life everlasting.

Thus the chief thing, the glory of God and the outworking of the Divine Plan, should be the most prominent things in our hearts as we approach the Throne of Grace. Then we may remember our own physical needs and ask for the bread of life. It is not for us to specify the spiritual or temporal food, but to petition the Giver of all good, in the spirit of submission to the Divine arrangements, whatever they may be.

The very essence of Christian principle is love, sympathy, forgiveness of the faults of others, even as we realize we have faults ourselves and that God has graciously forgiven us these for Christ's sake. Our Lord emphasizes the importance of this forgiving spirit before we can be children of our Father in Heaven, saying, in another place, “With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged;” and with what measure ye measure others, your own conduct shall be measured. (Matt. 7:2.) We remember, also, that he gave a parable illustrating the subject, representing his forgiven disciple as a servant who owed ten thousand talents, whose debt he had freely set aside, and did not press; but when that follower manifested so different a spirit that, finding a fellow servant who owed a few pence, he treated him unmercifully, then the Lord's mercy and generosity were likewise withdrawn from him. —See Matt. 18:23-35. Let every Christian in approaching the throne of the heavenly grace, daily inquire of his own heart, whether or not he has forgiven those who are indebted to him, as he desires that God should freely forgive him for Christ's sake.

But we trespass through imperfection and temptation, contrary to our better intentions and wishes. These sins require acknowledgment and forgiveness. Divine mercy is pleased to remit the guilt of all unintentional sins and to reckon them as covered with the precious blood as part of Original Sin. The Lord waits to be thus gracious, but, desiring our blessing and development, he requires that we shall be similarly forgiving toward those with whom we have to do. “But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matt. 6:15.) What an incentive to sympathy, generosity and forgiveness is here!

R. 3351, R. 4560, R. 2253

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

– Matthew 6:19-21 –

Pleasure, delight, joy, comfort—all these sentiments are suggested to us by the word **treasure**. Our thoughts, our hopes, our plans, center there. Our treasure is the inspiration of our lives, the incentive to energy, perseverance and endurance, for the hope which it enkindles. Most people have treasures, but they are generally such as yield slight satisfaction, because they are transitory and disappointing. How many have built their hopes upon earthly things only to find them but illusive baubles, mocking delusions, leaving the heart at last broken, crushed and barren! The treasures of wealth, fame, social distinction, of houses and lands, of friends and home and family, of power and influence, are subject to change and decay! And if the heart be centered in them, they are liable in a moment to be swept away, leaving the life desolate and despairing, all the more so because of the high hopes which they had inspired.

We have the assurance of the Divine Word that everything that is pure, holy and good is acceptable there. The very chiefest of all treasures is the personal love and friendship of God and of Christ. Jesus becomes to us “the fairest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely.” He is an unfailing Refuge in every time of need, our daily Joy and Solace and Comfort. When we have gained this Treasure, we have gained the One that never changes, One whose love never grows cold, One from whom nothing can separate us. Let us keep our eyes steadfastly set upon the Heavenly, eternal things. Let us more and more lay up treasures where “moth and rust cannot corrupt and where thieves cannot break through and steal.” (Matt. 6:20.) If our hearts are upon the Heavenly treasures, then the disappointments and afflictions of the present life cannot overwhelm us. Whatsoever things are worthy the aspiration of the spiritual sons of God are our real treasures, and they are the only things that are worthwhile. R. 5862

No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

– Matthew 6:24 –

The thought which our Lord apparently wished to impress upon His disciples was that there is a principle involved in service—that no one can possibly render full service to two opposing interests, two opposing masters; for the one would surely be neglected in the interest of the other. There would be more or less of a preference shown. Men [are] born and shapen in iniquity. They are servants of Sin, slaves of Sin. But our Lord Jesus pointed out that through the knowledge of Himself and compliance with His terms of discipleship, there came a release from this slavery, an opportunity to pass over to the side of righteousness. R. 5666

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

– Matthew 6:28-33 –

The Master urges us to commit all of our interests to God and to wholly resolve to be obedient to him, to the extent of our ability, and then to realize the Divine care which is over all creation to be specially over us, because of having come into special relationship to him, in accordance with his promises. Such need have no **anxiety** with respect to their earthly affairs, but may trust all their interests to their Heavenly Father. Our eternal life is worth more than the food and raiment of the present life. If wise we will seek the future life at any cost, at any sacrifice of the present one.

As for the ability of our Heavenly Father to care for our interests, we should consider the manifestations in nature of his power and wisdom and grace, in his provision for the fowl of the air and for the lily of the field. We should realize that he has equal power to provide for our best interests; thus faith should firmly trust him, come what may.

Should we suppose that God, who cares for the lilies and the birds, would not much more care for us after we had become his children through faith in Christ and through the consecration of our lives? Let us then cast off all anxious care respecting food and raiment and all matters pertaining to these which the world in general are worried about. To be without worry would not mean to be without **proper concern** and due diligence to find work and to do it. But our Father knows better than we the things that we really need, and faith is not merely to trust him, but to accept what he gives as being for our best interests.



Our chief concern as followers of Christ is to seek to attain a share in God's Kingdom with our dear Redeemer—a share in the Millennial Kingdom as the Bride of Christ, who shall sit with him in his glorious Throne for the blessing and uplifting of the world of mankind. We have our Master's assurance for it that whoever pursues this course will do wisely and that God will look out for his earthly interests, for his highest welfare. So doing, our lives will be crowned with peace and joy and rest in the Lord, which in his Word he has promised those who trust him. R. 4567

Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

– Matthew 7:1-2 –

We are not to judge one another's **hearts**. On the contrary, we are to take one another's word for their heart condition. But we are to judge one another's **conduct**. If one should live immorally, it would be the duty of the Church to deal with him according to the immorality of his conduct. The Apostle asks, Why should you go to law with the brethren before unbelievers? If you are unprepared to judge yourselves in small matters, how would you ever be prepared to judge in great matters? In our judging, we are to remember the lines along which the Lord would have us judge. The Lord will be with the good, we may be sure of that fact. But we are to deal kindly, affectionately. "Be kindly affectioned one toward another, with brotherly love." In dealing with one another, in proportion as we lay down hard, inflexible lines of judgment, in that proportion we would be fixing the gauge of the Lord's judgment with us. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." With what allowance we mete out to others, the Lord will judge us. We are to be sympathetic with others, and to remember that all need mercy and forgiveness, even as we hope for these for ourselves. Whoever has a duty to perform, let him not fear but be courageous; and if doing unpleasant tasks which are necessary, let us perform them in a kindly manner, both justly and lovingly. Let us not fear man, but rather fear the Lord, and be intent on pleasing Him. R. 5413

Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?

– Matthew 7:3 –

Our Lord suggests that those who are always finding fault with the "brethren" who, like themselves, are seeking to walk in the narrow way—who can never see the noble efforts of the "brethren" to copy the Master, but are continually picking at them, are the very ones who have the greatest of faults in themselves,—lovelessness. The exaggeration of our Lord's words of reproof to this class seems to imply a vein of sarcasm, for literally he says, Why do you stare so at your fellow who is troubled with a grain of sawdust in his eye, while you have a whole rafter in your own eye? All the "brethren" are more or less troubled with difficulties of one kind or another, weaknesses of the flesh,—because all have the treasure of the new nature in imperfect earthen vessels—marred by original sin. "There is none righteous, no, not one" absolutely perfect. Yet the brethren whose hearts are full of love, even though they have sawdust in their eye of faith, or intellectual discernment or spiritual discernment, and perhaps also splinters in their hands, which affect all the deeds of life, and render their work imperfect, and though many of them have splinters in their feet also, so that their walk is by no means perfect, as they would desire it to be—yet if they have the spirit of faith and of love and of sympathy, the spirit of Christ, they are his, and far more acceptable to him than any could possibly be who are devoid of the spirit of love and sympathy, and who therefore in this parable are represented as wholly perverted in their judgment of others, because possessing so little of the Lord's spirit and so much of the spirit of the Adversary—the great "accuser of the brethren." All of the "brethren" should carefully view this picture which our Lord portrayed, and should note well to see whether or not they have any of the evil disposition of heart, and if they find any trace of such a "beam" of lovelessness and self-conceit in their spiritual eye, they should go at once to the great Physician and have it thoroughly eradicated. R. 2589

Ask, and it will be given to you. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you.

– Matthew 7:7 –

All the consecrated followers of Jesus are to be free to come in his name to the Throne of grace to make request for the things which they need—the things promised in the Word of God to the faithful. We are to seek for them and we shall find them. Knocking, we shall have Divine blessings unlocked before us. Consider how this principle prevails, even amongst fallen humanity. Any father asked for a fish, would he give instead a serpent? If asked for bread, would he give a stone? Surely not! And if so, what shall we say in respect to our Heavenly Father? Would he not be all the more



willing to give to his children who ask him? He has indeed given us many blessings without the asking, but some of the chiefest of his favors he withholds from us until we make requests—because thus he would draw us nearer to himself and prepare us the more for the blessings he is willing to bestow. Elsewhere the Master tells us that the good thing which the Father is specially pleased to bestow is his holy Spirit. This is the all-important thing, for only as we become possessors thereof, only as we attain to the mind, the disposition of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall we be fit for a place in the glorious Millennial Kingdom to which we have been invited. His holy Spirit is manifested in us by meekness, gentleness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness—love. R. 4568



I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!

– Luke 7:9 –

Our Lord's remark was a grand tribute of approval for the Gentile centurion. It distinctly indicates that the fact that the Lord's favor which for over eighteen hundred years had been confined to Israel was not merely because the Israelites were alone worthy, nor because in them alone was found such faith as that on account of which father Abraham was blessed, and the blessing pronounced on his children. But although the Lord found greater faith in the centurion than amongst others in Israel, nevertheless he could not and did not invite the centurion to become one of his disciples, because "the gifts and callings of God are not things to be repented of," and the divine favor to Israelites must and did continue down to the full end of the "seventy weeks" of favor promised through Daniel the prophet—although the national favor ceased three and a half years sooner, in the midst of the seventieth week, five days before our Lord's crucifixion, when he said of that nation, "Your house is left unto you desolate; ye shall see me no more until that day." —Matt. 23:38; Dan. 9:24.

[The centurion] suggested that our Lord would merely speak the word, and that he had fullest confidence that the word could be spoken as well outside as inside the house—that one possessing such power as the Lord Jesus manifested had agencies at his command which would not require him to personally see and touch the servant in order to heal him.

This was a wonderful illustration, both of meekness and of faith, and it was appreciated by our Lord accordingly. There is a lesson in it for all of the Lord's people, to the effect that the more we exercise faith in the Lord along reasonable lines, in harmony with the teachings of his Word, the more he

will be pleased with us. Let all of the Lord's people remember this, and instead of doubting the Lord's willingness to perform what he has promised, and requiring signs and further evidences and assurances, let us rather rest content that he who has so graciously done for us in the past more than we could have asked or thought is equally faithful today, and will fulfill to us all the good promises of his Word. The more heartily we shall accept his promises, the more fully we shall trust to his gracious providences, the more peace of heart we shall have ourselves, and the more the Lord will delight himself in us as his servants and brethren, and the more he will be pleased to favor us and to use us. R. 2620

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

– Matthew 9:16 –

One of the great lessons which the Master taught his followers, and which all in the School of Christ must learn, is that, with burning love and zeal for God and for righteousness, we should also have moderation—exercising the spirit of a sound mind. Christ's followers are exhorted to be “wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” Their wisdom is not to be merely the selfish kind, which would look out for its own interests, but of the generous kind which looks out for the interests of all, and



particularly for the interests of the Lord's cause and for any share therein which he may entrust to us.

In the midst of the “perilous times” of this “evil day,” and of the warning voices of prophets and apostles pointing out snares and pestilences and subtle dangers on every hand—and in the midst, too, of a realizing sense of the actual existence of such evil besetments and perils—how precious to the saints are the assurances of divine protection and care and personal love!

We call to mind the gracious promises of our Lord— “The Father himself loveth you;” “Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom;” and “He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him;...and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.... Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” —John 16:27; 14:21,23,27; Luke 12:32

But warning voices and wholesome counsel are also necessary; and he is not wise who turns a deaf ear to them, and takes cognizance alone of the comforting assurances which are designed only for those who faithfully “watch and pray lest they enter into temptation.” Every soldier of the cross needs to heed the Apostle's warnings— “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;” and again, “Let us fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it;” and fear also “lest, as the serpent [Satan] beguiled Eve, through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ;” “for grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them.” “Behold,” said our Lord, “I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” —Eph. 6:13; Heb. 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:3; Acts 20:29-30; Matt. 10:16.

R. 4712 and R. 3331

I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

– Matthew 11:25 –

The Great Teacher did not mean that he was glad, thankful, that his message was hidden from the majority, that they might slide down into eternal torture in darkness. Oh, no! Surely not! He did mean that he appreciated the Father's wisdom in not allowing any but those of proper condition of heart to see and clearly understand the present call of the Church. For the uncontrite of heart to see, to understand, would mean two things: —(1) They would oppose God's Plan the more; (2) They would come under greater responsibility themselves. Hence we with the Master may be glad of the wisdom displayed in the Divine arrangement of hiding certain features of the great Plan of the Ages from all except the "very elect." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear (reverence) him and he will show them his Covenant." —Psa. 25:14. R. 4599

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

– Matthew 11:28-30 –

The yoke is a symbol of servitude and subjection, and all in the world are under yokes of some kind —political yokes, social yokes, financial or business yokes, yokes of sin, of selfishness, of pride, etc. It is therefore necessary that those who would be delivered from the galling yokes of sin and of the present general order of things should submit themselves fully to Christ—that they take his yoke upon them. And he invites all who have come to feel and realize the discomfort of other yokes and the weight of other burdens, to come unto him for rest and release.

[The Apostle Paul] took Christ's yoke upon him: he did not attempt to guide himself, but humbly placed himself under subjection to Christ, and obediently followed his guidance whithersoever it led him—whether to prison and the stocks, to an ignominious public beating or stoning that left him almost dead, to shipwreck, to perils on land and sea, among heathen enemies or false brethren, to wearing labor, and painful toil. And yet Paul counted this burden of Christ a light one, and his yoke an easy yoke. Stephen had the same rest and joy even while his enemies were stoning him to death.

How are rest and even joy compatible with such conditions? The answer is: it is a rest of mind—"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." None can know the blessedness of this rest until they have experienced it. And none can realize its great value until they have been put to the tests of affliction. The Lord gives the key to this rest in the words—"and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." Truly, in a meek and quiet spirit is the secret of rest. To be meek is to cultivate the graces of patience; of loving submission to the will of God; of abiding confidence in his love and care and in the wisdom of his guiding counsel and overruling providences; and to perseveringly pursue this course through evil and through good report, or through favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Let the beloved children of God seek more and more to copy Christ's meek and quiet spirit, accepting the providences of God and obeying his precepts and leading as he did, armed with the strength which he alone can supply, and will, to all those who take his yoke upon them, and learn of him. R. 1961

He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

– Matthew 12:30 –

Sometimes on a battlefield it would appear as though each man were fighting for himself. All battle lines seem lost in the confusion; yet in the end the victory will show the same clear-cut distinctions that prevailed in the beginning of the battle. According to the Great Teacher the entire human family is either on one side or on the other side of a great battle between right and wrong, truth and error, God and Satan. There is no doubt whatever as to how the battle will end—God will have the victory. Indeed the Bible assures us that at any time he could quickly put an end to the conflict, deliver his saints, overthrow Satan and his empire, etc. The Divine promise is that this will be done in God's "due time"—when the Church will be completed and changed by the power of the First Resurrection, and the time shall come for the establishment of Messiah's Millennial Kingdom for the blessing of all the nations of the earth.

As we see how blindly scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law hated Jesus and said all manner of evil against him, we perceive that really they were on Satan's side. As we see Saul of Tarsus stoning Stephen to death and others persecuting followers of Jesus, we see clearly that they were in Satan's service, deluded by him and, in some instances, we are assured that these servants of Satan and unrighteousness verily thought that they did God service. Let us therefore be on guard along these lines, remembering the words of the Great Teacher, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "He that is not for me is against me." "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Alas, how many noble people have unwittingly been on the wrong side of the great controversy—fighting against God and the Truth, ignorantly deluded by the Adversary. By permitting this conflict and the measure of darkness, God is the more effectively trying, testing, those whom he has called to be his people. Not only are we tried directly as to the side we will take, but in a secondary sense we are tried as respects our humility. Those who are honest of heart and who make the mistake of fighting against God, when their eyes are opened, have a great test of humility in the matter of confession of their error and becoming zealous for the Truth. Those who are on the right side have also a test of humility, that they be not puffed up by their victory, but "humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time."

Satan, because created on a higher plane, is styled the Prince of demons in his relationship to the fallen angels. Judge of the delusion in the hearts of the Pharisees which prompted them to charge the Master with being Satan himself and, on this score, accounted for his power to cast out demons! The Master took the time to philosophize with them on this subject and to show that if the time had come when Satan would work against his own associates and servants it would imply the speedy fall of his empire. He also pointed out that demons had been cast out by some whom they acknowledged and honored. If he must be Beelzebub to cast out the demons, what would their logic be in respect to their neighbors and friends who at times had exercised this power! On the other hand, if he, by God's power cast out demons, it was an evidence that God's Kingdom was nigh, just as he had proclaimed.

Having thus answered their objection he showed that they were against him and opposing his Word and that this meant that if he were God's representative, they were opposing God. R. 4608

No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Luke 16:13

For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.

– Matthew 12:8 –

[This verse] applies to a time when the Jewish Law was still in force, and shows us that even then the right, the true, the proper interpretation of the fourth commandment was much more in accord with our observation of it than with the extreme observances accorded today by the Jewish teachers. The difference between then and now would be that the Jews under the Law were forbidden to do work of an earthly kind on the Sabbath, while we are not forbidden, except as earthly laws may limit without a commandment, and that we may delight to abstain from temporal labors that we may the more fully enjoy our spiritual privileges.

Our lesson pictures to us Jesus and his disciples in a public pathway across a wheat-field (in old English called a corn-field). The wheat was ripe or nearly so, and the disciples, feeling hungry, had plucked a few of the heads and rubbed them in their hands to remove the chaff for the eating of the wheat. The Pharisees, appreciating the shell rather than the meat of the divine Law, were very particular for outward observances of it, while entirely overlooking and neglecting its real sentiment or spirit. Here they thought they saw an opportunity for showing off their religious devotion by calling attention to the disciples of Jesus as being law-breakers, and to Jesus himself as being little better, in that he as their teacher had not reproved them. We see frequently this same spirit in our day: Some today would be scrupulously careful not to ride in a street-car on the Sabbath who would think nothing of allowing their minds to rove not only after the worldly things but worse, to dwell upon evil subjects, or perhaps meditate how they could take advantage of their neighbor the day following. This is hypocrisy, one of the worst sins from the divine standpoint.

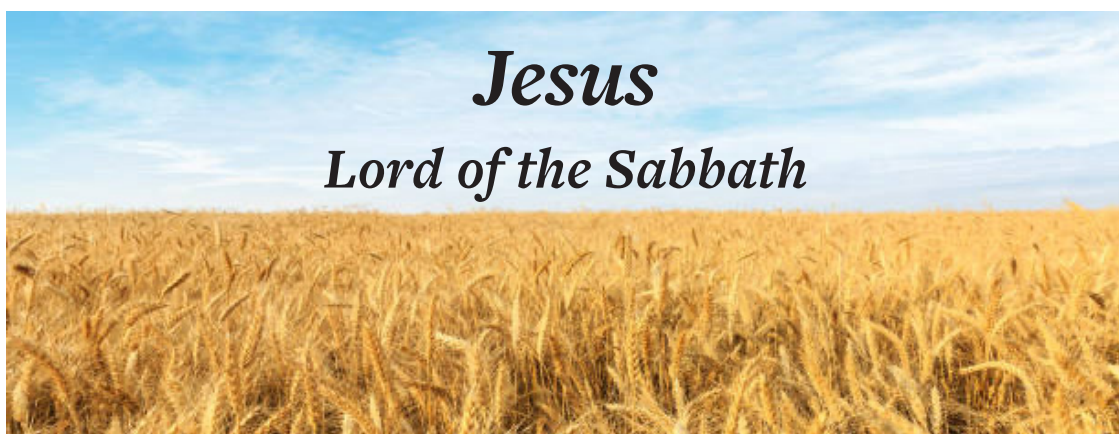
It is really amusing how the Jews, while neglecting the real essence and spirit of the Law toward God and man, exaggerated that Law as respects the trifling and unessential matters. For instance, the ruling of the Rabbis was that catching a flea on one's person was hunting, and therefore prohibited on the Sabbath; that rubbing the grain in both hands and blowing away the chaff constituted winnowing and threshing, and violated the rest of the Sabbath.

Our Lord did not accept the reproof, but, on the contrary, pointed out that his disciples not only had his approval in their course but that they were fully justified by the course of others whom the Pharisees recognized. Our Lord's illustration of what constituted necessity and mercy was drawn from the Bible narrative of David's eating the shew-bread, lawful only for the priests to eat, because of the necessities of his position, his hunger. Also the labor performed every Sabbath in the Jewish Temple, in connection with the worship there, by the priests and Levites. Our Lord held logically that these approved matters showed the proper principle governing the Sabbath. He did not claim that reaping, threshing and winnowing on the Sabbath day would be justifiable; his argument was that no such interpretation should be put upon the Law as would make the satisfying of hunger, as the apostles did, a crime, a violation of the Sabbath commandment.

But after convincing them from the Scriptures that their position was untenable, our Lord asserted to them his authority as an interpreter of the Law, saying, "I say unto you, One greater than the Temple is here." If it was right for the Levites to perform the Temple services on the Sabbath, Jesus was greater than the Temple in that he was the Son of God, the mouthpiece of God, and his disciples might therefore rest secure in anything done in his service and with his approval. What a personality our Lord must have possessed that he could make such a statement before his enemies without its being challenged! We are convinced that he not only spake as never man spake, but that his appearance must have been superior to that of members of the fallen race. Mark his statement again (v. 8)— "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." As the Lord of the Sabbath, as the great Teacher, he had not indeed the right to abolish this feature of the Law except by fulfilling it, "nailing it to the cross"; but as the Lord of the Sabbath he was the proper Teacher to set forth its real significance to the Jew.

Our Lord called the attention of his critics to the testimony of God through the prophet, “I will have mercy and not sacrifice.” (Hos. 6:6.) Our Lord declares that if they had given heed to this direction their thoughts would have been more merciful, more in line with the divine sentiment, and this would have hindered them from condemning the disciples, who the Lord declared were entirely guiltless of any violation of the Sabbath day commandment. Similarly we may say today that the great lack of many critics and fault-finders is their lack of mercy, lack of love. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has most of it will come nearest to the standard. The possession of love is always indicated by mercy—toward our friends, toward our brethren, toward the world, toward our enemies.

Proceeding to the Synagogue the same question was raised—the predominance of Love above any law was manifested. A man there had a withered hand, and the Pharisees, seeking to prove Jesus and to catch him, inquired whether or not it would be right to heal on the Sabbath day. They fain would condemn him on some score; his defense of his disciples was complete—would he now commit himself to a matter of healing on the Sabbath? Our Lord’s answer was along the lines of the prophecy he had just quoted, namely, that mercy was higher in God’s estimation than sacrifice, and he proceeded to show mercy to the afflicted man. First, however, he showed them from their own course in life that they were inconsistent: that if they owned but one sheep and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day it would be rescued—not for love of the sheep but for fear of the loss of its value. Our Lord inquired, “How much then is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day.” This question, as to the superior value of a man over a beast, is one that the world seems to find difficult to answer, but one which should be quickly answered by the Lord’s people of spiritual Israel. The Lord set the value of a man when by the grace of God he gave himself a ransom for man. Those who receive of his Spirit should more and more count it a privilege to do anything they can for the relief of their fellow man in matters temporal or spiritual. The Pharisees were answered at every point, and, less popular in Galilee than in Judea anyway, they felt that their influence before the people had been lessened by their conflict with the Lord, the great Teacher. So when Jesus had healed the withered hand by word they went out of the synagogue angry, to take counsel against him how they might destroy him. They were rabid sectarians, fully convinced of their own importance. They felt that anything that discredited them must be injurious to the Lord and to his cause, that they were the orthodox body, and that they would be fully justified in murdering anyone whose words and conduct so overmatched them as to hinder their influence from spreading more and more over all the people of Israel. A similar spirit prevails today, we aver, amongst many who are outwardly very zealous for religion. They are so deficient in mercy, love, so bound by the sectarian systems with which they are identified, that they would be willing to persecute as thoroughly as opportunity would permit any of the members of the Master’s body whose presentations of the Truth today would seem to diminish their honor and standing before the world. Let us, dear friends, remember the Master’s word, and understanding and appreciating our relationship to the Lord, let us be obedient to the very spirit of it. R. 5753





It has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. Therefore I speak to them in parables because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

– Matthew 13:11,13 –

The deep things of the divine plan are revealed to us only as we have confessed Christ. To this class it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom which are withheld from others. Only if we have fully confessed Christ are we granted a knowledge of the fact that all who would be his disciples must take up their cross to follow him, must suffer with him if they would reign with him, must be dead with him if they would live with him.

As one by one the Lord's people come to that condition of mind and heart development where they are ready for it the Lord is pleased to give them more light of "present truth"; and when once their eyes of understanding are opened they wonder why they have been so blind that they did not see these things before. The secret is that they were not previously prepared: other lessons must first be learned before the deeper truths could be appreciated; and the great Teacher, reading the heart, was able to give [to the Apostles] the opening of the understanding at the appropriate time for the highest welfare of his followers.

We are not to suppose that our Lord worked some miracle upon the minds of his followers to open their understanding: rather we are to suppose that he operated then as he still operates in giving instruction; that he used natural means, that he reasoned with them, explaining to them the necessity for the one feature and the other of the divine plan, until they got before their minds the logical order and sequence of affairs and were able to some extent to grasp the divine purpose. We are sure, however, that they did not comprehend the Scriptures perfectly, because this was not to be their experience, according to our Lord's own words, until after he had ascended on high and sent forth the holy Spirit, which would guide them into all Truth, yea, into the deep things of God.

R. 3339 and R. 3910

**He who has ears to hear, let him hear!
Matthew 13:9**

And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE, FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.’

Matthew 13:14-15

Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear. For assuredly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

– Matthew 13:16-17 –

The Apostle Peter’s statement (2 Pet. 1:21) is that “prophecy came not in old time by the will of man [that they were not the imaginings of longing human hearts], but that holy men of old spoke as they were moved [to speak] by the holy spirit” of God. And so far from their utterances being their own ideas of what would come to pass, the Lord sends us word, through the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 1:10-11), that the prophets did not know, but searched diligently to know what and what manner of time (whether literal or symbolic) the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand concerning the sufferings of Christ and concerning the glory and restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) that would follow as a result of his suffering—the just for the unjust. And not only does the Apostle tell us of this, but the prophets themselves acknowledge their own ignorance (Dan. 8:26-27; 12:4,8,9; Eze. 20:49); and the Apostle exclaims that they spoke and wrote not for themselves and the people then living, but for the instruction of the Gospel Church, and especially for the two ends, the opening and the closing of the Gospel age. —1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Cor. 10:11.

Such as do see this “great light” which illuminates the entire plan of God have certainly great cause for thankfulness; for such have been translated out of darkness into God’s marvelous light. We can thank God, too, in the light of the cross, not only for the blessings which have reached us, his Church, who truly believe in his great sacrifice; but also for the assurance that in “due time” this gracious message of redemption through the precious blood will be made known to all, and that all the deaf ears shall be unstopped! In due time all shall see the real significance and merit which were in the great atonement sacrifice given once for all; for it is written concerning the blessed Millennial Day— “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped”; and “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” —Isa. 35:5; 11:9. R. 1418 and R. 1988



Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?

– Mark 4:40 –

[Our verse is from an] account of a very severe wind storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, tired from His teaching and healing, in which vitality went out of Him for the relief of the people, had gotten into one of the boats formerly used by some of His disciples in the fishing business and still owned by them. The purpose was to cross the lake for a season of rest and refreshment. The Master in the hinder part of the boat on a cushion was soon fast asleep. Suddenly a terrific storm set in which appalled even those accustomed to such scenes. The winds were blowing and the waves were tossing over the gunwales. It was an emergency; they could not bale out the water fast enough, and they wondered that the Master slept through it all. They came to Him and aroused Him saying, “Master, carest Thou not that we perish?” and He awakened and rebuked the wind saying, “Peace, be still.” And immediately “there was a great calm.”

How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” “With faith all things are possible.” Proper faith is understood, of course, not credulity, not reliance upon the words of men, but implicit faith in the Lord for all that he has promised. “According to thy faith be it unto thee.”

It does not surprise us that in our individual experiences as Christians we find those which correspond to the experiences of the apostles noted in this lesson. How suddenly the Adversary may at times bring against us a whirlwind of temptation or of opposition or of persecution. How at such times our sky seems overcast, dark, foreboding; how the waves of adversity or affliction have almost overwhelmed us, and how the Lord seemed asleep and heedless of our distress and indifferent to our necessities! Such experiences are tests of our faith, as this one was a test to the faith of the apostles.



We of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.; and as the Apostle declares of his day, so it is still true that “we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high positions.” The storms may seem to come from the world, but really beyond the world is the Adversary. “We are not ignorant of his devices;” our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to grasp the thought of his mighty power in his own time and way to speak peace to the world.

Soon the time will come for him who careth for us to exert his great power on our behalf, to deliver his people, to say to the raging elements,

Peace, be still. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us—so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood. R. 5058 and R. 3324

I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

– John 6:35 –

It is a mistake to suppose that **truth** is the bread of life, and that the eating of truth will justify us, or give us a right to life. It is a mistake to suppose that to believe the Sermon on the Mount and other of our Lord's sayings would give life. Truths they were, and good for food **after** and **with** the Lamb, but **INDIGESTIBLE** without it. Those very truths were indigestible to many, and acted as emetics rather than as nourishing food, and "many went back and walked no more with the Lord." Even the twelve got little nourishment from our Lord's **teachings** until after the Lamb was slain, and they by faith had eaten of that **life-giving** food. **Then**, under the strength and vigor of the life, they were able to find sweetness and strength in all things whatsoever the Master had spoken unto them. The eating of the Lamb, by the new life which it brought, restored them again to fellowship with God; and receiving the adoption and spirit of sonship, they were thereby enabled to appreciate and appropriate to their strengthening, truths in general, as "meat in due season."

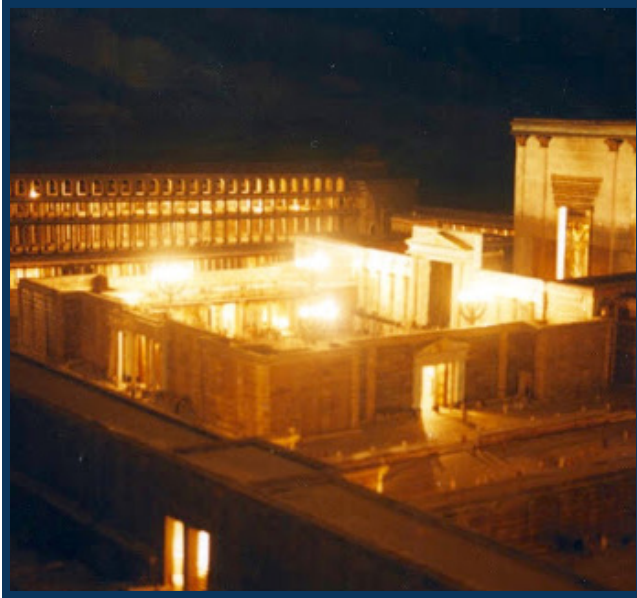
We, the church, who receive this bread of life now, and eat or appropriate it, do not experience a gradual restitution of our human powers to perfection, nor in any measure our restitution to human rights and privileges, etc. Ours is only **reckoned**, and not actual. By **faith** only, we can and do eat of the flesh of our Redeemer, accepting by faith (contrary to sight) **human** rights and liberties and life from the sacrifice made by our Lord. Mankind who will live in the next age will have sight as an aid to their faith; for they will feel their gradual physical improvement as they take the steps of faith and obedience. But none can walk by sight now, hence fewer and most **select** is the "little flock" now being chosen out from the world, to be the Bride and joint-heir of Christ in the Kingship and Priesthood of the age to come. To **eat** the Lamb we must realize his purity, his perfection, his spotlessness, and his **RIGHT** to all God's favors prepared for **man**. We must see, too, that he has sacrificed, surrendered up, all these human rights and privileges in order that all these blessings might be restored to the fallen and condemned race, and thus permit all to come back to a standing and fellowship with God, which he does not grant to **condemned** creatures.

Jesus explains that he himself had come down from heaven—not merely like the manna from the clouds, but from heaven itself, having laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, having humbled himself to an exchange of his previous spirit nature for the earthly nature in which he was then addressing them—the man Christ Jesus. But they could not eat him while he was alive, nor could they even understand what he meant when he said, "My flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed," and they reasoned, Will this man give us his flesh to eat? Is that what he means? The lesson was too deep for them; but, thank God, not too deep for us. As then some of the disciples forsook Jesus and walked no more with him, saying, "This is a hard saying, who can receive it?" so today there are some who cannot receive this teaching, which is the fundamental one of the Gospel of Christ. Whoever cannot receive this lesson cannot receive the other lessons which are built upon it. Our Lord further explained, "My flesh I will give for the life of the world." He had not yet given his flesh, though he was in the process of giving it; he was drawing out its vitality, its strength, in their service, but would complete the work of his sacrifice by surrendering his all to death—even the death of the cross. And this he did later. R. 1015 and R. 4146

I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness but have the light of life.

– John 8:12 –

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES CELEBRATION.



The two great feasts of the Jews were the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. These two great feasts divided the Jewish year, and were the great occasions on which the people from all over the Kingdom were expected to visit Jerusalem, the capital city, to spend a week in fellowship together, in thanksgiving to the Lord and the making of vows to him.

This occasion is thus described by Edersheim and others:

“In Jerusalem booths were erected everywhere, in court and on housetop, in street and in square. These arbors or booths were made of branches of trees—palms, sycamores, olives, pines, willows, etc. Nobody was living at home, everybody in these booths—all the people from the city and crowds from the country. All distinctions of

rank, all separation between rich and poor, were for a while forgotten, as each one dwelt in as good a dwelling as his neighbor.

“Each morning a joyous procession, with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam and drew water in a golden pitcher, from which it was poured out upon the altar amid hallelujahs.

“At night, four golden candelabra, each with four golden bowls for light, were in the center of the court, and the light emanating from them was visible to the whole city. Around these lights pious men danced before the people with lighted flambeaux in their hands, singing hymns and songs of praise, whilst the Levites, who were stationed on the fifteen steps which led into the woman’s court of the Temple and which corresponded to the fifteen psalms of degrees, i.e. steps (Psalm 122:1-9; Psalm 123:1-4; Psalm 124:1-8; Psalm 125:1-5; Psalm 126:1-6; Psalm 127:1-5; Psalm 128:1-6; Psalm 129:1-8; Psalm 130:1-8; Psalm 131:1-3; Psalm 132:1-18; Psalm 133:1-3; Psalm 134:1-3), accompanied the songs with instrumental music.

“The Temple illumination was symbolical of the light which was to shine from out the Temple into the dark night of heathendom; then, at the first dawn of morn the blasts of the priests’ silver trumpets, of the army of God, as it advanced with festive trumpet-sound and call, to awaken the sleepers and to utter solemn protest against heathendom.”

“It is supposed that on the last evening of the festival, when the splendid light of this grand illumination was to cease, Christ called attention to himself, ‘I am the Light of the world’ (John 8:12), which is to shine forever and illuminate not only the Temple and the Holy City, but all the world.”

—the Sun of Righteousness. R. 3508



If you abide in My word you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

– John 8:31-32 –

It is a blessed thing to take the first step in the Christian life—that of belief in and acceptance of Christ as our Redeemer and Lord; but the reward of this step depends entirely upon our **continuance** in his Word, in the attitude of true disciples. It is not difficult to do this, yet the disposition of human pride is to wander away from the simplicity of divine truth and to seek out new theories and philosophies of our own, or to pry into those of other men, who desire to be considered wise and great according to this world's estimate.

The reward of continued discipleship is, “Ye shall know the truth” —not that we shall be “ever seeking and never coming to a knowledge of the truth.” (2 Tim. 3:7.) Here is the mistake that many make: failing to continue in the Word of the Lord, they delve into various human philosophies which ignore or pervert the Word of the Lord and set up opposing theories. There is no promise, to those who seek for truth among these, that they shall ever find it. And they never do. Divine truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels: and those channels are the Lord and the apostles and prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their inspired writings, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and faithfully to conform our characters to them, is what is implied in continuing in the Word of the Lord.

The truth thus acquired, step by step, becomes a sanctifying power bringing forth in our lives its blessed fruits of righteousness, peace, joy in the holy Spirit, love, meekness, faith, patience and every virtue and every grace, which time and cultivation will ripen to a glorious maturity. And not only shall the true disciple thus know the truth and be sanctified by it, but the Lord also said, “The truth shall make you free.” Those who have received the truth know by blessed experience something of its liberating power. As soon as any measure of it is received into a good and honest heart, it begins to strike off the fetters of sin, of ignorance and superstition, and of fear. It throws its health-restoring beams into the darkest recesses of our hearts and minds, and thus invigorates the whole being. Sin cannot endure its light. Thank God, we who have received the truth have escaped that terrible nightmare, and the bondage of Satan over us is broken! R. 3153

The Lord's expression, “Then are ye My disciples *indeed*,” implies a distinction between real and merely nominal disciples. And since we desire to continue to be Jesus' sincere disciples, let us mark the expressed condition: “If ye continue *in My Word*, then are ye My disciples indeed.” The hypocrisy of merely nominal discipleship is an abomination to the Lord. R. 5508

Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.

– John 8:56 –

Abraham believed the Message and was glad. He rested. He did not know the way by which God would bring about the blessing, but he had the promise of God, confirmed by His Oath. He did not need to know then about the Lord Jesus or the Plan of Salvation. He had full rest in fully believing God; and so did as many of his posterity as exercised the same faith as Abraham. Isaac and Jacob and many of the Prophets, including the Prophet David, thus trusted God. Their writings show that they were fully in harmony with God. They realized that He had made a gracious provision for the future, and that this provision was for the world in general; yet they knew that they were to have a “better resurrection” than that of the world. They had a rest of faith in these things that God had not yet accomplished.

[Abraham] did not see it with his natural eye, but with the eye of faith. He saw the Day in which Christ, who has died for all men, will uplift the human family, raising the world up out of sin and death—first exalting His Bride, and finally causing the blessing of God to extend to every creature. This is just what God promised to Abraham—“In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Abraham was glad, and everybody else is glad who sees it. Abraham was content to see that there was to be a great blessing for his posterity, and through them for the world. He did not see God’s Plan clearly, as we see it, but he saw enough to make him rejoice. R. 5433

Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.

– John 8:58 –

Our Lord's statement, “Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:58), serves to identify the man Jesus with His previous condition as the Logos before He was made flesh and dwelt among us. We would say that our Lord as a human being was the same soul as in His pre-existent condition; for He had the same life principle as before; and that when He became human He did not die as a spirit being. The Scriptures declare that our Lord was “made flesh,” a human being; and that the difference between Him and mankind in general was that He was perfect—“holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners”—separate from the remainder of the human race. (Heb. 7:26.) The Scriptures also explain that this difference resulted from the fact that He was specially begotten. The life principle by which He was conceived came directly from the Heavenly Father.

“I know whence I came and whither I go....I am from above, I am not of this world; ...I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me....It is my Father that honoreth me, and if I should say I know him not I shall be a liar.” (John 8:14; John 8:23; John 8:42; John 8:54-55.)

There is no mistake about [this] expression. Since his humanity resulted from the transference of the life-principle from spiritual to human conditions; the being, the individuality, was the same. Jesus as a man, recognized himself as the same being—the Son of God, and could remember his former glory. “I AM” expresses his continuous existence, and identifies Jesus of Nazareth with the “only begotten” and “first born of all creation.” The Jews did not believe this wonderful truth, and took up stones to stone him. Our Lord’s teachings only convinced the meek, and only such he expected to receive them. —Isa. 61:1. R. 5064 and R. 1059

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

– John 9:5 –

The Lord's words then signified that he realized the opportunity at hand and did with his might what his hands found to do, what was possible to be done under all the circumstances and conditions prevailing, and with a realization that the night was drawing rapidly upon the Jewish people, and that not only his own work would be cut short soon by his death, but that all opportunities for dealing with the Jews would soon be at an end. The apostles after Pentecost entered fully into the Master's spirit in respect to this shortness of the time, and labored incessantly first with the Jews and only subsequently with the Gentiles, until all the elect had been gathered from the once favored nation, even though these were but a remnant, as the apostle explains. The rest were blinded, went into complete darkness, while the light of divine favor through the Lamp, the Word, was sent amongst the Gentiles to gather out of them also an elect class for membership in the spiritual Israel, for membership in the body of Christ, to be light-bearers under present conditions, through trials and difficulties and oppositions, and, by and by, to be associates with the Lord as members of the glorious Sun of Righteousness, the great Light which in the duly appointed time shall enlighten the whole world.

Thus, as the Apostle says, "As he was, so are we in this world"—lights shining in darkness, appreciated not, comprehended not, understood not, refused, repulsed by the great mass, even by those who claimed to be the people of God, but whose hearts were not in such sympathy with the light as to permit them to receive the holy Spirit's illumination. For be it noted that there is quite a distinction between having the holy Spirit and being illuminated by it so as to let our light shine, and on the other hand being of those upon whom such illumination shines. Our Lord let his light shine upon many, and so we have opportunity to let our light shine upon many. But no one has the light within him except he is begotten of the holy Spirit. —Hebrews 10:32.

R. 3518 and R. 4149



Whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before the angels of God. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

– Luke 12:8-9 –

Whoever confesses Jesus, confesses the Father who sent Him. And all such will be in the Lord's favor, and ultimately be acknowledged in the resurrection by the Father and the holy angels, as members of the Bride of Christ. But those who, after becoming disciples of Christ, deny Him, He will not acknowledge as disciples in glory.

Jesus' words were addressed to the disciples, not to the masses. Whoever would confess Christ would become His disciple. None could deny Him who had never acknowledged Him. He is to be confessed, not merely by baptism, nor by any outward form. He is to be confessed in the life, in the conduct, in the words, of His followers. They are to have His Spirit and to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light." Whoever makes a profession of being a disciple, and then ignores the Master's teachings, misrepresents Him, slanders Him, denies Him, will not share in the glorious presentation of the Bride, in the end of this Age. R. 5390

Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to ‘SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW’ and ‘A MAN’S ENEMIES WILL BE THOSE OF HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.’

– Matthew 10:34-36 –

Although the Prophet had foretold that Messiah should be the Prince of Peace, yet when Messiah came, he said [these words] in almost the same words as the Prophet [Micah 7:5-7]. Though this has been true in a measure during the entire age, it is specially true in the harvest or end of the age, when the sickle of truth is doing its work of separation; for in the time of harvest, not only are Christians to be separated from the world, and wheat from tares (the true from the false), but the ripe wheat is also to be separated from the unripe. And so it will probably be true of the faithful now, as it was true of our Lord, that they shall be **left alone**. He said even to his disciples, “Behold the hour cometh, ...that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone.”—John 16:32.



When our Lord first started in his ministry he was glorified (honored) of all (Luke 4:15), and men “wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth;” yet faithfulness to the truth quickly aroused hatred and opposition. Very soon the great ones in the church began to oppose him bitterly; but still many of the common people heard him gladly. And it seems that persecution from his earthly kindred was not lacking in his case, and that he was unwelcome in the home of his childhood; for he said, “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” (Matt. 8:20.) His brethren did not believe on him, and seemed ashamed of the unpopular notoriety which his course brought upon them as a family. And though Jesus walked no more in Jewry [Judea] because the Jews there sought to kill him, his brethren urged him to go, notwithstanding the danger, and do some of his mighty works there. But Jesus replied to them, “My time is not yet come, but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth [and they seek my life] because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come”—neither the time for manifesting his power to the world, nor to lay down his life as a sacrifice. (John 7:1-53.) His mother was doubtless always in sympathy with him, though she could not fully understand him and with a true mother’s love, as well as the love of a disciple, she shared his reproach and followed him to Calvary and the tomb.

While the world, and the nominal church, and they of his own house, were arrayed in opposition to the Lord, he turned to his disciples and said, “Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” (Matt. 12:50.) And yet the hour came when even these were scattered, and he was **left alone**. R. 1069

Now is the harvest, the sifting and separating time. Various things will tend to draw you away from the truth; fathers, mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters will oppose and seek to separate you from the truth and its service. You must remember the Lord's words, that the "harvest" is not a time for peace, but on the contrary it will surely produce separation and alienations between true wheat and all else. See, and treasure up his words on this subject. —Matt. 10:30-39 and Luke 18:28-30. R. 969

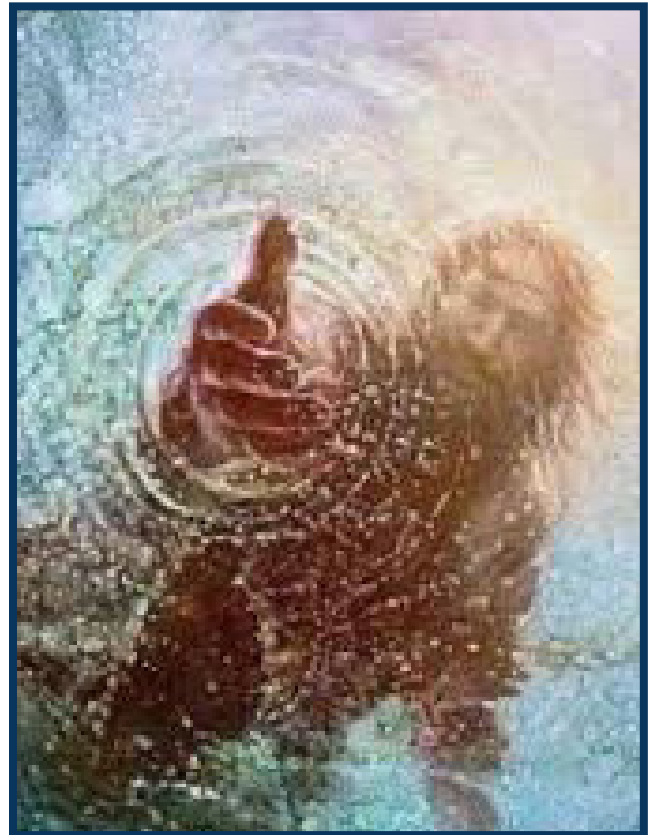
O you of little faith. Why did you doubt? – Matthew 14:31 –

John, who was one of those in the boat, tells us that they had only gotten about twenty-five or thirty furlongs (two and a half to three miles) from the shore, in the several hours they had been rowing. This was what is termed the fourth watch of the night, viz., between three and six o'clock in the morning. While thus rowing hard, worn and sleepy, [the apostles] saw the figure of a man near them, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass their boat. (Mark 6:48-50.) Some of them cried out in fear, thinking that they had seen a supernatural being, and that it foreboded some calamity, but it was Jesus who spoke to them, and set at rest their fears.

The boldness of Peter's faith was then most strikingly illustrated by his request that the Lord should bid him walk on the water; and having received the permission, his faith was so strong that he did walk for a few steps, until seemingly appalled by his own temerity and the boisterousness of the water, he began to sink, and cried to the Lord for help, which he received through touching the Lord's hand.

We are to remember that not only the natural winds and waves obey his power and command, but that all the storms and billows of trouble and persecution which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. The more we are able to realize this, the more of joy and peace we will experience, because the stronger will be our faith in him who is able to succor us and who has promised eventually to do so, and that meantime all things shall be overruled for our highest welfare, if we abide in him.

The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him. Courage, then, dear brother-mariners on the sea of experience, seeking to make your calling and election sure! Let us note carefully the Master's words to Peter as especially applicable to ourselves, viz., that all that will hinder us from walking out to meet the Lord is lack of faith. "O thou of little faith: wherefore didst thou doubt?" R. 2649



Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you.

Matthew 17:20

There is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known.

– Luke 12:2 –

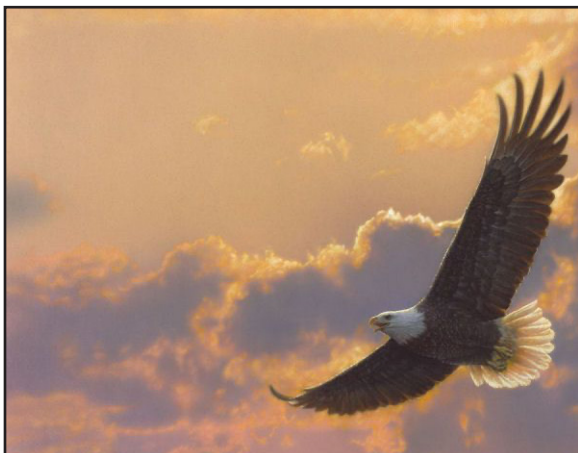
Jesus addressed His disciples, saying: “Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.” Here, as elsewhere in His teachings, Jesus uses leaven as a symbol, or figure, of an evil influence. We know not of one instance in which leaven is used to represent anything good or pure. During the Passover season Jews were prohibited from using it, thus symbolizing the putting away of sin. Jesus declared that the hypocrisies practiced by the Pharisees—the learned people of that time—were leaven, impurity, sin, contaminating in their influence. His disciples should be honest, sincere, pure, free from cant and deception. Their words and works should be such as would not need to be covered. Jesus declared that ultimately all hypocrisies and sins will be uncovered, revealed. Undoubtedly He meant that during His Kingdom, when the power of the resurrection will be exercised, all the hidden things of darkness will be abolished, the secrets of mankind will be exposed. No doubt this will constitute the basis of the shame and contempt which will be the punishment of many, as foretold. Thus we read that in the resurrection some will come forth to shine as the stars of heaven, and others to shame and everlasting contempt. (Dan. 12:2.) However, it is comforting to know that the Hebrew text signifies lasting and not everlasting. The shame and contempt will last as long as the shameful and contemptible conditions last—until the reformation of the individual or, that failing, until his destruction in the Second Death. R. 5390

The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore.

– Luke 12:7 –

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, and a reverential fear is always proper. But as God’s people become intimately acquainted with Him, learning of His Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power, and realize that He is the Friend of all who love righteousness, they come to love God; and, as the Apostle declares, “Perfect love casteth out fear [dread to offend],” which signifies rest. The Lord’s disciples were to realize their Heavenly Father’s care for them and His Wisdom—that as He forgets not the sparrows, so He will not forget them; and that not even a hair of their heads could be injured without his knowledge and permission; that everything that He permits to come to His people, to His children, He assures them, will work out for them some blessing.

“If God be for us, who can be against us?” or “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect?” Say in your heart as did Paul, “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any



other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.” —Rom. 8:31-39. “Through waves and clouds and storms, He gently clears thy way,” —until a blessed acquaintance with God through such experiences develops in the heart that perfect love that casteth out fear. Then shall you enter more and more fully into the blessed rest of faith, and like the eagle that soars above the storm cloud, live at such an altitude of Christian experience as to enable you to rejoice in the Lord always and in everything to give thanks. “Fear not, I am thy shield,” saith Jehovah. R. 5390 and R. 1906

Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

– Luke 13:24 –

Christianity now is presented to the unbeliever in the most attractive form, and every inducement that can be offered is presented to persuade men to come to Jesus. They are told that it is an easy thing to be a Christian; that they have only to say the word, to make the public confession, join the church, and they are safe. We do not question the benevolence of the motive which prompts this, but we do question both the authority and the wisdom of the plan. Will such work stand in the day that tries by fire?



The narrow way of self-sacrifice through which the high calling invites us, is so contrary to worldly wisdom that few find it in the sense of knowing or realizing it; and fewer yet, after finding it, will walk in it; it is so narrow, so difficult and painful to crucify the flesh with its human affections, hopes, aims and desires; so difficult to have a mind and judgment and will of your own and yet obey not their dictates, but crucify them and take and follow the will of another which often seems so much less complete than our own, and whose ultimate advantage we so often cannot see.

The Saviour **never** urged men to come to Him. The truth He taught had sufficient power to draw those who were susceptible to its influence. His words possessed the peculiar property of satisfying the hunger of earth-weary, toil-burdened and desolate hearts. And these are they who are especially invited. The only direct invitations given by Him who came to win ALL, were given to this class. “He that is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.” “Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Only those who feel the need of rest and life can appreciate the invitation. The rich, the popular, those absorbed in business; in brief, all who are content with the things of this life, are scarce likely to leave them for things for which they feel no need. As a rule, the more content we are with earthly things, the less we desire heaven; and God never gives of heavenly things except they are earnestly desired. R. 108 and R. 962

Whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

– Luke 14:27 –

The Lord very distinctly told what the cross would imply to those who become His disciples. He said that whosoever would be His disciple would suffer persecution. He warned us that carrying the cross would be a serious matter. If, therefore, you determine that you would like to be His disciple, sit down and count the cost. If you take up the cross, it is to be not merely **lifted**, but **carried faithfully unto death**. After we have **taken up** that cross, it has to be **borne**, our Lord tells us. **Bearing** it does not mean our running away from it, or getting alarmed at it. **Bearing** the cross means **enduring** it.

How much our Master knew of being counted a deceiver, while yet he was the true one, of being called Beelzebub, while really the Prince of light! What a cross it must have been to endure such slanderous misrepresentations, and contradictions of sinners against himself; and how faithfully he bore the cross. And shall not all of his followers expect to similarly share this cross with him, and be misunderstood, misrepresented, misjudged, by those who are more or less blinded by the Adversary! Such dishonor, such evil reports, are amongst the things which our Lord specifically declared would be a part of our cross-bearing when he said, “Blessed are ye when men shall revile and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad (in all such cross-bearings), for great is your reward in heaven.” In a word, our Lord calls upon his disciples to follow him, in direct opposition to the world-current. He declares that the disciple must not expect to be above his Lord in being spared such experiences, but promises great rewards at the end of the journey—life eternal, with exceeding glory.

Such are to know that the cost of such discipleship will be cross-bearing. Cross-bearing signifies endurance of trials, difficulties, disappointments—the crossing of the human will and preferences by circumstances and conditions permitted of the Father. Our Lord’s will was fully submitted to God, so that it was his delight to do the Father’s will, and this must be our attitude to commence with; but after this consecration has taken place comes the trial and testing.

We [cannot] in advance appreciate how the Lord wishes to test our zeal and our faith, by letting us come to the crosses of life one at a time, and letting us see their ruggedness, —hiding from us the assisting hand by which, as soon as we take hold of the cross and put forth our efforts, our Lord lifts the real weight of it, so that we have no more at any time than we are able to bear. So careful is he of all those who thus become his footstep followers and cross-bearers, and prospectively his joint-heirs in the Kingdom, that he will not “suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but with the temptation will provide also a way of escape.” —1 Cor. 10:13. R. 2616, R. 5223, R. 3235

To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

– John 10:3-5 –

Not all are able to hear and recognize the Shepherd's voice in the present time; the majority are deaf on this subject, however acute their hearing may be as respects the inducements held out to them by the world, the flesh and the devil. Consequently the Scriptures say, "He that hath an ear to hear [the gospel] let him hear." But the opening of our ears to hear the good tidings, of which Christ is the center, does not close them to the various voices of selfishness, ambition, pride, avarice, and vain-glory, and the other voices proceeding from the world, the flesh and the devil: it would seem indeed that, after accepting us to be his sheep, and after giving us some opportunity to learn the sound of the Shepherd's voice, the voice of Truth, we are intentionally exposed to the various voices which would call us away from our Shepherd, and from following in his footsteps. And Oh, how many stray away! "Walking after their own desires." How many thus become side-tracked on the way to the heavenly city! How many are ultimately entirely switched off into another direction! How many have thus gone "back and walked no more with him!" How few, what a "little flock," they are that follow on, day by day, to know the Shepherd more fully, to walk in his paths, and ultimately with him to reach the heavenly Kingdom!

How all-important then it is, that we have our minds thoroughly made up respecting the voice that we will obey and the footsteps that we will follow—for "a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." We "cannot serve God and Mammon," however much we try. We cannot hear and obey the voice of Satan and Sin and the World and Self and the Flesh, and at the same time hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd, the voice of Truth, the voice of Love. Let this be settled and fixed in our minds, that it may keep us from all wavering after we have once taken our place amongst the Lord's sheep. R. 2257



See also p. 309

I am the door of the sheep. I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

– John 10:7,9 –

Since, then, all men are imperfect—none absolutely righteous—the one sentence of death includes **every member** of the human family; and there is no door of escape from death, no door of entrance into life, except the one which God has provided—Christ Jesus, the Righteous, who became man's Redeemer by the sacrifice of Himself. He who fails to go through this door never attains to life, however much he may strive against sin, and however closely he may approach the door. **“I am the door; by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”** “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God [the sentence of death] abideth on him.” —John 10:9; 3:36.

Only those who feel that they are sinners, who feel that they need relief from sin, appreciate the offer of forgiveness. Only the sick, who realize that they are sick, feel the need of the Great Physician. Many indeed seek the Lord's grace because they realize to some extent their own fallen, degraded condition; only this seems to awaken them to a realization of their position; only this leads them to cry out, “Have **mercy** upon me, Thou Son of David.” And this realization of personal **unworthiness** of the Divine favor is necessary to all who would accept the grace of God on the only conditions upon which it is offered.

All “Israelites indeed” heard and recognized the voice of the true Shepherd and became his followers. Our Lord as the “Door” gave these true sheep that access to the blessings and mercies of this Gospel age in the fullest sense which began at Pentecost and will not be finished until all the true sheep shall have heard the Shepherd's voice and shall have entered into his rest and have been fed and refreshed by following him. Jesus as the “Door” represents all the privileges and blessings of the true sheep. By him we enter into rest in the fold or resting place provided for the true sheep—the rest of faith. By him also we may go out to enjoy the liberties and refreshment to which as our Shepherd he leads his flock. We go in and out continually, enjoying the liberties and privileges secured to us by our Shepherd. We thus enjoy “the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free.” —Gal. 5:1. This rest and liberty we obtain, first, through our justification by our Lord's sacrifice of himself; and, secondly, through our consecration as his sheep and our adoption through the holy Spirit, which brings us under his care and feeding. R. 5135 and R. 3528



I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

– John 10:11 –

Our Lord himself was the true Shepherd, and he demonstrated his devotion to his office by the sacrifice of everything, even life itself, on behalf of the sheep. The self-sacrificing spirit, blended with humility, should be recognized by all of the sheep as the spirit of the true Shepherd, and from such alone should be expected the leading which the Good Shepherd promised to the flock throughout this Gospel age. Our Lord defended the interests of the sheep against the false spirits and the wolves of his day, and it cost him his life.

The true Shepherd thus commends himself to all who are truly sheep, and such admire this spirit of their Master wherever they find it. That is to say, whoever are the true sheep will love and appreciate such a spirit and none other, and will thus differentiate themselves from those who are merely the followers of men, partisans, sectarians. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and they know him. The Lord appreciates those who thus recognize principle, and that class recognize, know, the Lord more and more intimately day by day, and find their love and devotion to him continually increasing. Our Lord's words on this matter are more clearly presented in the revised version, namely, "I know mine own and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father." This intimacy of acquaintance, this fellowship divine, is something which cannot be explained to others, but which is certainly appreciated by all the true sheep who know the true Shepherd, and who have been, under his guiding care, led to the green pastures and still waters and also into the fold for safety.

R. 3527

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 : See also pages 307-310, *Jesus Our Shepherd* :

My Father loves Me because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.

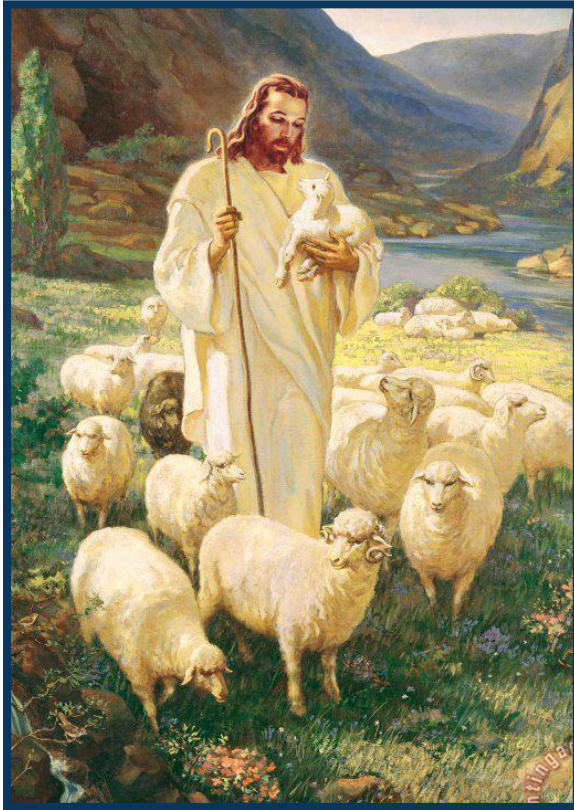
– John 10:18 –

[We are not to understand] our Lord's words, as meaning that he could have any power whatever during the interim of death. Rather, we are to understand this in harmony with the many plain statements of the apostles under the inspiration of the holy spirit, to mean that our Lord had authority or commission from the Father to make the declaration that though he would lay down his life he would receive it again--this authority, assurance to this effect, I have received it from my Father. So understood, the whole matter is clear. So understood, the doctrine of the resurrection becomes next in importance to the doctrine of the ransom, and really a part and parcel of it; for as we have already seen, for our Lord to have died and not to have risen from the dead would have meant no hope for those whom he had promised to deliver, and whom the Father had promised he should have authority to deliver from the power of death by a resurrection through judgments.

—John 5:28-30. R. 2794

Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

– Luke 12:32 –



Truly, those who follow the Lord's leading in this narrow way of sacrifice and of faith are only a little flock; for only a few thus apply their hearts unto instruction and wholly follow the divine direction. Consequently, only a few know the blessedness of the realization of the Lord's tender care. But to those who follow this leading there is a growing sense of his love which the daily walk with him deepens, confirms and sweetens as the years go by, and as experience makes plain the guidance of his loving hand. As one after another of the trials of life come, and we mark his overruling power, which caused even the adverse elements to work together for our good, faith takes deeper root and the character becomes more stable, sturdy and pleasing to God.

Although these are few in number, they are very precious to the Lord. He calls them His saints, His jewels, and tells us that at His second coming, prior to the setting up of His Kingdom to rule the world, these, as His jewel class, shall be gathered to Himself beyond the veil—changed by the power of the First Resurrection from human to the divine nature. These He tells us He will gather as His true “wheat,” in the

Harvest of this Age, into His heavenly garner— “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye”; “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.” —Matt. 13:43.

R. 2130 and R. 5038

I am the resurrection and the life.

– John 11:25 –

That our heavenly Father so regarded [our Lord's] sacrifice was evidenced by the impartation of the holy Spirit, which anointing upon him constituted him the Messiah, the Christ, and the hope of the Church, which is his body, as well as ultimately the hope of all things. Hence, since our Lord had never abrogated that covenant of consecration, sacrifice, since he was still in line with his Covenant, and since the Father still so recognized him, it was proper for him to think and act and speak from that standpoint, which not only looked down to the end of his own course with faith, but also looked down to the end of this Gospel age with confidence, and to the end of the Millennial age with assurance that all the good purposes of God would finally be accomplished in and through him. From this standpoint, therefore, he said, “I am the resurrection and the life.” He knew that the sacrificial work he had undertaken would secure to him the privilege of being the Life-Giver to the world, and that in the exercise of that right he would raise up not only from the tomb, but completely out of death conditions up to perfection, all who would come unto the Father through him—all who would have the right desire of heart to return to loving obedience to the Creator. R. 3754

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

– Matthew 16:19 –

As shown in several of our Lord's parables, the Gospel Church is the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 13:1-58) in its incipient and preparatory state; and its privileges and powers were about to be opened to both Jews and Gentiles. It was really the Lord that opened the door into his Church: Peter was merely the agent chosen to do the work in the name of the Lord—opening the door to the Jews in his discourse on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14; Acts 2:40), and opening the same door to the Gentiles in his discourse to Cornelius and his household, three and a half years later. (Acts 10:33; Acts 10:46.) This honorable service is what is symbolically referred to as using the “keys of the kingdom.” (Matt. 16:19.) But, the door once opened, neither Peter, nor any other man, can close it. Our Lord declares that he has “the key of David” (Rev. 3:7); and the door into his kingdom will not be shut until the last member of the chosen and faithful Church has entered into its glory—viz., at the close of the Gospel age. R. 1521

Unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

– Matthew 18:3 –

The special characteristics of a little child are simplicity of heart, meekness, truthfulness, freedom from ambition and rivalry, faith, confiding trust, love, obedience, teachableness, indifference to social distinctions and popular opinions, and guilelessness. Such, our Lord declares, must be the spirit of all who will be permitted to enter into the Kingdom of heaven; and he who cultivates it most will be the greatest; not, however, by any arbitrary law of retribution, but on the philosophical principle that humility leads to greatness, and is of itself a great achievement. It is just such loving generosity and meekness as this that will be necessary on the part of the “royal priesthood” of the Millennial age, to cooperate with Christ in the great work of lifting up the fallen to the high privileges of perfect manhood.

In the simplicity of our hearts we see precious promises in his Word and are ready to believe them; then the Adversary brings along objections, fears and doubts, and queries as to how, and the faith becomes diluted and loses its power to control our lives and conduct further. Our Lord, therefore, urges upon his followers that they should have the faith and obedience of little children and not be of the worldly wise. His Word assures us that the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and that God's wisdom and God's plan seem to the world to be foolishness. We must take our choice as between human wisdom and divine wisdom. Blessed are they who walk by faith and not by sight, and accept the wisdom of the divine Word. The end of the Lord's plan will fully justify their confidence, and work out abundantly more and better things than they ever dreamed.

R. 1766 and R. 3538

Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

– Matthew 18:10 –

How careful the Lord's people should be not to stumble one another, even one of the least of the little ones who has accepted of Jesus and become His follower! —is the lesson. The thought of the picture the Lord here shows is that his "little ones" are never forgotten, and that all their trials and difficulties are speedily brought to the Father's attention through the angels or agencies of divine arrangement. What a comfort this is to those who are seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and who find themselves frequently misunderstood or slandered or despised or neglected! Any good done to this class will never be forgotten by the Lord; any injury done to them will also be known and will not go unpunished, and the punishment will be in proportion to the degree of intelligence and willfulness of the wrongdoer. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Therefore, brethren, avenge not yourselves; leave all in the hands of the Lord as you suffer injury patiently and learn advantageous lessons therefrom; but at all times be careful, vigilant, that you yourself shall stumble, injure, none. R. 3798 and R. 5131

What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them goes astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine and go to the mountains to seek the one that is straying? And if he should find it, assuredly, I say to you, he rejoices more over that sheep than over the ninety-nine that did not go astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

– Matthew 18:12-14 –

Jesus suggested that any shepherd losing one of his sheep would leave all the others to go and seek that one; and he rejoices specially at its recovery. So we, the followers of Jesus, should be careful not to stumble each other, but rather to remember that we are all sheep under the great Shepherd, our Heavenly Father, and the great Under Shepherd, our Heavenly Lord, and that He has the spirit of loving interest and care which would go after the straying sheep, and that we should have this same spirit; and possessing this spirit, we would be very careful indeed not to stumble or hinder even the least of the Lord's followers.

Here it refers to all of the Lord's "little ones," all who become his followers, his sheep. Should one of them be stumbled, should one of them stray, the Lord in his providence will not abandon him, but will purify him if possibly he may be recovered. And all who are in harmony with the Lord should have this same thought and interest in one another, that they would be willing to spend and be spent in the recovery of a brother from the snare of the adversary. Verse 14 sets the matter forth very clearly, saying, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." Hence, as the Apostle explains, he that recovereth a sinner from the error of his ways, saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins. (James 5:20.) This is not referring to the souls of the world in general, which are still under the sentence of death, but it is referring to the souls of believers, who through faith have been justified and consecrated to the Lord. If they shall fall away, shall stumble by any means, all the faithful are to be energetic in their endeavors to recover such, to bring them back into full accord with the Lord. Its assurance further is that it is not the will of the Father that they should perish, and hence we may rely upon it that any and every reasonable and

proper thing in their interests will be done rather than that they should be abandoned. This same spirit at work in the household of faith amongst the “little ones” would lead them, not to strive as to which of them would be greatest, but rather lead them to mutual helpfulness, that each and all might gain the prize of the high calling. R. 3798 and R. 5131

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.
– Matthew 18:15 –

The great difficulty in cases of misunderstanding is that **the Lord’s counsel is not accurately followed**. Good, honorable brethren, anxious to do right, who apparently would be quite competent to advise others, seem to think that **theirs** is a different case—seem not to exercise the proper judgment. Instead of going to the brother and saying, kindly, “Brother, I have come to see you in reference to a little matter, following the advice of Matthew 18:15. The spirit of the Lord’s injunction is to **help** a brother, not to twit him, nor to anger him, nor to tease him; not to entrap him into saying what he did not intend to say, nor to distort the meaning of what he has said. Such is not the right spirit. No brother should be approached in this manner. But the matter should be considered in the most kindly way; and if then—in spite of all that one can do—the wrong is continued, we should have nothing more to say. Some might say, “He did not apologize.” The Lord did not say anything about his apology. But if he recognizes that he is wrong and fails to apologize, he is doing **himself** injury.

If the second step in Matt. 18:15-17 be found necessary, it should be taken only after very deliberate thought and prayer, with the desire to make sure of doing the Lord’s will. First of all, one should make sure that the matter is of sufficient importance to ask the brethren to go along! and that it is something against **us**, not against **another**; that it is not **busy bodying**; that it is something that is being done **now**. If this is the case, take two others along. Do not say, “If I ask you to go along, be sure to stand by me.” **We** may be **the ones in error**; and if we are we should be more anxious to be **corrected ourselves** than to have the **other brother** corrected. If we make sure that the matter is important, we should select two that we think would be friends of the brother injuring us—fair-minded, honorable people in the Church. Then, after the party has met with the offending brother and discussed the case, it would be proper for these brethren to advise us. If the advice were something that we could follow, we should do so and bring peace and harmony.

But if this course should avail nothing and the injurious actions should continue, then it would be proper for us to bring the matter to the attention of the Church.
 R. 4985

Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.

—Matthew 18:20—



None of us is so strong in the new nature that he can disregard the fellowship of kindred minds. But even if we did feel sufficiently strong for ourselves, the spirit of love in us should so control that we would delight to meet with “the brethren” for their sakes, if we ourselves received no benefit therefrom. But we are more or less like coals of fire, which, if separated, will tend to cool rapidly, but which, if brought together, will tend to increase in fervency the entire mass. Our Lord has encouraged his people to seek each other’s fellowship for companionship in the study of his Word, and in prayer, pronouncing special blessings upon the meeting of his people together, even if so few as only two or three.

O, that as we meet (personally or through the printed page) we could always realize our Heavenly Father’s interest in us and his willingness to bless our efforts in the study of his Word and in the development of character! Such a realization would probably make all such meetings increasingly profitable. Those who do not recognize the Lord’s presence in the gathering of his people are apt to exercise an injurious rather than helpful influence upon

others, and are less likely to get any profit for themselves. Let us more and more remember as we meet in the name of our Lord his promise, “Where two or three are met in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Those who realize the Lord’s presence amongst his people when they meet will be very careful of the words of their mouths, their actions and the very thoughts of their hearts: pride, vainglory, slander, and all evil things (“works of the flesh and of the devil”) will be carefully shunned, if his presence is clearly realized by the eye of faith. R. 2543 and R. 4077

I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

—Matthew 18:22—

It is true that Justice is the foundation of Divine Government—that God is just; but it is also true that God is loving and kind, and that he accepts to himself the very name of love, for “God is love.” Such should learn that to be in the Divine likeness is to govern one’s self and one’s course by the rules of justice, but to measure the course of others by the rule of love and sympathy, generosity and forgiveness.

Our Lord said that we should forgive a brother not only seven times, but seventy times seven. What a breadth of generosity is here suggested! How it tells us of the loving mercy and forgiveness of him with whom we have to do! But let us remember another statement of this same matter, where it is implied that before the forgiveness is granted, it is to be at least desired, if not sought. “If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day and seven times a day shall say, ‘I repent’; thou shalt forgive him” —or to the extent of seventy times seven. We must even assume that the Lord meant that in our hearts we should already forgive the brother his trespasses, even though we might wisely wait to express our forgiveness until his attitude manifested some desire for it. The disciples of Christ are to be continually in the attitude of generosity and filled with the spirit of forgiveness as is the heavenly Father—ready and waiting to be gracious, and under proper conditions, to manifest that readiness. R. 4650

I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery. And whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery.

– Matthew 19:9 –

One cause is mentioned in the Scriptures as a proper ground for the dissolution of the marriage bond. (Matt. 19:3-10.) And the disciples, hearing these our Master's words, were as much surprised as the Pharisees, and said that if the case stood thus—i.e., if the marriage covenant was so binding and indissoluble, it would be better not to marry—it would be too great a risk to run, (Verse 10.) But this is just the way the Lord would have us view the relationship. The marriage contract is one that should stand until death makes the separation, unless the one cause referred to releases the innocent from the guilty and faithless. The twain bound for life by mutual contract, are thereafter no longer twain, but one flesh; and all their future happiness and prosperity in the present life depend upon their loyalty, generosity, love and consideration one for the other. The marriage relation, both in its duration and in its character, was designed to be a type of the lasting, faithful and blessed union of Christ and the Church. He will never leave her nor forsake her; and she will never withdraw her allegiance and faithfulness to him. Jesus was criticizing the too slack observance of the marriage tie, and condemning it. He declared that the marriage contract could not be fully broken except by adultery. In our day these matters are regulated by courts. Very properly, Bible Students govern themselves additionally by the Word of God. The fact that a court would grant a divorce would not by a Bible Student be considered liberation from the marriage bonds, unless upon the one ground which the Master specified. But a court divorce is to be respected when it is backed by the condition of adultery—or backed by a second marriage of the separated one. R. 1554 and R. 5954

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

– Matthew 19:24 –

Our Lord commented upon the matter to his disciples and added that the rich must have great difficulty in connection with their endeavor to enter the Kingdom. This astonished the disciples very greatly, for they knew that the majority of the religionists of their day belonged to the wealthy class, the Scribes and the Pharisees. They replied, "Who, then, can get into the Kingdom, if these cannot?" Our Lord's reply was, "With men this is impossible, but not with God." Men would be inclined to say that God would find no one for the Kingdom at all if he rejected the rich. In a word, no **rich** man can get into the Kingdom. He must give up everything to the Lord or else be barred from a place in the Kingdom. The terms of acceptance are the same to the rich as to the poor. He who would have the "pearl of great price" must sell all that he has in order that he may obtain it. The rich must give up all to the Lord, and then as stewards of their riches will be held responsible for their stewardship. R. 4658

THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE

Tall was my camel and laden high,
And small the gate as a needle's eye.
The city within was very fair,
And I and my camel would enter there.
"You must lower your load," the porter cried,
"You must throw away that bundle of pride."
This I did, but the load was great,
Far too wide for the narrow gate.
"Now," said the porter, "to make it less,
Discard that hamper of selfishness."
I obeyed, though with much ado,
Yet still nor camel nor I got through.
"Ah," said the porter, "Your load must hold
Some little package of trust-in-gold."
The merest handful was all I had,
Yet "Throw it away," the porter bade.
Then lo, a marvel! the camel tall
Shrank to the size of the portal small,
And all my riches, a vast estate,
Easily passed through the narrow gate!

Then Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. Now behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. And he sought to see who Jesus was, but could not because of the crowd, for he was short stature. So he ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was going to pass that way. And Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”

Luke 19:1-5



Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

– Luke 19:9-10 –

We can imagine Zaccheus lying on a limb of a sycamore tree, looking down upon the Lord, studying the lines of his countenance, wondering whether or not this were the very Christ, and feeling despair in his own heart as he realized his own imperfection and impurity as contrasted with the Master's character, which shone forth in his countenance, speaking purity, gentleness, meekness, patience, love. How surprised he must have been when the Master stopped and looked directly into his eyes and, calling his name, said, "Zaccheus, come down, for I must dine today at thy house." We have here evidences of the Lord's knowledge of what is in man, that he reads the heart and makes no mistakes. Zaccheus was indeed glad to receive him and hastened to come

down and to take him to his home. Doubtless there were others in that vicinity not only more highly esteemed amongst men but of still grander and nobler character than Zaccheus, but he had the longing heart, hungering and thirsting for righteousness. To him the blessing came; he should be filled. What a wonderful opportunity it was to have the Master come to his home! What an honor, what an opportunity for hearing some precious words, instructions, guidance, encouragement! Not all the conversation of that dinner-table is recorded, but sufficient is told to teach the lesson. Whatever the Lord said to him, Zaccheus there made a full surrender of his heart—that henceforth he would not only forsake sin and evil customs and practices, but that so far as possible he would make restitution for wrong doing and injustice. R. 3847

Even Moses showed in the burning bush passage that the dead are raised, when he called the Lord ‘THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB.’ For He is not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live to Him.

– Luke 20:37-38 –

The Sadducees of Jesus’ day did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. When, therefore, they heard that Jesus had said that all in the graves would ultimately hear His voice and come forth, they disputed His statement as foolish. Coming to Him with a proposition which they thought would expose the fallacy of His teachings, they said to Him, Suppose a woman had seven husbands, all of whom died before she did, whose wife would she be in the resurrection? —Luke 20:27-40.

Jesus replied that they erred because they neither understood the Scriptures nor appreciated the Power of the Almighty. He reiterated His statement that there would be a resurrection of the dead, and reminded them that God had so implied in His message to Moses at the burning bush, when He said, “I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” The Master’s argument is that this statement is of itself a proof of the resurrection; for God surely would not refer thus to beings forever blotted out of existence; that God’s purpose of a resurrection is fixed, unalterable, and that those whom men call dead “all live unto Him”—from God’s standpoint they are asleep, and not destroyed. The Word of God therefore speaks of the dead as sleeping. R. 5611

Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.

– Luke 20:25 –

We are not called upon to war with carnal weapons against the powers that be—all the followers of the Lord Jesus are to seek peace and pursue it, endeavoring to do good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith, and to speak evil of and to do evil to none. To the disciples this would imply that the affairs of the world may be safely left with the world, under the Lord’s supervision, for he is able to make even the wrath of men to praise him; the remainder he can restrain, and in due time all of his gracious purposes will be accomplished. (Psa. 76:10.) Until that due time shall come we are with patience to wait for it, knowing that in the end it will come and will not tarry. The Lord’s due time for the changes in the world’s affairs is what we are waiting on, and meantime we are occupying, using, our talents and opportunities, not in fighting worldly battles either by tongue or pen or with other earthly weapons, but fighting the good fight of faith, laying hold upon eternal life, whereunto we are called, that we may thus be prepared by the trials and difficulties and sacrifices of the present time for the glorious share in his Kingdom reign and blessing which the Lord has promised to us as his followers if we are faithful.

If Caesar commands taxes and they are general we are not to dispute them. When the Lord’s time shall come, when Caesar no longer shall collect taxes from the heirs of the Kingdom, it will be manifest to us, for then Caesar will have no power or authority to collect these. If Caesar merely gives us liberty to vote it is not at all necessary that we should accept or use that liberty; should he by and by command us to vote, it would be proper for us to comply and use our best judgment. But in the absence of any command or compulsion it would seem that those consecrated to be followers of the Lamb, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, would have plenty to do in following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth—in fulfilling the terms of their consecration as members of the body of Christ, in doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith. R. 3853

If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.

– Mark 9:35 –

The Master knew that the time of His death drew near. He wished to break the information gently to His loving disciples. Therefore He passed hastily through Galilee, en route for Capernaum, rather seeking to avoid the curious. He desired this opportunity for breaking to His disciples the news of His soon-to-be-completed sacrifice. While He had previously declared that none could touch him because His hour had not yet come, now He declared that He would be delivered up into the hands of men, and that they would kill Him, and on the third day He would rise from the dead.

But the disciples understood not and feared to ask explanation. They were only natural men; for none were begotten of the Holy Spirit until Pentecost. (John 7:39; Acts 1:8.) As Jews, they had the thought of the Messianic Kingdom uppermost in their minds. Jesus had authorized them to preach the Kingdom at hand, and had promised them a share in the Kingdom. Until now they were not ready for the further information that the Jewish nation would fail to accept Him, and that thus the Kingdom blessings would be put off for centuries.

The Apostles had heard Jesus utter so many “dark sayings” and parables that they were bewildered, and wondered what interpretation to give to these words about His death and resurrection. But their minds naturally drifted to the great hopes that were before them—that Jesus would soon be the King, and they would then be in honored positions as His associates in the Kingdom. They even went beyond this, and disputed amongst themselves as respects the honorable positions they would occupy and as to which would be greatest—the Lord’s prime minister. So little did they understand the great trials and disappointments which were only a few days in advance!

Jesus gathered them about Him and inquired respecting their dispute; but they were ashamed to tell the topic. Then He gave them advice to the effect that the selfishly ambitious who would be seeking honor rather than service would be disappointed. In His Kingdom self-seekers would have the lowest place. As illustrating the matter He took a child and set him in their midst and said, “Whosoever shall receive one such little child in My name receiveth Me, and whosoever receiveth Me receiveth [not Me alone, but] Him that sent Me.”

By this the Master sought to show His disciples that it was not their own greatness that was to be considered, but God’s favor. The humblest one amongst them, if favored by God, would have a high position. R. 5361

**For whoever exalts himself will be humbled,
and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**

Luke 14:11

He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

– John 12:25 –

Stating matters far beyond the comprehension of his hearers, our Lord proceeded to mark out the course of his immediate followers in language which they would understand after the begetting of the Spirit, after Pentecost. If we esteem highly our present existence, under present imperfect conditions, we will not be willing to lay down our lives in the Lord's service in the hope of future life, seen only by the eye of faith. We must love less the present life under present imperfect conditions in order to appreciate more the eternal life under better conditions. Whoever is satisfied with the sinful and imperfect condition in the present life is in no state of mind to become the Lord's disciple. Being satisfied with present conditions, he will be unwilling to sacrifice them for the really better ones which the Lord commends. We have no reason to think that the Lord's words apply beyond this Gospel age—in the Millennial age things will be greatly transformed, reorganized. The Lord's language limits the matter saying, "in this world,"—that is, this **kosmos** or order of things. R. 3540

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me, and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

– John 12:26 –

To serve Christ is to enlist under his captaincy in the very service to which he devoted all his energies, even unto death,—the service of mankind along the exact lines of the divine plan. Therefore he refers us to his own sacrificing service. He does not say, **Go** in yonder way of humiliation and self-sacrificing service; but he says, **Come, follow**, where I have led the way! I have not despised humble service, and the servant is not greater than his Lord. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart." A proud spirit cannot follow Christ. The current of thought and feeling must be changed to that of meekness, gentleness and love. The proud, haughty spirit must be converted, and with that conversion will come rest, peace and joy in following the Master's footsteps of faithful, untiring and self-sacrificing service.

All such will receive abundance of honor in due time; but the crown must not be looked for until the cross has been borne to the end. On this side the veil that separates the present from the future lies the pathway of humiliation and self-sacrifice, but beyond are glory and peace and praise and joy forevermore. R. 1707

If anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him, for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

– John 12:47 –

As it was the mission of our Lord not to rule the world, nor to judge the world, at his first advent, but to lay down his life for the world, so it is the mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, not to rule the world, nor to judge the world now, but to "lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.) Our Lord declares, "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) The Son of Man came to lay down his life for the world. (John 6:51; 10:15.) "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36.) And so the Apostle assures us that we are not to reign now, but on the contrary to suffer with Christ, if we would reign with him by and by: that we are not to judge the world now, but on the contrary to judge nothing before the time; but he assures us that in God's due time the saints shall judge the world, and that to the world's blessing. R. 2415

These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.

– Luke 24:44 –

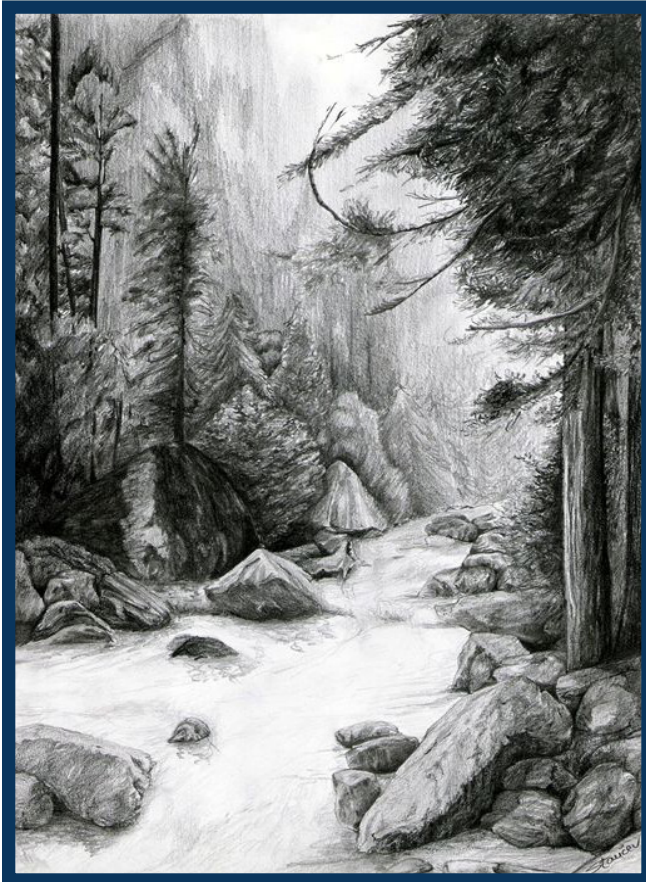
[Our dear Redeemer] explained that what they were experiencing was the fulfillment of his words while he was yet with them—intimating that he was no longer with them in the same sense as formerly. He proceeded to explain to them the necessity for their trying experience, and his, that the Father had so arranged from the beginning, and had so outlined the matter in the prophecies of Moses and all the prophets, including the Psalms wherever they referred to him. Thus he opened their understanding, their minds, that they could appreciate the Scriptures. His words served as a Bible Key, bringing order out of their previous confusion. The fact that the Scriptures are so written that they cannot be understood without certain divine assistance is incomprehensible to the world. Not seeing the divine plan, worldly minds think it unreasonable that God should hide his purposes from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes (Matt. 11:25); they think it strange that he so arranged his revelations through the prophets that they could not be understood except as he would furnish the necessary elucidation, keys or instructions. However, to us who do see the divine plan with a measure of clearness, it was evidently not only the wisest way but the best in every sense of the word for God to arrange his plan so that only those in heart harmony with him would be able to appreciate it in advance of its fulfillment, as the Lord declared, To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom, but to all outsiders these things are spoken in parables and dark sayings, that they might not understand; and again he said even to his faithful ones, “I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now.” —John 16:12. The things which our Lord revealed to his disciples on this occasion as a key to their understanding of the Scriptures could not properly have been given them previously; those truths would not have been meat in due season to the household of faith earlier. They would do them more good now than at any other time—now that their minds were quickened and they were awakened, energized by the stirring events and perplexities; they now were ready to see the course of divine wisdom in the arrangement of the plan. And is it so now—today? As one by one the Lord’s people come to that condition of mind and heart development where they are ready for it the Lord is pleased to give them more light of “present truth”; and when once their eyes of understanding are opened they wonder why they have been so blind that they did not see these things before. The secret is that they were not previously prepared: other lessons must first be learned before the deeper truths could be appreciated; and the great Teacher, reading the heart, was able to give them the opening of the understanding at the appropriate time for the highest welfare of his followers. R. 3910

JESUS

The gentle sighing of the wind among the pines,
The joyous singing of the lark at break of day,
The rippling of the water-brooks through cooling shade,
The patter of the softly falling rain at night,
Are sounds less sweet by far than His most precious name.

No art can show a form so gracious and so fair,
No Master's hand hath drawn a smile so wondrous sweet,
Nor could depict the majesty of that pure brow;
No canvas ever glowed with such a holy light
As shines from His most radiant image in my heart.

The dearest earthly friend may fail in time of need,
The sweetest and the loveliest grow cold at heart,
The nearest may not heed the throbbing heart's sad cry,
The gayest throng may hold the loneliest solitude,

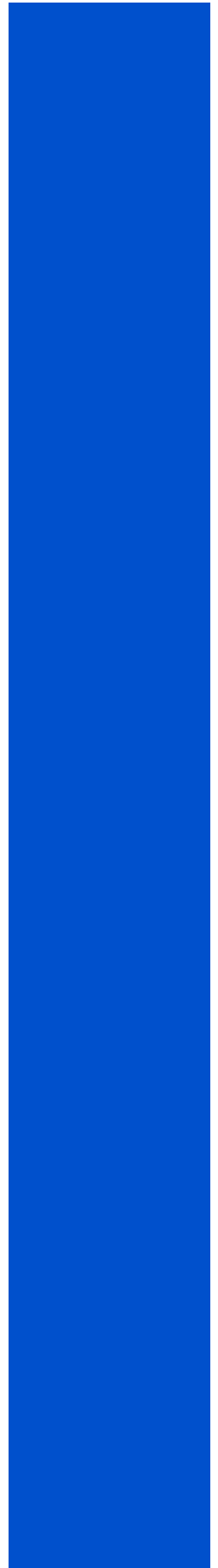


But Jesus, Jesus never fails my call to hear.
Oh, may the music of Thy name more clearly fall
Upon my ears attuned to catch that sweetest sound!
Oh, may Thine image in my heart so bright become
That I by gazing may be changed into the same;
Oh, blessed Jesus, let Thy presence ne'er depart,
Oh, come and reign forevermore within my heart!

P

--*Poems of Dawn*, p. 34

**JESUS CHRIST
THE SEED OF
PROMISE
AND
HEIR OF
ALL THINGS**



God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things.

– Hebrews 1:1-2 –

As Heir of all things He will be the representative of the Father to all eternity. He takes the position at the right hand of authority on High. In due time, every knee shall bow to Him, and even the angels shall be subjected unto Him.

All these things came to our Lord as a part of the reward which the Father promised. But this one particular feature, the restitution of all things lost by Adam, is a special privilege coming as His own gift to humanity—that which He purchased at His own cost; that is to say, the laying down of His earthly life is the basis upon which He obtained the new nature and the right to control that earthly life, which shall be applied in restitution in behalf of the world.

If our Lord Jesus had kept the Law Covenant merely and had not consecrated his life, had not sacrificed it, he might thus have had eternal life as an earthly being. Then truly he might have claimed to be Abraham's seed and heir of all earthly things. But, then, he could not have been the promised seed; for the promised seed was to "bless all the families of the earth"—implying the resurrection of the dead. This blessing ability could be our Lord's not by keeping the Law and becoming Hagar's wonderful son, but by sacrificing all of the earthly blessings proffered by the Hagar Covenant, accepting instead the spiritual privileges of the Sarah Covenant. Let us get clearly in mind that it was not the "man Jesus," but the "new creature" Jesus who became heir of all and who liveth to bless Israel and all nations. Similarly only such believers as have become New Creatures, begotten of the holy Spirit, are members of the great Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator and Judge which God is now raising up as the Seed of Abraham to bless the world. R. 5086 and R. 4440

In you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

– Genesis 28:14 –

Not only did our Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrate that He was to the core loyal to the Heavenly Father, but it also demonstrated that in Him the Father's spirit, Love, dwelt richly, for He shared the Father's love for the race He redeems. On this account also He is found worthy to be the Divine Agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, according to the terms of the Divine Covenant made with Father Abraham. Thus He has become the "Seed of Abraham" which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to Him that "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" when Jehovah's "due time" shall come for the pouring out of Divine blessings upon the redeemed world—that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life. R. 4928

And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise. What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made.

– Galatians 3:17-19 –

[The Apostle] tells us that when God told Abraham that he would bless all nations through his seed, he referred not to all of his offspring, but to Christ Jesus, who, according to the flesh, would be born of Abraham's descendants; and that for Christ he would select a "bride" or companion, of many members, but all of one spirit with him, --to be joined with him in the sufferings incidental to sympathy and obedience and, when complete, to be perfected with him in glory and to share with him the work of blessing all the families of earth. (Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:29; 1 Pet. 1:11; Rom. 8:17-18.) He tells us that the due time for Christ to come and redeem the world must be before the selection of his "bride;" because she must be redeemed before she could be called or chosen. But as a long interval lay between the promise to Abraham and the "due time" for God to send his Son to redeem men, God purposed a work with Abraham's natural children, which would fill the interim between then and the coming of Christ Jesus, the real "seed of Abraham" according to the divine intention.

Of this covenant the Apostle declares, The Law "was added [to the Abrahamic Covenant] because of transgressions [because sin was spreading and men were degrading very rapidly], till the [promised] Seed should come [until Christ came (not only Christ Jesus, the Head, but also the Church his body) to do the real work, the time for which had come] to whom the [Abrahamic Covenant] promise was made." "For the Law made nothing perfect:" and, moreover, "the Law which was [given] 430 years after [the Covenant made with Abraham] can not disannul [or in any manner change the terms and conditions of that covenant], that it should make the promise of none effect." --Gal. 3:19; Gal. 3:17; Heb. 7:19.

God's covenant with Abraham was not hampered with a law. It applied as soon as Abraham entered Canaan,—“In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” The seed was promised and was sure, and so was the blessing. But not so the Law Covenant, made four centuries afterward with the fleshly seed of Abraham. The blessing which it promised was conditioned on obedience to a code of laws then given them. It said, “The man that doeth these things shall live by them.” —Rom. 10:5; Lev. 18:5. R. 1724

Israel realized the value of this Covenant made with Abraham: it constituted the basis of all their hopes and faith and trust. They supposed that the Law Covenant needed to be added to it, and therefore they accepted it as an amendment; but they continually trusted, hoped, in the original Covenant, as St. Paul says, "Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God, hope yet to come." (Acts 26:7.) It was after Israel had become discouraged with their inability to keep the Law that God encouraged them, by assuring them that he would make a New Covenant with them, which would operate more favorably—more to their advantage. And so He will. By the end of this Gospel Age, after having selected the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the New Covenant with Israel will go into effect. As it is written, "This is my Covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. The Deliverer (Mediator, Prophet, Priest, King) shall come out of Sion (the Gospel Church) and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (natural Israel)."
—Rom. 11:26-27. R. 4497

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

– Romans 1:16 –

Our Lord Jesus, by his obedience, became heir of all, heir of the original Covenant and heir also of the Law Covenant. Of the people there was none with him, neither Jews nor Gentiles. But by the grace of God there was provision made, as we have seen, that any Jew, seeing that the Law Covenant was dead, nailed to the cross, might become betrothed to Christ. They did not need to wait for the New Covenant, the provisions of which apply only to those on the earthly plane. Instead, by a faith justification and a consecration unto death, they were counted worthy of begetting to the new nature—betrothal to Christ. And similarly Gentiles, favored of God by the hearing ear and seeing eye of faith, were subsequently privileged to go through the same process, except that they did not need to reckon themselves dead to the Law Covenant, because they never were under it. Otherwise, recognizing Christ's death as the blood of the original Covenant, typified by Abraham's offering up his son, these also were reckoned justified and, presenting their justified bodies to the Lord as sacrifices, they were begotten of the same holy Spirit as the Jews, to be fellow-members of the same Body—the Body of Christ. R. 4318

Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

– Colossians 2:14 –

Those Jews once under [the] Law Covenant needed to be freed from it before they could become espoused to Christ. The Apostle most distinctly states this, saying to the Jews that, so far as its blessings and opportunities were concerned, these ended at the cross of Christ, that Christ made an end of the Law Covenant, nailing it to the cross. (Col. 2:14.) He further shows us that every Jew who believed in Christ needed first to recognize the death or end of the Law Covenant under which he had previously been bound before he could become married to Christ, betrothed to Christ as a member of the Bride class, Spiritual Israel. R. 4013

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

– Romans 10:4 –

Our Head Christ Jesus who made us free from that Law **under** which Israel was placed, gave us another instead, saying, "A new commandment I give unto you that ye LOVE one another." (John 13:34.) This law of LOVE under which we are placed, contains the **spirit** of the Law to Israel—the Ten Commandments, and **even more**. This, the Apostle James terms the "**royal law**." (Chap. 2:8.) And the same apostle who wrote that we are "delivered from the Law," (Rom. 7:6), and called it "Moses' Law," (Heb. 10:28), and that "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth," (Rom. 10:4), and that **now** "we are not under the Law," (Rom. 6:15), said also that he was not **without law** to God, **BUT UNDER THE LAW to Christ**, (1 Cor. 9:21) [i.e., our responsibility is transferred from the Father to our Lord Jesus who bought us, hence we are no longer **under Jehovah's Law** given at Sinai, but under a new law or arrangement—"**under Law TO CHRIST**." R. 542

Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

– Genesis 22:17-18 –

Looking back at the original Covenant made with Abraham, it is like a closed-up telescope. For hundreds of years natural Israel seemed to be the Seed of Abraham, to whom the promises were made and through whom all the nations of the world would be blessed. Yet after more than sixteen centuries the telescope was slipped out a notch and matters so completely changed that the Jew does not know what happened unto this day. The thing which did happen was that Christ Jesus came and **personally** became the Seed of Abraham, by obeying the Law. Then, by **dying** for Adam's race, he was exalted to be the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. Then he was ready to give the earthly part of Israel's blessings to as many as would receive them—by **justification by faith**. Bewildered Israel held off and the favor went to the few of that nation and to thousands of others previously in darkness—Gentiles. These, after accepting the blessed privilege of human justification, were invited to surrender it, to sacrifice it, as their Redeemer had done. R. 4354

Our Lord Jesus could and did fulfill the demands of the Law Covenant: he proved his supreme love for the Father by his obedience to the divine arrangement “unto death, even the death of the cross.” Thus he demonstrated that he was the Seed of Promise, and became sole heir to all of the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant, promised to Abraham's Seed. Hence, now, in him, and in him only, “shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” R. 2121

For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.

– Acts 2:39 –

The words of the Apostle Peter, “The Promise is unto you and to your children” (Acts 2:39), are in full harmony with all of the Lord's dealings with Israel, and with His Covenant with them as the posterity of His servant Abraham. The “Seed,” promised by the Lord in His Covenant with Abraham, was for many centuries supposed to mean only the natural seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—only those who were under the Law of Moses—the Jewish nation. But there was a condition attached to this promise of heirship. When God entered into the Covenant with Israel, the understanding was that **if they would keep the Law** they should have everlasting life and should inherit the privilege of blessing all the families of the earth—all peoples. But that if they did not keep the Law, then they would be cut off from all these favors.

God knew that not one of Israel could keep the Law; and He had no thought that any of the natural Israelites living before our Lord's day would become members of the Body of Christ spiritual. He knew that no one could come into the Body of Christ until Jesus had first come and opened the way. Nevertheless, it was not an empty offer that was made to the Jewish nation. God did not promise that all Israel might become members of the Spiritual Seed—the Church of Christ. He merely promised that on certain conditions they should bless all the nations of the earth. Since the Spiritual Seed was not mentioned, the natural seed were right in line for that which was specified—to be blessers of the world. R. 5836

I have made a covenant with My chosen. I have sworn to My servant David: Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations. My covenant I will not break, nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips. Once I have sworn by My holiness, I will not lie to David: His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me.

– Psalm 89:3-4,34-36 –



David is introduced here as a typical character representing Christ—primarily our Lord Jesus, but subsequently the Christ complete—Head and body. In the meekness of his youth, his loyalty to God, his faithfulness, zeal, courage and wise discretion, David’s character was a very beautiful type of the beloved One, to whom God referred when he said, “I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.”

Our Lord Jesus is **the** mighty One upon whom the help of the world is laid. He is the great deliverer, but it has pleased God also to associate with him in this great work the Church of the Gospel age, the elect “little flock,” whose names are written in heaven. These, all chosen out of the people, constitute that one body, which, with Christ Jesus their Head, shall bless all the families of the earth. These all possess the characteristics enumerated above, which are preeminently the characteristics of their Head.

All, therefore, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, whose souls thirst after God as the hart for the water-brook, and who, having found him, have consecrated themselves to him and received the anointing of the holy spirit, witnessing with their spirits that they are the sons of God, and who as anointed sons can discover in themselves the worthy traits of true sons, enumerated above,—loyalty, faithfulness, zeal, energy, courage, discretion, etc.,—these constitute the class with whom the Lord has made an everlasting covenant and to whom belong “the sure mercies of David.” R. 1936

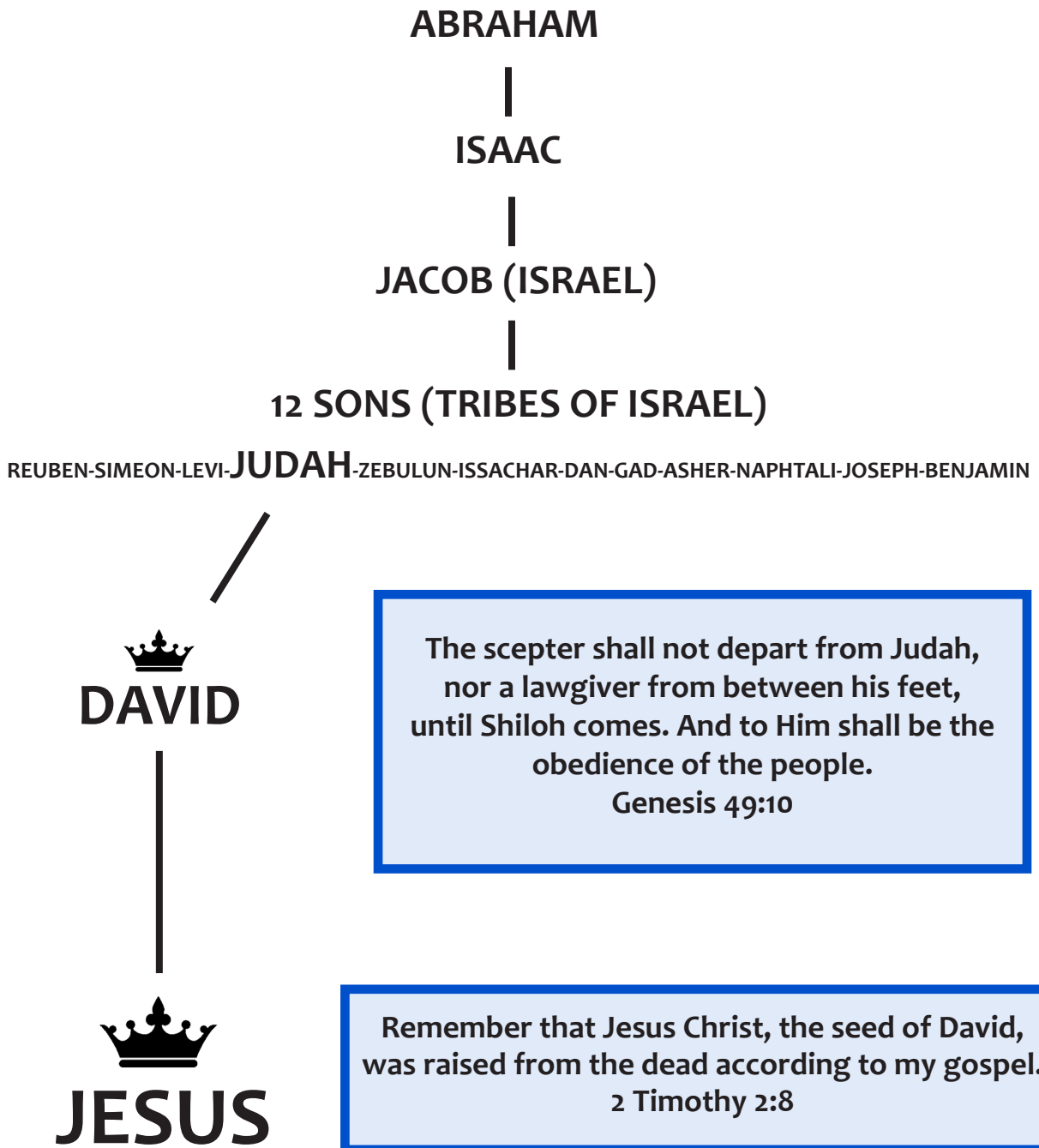
He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, I HAVE FOUND DAVID THE SON OF JESSE, A MAN AFTER MY OWN HEART, WHO WILL DO ALL MY WILL. From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior—Jesus.

Acts 13:22-23

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations.

– Matthew 1:1,17 –

Matthew is the Jewish Gospel, connecting the Old Testament with the New Testament, and is written to prove the Messiahship of Christ. [Matthew] first speaks of Christ as the Son of David, hence his genealogy is complete (1:1-16). In Matthew [Jesus also] is said to have been born king of the Jews; Christ is described as a king. R. 1046



The LORD said: I am the LORD God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth. You shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south, and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

– Genesis 28:13-14 –

Jacob was not a Christian; and we are not to think for a moment of the Lord's providences over him as being of the same kind as those of the Church of this Gospel Age. He was not invited to be a sharer of the "high calling." He was not promised a change of nature to Heavenly condition by resurrection, or in any other way. All of the promises to him were earthly, as were those made to Abraham.

Neither was Jacob a Jew. There were no Jews yet. The nation subsequently called Israel and afterwards known as the people of the Jews were Jacob's children; but they were not yet born. They became a distinctive people and nation not merely by being Jacob's children, but by being brought into Covenant relationship with God through Moses and the Law Covenant of Sinai.

We see that the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not under the Law Covenant, and not under the Gospel arrangement, constituted a class by themselves. To them especially (and in conjunction with them some of the noble Prophets and worthies of the Jewish Age) belonged certain great promises of God in respect to the land of Canaan and the blessing of the world. Not being a part of the spirit-begotten Church of this Gospel Age, they can have no share with Messiah in His Spiritual Kingdom, which shortly is to bind Satan, overthrow sin, scatter darkness and superstition and flood the world with a knowledge of God. They were not invited to share this "high calling." However, a special call, or invitation, or promise, was made to them, not made to any others. In fulfillment of that Promise, these patriarchs are to be granted human perfection in the resurrection; and being made superior to the remainder of humanity, they will be qualified to be the princes or rulers of all the earth, representatives of the Spiritual, Heavenly, invisible Kingdom of Messiah.

The lesson to us is that a still greater promise being left to us—that is to say, the same promise having further developed and divided into two parts, and the higher or spiritual feature having been bestowed upon the Church of Christ—we who realize ourselves to be heirs of this same promise, and who now see its spiritual force and signification, have still more reason than had Jacob to humble ourselves before the Lord, to acknowledge our dependence upon him, to ask him for deliverance from the great enemy and from every foe to our best interests, and to plead his gracious promise, confirmed unto us in the death of Jesus our Lord. Ah, yes! the Apostle clearly indicates this when he says to us, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

—Gal.3:29.

Jacob indeed will come in as one of the heirs of the earthly phase of the blessing, but the distinguished honor of sitting in the throne has passed to the Spiritual Israel. Shall we not cry day and night unto the Lord respecting the exceeding great and precious promises given unto us, and our expectation of realizing them—that we may have grace and strength to overcome, to come off conquerors through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood? R. 5199 and R. 3969

I will make your descendants multiply as the stars of heaven. I will give to your descendants all these lands, and in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

– Genesis 26:4 –

It will be noticed that in [the blessing to Jacob] the Lord likens the seed of Jacob to the dust of the earth, but not to the stars of heaven. We remember that in the divine promise to Isaac (Gen. 26:4) the reverse of this is stated: the posterity like unto the stars of heaven is mentioned, but no illustration of the dust of the earth, while to Abraham God used both of these illustrations, saying, "Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore for multitude." In the Abrahamic promise both the spiritual seed, likened to the stars of heaven, and the natural seed, likened to the sands of the seashore, are properly mentioned, because both the heavenly and earthly seeds and the heavenly and earthly blessings proceed from that original Covenant.

We remember in this connection the Apostle's statement, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise": we are the spiritual Seed of whom in the First Resurrection the Prophet says, "They shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever." (Dan. 12:3.) The Apostle refers to the same class as celestials, comparing them to the stars—"as one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the [first] resurrection of the dead—it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." (1Cor. 15:40-44.) Similarly Jacob is referred to by the Apostle as a representative of natural Israel: for instance, telling us of the blessing that shall come upon natural Israel at the end of this Gospel age, when the Spiritual Israel shall have been glorified, he says, "A deliverer shall come out of Zion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my Covenant with them when I shall take away their sins." —Rom. 11:25-30.

Not only did the Lord assure Jacob that he was in the right way as an heir for the promise, but, further, that whatever his experiences might be he should remember that the Lord was with him and would not let go of him until he had fulfilled toward him all these gracious promises. What a force, what a power, this experience and the Lord's testimony must have been to Jacob in future years! And it still appertains to natural Israel. The Lord has held that people under his care nor let them go for over thirty centuries, and as surely as it is here written he will accomplish for them the promised blessing and will yet make them a blessing to all nations. Nevertheless, as Jacob had trying experiences in the interim, so his posterity have had and will have until the blessing of the Lord under the New Covenant shall come to them at the hands of the great Mediator of the New Covenant, the glorified Christ Jesus and the Church, which is his body—Spiritual Israel.

A comforting lesson comes to all of us who are Spiritual Israelites also, for we reflect that it is the same unchangeable God who has given us the chief blessing, which the natural Israelite failed to receive, as it is written, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." We, the elect, Israel spiritual, may feel sure that if God's promises to natural Israel are all to be fulfilled his promises to Spiritual Israel are yea and amen in Christ. To us he has also promised that, into whatever situation we may be brought in his providence, he is able to make all things work together for our good, and to bring us off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors, through him that loved us and bought us with his precious blood. R. 3965

**Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament,
and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.
Daniel 12:3**

Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all.

– Romans 4:16 –

As the Apostle intimates in this text, it is the Divine purpose to have two seeds of Abraham; one of them the Spiritual Seed, and the other the natural seed of Abraham. The one of these, he says, is developed according to the spirit, according to grace, favor. We do not come into this relationship through the Law, but we come into it through participation with Christ. It is the favor of being permitted to present our bodies living sacrifices, acceptable to our Redeemer, of having this sacrifice accepted by God and of having a share in the reward. This is the favor or grace which now comes to us as the Spiritual Seed, in which we have participation to the extent of our faithfulness to the Lord.

This is the Seed, then, that we find represented by the "stars of heaven." The other seed of Abraham is likened unto the "sands of the sea." This Scripture tells us that this seed, the earthly seed of Abraham, is a seed that will be developed under the Law. We know from the same Apostle's writings that this Law could not be the Law that God instituted with the Jews at the hands of Moses. That Law did not bring any of them everlasting life. It did not bring forth any of the seed of Abraham to perfection.

How, then, shall we understand the Apostle in connection with this statement, that some of the seed are to be of the Law, when the Law could make nothing perfect? We answer that he was here pointing back to that Law Covenant which was instituted through Moses, and in the other expression he is pointing forward to the Law Covenant of the future, which will be instituted at the end of this Gospel Age, and which is called the New [Law] Covenant. It will be the same as the one just referred to, but it will have a better mediator, one who will be able to give eternal life and all the blessings God intended for them and promised. We see, then, according to other Scriptures, that all the nations will have the privilege of coming in under this New [Law] Covenant arrangement, of which Christ is the Mediator and of which we are becoming members, so that by the end of the Millennial Age, his Seed will include all the saved on the human plane. All will get eternal life who shall comply with the conditions—"the number of whom will be as the sands of the seashore for multitude."

Hence this statement, "that which is of the Law, and that which is of grace," refers to those who are now the Spiritual Seed of Abraham through grace, and to those who will become the seed of Abraham under the New Covenant arrangement during the Millennial Age by obedience to the Law under the better Mediator than Moses, under the great antitypical Moses, Christ the Head and the Church his Body, whom God is now raising up during this Gospel Age. He raised up the Head eighteen centuries ago. The Body will soon be fully raised up and joined to the Head in glory.

R. 4606

If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise.

– Galatians 3:29 –

Only to Israel had God sent His Law and given His prophecies. To them He had said, “You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth.” (Amos 3:2.) When Jesus came, He said, If you had received the witness of John, you would have been ready to be My disciples. Many of the Jews had merely a form of godliness. They thought God would save them by the Law whether or no. But Jesus told them that they should not boast that they had Abraham for their Father, for God was able even of the stones about them to raise up children to Abraham. He assured them that God would find a worthy Seed of Abraham.

The work of Jesus during His ministry was the starting of this new Seed. Jesus Himself was the Head of this Seed. The special work of the entire Gospel Age has been the calling and preparing of this Spiritual Seed of Abraham. The promise was first to the Jews, but since they did not prove worthy as a nation, God, after taking out the faithful “remnant” from that people, turned to the Gentiles, to take out from them a sufficient number to complete the foreordained 144,000 to comprise this Seed, the Church of Christ, the members of His Body. The Apostle tells us that when this Bride class is united with Him they shall be parts of the Seed of Abraham. This statement relates to the promise made to Abraham, that through him and his Seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Thus we see the work that Christ is accomplishing now.

The invitation to become the Bride of Christ is a very special invitation and those who would be His must walk in the “narrow way.” If they will sit in His Throne, they must suffer with Him. If they suffer with Him they shall also share His glory. So “the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that shall follow,” were not only to be accomplished in our Lord Jesus, personally, but He was an example for **all the Church** who are justified through faith in His blood. They have a share with Him in His sufferings, and will share in His glory. —Rev. 20:6.

Our Lord Jesus was in person the promised Seed of the woman, but, as we have already seen, the divine plan included also the Church, “members of his body.” The sufferings of Christ, Head and body, are mentioned in the promise of Eden, as the bruising of the heel by the serpent. This has been in progress throughout the Gospel age; Jesus was crucified by the forces of evil, yielding himself up a sin offering; and the members of his Body are suffering with him, “filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” Col. 1:24.

Soon the time will come when this great Seed, the Christ, shall be fully glorified, all the members sharing in the glory of the Head: and then, as the Apostle declares, “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” (Rom. 16:20.) And it is this great Deliverer, whose Head and Lord has redeemed the world with his own precious blood, that the Father has appointed to be the Judge of the redeemed race, when it shall be on trial during the Millennial age, while Satan is bound. The work of the Son will not be complete until all evil has been thoroughly subjugated, which will be at the close of the Millennial age. He will reclaim, by a knowledge of the truth, and chastisements and corrections in righteousness, so many as are willing, and the residue shall be destroyed from among the people. (Act 3:23.) And when he shall thus have put down all opposing authority, rule and power, the Apostle assures us, he will deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father. Thus the Father worked previously to man’s fall, and has committed the work of reconciliation of man to the Son, and also the judgment of the race, and will receive it back again under divine jurisdiction, when, through the Son as his agent, he shall have made all things new. —1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:5.

R. 5910, R. 4963, R. 2434

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

– 1 Peter 1:10-12 –

David's thought in writing the Psalms may have been merely their use in song; but the Lord's object was to give **prophecy** to assist his people of a later period. Other prophecies of the Old Testament are written in poetical form, particularly Isaiah and Job. Our Lord quoted from both, as did also his apostles, and showed that in some of the Psalms David typified the Lord. R. 2345



These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

– Hebrews 11:13 –

After pointing us to these glorious heroes the Apostle intimates that they are a different class from ourselves, the disciples of Christ of this Gospel Age. They all died in faith, not receiving the things promised them, because God had provided something still better for us and had arranged that they could not get their blessing until we should first have received ours. The Ancient Worthies, whose glorious career we have been considering and praising, must wait until the spirit-begotten class shall be born from the dead in the First Resurrection; then they shall receive their blessing of resurrection to the earthly plane, to be the earthly representatives of the Heavenly City, Heavenly Kingdom, and to share in a very particular way in the bestowment of God's blessing to Israel and to all the families of the earth. The Ancient Worthies responded to the extent of the privileges and blessings that were then tendered, proffered, available. And we of this Gospel Age have heard and responded to the still higher blessings and privileges of the high calling of this Gospel Age. R. 4388

All these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect apart from us.

– Hebrews 11:39-40 –

[The Apostle's] words, while addressed directly to the early Church, apply with equal force to the whole Church, to the end of the age; and in some respects the application will be seen to have special force in the end, or harvest, of the age. In recounting the prominent characters among those to inherit the earthly phase of the Kingdom, beginning with Abel, He shows how by faith they walked with God; how they ventured upon his promises, doing his will and leaving the results with him; how they overcame great obstacles in the strength of that faith; and how they endured persecution, pain and loss, and then died in faith that what God had promised he was able also to perform, and would perform in his own good time and way. They were such men and women, says the Apostle, as the world was not worthy of. They endured as seeing him who is invisible, so strong and courageous was their faith.

Yet, though the reward of those ancient worthies will fully recompense their faithfulness, the Apostle would have us know that God hath still reserved "some better thing for us;" viz., the inheritance of the heavenly phase of the Kingdom. The times and seasons for the selection of these two companies, as well as the conditions of eligibility to them, were fixed by Jehovah before the foundation of the world; and within those appointed seasons those individuals who will have complied with the conditions become heirs of the promised inheritance to be realized in the time appointed. God has a right thus to do what he will with his own, and his wonderful favors will be received with thanksgiving by all his righteous heirs without respect to comparisons; and all will be satisfied when they awake in his likeness, whether it be on the human or on the spiritual plane of being. R. 2035

Instead of Your fathers shall be Your sons, whom You shall make princes in all the earth.

– Psalm 45:16 –

When Messiah's Kingdom, itself invisible, shall establish a reign of righteousness in the earth, it will have amongst men visible representatives, "princes in the earth." (Psalm 45:16.) And we are assured that Abraham will be one of these, and will thus have to do actively, prominently, with the establishment of the reign of righteousness and the demonstrations of justice and mercy and love to the world of mankind, "to all the families of the earth."

While this blessing is to come to the world through the seed of Abraham, the Scriptures indicate that a great change takes place by which the seed, the child of Abraham, Christ, becomes greater than Abraham, as it is written, "Instead of the fathers shall be the children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." Abraham, instead of being viewed any longer as the father of Messiah, will be recognized as one of his children, perfect on the earthly plane and made a prince amongst men, to be used as an active agent of the glorified Christ in dispensing the blessings secured by the great redemptive sacrifice. Referring to the matter, our Lord points out the fact that these ancient worthies will be visible to men, but properly enough says not a word about himself and the apostles or any of the Bride class being visible. The statement is, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets." The fact that the still more notable ones in the Kingdom are not referred to as seen is an evidence that they will not be seen by the world, and this comports with the Lord's statement to some in his day, "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more." It agrees also with the declaration, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Only those changed from human to spirit nature, under the terms of the Lord's arrangement of this Gospel age, will be spirit beings, and they alone therefore will be able to see, discern, the Lord and other spirit beings. R. 3937

I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

– Romans 11:11,28 –

When the Israelites were proven unworthy of becoming heirs of the Abrahamic Covenant, they were broken off and Gentiles were grafted in to take their places and become partakers of “the root and fatness of the olive tree.” (Rom. 11:17.) Only those Jews who were desirous of doing God’s will in the **fullest sense** of the word were allowed to remain as branches of the olive tree. Only those who accepted Christ were made heirs of the Promise, as members of the Spiritual Seed. After all the “Israelites indeed” of the natural seed were gathered in, the Message went to the Gentiles, that the full number of the Elect might be found. But the Lord tells us through the Apostle Paul, in Romans 11:1-36, that God’s ancient people may yet be grafted into the olive tree from which they were broken off, “if they abide not still in unbelief.” “And so all Israel shall be saved,” after “the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.” O the riches of the love and goodness of God! R. 5837

**Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!
Romans 11:33**

This One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. Every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

– Hebrews 3:3-6 –

Since the two houses of Israel—the Jewish and Gospel houses—stand in relation to each other as type and antitype, let us notice [a parallel]: The law was a shadow of good things to come, and in the Gospel dispensation we find the substance which cast those shadows. We must bear in mind also that the shadow is not the substance, but that it has strongly marked features of similarity.

The Jewish house was a house of servants— “Moses was faithful in all his house as a servant.” The Gospel house is a house of sons— “Christ as a son over his own house, whose house are we.” (Heb. 3:5-6.) The founder of the typical house was Jacob, surnamed Israel; the founder of the anti-typical house was Christ, the true Israel of God. The typical house was founded on the twelve sons of Jacob, the anti-typical on the twelve Apostles. R. 600

Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

– Galatians 4:7 –

As children are under nursery laws and subject to teachers until an appointed time, so were we (Israelites) under the Law, and treated as servants rather than as sons. We were kept under restraints, though we were the heirs through whom, according to the promise, others were to be blessed. But in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law that **we** (Israelites), being liberated, might receive the adoption of sons.

You that desire to be under the Law Covenant, Do you not understand what it is? It is a **bondage**, as allegorically shown in Abraham's two sons. Abraham, here, is a figure of God; and Sarah, the real wife, is a figure of the real covenant of blessing, out of which the Christ should come as heir of all, to bless the world. For a long time Sarah was barren; so, too, for a long time the original Covenant of God (made with Abraham: In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed) brought forth no fruit—until Christ Jesus. Hagar, the servant of Sarah, in the meantime was treated as Sarah's representative, and her son as the representative of Sarah's son. Hagar represented the Law Covenant, and fleshly Israel was represented by her child, Ishmael. For the time they **represented** the true Covenant and the true seed of blessing, though they were always really servants—child, as well as mother. When the true son of the real wife, the heir, was born, it was manifest that the son of the bondwoman was not the heir of promise. And to show typically that the Law Covenant was not to have any rule over the spiritual sons of God, Hagar was not allowed to become the governess of Isaac, but in his interest was dismissed entirely. —Gal. 4:21-31; Gen. 21:10.

The Apostle's argument, based on this allegory, is, that we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the seed to whom the promise was made; we are not children of the bondwoman, the Law Covenant, but children of the original, Abrahamic Covenant, born free from the slavery and conditions of the Law Covenant. And not only so born, but the Law is **entirely put away** from us, and has nothing whatever to do with us. "Stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." —Gal. 5:1

To thus accept the favor of God through Christ—the evidences of sonship and the present and prophetic inheritance of sons—is to enter into the blessed rest of faith. This rest of faith is something which the world can neither give nor take away. It brings with it peace and happiness and joy in the midst of all the shifting circumstances of the present life. To those who have entered into this rest of faith penances are seen to be of no avail, and prayers are occasions of sweet communion with God; feasting from the Lord's bountiful table take the place of fastings, active zeal in the Master's service supplants the gloomy and useless life of the solitary and self-tortured recluse; and the glorious sunlight of truth chases away the shadows of human superstitions. R. 1728 and R. 1657

**Now, we brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.
But as he who was born according to the flesh
then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit,
even so it is now. Nevertheless what does the Scripture say?
CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,
FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN
SHALL NOT BE HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.
So then, brethren, we are not children of
the bondwoman but of the free.
Galatians 4:28-31**

ABRAHAM & HAGAR



ISHMAEL



LAW COVENANT

ABRAHAM & SARAH



ISAAC



SARAH/GRACE COVENANT

They are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham, but “IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED.” That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as the seed.

– Romans 9:6-8 –

Paul shows (verse 8) that the two sons of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac, illustrated the fact that the natural seed of Abraham (Israel according to the flesh) would not inherit the chief blessings: for Ishmael was born in the ordinary course of nature, but Isaac, who typified the true heirs, was not so born, but on the contrary came by the exercise of divine power—not of the will of the flesh, but of God, for Sarah was not only barren but aged. (Heb. 11:11-12; John 1:13.) The Apostle’s argument is, that this fact of passing by of the first-born and natural offspring, in the type, and the giving of the blessing to one not naturally born, to one subsequently born by divine interposition and in fulfillment of the original promise, showed that the natural or fleshly descendants of Abraham would not obtain the great, promised favor, but that another seed, a spiritual seed, would be developed, begotten of God by the word of truth, which would inherit all the privileges and honors contained in those promises. R. 1140

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “AND TO YOUR SEED,” who is Christ.

– Galatians 3:16 –

With our eyes anointed, and our hearts fully consecrated to the Lord and fully desirous to know just what is his will and his way, we look at the Great Covenant, and behold, it opens gloriously before us into three parts: (1) All the families of the earth—every member of the human family is to receive a blessing. (2) The Seed of Abraham is to be the **channel** of these divine blessing to every creature. (3) This Seed in its primary sense we find meant our Lord Jesus Christ; but in its secondary sense it includes the “bride the lamb’s wife,” his joint heir in this Covenant and in all of the divine mercies. This is clearly set before us by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians. —3:16,29.



With this thought in view we realize at once that none of the spiritual blessings of this Covenant were possible until Christ Jesus, the Head of the Seed had finished his course and been glorified; and we see that the Lord’s work since that time has been the gathering of the “elect” Church to be the “bride,” the “body of Christ.”

Scripturally (1) Isaac primarily represented our Lord, the “heir of all things,” personally, and no others; (2) the joint-heirs were represented in Rebecca, his bride, who was his only joint-heir; (3) Rebecca typified a class selected from among **justified** believers—believers in God (Abraham) and in Christ (Isaac)—which is true only of the household of faith and surely not true of the Jews; (4) the Abrahamic Covenant, represented by Sarah, bore only **one** seed, which is Christ Jesus, and that it died or ceased as a mother when he had finished his course and become **heir of all things**; (5) if we would become joint-heirs of the opportunity and honor (of being God’s seed through whom the blessing of the world will come) contained in that Abrahamic Covenant, typified by Sarah, there is no other way than by becoming Christ’s—by giving ourselves to him according to the Father’s invitation by the spirit of the truth—losing our own name and taking his, and forgetting our father’s house (earthly hopes and ambitions) and our own people and becoming wholly **his**—his Bride, whom he loves and will cherish as “his own body.” R. 2209 and R. 1387

Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear. Forget your own people also and your father’s house. So the King will greatly desire your beauty because He is your Lord, worship Him.

Psalm 45:10-11

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

– Hebrews 6:17-18 –

We may be sure that the Lord, who made this covenant, had more in mind the spiritual seed than the natural. The Apostle Paul tells us so. The holy Spirit here, through the Apostle's pen, informs us that this oath was given to Abraham, not solely on his own account, as might appear, but specially on account of us, the spiritual heirs, the heirs of promise. The Apostle points out that Christ is the great inheritor, and that we who are Christ's are joint-heirs with him in this covenant promise, and that thus through Christ and the Church the entire promise will be made effective to Abraham and his natural seed as well as to all the families of the earth.

How much more convincing is God's oath, making sure, unchangeable that basic Covenant made with Abraham, assuring the heirs of the promise ("us") that ultimately all mankind will receive a blessing, and that it would come through us. (Gal. 3:29.) The Apostle tells us that that oath was intended of God for us rather than for Abraham, to give us strong consolation, that we might lay hold firmly of the hope set before us in that promise—that Abrahamic Covenant. He adds (v. 19) that we have this hope as an anchor of the soul sure and steadfast within the veil, whither Jesus has entered as our forerunner, to whom we are approaching—as members to our Head. He is the Head of that Seed of promise. We, the members of his Body, will shortly follow him beyond the veil and share his glorious work of blessing the nations, beginning with Israel, under a New Covenant. We, as the adopted members of the Body of Christ, are directly the beneficiaries of the original Covenant, whose other features of blessing the world will all be worked out through us—under the New Covenant arrangement with Israel. Surely there is no consistency or reason in ignoring this great Oath-bound Covenant made in Abraham's day, consummated by the Divine oath.

R. 3946 and R. 4496

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

– Hebrews 6:19-20 –

Now what we have is still a hope. Abraham is dead; his natural posterity have failed to attain the blessing; the higher favor secured by our Lord Jesus through his own obedience unto death has been extended to the faithful of the Jews and the faithful of every nation, whom the Father has drawn through his grace and truth, and yet we have this promise as a hope, but it is anchored to Christ, who is within the veil, a spirit being. By faith we realize a relationship to him, and that the darkness and suffering of this present time will soon be ended; by faith we realize that the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them that love him far more than overbalance the trials and difficulties of the pilgrim journey; by faith we see that as soon as the entire body of the Anointed One shall be completed and glorified, then a great blessing is due to begin with Israel after the flesh, and to extend through them also to every creature. Ah, how gracious is our Lord's provision! How kind for him to give us such a strong consolation through not only his repeated testimony of the truthfulness of this great matter, but also of his oath which confirms, secures, makes positive every element of the promise! R. 3946

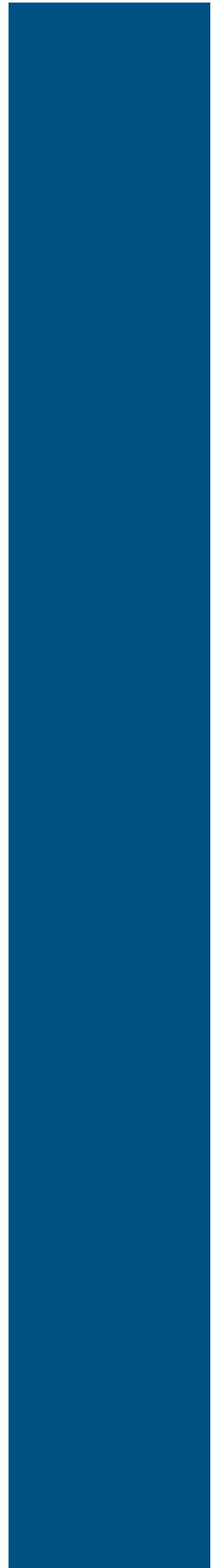
THE YEAR BEFORE US

*Standing at the portal of the opening year,
Words of comfort meet us, hushing every fear;
Spoken through the silence by our Father's voice,
Tender, strong and faithful, making us rejoice.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.
"I, the Lord, am with thee, be thou not afraid;
I will help and strengthen, be thou not dismayed.
Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine own right hand;
Thou art called and chosen in My sight to stand."
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.
For the year before us, oh, what rich supplies!
For the poor and needy, living streams shall rise;
For the sad and mournful, shall His grace abound;
For the faint and feeble, perfect strength be found.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.
He will never fail us, He will not forsake;
His eternal covenant He will never break;
Resting on His promise, what have we to fear?
God is all-sufficient for the coming year.
Onward, then, and fear not, children of the Day;
For His Word shall never, never pass away.*



-- R. 5158

**JESUS
THE HEAD OF
THE CHRIST**



Jesus The Head of The Church of The Firstborn

You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.

– Hebrews 12:22-23 –

All who, like the early Church, are fully consecrated to the doing of our Father's will, amenable only to Christ's will and government, recognizing and obeying none other—these, the saints, from the beginning of the Gospel Age down to its close, when all of this class are sealed—constitute

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

The whole company of consecrated believers from the beginning of the Gospel age to its close constitute **one** body, **one** Church, not many; for the Lord established but **one** Church. And over that **one** Church he himself is the only “Lord” and “Head,” the great “Chief Shepherd,” and “Teacher,” and the only authority. This is “the Church of the firstborn,” whose names are “written in heaven” (Heb. 12:23); and those whose names continue there to the end of their course, and are not blotted out because of unfaithfulness (Rev. 3:5), will be admitted to full membership in the Church triumphant at the appearing and kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. —2 Tim. 4:8; Tit. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:7; 5:4. These are all one in aim, hope and suffering, and in due time will be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus to the great “inheritance of the saints in light”—joint-heirs with him of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love him.

Another sense in which the Church may be considered—which also is a Scriptural sense (Philemon 1:2; Rev. 2:1, etc.)—is that of counting a part as though it were the whole. Thus all the living saints may be spoken of as the Church of today. Or again, any number of the living Church assembled together in any place may properly be called the Church of that place (Philemon 1:2; Rev. 1:4; 2:1; 2 Cor. 11:28); for wherever even two or three are assembled, the Lord, the Head, has promised to be in their midst. (Matt. 18:20.) The **general** assembly will be when all the members are glorified with and united to the Head.

Such, then, is our definition of the Church of Christ. It is perfectly illustrated by Paul (Rom. 12:4-5), when he compares the Church to a human body. In this figure the head represents our Lord, and all who are his constitute the body, over which the head rules. Jesus has been and always will be the Head over his Church as a whole; he is likewise the Head and ruler of the entire living Church; and in every assembly where two or three meet **in his name** (when his Word is sought and heeded), he is the Head, ruler and teacher. —Eph. 1:20-23. R. 1893 and R. 4163

If any inquire how we know the members of the true Church, we answer, We know them by their profession of faith in Christ, and by the spirit of Christ manifested in them. It is his truth, and his spirit, and his presence manifested among them, that impels them to assemble together, that unites their hearts in the bonds of Christian love and fellowship, that inspires them with the same hope, animates them with the same joy, and leads them to cooperate together in the work of the Lord.

The great Head of the Church also furnishes abundant means for the edification of his people—for their building up in the most holy faith and their development in Christian character. Then we have his constant supervision and leading throughout our earthly pilgrimage. He is our Head, we are his body; he is our Shepherd, we are his sheep; he is our Captain, we are his soldiers. Now we are the Church on probation, on trial; now we are the Church militant, in the midst of our warfare, hoping by and by to be approved as faithful soldiers and worthy to be admitted into full membership in the Church triumphant, in power and great glory.

Thus we see how thoroughly the true Church of Christ is organized, under Christ, its Head, even in this probationary state, as we journey through the wilderness to our promised Canaan. We are all under the orders of our great Commander whom all must obey and follow who would reach the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Oh, no, we are not our own, and have absolutely no liberty to do our own will in any matter. All is subjected, even our very thoughts, to the will of God in Christ; and our membership in his Church is made dependent upon our faithfulness in recognizing this and in rendering cheerful, loving obedience. We cannot do as we please in any matter: we are strictly under law to Christ, whose holy spirit must rule our every deed and word and thought; and our constant effort must be thus to bring our every power and talent into subjection to him.

In this blessed bondage to Christ, a bondage of love, there is the highest sense of liberty, as, one after another, the shackles of sin drop from us. The world and its ideas and vain ambitions, and follies, and pride, and its superstitions and fears cease longer to fetter us, and the windows of our minds and hearts are thrown wide open that the glorious light of divine grace may stream in, and our hearts rejoice and sing. R. 1893

Now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

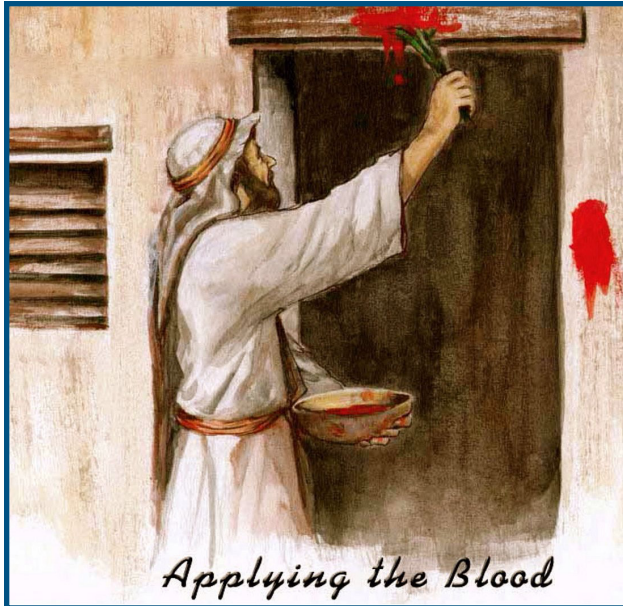
– 1 Corinthians 15:20 –

Our Lord was the first-fruits of them that slept—none preceded him. His being born from the dead signifies that he was lifted fully and **completely out of death conditions** to the perfection of life. His resurrection became the first-fruits of them that slept—the first-born from the dead. Our Lord Jesus, as represented [here], was certainly the **first fruit of all**. If we were speaking of summer fruit and would say that strawberries are the first fruit of the season, we could also pick up the first ripe strawberry and say, **This** is the first fruit. So it is true of our Lord Jesus, the first fruit, and also true of the Lord and the Church together, that they are the “first-fruit unto God of his creatures.”

James 1:18. R. 2794 and R. 3131

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

– James 1:18 –



Those familiar with the Bible have noticed that therein the Church of Christ is called “the Church of the First-born,” and again “a kind of First-fruits unto God of His creatures.” (Heb. 12:23; James 1:18; Rev. 14:4.) This implies others ultimately of God’s family later born—the after-fruits. Christian people seem to have overlooked these Scriptures so far as making application of them is concerned, and have generally come to believe that only those who are of the First-fruits will ever be saved, that there will be no after-fruits. But let us look at this type of the Passover—let us notice that it was God’s purpose to save all Israelites, and that as a nation they represented all of mankind that will ever come into harmony with God and be granted eternal life in the Land of Promise.

Let us notice also that there were **two passovers**. There was a great one, when the whole nation by Divine power was miraculously delivered by the Lord and led by a sand-bar across the channel of the Red Sea especially prepared for them by the accentuation of winds and tides. That picture, or type, shows the ultimate deliverance from the power of sin and Satan of every creature who will ultimately come into accord with the Lord and desire to render Him worship—not an Israelite was left behind.

But the event which we celebrate is the antitype of the passing over, or sparing, of the first-borns of Israel. Only the first-borns were endangered, though the deliverance of all depended upon the salvation of the first-borns. Applying this in harmony with all the Scriptures, we see that the First-fruits unto God of His creatures, the Church of the First-borns, alone, are being spared at the present time—being passed over—those who are under the blood. We see that the remainder of mankind who may desire to enlist and to follow the great antitypical Moses when He shall ultimately lead the people forth from the bondage of sin and death are not now endangered—merely the First-borns, whose names are written in Heaven. R. 5640

These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Revelation 14:4

He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

– Colossians 1:18 –

The Scriptures show us that this plan or purpose of God was foreknown, forearranged, by him before the foundation of the world. They show us also that in the divine purpose our Lord Jesus was the Head, the First, the principal One, the Lord of this little flock, and that God's dealings with him and the method by which he was prepared for his present high position were an illustration of the method by which his Church is to be prepared for joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

—Eph. 1:3-4, Eph. 4:15; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:20. R. 2479

Those whom he foreknew, he also pre-determined to be Copies of the Likeness of his Son, for him to be a Firstborn among Many Brethren. (Diaglott) Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called. Whom He called, these He also justified. And whom He justified, these He also glorified.

– Romans 8:29-30 –

Other Scriptures show that this Calling of this present Age is to joint-heirship with Jesus in the Messianic Kingdom, which is shortly to grant restitution blessings to all the families of the earth. To get a suitable class to be the teachers, blessers, rulers and judges of the world in the future has been the object of this Gospel Call. Jesus, the Head of the Church, was the first to respond and has been glorified and honored, and through all eternity will be honored. His followers, called during this Gospel Age, will have a similar blessing at the hands of God—glorification on the spirit plane, if faithful.

God foreknew, or purposed in advance, that He would have such a Church as the Apostle describes, to accomplish the work mentioned. All that was predestinated or arranged in advance. But in order to be of that predestinated and glorified class, certain things were necessary; i.e., that all those who would be finally accounted worthy of a share in the Kingdom, must be copies of God's dear Son—in heart, in character, and like Him also in the resurrection, spirit beings. This is a glorious predestination. It assures us that God will have none others in the Kingdom than those who are character-likenesses of Jesus.

Then the Apostle points out the procedure by which God has selected this predestinated or foreknown class to be copies of His Son. They were called in the sense that the Lord brought to their attention the glorious opportunity, and we may safely say that such a call was extended only to the honest-hearted who were feeling after God, desirous of knowing Him and serving Him. These called ones needed first to be justified before they could accept the call, and this justification must come through repentance and through acceptance of Jesus as the Redeemer. It was those who accepted Jesus and were justified by Him through faith, whom God also glorified (honored) by begetting them with the Holy Spirit, bringing them into His family as children, joint-heirs with Jesus, to the privilege of suffering for the Truth and being glorified in connection with the Kingdom. R. 5837

Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

– Ephesians 4:13 –

What is the mission of the Church? —What ministry or service has the Lord appointed to his consecrated people? This question is one that should be prominent and clear before the mind of every consecrated child of God. It is of the utmost importance that the servant know what is expected of him before proceeding far in rendering service.

Her chief mission is toward herself. She is to lift up the light in the world, the True Light, —not with the expectation of enlightening the world, not with the thought that her feeble lamp shall scatter earth's night of sin and darkness of superstition; for that can be accomplished only by the coming of the morning, the Millennial morning, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams. Her message respecting the love of God and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as it rings out into the world, is not expected to awaken the **world** and to lead the world to the Lord. No, she is merely bearing "witness." The Church is to realize that her mission is not to these, the blind and deaf, but to him "that hath an ear [to hear], —**let him hear!**" —Rev. 2:7; 3:6,13,22.

The Church is supplied by her glorious Head, Christ Jesus, with certain gifts of the spirit, amongst her members of the earth; and these co-working together in their various offices are to strengthen, establish, upbuild, develop, one another, growing in grace and in the knowledge and spirit of the Head, until the whole Church shall eventually, by the close of this age, be brought to the stature of the fullness of perfection as the Body of Christ, under the Lord Jesus as the Head. (Eph. 4:13.)

The conditions imposed upon the Church are designed of the Lord to be crucial tests of **her loyalty** to him, and to the law of the New Covenant under which she was received by him. Trials, difficulties, persecutions, are useful in proving whether or not her covenant of consecration is from the heart: those who have merely made a lip covenant will be sifted out, manifested, separated from the true ones whom the Lord designates his jewels, and his sons; and whom he purposes to make joint-heirs in the Kingdom with his well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is for this reason that this call and election or selection of the Church takes place during this present age, while evil is still permitted to reign in the world, and while the majority of mankind are under the blinding influences of the great Adversary, not yet bound. —Rev. 20:1-3.

The truly consecrated Church of Christ, all "whose names are written in heaven," are his representative members upon the earth, throughout this Gospel age. The Head suffered eighteen-hundred years ago, the members of the Body have since been suffering with him, and have been learning the same lessons of obedience to the divine will, and trust and confidence in the divine wisdom, and love for the brethren; and by and by the entire Body of Christ will have finished its course, and will have been received by the Head into his glory, and then will begin God's great work for the world, for which all his dealings with the Church are but the divine preparation. In the Church the Lord will give to the world Kings, to rule in righteousness,—in love, instead of in selfishness and pride; but the Church will also be Priests, to bless with the knowledge of the truth, and with help out of the mire of sin, back to full harmony with God, all who desire to return to him. It will then be true, "Thou hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests: and we shall reign on the earth." —Rev. 5:10. R. 2413

Jesus The Head of The Body

Let us remember that each of these figures stands separate and alone, and the moment we begin to blend any two of them we get confusion. They each represent some special feature of our relationship [to Christ]. R. 398

He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body.

– Ephesians 1:22-23 –

There can be no question that the Church of Christ is an **Ecclesia**, a **Body**, and that Christ Jesus is the **Head** of the “Church, which is **His Body**.” (Eph. 1:22-23.) There can be no question that the different members of the Church are being called—drawn by a selective process—from the world of mankind. The testimony of the Scriptures as to the object of the call seems also to be clear. The Apostle Peter says that the Church is a people **for a purpose**; that is, God has a special object or purpose in selecting the Church. They are to “show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of **darkness** into His **marvelous light**,” “that men may see their good works and glorify their Father which is in heaven.” —1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 5:16. R. 5057



**CHRIST IS THE HEAD
OF THE CHURCH**

THE CHURCH IS HIS BODY

**You are complete in Him, who is the
head of all principality and power.
Colossians 2:10**

As we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

– Romans 12:4-5 –

The figure of a body beautifully represents the intimate relationship existing between our Lord Jesus and his Church. He is the Head—he plans, directs, supervises and cares for the various members of his body, the Church, and all real members are dependent upon each other and upon the Head and are bound together by the ties of spiritual love and common interest. And although the Head has been actually absent for over eighteen-hundred years, he has yet been present in his care and by his spirit, and representatively through certain members of the body upon whom he, in his absence, confers certain gifts representing his qualities and office as the head of the Church—the **eye**, the **mouth**, the **ear** members. (1 Cor. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:21.) We should have missed much had the illustration of the Lord as the Head and the Church as his body been omitted. R. 1387

**He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.
Ephesians 4:11-15**

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

– 1 Corinthians 12:27 –

As a human body is composed of many members with various functions, yet all perfectly controlled and ordered by the one head, and without any will or desire to control themselves, so is “the body of Christ” under its head, Jesus. Every member must be in perfect accord with the head, that the great work of the Christ in the coming age may be accomplished perfectly.

The Apostle Paul, in speaking of our human bodies from the standpoint of our new relationship in Christ Jesus, says, “Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ?” (1 Cor. 6:15.) God no longer counts our fleshly body as the body of a human being. It is a member of Christ, the property of the spiritual New Creature. This New Creature keeps the Law of God. Wherein there is failure, it is not the New Creature that fails, but the imperfect flesh, which is covered by the pure, white robe of Christ’s righteousness. God looks upon it as the spotless body of this New Creature. Thus we stand perfect before God’s Law; thus the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not according to the flesh, but in the footsteps of Jesus. R. 962 and R. 5917

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

– Ephesians 1:3-5 –

God not only foreknew the sin that would enter into the world through the liberty given to father Adam and mother Eve, but he also foresaw the fall that would take place as the result of his own sentence, and the mental, moral and physical degradation which have resulted. Moreover, he foreknew that in due time he would send his “Only Begotten Son,” our Lord, to ransom all from sin and its penalty, so that ultimately he might be the Deliverer of all who desire to return to harmony with their Creator. He not only foreknew the humiliation of our Lord, his First-begotten Son, from his condition of glory and spiritual nature to the lower conditions of human nature, but he foreknew his trials, and his faithfulness through them, even unto death, even the death of the cross. In all this he foresaw our redemption sacrifice. He foresaw also the glory which he designed to bestow upon our Lord Jesus following his obedience, as expressed by the Apostle Paul, saying, “Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name [title, honor, etc.] above every name.” But our Heavenly Father foreknew and foreordained still more than all this, —the selection of the Church to be the “body” of Christ, the “bride” of Christ, his associate, not only in the sufferings and trials of the present life, but also in the subsequent glory, and great work of “blessing all the families of the earth.” God is calling a number of sons to “glory, honor and immortality,” and has made Christ Jesus the Only Begotten, faithful in every trial, the Head or Captain of this foreordained company, whom he has since been calling, testing and preparing for the foreordained glory. And as it was but a reasonable thing that God should determine that if our Lord Jesus would be faithful he should receive the highest exaltation, so it was equally right and proper that the divine will should be forcibly asserted and that he should **predestinate** that none could be of that glorified “body of Christ,” except as they would become imitators of Jesus, who is the firstborn among these his “brethren.” R. 2375

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 1:11-12

As the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.

– 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 –

We are all baptized by one Spirit into one Body. The specially called out of God's people during this Gospel Age, whether they be called out from amongst the Jews or from amongst the Gentiles, are of one Body, because the Body is **one**, and not a divided Body. The members of the Body of Christ all have one work, one purpose, or object, in view, and one method by which to attain that purpose. They are called to a special service—that they may show forth the praises of God. The world is seeking to show forth the praises of king or queen or sect or what not. But this class have but one aim and object in life—to **serve God**. They are His representatives in the world.

We are not new individuals or persons, for it was individually and personally that we ceased to be when we gave ourselves over by full consecration to the Lord: our new condition is that of members or parts of the larger corporation or body of which our Lord Jesus is the Head. Whoever has a will of his own is properly to be considered an **individual**; but whoever has dropped his own will, and accepted instead of it the will of another, has ceased or figuratively has died as an individual. And this is the picture which the Apostle presents in this and in various other presentations of this subject. For instance, in 1 Cor. 12:1-31 [St. Paul] declares that the entire Christ is not in the members but in the Head. To whatever extent, then, the Lord's people have fully consecrated themselves to him as **members** of the body of Christ, they should be in absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ; and so far as their own wills are concerned they should have none, but in that respect should be "dead."

It is proper then that we should realize that the entire Christ, the entire anointed company, is, from the Divine standpoint, a composite Body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head (1 Corinthians 12:12-14), and that this Body, this Church, as a whole must be broken—that each member of it must become a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of His sacrifice.

R. 5212, R. 2479, R. 5871

**There is one body and one Spirit,
just as you were called in one hope of your calling.
One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,
who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
But to each one of us grace was given
according to the measure of Christ's gift.
Ephesians 4:4-7**

Speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

– Ephesians 4:15-16 –

When the holy spirit is received into the heart as the actuating principle of a life guided and instructed by the counsel of the Lord, it will not only obey the Lord in the matter of symbolic immersion, but it will also soon manifest itself in the various affairs of life, to those with whom the “new creature” comes in contact. The **anointing** which comes upon the Lord’s people must soon or later affect their outward conduct by manifestations of greater meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, affection and generosity of word and deed. All of this is in the illustration of the anointing oil which typifies the spirit from which we have an **unction** or **anointing** or **lubrication**. Whatever friction may be unavoidable between the new creature and the world, which has a different spirit and which therefore operates along different lines and on different principles, there should be no friction amongst those who are the Lord’s people, and who have all received of the same spirit.

The Apostle’s thought seems to be that while each new creature may be considered as a complete member of Christ, and have all the parts of his own character thoroughly lubricated with the spirit of love, yet in addition to this all the new creatures are to recognize themselves as members one of another, and of the body of Christ, the Church; and are to exercise toward each other in their various efforts toward cooperation in obedience to the will of the Lord, such love, such unction, such anointing, such lubrication, as will prevent friction and enable the whole body of Christ to cooperate for its own upbuilding in the graces as well as for its own completion in numbers. R. 2227

The Lord does not choose to force any of His family. He is choosing such as worship Him in spirit and in truth, such as are in every respect loyal. He has set aside for the purpose of selecting this class the entire Gospel Age. And this company will be a Little Flock. They will, evidently, be a very select class. They are required to walk by faith, not by sight. Not many have the loyalty to God and to righteousness to walk that way and to count the world as loss and dross—as nothing, with all its projects. As the disloyal ones leave the ranks, more and more the loyal ones will find themselves drawn together, and more and more of oneness will be found among those who are faithful. This would necessarily be true in every time and in every country. All who are thoroughly loyal would desire to do the Father’s will, desire to lay down their lives in the Father’s service. And this desire would make them one. R. 5358

Jesus The Captain of Our Salvation

It was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

– Hebrews 2:10 –

The opulence of divine favor does not stop with the exaltation of one, but has arranged that Christ Jesus, as the Captain, shall lead a company of sons of God to glory, honor and immortality (Heb. 2:10; Rom. 2:7), each of whom, however, must be a spiritual “copy” or likeness of the “first begotten.” And as a grand lesson of the divine sovereignty, and as a sublime contradiction to all evolution theories, God elected to call to this place of honor (as “the bride, the Lamb’s wife and joint heir” —Rev. 21:2; Rev. 21:9; Rom. 8:17), not the angels and cherubs, but some from among the sinners redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb. God elected the number to be thus exalted (Rev. 7:4), and predestinated what must be their characteristics if they would make their calling and election sure, to a place in that company to be so highly honored; and all the rest is left to Christ, who worketh now as the Father worketh hitherto. —John 5:17.

The present age, the Gospel age, from Pentecost to the present time, is the time for the selection of this elect class, variously termed “the Church,” “the body of Christ,” “the royal priesthood,” “the seed of Abraham” (Gal. 3:29), etc.; and the permission still of evil is for the purpose of developing these “members of the body of Christ” and to furnish them the opportunity of sacrificing their all in the service of him who bought them with his precious blood; and thus of developing in their hearts his spiritual likeness, that when, at the end of the age, they are presented by their Lord and Redeemer before the Father, he may see in them “the image of his Son.” —Rom 8:29.

As the reward of glory, honor and immortality, and all the features of the divine nature, were not conferred upon the “First-begotten” until he had finished his course by completing his sacrifice and obedience in death, so with the Church, his “bride,”—counted as one and treated collectively. As our Lord, the First-born and Captain, “entered into his glory” at his resurrection; as he there became partaker of the divine nature fully by being “born of the spirit;” as he there was highly exalted to the throne and highest favor (“right hand”) of God, so he has promised that his Church, his “bride,” shall in her resurrection be changed by resurrection power from human nature to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature. R. 1877

A GOOD SOLDIER: (1) one who is very much in sympathy with the Captain of his Salvation. He is an intelligent soldier, and sees that he has on the proper armor, that he wears it properly and that he gets the very best possible use out of this armor. He sees that in his walk he has a soldierly bearing, as a proper representative of the King, and of the great Kingdom so near at hand.

(2) He is not ashamed of his flag, nor of the garment of Christ's righteousness. He is to lift up the standard of righteousness everywhere. He enlists in this warfare, knowing that it means his death—the death of the flesh, of the human nature. He is to be a good soldier—not merely outwardly loyal, merely wearing the uniform, but having the full spirit of the Cause. This means that whatever experiences come to him he is to receive these thankfully, and be glad to have the privilege of enduring something for His Captain and in the interests of the Kingdom to which he has sworn allegiance.
R. 5404

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

– Galatians 5:1 –

Although this very Scripture declares that Christ gives this freedom, the Word shows us that he gives it only to those who desire it and who will fight for it. Their battle is not to be with carnal weapons which the law of love forbids, yet their warfare is to be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds of error. Against what, then, do they battle? We answer that their chief fight is against the fallen tendencies of their own beings.

To the surprise of every soldier he finds that some of his greatest battles are within. True he finds the world an opponent to his full devotion of time and talent and influence to the service of the Truth. The Adversary also is a foe who must be reckoned with, and whose subtle attacks may be encountered in various ways. The Christian soldier has the assurance of his Captain that all the arts of the Adversary are known to him, and that all his interests shall be guarded so long as he is loyal to his Captain and faithful to his consecration and enlistment. But, as we have said, the chiefest of all the Christian soldier's opponents is the human foe—the weaknesses and cravings and demands and subtle persecutions, etc., of the fallen conditions of his own mind and body. To his surprise he finds himself a slave to his own weaknesses, and that he must battle daily, hourly almost, for victory, in order to attain fully the liberty wherewith Christ makes free indeed. From this standpoint all battles against our own fleshly weaknesses, our own selfish instincts and propensities, are battles for liberty, battles for right, battles on the Lord's side. Our great Captain is not so much wishing us to fight his battles as wishing us to fight the good fight of faith in ourselves, and in this matter he is ready to assist us, and without him we can do nothing. R. 3857



This is a great battle which each fights for himself. Each soldier may more or less assist and set an example to the other soldiers, but the chief battle is with himself. It is a hand-to-hand conflict. Although he is expected at all times to be on the alert against the wiles of Satan and the world, yet his special fight is with the enemies in his own flesh. St. Paul himself had taken the shield of faith—wherewith to quench the fiery darts of the wicked—and the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. R. 5404

Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

1 Timothy 6:12

Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Ephesians 6:14-17

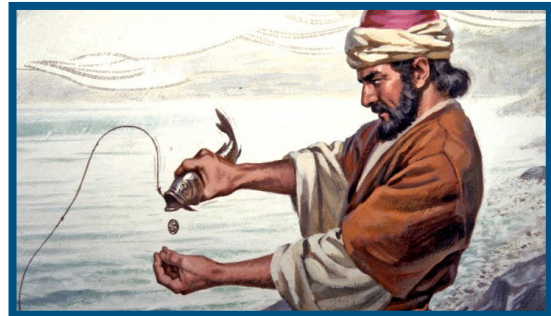
You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

– 2 Timothy 2:3-4–

Let us never lose sight of the fact that we are **soldiers**, and that as true soldiers we are to learn to “endure hardness.” A soldier has many trivial duties to perform and he is as really doing his duty as a soldier when he is polishing his armor, foraging, cooking his meals, cleaning camp or building bridges for the army to pass over, as when he is fighting the enemy. Such things are incidental work, but are necessary and entirely consistent with his commission as a soldier and should not be regarded as entanglements and hindrances. These duties cannot be disregarded nor carelessly done without a measure of unfaithfulness.

So with the Christian soldier. The routine of life—housework, shop work, daily toil, anything, everything, incidental to a proper and honest provision of “**things needful**” for ourselves and those dependent upon us for support, as well as for provision for the prosecution and care of the Lord’s work—all this is a proper part of our engagement as soldiers of the Lord.

The Apostle Peter was as truly serving the Lord when catching the fish from whose mouth he got the coin with which to pay his Master’s taxes and his own, as when proclaiming, on the day of Pentecost, the “raising up” and ascension of the Lord. The Apostle Paul was as truly a soldier of the cross and doing his proper work as such when making tents (rather than be chargeable to any) as when at Mars Hill he preached Jesus and the resurrection. **Whatever** is done with a view to the glory and honor of our Lord, the Captain



of our salvation, or for the benefit of any of our fellow-soldiers, or for our own **preparation** for this warfare, or in the discharge of obligations which our Captain has recognized and approved, is proper work for us as soldiers and is not **entanglement** in the affairs of this life. R. 4838

The thought which the Apostle is impressing is that all good soldiers should endure hardness—hard, distressing conditions, circumstances that are quite unpleasant, difficult. Earthly soldiers are obliged to tramp through water and mud, enduring long, wearisome marches. Sometimes they are short of rations, sometimes obliged to sleep on the ground. Sometimes their battles are waged in the face of great opposition.

So the soldier of Christ is to endure whatever experiences may come to him, under the guidance of his Captain, not only willingly, but gladly, rejoicing that he has been permitted to enter this army of the Lord, knowing that these experiences are working out for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." These various hard experiences of the Christian are designed to work out for his good, that he may "lay hold on eternal life," and gain a share in the Kingdom with his Redeemer. R. 5404

Jesus Our Bridegroom

Listen, O daughter, consider and incline your ear. Forget your own people also and your father's house. So the King will greatly desire your beauty because He is your Lord, worship Him.

– Psalm 45:10-11 –

Was ever a proposal of marriage couched in more delicate and beautiful phrase? With astonishment I read it again and again. Surely it can mean nothing less than this: I am invited by the King of kings to become the bride of his royal Son—his only begotten Son and heir of all things. And since clothed with the imputed robe of his righteousness, which hides all the unrighteousness of my own robes, I am really considered beautiful in the eyes of the King, I am told, so that he desires to make me his bride—if I am willing for his dear sake to forget my own people and my father's [Adam's] house—the world in general, with all its hopes, aims and ambitions.

Let us see to it, beloved, that we are of those who hold the Head (Col. 2:19), who acknowledge in every thought and doctrine the preeminence of our Redeemer. He is the antitype of Isaac—not we. He, alone and apart from us, was the heir of all things. We were strangers to him and afar off, like Rebecca, when Christ (Isaac) became Lord of all and was highly exalted and given a name above every name, and when in consequence he could say, “All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me.” Ah, yes! “Of the people there was none with him.”

It is since he is thus Lord of all, and our Lord, that we or any have received an invitation from the Father to become his bride and joint-heir. To us the spirit of truth declares, as Eliezer declared to Rebecca and her family concerning Isaac—His Father is very rich, and all that he hath he has given to his Son— “He is Lord of all” the estate, and fully his Father's representative, and the Father now seeketh for him a bride and joint-heir.

And as in the type certain gold ornaments were presented to Rebecca from the moment that she entertained the good tidings, so with us: from the moment that we first gave ear to the Father's invitation or “high-calling” we have been blessed. The ornaments, being of gold, symbolize **divine** blessings, gold always symbolizing divine things. The golden adornments were first, earrings, representing the blessed effect of hearing the call; and secondly, bracelets for the hands, representing the blessed effect of the divine call upon all our **doings** thereafter.

And so these blessings came merely from the attentive hearing of the high call; and yet greater blessings followed when we accepted that call and said that we would leave our father's house (the human nature) and our own people (earthly friendships) and go to our Espoused One. (Psalm 45:9-11.) So in the type—when the decision was reached and Rebecca was “betrothed” or “espoused” to Isaac, whom having not seen she loved, the servant presented her with vessels of silver (symbolizing **truths**), and with further jewels or ornaments of gold (divine blessings and graces), and with **new** raiment, symbolizing her newness of life and relationship to the Father and the Son whose call she had accepted. —Gen. 24:22; Gen. 24:53. R. 1494 and R. 1386

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD. My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation. He has covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

– Isaiah 61:10 –

As we have made a consecration of ourselves to God, our sins are all under the blood, and the new life has begun in us. Selected from a race of bondslaves of sin, beings of a fleshly nature, depraved, death-stricken, sin-cursed, we are lifted out of the miry clay; we are washed, cleansed, from our pollution, our soiled rags of unrighteousness, and a new nature has been begun in us. Then our earthward tendencies are gradually bent Heavenward. We are transformed day by day, rising **up**, UP, until, our resurrection completed, the work of transformation fully accomplished, we are exalted to heights unimaginable. We come in under [this] arrangement, our weaknesses and imperfections being covered by our Redeemer's robe of righteousness, which constitutes our "wedding garment." Thus we stand before the Father complete in the Beloved. And His Word to us is, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. 12:9.) R. 5855

For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church, and He is the Savior of the body.

– Ephesians 5:23 –

Here [the Apostle Paul] does not blend, but links these illustrations—the **body** and **bride**, and shows them to refer to the same class. He is here addressing "the saints which were at Ephesus, and the FAITHFUL (overcoming ones) in Christ Jesus." (Chap. 1:1.) In chap. 1:23, he likens the church to the human body, of which Jesus is the Head; and in chap. 5:22-33, speaking to the **same persons**, he likens the church to husband and wife, exhorting husbands to love their wives, and wives to reverence their husbands, and thus exemplify the beautiful relationship between Jesus and his church. Verse 28 compares the **wife** to the **body**, saying, "So ought men to love **their wives as their own bodies**. He that loveth his wife loveth **himself**; for no man ever yet hateth his **own flesh**, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it, **even as the Lord the church**."

The head is the director and caretaker of the body; every interest of the body is taken into consideration by the head, and every possible provision made and applied to meet those interests. And in turn, the members of the body are always at the prompt and willing service of the head. We see that in this relationship of husband and wife, is prefigured the beautiful relationship between Christ Jesus and the church. And as in the type, so in the antitype, the church, the bride of Christ is to be subject unto him in everything; earnestly seeking at all times to know, and then delighting to do his will.

R. 399 and R. 765

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

Ephesians 5:25-26

That He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

– Ephesians 5:27 –

This beautiful figure of the Church's relationship to Christ is made very prominent in the Scriptures. See the invitation to become the bride in Psalm 45:10-11, and the promised joy and gladness of those who accept it and prove themselves worthy of it. Then read Paul's counsel to the husbands and wives who are truly wedded in the Lord: they two shall be one flesh—as one person, having but one mind and one common interest, purpose and aim. And for this purpose, to this end, each is to forsake the former ties which united them to parents and brothers and sisters. Then says the Apostle, "This is a great mystery" —it is something rarely seen, even among Christian husbands and wives— "but I speak concerning Christ and the Church," the Bridegroom and Bride between whom the union will be **perfect**. —Eph. 5:22-33. R. 1386

My brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Romans 7:4

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

– Ephesians 5:28-30 –

The Apostle shows that for Christ to love his bride is to love himself, for in accepting the Church as his Bride the Lord accepts her as his own body, even as in the type of this (Adam and Eve and the human union), the wife is accepted as the very flesh of her husband and her body as an addition to his members—and the husband as her head. Thus, now, the consecrated, espoused ones while in the flesh represent Christ in the flesh; and in their daily sacrifices they are filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24); and by and by, when glorified, when made spirit-beings like their glorious Lord, they will be his glorified spouse and joint-heir, and still loved as himself—as members of his body. R. 1387

FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.

Ephesians 5:31

This grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ.

– Ephesians 3:8-9 –

The Apostle points out to us most distinctly that the seed of Abraham according to the flesh was Jesus, our Lord, who is now of the flesh no more, having sacrificed it and received the begetting of the Spirit to the new nature. He is now the glorified one, the Christ, Abraham's Lord and David's Lord. And the Apostle points out to us as a great mystery the fact that God during this Gospel age is selecting from amongst mankind some to be joint-heirs with Jesus in the Kingdom—to be members of the seed of Abraham. (Eph. 3:9; Acts 15:17; Rom. 8:17.) We ask how could this be, since the Law Covenant was added, and since Jesus alone fulfilled the terms of the Law Covenant and ended all the hopes and prospects it contained? Surely no Jew preceded our Lord in the matter, and surely, since our Lord has finished his course, the offer of the Law Covenant is no longer open to a Jew, as it never was open to a Gentile. Where, then, is the prospect for either Jew or Gentile being joined with Christ, in joint-heirship with Christ in this Abrahamic Covenant?

We reply that we are accepted of the Lord, as the "Bride of Christ," the "Lamb's Wife." The Church, composed in the beginning exclusively of Jews, and subsequently almost exclusively of Gentiles, is as a whole accepted by the Lord as his Bride, and by becoming joined to him and by union or marriage with him these, whether Jews or Gentiles, are made his joint-heirs. This is the Apostle's clear statement of the matter, for after telling that Christ is the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16) he adds a word respecting the Church, his prospective Bride, saying, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. 3:29.) In the one figure we are accepted as members of the Lord's body, that is, when the Apostle says, "Ye brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise;" in another figure we are accepted as members of his Bride. R. 3937

I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

– 2 Corinthians 11:2 –

We cannot understand that [St. Paul] was actuated by a mean jealousy, but that he was jealous **for**, or in the interest of, the **Corinthians**; he was jealous also for the things that were right and that they should be in accord with them. His jealousy, therefore, was an earnest, anxious solicitude and vigilant watchfulness, a godly jealousy for the best interests of the Lord's precious Truth. This, of course, is a



jealousy such as we all should feel in the Church. When we have that jealousy in the Lord's cause, it is different from a jealousy in our own interest.

Dear brethren and sisters, we see the course we are to pursue. We are to be the Bride of Jehovah's great Son. Therefore we must be very diligent to get everything in readiness for the approaching marriage. When we consider the preparations which an earthly bride makes for her nuptials, we have a good illustration of how important it is for us to have our garments all prepared, our robes spotless, our embroidery-work all completed beforehand. You and I are privileged to have a most important part in the greatest, grandest wedding ever held. Therefore we should be ready. We who were by nature children of wrath even as others, are now privileged to be cleansed from all defilement by the precious blood of Christ. Daily also we are to wash with the water of the Word. We are to be purified from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and be fitted to become the Bride of our Heavenly King.

R. 4789 and R. 5905

He who has the bride is the bridegroom.

– John 3:29 –

Note how plainly the Scriptures teach that Jesus, personally, is the Bridegroom, and not Jesus and the overcomers. John speaks of Jesus personally as the bridegroom. (John 3:29.) Jesus also speaks of himself individually as the Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15; Mark 2:19; Luke 5:34.) In Matt. 25:1; Matt. 25:5-6; Matt. 25:10, the Bridegroom is four times mentioned, and who will say that any of them could be applied to other than the individual Bridegroom, Jesus? No virgin went forth in any sense to meet a multitudinous bridegroom. The midnight cry was not, Behold, a multitudinous bridegroom cometh, nor did a multitudinous bridegroom in any sense tarry.

The glory, the honor, the power, all came directly to the man, and the woman obtains joint-heirship by marriage (covenant union with him). So Jesus was the heir of all things (Heb. 1:2) and we inherited none of them, until called by the Father, we become his betrothed, and now we are heirs unitedly with him, for "He (the Father) that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not **with** him, also freely give us all things?" Therefore, by union or marriage with him who is the heir, "all things are yours." R. 398

Jesus Our Foundation and The Chief Cornerstone

Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

– Matthew 16:16 –

“And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter [Greek, **petros**, a stone, a piece of a rock]; and upon this rock [Greek, **petra**, the rock in mass, the foundation rock] I will build my church; and the gates of hell [**hades**, the grave, death] shall not prevail against it.”

The foundation “rock” was Christ—“this rock”—which Peter had just confessed, and not Peter, as the Church of Rome claims, and as some Protestants are now willing to concede. Peter himself disclaims such distinction, and such usurpation of the Lord’s place, when he points to Christ as the foundation stone in the spiritual temple of God, and to **all** the members of his body as living stones to be built upon that foundation. —1 Pet. 2:4-6. See also Isa. 28:16; Matt. 21:42; Acts 4:11; Rom. 9:33; Eph. 2:20; Psa. 118:22-23; 1 Cor. 3:11.

Peter himself gives us this interpretation of the matter in his Epistle (1 Pet. 2:4-7), assuring us that the whole Church as a building of God is growing more and more complete through the addition of each member, who, as a living stone, is built up into and under the headship of Christ, the great chief corner-stone and capstone of the whole—the figure being that of a pyramid. R. 1760 and R. 2656

The love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died. And He died for all that those who live should live no longer for themselves but for Him who died for them and rose again.

– 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 –

This is the basis of our hope: the only foundation—the one which no man ever could lay, but which God laid for us (1 Cor. 3:11); for, “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8), the “just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” (1 Pet. 3:18.) Realizing that we are sinners under condemnation to death, and that we may have peace with God and be justified to life by appropriating to ourselves the merits of his death, we gladly accept him as our Redeemer. “We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” (Eph. 1:7.) This is **justification**; and, being thus justified by faith, we have peace with God. Then, realizing, further, that those who are thus redeemed should not live the remainder of their lives to themselves and their own pleasure, but to him who died for them (2 Cor. 5:14-15), we consecrate ourselves to his service. R. 416

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

– 1 Corinthians 3:11 –

Jesus sought to impress upon His hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a Kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a Kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that Kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them.

Jesus intimates that many who heard His words and expressed great appreciation of them, would fail to take the proper steps to attain the glorious Kingdom privileges which He presented. They would allow custom, habit, love of pleasure, love of ease, the spirit of the world, to hinder them, either from making the proper, full devotion of themselves to God, or from carrying out that purpose. Such indeed might to some extent encourage themselves with hopes of the Kingdom which would never be realized, because they never took the proper steps. They did not build their faith upon the proper foundation. Perhaps some of them built upon the Law, and thought that they could commend themselves to God by their own endeavors, without the imputation of the merit of Christ. Such would be greatly mistaken. "Other foundation can no man lay than that which God has laid—Jesus Christ." His death is our redemption-price, and His appearance in glory as our Advocate is to make good for our unintentional shortcomings. R. 5407

Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

– 1 Corinthians 1:12-13 –

Nay, nay, dearly beloved; one, and only one, deserves all the honor of the Church, both now and forever, and that one is her true Lord and Master; and his name only should she own in any manner. He leads, he teaches, he feeds; and the various human agents used by him, as channels for his blessings to his espoused, should neither take his place in her heart nor share his honor before the world. We may, however, and should, honor his servants "for their works sake," and count those who serve well as worthy of double honor; but we must always "hold the Head," and render him supreme reverence and obedience. (1 Thes. 5:13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Col. 2:19.) Our esteem for others should be "in the Lord."

While the taking of different names was wrong, it was an evidence of a deeper wrong—of a selfish, party spirit. It was an evidence that those Corinthians who took the party names had never appreciated the oneness of the Body of Christ; that they did not really appreciate that Christ is the only Head, leader and standard; and that his is the only name by which his followers should recognize themselves and each other. Where scoffers apply a name in derision, it is not the fault of the faithful; but the true, loyal soldiers of the cross should never own or recognize such a name. R. 4163

Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building being fitted together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

– Ephesians 2:20-21 –

The number of the apostles corresponded to the number of the sons of Jacob, the representatives and founders of the tribes of Israel, which in one phase of their typical character stood for the entire gospel Church, and in another for the whole world. (See Tabernacle Shadows.) And in the Book of Revelation these apostles are designated as the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem, the glorious Church. (Rev. 1:14; Eph. 2:20-21.) Just so the foundation which sustains the Church is designed ultimately to sustain the whole world. But if these foundation stones were laid in the sand, the building reared upon them would be very insecure, and could not stand forever. (Matt. 7:25-27.) But they were not laid in the sand, but upon the sure and steadfast rock, Christ Jesus. —Matt. 16:16-18; 1 Pet. 2:4-8. While all of the twelve were chosen early in the Lord's ministry that they might be his witnesses, because they had been with him from the beginning, when one of them (Judas) dropped out, having proved a traitor to his trust, the Lord supplied his place with Paul, who was made a witness of his glory after his resurrection and ascension. (Acts 26:13; 1 Cor. 15:8.) And thus the testimony, of the eleven eye and ear witnesses of the Lord's ministry, death and resurrection, and of the twelfth as to his glorious exaltation, is a firm foundation for the faith of the whole Church, to the end of the age. R. 1522

**Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I lay in Zion
a stone for a foundation, a tried stone,
a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.”**

– Isaiah 28:16 –

The chief corner-stone in a pyramid is the top stone, which is also the model after which the whole building is being fashioned. The Prophet Zechariah (4:7) calls it the head-stone, and Isaiah (28:16) calls it a foundation-stone. At first thought these figures seem incongruous, but they are not really so when we consider that this building is not an earthly, but a heavenly building, having a heavenly foundation, and that it is held together, not by earthly, but by heavenly attraction. And it is in accordance with this thought that we are invited to come unto Christ, the chief corner-stone, to be built up under him and to be fashioned for our places as living stones in this building, in accordance with the lines and angles seen in him who is the model. R. 3622

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

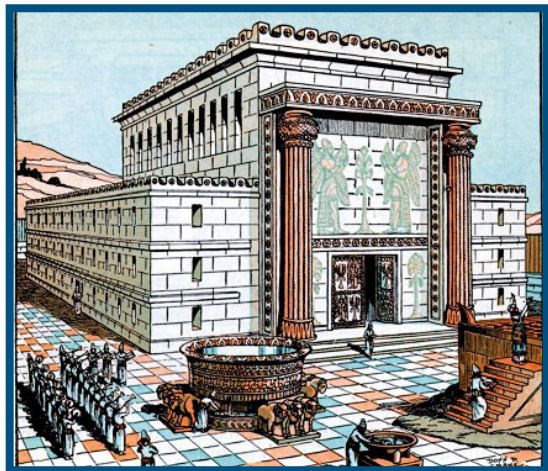
– 1 Corinthians 3:16 –

The temple is another figure and name given to the church. (1 Cor. 3:16.) At one time each Christian is compared to a temple, in which God, by his spirit, dwells; and again, each Christian is compared to a living stone in the one great temple which God is building during this age, and from which his blessing is to flow to the world during the next age. This last figure shows the growth of the church as the other figures do not show it. Neither the soldier figure, nor the priest figure, nor the disciple figure, nor the body figure, none of these show the growth of the church as a whole; but the temple figure does show it. We, as living stones, are cut, polished, and builded, and so through this age, the temple “groweth,” until Jesus, the top-stone, shall crown it. Then it will be perfect and ready for its great Millennial work. R. 398

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

– 1 Peter 2:4-5 –

St. Peter. He tells us that the various members of the Church of Christ—the saints—are living stones, which are in process of chiseling and polishing, preparatory to the uniting of all these in one grand, glorious Temple of God beyond the Veil. (1 Pet. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:9.) Any not enduring the chiseling and polishing will be discarded as unfit for the glorious Temple.



The bringing together of these living stones beyond the Veil will be by the Resurrection Power, beautifully illustrated in the erection of Solomon's Temple, of which we read that its stones were prepared at the quarry and then finally assembled for the construction of the Temple, and that they were so perfectly shaped and marked for their various places that they came together without the sound of a hammer—without need for chiseling or for other labor upon them at the time of the construction. So, St. Paul says, the Church is God's workmanship. (Eph. 2:10.) And His work will be so perfectly accomplished that there will be no need of rectification or alteration beyond the Veil.

It is this viewpoint that is especially interesting and profitable to the Lord's people. Such of them as can realize that they have been called of God to this High Calling, to membership in the Temple, can fully appreciate thereafter the necessity for the trials and difficulties of life which are shaping them, fitting them, for Heavenly glory, honor, immortality. R. 5713

Jesus answered and said to them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

– John 2:19 –

During the Millennium, all the world will have the opportunity of approaching God through His great Temple of which Jesus is the Chief Corner-Stone, and the Church the living stones under His Headship. And God will hear the prayers thus properly presented, and will forgive the sins of the people; and as a result the work of Restitution will progress to a grand completion.

As Solomon dedicated the Temple, so the Church of Christ will be dedicated, formally presented to the Father. The great Antitype of Solomon will do this; namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, presenting us all as His members, as the Temple which is His Body, reared up on the Third Day—the Third Thousand-Year Day from the time of His death—the dawning of the Great Sabbath. (John 2:19-22.) As a result of the dedication, the glory of the Lord will fill the House. R. 5713

This is the ‘STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED BY YOU BUILDERS, WHICH HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE.’ Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

– Acts 4:11-12 –

[Peter] proceeded to assure his hearers that this one, Jesus, whom they despised and rejected, had nevertheless been owned of God as the “chief corner stone” of the great Temple which God purposes to build. He thus referred their minds directly to a Messianic Psalm (118:22) familiar to them, pointing out its fulfillment in Christ, and declares, “Neither is **the** salvation in any other.” This expression, “**the** salvation,” to his hearers would have the sense of, The salvation for which we Jews, as a nation, have been waiting and longing, —a national salvation, and an individual salvation in the Kingdom of God.

Let us mark well also the inspired utterance of the Apostle, “There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” This would be a difficult lesson for his hearers to receive. It would mean a total revolution of their theories, hopes, aims, plans and projects. It would mean that they had been wrong, utterly wrong, in all their expectations for some time. It would mean that they had, as teachers, been misrepresenting the divine plan and misleading the people. The Apostle’s course, however, was plain. It was proper that he should state the matter clearly, without peradventure, that his hearers might have a full testimony respecting the truth.

Peter’s declaration is that only those who have accepted Jesus have yet come under the terms of the only salvation God has provided: and, since Jesus “tasted death for every man,” it follows that in God’s “due time” every man must come to an opportunity of hearing of the only name, and of accepting the one salvation. This opportunity, according to the Scriptures, will be during Messiah’s reign in the Millennial age, when “the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth,” and “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” by the glorified Christ and his glorified Church unitedly, the spiritual seed of Abraham. —Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:29; Jer. 31:34. R. 2940

It is also contained in the Scripture, “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHIEF CORNERSTONE, ELECT, PRECIOUS, AND HE WHO BELIEVES ON HIM WILL BY NO MEANS BE PUT TO SHAME.” Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious, but to those who are disobedient, “THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE,” and “A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE.”

– 1 Peter 2:6-8 –

The foundation stone of this great building would be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to many until the time of its exaltation. Those who will stumble over it, says the Apostle, are not those faithful and loyal to the Word of God, but those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient, and who will not accept its plain and simple teaching relative to the great foundation of our faith—Christ Jesus, who gave his life a ransom for many. (Matt. 20:28.) And this class, he assures us, were appointed to stumble—that it does not happen so, but that God designed that they should stumble, because they are unworthy to stand, being disobedient. All such were appointed to stumble; but blessed are the meek, for they shall stand. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." R. 3622

They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

– 1 Corinthians 10:4 –

The work of Christ as our ransom is the foundation Rock upon which all other parts of his work for man's salvation are built, and that faith in his work as our ransom price is the solid rock-foundation, and the only foundation for all our hopes, present and future, through him. What is it to believe in Christ? Surely not the mere belief that such a person lived and died. No; many infidels believe this, and yet, rejecting the work which he accomplished as our Redeemer, our ransom-price, they have no foundation for faith in him. The rock which typified Christ was the one from which the water flowed out as the result of its being smitten. That smiting represented Christ's crucifixion as our ransom. As the direct result of that ransom the water of everlasting life flows to the otherwise perishing. The source of life, the foundation of all faith and hope, then, is the smitten Rock, Christ as our ransom.

Digging deep for a sure foundation upon which to rear such a superstructure, we find nothing solid until we come to Christ the rock. (1 Cor. 10:4; Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:7,8.) In ourselves we find no ground of stability upon which to rear our building of character and faith. Nor is there stability in anything which other men can furnish. Human resolutions and human theories are all sandy foundations which cannot insure permanence in the storms of life. But those who are rooted and grounded in Christ and built up in him—in his doctrine, his love, and his character—shall never be moved. When the floods of temptation rise and in a steady stream beat against that house, it shall not be moved; for its strength is in Christ, the solid rock upon which it is founded. R. 1228 and R. 1922

Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: And the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it did not fall: for it was founded on the rock.

– Matthew 7:24-25 –

Jesus gave an illustration, or parable, declaring that those who heard His Message and rendered obedience thereto would be like a wise man, who built his house upon the rock, where the descending rains would not wash away the foundation from underneath, nor in any wise harm it. The storms of life are sure to come; and the great crisis of life, death, is sure to come. Amidst those trials there will be calmness, confidence and security for such as have accepted the Lord's arrangement and have been walking to the best of their ability in the footsteps of Jesus. To them death will be merely a transition from the earthly state to the Heavenly, by the power of the First Resurrection— "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye"; for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 15:50-52.) Their faith and confidence, built upon God's promises, can never fail them. For such there is laid up a crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give them at that Day. —2 Timothy 4:8.

Those who build with obedience, their hearts as well as their tongues confessing and honoring the Lord, their deeds corroborating their faith, and their fruits bearing testimony of their vital relationship with the Lord—these shall pass through all the storms of life and shall never be moved, never be shaken, because they are on the foundation. R. 5407 and R. 3318

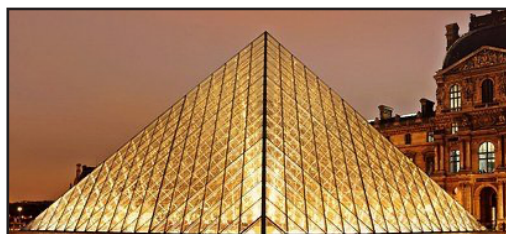
According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear, for the Day will declare it because it will be revealed by fire. And the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is.

– 1 Corinthians 3:10-13 –

The Apostle Paul (I Cor. 3:10-15) uses this same illustration [from Matthew 7] in a slightly different manner. His illustration shows only those who are built upon the rock, Christ Jesus, but shows that two classes are building upon the rock and that while all such builders will be eventually saved, gain everlasting life, there will be nevertheless two classes of them—some saved abundantly in the Kingdom and others "saved so as by fire" —by passing through great tribulation. The Apostle's explanation is equally possible, whether we apply the gold, silver, and precious stones of the proper building to true doctrines, in contrast with the wood, hay and stubble to false doctrines, or whether we apply these symbols of gold, silver and precious stones as signifying character development, the results of sound doctrine, and the wood, hay and stubble the deficiency of character development.

The general tenor of [this lesson] is that all those who think worth while to be on the Lord's side at all in this present age will do wisely if, after counting the cost, they completely lay aside not only their besetting sins but their ambition and their hope and every desire of an earthly kind—that their entire interests may be devoted to the Lord, to knowing his will, to serving him. These are they who really love the Lord more than they love houses or lands or father or mother or children or self; these are the Lord's Jewels, who shall be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom and in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." R. 3318

**Do you not know that you are the temple of God
and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?
1 Corinthians 3:16**



**Thus the Church of Christ, the elect little flock, are now being shaped,
fitted and prepared for positions in the Temple of God, of which
the dear Redeemer himself is the chief cornerstone, the foundation. R. 3587**

Jesus Our Shepherd

The Lord is my shepherd: I shall not want. – Psalm 23:1 –

David, The Psalmist, wrote prophetically, “Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want” (Psa. 23:1-6); for in David’s day the arrangements for the Shepherd and the flock of this lesson had not been completed. True, the heavenly Father had purposed his entire plan as respects humanity’s redemption and return to his care as his flock, but he had not yet sent his only begotten Son, the Good Shepherd, to give his life for the sheep, to call the flock, to open the door and to lead them out and into pasturage and to rest. Nevertheless, in the Lord’s providence the nation of Israel had already been gathered, as those who would be prepared to be the flock of the Good Shepherd when he should come. These were “shut up under the Law” (Gal. 3:23), waiting for the coming of the Good Shepherd to open the door and to call them by name as his own sheep. R. 2672



It is only when the individual can say in his heart, The Lord is **my** Shepherd that this blessed ministry of the good Shepherd can be realized. It is when we become his sheep that we learn the value of the Shepherd’s care; and the man who has had experience under the care of the good Shepherd can truly say with the Psalmist, “I shall not want.” He shall not want for the temporal necessities of the present life— “Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.” (Isa. 33:16; Matt. 6:33-34.) He shall not want for light and be left to walk in the darkness of this world, but unto him shall be given the light of life. (John 8:12.) He shall not want the necessary care and discipline to fit him for the future life; “for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” (Heb. 12:6.) He shall not lack the consolations of divine grace in times of trial and affliction; for it is written, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. 12:9.) He shall not want for fellowship and sympathy; for the Lord himself hath said, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee” (Heb. 13:5); and again, “Lo, I am with you alway.” —Matt. 28:20. Surely no **good** thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly—as true sheep. He will protect them in every danger, and guard them with a shepherd’s care. R. 1745

**I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
– John 10:11 –**

The Scriptures assign many very beautiful and expressive titles to our Lord as descriptive of his relationship to his faithful. Amongst the most beautiful and impressive of these is the Good Shepherd, or, more literally, the grand Shepherd, the ideal Shepherd. Likewise amongst the various names applied to our Lord's followers, the term "sheep" is the one most familiar as well as one of the most fitting. If we could imagine any earthly lord as adopting a symbol of a sheep, it would surely represent a surly-horned ram. Lions' heads, tigers' heads, eagles' heads, and nondescript heads of ferocious aspect, dragons, etc., are what are usually chosen. This represents the natural mind and the desire that the natural man has to appear strong and ferocious and to intimidate others. He who represented himself as the Good Shepherd and his followers as sheep had a very different idea of the whole matter from that of the natural man, and we who have become his followers should take note of this, and, appreciating it, should cultivate more and more of the sheep-like nature in our relationship to him as the Shepherd.

The Good Shepherd, so far from self-seeking, gladly laid down his life for the sheep, and it was by virtue of thus purchasing the sheep by his own precious blood that their eternal life is possible; without his purchase there would be no flock, and it is by this that he becomes the Shepherd of the flock. How clear, how beautiful the thought, "Ye were bought with a price"! (1 Cor. 6:20.) No one else could give this ransom for us, no one else could purchase us or grant us life everlasting, no one else, therefore, could legally become our Shepherd or be able to lead us into the rest and peace of God, into the knowledge of the truth and ultimately into the heavenly fold, the rest that remaineth for the people of God. R. 4157

May the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

– Hebrews 13:20-21 –

"Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want," [Psa. 23:1] Do not all realize that the Great Shepherd's great Son is our Shepherd also? It is the Shepherd-Son that the Apostle Peter declares to be "The shepherd and bishop of our souls." (1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20.) It is our Lord himself that declares, "I am the Good Shepherd." (John 10:11.) Not only so, but our word, "pastor," signifies shepherd, as does also the Greek word rendered "bishop" in our common version New Testament: and God, the Great Shepherd, "set" these in the Church, says the Apostle. Again he says that the Good Shepherd, Jesus, gave these gifts to his Church. Is there conflict between these statements? By no means; they are all true and all consistent when viewed from the right standpoint: the Head of the under-shepherds is Christ, the Good Shepherd, and the Head of the Good Shepherd is the Great Shepherd, and the flock is one. The key is in the oneness of purpose and of work between the Father and the Son—"I and my Father are one." But this statement can only be apprehended by becoming one with the Father and the Son, in harmony with our Lord's prayer.—John 17:21-23. R. 2431

The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

– John 10:3-5 –

The tales told respecting the shepherds of eastern countries and their flocks are remarkable and illustrate well our Lord’s declarations of this parable. One writer says: “It is one of the most interesting spectacles to see the number of flocks of thirsty sheep water at a fountain. Each flock in obedience to the call of its own shepherd, lies down awaiting its turn. The shepherd of one flock calls his sheep in squads, and when the squad has done drinking, orders it away by sounds which the sheep perfectly understand, and calls up another squad. The sheep never make any mistake as to who whistles to them or calls them. In a flock of hundreds or thousands each individual sheep has a name, knows it and is known by it. The Greeks had a similar custom. The names frequently corresponded to certain defects, as for instance, 'Torn' or 'Broken-Legged,' 'One Eye,' 'Curly Horn,' 'Bald Head.' As lambs they are taught to answer to their names by patient drill, being led back and forth from the rest of the flock and not allowed to go to their mothers for food until they respond properly to the calls. The shepherd never drives his sheep in the East, but goes before them, they follow him, they run after him if he appears to be escaping from them and are terrified if he is out of their sight or any stranger appears instead of him. He calls for them from time to time to let them know that he is at hand, they listen and continue grazing, but if anyone else attempts to produce the same peculiar sounds they look around, startled, and begin to scatter.”

A stranger will the sheep not follow, because they know not the voice of strangers. This indicates that in the voice of the True Shepherd there is something that has the proper ring. And the sheep will not follow another having a different voice—a different sound or message. In the [True Shepherd’s] sound is the chord of Justice mingled with those of Love and Wisdom and Power. All other theories and doctrines have no such power or harmonious sound as the glorious message of “good tidings” which the Father has sent us through his Son. The voice of the True Shepherd satisfies the longings of the sheep as nothing else can do.

The voice of the Lord is the voice of justice, of truth and of love, and all who are his sheep are expected to be able to discriminate between his message and the various false messages which more or less particularly represent the Adversary, who seeks to mislead the flock, using human instrumentality to accomplish the purpose. We have the Lord’s assurance that none of the true sheep will be satisfied with the false Gospel; it will not appeal to their hearts, and equally we have the assurance that the true sheep will be satisfied with the true Gospel, because it will satisfy their longings as nothing else will do. This is an important point to keep before our minds. It indicates to us the importance of becoming fully, truly, emphatically the Lord’s sheep, of entering into covenant relationship with him and thus making sure his protecting care and instruction. R. 4157 and R. 4732

See also p. 245

I am the good shepherd, and I know My sheep and am known by My own.

– John 10:14 –

The true Shepherd thus commends himself to all who are truly sheep, and such admire this spirit of their Master wherever they find it. That is to say, whoever are the true sheep will love and appreciate such a spirit and none other, and will thus differentiate themselves from those who are merely the followers of men, partisans, sectarians. The Lord knoweth them that are his, and they know him. The Lord appreciates those who thus recognize principle, and that class recognize, know, the Lord more and more intimately day by day, and find their love and devotion to him continually increasing. Our Lord's words on this matter are more clearly presented in the revised version, namely, "I know mine own and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father." This intimacy of acquaintance, this fellowship divine, is something which cannot be explained to others, but which is certainly appreciated by all the true sheep who know the true Shepherd, and who have been, under his guiding care, led to the green pastures and still waters and also into the fold for safety. R. 3527



Jesus Our Advocate

He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

– Hebrews 2:11 –

We are introduced to the Father at once, because our hearts are in the right condition—desirous of knowing and doing of God’s will to the extent of our ability and trusting in the merit of Christ’s sacrifice already applied on our behalf. When we consecrate our lives after the example of our Redeemer— “to suffer with him,” “to be dead with him,” that we may live and reign with him—the Redeemer, according to the Father’s Plan, becomes our Advocate, endorses our petition, applies his merit on our behalf and becomes guarantor for us, that we may be loyal to God, or die the Second Death. As our Advocate, our Lord does not stand between the Father and us, but stands with us as our Elder Brother, as Chief Priest over his own House of Priests. “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the Church will I sing praise unto thee.” —Heb. 2:11-12. R. 4584

If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

– 1 John 2:1 –

There is a wide distinction between the work of a **mediator** and the work of an **advocate**. The Great Mediator between God and man—The Christ of glory—will fill His mediatorial office for a thousand years and complete it only by the end of that time, when He will deliver over to the Father, fully reconciled, all who can be brought into harmony with the Divine arrangement. The work of an advocate is different, and according to the Bible, relates only to the work which Jesus accomplishes on behalf of the Church during this Age. The Church will need no advocate in the future. The world has no advocate now. “**We** have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.” It is Jesus **individually** who is the Advocate for us—“the Church, His Body.” He advocates our cause—first of all by imputing to us the merit of His sacrifice, thus making us presentable in the Father’s presence and acceptable as sons of God. Because of this Advocacy, we have received the Holy Spirit and are New Creatures in Christ. As New Creatures we still need our Advocate, because we **cannot** do the things that we would—perfectly. We need a Throne of Grace and an Advocate through whom we may maintain our present relationship with the Father.

Our Advocate is more than an advocate, more than a representative at the bar of divine justice, interested in our welfare and forgiveness; he is in addition the one who gave himself for us, who at Calvary finished the work of making a propitiation (**satisfaction**) for our sins. This is the reason why we may come “with boldness to the throne of grace,” not only realizing that God is for us, and that our Lord Jesus sympathizes with and is our Advocate, but also and specially realizing the merit of the sacrifice which he has already paid to Justice, and which he has made fully applicable on behalf of all who love and obey him, on application. R. 5928 and R. 2235

Jesus Our High Priest

The LORD has sworn and will not relent, “You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

– Psalm 110:4 –

A Priest, in the only true sense, is a mediator between God and fallen creatures, the object of such mediation being to restore and establish harmony on a legal basis. The office of the priest or mediator between God and man is to restore to perfection and consequent harmony with God a race of human beings condemned to death or already dead or dying. Hence the priest of necessity must be “mighty to save.” (Psa. 89:19.) He must have both the right and the power to recall the



dead to life, and ability to instruct and discipline, and thus to lead every willing subject back to the perfect estate from which Adam and the race in him fell. To secure this right he must first satisfy the demands of justice, which required the extinction of the human race; and these demands of justice could only be met by a corresponding sacrifice—a human life for a human life. The life of Adam and all in him could only be redeemed by another perfect human being. And so it was — “Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead.” (1 Cor. 15:21.) By the sacrifice of a perfect human existence is secured the right of the priest to restore.

But beyond the right or privilege of restoring, the priest must have the power, and power would of necessity presuppose his own everlasting existence. He must have power to create, since to restore to being that which had completely lost existence is to re-create it, and is a greater work even than the first creation; he must also have perfect knowledge, both of God’s requirements and of human necessities, as well as perfect ability to guide a race so destitute back to the glorious heights of perfection and blessed harmony and communion with God.

From these considerations it should be plain to all that our High Priest is truly a King, in whose hands absolute power is vested. And in looking back to the types God has given us we find Melchisedec, to whom we are cited as an illustration of this priesthood both by the Psalmist and the Apostle Paul. (Psalm 110:4; Heb. 5:5; Heb. 5:10.) They show that Melchisedec, who was a priest upon his throne, represented the Christ in glory and power, while in the Aaronic priesthood the special features of the redemptive sacrifice were shadowed forth—its perfection, its completeness, its acceptableness, as also the share which the Church has with Christ in that sacrifice. R. 3951

Having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest “ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK.”

– Hebrews 5:9-10 –

Who would presume to assume such a title? It belongs really and only to Jehovah’s Anointed. Even Jesus, “the Anointed one, did not glorify himself to become a High-Priest,” but he has “been declared by God a High-Priest according to the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb. 5:5; He. 5:10, **Diaglott.**) Jehovah honored him by inviting him to that position, and giving him all power to fill it. In harmony with God’s plan, not only has Jesus, his Anointed one, been chosen as the Chief, or High Priest, but the little flock, who follow him in sacrifice now, are called to be joint-heirs with him in the same honor. “If we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together.” Jesus alone is the Priest, but when redeemed by his death and associated with him in sacrifice now, and in divine power hereafter, we are counted in with him, and together with him constitute the great Prophet Priest and King promised, to liberate and bless the groaning creation—the Seed of promise. —Gen. 22:18; 28:14; Gal. 3:29; Acts 3:20-23; Psalm 110:4.



While the Aaronic priesthood furnishes typical illustrations of the sacrifices and sufferings of Christ and the blessings to follow, yet it did not completely illustrate the glorious, everlasting and unchangeable character of his priesthood during the Millennial age; and for this cause Melchisedec was presented as a type, that thus might be shown his glorious office of priest and king—a priest upon his throne. Here, too, the body of Christ is no longer shown as separate individuals, but as **one**, complete. In the work of sacrifice we have seen the head or chief priest and the under priests more or less separately sacrificing, as represented in Aaron and the under priests; but in the future glory all will unitedly share as represented in Melchisedec alone. R. 962

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.

– Hebrews 3:1 –

In worship also [the Jewish and Gospel dispensations] are pattern and reality. The pattern had a tabernacle into which the typical High Priest went every year to make a typical atonement. We have the true tabernacle, into which the true High Priest has entered for us. (Heb. 6:20.) And, as in due time the typical High Priest came out to bless the people typically, so the real High Priest will in due time come out to bless all the world.

There were under-priests there, who wore bonnets to indicate that they were not the head, or High Priest, while Aaron, their head, wore none. So we are told that the true Church, the body or bride of Christ, is likewise a priesthood, and that Christ Jesus is the head or High Priest of our profession. (Heb. 3:1.) As they offered typical sacrifices, so we may offer up spiritual sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 2:5. R. 600

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 6:19-20

Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.

– Hebrews 9:11-12 –

The Apostle is pointing to Jesus, ascended and in the heavens, as the antitype of the earthly high priests when they went into the “Most Holy” on the Day of Atonement to sprinkle the blood of the atonement upon the Mercy Seat. It will be remembered that on the Day of Atonement the high priest put on his linen garments (not his glorious garments) and with the blood of the sacrifice went into the Most Holy to present it as the ransom price—the atonement. While he was within the people had no evidence of divine favor resulting from his sacrifice, but waited on their faces in the dust, representing the prostrate and helpless condition of mankind in degradation, needing and waiting for the divine blessing. So, now, our High Priest is in the heavens, and we must not look for the blessings of restitution until all the work of atonement be accomplished, and until all the members of his body shall, with their Head, have put on the garments of glory and beauty, typifying honor, majesty and authority. Then the blessing will quickly follow, from the uplifted hands (manifested power), of our great High Priest; then, indeed, restitution blessings will prevail toward the whole creation now groaning and travailing in pain together. —Rom. 8:22. R. 2821

Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

– Hebrews 2:17 –

[Jesus] learned certain lessons which would qualify him to be the great High Priest for the world. Additionally, through the sacrifice of himself, this Chief of a Royal Priesthood **bought** the world, thus making possible the restitution of as many as will in due time receive the blessing of God at his hands, and at the same time making possible the invitation of some of them, some of the redeemed, to become joint-heirs with himself in his Kingdom. But if it was necessary that the Head of the priesthood should be tested in all points, and should learn obedience by the things he suffered, it was certainly not less necessary that all who would be members of the Kingdom class with him, after being redeemed by his precious blood, should be exercised, tried, tested, proven—“made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” So how plain it is, that the Head having been manifested in the flesh, seen of men, testified of angels, etc., all the members of his body should likewise be manifested in the flesh; because, as the Apostle declares, —“As he was, so are we in this world.” —1 John 4:17.

R. 3191

Both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: I WILL DECLARE YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN. IN THE MIDST OF THE ASSEMBLY I WILL SING PRAISE TO YOU.

– Hebrews 2:11-12 –

Our Lord himself tells us who are his brethren saying “Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother.” No sinner can measure up to this requirement; only the saints can fill the measure, and they, only by having their sins passed over, covered by Christ’s meritorious sacrifice, and having their **motives** accepted now, through Christ, as instead of their actual works. Only these, in whom the righteousness of the law is reckoned as fulfilled through Christ—who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, fully consecrated to God, are the brethren of Christ, brethren, too, whom he declares he is not ashamed to own, —brethren of **holy desires**, justified and sanctified.

Here, then, we recognize the Lord’s “brethren” —those who seek, love, and do the will of the Father in heaven, in preference to their own. Here we see how he was tested in all points like as **we** are, yet without yielding—without sin. Our Lord, holy, harmless, undefiled, was **like unto** these, his justified, sanctified “brethren,” who in him and through him are also recognized by the Father as holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

Yes, dear “brethren,” our Head, our Lord, was perfect as a man and gave a perfect sacrifice, without spot or blemish, for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world; and as our blemishes were laid upon him and he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, so his perfections were imputed to us so that we bear his righteousness. He, the holy, the pure one, was made a sin offering on our behalf, in order that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. —2 Cor. 5:21, **Diaglott**. For such an high priest, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, became us [suited us, was necessary for us]. He was tempted in all points **like as WE ARE**, and is able to sympathize with and assist us in our efforts to be dead to every worldly ambition, and alive only to the will of God. Wherefore, let us go to him in confidence and trust his every direction as to every step of the way.

R. 963

**This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.
– Ephesians 5:32 –**

When Christ (possessed of the full ransom-price, sufficient for the sins of the whole world) ascended up on high, he did not present the ransom-price on the world's behalf. On the contrary, in harmony with the Divine programme for the selection of the Church of firstborn ones, the appointed Mediator for that promised New Covenant applied the merit of his sacrifice, not **for the world** and the cancellation of its sins, nor for the sealing of the New Covenant between God and the world of mankind—he applied it “on our behalf,” for the sins of the Church, for the sins of consecrated believers. “He made satisfaction for our sins,” as, by and by in the end of this Age, he will use his blood, the merit of his sacrifice (passed through the Church) and apply it to Justice for the satisfaction of the sins of the whole world. —1 John 2:2.

Our Lord has various offices—Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator, Advocate, Judge. It was not as King that he appeared in the presence of God and made satisfaction for our sins—nor as Judge, nor as Prophet, nor as Mediator of the New Covenant. He appeared in the presence of God for us as the High Priest of our profession (or order)—as our Redeemer and Advocate with the Father. The delay in the application of the ransom-price to the forgiveness of the sins of the world, the delay in sealing the New Covenant with Israel and making possible through it and them the blessing of all the families of the earth; the delay in bringing in “the times of restitution of all things” under the New Covenant arrangement, is for a special purpose. It is in order to permit the election or selection of the Church, which is the Body of Christ.

This mystery, which few are able to understand, is that a certain class, justified through faith, are permitted to join with their Redeemer as participators in his sacrifice, his sufferings, his death, in order that they may be granted a share with him in his glorious work of the Millennial Kingdom—in the blessing of natural Israel and all the families of the earth under the provisions of the New Covenant—to be sealed or made binding and operative by his application of his meritorious sacrifice on the world's behalf. R. 4515

**Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.
– Hebrews 4:14 –**

Our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, has been proved perfect through obedience to the things which he suffered; and now, in the completing of his body-members, he stands not only as our **Redeemer**, to make us fit to stand trial under the high-calling; and also as our **Example** of how to overcome, but more: he, as our **High Priest**, makes good our unintentional shortcomings, and also stands ready to succor all his consecrated members—promising that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, because he will provide, for such, ways of escape.

We have now “a great High Priest, **that hath passed into the heavens** [one who is now on the most intimate terms and in the closest possible favor with the Sovereign of the whole universe],...and not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but [one who] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;”...“a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people;” and “in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.... If any man sin, we have **an advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” His very presence there in the glory of his enduring priesthood is the only appeal that is necessary on our behalf; for Jehovah himself loveth us—the dear purchase of the precious blood of his Anointed One (John 16:27); in fact, the whole plan of this reconciliation was of God, and is wrought out in Christ. Yes, praise the Lord!

R. 1490 and R. 1829

Our Father knows *all about* these experiences we are having, and *He* made the provision for our covering. He provided succor from our difficulties, that we might come in as members of the Body of Christ, even though imperfect. How precious and comforting the realization that our merciful High Priest is touched with the feeling of our infirmities! We should never, however, relax our vigilance because of this knowledge, or take any advantage of His mercy. But we rejoice that we have a Mercy Seat to which we can go as soon as we are conscious of our inability to be all that we would, and rejoice to know that we shall not be turned away. R. 5586

We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

– Hebrews 4:15-16–

[Our Lord Jesus] entered upon His priestly office at the time of His begetting and anointing of the Holy Spirit, which He received at His baptism by John. His work as High Priest still continues, and will not be complete until the close of His Reign of a thousand years. He is now a Priest on the highest plane, the Divine plane. Although at His resurrection He became so great, so highly exalted above mankind, nevertheless this great High Priest, the highest of all the House of Sons, is One who can be touched with the feeling of our human infirmities. He realizes our imperfection, our trials, our difficulties; for in the days of His flesh He had similar trials, similar difficulties.

When we realize that we are not always successful in resisting these temptations, we are to remember that we have a Throne of Grace, to which we may come and find mercy and grace to help in time of need. We may come to our great High Priest. The high priest of old held a very high and honorable position. Our High Priest is far more highly exalted. In considering this, we might at first be inclined to think of Him as very austere, not easily approached. But the Apostle says that we are to remember that this is the One who is our Savior, the One who died for us; and that although He is so greatly exalted and seated upon the Throne of Glory, yet His Throne is also a Throne of Mercy.

Coming to the Savior's Throne is not the same as coming directly to the Father's Throne. Jehovah's Throne is a Throne of **Justice**, but Jesus' Throne is a Throne of **Mercy**. Here we may obtain mercy if we fail to come up to the highest standard. We are to remember that our merciful High Priest knows just what kind of trials we have. If we have **tried** to do **our best**, and have been overtaken in a fault, He knows how to make allowance for us and to be very sympathetic. We are to remember that this Mercy Seat is for this very purpose—to show mercy to us.

Thus as we realize that in our temptations and trials the Lord is for us as He sees our earnest struggles and endeavors, it makes us the stronger in resistance another time. "He knows, and loves, and cares." Therefore we should never grow discouraged, but come to Him again and again, remembering that He is never weary of our coming and that He will not turn us away empty. R. 5965

THE BODY OF THE CHRIST



Rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

– Luke 10:20 –

While rejoicing with the disciples in their increased faith and joy, resulting from their activities in his service, and in the exercise of the gifts which he had bestowed upon them, our Lord cautioned them against thinking too highly of such miraculous gifts, and assures them that their chiefest cause for joy lay in another direction—in the fact that they had been accepted as sons into God’s family (John 1:12); in the fact that their names were written in heaven, as prospective joint-heirs with Christ in his Kingdom—prospective members of the body of Christ, to suffer with him, and thus attest their fidelity, and by and by to be glorified with him to all eternity. This is in harmony with the Apostle Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 13:1, where he assures us that the miraculous gifts conferred upon the early Church by the laying on of the apostles’ hands, such as speaking with unknown tongues, interpretations of mysteries, etc., are not proofs of spirit-begotten conditions; —that a greater proof is the possession of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love that never faileth. The more of the spirit of love we possess the greater is our likeness to God’s dear Son, our Redeemer, and the more will we be fitted and prepared for a share with him in his heavenly glories. R. 2675

**To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne,
as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.**

Revelation 3:21

Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

– Matthew 19:28 –

Our Lord’s object in selecting or ordaining these twelve was to so train and empower them, and to so establish their testimony concerning the truth of God, that, through them, such as hunger and thirst after righteousness might be convinced of the truth, and that from among such “a people for his name” (a bride for Christ—a Church) might be selected, trained and prepared for their exaltation as “joint-heirs with Christ” in his kingdom. This purpose in the selection of the twelve was implied in the prayer of our Lord just prior to his crucifixion (See John 17:6-9; John 17:20-21) —“I have manifested thy name unto the men [the apostles] which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them to me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words [the doctrine] which thou gavest me, and they have received them....I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine....Neither pray I for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which **shall believe** on me **through their word** [the entire gospel Church—to the end of the age]: that **they all** may be one [in heart and purpose and love], as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be **one in us** [and then he shows the ultimate purpose of this selection, both of the apostles and of the entire body of Christ, in the following words]— that **the world** [that ‘God so loved, even while they were yet sinners’] **may believe** that thou hast sent me” —to redeem and restore them. R. 1522

Then Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you’: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant, for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children. For You said, ‘I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.’ ”

– Genesis 32:9-12 –

The lesson to us is that a still greater promise being left to us—that is to say, the same promise having further developed and divided into two parts, and the higher or spiritual feature having been bestowed upon the Church of Christ—we who realize ourselves to be heirs of this same promise, and who now see its spiritual force and signification, have still more reason than had Jacob to humble ourselves before the Lord, to acknowledge our dependence upon him, to ask him for deliverance from the great enemy and from every foe to our best interests, and to plead his gracious promise, confirmed unto us in the death of Jesus our Lord. Ah, yes! the Apostle clearly indicates this when he says to us, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.”

—Gal. 3:29.

Jacob indeed will come in as one of the heirs of the earthly phase of the blessing, but the distinguished honor of sitting in the throne has passed to the Spiritual Israel, and we who are now called according to the divine purpose should be very alert to make our calling and election sure; and still more intelligently and more fervently should we, who have now been brought nigh by the blood of Christ, glorify our Father in heaven in respect to the riches of his grace, to which he assures us we are welcome upon a manifestation of the necessary faith and obedience. R. 3969

Scholars have pronounced this a perfect prayer as measured by the standard of the Lord's prayer; for it seems to follow the same general lines: (1) Adoration to the Almighty; (2) humiliation and self-effacement in the presence of the Lord; (3) petition for divine care and protection; (4) repetition of the divine promises as the ground for faith and hope. The various parts of the prayer thus indicated are: (1) "O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country and to thy kindred, and I will do thee good: (2) I am unworthy of the least of all the mercies and all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff [without other possessions] I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two companies [referring to his large possessions of flocks and herds and herdsmen, etc., which he had divided into two bands or companies]: (3) Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother; from the hand of Esau; for I fear him lest he come and smite me and the mother with the children [i.e. root and branch]: (4) And thou saidst I will surely be with thee, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." R. 3969

He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

– Revelation 3:12 –

Already Christ is the Prince of the Church, which in obedience to his call is seeking to walk in his steps, that they may be joint-heirs with him in the glorious Oath-Bound Covenant which he has inherited, just as the Israelites sought to follow Jacob and become heirs of the same promise.

By his faith Jacob obtained a rank, a standing, amongst his posterity with his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham, and in olden times no Israelite would appropriate any of these three names—they were considered too sacred for others than the originals. The changing of Jacob's name [to Israel] reminds us of other similar changes: for instance, amongst our Lord's disciples Simon was renamed Peter, and again Saul of Tarsus was renamed Paul, and this gradually led to the custom prevalent throughout Christendom of giving to every convert a new name, a Christian name, and this principle was eventually applied to children of believers and ultimately to all children.

But God proposes a new name for his people—his Church—the Bride, the Lamb's wife. As Jesus was our Lord's name and he became the Christ, the Messiah, so all who become members of his body come under his new name, and are recognized of the Lord and may be recognized of each other as members of the Christ (Rev. 3:12); and again, the Lord, prophetically speaking of Christ, says, "This is the name whereby he shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah," (Jer. 23:6); and again, speaking of the Bride of Christ, we read, "This is the name by which she shall be called, The Righteousness of Jehovah." (Jer. 33:16.) The name of the Bridegroom is given to his Bride—"They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:17.) And those who will get this new name, we may be sure, will all be called upon to demonstrate that they will be overcomers. They must all pass approval before the Lord for their faith and their persistency in holding to him and his gracious promise—the Oath-Bound Covenant. R. 3970

**'Behold, the days are coming,' says the LORD,
'that I will perform that good thing which I have promised
to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah:
In those days and at that time I will cause to grow up to
David A Branch of righteousness. He shall execute
judgment and righteousness in the earth. In those days
Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell safely.
And this is the name by which she will be called:
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.'
Jeremiah 33:14-16**

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

– Romans 12:1 –

It is after eleven chapters of argumentative, logical, beautiful, instructive, blessed reasoning that the Apostle reaches the crown of his argument, saying (12:1), “I beseech you **therefore**, brethren, by the mercies of God [presented in the previous eleven chapters] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” He is addressing the “elect” body of Christ, of which a part was being gathered from among the Jews and the remainder being made up from those called from among the Gentiles. These should know what are the terms and conditions upon which God hath “called” them; viz., (1) to suffer with Christ in this present time, and (2) to be glorified and reign with him in the coming age, to bless the world. These should know the reason for their sufferings and the character which God would develop in them, and without which they would not be “fit for the Kingdom.”

[This verse] is an exhortation to those already justified by faith in Christ as the Redeemer, and who are therefore “brethren” of the household of faith, to enter into the higher grace of sons of God on the spiritual plane and become joint-heirs with his dear Son and partakers with him of the divine nature. (2 Pet. 1:4.) The way to this exalted position is pointed out as a way of sacrifice—“Present your bodies a living sacrifice.” To do so is to do just what our Lord Jesus did, who said, “I came not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” It is to ignore the will of the flesh with all its ambitions, hopes and aims, however proper they may be in themselves, henceforth to devote all our time, our energies and our talents, be they many or few, to the doing of the Master’s work, so that we can say with Christ Jesus, it is my meat to do his will and to finish his work. (John 4:34.) And this consecration is even unto death, when, the course being finished, the reward is sure.

The very thought of such a Calling should cause us to bow our hearts in the dust before our God, realizing our great unworthiness of such stupendous grace—of bliss so transcendent! What can we render unto the Lord that can fittingly demonstrate our gratitude, our thankfulness, for so unspeakable a favor? Surely, the most faithful service we can give is but a very feeble return to Him who has so loved us, so blessed us, so honored us! R. 2213, R. 1586, R. 5855

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.

– Galatians 2:20 –

Brother Paul was not literally crucified but ended his course by being beheaded. 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 and self-control, my talents and powers, my rights and lawful ambitions as a man, are all pinioned and stopped by my consecration, so that having no will or plan or way of my own, I may be fully able to let the holy spirit or mind (will) of the Master dwell in me and rule my every act to his service—not so dead that I will 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, but I keep my body and its wishes under (1 Cor. 9:27.), subject to the will of God, saying as did the Master under similar circumstances, "Not my will but thine (Father) be done." As with our Lord, so with the Apostle Paul crucifying did not mean the crucifying of a sinful will, or sinful desires, plans, etc.; for he says "I am crucified **with Christ**," and elsewhere he calls it being "dead **with Christ**" and having "fellowship in **his sufferings**." So then if Christ's crucifixion was not the crucifixion of a sinful will, and desires, neither was Paul's; and neither are yours and mine as followers of the spotless Lamb of God, crucified with him.

As our Lord set aside and crucified his own will, and accepted of the Father's will **instead**, so we set aside or crucify our wills or desires, no matter how good and wise they appear to us, to accept of the guidance and direction of our Lord Jesus who, now glorified, delights still to carry out the Father's plan, and the grandeur perfection of which he can now **fully** appreciate. R. 960

You are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world.

– John 15:19 –

The Church is an especially called-out class. "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world," said the Master. "I have chosen you out of the world." Mankind in general are in a different heart attitude from those who come into the Church. It is only the minority who now hunger and thirst after righteousness. God in mercy keeps back the Truth from those to whom it would not in the present time be a blessing. This class that the Lord is now calling out from the world are "called to be saints."

The word saint stands for one who is holy. The word holy has the significance of the word whole—that which is entire, lacking nothing. God, who is holy, calls His children to be holy, saying, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:16.) But we were by nature unholy; hence His arrangement for our justification, our being made right, whole. The world in general will be made right during the Millennium. None is made right now in the actual sense.

Our Lord's interest in the world will be fully manifested in due time. He has already given his life with a view to the world's blessing—he tasted death for every man; but now in the present age his chief interest is in the Church, which is his body. The development of the Church is a necessary step in the divine plan before the blessing of the world in general can be accomplished. As it was necessary that Christ should come as the Seed of Abraham, so also it was necessary that the Church, his body, his Bride, should be developed as members of the same Seed before their work could be accomplished, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Thus the Apostle's words are clearly applicable to the Church: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and heirs according to the promise"—heirs of the promise that through you, as members of Christ, a blessing shall proceed to all the families of the earth. —Gal. 3:29. R. 5856 and R. 3914

Since the Apostles urged the church as **soldiers**, as a **priesthood**, as **disciples** or imitators, as the **body members**, as **living stones** of the temple, and as "a chaste **virgin, espoused** to one husband--Christ," we believe that all of these expressions were but variations of the **same** call, and to the **same** class, because during this Gospel Age there has been but **one**---the high calling; and all are "called in ONE HOPE of your calling." Hence these distinctive titles refer, not to different classes, but to the same. R. 399

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

– Ephesians 4:4-6 –

What was this one faith? The basis of it is stated by Paul, thus: "I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received [first of all—as a foundation truth or doctrine, upon and in harmony with which all other doctrines must be built], how that **Christ died for our sins**, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3-4.) "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.

This true gospel, this simple faith, easily understood and confessed by the weakest babe in Christ, must also be, and always, and equally, the faith of the most developed sons of God. This one faith (and not the endless ramifications and details of faith which lead out from it) Paul placed as a standard or test of all claiming the name Christian. All the consecrated who agreed on this one standard, or foundation truth, Paul counted as in and of the one Church. While each member was to grow in grace, knowledge and love, there would always be harmony and oneness in the faith and fellowship of the Church, if all growth were kept in line and harmony with this foundation truth.

When received into honest hearts, this simple gospel, the true gospel, will gradually open up and spread its roots of reason and its branches of hope in every direction, feeding upon the promises of God, building itself up as he designed, and grasping, as it progresses, the "one baptism" (See TOWER, June 15, '93) and every other feature of the gospel in its fullness. R. 1572



It is remarkable how fully the Lord has covered the whole range of illustration in describing the oneness subsisting between himself and his consecrated followers. He gives us an illustration from the mineral kingdom, saying that we are living stones built together upon him as the foundation and capstone, to be the Temple of our God. From the animal kingdom our Lord drew illustrations of this oneness, likening himself to the good Shepherd and his true followers to the sheep under his care, one with him in fellowship. From the vegetable kingdom he drew the illustration... — I am the Vine, of which my true disciples are the branches. From the family relationship he drew an illustration of the true husband and true wife, and their complete, thorough union of heart and of every interest. From the family again he drew another illustration representing the Creator as the Father, himself as the elder Son and all of his followers as brethren. From the human body we have another illustration, Jesus himself being the Head over the Church, which is his body, for, as the Apostle declares, we are members in particular of the body of Christ. R. 3544

Do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

– Romans 6:3-4 –

They who see the “high calling” of this Gospel age—to joint-heirship with Christ Jesus our Lord, as members in particular of the “body of Christ,” of which the Redeemer is Head and Lord—know that our attainment of that high honor depends upon our acceptableness as members in that body of Christ. (Rom. 12:1; 8:17,18.) They also know that no one is “called” or invited into this “body of Christ”—“the Church of the firstborn”—except those who already are **believers**, who own Christ as their Redeemer or Justifier, and who are therefore justified freely from all things by faith in his blood. Such, and not sinners, are invited to become joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs with Christ. Under the Law, the blemished of the flock were not acceptable on the Lord’s altar, typifying God’s rejection during **this** age of all imperfect offerings. Our Lord was the **actually** spotless, unblemished, perfect Lamb of God, sacrificed for our sins; and in inviting some to join him in sacrifice, and afterward in glory and honor, the Father accepts only such as are first made “whiter than snow,” and who, because of faith in and acceptance of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, are **reckoned perfect**, and hence are acceptable to God as joint-sacrificers. This is given as the true significance of water immersion. The **real** baptism, therefore, is this immersion into a sacrificial death with Christ; and the water immersion, though a beautiful figure which graphically illustrates the real baptism, is only its figure or symbol. While therefore we do not say that none will be of the “little flock” except those who have been **immersed into water**, as well as into the death of Christ, which it so beautifully symbolizes, we do say, that we do not expect to find in that “little flock” a single one who has **seen** water immersion to be the will of God, and who has refused to obey. Let us remember that obedience in a small matter may be a closer test than in a large one.

While the way of life will be made very clear to Israel and to the world, in the Age to come, it is made none the less clear now to the children of God who walk by faith and not by sight. It is shown to be, first, a way of faith; and those who now walk by faith are the true Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16; Gal. 3:29), to whom pertain the Covenant and the exceeding great and precious promises, in their largest fulfillment. Second, It is a way of entire consecration to God, even unto death, which implies the burial of one’s own will into the will of God—the presenting of self a living sacrifice. In harmony with these two principles—faith and consecration—we are taught to walk in newness of life, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minds, but circumspectly; “not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time”; not by sight, but by faith. —Rom. 6:4; 8:1; Eph. 4:17-18; 5:15,16; 2 Cor. 5:7.

We who are risen with Christ in the spirit of our minds should walk in newness of life while still in this mortal body and still amongst men; that we should look forward to the glorious change of the First Resurrection, when we shall be actually in the Lord’s likeness and see him as he is, sharing his glory and participating with him in dispensing all these blessings of life and healing to whosoever will accept these favors in the glorious Kingdom time which we rejoice to know is near at hand.

R. 1542, R. 4882, R. 3337

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. (KJV)

– 2 Corinthians 5:17 –

By believing in Christ, by accepting His terms, by becoming His disciples through full consecration, we secure forgiveness for the sins that are past, and additionally secure relationship with the Heavenly Father through our Redeemer, our Advocate. Now His acceptance of us is by and through the begetting of the Holy Spirit, and this is granted to none others than those who come by His appointed way.

Those begotten of the Holy Spirit are Scripturally styled “New Creatures in Christ.” To them, “old things have passed away, and all things have become new.” They have new aims, new objects, new hopes in life. To them, earthly things have no value, except as they can be used to glorify the Lord and to serve Him. Earthly learning, reputation, honor, titles, are valuable only as they can be used in some way to the glory of God—in the service of His Cause or for the benefit of fellowmen, especially those of the Household of Faith. To these, earthly prospects, political hopes and ambitions, etc., are nothing; for they have before their mind’s eye Heavenly prospects, which include joint-heirship with Christ in His Messianic Kingdom of a thousand years and, after that, additional glory and honor in the ages to follow.

These “new creatures in Christ Jesus,” sons of God and prospectively joint-heirs with Christ, are expected to receive of the Father’s spirit so fully (through the word of his grace) that they will be willing to suffer reproach for his cause and his truth, and like the Logos himself be willing to lay down their lives for the brethren, in harmony with the divine arrangement of this age, as living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable through Christ. And it is only upon condition that they suffer with Christ that they may hope eventually to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom and glory and power promised him by the Father. —Rom. 8:17; John 1:11-12. R. 5596 and R. 2409

You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.

– Romans 8:9 –

We are to remember that our relationship to one another in the Body of Christ is not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit; hence, as the Apostle declares, we know one another no longer according to the flesh, with its weaknesses, imperfections and ungainly and ungraceful natural tendencies. We know each other only according to the spirit, according to the intentions, according to the heart,—as “new creatures,” not as old creatures. (2 Cor. 5:16.) This will lead us to be very pitiful of one another’s imperfections of the flesh, so long as we have the assurance that the flesh does not represent our brother’s real self, his mind, his will. We are, therefore, to be gentle toward all, kindly affectioned one toward another, so that so far from desiring to wound one another, or to injure one another, or to devour one another with our tongues, we shall sympathize with each other, do each other good, and by words of grace and comfort, or of admonition and reproof spoken in love, may build one another up in the most holy faith—in the likeness of our Lord and Master. R. 2446

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you.

– 1 Peter 1:3-4 –

The expression, **begetting of the Spirit**, then, is used in the Scriptures to describe that personal experience by which God accepts the individual as a New Creature, and starts the new nature. This new nature subsequently prospers, develops, and if faithful will be born of the Spirit. The terms **begetting** and **birth** are used symbolically to represent the beginning and the completion of the New Creature.

As we have made a consecration of ourselves to God, our sins are all under the blood, and the new life has begun in us. We are under a solemn contract to see that the work of transformation steadily progresses. When the Father accepted our offering and our vows to Him, and granted us His Holy Spirit, He did not give us the full consummation of our hopes, but merely an “earnest of our inheritance.” Our agreement was to be dead to the world, dead to earthly things, and alive toward God. It is therefore for each of us to demonstrate in our words, in our actions, in our thoughts, that everything in this contract is bona fide on our part—that we **meant** every word of it. When we become children of God, our one ambition should be to prove our loyalty to God, our loyalty to our Covenant of Sacrifice. Was it not so with our Lord Jesus? Our Lord came into the world to be our Redeemer. But He was not the Redeemer when He was born, nor when He was thirty years of age, until He made His consecration. He was called the Savior from His birth, only in a prospective sense. He became our Redeemer in the real, the official, sense when He was baptized of John in Jordan, and the Holy Spirit came upon Him in begetting power. Then it remained for Him during the three and a half years of His active service to work out that consecration. Every act of life during that crucial period was the fulfilling of His Covenant of Sacrifice. He had covenanted to sacrifice His human nature with all its conditions and possibilities, in order that He might carry out the Father’s purpose. For this cause He came into the world, and He faithfully fulfilled His Covenant. His glorious reward was the Divine nature and the authority to execute all the Father’s great Program. R. 5394 and R. 5855

Let us all remember that all of the Lord’s special dealings with his people during this Gospel Age are with a view to developing them in character, not only good character, but fixed character. It is not sufficient that we accept Christ, nor sufficient that we should preach him to others. To be fit for the heavenly Kingdom we must develop characters in harmony with our Lord—gentle, yet firm; sweet, yet strong. This is signified in the terms of our discipleship. We are to copy our Teacher, who is also our Redeemer. We are to let his light shine. It is important that we see this fact. R. 4467

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature.

– 2 Peter 1:3-4 –

Jehovah God, “who only hath immortality” of himself, or “life in himself” innately, and of whom are all things, having created various orders of beings, angelic and human, in his own moral and rational likeness, but mortal and not of his divine nature, has declared that he designs a new creation,—an order of beings not only morally and rationally in his resemblance, but in “the express image” of his person and partakers of his own divine nature—a prominent constituent or element of which is immortality. —2 Pet. 1:4.

We who have been blessed with the richest favors of divine grace in that knowledge of divine truth which reveals to us the high privilege of becoming sons and heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for the called and chosen and faithful according to his purpose, have a never failing cause for deepest gratitude. Great indeed was the favor which revealed to us the hope of everlasting life as justified, human sons of God—of full restitution to the divine favor and likeness, as at first possessed by our father Adam. And great was our joy when first, by faith, we appropriated this precious promise and realized that legally, through merit of the precious blood of Christ shed for our redemption, we had passed from death unto life, and that in God’s appointed time the everlasting treasure with all its attendant glory and blessing would be ours. But beyond even this favor are the “**exceeding great and precious promises**” to those of this justified class who have been called, according to God’s purpose, to become the bride and joint-heir of his dear Son.

These exceeding great and precious promises contemplate the adoption of these called ones by the great Sovereign of the whole universe as his sons and heirs; as joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, the heir of all things: they shall be with him where he is and behold his glory; and they shall put off this mortality, and, like him, who is “the express image of the Father’s person,” they shall be clothed with immortality. So shall they be forever with the Lord, and see him as he is; for they shall be like him. Having overcome the world, they shall sit with him in his Kingdom, even as he overcame and sat down with the Father in his Kingdom. —Rev 3:21. R. 1879, R. 1281, R. 2154

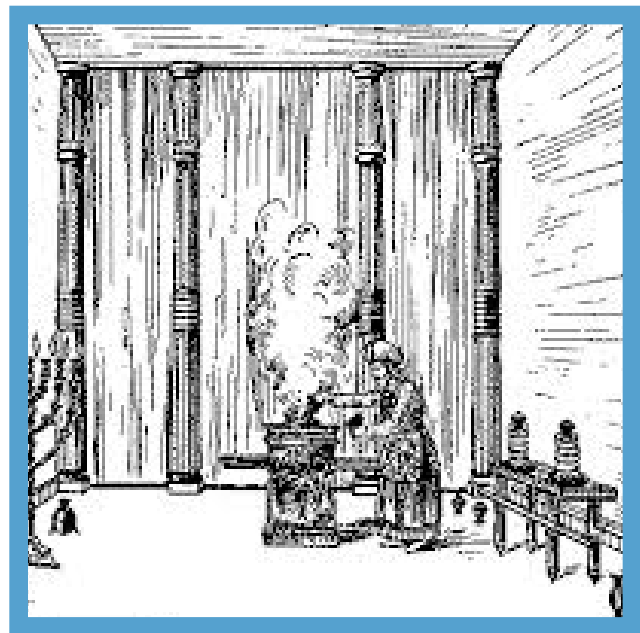
Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (KJV)

– 1 Peter 2:9 –

The privilege of this “royal priesthood” to know “the Secret of the Lord,” to comprehend “the deep things of God” hidden from others, was beautifully symbolized and typified in the privileges of the Jewish priesthood. When the Tabernacle was set up, with its beautiful golden furniture, lamp stand, table of shew bread, golden altar, etc., all symbolizing spiritual things, they were covered over, hidden, not only from the ordinary Israelite, but even from the Levitical “servants” of the Tabernacle, who were not even permitted to **look therein**. The privilege of seeing those typical secret things, reserved exclusively for the priests, thus typified “the royal priesthood” and their exclusive privilege of understanding the mysteries of God, his Secret.

This peculiar people is a new and chosen generation. They were first chosen out from among men, “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” (2 Thes. 2:13.) Or, in other words, having believed the message of salvation through Christ the Redeemer, and having gratefully accepted the same, and being earnestly desirous of perfect personal conformity to the divine will, and having, therefore, humbly submitted themselves entirely to God, they were chosen of God to be his peculiar people.

That which renders this people peculiar as compared with all other people in the world is a very radical change—a change of nature from the human to the spiritual. (2 Pet. 1:4.) This change of nature has been brought about by the power of the Truth, which leads those who are rightly exercised by it to a full consecration of heart and life to the will and service of God, even unto death. This change of nature is, however only begun in the present life, and consists as yet only of a change of mind and a consequent change of character and action in harmony with the new hopes, aims and aspirations generated by the “exceeding great and precious promises.” No wonder is it that a people actuated by such hopes and aims should be a peculiar people—a people separate from the world—in the world and yet not of it. R. 2209, R. 3621



We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

2 Thessalonians 2:3

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.

– Hebrews 10:19-20,22 –

We [now] have Christ as the Head of this new Order of Priesthood; let us realize our position as under-priests of this order. Our High Priest has entered into the true Most Holy. The evidence of this came in the Pentecostal blessing showing that the Father was well pleased with the sacrifice made by our Lord, and that all things were then ready to permit us also to come near to God, sharing our Redeemer's experiences, that we might later go to Him beyond the veil and share His glory. Seeing that God has thus made all these gracious provisions, and has accepted us as the House of God to take the place of the House of Aaron—and so much greater than his House—let us enter into the real Holy and Most Holy, “with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.”

Seeing, then, that we have confidence that God has made this arrangement, confidence to take the proper steps, and have presented our bodies living sacrifices, have gone through the antitypical consecration, and received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, let us begin at once the work of the new Order of Priesthood. There are great things to be accomplished: let us fully enter in with Him—let us become full participators in this work—in everything that God has for us to do. Let us come with true hearts, however, realizing how wonderful are our blessings, how precious is the provision of the covering of our Savior's merit. Let us be true and loyal to this Covenant into which we have entered with God.

Let us never forget that He who has begun this good work in us **changes never**, and that if we keep our hearts in harmony with Him, if our faith is still firm and clear in the great Atonement made for our sins, and we continually renew our consecration to Him, keeping our all on the altar of sacrifice, letting the Lord consume it in His own way, seeking not our own will, our own way, but **His will alone**, we have every reason to have full confidence that this good work in us will be finished, that we shall enter with joy into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord, and shall hear His blessed words of approval, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” R. 5424

**Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other.
I am God, and there is none like Me. Declaring the end from the beginning,
and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying,
'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.'
Isaiah 46:9-10**

It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments.

– Psalm 133:2 –

The word **Christ** signifies **anointed**. All who will be members of the Royal Priesthood will be anointed—not separately, but collectively. This was pictured during the Jewish Age by the installation into office of both the kings and the high priests of Israel. According to the Law, every king and every high priest must be anointed, else he could not serve.—Exo. 30:22-23.

The anointing which our Lord and the members of His mystical Body have received is different from anything else in the whole world. It is the anointing of the Holy Spirit, which is variously spoken of as the spirit of holiness, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of the Truth, and the Spirit of God. It is not the Truth, but the **spirit** of the Truth, it is not the Word of God, although it is in harmony with the Word; it is not holiness, yet it is in full accord with holiness. It is the spirit, the disposition, which is associated with a sound mind, with holiness, with Truth and with the Word of God.

Our Lord was set apart for a very high office. In harmony with the Divine arrangement, He is to be the great antitypical King and Priest—“after the order of Melchizedek.” During the Gospel Age, God has been setting apart those who are to be members of the Body of Christ. These are invited to be kings and priests unto our God—a Royal Priesthood. Consequently, when one is received into this Body, under the Headship of Christ, he comes under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This unction is from the Father in that He alone can give the recognition. It is from the Son in that we can come to the Father only through Him.

This is well illustrated by the consecration of the Jewish high priest. The holy oil was poured upon Aaron’s head, typifying the anointing of our Lord at the time of His consecration. The oil then ran down to the very skirts of Aaron’s garments, thus typifying the anointing of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. This descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Church was manifested at Pentecost.

What blessing we have received is the possession of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of our adoption into the family of God. This, however, is merely the beginning of the glory which God has promised to those who are faithful—merely the earnest. To have the Holy Spirit in us is to have the anointing in us. If we allow the Holy Spirit to operate in us, and ourselves faithfully co-operate therewith, the end will be glorious. Thus the anointing which we have received—the Spirit of Christ in us—is the hope or basis of the glory which we are expecting—a glory which is to be like that of our Redeemer—a glory which is above that of angels, principalities and powers—a glory which is next to that of the Lord. This anointing, this Spirit of Christ within us, is the earnest, or hope, or basis, of all that is coming. R. 5227

He shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat. So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place.

– Leviticus 16:15-16 –

Turning to the principal account of the sin-offerings in Lev. 16:1-34 we find the matter there most interestingly set forth, yet in a manner which none can understand except as the eyes of their understanding open to these things. Hence the Apostle prayed for the Church that, the eyes of their understanding being opened, they might be able to comprehend with all saints; and our Lord declared, “Blessed are your eyes for they see.” This spiritual sight, however, is granted only to those who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, in the secret place of the Most High, in nearness and fellowship with him—these alone may see that there were two sin-offerings on Israel’s typical Atonement Day—the bullock, which represented our Lord Jesus, and the goat, which represented the Church, his followers.

The value of these animals as sacrifices was typically represented in the amount of their fat, which was burned upon the brazen altar as a sweet incense to God—as a mark of the love and devotion of the sacrificed ones. And here the figure is beautifully appropriate, for the goat, which represents the Church, is a very lean animal, while the young bullock, which represented our Lord Jesus, had much fat, much zeal, much love, which gave incense before God. Furthermore, these two sacrifices were not treated as equals in any sense of the word: they were not offered together, but the bullock first as making atonement for the class represented by the goat. Thus it was necessary that Christ should die and pay the penalty for our sins, and that this should be accepted on our behalf by the Father before we could have any part or lot with him in Christ’s sacrifices; or, as the Apostle expresses it, “Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ,”—afflictions which Jesus’ sacrifice was so abundantly able to complete, but which he purposely left for us, in order that by participation in his sufferings we might also in harmony with the divine program be enabled to participate in his divine glory, his Kingdom.



A little while and all the sufferings of all the members will be at an end. There will never be any more sin-offerings for Adam and his race, no more burnings without the camp, no more walking in the narrow way of self-sacrifice. Thank God for the privileges brought to us in this way, and thanks be to his name also for the blessed assurances that the whole world shall, in consequence of divine favor thus bestowed, be brought into fullest opportunities for reconciliation to the Father—to the Jew first, also to the Greek and to all men. While in the type the sacrifices were offered for one tribe first and then for the other eleven, in the antitype we see this is much larger—that the one tribe represents the believers of this present Gospel age, and the eleven tribes represent the world of mankind in general, at the head of which will be natural Israel, the first to share the benefits of the New Covenant. R. 3917

The bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp. And they shall burn in the fire their skins, their flesh, and their offal.

Leviticus 16:27

For the bodies of those animals, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned outside the camp. Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate. Therefore let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

– Hebrews 13:11-13 –

The bullock was burned first and secondly the goat. (Lev. 16:27; Exo. 29:14.) The burning represented the gradual destruction of the flesh. Outside the camp signified ostracism, rejection of men, dishonor. The Apostle says that our Lord thus suffered outside the camp and that we should arm ourselves with the same mind, with the full intention of suffering with him as **his members**. St. Paul emphasizes this fact saying, “For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest **for sin** (offering), are burned outside the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate. Let **us go forth** therefore [as the Lord’s goat] unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach.” —Heb. 13:11-13. Notice that here the Apostle is pointing back to the typical sacrifices and comparing them with the **better sacrifices** of Christ and the Church; and that he exhorts us to share in Christ’s sacrifice—to recognize ourselves as members of the Lord’s goat class who go through experiences outside the camp similar to those which our Lord endured—he typified by the bullock, we by the goat.

The Apostle in our text is discussing sin atonement. He points us to one particular picture illustrating his subject. In the typical service the Jews made various offerings and sacrifices—thank-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings, etc. The sin-offering picture is the only one of these we are now looking at and discussing. The sin-offering for the nation was made annually, on the 10th day of the 7th month, which is styled the Day of Atonement. The offerings or sacrifices for sins, through which the Atonement or Reconciliation with God was effected, were made on this Day and lasted as valid for a year, at the end of which the whole procedure was repeated. The Apostle refers to this offering of bulls and goats year by year continually and tells us of the “better sacrifices” made by our Lord Jesus, which need no repetition, because actually canceling sin. We are to remember, however, that this one sacrifice of himself, which forever perfects all who come unto God through him, began with the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus in his own person and has been continued by him throughout this Gospel Age in the persons of his Church, his followers. These are invited to present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God and their reasonable service. As the High Priest accepts any of these sacrifices the consecrated one is begotten of the holy Spirit and henceforth counted as a member of the Body of The Christ—a member of the Body of the High Priest, who is doing the sacrificing. In this sense of the word the “better sacrifices” of the High Priest, which began eighteen centuries ago, when he offered up his flesh, continue in his followers as they offer up their flesh, which is acceptable in sacrifice, because of the High Priest—in his name, in his merit, as his sacrifice. In this sense of the word the whole work of the Day of Atonement is the day of sacrifice—though in another sense of the word, as shown by the type, it is divided into two parts—the sacrifice of the Head and the sacrifice of the Church, the members of his Body.



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Nothing in this, nor in anything we have ever written, controverts the idea that our Lord Jesus gave his own blood as our sacrifice and that he finished the sacrifice for us at Calvary in his own Body on the cross. Then it was, according to the Apostle, that the time came for his exaltation

to be the spiritual Head over the spiritual Body. He was not that spiritual Head in the flesh. It was after his resurrection that he became the Head of the Church, his Body. And the Church become his members only as spirit-begotten New Creatures, when their mortal bodies have been presented in sacrifice and accepted. In accepting us as New Creatures the High Priest accepts our sacrificed wills and then tests us respecting the accomplishment of it, counting the blood of our sacrifice as his own, because it was his that justified ours and made ours possible.

Are we asked what people Jesus would sanctify with his own blood? We answer, in the broader sense of the word, “All people—all who ever will accept sanctification, cleansing, reconciliation through him.” We read that he gave himself a ransom for all. It matters not that he did not apply it at once for all, but merely for us, the Church, the “household of faith.” The intention of his sacrifice was for all. This does not alter the fact that thus far the merit of Jesus’ sacrifice extends not beyond the “household of faith.” In due time through the Church his merit will extend to every creature.

R. 4384, R. 4426, R. 4428

This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him we shall also live with Him. If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.

2 Timothy 2:11-12

For 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 Timothy 2:5-6 –

The Apostle does not here refer to the Church, but to the world. Of the Church Jesus said, “Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” The Apostle tells us that Jesus is the Mediator between God and the world—men. He is not **mediating** now, but, as the Mediator is getting ready to deal with the world in the Father’s stead. He is now performing the **sacrifice of atonement**—accepting the willing offerings of believers and counting their sufferings as his own, even unto death. Shortly, with these **his members**, added, this great Mediator will present the blood which will **seal** the New (Law) Covenant. And then the blessing of Israel and all the nations by restitution opportunities will begin. Note the context. The Apostle is not discussing the Church, but the world—“kings and all in authority.”

When did our Lord become the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant or a mediator in any sense? Not when he was born the babe of Bethlehem! Not when baptized at Jordan! but when he had sacrificed to the finish and was raised from the dead to be a Prince and a Savior, as the Head of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham. That entire Seed will be the Mediator when all the sacrificing will be finished and the entire Church glorified.

Our Lord laid down that Ransom-price during the three and a half years between his consecration at Jordan and his death at Calvary; but he did not apply it at that time (but later when “he appeared in the presence of God for us,” the Church class), nor has he yet applied it for the whole world. He will, however, apply it for the world “in due time.” He is now imputing of his merit to a small class, so that they may be acceptable to the Father and have the privilege of participating in his sufferings —“filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his Body’s sake” —that they may have fellowship with him also in his great glory, in his great Office as Mediator between God and men.

Thus the Church will have a share with her Lord in the sufferings of the present time that she may be a part of the Sin-Offering. This does not imply that they will have a share in the Ransom-price, because one man is the Ransom-price, and **not many men**. The Church's share, therefore, as a part of the Sin-Offering is not to be confounded with our Lord's work as a Ransom-price. Even in the Sin-Offering the Church does not offer the Sin-Offering. The High Priest **offered the bullock**, and the High Priest also **offered the goat**. It is not that the High Priest offered the bullock and the under-priests offered the goat—as though we offer or sacrifice ourselves. The utmost that we can do is to consecrate ourselves to be willing sacrifices. It then remains for the High Priest to come forth and impute of his merit in order to make an acceptable sacrifice of this class represented by the “goat.” Thus it is seen that we do not share in the Sin-Offering in the sense as does our Lord. The High Priest's offering was of two parts, the “bullock” and the “goat”—the bullock representing his own person and the goat that of his followers.

The participation of the Church in the Sin-Offering for the world is not due to any necessity that has arisen; but owing merely to the Divine arrangement, which permits us to come in with Christ and share in his glorious higher nature and work. The matter of suffering is purely a matter of favor for the Church, and entirely unnecessary. Jesus' death alone is all that was necessary for the release of the world from the Divine sentence of death.



It is, as we see, highly important that we keep clearly in mind the difference between our work of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices and our Lord's work, as the great High Priest, in offering us sacrificially. The two matters are distinctly separate, as shown in the type. The goat was brought to the door of the Tabernacle and tied, picturing the Covenant of Sacrifice which we make. But the goat had not yet been offered and no one but the High Priest was qualified to make the sacrifice. The work of the High Priest in sacrificing the goat was the only sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word.

Even after the presentation of ourselves and the Father's acceptance, and after we have become New Creatures and are members of his Body, and, therefore, members of the Royal Priesthood, there is a continuous work—the presenting of ourselves daily. So the Lord Jesus has continued the offering all through this Gospel Age. He will finally complete this at the end of the Gospel Age, when the offering will all be finished as one sacrifice and the New Creatures will all be admitted as members of the glorified Body. R. 4437 and R. 4747

When He came into the world, He said: “SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME.”

– Hebrews 10:5 –

We must be careful not to read in what is not stated. It is not stated, “A body hast thou prepared me as a ransom-price,” but, “A body hast thou prepared me” (Heb. 10:5), “for the suffering of death.” (Heb. 2:9.) The **suffering of death** on the part of our Lord Jesus **constituted the ransom-price** for the sins of the whole world. But the Body, which is the Church, the Father prepares through justification for association with Jesus in the “suffering of death,” but this does not constitute the Church partakers in the ransom-price. Only one ransom-price was necessary, and that was one perfect man's death, and that had already been arranged for before the Church was invited to become joint-sufferers and joint-heirs with the Redeemer as His members. R. 4965

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of His body, which is the church.

– Colossians 1:24 –

Although the sin-offering was finished eighteen-hundred years ago by the sacrifice of our Lord, the Lamb of God, there is another part that is not yet finished; but in harmony with the divine plan our Lord is waiting for the Church, which is his body, to “fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ.” (Col. 1:24.) And looking all about us, in the light of the Lord’s Word, we may say that this work is almost finished too. Very soon the last member of the body of Christ will have suffered with the Head for righteousness’ sake: then the entire work of sacrifice apportioned for this Gospel age, or Day of Atonement, will be ended, and the Millennial age of glory and blessing, ruling and uplifting, will begin; ushering in for the world of mankind the great blessing, the **purchase-price of which was finished at Calvary.**

[Lacking], not because our Lord could not suffer enough for all, nor because his sufferings were not sufficient for all, but because he wished to have us with him to share his nature and his glory, and only by suffering with him and as his **members** could we be allowed to share his glory, honor and immortality. Let each dear follower in the Master’s footsteps keep patiently and perseveringly on in the way of self-denial until his course shall be finished—until the Master shall say, It is enough; “Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou has been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

As soon as the entire Christ (Head and Body) has been prepared for the work to be done, the work itself will be commenced. It is in full accord with this that the Apostle says that the prophets spake beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and of the glory that should follow.

Not that the sufferings of Christ were completed more than eighteen centuries ago, and the glory failed to follow; but that the sufferings of Christ, which began in our Lord, the Head of the Body, are being filled up or accomplished in all the members of his body, and, as soon as the last member of the Body has been made perfect through suffering, and been fitted for his share in the glory, then at once the glory shall follow, — follow the completion of the sufferings. (Compare Col. 1:24.) It is because there are some members of the Body of Christ still lacking to make up the elect and predestinated number, foreknown of the Lord (Rom. 8:29), that the glory has not yet been ushered in. And fortunate this is for us who hence still have hopes of attaining to this high calling of God in Christ Jesus, to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, to an inheritance incorruptible and never-fading, reserved in heaven for those who shall make their calling and election sure.

The **glorified** Church, Head and Body, will be so filled with the spirit of Jehovah —his wisdom, his love, his power—that they will be fully qualified to do all the great work which divine love and wisdom has purposed and arranged for, since before the foundation of the world. R. 3526, R. 2473, R. 4319, R. 2373

You will indeed drink My cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with.

– Matthew 20:23 –

No other lesson, perhaps, is more needed by the Lord's followers than the one of willingness to drink the cup which the Father pours—a recognition that the Father is guiding and directing in our affairs because we are his, as members of the body of the Anointed One. In these respects the consecrated children of God occupy a very different position from the world, with whom the Father is not dealing as sons, who are not on trial for glory, honor and immortality, and for whom, consequently, he is not now pouring cups of trial, testing, endurance etc. “The cup which we drink, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” —a share in his sufferings? “If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him we believe that we shall also live with him.” R. 2778

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body, for we all partake of that one bread.

– 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 –

In considering this question of the Apostle, “is it not a participation [common union] in the blood of Christ?” we should have a double thought before our minds: first, of the literal cup to which he refers, the literal fruit of the vine, which represents the blood of Christ; and second, the fact that we have the privilege of partaking of **His** cup, the **sacrificial** cup. We have the privilege of sharing in His death, sharing in His sufferings. This thought is borne out in other Scriptures—that Jesus is the Head of the Church which is His Body, etc. He is to be the great Prophet, Priest, King, Judge and Blessor of the world. According to the Scriptures, the great Head was glorified, after having endured the sufferings even unto death, after having laid down His life for the world. And He has adopted us as His members—members **now** in the flesh, to be His members shortly in glory.

It is **one cup**, though it contains the juice of **many grapes**; and it is **one loaf**, though made from **many grains**. The grains cannot retain their individuality and their life if they would become bread for the world. The grapes cannot maintain themselves as grapes if they would constitute the life-giving spirit. Thus we see the beauty of the Apostle's statement that the Lord's people are participants in the one loaf and the one cup. There is no other way by which we may attain the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to drink His cup, and by being broken with Him as members of the one loaf; by being buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus attaining with Him a resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, attaining unto the First Resurrection. We are to remember that Jesus said, “This do in remembrance of **Me**.” (Luke 22:19.) He did not say, This do in remembrance of yourselves—in remembrance of **your own** share in the sacrifice. We are to be dead **with Him**. We remember that we must share with **Him** in the sufferings of this present time if we would share in the glories to follow. The Father gave Him to be the Head—“God blessed forever.” —Heb. 3:1; Rom. 8:17-18; 9:5. R. 5341

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.

– Philippians 3:10 –

The Apostle Paul agrees with Peter's testimony [1 Pet. 3:18], that Jesus was quickened in spirit, saying that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God **with power**, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4); and again, the same Apostle, describing the first resurrection, in 1 Cor. 15:42-45, says: "Thus also 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 a natural [animal] body, it is raised a spiritual body." The Apostle elsewhere declares that the Church's highest ambition is to be a partaker in this first resurrection, which he denominates "his resurrection," the Christ-resurrection, the resurrection to spirit conditions, which came first to our Lord Jesus, and in which all of his body, his Bride, is to have a share. —Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:6. R. 2796

If children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

– Romans 8:17 –

As our Lord suffered in the flesh, so will also those who are members of the Church, which is His Body. (Eph. 1:22-23.) St. Peter admonishes us to expect this, saying, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same mind." (1 Peter 4:1.) It is the **flesh**, not the **New Creature**, that **suffers**. While we are suffering in the flesh, we are also being developed in the spirit.

The sufferings of this present time, [the Scriptures] assure us, are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be (future) revealed in us. (Rom. 8:18.) These sufferings, though they are to be unto death, are to be esteemed light afflictions and to be rejoiced in, because of the divine assurance that they are **working out for us** (preparing us for) a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory, as yet unseen. —2 Cor. 4:17. R. 5173 and R. 2413

Share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

2 Timothy 1:8-9

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.

– 2 Corinthians 5:18 –

[We], through faith, are already reconciled to God by the death of his Son; for, as the Apostle says, he not only reconciles us, but has committed unto us the ministry of reconciliation, the privilege, the service of bringing others into a reconciled condition, into harmony with God. It is their privilege to use this ministry **now** with such as have an ear to hear—thus following the example of Jesus and the Apostles. But the ministry of reconciliation now committed to the faithful for the believing ears, will be extended to the world during the Millennium. The entire work of the Mediatorial Kingdom, under the control of the great Mediator King and his associate kings and priests, will be a work of reconciliation. The great Mediator will reconcile—or meet the demands of Justice for the sins of the whole world at the close of this Gospel Age by presenting the merit of his sacrifice on the world's behalf, after that merit shall have been used to the full and laid down by the Church, which is his Body. Then during the Millennium he will mediate or deal with “men” —the world. R. 4515

The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations but now has been revealed to His saints, to them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

– Colossians 1:26-27 –

This is the Mystery—the selection of the Church as the Bride of Christ during this Gospel Age, to be sharers with their Redeemer in the sufferings of this present time, and also in the glory that shall follow. Hence the Apostle was very solicitous that he might have share in “His Resurrection,” The Christ Resurrection, “The First Resurrection.” Not until that “First Resurrection” is finished will the Seed of the Sarah Covenant be fully born. This is quite in accord with the prophetic statement, “Shall I bring to the birth (deliver the Head), and not cause to come forth (the Body).” (Isa. 66:9.) The intimation is that so surely as Jesus, the Head of the Body, was brought forth in the Resurrection, born from the dead, so surely will all the members of his Body share with him his glorious “change” from mortality to immortality, from earthly to heavenly nature.

The wealth of God's wonderful favor to the church of Christ is briefly comprehended in that one expression of the Apostle Paul, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Christ in you, dear ones, is the only Scriptural foundation for that good hope of the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. If Christ be not formed in you, then indeed is your hope vain, no matter how much truth or how many advantages you may possess. The object of giving the truth is not to satisfy mere idle curiosity, but to sanctify us wholly; and if it does not accomplish this result, the knowledge of it is only the stronger condemnation against us. Let all who aspire to the inheritance of the saints make sure that they have the Christ character formed in them, that the principles so notable in Christ's character are established in them. R. 4319 and R. 1273

THE MYSTERY HIDDEN FROM AGES

Wondrous mystery, long concealed,

Unto us has been revealed.

Herald wide the gracious story--

'Christ in you, the hope of glory!'

Christ in you the world's sore need,

Christ in you the promised Seed.

Canst receive it? Then thou art

Of the Christ, indeed, a part.

–R. 5072:241

HOW LONG, OH LORD, HOW LONG?

How long, oh Lord, how long
Shall weakness serve the strong?
How long shall Might make Right,
And darkness hate the light?
How long, oh Lord, how long,
Till Truth shall crush the wrong,
Till darkness turn to day,
And sorrow flee away?
How long till wars shall cease,
This turmoil end in peace?
How long the sin-cursed Earth
Await her second birth?
How long, Lord, must I feel
The proud oppressor's heel?
I'm weary of the night,
I long for morning light!
I long to see Thy face,
I long for Thine embrace--
How long, Lord, till I come
To my long-promised home?

Not long, my child, not long;
Be brave, be true, be strong!
The Day-star doth appear,
The Kingdom draweth near!
Look up, my child, look up,
The last drop's in thy Cup!
Trust where thou canst not see--
I soon will call for thee!

--GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT, R. 5991

Special Encouragement To The Body of Christ

Rightly understood we find the Bible to be a love story of surpassing interest. No earthly love story will compare with it. First, we have the Father's love for our race, which, originally created in his likeness, fell by disobedience under just condemnation. What a wonderful story of parental Love blended with Divine Justice is conveyed to us in the narrative of how God so loved the world while we were yet sinners, that he gave his Only Begotten Son to be our Redeemer, that he might restore again to Divine favor and blessing whosoever wills to return after learning of his loving provision.

Oh, what a relief it has brought to our hearts to know God as really and truly a God of love, who is not only willing to save unto the uttermost, but able to save unto the uttermost all who put their trust in him! and who is so willing thus to save that he has made abundant provision that every member of Adam's race must come to a clear knowledge of his grace and to a full opportunity—by obedience to the extent of his ability—to attain eternal life through Christ Jesus.

It does us good at times to look back and view, not only the horrible pit and miry clay of sin out of which Jehovah lifted us when he placed our feet upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, but also to remember his mercy toward us in the anointing of our eyes, now in the end of the Age, that we may see wonderful things in his Word; that we may realize how he has graciously brought us "out of darkness into his marvelous light," in permitting us to brush away the veil of superstition, misunderstanding and mistranslation which has befogged his Word, beclouded our understanding and bedimmed our view and appreciation of the great Father of lights, from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift. —James 1:17.

Our loving Father, having provided a redemption for all our race through Christ Jesus, did more: he highly honored and glorified our dear Redeemer as a reward for those things he endured faithfully through obedience to the Father (Phil. 2:8-11), and in addition to this, arranged to select a Bride and joint-heir in glory for his Son, our Lord Jesus. It was not an individual that was chosen to be the Bride, but many individuals, and yet in all, compared with the world, a "little flock," the "elect Church," called and in process of selection and perfection, to be "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife."



Of all the plots and peculiarities of love stories which have been conjured up by human brains, none will compare with this story of how Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her—redeeming her with his own life; and how, being rewarded with excellent glory by the Father, these who would be his companions, are invited to share his cross, his suffering, his death, and to be received up into glory with him, to share his love and his throne and the Father's favor. R. 4783

I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine.

– Song of Solomon 6:3 –

How much is implied in this statement, “My Beloved is mine”! We are reminded of the Scripture which declares, “He that hath the Son hath life”—eternal life. More than this, the Apostle assures us that those who have Christ, who can truly, Scripturally say, “My Beloved is mine,” are really possessors of “**all things.**” For since Christ is the heir of all things, if we have become associates with him, then, indeed, “all things are yours (things present and things to come) for ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” (1 Cor. 3:22,23.) If it lifted from us a great load to know that our sins were graciously forgiven through the merit of the precious blood, how much more of a load of care does it lift from us to know that we are vitally united with the illustrious Son of the great King of the Universe—the Son in whom the Father is well pleased and whom he has made his sole associate in the glory and dominion of the Universe.

Nor does this promise of blessings in Christ apply merely to the future. The glories and honors truly are not now, but by and by to be revealed; but the Bridegroom’s care, protection, provision and comfort belong to his betrothed even now, while we are in this tabernacle; so that while we are passing through the “valley of the shadow of death,” we need fear no evil, for he is with us, and his rod and staff comfort us. All who abide faithful to him, all who truthfully can say, “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved is mine,” have not only the promise of the life that is to come, but also the promise of this present life. R. 4784

“They shall be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels.”

– Malachi 3:17 –

These gems must all be found by God, who is making up these jewels. But having been found of Him, they are placed in the hands of the great Lapidarist, our Lord Jesus, that He may cut, polish and fit them for the glorious work of shining with Him in the Kingdom. Our Heavenly Father has appointed our Lord to be the great Master Workman in the preparation of the jewels.

In our text, the Lord Jehovah says that in that day of preparation of the jewels He will spare this class as a man spares his only son that serves him. He has not spared this class in the sense of relieving them from all suffering, for if they were thus spared they could not share the glory to follow this trial time. He did not spare Jesus, the Head over the Church, which is His Body. But He will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear. (1 Cor. 10:13.) He has an interest in them and a sympathy for them, and delivers them from those things which would prove too weighty for them. R. 5119



The secret of the LORD is with those who fear Him and He will show them His covenant.

– Psalm 25:14 –

Our text speaks merely of the fear (reverence) of the Lord, but, as we have seen, this reverence **continued** leads into the very deepest work of grace obtainable; —to a fullness of consecration to the Father’s will and service. It is of this class who fear (reverence) the Lord that we read,— “They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared [reverenced] the Lord, and that thought upon his word [esteeming his Name, his Honor, his Will above any earthly, sectarian name or work]. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them [they “shall be accounted worthy to escape” the severity of the great time of trouble with which this age shall end], as a man spareth **his own son** that serveth him.” These who reverence the Lord, in this full and Scriptural sense, are surely the Lord’s “elect,” “the body of Christ,” the “overcomers,” the “little flock,” the “royal priesthood,” who shall reign with Christ, and with him bless all the families of the earth in due time.

Our text adds, “He will show **them** his covenant.” This is stated as though it were a very important matter to see or clearly understand God’s Covenant: and it is an important matter, for God’s Covenant is really the key to the entire divine plan. What God promised to Abraham in the Covenant, “In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,” included directly and indirectly all the riches of divine grace. Yet, how few see this. We do not say how few of the world see this, for we should not expect any appreciation of the divine Covenant on the part of “them that are without.” But we say, How few of those who have named the name of Christ, and nominally stand related to spiritual Israel—how few of these know or care anything whatever about the divine Covenant.

R. 2209

If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

– Romans 8:11 –

The Apostle, arguing that our adoption into God’s family, our begetting to newness of heart and mind, and our acceptance thus as members of the body of Christ, while it means, first of all, that the body is ignored and reckoned as **dead**, because of sin, and only our spirits or minds are reckoned righteous and alive, the beginning of our eternal existence, nevertheless this good condition is not to be considered the limit of our ambition and attainment in Christ-likeness. On the contrary, we are to remember that the spirit of God is powerful: that in the case of our Lord Jesus it was powerful enough to raise him from the dead; and as we become more and more imbued with and controlled by the holy spirit of God in our hearts, in our minds, divine power will come gradually to us through this channel of the holy spirit, which will permit a figurative raising of our mortal bodies from their death-state into activities of spiritual life, in the service of the Lord. The Apostle affirms (Rom. 8:11) that if we really have the Spirit of God in us—unless we quench it or put it away from us—it will quicken our mortal bodies, make them alive toward God, active in growing into his likeness and fruitful in Christian graces and activities. R. 2721 and R. 4808

Gather My saints together to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.

– Psalm 50:5 –

As the Psalmist expresses it, [this class] includes all those who have made a covenant with God by sacrifice (Psalm 50:5)—all the consecrated and faithful children of God, however young or weak they may be, whose hearts are fixed firmly and resolutely to be true loyal and obedient children by his assisting grace.

To be numbered among the people of God is a very great privilege; but it means much more than many seem to understand—much more both on their part, and on God’s part. On their part, it signifies, not merely a name to live, in some great organization which bears the Christian name, but that they have become sons and heirs of God through Christ, that they have fully consecrated themselves to God to follow in the footsteps of his dear Son, that they have renounced the vain pomp and glory of the world and have solemnly covenanted to live apart from its spirit, ambitions, hopes and aims; and not only so, but that, in pursuance of that covenant, they are striving daily to be faithful, and meekly to take up their cross and follow their leader and head, Christ Jesus.

On God’s part it signifies the fulfillment of all his gracious promises to such through Christ, both for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. It signifies that in the present life we have his fatherly love, care, discipline, counsel, teaching, protection and encouragement to the end, and that afterwards we shall be received into his glorious presence and everlasting rest and joy and peace. Oh, how blessed to be the people of God! even in the present life the reward of his favor is beyond computation. Through all the age God has permitted his people to be scattered as sheep in the midst of wolves, and as wheat in the midst of tares; but now the harvest of the age is come, and their gathering together unto him is due.

As Christ redeemed us by laying down His life as a willing sacrifice, so let us have this same mind, this same disposition, this same will. This is the special Covenant of the Church—the Covenant of Sacrifice. (Psalm 50:5.) This is the Covenant which our Lord made with the Father, and we are to follow in His footsteps. R. 1788 and R. 5643

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

– Hebrews 10:23 –

We confess to men that we have a faith that reaches beyond the present life, a hope that “entereth into that within the veil,” whither Christ, our Forerunner, has entered for us. We confess our hope that we shall have a part in His resurrection; that “we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and like Him be spirit beings, see Him as He is and share His glory on the Divine plane. We confess that we hope with Him to be instruments in the Father’s hands, bringing life and joy and blessing to all the world of mankind, the living and the dead; that we hope to uplift them from death, to raise them from all the sin and blight and sorrow and tears that have oppressed them for these six thousand years. Truly ours is a wonderful hope! Who would not rejoice to tell it!

Hence everything depends on our holding fast to this faith which we have professed, without wavering, without harboring any doubts and fears; and the basis of our faith in our ultimate triumph is the assurance that “He is faithful that promised.” While the Lord tells us that there is nothing in ourselves that we can depend on, He assures us that His grace is sufficient, that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. We have only to lay hold upon it. If therefore we hold fast to our faith, we may obtain all that God has promised us. He will be faithful; He will not disregard His promises; He will do all that He has said. R. 5497 and R. 5698

He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress. My God, in Him I will trust.”

– Psalm 91:1-2 –

We thus place ourselves under the Divine protection when, having come to a knowledge of God’s willingness to accept us as His children, we gratefully accept the invitation and approach in His appointed way, through Christ our Redeemer, and consecrate ourselves fully to His service. Such may sweetly rest in the precious promises of God, all of which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. (2 Cor. 1:20.) The world does not see the overshadowing wings of Divine protection, but the faithful have a blessed secret realization of it. Praise the Lord!

“I [Christ Jesus, whom David here, as elsewhere, personifies, and who thus addresses His Body, His Church] will say of Jehovah, He is My refuge and My fortress, My God; in Him will I trust, that He will surely deliver thee from the snare of the Fowler and from the noisome pestilence”—from the deceptions of Satan, into which all those not protected shall stumble; for our Lord said that so subtle and deceptive will they be that, if it were possible, they would deceive “the very elect.” But this is not possible; for those who are making their calling and election sure abide under the protection of the Almighty. Such shall be delivered, not from the destructive pestilence of physical disease, but from the moral and spiritual pestilences of destruction—from the sinful propensities of the old nature, which in unguarded moments are liable to assert their mastery and overwhelm the souls of those who are not abiding under the secret protection of the Most High. R. 4925

He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU NOR FORSAKE YOU.”

Hebrews 13:5

Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

– 1 Peter 5:7 –

God is the most careful Being in the Universe, we may be sure. He is not careful, in the sense in which the word is used in our text—in the sense of worry and unrest of mind—but He is care-full in the right and proper sense. There are cares that come to the Lord’s people because they are harassed by the Adversary. These experiences the Lord permits for the very purpose of leading His people to cast their care upon Him, of bringing them closer to Himself, of teaching them patient endurance, of showing them more fully their need of Him, their utter helplessness and wretchedness without Him.

But worries and frettings—anxieties that would hinder us in the Lord’s service, that would rob us of our peace in the Lord—should be dropped, not carelessly, however, but intelligently, with the thought that Jesus, our great Burden-bearer, has invited us, yea, urged us, to cast all our care—all that would disturb our peace—upon Him. He will make our burden light and ease our tribulations. This is a rest of faith, and cannot be attained otherwise than through faith in His love, faith in His promises. R. 5509

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

– Philippians 4:7 –

If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose.” (Rom. 8:28.)

This peace can come only to those who have given themselves unreservedly to God—their time, their talents, their influence, their life, their **all**. These have a peace that none others can know. This peace of God rules the heart even amid turmoil and trouble; it is an inward tranquility and rest which is the direct result of a close, personal relationship of the soul with God. It is the peace of God because it is a peace that God only can give, a peace which only His very own can fully know.

R. 5879 and R. 5432

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL DAY LONG. WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

– Romans 8:35-39 –

It was this strong persuasion, this confident faith, of the Apostle that gave him such joy in the midst of all his tribulations. His faith laid hold upon the promises of God with a strong and steady grasp, and love and gratitude impelled him to prompt obedience to the will of God and ardent zeal in his service; and evidently the Lord’s promise was fulfilled to him in the abiding presence of Father and Son with him at all times and under all circumstances.

This blessed privilege is ours also, if by faith we enter fully into the Lord’s will and favor. And with a blessed realization of the abiding presence of our heavenly Father, and our Lord Jesus at all times, and of their love and favor, and a faith that lays hold of all the exceeding great and precious promises of God, what soul may not rejoice and be glad, even in the midst of deep sorrow or great tribulation? In the Lord’s presence, no matter where we are, is fullness of joy. Let us cultivate the Lord’s acquaintance more, drawing near to him in prayer, in the study of his precious Word, in meditation upon all his goodness, his providential care, the marked manifestations of his grace in our own individual experiences, and his precious promises which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Thus “draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you” (James 4:8), he will manifest himself to you and take up his abode with you. R. 1948

He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

– 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 –

While it was not proper to remove the burden from the Apostle in answer to his prayer; while God saw a special way in which this thorn in the flesh would be specially helpful to him in the development of the holy Spirit, nevertheless his prayer could receive an answer still more effective, still more blessed, in a different way. Instead of removing the difficulty, the Lord promised the more grace, the more strength, the more endurance to meet the difficulty, to overcome it, to compensate for it. This was really much better for St. Paul in every way than if his prayer had been answered. We do not know, neither did he know, how necessary to the preservation of his humility and usefulness in the service was that “thorn in the flesh.” We may know assuredly, however, that the giving to him of **more grace** was the greater blessing; because the grace of the Lord is helpful in all things, in all of life’s interests, while the taking away of the thorn would have been merely a relief in the one line. No wonder the Apostle, when he understood the situation, cried out, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

The Lord has already told us in His Word that we are to rejoice even under tribulation; for tribulation, rightly received, will work out for us a “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” So while the Lord does not promise us that we shall **escape** trouble, He does promise that **with** the trouble He will give His children consolation of heart, sustaining grace, that will enable them to rejoice in the midst of their tribulation. (2 Cor. 4:6-18; 12:9,10; Isa. 43:1-2.) This was exemplified in our Lord Jesus and in the Apostles. Paul and Silas were able to sing praises to God in prison with their feet fast in the stocks and their backs bleeding from the whippings which they had received. They could rejoice in tribulation for Christ’s sake.

There have been blessed lessons for all of the Lord’s dear people throughout the Gospel Age in these experiences of St. Paul. We have various thorns in the flesh, various difficulties, various trials; some of them mental; some physical; some well understood by others; others unknown except by ourselves. What a comfort it has been to many to have the Lord’s assurance that what trials and difficulties he does not remove from us, he permits for wise and loving purposes. These, he assures us, will all work together for our good. Of these he declares, “My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness.” R. 4432 and R. 5757

Painful and dark the pathway seems

To distant earthly eyes;

They only see the hedging thorns

On either side that rise;

They cannot know how soft between

The flowers of love are strewn,

The sunny ways, the pastures green,

Where Jesus leads His own.

--R. 5913, p. 188



For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

– Isaiah 57:15 –

Besides being very great and lofty, our God is particularly sympathetic towards those who are of a broken and contrite heart, whose spirit is humble, who realize that they are imperfect, who desire to be in accord with Him, and to dwell in holiness. To such He is ever near—to revive the spirit of the humble, to give them strength. He will not trample them into the dust, as many an earthly potentate has done to his subjects, but will assist them in the right way, and revive the heart of the contrite. These are to know that our God is a God of sympathy, compassion and love, who takes pleasure in reviving their hearts and in bringing them back into harmony with Him, if they are willing to be led.

There is a difference between a broken and a contrite heart. A heart is broken when it is bowed down with grief and sorrow; a heart is contrite when it has a quiet, deep, continual sorrow for acts not in harmony with righteousness. A broken will is not necessarily the same; for there are those whose wills are broken, but who are not submissive to the Divine will. To be repentant is to be thoroughly submissive to the Divine will, and implies a change of mental attitude toward sin. This humble, discouraged condition becomes a very favorable one if the person will seek Divine assistance, if he will become submissive to the Lord and ready to do the Divine will. Such will surely receive the blessing of God; for the Lord is very nigh to every one who is broken-hearted. The way to full consecration would be very short to him.

If such as be of contrite heart will be submissive to the Lord, He will save them from their difficulties and bring them into a large place, as the Prophet David states. (Psalm 18:19.) A just man will not fall into sin. The very most that could happen to him would be to stumble. There are various causes for stumbling. But if the heart is right, the man will rise again; for the Lord will show him that he has made a mistake and will point out the way to him by which he may recover himself. If he is a lover of righteousness, he will desire to press on toward that which is right, just, approved of the Lord, even if he should stumble many times.

Only the humble-minded can really appreciate their own condition. God not only will revive their spirit, but is willing to lift them up and to make them again sons of God, with all that this implies of blessing. He has this attitude toward the humble and contrite in the present time, and He has always had this spirit toward the humble and contrite ones. —Psalm 37:23-24; Pro. 24:16. R.5217

He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

– 1 Thessalonians 5:24 –

No sinners are called to have part in this "high calling, which is of God in Christ Jesus." True, Jesus called "sinners to repentance"—so does the word of God, and all his children seek to bring men to repentance and faith in Christ and consequent justification. But only the justified ones are called to be "kings and priests unto God, and to reign on the earth." This being true, that none are called to the high calling except the justified ones, the fact that you know of your justification may be the proof to you that you are one of those whom God has "called" to spiritual life and joint-heirship with Jesus. What a blessed privilege to be called with such a high calling. Now do you realize that you are called to be a member of the Bride of Christ? Then remember who called you—God; and that "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." (1 Thes. 5:24). Our Father mocks none with a call which they cannot attain to. His grace is sufficient for us. R. 200

We do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

– Hebrews 4:14-16 –

Our Lord, the Captain of our salvation, has been proved perfect through obedience to the things which he suffered; and now, in the completing of his body-members, he stands not only as our **Redeemer**, to make us fit to stand trial under the high-calling; and also as our **Example** of how to overcome, but more: he, as our **High Priest**, makes good our unintentional shortcomings, and also stands ready to succor all his consecrated members—promising that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear, because he will provide, for such, ways of escape.

When we realize that we are not always successful in resisting these temptations, we are to remember that we have a Throne of Grace, to which we may come and find mercy and grace to help in time of need. We may come to our great High Priest. The high priest of old held a very high and honorable position. Our High Priest is far more highly exalted. In considering this, we might at first be inclined to think of Him as very austere, not easily approached. But the Apostle says that we are to remember that this is the One who is our Savior, the One who died for us; and that although He is so greatly exalted and seated upon the Throne of Glory, yet His Throne is also a Throne of Mercy.

Although our Lord taught us to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and again to pray, “Our Father which art in heaven,” and although the Apostle said, “I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Eph. 3:14), nevertheless the general sentiment of Scripture seems to imply that there will be nothing wrong in our addressing a petition to our Lord Jesus direct if any so desire at any time. As the head of the body it is but the appropriate thing that, as every member of the natural body makes known its desires, its petitions, to its own head, so the Church, the body of Christ, should be permitted to address him, and thus we read that the apostles worshiped the ascended Jesus—they recognized his greatness and dignity and honor as the Messiah, the Son of the living God, the Redeemer of the world, who in due time shall come and receive his faithful to himself and establish his Kingdom for the blessing of the world. The Lord’s own words are appropriate here: he says, “That all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.” —John 5:23.

Coming to the Savior’s Throne is not the same as coming directly to the Father’s Throne. Jehovah’s Throne is a Throne of **Justice**, but Jesus’ Throne is a Throne of **Mercy**. Here we may obtain mercy if we fail to come up to the highest standard. We are to remember that our merciful High Priest knows just what kind of trials we have. If we have tried to do **our best**, and have been overtaken in a fault, He knows how to make allowance for us and to be very sympathetic. We are to remember that this Mercy Seat is for this very purpose—to show mercy to us.

Thus as we realize that in our temptations and trials the Lord is for us as He sees our earnest struggles and endeavors, it makes us the stronger in resistance another time. “He knows, and loves, and cares.” Therefore we should never grow discouraged, but come to Him again and again, remembering that He is never weary of our coming and that He will not turn us away empty. R. 1490, R. 3910, R. 5965

BEYOND THE VEIL

**These stammering lips, that now
So vainly strive to speak Thy praise --
Beyond the veil
Shall make the heaven of heavens resound
Through endless days.**

**These yearning eyes, that strain
To catch by faith a glimpse of Thee --
Beyond the veil
Shall see Thee as Thou art through all
Eternity.**

**These trembling hands, these feet,
That seek to serve so earnestly --
Beyond the veil
Shall for Thy Kingdom's glorious work
Empowered be.**

**And this poor, throbbing heart,
That cannot now unfold its love --
Beyond the veil
Shall bloom and shower its fragrance through
The heaven above.**

**My soul, that neither seeks
Nor findeth here its perfect rest --
Beyond the veil
Shall in Thy likeness wake and be
Forever blest!**

--GERTRUDE W. SEIBERT, R. 5050

In Summary

He who has the Son has life. He who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

– 1 John 5:12 –

Now is the opportunity for coming into relationship with him as his Bride and joint-heir. Blessed are we whose hearts of understanding and ears of appreciation have recognized this grand opportunity, so that we have been glad to accept the Lord's proposition at the cost of every earthly interest. Surely the faithful shall be like him and see him as he is and share his glory. Then in the time of his presence the world of mankind in general will be granted an opportunity to see and to hear and to accept of divine mercy in him—not by becoming the Bride, for that class will have then been filled, but they will be granted the privilege of coming into relationship with the Christ as children, receiving of his life, being begotten again to restored life—to a restitution of all that was lost in the first Adam and restored in the second Adam. He that hath such a hope in him may well purify himself and strive to come into relationship with Christ, and thus to as quickly as possible attain to the joys and blessings of the divine favor. R. 3925

You were bought at a price.

– 1 Corinthians 6:20 –

God wishes us to learn very thoroughly the lesson of the “exceeding sinfulness of sin,” of its gall and bitterness, and of the hopelessness of any deliverance except that which He provides. All who come to realize the true situation, and to feel the bondage and need for deliverance, may thus see that the only hope is in God. If they reflect that it was God Himself who pronounced the sentence of death, and that He could not annul His own sentence nor transgress His own laws, let them reflect also that as He has infinitely superior power to ours, He has also superior wisdom; and that He may know how to accomplish that which to us would seem an impossibility. And this is the case. He has provided the way, which all mankind will see in Jehovah's own good time, now very near.

All along through this Gospel Age there have been some who have gladly owned themselves the bond-slaves of the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ. These precious souls rejoice to acknowledge and to avail themselves of God's gracious and loving arrangement through His Only Begotten Son—the Ransom given on Calvary. They are glad to recognize that they are “bought with a price,” and are “not their own.” And as they learn of their unspeakable privilege of joining with our Lord Jesus in His sacrifice, of following in His footsteps even unto death, they accept His terms with rejoicing and thankfulness. These leave the world and all to follow Jesus, and if they abide faithful unto death, they shall share with their Lord in all His glorious spiritual inheritance. The price has been furnished for man's full deliverance; and although thus far this price has been made applicable to only the few, yet its application for all is soon to be made. R. 5859

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

– Hebrews 13:8 –

This statement would not identify our Lord with His previous condition; for in His pre-existent state, He was not Jesus. He was called Jesus at His birth. He became Jesus Christ at His baptism. “By His knowledge shall My Righteous Servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.” (Isa. 53:11.) Our Lord began to bear the iniquities of the world at His consecration, and finished so doing at His crucifixion. Since then He has been reckoning certain persons to be members of Himself. R. 506

According to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

– 2 Timothy 1:9-10 –

God’s purpose was to make a “**new creation**,” of his own nature—the divine nature—of which new creation his Beloved Son, our Lord, was to be the chief or head, next to himself. God’s purpose was that this new order of beings should be selected from among the human order; not that the human family had specially pleased God in works, or in any other manner had **merited** this honorable preference; but of his favor he purposed it so. And it is in the carrying out of this purpose that our Lord Jesus has already been manifested, and that by his **obedience** he has not only secured to himself the Father’s favor and his own exaltation to the divine nature and glory and honor, but by the same act of obedience, even unto death, he has opened the way to two things; viz., **life** and **immortality**.

Life, everlasting life, is opened up to the world in general; and each member of the race may secure it by conformity to the terms of the New Covenant: and immortality is brought to light for the special class, the foreordained Church, which, according to God’s purpose and wonderful favor, is now being called, and tested, and selected, for participation in the divine nature and association in the divine plan, as heirs of God and **joint-heirs** with Jesus Christ, their Lord and Redeemer. R. 1641

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

– 2 Corinthians 4:17 –

The Gospel Message which Jesus and the Apostles taught was expressed in our Lord’s prayer: “Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, even as it is done in Heaven.” (Matt. 6:10.) The Apostles exhorted the people to prepare for the Kingdom of God’s dear Son and to accept the invitation to become members of the Bride class. The parables of Jesus, His sermons, and the teachings of the Apostles abound with the thought that Messiah’s Kingdom will be the great panacea for all the ills of the world; and that the Church, if found faithful, will share her Master’s glory, honor and immortality. It was because St. Paul had this glorious hope before him, he declares, that he was willing to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ and to count all his afflictions and sufferings for Christ, his sacrifice, but light afflictions. Because of these hopes, because of this deep-seated faith, he counted all earthly prospects as valueless in comparison, and willingly sacrificed his fame, his family position and his Roman citizenship, and endured stripes, imprisonments, buffetings and derision.

—Phil. 3:7-11; 2 Cor. 4:17; 11:23-28. R. 5850

To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

– Revelation 3:21 –

Blessed are the overcomers! What a reward is this which is held out as an incentive and inspiration to urge us on to noble and heroic effort! —to reign with Christ, to be his bride and joint-heir, his beloved and confidential companion through all eternity, and to be partakers of his divine nature and glory. These promises are freighted with an “exceeding and eternal weight of glory,” which “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man; but God hath revealed it unto us [brought it within the range of our appreciation] by his spirit.” The words sound hollow and meaningless to those who have no appreciation of spiritual things, but to the consecrated children of God who are faithfully striving to meet the conditions upon which the fulfillment depends, and who have therefore a good hope, they are exceeding precious, and fill their hearts with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

But between the present time and the realization of the promises there lies the necessity of **overcoming**. The word is strongly suggestive of a great conflict, and calls to mind also the Apostle Paul’s expressions— “**Fight the good fight of faith;**” “**Endure hardness as a good soldier of Christ;**” “**Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.**” To overcome requires energy, force of character, perseverance and steadfast, patient endurance to the very end of the present life.

It is necessary for the discipline, trial and final proving of the Church of God that they should be subjected to adverse influence; for “to him that **overcometh**” is the promise of the great reward. If we would **reign** with Christ, we must prove our worthiness to reign, by the **same tests of loyalty to God, of faith in His Word, of zeal for the Truth, of patient endurance, of reproach and persecution, even unto death, and in the unwavering trust in the power and purpose of God to deliver and exalt His Church in due time.** R. 1719 and R. 4925

The LORD of hosts has sworn, saying, “Surely, as I have thought, so it shall come to pass, and as I have purposed, so it shall stand.”

– Isaiah 14:24 –

We are taught that having begun this work of salvation God has not abandoned it, and does not intend to abandon it, but that eventually “he shall bring forth judgment [trial] unto victory;” —and that eventually our Lord Jesus shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul on man’s behalf, and shall be satisfied; —that eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and all shall know him from the least to the greatest; that eventually he shall bring in everlasting righteousness, so that the time shall ultimately come when all the families of the earth shall be blessed with the knowledge of God’s goodness and grace, and with an opportunity to benefit thereby; that eventually whosoever will not obey the great Prophet-King shall be cut off from amongst the people in the Second Death; that eventually there shall be no more dying, no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain there, because the former things of Adamic sin and its penalty and blight shall have been done away.

—Isa. 14:24; Isa. 14:27; 55:11; Matt. 12:20; Isa. 53:11; 11:9; Jer. 31:34; Acts 3:19-23; Rev. 21:3-4. R. 2690

There is nothing in all the novels and romances in the world that in any degree compares with the marvels of this glorious grace of God bestowed upon consecrated believers of this Gospel age. Do we really believe it? So surely as we do the effect will be manifested in our words and thoughts and doings. Imagine a young peasant woman invited to become the bride of a king of a prominent earthly throne: would not the thought of her espousal and the coming honors and blessings and privileges fill her heart almost to the exclusion of every other subject? Would not the preparation for the wedding day be to her and to her friends the all-absorbing topic of interest, engaging time, talent, influence, attention, in every sense of the word? And yet all this would be to a view of an earthly honor that might be very fleeting, with a prospect of earthly happiness; or it might prove bitterly disappointing, and at the very most, and considered from the most advantageous standpoint, could only be a blessing for a few years.

Compare this with the glorious prospects that are set before the Lord's espoused virgin Church—glory, honor, immortality, eternal life with him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood and with the Father. Truly those who really believe this message, who recognize of a truth that they have been begotten to the new nature and have received the spirit of espousal—surely these could have no greater power and influence operate in their lives to sanctify them and separate them from the world, and to bring them into close fellowship of spirit with their Redeemer.

Those whom the Lord is now selecting for joint-heirship in the kingdom of his dear Son are required to learn lessons in the great school of experience, in the school of Christ, and they are required to manifest character and be overcomers—strong in the Lord and in the power of his might—mighty in words and in deeds for the Lord and for the Truth. And thank God, however humble our speech, or insignificant our station, he is reckoning these matters to us according to our attitude of heart; and the smallest word or act done through loyalty to him and to principles of righteousness is counted as mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of error, and to the establishment ultimately of the Kingdom of God under the whole heaven. R. 3988

“We beheld his glory,” his grandeur, his perfection, his nobility; it shone out clearly to those who had eyes to see it—those who were not blinded by the prince of this world. These very glories of the man Christ Jesus attest fully that he was not of the sinner race of Adam, but that he was indeed an exception to all mankind; giving evidence of having been begotten of the heavenly Father, in that he was full of grace and truth. “As he was so are we in this world,” says the Apostle: and although we are by nature sinners and children of wrath even as others, yet by grace we have been begotten again to a new nature, and this grace of God operating in our hearts, enlightening, purifying, sanctifying, should, gradually at least, transform us, change us “from glory to glory,” bringing us more and more to the likeness of God’s dear Son, our Redeemer and Lord, to whom, with God the Father, be praise and thanksgiving now and forever, for “so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.” —Heb. 2:3. R. 2410

IN THE DAWNING

**In the dawning O Beloved,
When earth's night of sin is past,
Gone will be your tears and heartaches,
You shall see His face at last.
Gone will be your tears and heartaches,
You shall see His face at last.**

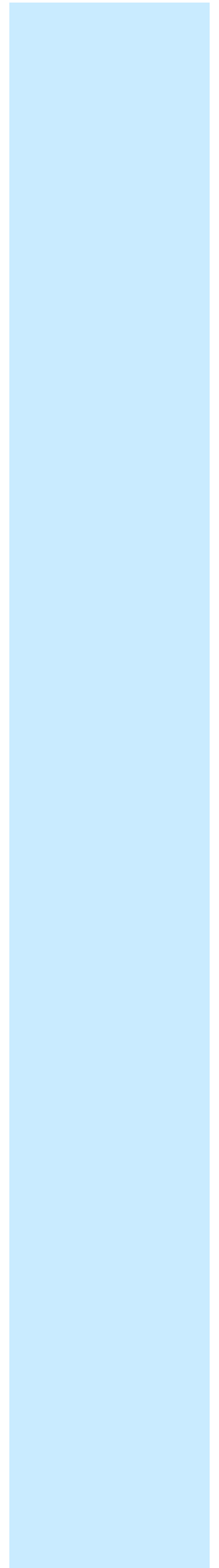
**Now the world is filled with tumult,
Satan seeks you for his own.
Fear thou not O dear beloved,
By your Savior you are known.
Fear thou not O dear Beloved,
By your Savior you are known.**

**In the dawning O Beloved,
From your flesh you shall be free.
Called and chosen let's be faithful!
That immortal we may be.
Called and chosen let's be faithful!
That immortal we may be.**

**Let not doubts nor fears o'er-take you,
Trust Him where you cannot trace.
Put your hand within your Master's,
In the dawn you'll see His face.
Put your hand within the Master's,
In the dawn you'll see His face.**

--Hymns of Dawn, #241A

JESUS CHRIST RETURNED



Editor's Note: The following chapter is not intended to be a comprehensive treatise on the study of Christ's Return, nor a study on the Reign of Christ. It is not intended to "prove" or "disprove" any doctrine, but rather, in the style of the entire book, this chapter is intended to be used as a source of devotion, as a reminder, encouragement and inspiration for the reader. For a complete study on the Return of Christ, see MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOLUMES I-V.

**Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.
– Matthew 28:20 –**

In the end of the Age [Jesus] is to be specially near, specially precious, and is to reveal himself to his faithful in an especial manner, even before she is so changed as to behold him in his glory. All disciples of Jesus were instructed to follow him, to take him as their pattern and example. Any instructions contrary to these are contrary to the words of the Great Teacher. He has been with his faithful followers to bless them, to comfort them, to strengthen them, to fellowship them, to safeguard their highest interests, though often at the expense of their temporal interests. And this promise of his Word, of providential guidance, was to continue until the end of the Age—then he would come again in a personal and official sense to exalt his Church.

The Lord has been with his representatives in all their labors of love and self-denial, throughout the entire age, noting their efforts, assisting, encouraging, sustaining them, and surely watering and refreshing all who are making his service their special object in life, —ministering his grace to others, watering and feeding them. And if this has been true in the past, all through the age, how specially true we may realize it to be now, in the end of the age, in the time of harvest, in the time of our Lord's second presence! How we may realize that he is with us, in sympathy, in cooperation, in assistance, in sustaining grace, —able and willing to make all of our experiences profitable to us, and to use us abundantly in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

Let these thoughts quicken us to fresh and greater energies, and to an appreciation of the fact that the things of this present time are but transitory (both its joys and its sorrows); and that the ambitions and hopes of the world are not worthy of comparison with these noble and laudable ambitions to serve and to please our Master, and to have his rewards—the chief of which will be fellowship with himself in glory, and the privilege of being colaborers with him in the blessing of the world,—the grand fulfillment of the heavenly Father's gracious plans for the world of mankind. R. 4784, R. 4714, R. 3166

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.”

– Acts 1:9-11 –

The account of the ascension is very simply given and yet, strange to say, many stumble over the statement of the angels “this same Jesus” “shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go.” Many think of this as though it read **that** same Jesus, “the **man** Christ Jesus,” shall come again. But it was **this** Jesus, the resurrected Jesus, the Jesus whom none of the world saw; the Jesus who was seen by the disciples only a few times during that forty days; the Jesus who was seen by them only when “he appeared” or “showed himself;” the Jesus who could come into their midst, the doors being shut, and who could and did “vanish out of their sight;” “**this** same Jesus” is the one who will “come again.” It should be carefully noted that the angels did not say, “come in like **form**.” The Lord departed from them in some kind of fleshly body, or form, which would enable them to see Him ascending into the clouds as they could not see His spirit body. The manner of Jesus’ going did not appertain to His form. Our Lord’s manner of going was quiet, secret, unknown to the world, known only to His disciples, without noise, without ostentation, without trumpets or bugles. He will so come in like manner—unknown to the world. He will be present as a thief in the night; and none will then know of His presence, except His disciples.

The lesson was a complete one and was well understood by the apostles; they fully believed that the Master had gone from them and that as truly he would come again. They did not forget his statement either, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age,” but accepted this properly as signifying that he would be with them in the plenitude of his power to protect them, to oversee their interests through various agencies at his command. But as to his actual presence, that was gone— “Ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (Matt. 21:9.) He went from them quietly, unostentatiously, unknown to the world. Hence his followers are to be on the watch for the signs that will indicate the presence of the Son of man in the end of the Gospel age, and are to remember that it will be in his day as it was in the days of Noah, men will be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, not discerning, knowing not that the Son of man is present, that the Gospel age is closing, that a new dispensation is about to dawn, to be inaugurated by the complete change of the members of the body of Christ, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom. R. 2082, R. 5830, R. 3911



What Jesus Said

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

– John 14:3 –

It is because the believers of the past as well as the believers of the present age could not go to our Lord, that all of them who were rightly instructed from his Word looked earnestly for his return, his second advent, his coming in glory and kingdom power, according to his promise, “I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also.” —John 14:3.

Many have lost sight of the hope set before us in the Gospel, and have accepted instead a hope that has no foundation, except like the errors of fleshly Israel, in “the traditions of the elders” —the hope that when they die they will not be dead, but more alive than ever: a hope that is as contrary to reason as to the Word of God, in which it finds not one solitary word of support. “But he that hath this hope in him [the hope of the second coming of the Lord to make up his jewels, to receive his faithful ones to himself] purifieth himself even as he is pure.” There is no greater incentive to faithfulness than this, the true Gospel hope. R. 2438

A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

– Luke 19:12 –

The object in the giving of the parable is stated in the lesson. The Lord and His disciples were approaching Jerusalem, where shortly He was to be crucified. The disciples had supposed, on the contrary, that the Messianic Kingdom would immediately be established in power and great honor. This parable was intended to inform them that a considerable period of time would elapse before the Kingdom would be established.

During the interim of the Master’s absence—in Heaven, waiting for Divine investiture with the government of earth—He has committed to His disciples, His servants, otherwise styled His brethren, one pound each. He has left them with full liberty to use their best judgment and to show their love and their zeal in His service. At His return, all these servants will be reckoned with, and the degree of their zeal and efficiency as servants will be manifested by the results; and the rewards given them will be proportionate.

The parable distinguishes between these consecrated servants of God and the masses of the people. It shows that nothing is committed to the masses of the people; and that no judgment, reward, is made in their case at the return of the Master as King. Only to His servants did He give the pounds —only His servants had the responsibility of those pounds, and only those servants will be reckoned with or held responsible, either for reward or for punishment in respect to the matter. R. 5492

After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

– Matthew 25:19 –

By these words our Lord gave to the disciples as clear an intimation as was proper of the fact that they were not to expect him to return and reckon with them in a very few days, a few months or a few years; but when they subsequently asked him respecting the particular time, he refused them, saying that it was not for them to know the times and the seasons, which the Father had put in his own power. And so for eighteen hundred years the Lord's people have been left without clear information on this subject. This, however, does not militate against the thought that it is the privilege of God's people **now** to know something of the times and seasons, because the due time has come in which the Father wishes to communicate these.

There is no intimation in the parable that the disciples would die and **go to** their Lord, and be reckoned with and rewarded then, as many believe to have been the case. The Scriptures are harmonious and consistent with themselves in their teachings, and not only declare that "David is not ascended into the heavens," and that "no man hath ascended up to heaven" save Jesus, but they declare also that **our Lord will come** a second time, to receive his people unto himself and to then reward them. R. 2765

It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.

– Matthew 26:64 –

This prophecy compassed the certainty of his death and resurrection, and pointed to his return in the end of the Gospel age in power and great glory—the power and glory of his Kingdom, which he had previously affirmed was not to be of this world, or dispensation, of which Satan is the prince (John 14:30), but of the world to come, wherein dwelleth righteousness. —Heb. 2:5; 2 Pet. 3:13.

In this statement, as in nearly all of our Lord's utterances, much was said in few words. It was not his intention nor would it have been proper to have explained the future of the divine plan at that time under those circumstances to those people. "The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show **them** his covenant." Hence our Lord did not say, as he might have said, "You are about to condemn me; I will be crucified this day between two thieves; I will rise again on the third day; I will ascend to the Father in forty days thereafter; I will then send my holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the work will be begun of a spiritual kingdom which will find the very elect throughout the whole earth. When these are found I will come again at my second advent in power and great glory, not to be tried by you, but to be your judge and to be the King and Ruler of the whole world, and to grant the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom to every creature, with full opportunity of coming to full knowledge and full blessing." We see that what our Lord stated implied that he knew all this, but it was not the proper time for its declaration.

He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High, until the time should come when the Kingdom would be delivered over to Him, and His enemies would be made His footstool. But the words **sat down** do not mean that He sat down on a literal seat, and has remained inactive during this Age. The thought is that He was seated at the Father's right hand in the sense of being given this permanent position of honor, dignity. It was in the official sense that He left the earth for the entire Gospel Age, giving up all work as a man—and all work directly for mankind, until the close of the Age.

R. 1809, R. 3888, R. 5408

Take heed, watch and pray, for you do not know when the time is. And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!

– Mark 13:33,37 –

FOR WHAT ARE WE WATCHING?

This is an important question. Many of God's people have been offended, "stumbled," as respects the doctrine of the second coming of our dear Redeemer. But we are not to reject one of the grandest and most prominent doctrines of the Scripture. On the contrary, this doctrine, as a glorious gem, should be given the first place among the precious jewels of divine truth, where it can cast its halo and splendor and brilliancy over all connected and related promises and blessings. It should not be left in the imperfect setting which hides its glory and beauty, but should be recovered, remounted, set in its true place, to the glory of God and to the blessing of all who are sincerely and truly his people. We need offer no apology for the interest which we feel in this grand subject, which is the center upon which all the testimony of divine grace, through all the holy prophets, is focused.

Our watching is to be for the second coming of him who redeemed us; who said, "If I go, I will come again and receive you unto myself." The watching is to be specially with the thought that our Lord Jesus comes at his second advent, in the majesty and glory of the Father, King of kings and Lord of lords. The watching includes not only the thought of the second presence of our Lord, as King, but it has attached to it the wonderful results which are promised to flow from the coming of the King; for the coming of the King means the coming of the Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." And the coming of our Master, the King, and the establishment of this glorious Kingdom mean the fulfillment of the long-awaited-for promise made to the seed of Abraham; the promise which Israel after the flesh was not found worthy to inherit; the promise for which God has been selecting the members of the Bride of Christ during this Gospel age, to be with the Lord Jesus, and his joint-heir in carrying out his beneficent provisions; the promise which is sure, but which has never yet had, in any sense of the word, a fulfillment; the promise which reads, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Watching implies hoping, and it also implies waiting. We are waiting for what the Apostle terms "that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," who shall transform his Church to his own spiritual image and likeness, in order that we ("changed") may be like him, see him as he is, and share his glory, and be associated with him in his great work of bringing in the Millennial blessings to the world of mankind. Nevertheless, this waiting time and hoping time is a time of more or less tribulation, not only on the world, which still lies under the yoke of sin, and under the blinding influences of Satan, but also to the waiting, hoping and watching Church, of whom the Apostle says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance [from death] of our body"—the body of Christ, of which we are members in particular. —Rom. 8:23. R.2972/2973

Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. – Matthew 24:42 –

Whatever the character of the watching, and whatever the thing to be looked for, there can be no question that the exhortation to watch for an event whose precise time is not stated, implies that when the event does take place, the watching ones will know it. Watch, because ye know not, in order that at the proper time ye may know, is the thought; and the intimation clearly is, that those who do not watch will not know: that the events which are to be known in due time to the Watchers, will be recognized by them, and not recognized by others, at the time of accomplishment.

This, the only logical interpretation of our Lord's exhortation, is fully corroborated by several of the apostles. The Apostle Paul urges us, saying: "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; for when they [the world, unbelievers] shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thes. 5:2-4); because, being children of the light ye, brethren, will be watching and be enlightened and taught of the Lord. The Apostle Peter suggests the means by which the Lord will teach us, and informs us respecting our location upon the path of "the just which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." He shows that it will not be by miraculous revelations, nor by dreams; but through the Word of testimony, the Bible. He says, "We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-star arise in your hearts."—2 Pet. 1:19. R. 2972

Of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

– Mark 13:32 –

The united testimony of these Scriptures teaches us that, although it was neither proper nor possible for the Lord's people to know in advance, anything definite, respecting the exact time of the second presence of the Lord Jesus, and the establishment of his Kingdom, yet when the due time would come the faithful ones, the watchers, would be informed, —would not be left in darkness with the world. It is vain to urge, as contradicting this, our Lord's statement, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13:32.) Those who use this Scripture to prove to themselves and to others that no man will **ever know** anything respecting the time of the second advent, find it to prove too much, and thus spoil their own argument; for if it means that no man will **ever know**, it must similarly mean that no angel will **ever know**, and that the Son himself will **never know**. This, evidently, would be an absurd construction to place upon the passage. The Son did not know at the time he uttered this statement; the angels did not know then; and no man knew then; but the Son certainly must know of the time of his own second advent, at least a little while before it takes place; the angels also, must know a little while before it takes place; and the true children of God, the "watchers," as we have seen above, are to watch in order that they, too, may know at the proper season and not be in darkness, in ignorance, with the world; and that their watching shall be rewarded is guaranteed:— "None of the wicked shall understand; but the wise [in heavenly wisdom] shall understand."—Dan. 12:10. R. 2972

The Day of the Lord Foretold

Beloved, I now write to you that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior.

– 2 Peter 3:1-2 –

The prophets foretold things which they did not themselves understand; for instance, Daniel, having seen a vision reaching away into the future, upon making inquiry as to the time, was told: “Go thy way, Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end;” then “knowledge shall be increased, and **the wise shall understand**, but none of the wicked shall understand.” (Dan. 12:9; 4:10); neither shall the **unwatching servant** and the **unwise Virgins**, adds our Lord. (Matt. 25:1-46). Peter speaks of this, and said that the prophets inquired and searched diligently as to **what time**, or what **manner** of time the Spirit did signify [*i.e.*, whether the time given them was **literal** or **symbolic time**], unto whom it was revealed, that **not unto themselves**, but **unto us** [the Gospel Church] they did minister. (1 Pet. 1:10; 1 Pet. 1:12). They were used as God’s mouth-pieces simply, and laid up treasures of wisdom and knowledge which are developed and made manifest during the Gospel age, a little at a time, as “meat in due season”, by the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, whose office is to guide the faithful Church into all truth.

Those who have taken heed to the landmarks, pointed out by the Lord through Daniel and Isaiah and Jeremiah and all the holy prophets, realize that we have come already a much longer journey than was expected by the Church when first she started out; but we realize also from these landmarks, that we have approached very close to the end of the journey; very near to the time when the great blessing, for which God’s people have so long waited and prayed, is at hand. R. 598 and R. 2973

**For prophecy never came by the will of man,
but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**

2 Peter 1:21

In harmony with the Apostle's words, nearly all the Old Testament prophecies were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the ages have come, and in many instances those who uttered the prophecies and those who heard them comprehended them not. R. 3455

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven---things which angels desire to look into.

– 1 Peter 1:10-12 –

Those who look upon the Bible as a collection of moral precepts designed for the regulation of the world in general, are very far from the proper estimate of its object and scope; for the Bible is not addressed to the world at all. The whole book, from beginning to end, is the inheritance of the saints— "the sanctified in Christ Jesus." To them, all the apostolic epistles are addressed.

The book of Revelation is also similarly addressed. And the Apostle Peter, in referring to the prophecies of the Old Testament, says even of the prophets that "not unto themselves, but unto **us** they did minister." (1 Pet. 1:12. See also Dan. 12:4,8,9.) And the Apostle Paul says that "**whatsoever** things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we [the sanctified in Christ Jesus] through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4.) Consequently, all that was written aforetime by Moses and the prophets—whether of history or law or prophecy or type or precept—was designed specially for us who are in Christ, for the instruction and comfort of the children of God. And not one iota of it belongs to the unregenerate world. It is a "light which shineth in a dark place" **to Christians:** it is "a lamp to **our** feet, and a light to **our** path." And whatever light the worldly get from it, reaches them indirectly—as reflected from the children of God, who "shine as lights in the world." "Ye," said our Lord, "are the light of the world." —Phil. 2:15; Matt. 5:14.

So far from their utterances being their own ideas of what would come to pass, the Lord sends us word, through the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 1:10-11), that the prophets did not know, but searched diligently to know what and what manner of time (whether literal or symbolic) the spirit which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand concerning the sufferings of Christ and concerning the glory and restitution of all things (Acts 3:21) that would follow as a result of his suffering—the just for the unjust. And not only does the Apostle tell us of this, but the prophets themselves acknowledge their own ignorance (Dan. 8:26-27; 12:4,8,9; Eze. 20:49); and the Apostle exclaims that they spoke and wrote not for themselves and the people then living, but for the instruction of the Gospel Church, and especially for the two ends, the opening and the closing of the Gospel age. —1 Pet. 1:12; 1 Cor. 10:11. R. 3646 and R. 1418

**Although I heard, I did not understand.
Daniel 12:8**

Who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderers' soap.

– Malachi 3:2 –

[These] words of the Prophet refer to the close of the present Gospel Age. It is the same Day prophesied by the Apostle Paul when he declared, "The fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3:13.) It is the Day of which the Apostle Peter wrote so graphically when he said that in that great Day of the Lord the heavens should be on fire and the elements should melt with fervent heat, and that the earth and all the works therein should be burned up. (2 Pet. 3:10.) It is the Day of which the Prophet Zephaniah spoke when he said that in the great Day of the Lord all the earth should be devoured with the fire of God's jealousy. (Zeph. 3:8.) Isaiah, Jeremiah, and many of the faithful Prophets of God prophesied of this Day. The Prophet Daniel was instructed by the angel of the Lord that in that Day there should be a "Time of Trouble such as never was since there was a nation." (Dan. 12:1.) Our Lord Jesus Himself verified this prophecy, and added that never afterwards should there be such a time. —Matt. 24:21-22.

The Scriptures call this Day "the Day of the Lord," "the Day of Jehovah," "the Day of God," "the Day of Christ," "the Day of Vengeance," "that great and notable Day," etc. It is the Day in which the Old Order is to perish and the glorious New Order is to be ushered in. In foretelling this Day, both the Prophets and the Apostles speak of the class which will stand in this Day when all others shall fall. St. Paul says that everything which can be shaken down will be; and that only the Kingdom which will then be set up, and which cannot be shaken, will remain. (Heb. 12:25-29.) The present order of society—the nominal church systems, financial institutions, political institutions—**all**—will go down. R. 5916

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

– Malachi 4:5-6 –

Elijah was a type of the Church in the flesh—the Church of which Jesus is the Head, and all of His saintly followers are the members. Jesus and His Apostles, and all of His followers, as the members of this greater Elijah, actuated by the Spirit of God, have been delivering a Message to the world. They have been reproofing sin, and making known to the world the righteousness of God. If the world had heeded the Message, the Kingdom of Messiah on the spirit plane would eventually have been ushered in, as the desire of all nations, without any great Time of Trouble, or "Day of Wrath," being necessary. But the world has not heeded the Message of Jesus and His followers; and hence the smiting of the earth with a curse, the blow of the great Time of Trouble now beginning, is the only way by which Messiah's Kingdom can be ushered in. R. 5741

“Therefore wait for Me,” says the LORD, “Until the day I rise up for plunder. My determination is to gather the nations to My assembly of kingdoms, to pour on them My indignation, all My fierce anger. All the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy.”

– Zephaniah 3:8 –

This burning day, so frequently referred to in the Scriptures, will, to our understanding, be more than a twenty-four-hour day—the day of wrath will be a period of several years’ duration, so far as the intensity of its burning is concerned; —a period whose burning will not entirely cease until the close of the Millennial age, by which time it shall have destroyed, root and branch, everything that is evil—everything contrary to righteousness, truth and goodness. This fire of God’s jealousy or zeal for righteousness will, we understand, burn in a very natural manner as regards humanity and its affairs. In the present time God is letting the light of truth shine in the world marvelously; not that light only which is shining upon the path of the just, leading God’s people onward to the perfect day, but a light is also being reflected now upon the path of the world, opening its eyes to human rights and prerogatives, liberties and privileges, to which formerly it was blinded through ignorance and superstition. As the light now comes in, the result is unrest; and thus the Lord seems to purpose, that the very blessings of this time, the end of this Gospel age, the very condition of things which, rightly received, should be bringing men happiness, is bringing more and more of discontent, and thus leading them step by step into the great period of anarchy which the Scriptures distinctly show will be the fire of trouble in the end of this age, which will consume church and state, religious, political and financial institutions, and reduce the whole world to a general level— “a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.” —Dan. 12:1. R. 2971

I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

– Joel 2:30-31 –

The coming of the King means much trouble and the general overturning of the kingdoms of this world which, while professing to be kingdoms of God, are really under the control of the “prince of this world,” Satan, “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” (John 14:30; John 16:11; Eph. 2:2.) It means the shaking of society in a manner and to an extent never before known, and so thoroughly that another shaking will never be necessary. (Heb. 12:26-27.) It means the breaking in pieces of the empires and governments of the world as a potter’s vessel. It means the passing away of the present ecclesiastical “heavens,” and the fall of many of its bright “stars.” At present the sunlight of the true Gospel, and the moonlight of the Law with its types and shadows, are obscured by the thick clouds of worldly wisdom. R. 5917

**Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken,
let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably
with reverence and godly fear.**

Hebrews 12:28

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people.

– Daniel 12:1 (a) –

[This] prophecy touches the Day of the Lord and its events—the very time in which we are living—the time of resurrection, etc., and instead of saying, Then shall Messiah set up his kingdom, etc., it says, “At that time shall Michael stand up [begin to exercise his power and dominion]—the GREAT PRINCE, etc.” We reason that this Great Prince—Michael—Jehovah’s chief-messenger, is none other than the Lord of glory, whose presence we are now proclaiming. The key to the whole matter seems to be in our hands when we learn that the name Michael means: “**Who as God,**” or “**Who is like God.**” **Who is like God** but him whom God hath highly exalted and given a name above every name; who is partaker of the divine nature, and “the express image of the Father’s person,” of whom it is written, that “All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father,” also— “And let all the angels of God worship him”? With the meaning of the word Michael in this last text how significantly it reads: At that time shall he **who is like God** stand up—come into power—the **Great Prince**. Yes, he shall take to himself his great power and reign. (Compare Dan. 12:1-2; Rev. 11:17-18.)

Paul’s mention of the Arch-angel is in harmony. “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the **chief-messenger** and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise,” etc. This term [“arch-angel”] signifies **chief-messenger**, and occurs but twice, Jude 1:9; 1 Thes. 4:16. It is never used in the plural, and altogether seems to teach that there is but the **one** chief-messenger of Jehovah.

While we are not directly told who is Jehovah’s chief-messenger, except that his name was called Michael, the thought suggests itself, Can it be that he who was called Michael—Jehovah’s chief-messenger—was none other than our Lord in his pre-human condition? He who “did not meditate a usurpation to be like God, but divested himself, taking a bondman’s form, having been made in likeness of men” (Phil. 2:6-7 —Diaglott), and whom Jehovah in consequence highly exalted and gave “a name above every name; that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow and every tongue confess to the glory of God the Father”? (Phil. 2:10-11.)

We call to mind that Jesus was called “**the messenger** of the covenant” (Mal. 3:1), and from what we learn of his pre-human glory (see Dec. issue, “Consider Him”), we conclude that HE must have been “**chief messenger.**” Surely we may well reason that Jehovah’s first-born, the beginning of the creation of God, would be the chief. And the thought gathers force as we remember that he was the “**only begotten** of the Father”—the only being whom Jehovah directly created, and in this sense the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and ending of Jehovah’s creation, who “was before all things, and by whom [as Jehovah’s agent] all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17), “Without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:3). Surely chief-messenger would be a fitting title for this being. And we inquire, If he was not the **chief-messenger**, who was his superior?

Yes, beloved, we believe that the great chief-messenger is present, and is even now standing up or assuming control and organizing his kingdom; hence the unrest among the kingdoms of earth, which are tottering to their fall—the voice (of command) from the chief messenger is now distinctly heard by those who have an ear to hear, hence the dissolution of present systems. “He uttered his voice, the earth melted” —symbolically. (Psa. 46:6). R. 490

You, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end. Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

– Daniel 12:4 –

The Watchers have noted the Lord's testimony through the Prophet Daniel that "the time of the end" would be a period of time (more than a century), and that in this "time of the end" there would be a great increase of travel, running to and fro throughout the earth, and a great increase of general intelligence, increased knowledge.

Watching carefully respecting our whereabouts, hopeful and solicitous respecting the gracious things which God has promised, none of the Watchers is indifferent to these fulfillments of prophecy, which are to be seen on every hand today. All men discern these things, but not all alike: the faithful, the Watchers, discern them not only as facts, but also as fulfillments of prophecy; as proofs that we are already in the period termed "the time of the end." Further investigations and applications of the prophetic measurements prove to the watchers that we have been in "the time of the end" since 1799, and that it is also termed "the day of his [Jehovah's] preparation." Looking about them, they see the preparation that Jehovah God is making for the Kingdom of his dear Son. They see the lifting of the curtain of ignorance, and the letting in of the light, and that thus God is using mankind at the present time to make ready, in a natural way, the mechanical and other arrangements and conveniences which ultimately shall be so great blessings to the world;—when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams, and the Millennial Day shall be ushered in, with all its multiplied blessings and mercies and opportunities; —"the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

—Acts 3:21. R. 2973

There shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time.

– Daniel 12:1 (b) –

The Watchers note that Daniel's prophecy further points out that, as the increase of travel brings the increase of knowledge, so the increase of knowledge will bring an increase of discontent to the world of mankind in general; and the result will be, as prophetically stated, that "there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." The Watchers, seeking to note whether these things have yet had a fulfillment or not, look about them and behold on every hand discontent, unhappiness; much more than when the world enjoyed far fewer of the mercies and blessings of heaven. These latter day gifts of Providence (preparations for the Millennial age), instead of provoking thankfulness, gratitude and love to God, and generosity to man, produce in unregenerate hearts ambition, greater avarice, selfishness, envy, hatred, strife, and other works of the flesh and of the devil. Yes; the Watchers can clearly discern the approach of the great climax of human trouble, in which the Scriptures distinctly declare that all the present human institutions shall go down in anarchy, in confusion, in chaos. But the Watchers do not lose sight of God and his providence. They see that the approaching social and ecclesiastical catastrophe will be the natural result of the operation of selfishness under highly favored conditions; nevertheless, they remember that God is at the helm, and that he is able to cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of man's wrath (which would not praise him) he will restrain. —Psa. 76:10. R. 2973

Surely the wrath of man shall praise You!

Psalm 76:10

The great day of the LORD is near. It is near and hastens quickly. The noise of the day of the LORD is bitter. There the mighty men shall cry out. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of devastation and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness.

– Zephaniah 1:14-15 –

In that Day of terror and darkness men shall come to learn their need of a strong arm to deliver them. Their pride and self-sufficiency will be humbled into the dust. But out of that awful trouble mankind will come forth chastened and broken, and will be ready to be led out of the ruin and defeat of their own schemes and hopes, out of the darkness and chaos which in their ignorance and selfishness they precipitated upon themselves, out of the power of evil angels, into the light and blessing and deliverance then brought to them by the establishment of the Kingdom of God's dear Son, long promised for the blessing of all the families of the earth.

It will be a lesson never to be forgotten. The sons of God, then exalted to the rulership of the Kingdom, will begin their work of healing and blessing, of binding up the crushed and broken hearts of men. Their own experience in the present life will have taught them how to sympathize with the poor, sin-sick world; and they will be able to pour into humanity's wounds the blessed balm of Gilead, "to give beauty for ashes," to wipe away all tears, and to lead all who will step by step up the grand Highway of Holiness then cast up for the people. "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. 35:10.) R. 5537

Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.

Luke 21:28

Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

– 2 Peter 3:11-13 –

St. Paul has assured us, though this Day shall come as a thief and a snare upon the whole world, it shall not so come upon God's children who are living up to their privileges. "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads; for your deliverance draweth nigh"; "When ye see these things, ...know that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." (Luke 21:28; Luke 21:31.) The Master does not say, When ye see **all** these things, but When ye see the **beginning** of them, then we are to lift up our heads and rejoice—not rejoicing in the trouble, nor in the sufferings of others, but in the fact that these things are the foretold signs that the Present Order is about to be succeeded by a New Order, which will be far better, and more advantageous and desirable for all.

The Church herself will be the "new heavens," and will come into great glory, power and privilege. The thought in the early Church, evidently, was that these dispensational changes would very shortly

come to pass. They were living in constant expectation of the coming of the Lord, the establishment of His Kingdom and the glorification of the Church. Some of them even felt too confident of the matter. The Apostle Paul writes to the Church of Thessalonica saying that some of them had made a mistake in thinking that the Day of the Lord might have already come. He tells them that that Day could not come until the Man of Sin should be revealed. Thus in the days of the Apostles the Church was ever on the qui vive; and throughout this entire Age the Lord's people have been left in uncertainty as to the time of the Master's Second Coming, watching, preparing, for the things of the Kingdom, knowing that the Day of Christ would come as a "thief in the night" at the appointed time. —2 Thes. 2:3.

The Christian who knows about these things of the future, and who lives in anticipation of them, has a joy and a peace of which the world knows nothing. One week of such living is worth more than an entire lifetime with only such things as the world has to offer. And if now we enjoy living the new life, and entering by faith into the things that the Lord has in reservation for us, what will be the **realization!** If we would lose much in the present time by losing our hope and faith, what would it be to lose these things eternally! As we realize this, we see that we cannot afford one moment of carelessness. The Lord has promised us grace sufficient for every time of need. If we are overcome by the old nature, it will not be because we have not strength sufficient for the victory; for if we call upon the Lord, He will sustain us. But the Lord will test our loyalty, our faith, our strength of character, our alertness of mind. And the victory is sure, so long as our trust is in Him!

R. 5735 and R. 5777

We who are living in this Day see the prelude to the great Battle of Armageddon. Our thought is that the Armageddon itself will be the mighty "Earthquake" spoken of in Revelation. (Rev. 16:16-18.) In this great revolution and in the succeeding anarchy all earthly institutions will be swept away. The result of the anger, hatred and strife, if permitted to continue indefinitely, would be so terrible that it would bring about the destruction of the race; but for the Elect's sake, that they may begin their glorious reign, God will cut short the carnage, and will set up His own Kingdom under Christ and His elect Church. Christ and His Bride will take over the kingdoms of this world, and thus will hinder the strife of men from going to the extreme that it would otherwise go. But it will not be stopped until the Present Order shall have been wholly dissolved.

The Apostle points out that all these things that occupy men's minds and absorb their energies are to pass away. None of them are to be permanent. We realize this to be so. We see that their passing away is just at hand in this our day. Others do not perceive it, although many thoughtful minds see that present conditions are unprecedented, that some great change must be impending; and their hearts are failing them for fear.

Surely the knowledge of these things, of the transitoriness, the trifling value of the most alluring of earth's gifts, should cause us to turn from them and to set our affections and hopes upon the Heavenly things, which are infinite in value and which shall never pass away. We should lay up treasure in Heaven, where the institutions will be permanent, and where armies and revolutions will not destroy the Government. All those who believe in the great changes just before us should be living for the future and not for the present. The more we discern, then, the teachings of the Bible, the more we imbibe its spirit, the more shall we live for and prepare for the great blessings promised for the future to those who love God. "Be ye holy, for I am holy," is the injunction of our Father in Heaven. R. 5735

An Invisible Return

Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said:
The kingdom of God does not come with observation.

– Luke 17:20 –

Our watching consists not in looking up into the sky, —“stargazing;” for those who study the Lord’s Word to any purpose soon learn that “the **day** of the Lord so cometh as [like] a thief in the night,” and that its dawning cannot be discerned with the natural eye. If the Lord’s people could discern anything by watching the sky with their natural eyes, could not the world discern the same thing? If the second advent of our Lord were to be an open, outward manifestation, would not the world know of it just as soon as the saints, the watchers? In such event it could not be true that the day of the Lord should come as a thief, as a snare, unawares, upon the world, while the Church would have foreknowledge thereof—not be left in darkness. —1 Thes. 5:2-4.

We are to watch the signs of the times, in the light of the Lord’s Word, our lamp; as the apostle declares, “We have a more sure Word of prophecy,...as a light shining in a dark place, —until the Day dawn.” The Gospel age has been a night-time; and the Lord’s people have been waiting for the dawn of the Millennial morning, with the promise ringing in their ears, “God will help her [the Church], and that right early [in the morning].” (Psa. 46:5.) The Word of the Lord, through the prophets, has been the lamplight all through this Gospel age, upon the Church’s pathway; as the Lord expressed it through the Prophet David, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, a lantern unto my footsteps.” (Psa. 119:105.) The lamp of the truth of revelation has guided all the faithful, watchful pilgrims in their journey toward the Celestial City—the Heavenly Kingdom. Oh, what a comfort it has been, and how dreary would have been our pilgrimage without it!

The Watchers remember well that the King gave them an outline of the history of the Gospel age at the very time that he told them to watch; intimating to them that they were to watch for the things which he therein noted. The Watchers are those who are in harmony with the King, and who have respect to his promise, and they, therefore, do not neglect the words which he spoke. And as they note this very prophecy in connection with which he tells them to watch, they see in it clearly that the day of the Lord will be ushered in at the close of this Gospel age, secretly, quietly, unobtrusively, “as a thief in the night,” —unawares to the world, and known only to the Watchers. R. 2672/2673

Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

– 1 Corinthians 15:50 –

When describing what would be seen and recognized at His Second Advent and the establishment of His Kingdom, Jesus said not one word about any one seeing Himself or any one of the Apostles in Kingdom glory. But He did say, “Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets.”— Luke 13:28-29. Jesus and His Bride Class—the Apostles and saints of this Age, from every nation and denomination—will indeed be the real Kingdom and have the real supervision and power; but they will be invisible, as the Scriptures declare. All these will “be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” by the First Resurrection power. No longer earthly beings, they will be spirit beings, the Elect, being “made partakers of the Divine Nature.” (2 Pet. 1:4.) As St. Paul again declares, the Resurrection change must come before the Church can enter the Kingdom glory; for “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.”—1 Corinthians 15:50. R. 5199

The reason why many professing Christians cannot recognize our Lord's Parousia—presence—is that they are looking for a fleshly Christ, visible to the fleshly eye, and making an imposing demonstration which they cannot mistake. Failing to realize the fact that spiritual bodies cannot be seen by human eyes without a miracle, they cannot understand how He can be present while "all things continue as they were since the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:3,4.) Thus they are unable to understand "the signs of the times," revealing His return. R. 5933

Nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.

– Luke 17:21 –

The coming of the King to possess His Kingdom will mean a personal as well as a national and a church examination, judgment and treatment. It will mean, when the Kingdom is fully inaugurated, the suppression of vice in a manner and to a degree never attempted by any earthly reformer. There will be no license to do evil in any form. The only liberty granted will be liberty to **do right**. It is no wonder that so few experience joy at the proclamation of the return of earth's rightful King to reign. To many it will mean the loss of their present advantages over their fellowmen. To many it will mean the prohibition and cutting off of sins now indulged in and enjoyed.

Nevertheless, both the King and the Kingdom are not only **coming**, but are **here**; and the present troubles and shakings in church and state, and the general awakening of the people are the results of influences emanating from that King and Kingdom. Though men know it not, it is the smiting of the Kingdom of God that is even now preparing for the wreck of all the kingdoms of the earth, that the way may be opened for the establishment of righteousness in the world, that men's hearts may be humbled and prepared for the righteous Government which is to take control of earth. Worldly men cannot realize this; for this Kingdom cometh not with outward observation—with outward show and display. Therefore they cannot say, “Lo, here,” or “Lo, there.” R. 5916

The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat. Both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.

– 2 Peter 3:10 –

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief [unobserved by the world], in the which the heavens [present ecclesiastical powers] shall pass away with a great noise [tumult and confusion], and the elements [the various parties and sects composing it, split and torn by discordant views] shall melt with fervent heat [the heat of public discussion and investigation]: the earth also [society as at present organized under civil and ecclesiastical authority] and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (destroyed, in the strife and friction caused by increasing knowledge combined with selfishness. This will not be a literal fire, but, as described by the prophets, the fire of divine jealousy—(Zeph. 1:18; 3:8). (2 Pet. 3:10.) Already the noise and tumult, which shall thus eventuate in world-wide anarchy, are distinctly heard in every nation: for the day of the Lord has indeed begun, and the heat of human passion is growing more and more intense daily, and the great time of trouble is very near. “Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be **diligent** that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” (2 Pet. 3:11-14.) And Jude (24) reminds us that the Lord, in whose grace and knowledge Peter desires us to grow, “is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” R. 3215

Know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.

– Matthew 24:43 –

[Our Lord] speaks of his second advent as being unknown to the world and therefore to them as a thief in the night, unexpected. He intimates that such a secrecy respecting the time is essential; that if it were generally known to the world the divine plan and arrangement in respect to the end of the age would be foiled. To the Church it would be given to know the times and seasons, through the holy Spirit enlightening their understanding respecting the Word of Truth uttered through the apostles and prophets of old for our admonition. But none of the wicked would understand, only the wise, the truly wise with the wisdom that cometh from above, the consecrated. So far as the world would be concerned, its great ones, its masterminds in Church and in State, in business, in finances, would all be surprised in the end of this age. The Master would be present as a thief in the night to take, first of all, his “jewels,” his Bride, his saints, and then to utterly spoil, overthrow, the affairs of this present time, that on the ruins thereof he might speedily set up his everlasting Kingdom of righteousness. “Ye brethren are not in darkness” —that day has not overtaken you as a thief, though it will thus overtake all the world. (1 Thes. 5:3,4.) The thief-like work of taking the Church is already in progress; by and by it will all be completed, and shortly thereafter—1915*—the kingdoms of this world, with all of their associated institutions, will go down in a climax of trouble such as the world has never known, because after gathering his Bride class the Lord will execute judgments upon Babylon. At that time Satan will be bound that he should deceive the nations no more until the thousand years are finished. —Rev. 20:3. R. 3784

**Please see AUTHOR'S FORWARD in Vol. II of MILLENNIAL DAWN STUDIES.*

There stands One among you whom you do not know.

– John 1:26 –

Many are noting the signs of our times and are startled, and led to exclaim, What do these things mean?—this remarkable latter-day advance in science, art and mechanical invention?—this latter-day discontent in the midst of plenty and luxury?—this latter-day growth of millionaires and paupers?—this growth of giant corporations of world-wide power and influence?—Why are national policies and public men and their utterances and doings criticized (judged) by the masses as never before?—And what means it that with an apparent growth in wealth and numbers in all denominations of Christians, there is a growing dissatisfaction, discontent in them all: a growing tendency to criticize the creeds and the preaching and everything?

The Scriptural answer is, The hour of God's judgment is come; the time when "Christendom," political, financial, social and ecclesiastical is being judged—being tried in the divine balances. And the Scriptures declare that she will be found wanting, and will be adjudged unworthy to further administer the affairs of earth, which will be turned over to the elect "little flock," according to the divine promise. —Luke 12:32. The secret of the matter now is the same as in the Jewish "harvest," which John explained, saying,

"THERE STANDETH ONE AMONG YOU WHOM YOU KNOW NOT." R. 2983

We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

– 2 Peter 3:14 –

The apostle is not referring to new worlds, nor to heavens ranged one above another, as many have supposed, but, what is termed the first heavens and earth or order of things, passed away at the flood; and that the heavens and earth "which are now," the present order of things, are reserved of God to pass away with a great fire of trouble, revolution, etc., which shall utterly destroy them—the present spiritual powers and the present earthly or social arrangements. "Nevertheless, we according to his promise look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This will be the third heavens, and third earth, or the new heavens, and new earth, which will differ from the present condition of things in that it will be righteous, whereas the present is unrighteous, imperfect. The "new heavens" will consist of the new spiritual ruling powers of the future, Christ and the glorified Church, the eyes of whose understanding have been opened, who are under special blessing and leading, and are taught of God, —the "little flock," "heirs of the Kingdom." —Eph. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4. R. 2832

The Kingdom which we are expecting, and which we believe is now in process of establishment, and is soon to smite the kingdoms of this world and to supplant them, is not an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly one; not a fleshly kingdom, but a spiritual one; not a kingdom which will be visible to the natural eye, but an invisible yet powerful kingdom. We find nothing in the Scriptures to corroborate the thought entertained by some that this Gospel age having begun in the spirit, is to culminate in a reign of Christ and his Church in the flesh with an earthly throne, etc. Quite to the contrary, the King and his joint-heirs, the Church, as spirit beings, will have a spiritual empire, though their subjects, to whom they will offer the blessings of the restitution purchased at Calvary, will be men in the flesh, whose highest hope and ambition will be restitution to the grand perfection of the human nature lost in Eden, redeemed at Calvary,—an earthly image of the Heavenly Father. R. 2980

Three Greek Words

Discriminating carefully, [those that are watching] discern that there are three words of distinctly different signification, used in respect to the Lord's second advent; namely, parousia and epiphania and apokalupsis. Parousia is used in respect to the earliest stage of the second advent, while apokalupsis relates to the same advent later; —not that apokalupsis and epiphania relate to another, or a third advent, but merely to a later feature of the second advent. These Greek words, it is true, are somewhat obscure or hidden in the Common Version of the Bible, and undoubtedly for a purpose. The Lord's purpose evidently was to keep the world and the wicked in ignorance of his gracious plan until his due time; nor did he wish the particulars to be understood by the Watchers until near the time of the fulfillment. But now we are "in the time of the end," in "the day of his preparation," in the time in which it was foretold that then "the wise [not the worldlywise, but the humble Watchers who are wise enough to take heed to the Word of the Lord] shall understand." (Dan. 12:10.) And hence, since many of the Watchers are not Greek scholars, God has made gracious provision through valuable helps (such as Young's Analytical Concordance and the Emphatic Diaglott), so that the very humblest of his people may have a clear and discriminate understanding of the meaning of certain features of his Word which, hitherto, have been kept hidden.

By these helps, the Watchers are rapidly coming to see that the word "parousia," in our Common Version translated "coming," does not mean what our English word signifies; namely, to be on the way, approaching; but that on the contrary it signifies presence, as of one who has already arrived. The Watchers note also that the Scriptures predicate certain things respecting the Lord, and respecting his parousia (his presence) which clearly intimate that he will be present and doing his work, his great work (of setting up his Kingdom and smiting the nations with the sword of his mouth) wholly unknown to the world, —as a thief in the night. The Watchers also notice that the Scriptures clearly indicate that after the Lord has done certain things during his presence (parousia) and unknown to the world, he will later make a manifestation of his presence; —a manifestation which will be discerned by all mankind: and this outward manifestation is designated his "epiphania" which signifies "shining forth" or "bright shining."

[The] reckoning with the Church and the reward of the faithful will precede our Lord's apokalupsis, or revealing. To use one of his own figures, we might say that his day or time of presence—"the day of the Lord"—will come "as a thief in the night;" and in this time he will gather his virgin Church, discriminately, and take her as his Bride to himself; —changing her from earthly nature and conditions to spiritual or heavenly conditions, to be like him, see him as he is, and share his glory. And since the saints have always been "the salt of the earth," we may readily discern that the taking away of the salt of the earth would leave mankind proportionately in a deplorable condition, in which corruption would spread rapidly: and this is exactly what the Scriptures indicate. R. 2974

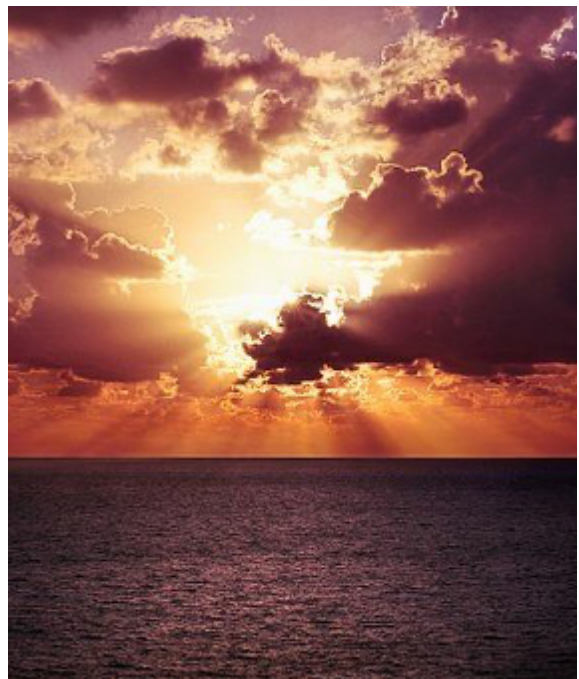
Note the wide difference in the sense of the following texts where the Greek word parousia should be rendered presence in every instance: —Matt. 24:3; Matt. 24:27; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thes. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thes. 2:1,8; James 5:7-8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4; 1 John 2:28. True, there is to be an earthly phase or representation of the Kingdom of God, visible to the natural eyes of men, as the spiritual government will be recognized by the eyes of their understanding; but it will be established later, as it is written, Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets—all the overcomers of the past—in the Kingdom. (Luke 13:28.) The unseen Kingdom will be Christ and the apostles, and all the faithful overcomers of the Gospel age —the body of Christ. R.1693

- The word *parousia* occurs in [several] texts of the New Testament in each of which it should be properly translated "presence:"
- The Greek word *epiphania* signifies *bright shining* or *manifestation*. It is rendered "appearing" and "brightness."
- The Greek words *apokalupsis* and *apokalupto* signify *revelment, uncovering, unveiling* (as of a thing previously present but hidden). The name of the last book of the Bible is from the same root—Apocalypse or Revelation. *Apokalupsis* is rendered *revealed, revelation, appearing, coming* and *manifestation*, in [several] texts which relate to the Lord's second *presence* and power and glory. R. 2979

The *bright shining of the present One* is due to begin shortly after the *parousia* begins; and again as at the first advent it will be true that "the Light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." The *revealing* of the Lord's presence begins with the faithful of the Church speedily, and gradually extends to the world in general. Up to the time when the strength of the trouble breaks forth, only the faithful Watchers discern the *parousia*, and only by them can the bright-shining of the Lord's presence be appreciated. To these the bright-shining of the Lord's presence, the increased brilliancy of the light of truth respecting the Word and character and plan of God, is an ever increasing joy and pleasure: thus it is that "ye, brethren, are not in darkness," respecting the events of the day of the Lord, but know in advance that its tribulation will come upon the world as travail upon a woman. —1 Thes. 5:3,4. R. 2979

*Watchman, tell me, does the morning
Of fair Zion's glory dawn?
Have the signs that mark its coming
Yet upon thy pathway shone?
Pilgrim, yes! arise! look 'round thee!
Light is breaking in the skies!
Gird thy bridal robes around thee;
Morning dawns! arise! arise!*

—R. 5341



Signs of The Lord's Presence

Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “What shall be the sign [indication] of thy presence, and of the consummation of the age?” (Diaglott)

– Matthew 24:3 –

Perhaps remembering that Jesus' first advent had been obscure and unrecognized by many, so that even John who baptized and announced him sent and inquired, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?” the disciples may have been wondering whether the second coming of Jesus would be likewise obscure and unrecognized, and whether some might not at the time of the second presence, as in their day, be ignorant of the Lord's presence. Or, their query may have been suggested by Jesus' answer to the Pharisees when questioned about the kingdom to come—“The kingdom of God cometh not with observation [outward demonstration and show], neither shall they say, Lo here! or there! for lo, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” Luke 17:20-21. R.V. margin. Whatever induced the question, it is evident from the Lord's answer, that they suspicioned that he might be present yet unrecognized by the world, and possibly by even his saints, unless some expected sign should indicate his presence.

Some who overlook the Lord's statement that the kingdom of heaven cometh not with outward demonstration, and who think that the second advent of Jesus will be accompanied with wonderful outward demonstration, put a very forced construction upon this word **sign**, and look for some visible manifestation in the sky. With their ideas of the manner of Christ's coming, no sign would be necessary. But such an interpretation of the word **sign** is out of harmony with common as well as Scriptural usage. Clouds are a sign of storm and rain; smoke is a sign of fire; frost and snow may be **signs** of cold weather; falling foliage is a sign of autumn. Likewise when the Lord is **present**, and the specially appointed work of his presence is in progress, those works will, to those who can appreciate them, be a **sign** of his presence.

All Christians should be most deeply interested in this question, What shall be the **sign**, indication or evidence of the Lord's presence and the closing of our age? In his answer, the Master's first aim was to put us (for his words were specially for all the Church) on guard against some who would assume his name (**Christ**-ians), and deceive many by saying that the **kingdom of God** has come; that they are the DELIVERER or Messiah, and that their dominion is the kingdom of God. He says: “Beware that no one **deceive** you, for many will assume my name saying, I am the Messiah.” (Matt. 24:5—**Diaglott**.) They say, We are Christ's vice-gerents, his representatives; our Church is the **body** of Christ, and his rightful and promised representative to rule and conquer the world. As the Lord forewarned, we can see that many have assumed his name, claimed to be his body, and as such the right to rule, and that his kingdom had come.

Passing on, Jesus tells that a long period must elapse, with its wars, and commotions, persecutions, betrayals, false teachers, etc., and that “the love of the many will cool” (become lukewarm, Rev. 3:16), and that patient endurance to the close of the race is needful for all running for the prize held out in this Gospel age.

We are living in a favored and precious time, for though it is the hour of trial coming upon earth (Rev. 3:10), it is to those who can discern the Lord's presence, etc., a precious and favored time correspondingly. Jesus' first advent was a time similar—of trial to all Israel, and of special favor and

blessing to every Israelite indeed. In reference to his presence Jesus said: “Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.” —Matt. 13:16-17. R. 710

Their privilege to hear from Jesus’ lips “dark sayings” and “parables” was great, but how much greater is the present privilege of having the Master gird himself and cause us to sit down to meat and come forth to serve us (Luke 12:37), disclosing to us the mystery hid from ages and generations, and expounding to us his parables and dark sayings. Truly, the bright shining of the present one shall not only consume and destroy Babylon and all other systems of error which enslave the redeemed, but also enlightens, cheers and refreshes all in harmony with truth. R. 710



Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

Luke 12:37

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.

– Ephesians 1:17-18 –

As the light by which the eye of faith may discern the parousia, we have the “more sure word of prophecy to which we do well to take heed.” It has shone upon the pathway of the Watchers all along through this night; but now its various prophetic rays have focused and clearly indicate that we are already living “in the days of the Son of Man.” R. 2974

Scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.”

– 2 Peter 3:3-4 –

It will doubtless surprise many to learn that there is much Scripture proof that we are already in the time of the presence (parousia) of the Son of Man, —that we are already living “in the days of the Son of Man.” At first some will be inclined to say, “Where is the promise of his (parousia) presence, while all things continue as they were from the beginning?” Peter foretold that some would thus question, being surprised at the information that we are living in the days of the Son of Man, while there is as yet no outward manifestation of his presence, but the affairs of the world continue in their ordinary channels. (2 Pet. 3:4.) The answer to the question is, as we have already pointed out, our Lord’s own declaration that in the days of his presence the world would be eating, drinking, planting and building, and know not. That is “the promise of his presence” while “all things continue as they were.” R. 2975

**You are all sons of light and sons of the day.
We are not of the night nor of darkness.
Therefore let us not sleep, as others do,
but let us watch and be sober.
For those who sleep, sleep at night,
and those who get drunk are drunk at night.
But let us who are of the day be sober,
putting on the breastplate of faith and love,
and as a helmet the hope of salvation.
1 Thessalonians 5:5-8**

Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

– Matthew 24:7 –

Since the subject of earthquakes was of sufficient importance for our great Teacher to specially mention, they are worthy of our notice also. Our Master, in referring to them, did not attempt by so doing, to arouse the fears of his holy followers, but on the contrary said, "Take care that ye be not alarmed, for these things must occur." "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be in various places famines and earthquakes. Yet these are only a beginning of sorrows." —Matt. 24:6-8. Diaglott.

Famines and earthquakes have in all ages given evidence that not only man but his home—the earth—is under the curse. And not only does mankind groan and travail in pain together until now, waiting for the new dispensation, but the earth also groans and quakes and travails to be delivered into the full and perfect Edenic condition, in which it will be a fit home for the restored, perfected race.

Our Lord well knew that these quakings of the earth, both physical and social, had been before his first advent, and that they would be frequent during the entire period between the first and second advents, and yet he mentions them among the notable things to be experienced in the transition period from the Gospel to the Millennial age: and so too with famines and pestilences. It seems evident, then, that our Lord's reference is not to the common run of such calamities, but to some special and wonderful events. This is clearly marked by the account of this same discourse given by Luke; he gives some items not mentioned by Matthew and Mark. Luke (21:10-12) records it thus: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in different places, and famines, and pestilences, and frightful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you."

It certainly was not before a great earthquake that the Church began to suffer persecution, for a few days after Jesus uttered these words there was an earthquake (the day he died) and there was another when he arose. (Matt. 27:51-54 and 28:2.) We think the proper inference then is, that in connection with the quakings of society, the overturning of kingdoms (mountains in symbol) in this great "Day of Jehovah," into which we have already entered, we may expect wars, pestilences, earthquakes, and famines, not as usual, not as heretofore, but to an extent never before known in earth's history. All these things together combine to make "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time," "no, nor [thank God] ever shall be." (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.) And as for the earthquakes and famines, severe and wonderful as they will evidently be, the Master tells us, "These are [only] the beginning of sorrows," the start of troubles much more intense. R. 879

**There will be great earthquakes in various places,
and famines and pestilences, and there will be
fearful sights and great signs from heaven.**

Luke 21:11

**When you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (whoever reads, let him understand).
– Matthew 24:15 –**

The setting of the abomination is not the sign, but the recognition, or discernment of the abomination as such, and of its improper place, is a sign that greatly increased light is shining, that knowledge is increased, which is elsewhere stated to be evidence of "the time of the end," Dan. 12:4. The abomination spoken of by Daniel, and again by Paul, is the false system of systems which, assuming the name of Christ, have misrepresented the character, plans and Word of God, and deceived many. It includes not only the mother system, Papacy, but the daughters as well, for she is the mother of abominations as well as an abomination herself; and the entire abomination system being ONE, and of the same spirit, it is so referred to by Jesus, Daniel and Paul. It is "Babylon the great," "the mystery of Iniquity," the "Abomination of the earth." Rev. 17:5 and 2 Thes. 2:7, Dan. 12:11.

The "Mystery of Iniquity" came into place gradually, and it was not until it had sat for a long time in the holy place, ruling and governing it, that its abominable and detestable character was seen, and still it is not seen by all the saints, many of whom still bow to the teachings and commands of that system which God calls abominable.

The god of this world—Satan—has by many devices blinded the eyes of many, while exalting and keeping in power this system, which is "after" or like him, whose child it is. When his power begins to fail, because the stronger than he begins to spoil his house (Matt. 12:29), then this system will begin to be seen, to be revealed and recognized in its true character as "The Mystery of Iniquity." Of this time when the abomination shall be seen occupying and ruling in the Church, the apostle says: "Then shall that wicked be revealed [literally uncovered or exposed] whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming" [literally—destroy with the bright shining of the present one]. 2 Thes. 2:3-6.

This accords perfectly with Jesus' words: "When ye shall see the abomination;" that is, when the mask shall be pulled off and you shall be enabled to see "The Mystery of Iniquity" as such, then you may know that you are in the consummation of the age, in "the time of the end." Your knowledge will be the sign of this. R. 711

The Lord's Supper celebrates the death of Christ accomplished at Calvary. The Mass represents a new sacrifice for sins made every time the Mass is performed. Our Roman Catholic friends believe that when the priest blesses the wafer it becomes the actual body of Christ in his hands, for the very purpose of sacrificing Him afresh. High Mass is a particular sacrifice of Christ for a particular sin of a particular individual. Low Mass is a sacrifice of Christ for the general sins of a congregation. Roman Catholics claim to believe in the merit of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary—that it covered original sin, general sins that are past; but they claim also that the daily sins, shortcomings, blemishes of every individual, require to be cleansed by fresh sacrifices of Christ from time to time. Thus, from their standpoint, as represented in the Mass, and as practised by the Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics and High Church Episcopalians, Christ is being sacrificed afresh all the world over every day. This in the Scriptures is called an "abomination" in God's sight, because it disregards, sets at naught, the fact as stated in the Bible, that Christ dieth no more, "that by one sacrifice He hath perfected forever all who come unto the Father through Him." —Rom. 6:9; Heb. 10:14. R. 5641



As the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

– Matthew 24:27 –

Jesus continued, saying, "They shall say to you, See here; or, See there: go not after them, nor follow." In a word, do not believe anybody who will thus tell you about My Second Coming; do not be deceived into believing that I will come in any such manner. I will tell you how I shall come: "As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, and shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of Man be in His Day."

This astounding statement is better understood when we translate the Greek noun **astrape** as "shining" instead of "lightning"; for evidently it refers to the sun, which rises in the east and sets in the west, shining out of the one part of the heaven even unto the other. But how will this represent the Son of Man in His Day? How will He be like the sun? We answer that the Day of Christ is a thousand-year Day, the Millennium; and our Lord's statement was one of the "dark sayings" of which Jesus said, "I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them now," and promised that in due time the Holy Spirit would grant them an enlightenment, that all of His words might be clearly understood. This portion, now due to be understood, is therefore becoming clear to those of spiritual discernment.

Then, that they might gradually learn that these things belonged to a distant time, Jesus explained that first He must suffer many things and be rejected of that nation. Coming back to an explanation of what would be the signs of His presence, in answer to their question as recorded in Matthew 24, He declared, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man."

Here we have something definite, concrete. We know what to look for at the time when the Kingdom will be due for establishment—the time when the Sun of Righteousness will begin to shine forth from one end of heaven to the other. The signs of the times will not be in the outward condition of the world; for on the contrary everything will be going along in as quiet and orderly a manner as ever, just as in the days of Noah, just as before the Deluge came, and just as in the days of Lot, before the destruction of Sodom—they ate, drank, married, built, bought, sowed, planted, as usual. These things are not signs of wickedness, but are mentioned to show us that there will be no outward sign to indicate to the world the time of the Second Presence of Christ, when He will begin to deal with the world and to set up His Kingdom. R. 5455

Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near---at the doors! Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

– Matthew 24:32-34 –

It is our understanding that the fig tree was a type or picture of the Jewish nation, to whom Jesus came when it was proper to expect fruitage. But coming to the Jews, he did not find the nation bearing fruit. The great ones of the nation were cast off; and only the publicans and sinners were ready to accept his message—the very ones the others would not recognize at all.

On the day previous Jesus had said to the Jewish nation, "Ye shall see Me no more until that Day." So He declared of this tree that it should be blighted to the end of the aion, or Age. Again, when speaking to His disciples respecting the end of this Age, Jesus declared, "When ye shall see the fig tree putting forth leaves, then know that summer is nigh"—that the winter time, the blight time of the nation of Israel and of the world, is at an end.

In other words, one of the signs of a New Dispensation would be the sprouting, or indications of life, hope, promise, amongst the Jews.



It is remembered that the nation had a blight upon it. At the end of his ministry, Jesus, riding to the brow of the hill overlooking Jerusalem, said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13:34,35.) A very short time afterwards it began to lose its power; and the Jewish nation lost its identity completely as a nation in the year 70—37 years after.

While the Jewish nation has thus been in hades, in the tomb, so to speak, it is as a nation that they are referred to thus. Of course, they go into the tomb as individuals, as every one else; but as a nation also they have gone into the tomb. But according to the Scriptures there will be a resurrection of the Jewish nation,* and a picture of that raising up is given where it says, "the bones came together, bone to his bone," etc. (Ezek. 37:7.) Those bones represent the whole house of Israel, which is referred to as saying, "Our hope is dead" (Vs. 11); our ambitions are all gone or are asleep!

So God is telling them that all the Kingdom hopes of that nation are to be revived. As Jesus said to his disciples in one of his discourses—When ye see the fig tree beginning to put forth its tender leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. We see the fig tree putting forth its leaves today (see Matt. 24:32; Mark 13:28); we see the Jews looking back to Jerusalem, and we thus see the fig tree putting forth its leaves, or giving signs of life, looking forward to the re-establishment of the Jewish nation. God says there will be such a Jewish nation again.* R. 5503 and R. 4788

**Editor's Note: The Parable of the Fig Tree prophecy was fulfilled in 1948. Pastor Charles Russell wrote these words in the year 1911. Since that time, the Jewish people indeed regathered from all parts of the world and officially became the nation of Israel in the year 1948.*



As the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

– Matthew 24:37-39 –

As [Jesus] expressly foretold, the world in general goes on as usual, in utter ignorance of his presence and of his harvest work and of the beginning of the Day of the Lord; it continues as usual—eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, planting and building. It is a mistake to suppose that our Lord, in giving this information respecting the events of the time of his presence, meant us to understand that it would be wicked for the world to eat, drink, plant, build and marry; these are not improper things, and any such interpretation is strained and faulty, and results from an utter misconception of the subject. Our Lord wished merely to show that the world would be in ignorance of his presence “in the days of the Son of Man,” and in utter ignorance of the great time of trouble, or “Day of Vengeance” which the inauguration of his Kingdom will signify to the kingdoms of this world, which are to be dashed to pieces as potters’ vessels. The ignorance of the impending trouble here will be similar to that of the people who lived in the days of Noah.

As “the days of Noah” were not days before Noah’s time, neither are “the days of the Son of Man” days before the Son of Man’s presence. The days of the Son of Man are the days of his parousia, or presence,—invisible and unknown to the world; known only to the Watchers and seen by them only with the eye of faith. “As in the days that were before the flood they were eating, drinking, marrying, ...and knew not, ... so shall also the [parousia] (presence) of the Son of Man be:” —the world will simply go on about its usual affairs, and know not of the Lord’s presence. —Matt. 24:38. R. 2974

So we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

– 2 Peter 1:19 –

While the revealment of our Lord’s presence thus illuminates the hearts of his faithful ones as the Day-star (2 Pet. 1:19) and causes them to understand, and not be in darkness with the world in respect to his plans, present and future, the bright-shining of the Lord’s presence shall affect nominal Christians, and the civilized world in general, also, but in a totally different manner; for the character of Christ’s “harvest” work, during this period of his presence, is such as to cause a general opening of eyes along the lines of justice and injustice, righteousness and sin, the rights of mankind and the wrongs of mankind. The light which has been shining out for the past twenty years is awakening the world to a realization of its rights and its wrongs; to a realization that the earth belongs to mankind in general and not exclusively to a few who have seized it and fenced it. This same light is exposing the corruption and falsity of many long-venerated theories and institutions, religious, political, social and financial. It was in reference to this light of his presence at the second advent that our Lord declared that this day of his presence would bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the secret counsels of the heart,—for there is nothing hidden that shall not be uncovered. (Luke 8:17.) And in this connection let it not be overlooked that the Apostle declares that Satan’s power to deceive the world through Antichrist is to be consumed by “the bright-shining [epiphania] of his presence [parousia].” —2 Thes. 2:8. R. 2979

The Jewish Age Points to The Gospel Age

God has linked together the history of the Jewish and Gospel Churches by the peculiar tie of type and anti-type; and this typical character of the Jewish dispensation was frequently referred to by the Apostles under the direction of the Holy Spirit. From them we learn that it was typical in all its features—its laws (Heb.10:1), its ceremonies (Heb. 9:9), its sacrifices (Heb. 10:11), its sacred days, its times and seasons (Col. 2:16-17), and also the exact length of its duration. If God has thus, in the Jewish dispensation, given us an exact pattern of the Gospel dispensation, that pattern is itself a prophecy. And what a clear revelation of truth should it be to us, who stand amid the closing scenes of the Gospel age, when nearly all of that prophecy has passed into history! With the keys furnished in the New Testament, the faithful student may now clearly read the times and seasons indicated. R. 598

The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

– Matthew 13:39 –

[The Jewish] dispensation ended with a harvest, in which harvest-time Jesus was present in the flesh as Lord of the harvest, and the faithful disciples who followed in his footprints were privileged to be co-workers with him in reaping the fleshly house and gathering the ripened grain into the Gospel garner—into the privileged condition of the Gospel saints. In the beginning of that harvest Jesus said to his disciples, “Lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest. I send you to reap,” etc. John 4:35-38.

Just so the anti-typical or Gospel dispensation ends with a harvest, at which time Jesus is again due to be present, not now as then in the flesh, but in glory, a spiritual being, invisible to human eyes. Say not now that there are yet many years and then cometh harvest; but, ye faithful children of God, lift up your eyes and look on the fields now, for they are white already to harvest. And every faithful disciple who now follows in the Master’s footprints has the privilege now of being a co-worker with him in reaping this harvest. Such are the angels or messengers referred to in Matt. 13:39, who are reaping under his direction. And he directs them through the Word by opening their understanding to discern the times and seasons there indicated, and the work to be accomplished therein.

The Jewish age or period of fleshly Israel’s favor ended with a “harvest” period of forty years. This began with our Lord’s baptism, lasted three and a half years, as a national test, and when that nation was rejected at the time of our Lord’s crucifixion, the harvest work proper began—a separation of the wheat from the chaff—a time of gathering out of that rejected nation such as were “Israelites indeed,” previous to the great time of trouble which came upon the nation, and which utterly destroyed their national polity A.D. 70. All of this is likened to a “harvest” season, and its first garnering of the wheat, and subsequent burning of the chaff. And our Lord gives instructions to us (Matt. 13:1-58) that this Gospel age of spiritual Israel’s favor will likewise end with a time of harvest, gathering the wheat together, and ultimately destroying the tares. In the harvesting of the fleshly house our Lord, in the flesh, was the Chief-Reaper, and his Apostles were co-laborers; in the harvesting of the spiritual house our Lord, a spirit being, is to be present as the Chief-Reaper, and members of the spiritual house are also to be reapers, —some on each side of the veil. R. 600 and R. 2977

Wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together.
– Matthew 24:28 –

While it is true that harvest is a time for separating, it is also a time for gathering. Should the farmer be content to thresh out his grain and leave it scattered on the ground? No; he knows that unless he afterward gathers and stores it his labor will be lost: it will decay on the ground, or the birds will come and devour it. Now the Lord is a wise husbandman, and he indicates that both the separating and the gathering are parts of the harvest work, saying, "Come out of her, my people [separate yourselves from Babylon];" and again, "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice."

We, therefore, that are separated from Babylon are not to stand alone and separate from each other; but we are to gather together in Christian fellowship and communion around the table of the Lord—the harvest table, so richly and bountifully spread for us. "Wheresoever the carcass [the food] is, there will the eagles [the hungry and farsighted eagle class, who discern the food from afar off] be **gathered together.**" (Matt. 24:27,28.) We are to assemble ourselves together and to strengthen the bonds of love and fellowship, and "so much the more as we see the day approaching." And in so doing it is a matter of special importance that we carefully consider what the Scriptures present as profitable for the various companies of the saints thus assembled. R. 1890

In the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

– Daniel 2:44 –

The scrutinizing Watcher will readily perceive that it is one thing to know the time when earthly dominion shall cease, and give place to the completed Kingdom of God, while it would be a totally different matter to know when the "stone" Kingdom would begin to smite the image upon its feet, preparatory to its destruction. This period of smiting of the image, which precedes its destruction, must also precede the full establishment of God's Kingdom to fill the whole earth. This smiting period is the period of the parousia; the period in which Christ is present, gathering his "jewels," his "elect," and in which he will smite the nations with the rod of iron and with the two-edged sword of his mouth, dashing them in pieces as a potter's vessel, and preparing mankind for the royal majesty of the heavens. Let the Watchers note critically the Prophet Daniel's explanation that it will be "**in the days of these kings**" (the kingdom represented in the feet and toes of the image—the divisions of Papal Rome) that the God of heaven will **set up** his Kingdom. God began the selection of his Kingdom class in the days of Civil Rome—represented by the legs of iron: he has continued the selection ever since, and the **setting up** or bringing of his Church (Kingdom) into power comes toward the close of Gentile power, but before it ends; for it is to be "**in the days of these kings**" and not after their days. Now note the similarity of the expressions "in the days of the Son of Man" and "in the days of these kings," and give both the same significance and remember that, as we have proven, they will be the **same days**—days before the lease of Gentile power expires, in which the Son of Man will be present to "**set up**" his Kingdom, which shall a little later destroy all these Gentile Kingdoms. R. 2977

Now to you, O profane, wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, whose iniquity shall end, thus says the Lord GOD: “Remove the turban, and take off the crown. Nothing shall remain the same. Exalt the humble, and humble the exalted. Overthrown, overthrown, I will make it overthrown! It shall be no longer, until He comes whose right it is, and I will give it to Him.”

– Ezekiel 21:25-27 –

When we look through the prophecies relating to the Times of the Gentiles, we find that there are two promises—one appertaining to the Jews and the other to the world. During this period of 2,520 years, known as the Times of the Gentiles, the Jew was to have more or less tribulation from the Gentiles. He was not to be free—he would be more or less under subjection to the “Powers that be.” At the close of this period the Church will be glorified. The Kingdom will not be established until that time. At the end of the Gentile Times Messiah will appear and set up His Kingdom. Referring to the last king of Israel, Zedekiah, we read, “Thou profane, and wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end; thus saith the Lord God, Remove the diadem and take off the crown; ...I will overturn, overturn, overturn it; and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it to Him.” (Eze. 21:25-27.) If this period of overturning be rightly understood to be 2,520 years, it would seem to end with the Second Coming of Christ and the setting up of His Kingdom. The Gentile supremacy was to pass from nation to nation until the time of the establishment of Messiah’s Kingdom. That would prove that the treading down of Jerusalem would then cease—it would not continue after the end of these Gentile Times. R. 5328

You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors. The wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

– Daniel 2:34-35 –

The Church is not neglected in the picture of earthly dominion given to Nebuchadnezzar, and interpreted by the Prophet Daniel. She is shown therein as a stone taken out of the mountain without hands (by divine power). This stone represents God’s Kingdom (Christ and the Church); and the inspired dream and explanation show that the disaster which shall come to the kingdoms of this world, represented in the image and in the toes of its feet, would come through the impact, or smiting of the image by the stone.

The explanation is that— “The great God hath made known to the king [and indirectly more particularly to the Watchers] what shall come to pass hereafter.” “In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [it shall have no successors, for the others will all be destroyed]; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.” Here is a prophecy which gives a full delineation of the empires of earth, to which God granted dominion during the interim between the removal of the typical crown from his typical kingdom, and the institution of the crown of righteousness and glory upon the true King, in the inauguration of the Kingdom of Heaven.

R. 2976

The Jewish age, from the death of Jacob to the death of Christ, was 1845 years long—to the beginning of our Lord’s ministry 1841-1/2 years long, and to the time of the utter destruction of their nation, in A.D. 70, 1881-1/2 years long. Notice how the Gospel age corresponds to this. The Gospel age did not begin with our Lord’s birth: it began after our Lord’s death and resurrection, when he commissioned his disciples to “preach the Gospel to every creature.” (Our Lord’s previous work during the three and a half years of his ministry was the offering of the Kingdom to the fleshly house, to test them, and to prove that they were unready to receive the true Kingdom.) Applying the foregoing measurements of the Jewish age to the Gospel age, beginning at the time of our Lord’s death and resurrection and the Pentecostal blessing, in the Spring of A.D. 33, we find that the period of 1841-1/2 years from the death of Jacob to the beginning of our Lord’s ministry, would measure from the Spring of A.D. 33 to the Autumn of 1874; and the 1845 years of the Jewish age, from the death of Jacob to the rejection of fleshly Israel, applied here, measuring from the Spring of A.D. 33, would reach to the Spring of 1878; and the 1881-1/2 years from the death of Jacob to the full destruction of Israel’s polity in A.D. 70, finds its correspondency in this Gospel age, by measuring 1881-1/2 years from the Spring of A.D. 33, which would bring us exactly to (Autumn) 1914 A.D.—the very year and time shown us by Daniel’s prophecy to be the full end and limit of the “Gentile times.” Can this be accidental? Nay; it is design. What stronger testimony could be asked by the eye and ear of faith? Surely, anything plainer or clearer would be sight, and leave no room for faith.

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:19-21

We find that Israel’s Jubilee year, in which every person and family had every lost possession and all personal liberties restored to them, was intended to be a type of the coming time of restitution, when a full opportunity for attaining freedom from sin and from Satan, and from the hereditary weakness of the flesh, shall be presented to all, and when the earth shall again revert to the human family in general, for whom it was created, and for whom, after being lost through Adam’s transgression, it was redeemed by Christ. We find that the Scriptures indicate, in connection with these jubilees, a system of counting by multiples; and that a Jubilee of Jubilees, or fifty times fifty years (2520 years) constitutes a Great Jubilee cycle and that such a cycle began to count after fleshly Israel had observed her last typical Jubilee. We find from the Scriptures that Israel’s nineteenth Jubilee year,—in the year B.C. 626,—was her last. Knowing that the Jubilee was a part of the Law, and that no feature of that Law, not one jot or tittle, can pass away without reaching a fulfillment, or antitype, we measure the cycle of the Great Jubilee 2500 years from the date when the last typical Jubilee was kept (626 B.C.), and find accordingly that the antitypical Jubilee or Great Jubilee of Jubilees should have begun in October, 1874. Thus,—625 years B.C. plus 1875 years A.D. are 2500 years, which would include the Jubilee year: consequently, with the end of the year 1874 (Jewish time, October), the antitypical Jubilee of 1,000 years, instead of another typical one year, was due to begin. Watchers will note carefully the correspondency of this date, and the character of the event to be expected, with the finding of our previous examinations (1 and 2), which showed us this very same date, October, 1874, was the time when the “harvest” of this age was due to begin, and when the Lord himself, as the Chief Reaper, was due to be present. The only thing necessary to connect this Jubilee prophecy with the others, is the statement of the Apostle Peter in Acts 3:21, which shows that our Lord must be present (at his second advent) at the beginning of the times of restitution of all things, and as already seen, these restitution times are the Antitypical Jubilee times typified by Israel’s Jubilees. R. 2978

We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, as it is written: “EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NOR HAVE ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN THE THINGS WHICH GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.” But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

– 1 Corinthians 2:7,9-10 –

What portions of the sure word of prophecy indicate that the presence of our Lord began in the Autumn of 1874? We answer that there are several lines of prophecy which interlace and corroborate each other in this testimony; but, as might be expected, since the entire matter was to be hidden from the world, and “none of the wicked,” but only the “wise” were to understand (Dan. 12:10), and these wise only to understand when the due time would come, —it must be evident to all that these prophecies, while clear and forcible and positive, are nevertheless somewhat under cover. We cannot here attempt to give a complete and comprehensive statement of these prophecies; that has already been done in five volumes aggregating twenty-three hundred pages.* Here we can only give a very brief resume, leaving it for the true Watchers to seek that they may find; to knock if they would have the door of divine revelation opened to them; to use the keys which God has provided, if they are interested in penetrating into “the deep things” of the divine Word, now due to be understood; to eat of the meat of present truth, “things new and old,” if they hunger and thirst after righteousness and true knowledge. R. 2976 *MILLENNIAL DAWN VOLUMES 1-5

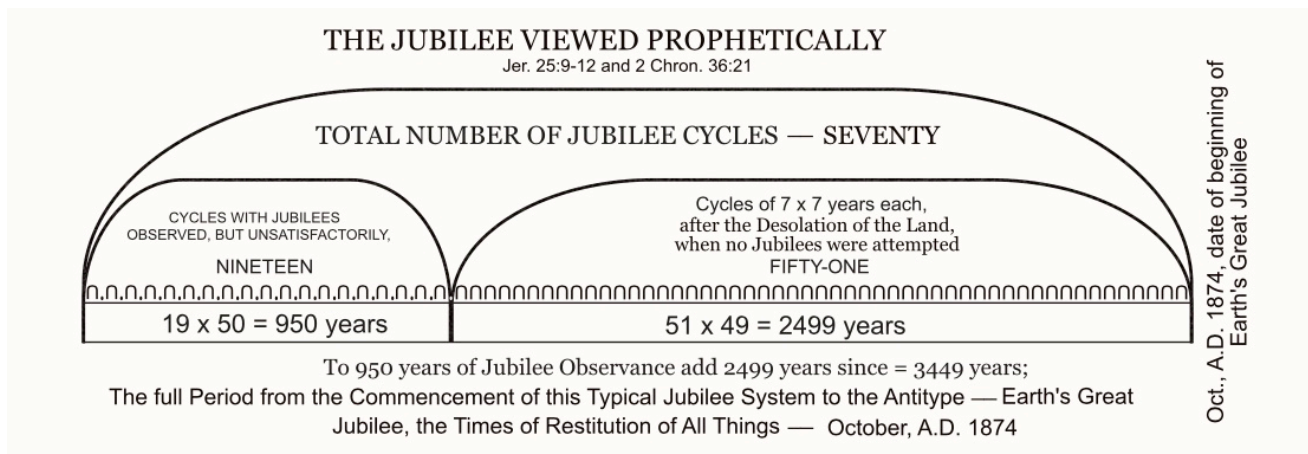


Chart found in MILLENNIAL DAWN VOLUME 2, p. 196

Jesus Returned for His Bride

Each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming.

– 1 Corinthians 15:23 –

[This verse] refers to the entire Church (the Christ, head and body) as the first fruit, because the discussion is with reference to “every man in his own order,” and not with reference to our Lord Jesus personally. The Lord Jesus and the Church, which is his body, united in glory will constitute the first fruit, the first resurrection (the overcomers being partakers of his resurrection. Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:4. Compare 2 Pet. 1:4.) “Afterward they that are [who shall become] Christ’s at [during] his presence;” that is, after the close of the Gospel age and the glorification of the Christ will come the second order or class of those to be “made alive.” —Vs. 22.

The description of verse 23 relates, therefore, entirely to the Millennial age, which will begin with the glorification of those who have become Christ’s during the Gospel age and including the perfecting of the remainder of those who shall during the Millennial age accept Christ and the life which is in him. Verse 23 reaches, therefore, down to and beyond the final trial at the end of the Millennial age, represented in Rev. 20:7-10.

The Church of Christ, his body, is to share with him in “his resurrection,” “the first resurrection,” a complete and instantaneous lifting out of the state of death into the perfection and completeness of glory, honor and immortality, which God has provided for them who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, his joint-heirs. These are all called the “first-fruits unto God of his creatures.” (James 1:18.) The after-fruits of God’s great plan will be developed during the Millennial age, yet there shall not enter into the approved condition any who will not use the means then within their grasp. R. 3131 and R. 2794

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day---and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (NIV)

– 2 Timothy 4:8 –

That the early Church lived in joyful anticipation of this longed-for event is manifest from many scriptures. (See 1 John 2:18; 2 Tim. 2:18; 2 Thes. 2:1-5.) And when the Apostle Paul had about finished his course, he looked forward to this event as the culmination of his own and the whole Church’s hope, saying, “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing.” (2 Tim. 4:8.) To them the appearing of the Lord was the consummation of their hopes, and their one concern was to be found approved of him at his appearing. R. 1796

For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

– 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 –

The chief work of our Lord during this “harvest” time, and especially in the forepart of it (when he calls his faithful servants of the Gospel age and reckons with them and rewards them), respects his Church as a whole, and not merely its living members. And here we should note the Apostle’s statement respecting this time and work. He informs us that the Lord’s dealings during this harvest will be first with “**the dead in Christ**,” saying, “We which are alive and remain to the coming [presence] of the Lord, shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep [those of the Church already dead],... for the dead in Christ shall rise first.” (1 Thes. 4:15,16). Taking this statement in connection with our Lord’s parable, it means that the faithful sleeping in death will be resurrected, reckoned with, rewarded, before the reckoning with and rewarding of the living members of the Church begins. Accordingly, if it be true, as we have briefly presented it, foregoing, —that we are now living “in the days of the Son of Man,” and that his **presence** began in the Autumn of 1874, then we should also believe that the resurrection of the saints which “were asleep” was due, and took place at some period not long after our Lord’s **parousia** began. And we are able to fix upon a date for this with comparative certainty, although the entire matter is invisible to natural eyes and can be discerned only with the eye of faith and by the light of our lamp, the Scriptures.

To all who understand the necessity for the sleep of the saints (namely, that it was because the call of the Church took place before the time divinely arranged for the establishment of the Kingdom), it will seem eminently proper that the King should, **immediately** on taking office as King, liberate from the prison house of death his faithful followers, who during his absence manifested their faithfulness, and for whom crowns of righteousness have been set aside, to be given them at his return in power and great glory. Indeed, it would be unreasonable to suppose any prolonged delay of their resurrection, after our Lord takes to himself his great power and begins his reign.

Furthermore, we note a beautiful analogy here; for, thus considered, our Lord’s resurrection a few days after his taking of office as King in typical Israel, corresponds to, or parallels the resurrection of the Church, “the body of Christ” a few days after his taking to himself honor and glory and power as the King of nations, in the Spring of 1878. Not only so, but the Book of Revelation, in a scene which belongs to that particular time, and in a description of the opening of the “harvest” of this Gospel age, shows “one like unto the Son of Man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle,” beginning the work of reaping the harvest of this age: and there we find the significant statement, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord **from henceforth**; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow them.” —Rev. 14:13-14; Rev. 14:16.

R. 2981/R. 2982

Through the testimony of God's Word we understand that the Resurrection began in 1878; not that we saw anything by the natural sight of the eyes, but that through the eyes of our understanding we recognized that the time had come for that great transaction, the First Resurrection, as far as the sleeping saints were concerned; and we understand that there commenced the time mentioned by the writer of Revelation, when he declared, "Blessed are they who die in the Lord from henceforth," marking a particular time, before which it would not be a blessing to die, but after which it would be a blessing. "From henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." —Rev. 14:13.

That particular time came, we believe, in 1878; then, not only the Apostles were awakened, but all the faithful in Christ Jesus, all the sleeping members of the Body of Christ. That was the beginning of the Resurrection of the Body of Christ—the Lord judging among His people first, before the judgment of the world. He foretold that when He would come He would call His own servants and reckon with them—not with the world—giving reward to those of His Church who had gone before, giving them part in the First Resurrection, and then afterward dealing with us, "who are alive and remain," so that each one of us who are of the Lord's people, may at death be "changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," during the sounding of the last trumpet—the Seventh. R. 5566

God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved. God shall help her, just at the break of dawn.

– Psalm 46:5 –

The destruction of the Temple of God, which is the Church, began there in the destruction of the chief corner stone and has progressed since—during the remainder of the fifth day, all of the sixth day, and we are now in the beginning of the seventh day— "very early in the morning." And the promise of the Lord is that the Lord's resurrection shall be completed about this time— "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5.) Thus we view the matter, that the Lord was a part of the three days dead and rose on the third day, early in the morning, and that likewise the First Resurrection will be completed—the entire body of Christ will be raised on the third day, early in the morning.

That blessed day is the resurrection day, the Millennial day, early in the morning of which the overcoming Church will be delivered. While carefully guarding the seal of promise, we may, therefore, as the apostles indicate, look for that blessed hope at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, who shall then change our vile body—the Church, both individually and collectively—and make it like unto his glorious body; for, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Titus 2:12,13; 1 Pet. 1:7; Phil. 3:20,21; Col. 3:4.) It was to this blessed day that Paul looked forward with joyful hope, and to which he bade all of those look forward who, like himself, were sealed with the same holy spirit of promise, the earnest of their inheritance, saying, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." —2 Tim. 4:8. R. 3375 and R. 2064

**Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.
Revelation 2:10**

At midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming! go out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you, but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding, and the door was shut.

– Matthew 25:6-10 –

The scene of the parable is laid near to the close of the Gospel age, as is indicated by its opening statement, “Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom.” The parable has not been applicable all the way down through the Gospel age, but to our understanding is applicable now, because we are living in the end of the age, at the time when the Bridegroom will be present—at the time when the wise virgins will go in to the wedding and the foolish will be excluded. The understanding of this parable at the present time, therefore, should be meat in due season to all who are the Lord’s true followers. Throughout the Scriptures the Church is represented as a Bride in preparation for her marriage. The Bridegroom uniformly is the Lord Jesus, to whom belongs the entire inheritance, and the opportunity granted to the Lord’s followers in the present time is that of becoming his Bride and joint-heirs. They have no status or relationship to the King eternal except as they obtain it by union with the King’s Son. It should be noted that the parable does not describe the world in general, but merely the “virgin” class—the Church class—the pure ones who have left the world, who have come to God through Christ, who have been justified by faith in His blood, and who have thus been made prospective members of the Kingdom class, the Bride class. This parable shows, then, that in the end of this Age a separation, or division, will take place in the true Church of Christ.

One of the special lessons of the parable is to show that amongst the pure, the wise, the consecrated people of God, there are two classes. For a time these will be all together—unseparated. But in the fulfilling of this parable certain circumstances and conditions and truths will develop and separate these two classes of saints, virgins.

The parable shows all the virgins as sleeping, waiting for the coming of the Bridegroom. Apparently, there is no difference; but really there is a difference—the wise had a larger supply of oil than had the foolish. Then came an announcement of the presence of the Bridegroom and a call to go forth to meet him. This implies that something from the prophetic Word at the appropriate time will call the attention of all the Virgin class to the presence of Messiah. But at the Second Advent it will be as it was at the First Advent, when John said of Jesus, “Behold there standeth one among you whom ye know not.” We are not to expect the Second Coming of Christ in the flesh, but as a spirit being.

The Lord exhorts that his consecrated followers of the Church or Virgin class be constantly on the alert, because they know neither the day nor the hour of the Master’s coming and of the invitation to go in to the wedding. The parable shows, however, that although the time of the Master’s coming could not be known in the past, nevertheless, it would be known to all of the Virgin class “in due time.” It will be announced, as indicated in the cry. The cry will be so loud that all of the Virgins will hear it, even though the world will have no knowledge of it. The Master merely wished us to understand that the great event would not be foretold in advance. R. 3867, R. 5522, R. 4693

The wise are those who have not only consecrated their all to the Lord, but who are living accordingly, --not unto sin, nor unto self, nor unto sectarianism, but unto the Lord: these, as intimated in the parable, will find no difficulty in trimming their lamps and recognizing the presence of the Bridegroom.

R. 2978



We are living in the parousia (presence) of the Son of Man—the wise virgins are already falling into line in the procession and entering in to the marriage; the full number will soon be found and the door will be shut. All in this watching attitude of heart, with the full measure of the Spirit of the Lord in their hearts will be very quickly attracted by the first intimation that the Bridegroom is present. These, trimming their lamps, examining the Scriptures, will quickly discern the truthfulness of the announcement, and speedily prepare and take their places with the wise virgins. The announcement, the truth upon this subject, is indeed a testing, proving which of the professed virgins of the Lord have the oil in their vessels, the right spirit of humility, patience, love, devotion, interest in the things of the Bridegroom. R. 3869

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

– Matthew 25:13 –

Probably on the last Sunday of his earthly ministry our Lord foretold the destruction at Jerusalem, the scattering of his followers, a long period of wars, rumors of wars, etc., and finally his second coming, as recorded in Matthew 25:1-46. This information was most appropriate to the apostles at this very time, for their expectation had run in a different direction—they had been expecting the exaltation of the Lord as the Messiah, and that Jerusalem would be the seat of his empire. They had asked, When shall these things be? and, What shall be the sign of thy presence? and Jesus, in his great prophecy of Matthew 24:1-51, had explained these matters, indicating to them that his second coming would be in strenuous times, when, if it were possible, the very elect would be deceived—in which, as it was in the days of Noah, so it would then be in the days of the Son of Man, that the multitude of the world would be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, and be unaware of the storm impending and the consummation of the age preparatory to the beginning of the new age, of his Kingdom. To impress the matter upon their minds, he gave the parable of the ten virgins—five wise and five foolish.

Those virgins who realize that the Bridegroom has come, those who have trimmed their lamps, those who have joined his procession, are not watching for his **coming**, but know of his **presence**, because that day and hour has come and has not found them unprepared, without sufficient oil. Let us praise God for the blessings and mercies already ours, and go on faithfully rejoicing in the light of our lamps and in the anticipation of the glorious nuptial feast and the later glorious work, with the Bridegroom, of blessing all the families of the earth. He that hath this knowledge will by it be separated more and more from the world and its spirit, and be gradually more and more transformed from glory to glory in the likeness of the Bridegroom. R. 3869

There will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved, but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

– Matthew 24:21-22 –

We who are living in this Day see the beginning of these foretold events. We see the prelude to the great Battle of Armageddon. Our thought is that the Armageddon itself will be the mighty “Earthquake” spoken of in Revelation. (Rev. 16:16-18.) In this great revolution and in the succeeding anarchy all earthly institutions will be swept away. The result of the anger, hatred and strife, if permitted to continue indefinitely, would be so terrible that it would bring about the destruction of the race; but for the Elect's sake, that they may begin their glorious reign, God will cut short the carnage, and will set up His own Kingdom under Christ and His elect Church. Christ and His Bride will take over the kingdoms of this world, and thus will hinder the strife of men from going to the extreme that it would otherwise go. But it will not be stopped until the Present Order shall have been wholly dissolved. R. 5735

Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.

– Luke 21:28 –

Very evidently, therefore, this reckoning with the Church and the reward of the faithful will precede our Lord's apokalupsis, or revealing. To use one of his own figures, we might say that his day or time of presence— “the day of the Lord” —will come “as a thief in the night;” and in this time he will gather his virgin Church, discriminatingly, and take her as his Bride to himself, —changing her from earthly nature and conditions to spiritual or heavenly conditions, to be like him, see him as he is, and share his glory.

The Christian has a special purpose in the world—to be a preservative power, to have, as it were, antiseptic qualities, and to draw out all the good qualities of those with whom he is connected. This is the mission of the Christian in respect to the world. And since the saints have always been “the salt of the earth,” we may readily discern that the taking away of the salt of the earth would leave mankind proportionately in a deplorable condition, in which corruption would spread rapidly: and this is exactly what the Scriptures indicate.

**You are the salt of the earth.
Matthew 5:13**

We are not, however, to understand that the Lord will take the Church away to heaven, and then come back again, and make his epiphania or apokalupsis; for that would be a third advent, which is nowhere even hinted in Scripture. The “change” of the Church from earthly conditions and nature to heavenly, spirit conditions and nature, will be first in order; and then they twain, the Bridegroom, Christ, and the Church, his bride, thus made one in nature and in heavenly, or spirit power, will commence the work of putting down all rule and authority contrary to the divine rule; —bringing all things into subjection to the heavenly Kingdom, the Millennial Kingdom. Our Lord and his Church will not be absent from the earth during the period of the world's tribulation; but, on the contrary, will continue present, but invisible, bringing upon the world the tribulation foretold in the Scriptures, which will result in the humbling of the hearts of mankind, that they may say, eventually, “Come, let us go up to the mountain [Kingdom] of the house of the Lord, that he may teach us of his ways, that we may walk in his paths.” —Isa. 2:3. R. 2974 and R. 5426

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

– 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 –

To our understanding, the last trump, the seventh of the series of symbolical trumpets, began in 1874, just before our Lord took to himself his great power and began its exercise—began his reign: its sound is to continue until the close of the Millennial age, a thousand years. This “change” “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” that is to occur to the living members of the body of Christ, will indeed be a momentary change as respects each individual after he shall have rendered his accounts before the great King, and been accepted of him as a joint-heir in the Kingdom; but it does not imply that all of these will be changed in the same moment. Quite to the contrary, the judging of the living members of the Church, the going in of the wise virgins in the end of this age, will be a gradual work; it has already been in progress, and is not yet finished. It will include the rejection of the “foolish virgins,” and the utter casting out of any who may take off the “wedding garment” of Christ’s righteousness, as shown in one of the parables. R. 2982

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

– 1 John 3:2 –

“The Bible makes no attempt to describe heaven itself, nor its inhabitants. We are merely told that God is a Spirit ‘dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can ever see’ personally. Man must discern God in his works, the noblest of which is the perfect man, made in Jehovah’s moral likeness on the earthly plane—a little lower than the angels on the spirit plane. The most that the Word declares of our heavenly inheritance is that ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him.’—1 Cor. 2:9.

“But while refusing to inform us of the heavenly conditions, God does give us a soul-satisfying portion. Through the Apostle he declares, ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he (the glorified Jesus) shall be revealed (at his Second Advent, in power and great glory) we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is,’ while others not thus ‘changed’ from human to spirit nature by the ‘First Resurrection’ power will not see him as he is, but only as he shall be revealed in his providences and judgments, which every eye shall recognize.

“How satisfactory! How far beyond all that we could have asked or thought! ‘Like Him.’ What more could we ask? ‘Like him,’ whom ‘God hath highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers’! We stand amazed at such grace! Moreover, we can realize that he who called us to become ‘partakers of the divine nature’ and joint-heirs with the Redeemer in his Mediatorial Kingdom has provided for our every comfort and joy in that heavenly state, the details of which we may not now grasp. Prophetically of these it is written, ‘I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.’—Psa. 17:15.” R. 4675

Who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

– Philippians 3:21 –

While it is true, and elsewhere taught, that the “little flock” shall be changed and given spiritual bodies like that of Christ, and that they will thus be like him, yet, this is not what the apostle is here teaching. It should be noticed that the word body is not plural, but singular; and that this letter is addressed to the saints in Christ. And since the apostle likens the church to a human body, the head of which represents our Lord, and the various other members the individual members of the church, we are warranted from the context in believing that the body to which he here refers, is the church, and that this is another instance in which he employs this figure.

In the Emphatic Diaglott it is translated, “the body of our humiliation.” And this body, the church, which in God’s estimation is a holy body, a body justified, and consecrated to his service, and therefore acceptable to him, and by him anointed for the glorious work of carrying into execution his great plan of salvation by the restitution of all things, is to be changed from its present condition of humiliation to a glorious condition—to a condition suitable to its real character, and the high position it is destined to fill as the bride of Christ.

While, in God’s estimation, the church is now regarded from the standpoint of her future exaltation as a glorious body, yet now, in the estimation of men, she is despised, rejected and hated, as was her Lord; because the world knows her not even as it knew him not. The world does not realize that this body, now in humiliation, is a body of kings and priests who shall by and by bear rule over angels and men.

“When Christ ...shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Col. 3:4.) Then, the church shall in reality be a glorious body, a body suitable in every way for the high position she shall fill as the bride of Christ—the companion of the Son of God for all eternity, his joint-heir in all things, and his efficient and thoroughly capable co-worker in the great mission to which Jehovah hath appointed the Christ—head and body—bridegroom and bride. Together they shall constitute the great Prophet, Priest and King whom Jehovah hath anointed; and their glory shall appear to all intelligent creatures in heaven and in earth. R. 1102

**When the Chief Shepherd appears,
you will receive the crown of glory
that does not fade away.**

1 Peter 5:4

**Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me,
to give to every one according to his work.
Revelation 22:12**

Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.

– Revelation 3:11 –

[This verse] teaches, in harmony with the entire Bible, that there can be no remedy for the reign of Sin and Death, except that which God has provided, to be applied at the Second Coming of the Redeemer, when He will set up His Kingdom. Messiah will be quite competent, backed by Power Divine, to cope with sin, sorrow, pain, death—everything that is now troubling humanity. When the Church shall have been selected from the world as the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife and Joint-heir in His Kingdom, everything will be ready for the blessed work of restitution, restoration, resurrection, regeneration of mankind—to bring the willing and obedient back to the image and likeness of the Creator, lost through Adam’s sin and gained through the willing obedience of Christ, even unto death—even the ignominious death of the cross.

Our text addresses not the world, not the nominal Church—but the true Church. The true Church, having turned away from sin, having accepted Christ, having given their hearts to God, through Christ having been accepted of the Father and begotten of the Holy Spirit, are children of God; and, as the Apostle says, “If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ” our Lord. (Rom. 8:17.) A crown of glory is set apart for each son thus received of the Father, and the name of each is recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

So far as God is concerned, the whole matter is settled. But so far as the Church is concerned, it still remains for them to fulfill their Covenant. Having presented their bodies a living sacrifice to God, acceptable through Christ, they are to continue in that attitude—day by day gladly presenting their bodies, willing to endure, to suffer, to be anything and everything that God would be pleased to have them be. All who do this continue to grow in character-likeness to the Lord Jesus; and all such will thereby make their calling and election sure. R. 5532

This is the thought of the text; namely, Be of good courage. It will not be long until I will come to receive you to Myself. Let the thought of the Kingdom and of the Divine blessing connected with it cheer, strengthen, comfort you, and make you strong to do God’s will faithfully, nobly, courageously, loyally. “Hold fast that which thou hast.” Do not let slip from you the blessed relationship which was entered into, which was established for you by Me, your Master, when I made you acceptable on the basis of your Covenant to be dead with Me, to suffer with Me, to give up all earthly ambitions and to strive daily for the great prize which I set before you—a joint-heirship in My Kingdom. The crown is yours now, by virtue of the arrangement which I have made with you as your Advocate, and by virtue of the Covenant of Sacrifice which you have made with Me. Hold fast your crown! R. 5532

For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope, because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

– Romans 8:19-23 –

Who can look around [himself], and consider the state of the world in which we live, and not be obliged to confess that clouds and darkness are now on every side? “The whole creation travaileth in pain.” Rom. 8:22. Look where we will, we see confusion, quarrels, wars between nations, helplessness of statesmen, discontent and grumbling of lower classes, excessive luxury among the rich, extreme poverty among the poor, intemperance, impurity, dishonesty, swindling, lying, cheating, covetousness, heathenism, superstition, formality among Christians, decay of vital religion—these are the things which we see continually over the whole globe.

[In these verses] the Apostle tells us that the world's liberty awaits the dawning of the Millennial morning, when the sons of God, Christ the Bridegroom and the Elect Church his Bride, shall be manifest in power and great glory as the divinely appointed Royal Priesthood, judges for the world—to lift them out of bondage to sin and death, and by restitution processes to give back to them, by the close of the Millennium, the full perfection of their human nature and a perfect home, and divine favor and blessing unto everlasting life.

The whole world lieth in the wicked one, overwhelmed in sin and death and corruption. Of them St. Paul declares, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” (Rom. 8:22; Rom. 8:19)—waiting for the High Priest, Head and Body, typified by the glorious garments of the Jewish high priest. Following the picture a little further we see that the high priest in his glorious garments went to the Altar and lifted up his hands and gave his blessing to the people—the blessing of the New Covenant, the blessing of the forgiveness of sins, the blessing of pouring out of the holy Spirit upon all flesh. If in the type a blessing is portrayed, how much greater will be the blessing in reality! R. 1072, R. 4005, R. 4428

Surely, those who know that the King and his Kingdom are the only remedy and the best remedy for all the wrongs and woes of men should be pointing the groaning creation to this, rather than to the poultices of their own contriving which can do no real good. Tell them about the Return of the King! Tell them that his death was the redemption price for all, and that the return of the King is to bind Satan and set free all of his captives! —Acts 3:22,23; Gal. 3:29; 1 Cor. 6:2. R. 1693

Jesus Returned to Reign

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.

– Revelation 1:7 –

The very object of [Christ's] coming will be for the lifting up of the poor and fallen race. St. Peter tells us that there will be "times of refreshing," "Times of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of ALL His Holy Prophets since the world began." —Acts 3:19-21.

How shall we harmonize this last statement with that of our text, which says that He shall come with clouds; that every eye shall see Him; and that all mankind "shall wail because of Him"? The answer is that in harmony with other Scriptures the coming with clouds would signify the coming in a period of trouble—the word "clouds" being used to signify trouble—in the dark Day. He is coming in clouds, in that the time in which He will first manifest Himself to the world will be a very dark Day to the world—"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," and, we are told, never shall be again. (Matt. 24:21.) That will be a dark, cloudy Day.

In that Day, ultimately all eyes shall be opened; and all mankind shall see Him with the eyes of their understanding—see Him in the sense that we see Him now, and have knowledge of Him and of the Father. A blind man sees in the same sense. He says, "I see now" —meaning that he sees with his intellectual sight. R. 5269

Our King will reveal Himself gradually. Some will discern the new Ruler sooner than will others. But ultimately "every eye shall see [Greek, horao, discern] Him." But "He cometh with clouds." And while the clouds of trouble hang heavy and dark, when the mountains—kingdoms of this world—are trembling and falling, when the earth—organized society—is being shaken and disintegrated, some will begin to realize that Jehovah's Anointed is taking to Himself His great power and is beginning His work of laying justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet. For He must reign until He shall have put down all authority and laws on earth which are contrary to those controlling in Heaven. R. 5991

Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

– Revelation 11:15 –

The time is promised when “He shall take to Himself His great power and reign,” exalting His church and giving her “power over the nations,” so that instead of as now, being “subject to the powers that be,” she shall “rule the nations.”

But when will He thus assume control? When the Gospel church, “His body”—Ecclesia—is complete, evil now being permitted, for the trial of faith, and the perfecting of the saints. This time is synchronous with the sounding of the “seventh trumpet.” (Rev. 11:15.) Here the mystery (church) of God is finished—and “the kingdoms of this world” become the kingdoms of our Lord and His anointed (church). Now, we inquire, is this transfer of authority from Satan to Christ caused by the conversion of the nations to Christ through preaching the Gospel? We answer, no; at this time the nations are not converted. See the eighteenth verse: “And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come.” If converted, they would not thus be hostile, neither would God’s wrath come upon them. On the contrary, God teaches in many Scriptures that a great time of trouble will come upon the nations. “Come, behold the desolations which the Lord hath made in the earth; He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth.” (Psa. 46:8-10). This is the way God tells us He will make wars to cease. The next clause informs us that then He “Will be exalted among the heathen and in all the earth.” This chastisement of nations is designed for their good, and is as necessary to them as chastisement to the children of God now, and it will have this effect; for “When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. (Isa. 26:9) R. 532

**I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like
the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven!
He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.
Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that
all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,
and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.
Daniel 7:13-14**

He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet.

– 1 Corinthians 15:25 –

Christ's Millennial work will not consist simply in drawing men's hearts by love, through a knowledge of the truth; it will be more than that: it will be a ruling with an iron rod—with unbending justice, as well, over any disposed to be rebellious against the rules of righteousness then in force. Such will be forced to comply with law and order. The perverse and obstinate will be roughly handled if they attempt resistance. Nothing will be permitted to hinder the divine plan for growth in grace, knowledge and love, and advancement toward perfection under earth's new government. But this forced submission, in which every knee will be forced to bow, and every tongue be forced to confess, will be very different from the drawing of men's hearts which will be progressing at the same time. Hearts are not forced—they cannot be: God has made them free, in his own image. While the whole world will be compelled to render outward obedience to the laws of Christ's Kingdom, those only will be approved of God who do so willingly and from the heart. And only such as submit to the drawing influence of the truth, and render willing obedience from the heart,—who hate sin and love truth and righteousness, will be admitted to the everlasting life beyond the Millennium. It is this class which in the close of the Millennial reign will be addressed in the words of our Lord as foretold: "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom [of earth] prepared for you from the foundation of the world." —Matt. 25:34.

How many will then choose life, by choosing and loving righteousness and obedience to God, we cannot judge from the conduct of the majority now, who love sin rather than righteousness. We should remember that they do not now know God, not yet having seen the height and depth, and length and breadth of his loving plan for human salvation, as we do,—as it will be finally wrought out through Christ. They are blinded by the misrepresentations of Satan, and prejudiced by their perverted judgments and tastes which often make good to appear undesirable and evil to appear desirable.

When in the Millennial age, the whole truth regarding the pleasures of sin and its consequences, and concerning the joys of righteousness and its results, are fully understood by all, and when all are granted a choice, each will decide for himself which is his choice; and though the Judge can read their hearts and know their choice and could decide thus, their future fitness or unfitness to pass beyond the Millennium, through the portals into the everlasting and perfect state, yet he will make a test so searching and thorough as to prove and make manifest the hearts of all to all, as shown in Rev. 20:7-10. R. 1057

**I will make justice the measuring line
and righteousness the plummet.**

Isaiah 28:17

Jesus Returned to Resurrect the World

He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.

– John 5:20-22 –

Amongst the greater works the Lord mentions the quickening of the dead—claiming that, as the Father has the power to raise the dead, so also this power is granted to the Son. Nor should we suppose that our Lord, in this statement, referred to the awakening of Lazarus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. These at most were awakenings, and not, in the full sense of the word, resurrections—these individuals were not lifted up completely out of death into the perfection of life. Rather, we may suppose that our Lord was looking down into the future—to the resurrection of the Church in glory, honor and immortality, and to the subsequent resurrection (under trial or judgment) of the world during the Millennial age.

This thought is borne out by the statement of vs. 22, that all judgment has been transferred to the Son. The resurrection life is to be the reward of those who will successfully pass the judgment. The first resurrection will be the reward of those who are “overcomers” in the trial in progress during this Gospel age, under the conditions of the high calling, and its narrow way to glory, honor and immortality. The Church is on judgment, on trial, under the terms of this high calling, now, during this Gospel age. The Lord will also judge the world of mankind redeemed by his own sacrifice,—during the Millennial age: and in that judgment of the world he has promised to associate with himself the Bride class, whose judgment trial is now in progress. (1 Cor. 6:2.) Those of the world of mankind, awakened and brought to trial during the Millennial age, who shall develop characters in harmony with righteousness, and fully acceptable to the Judge, shall attain to full resurrection, and enter life, complete and everlasting, at the close of the Millennial age—at the close of their day of trial, while the residue will be cut off in the Second Death. R. 2434

The Divine promise and provision is that under Messiah's Kingdom wars will be made to cease forever, and all other calamities will cease. Instead of mankind's going down into the tomb, the reverse order will be established—the resurrection of the dead. Instead of sickness, disease and insanity will come healing, strength, restitution. (Acts 3:19-21.) Speaking of the effect of His Millennial Kingdom, Jesus declares that the curse will be rolled away and God's blessing will come on instead, until there shall be no more sighing or dying or crying or pain. All these blessings are as yet only promises, and hence only for the Church to rejoice in or understand—and they according to their degree of faith in God and of understanding of His Word. R. 5760

**That He may send
Jesus Christ, who
was preached to
you before, whom
heaven must
receive until the
times of restoration
of all things.
Acts 3:20-21**

Do not marvel at this, for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation*.

– John 5:28-29 –

It not only will thus take hold of the people who will not at that time have fallen asleep in death, but this mighty power of the Kingdom will take hold also of those who have gone down into the tomb, and who are in the great prison-house of death; even as our Lord declared, that he will open the prison-doors and say to the prisoners, “Show yourselves; come forth.” “And all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth” (John 5:28-29), and the coming forth shall be unto a resurrection by judgment—that so many as will, may avail themselves of the blessed privileges and opportunities of that great judgment day (the Millennial age), and profit by the stripes and corrections in righteousness which will then be administered, and grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in love and grow in perfection of being, until by the close of the Millennial age, if they will, they shall have arrived back again into full harmony with God, and received fully all the perfections of human nature lost through the fall, and redeemed by the great “**memorial**” of divine favor.

The precious blood will never lose its power till all whom it purchased—all the ransomed of the Lord, shall have heard the voice of their Redeemer calling them to everlasting life. All that are alive, and all that are in their graves, shall thus hear the voice of the Son of Man, and they that hear [obey] shall live—attain perfect and everlasting life.
R. 2714 and R. 858

**The Greek word krisis here rendered "damnation" in the Common Version is more properly "judgment" in the Revised Version and in the Emphatic Diaglott. The same Greek word is translated "judgment" in thirty-nine instances, and in only two others is it rendered "damnation" —a word to which modern theology has attached the unwarrantable idea of eternal torment, but which otherwise signifies simply judgment or trial, including, of course, the result or sentence, to either life or death, at its close. R. 1374*



Jesus Returned to Judge

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom.

– 2 Timothy 4:1 –

As considerations moving to this end the Apostle mentions first the Father, God, —his approval; and second, the Lord Jesus Christ, the appointed Judge of all, living and dead, at his appearing and Kingdom. Only when moved by all of these considerations, can the preaching of the gospel be most effectual. He who does not believe in God the Father and in his Son, our Lord Jesus, could not preach the gospel at all; and even though believing in the Father and the Son, no man can really preach the good tidings intelligently who does not believe also that the Son has been appointed by the Father to judge the world in the appointed Millennial day (Acts 17:31), and that this judgment of the world will be at (during) his manifestation and Kingdom, at his second advent. R. 2229

For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.

John 5:22

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

– John 5:24-27 –

Those who now hear and believe and obey to the extent of their ability have everlasting life guaranteed to them, as a result of thus favorably passing the present judgment or trial. These are assured that they will not need to come into the general judgment of the world during the Millennial age, because they pass from death unto life as the result of the judgment of this age. The word “condemnation,” in this verse, signifies judgment, and is so rendered in the Revised Version. —Compare 1 Cor. 11:32. In vs. 25 the general judgment of mankind during the Millennial age is specially referred to, when all the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, be brought to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4), and when they that hear (obey that knowledge) shall live: shall be rescued not only from the tomb but also from all the imperfections, mental, moral and physical, which have come upon the world through sin—be raised up to perfection of life. The fact that this judgment work begins with a little flock during this Gospel age is suggested by the expression that the hour for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of Man has already commenced, “now is.” The whole world, from the divine standpoint, is spoken of as dead, because it is already nine-tenths dead and under sentence of death to the full. It was from this standpoint that our Lord said to one, “Let the dead bury their dead.”

Our Lord realized that his hearers could not appreciate the possibility of his doing so great a work

as a man, and hence he makes the explanation that the Father, who has life inherent (immortality), hath given (promised) the Son the same inherent life (immortality), as well as given commandment (authorization) that he, the Son of Man, to whom the work was committed, as declared in the prophets, should execute judgment—the divine will. And it is in view of this high honor conferred upon the Son by the Father that we are told (vs. 23), “that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father.” (Revised Version.) The explanation of this statement follows, and shows that the honor to the Son is as the Father’s appointed representative and agent in the great work, saying, “He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent him.”

That this judgment of the world did not begin at our Lord’s first advent, we have his own testimony: “I came not to judge the world.” (John 12:47.) And again, his declaration, “My Word shall judge you in the last day” —the last thousand-year day of the seven, the Millennial Day. It is in full harmony with this that the Apostle declares, “God hath appointed a day [period—epoch] in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained” —the Christ, Head and body. —John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1Cor. 6:2. R. 2435 and R. 2434

He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.

– Acts 17:31 –

That appointed Day was future in the Apostle's time, and is still future, though now about to dawn. The Gospel of Christ, Good Tidings, is to the effect that He who bought the world with His own precious blood is to become the Judge of all men, the living and the dead. "All in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth," "and they that hear shall live." —John 5:28,29,25.

A new trial is to be granted to Adam and all his race. It will be an individual trial, under the enlightenment and uplifting influence of the great Messianic Kingdom. Truly, this is "Good Tidings of great joy" to the world, the "groaning creation." Even though the great Adversary has succeeded in deceiving the vast majority, even of Christians, into thinking to the contrary, this Trial Day, the Day of Judgment, is to come to all the sons and daughters of Adam for their deliverance and blessing, if they will. This Great Day, which will be "the desire of all nations," is forcefully depicted by the Prophet David. (Psalms 96-98.) The saints of the Lord, the faithful followers of Christ, those who "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," shall be associated with their great Head as assistant judges, in His glorious work of human uplift and restitution to all that was lost in Adam.

How glad we are that our eyes have been anointed to see all these wonderful arrangements of our God! How glad we are that we can understand the significance of the dark clouds now hovering over the world and soon to break! How we rejoice that we can discern the silver lining to these clouds of trouble, and know that the end will be glorious—that beyond the yawning chasm just before us, beyond the blood and tears of the coming whirlwind and tempest, the blessed Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing and blessing in His wings, and mankind, broken and helpless and despairing, shall be led into the light and glory of the Kingdom of God's dear Son! R. 5443

For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with His truth.

Psalm 96:13

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food. I was thirsty and you gave Me drink. I was a stranger and you took Me in. I was naked and you clothed Me. I was sick and you visited Me. I was in prison and you came to Me.'

– Matthew 25:31-36 –

[This parable] explains the work of the Kingdom after it shall have been set up—after Messiah at his Second Advent shall have gathered his "jewels" to constitute his Bride class—after these shall be with him in the Throne of his glory—after he shall have taken unto himself his great power and shall have begun his Messianic reign of righteousness "under the whole heavens." It is important in every study of the Scriptures that we recognize the Divine Plan as a whole and properly locate the teaching of each parable.

We know that the parable of the sheep and the goats belongs not to this Age, but to the coming Age of Messiah's glorious reign, because the introduction declares this, saying, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the Throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Those sheep and goats will not include the Church, to whom the promise is, "When he shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory" —sharing his Throne.

The salvation of the Church will be finished before the salvation of the world will begin. [This parable] pictures the salvation of the world, showing us how every member of Adam's race will be on trial during the reign of Messiah and, by his obedience or disobedience to the light and knowledge then prevailing, he will be deciding his own everlasting future, either as a sheep or as a goat. It will require the entire one thousand years of Messiah's reign to complete the testing and separating work.

All then obedient will be recognized as children of God and brethren. All the disobedient will be reckoned as children of the Adversary and worthy to share his fate, because, under favorable conditions, they were rebellious. Such shall be destroyed with Satan in the Second Death, which is symbolically represented as fire, because fire is always destructive, never preservative. On the contrary, the sheep class at the conclusion of Messiah's reign will have reached perfection, the image and likeness of God, on the human plane. These will be invited to become the kings of earth under the Divine supervision—even as was Adam in his original perfection—crowned with glory and honor and set over the earthly creation. —Psalm 8:3-5. R. 4694

Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’

– Matthew 25:37-39 –

The terms and conditions which will test and determine who will be sheep and who will be goats, who will be obedient or disobedient to the Divine regulations, will be mercy, kindness, love. The loving and sympathetic character is the only one which God purposes shall have eternal life, either on the heavenly or on the earthly plane—all having either the wolfish or devilish character, or even the goat character—of waywardness and unsubmitiveness, will be accounted unworthy of any further blessing after the close of the reign of Messiah. The testing then will not be as to believing or disbelieving, striving to do well or not striving to do well. The Church is dealt with now along such lines. God's dealings with us make allowances for our unwilling imperfections. But in the trial of the world in the future every man shall be tried according to his work, not according to his faith. In that time knowledge will have practically supplanted faith; hence faith will have no special rewards. Works will then have the rewards, and each member of the race will be expected to strive for perfect works and to be assistants of the Great King Emmanuel and his Bride, the Church on the spirit plane. Mankind will be enabled gradually to attain such perfection of mind and of body as will make perfect works possible. At the conclusion of the Millennial Age perfect works only will be rewarded.

With the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom all who come into harmony with it will have the great privilege of doing something to help others. The world is blind and starved now, for lack of spiritual food and the anointing eye-salve of the Truth. While the Millennial blessings will be showered upon those who accept the Lord's terms, there will be others who will need assistance. Those who have the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Love, will be glad to carry the Heavenly Message of reconciliation to all humanity, glad to apply the eye-salve to the blind, glad to unstop the ears of the deaf, glad to help the sin-sick back into harmony with God—to the blessings of Messiah's Kingdom, to the way in which these may be obtained—helping them to cover their nakedness with the merit of Christ.

All who will take pleasure in this work will thus be manifesting that they have God's Spirit and are co-laborers with Him. All these will be the Sheep.

**And the King will answer and say to them,
‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of
the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’**

Matthew 25:40

Likewise the reproof to the goat-class: to these He said, You were not interested in the things of God. Your interest was merely personal, a selfish one. You have enjoyed the blessings of these glorious thousand years, and that is all that God has provided for you. You are not of the kind to whom He is pleased to grant everlasting life. You will therefore, die. You have more or less of the selfish spirit, which is the spirit of Satan, and as God's provision for all who will not be in fellowship with Him in spirit is destruction, this is to be your portion—the Second Death.

The eternal fire is the fire of God's jealousy or anger, which burns against and destroys everything antagonistic to His righteousness. (Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8.) It is, of course, merely a figurative expression representing complete destruction. R. 4694 and R. 5531

God is arranging that all the affairs of the world shall reach a crisis soon, whether He is permitting this king to rule, or that one; or this one to be President, or that one. All things are working in harmony with His great Program. God will set down the "prince of this world," Satan, and all the arrangements he has made—set them down by a severe fall, by a great overthrow, and will set up His own Kingdom, that will bring blessing to all mankind—His own Kingdom that will be the "desire of all nations." It will be the Kingdom of Messiah and His Bride, who is to be His Joint-heir in the Kingdom. It is the Kingdom for which we pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as in Heaven."

Those of the Church—those who are hoping to be kings and priests and to reign with Christ and to be judges of the world—their conduct should be as far as possible in accord with God's standard. Everything should be open, honest, subject to the investigation of the Lord or of anybody. In thus living we shall be proving our faithfulness to the Lord. We must demonstrate our loyalty to Him by being willing to suffer rebuffs and adversity. We must strive most earnestly to overcome our human weaknesses and imperfections, and thus manifest our love for righteousness and for God. We see that our Lord Jesus is the embodiment of these glorious principles for which God stands; and we are to be like Him, our Pattern.

We are to be so in love with God's gracious character and God's methods that we shall greatly prefer to be on His side, under the banner of light, rather than to be children of darkness, whatever its present reward. So let us walk as the children of the light—the children of the Day, and thus we shall be laying up treasures above, and shall prepare ourselves for the glorious things which the Lord has in reservation for those that love Him—for those who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps. R. 5305 and R. 5340

In Summary

You, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.

– 1 Thessalonians 5:4 –

As the Savior said, perplexities are causing the hearts of men to fail for fear and for looking after the things coming upon the world, still future, but because of the sealing in our foreheads—the clear intellectual knowledge—the servants of God may, as Jesus suggested, be lifting up their heads and rejoicing, realizing from present developments that their deliverance draweth nigh—that the resurrection of the Church and her glorious establishment as Messiah’s Bride in the Kingdom, are near at hand, even at the door. R. 5715

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

– Revelation 3:20 –

This is the announcement which we are now giving—Not, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, but “Behold the Bridegroom!” already here, present, knocking gently with the prophecies to arouse the Virgins, but not to arouse the world. (Rev. 3:20.) This is the reading of the oldest Greek Manuscripts, which omit “cometh.” Our Lord says, “If any man hear my voice [knock] and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him.” This message to the present Laodicean phase of the Church, intimates very clearly (1) that the “knock” and “voice” will be inaudible to natural ears, and heard only by the ears of the understanding, the hearing of faith; (2) that it will not be a denominational knock or call (as to Adventists, Presbyterians, etc.), but (3) that it will be a knock that must be heard individually, and responded to individually,—“any man” who hears the “knock” or “voice,” if he so wills, may exercise faith, open the door of his understanding, and realize his Lord’s second presence.



The man who never hears the “knock” is evidently not counted worthy to hear it. But those who hear are just as evidently not compelled to respond and to accept the present, knocking King: hence he says, if the hearing one open the door, I will come in. However, only those who recognize the “knock,” and who respond and by faith open to the Lord and receive him as their present King—only these are to have the great blessing of spiritual nourishment—the feast of “meat in due season,” “things new and old,” which the Master promised to provide at that time to strengthen the faithful for the judgments, trials, testings and siftings which must “begin with the house of God.” “I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.” —Compare Rev. 3:20, and Luke 12:37. R. 2978

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat, and will come and serve them.

– Luke 12:37 –

The injunction to watch implies not only some advantage in watching, but also that the manner of the Lord's second advent might be so contrary to the general expectation as to require some discernment on the part of the watchers. The advantages of watching have been to keep fresh in mind the inspiring hope of the Church—the reunion with Christ in glory, the reign with him in his kingdom, and the privilege of cooperating with him in the blessing of all the families of earth, and to keep the heart in love and harmony with the Lord and his work. Thus, at his coming, the watchers would be found in readiness to sit down to meat and be served by the Lord, who himself would make known to them the secret of his presence. As at the first advent he was present some time before his presence was declared and recognized, so at his second advent his presence, which was due in 1874, only began to be recognized subsequently as he drew the attention of the watchers to it through the Word of truth.

It is the mistake of those laboring under the delusions of various popular errors, to think that they must watch for the appearance of the Lord again in the flesh, in the body of his humiliation, to see him descend from heaven in the literal clouds, and to hear the blast of a literal trumpet announcing his presence. But those who watch unto “the sure word of prophecy, which shineth as a light in a dark place,” know that “though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more;” that the clouds in which he comes are the clouds of trouble predicted by the prophets (See Dan. 7:13-14; 12:1; Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7); and that the trumpet sound is the sound of “the last trump,” “the trump of God,” “the seventh trumpet,” whose sounding is in the momentous events of this day of the Lord, just as the preceding six were sounded in other historic events; for if, as all admit, the first six trumpets were so sounded, why should we indulge the unreasonable idea that the seventh will be a blast on the air? Those who have been watching thus unto the sure word of prophecy, and who have also been watching unto prayer and thus keeping their hearts in a humble teachable attitude, have been and are being made to sit down to meat at the Master's table, to realize his presence, and in his light to read with unclouded vision the wonderful working of the divine plan of the ages and to see the duties and privileges of the hour. R. 1796

Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

– Revelation 20:6 –

Not until that “First Resurrection” is finished will the Seed of the Sarah Covenant be fully born. This is quite in accord with the prophetic statement, “Shall I bring to the birth (deliver the Head), and not cause to come forth (the Body).” (Isa. 66:9.) The intimation is that so surely as Jesus, the Head of the Body, was brought forth in the Resurrection, born from the dead, so surely will all the members of his Body share with him his glorious “change” from mortality to immortality, from earthly to heavenly nature. First must come the spiritual Christ, Head and Body, partaker of the divine nature, heir of all things. Then God's favor will return to natural Israel. R. 4319

Carry out these injunctions because you know the critical period at which we are living, and that it is now high time, to rouse yourselves from sleep, for salvation is now nearer to us than when we first became believers. The night is far advanced, and day is about to dawn. We must therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness, and clothe ourselves with the armour of Light. (Weymouth)

– Romans 13:11-12–

The Lord's people may know now just where we are on the stream of time, but this matter was sealed up and hidden until "the time of the end," as the Lord informed Daniel: hence the Apostle and early Church could only speak of the time question from a general standpoint. They knew that time was passing, that the day of deliverance was drawing nearer and nearer, and was thus surely closer at hand than when they had first believed.

The Apostle's words were true, as uttered, and his exhortation was appropriate then; but how much more appropriate is that exhortation to us who are now living;—to us who already see with the eye of faith the Day Star, and the first rays of the Millennial morning's light. "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." He who casts off the works of darkness, thus intimates that he is no longer in sympathy with the things of darkness, the things of sin, of selfishness, of injustice. He who puts on the armor of light not only intimates that he has enlisted on the side of God, of righteousness, truth, uprightness, light,—but he also intimates, in putting on an armor, that he realizes that he will be obliged to contend, to battle with the forces of darkness, which will oppose him now that he has enlisted on the side of the light, as they never before assailed him when he was one with them either in heart or in hand.

A proper retrospect on the part of a proper child of God will enable him not only to render thanks for the past, but to look up and lift up his head, realizing that our deliverance is nearer than when we first believed; and that he that began a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it, if we will but continue to submit our wills, our lives, our all, to his wisdom and loving care.

—Rom. 13:11; Phil. 1:6; 1 Pet. 5:5-6. R. 2738

Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth!

– Psalm 46:10 –

Out of the wild commotion of that stormy sea God will bring order and peace. Instead of this restless sea of humanity he will found the new earth, the new order of things; yea, and he will firmly establish it upon [in place of] the floods; there he will establish his Kingdom "which cannot be moved." (Heb. 12:28). And he will set his King upon his holy hill of Zion and give to him the nations for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. (Psa. 2:6; Psa. 2:8). Then, indeed, shall the King, the Lord's anointed, reign in righteousness and princes shall decree justice (Isa. 32:1); and, in consequence, there shall be abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.

—Psa. 72:7. R. 3114

THE CHRIST HEAD AND BODY IN GLORY



Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

– Revelation 21:2 –

The Divine Promise is that the Kingdom of God will be amongst men— “under the whole heavens.” The Scriptures state that both our Lord and the New Jerusalem, or glorious Kingdom of Messiah, are to come down from heaven to earth; and they call our Lord, therefore, Immanuel (God with us). During that thousand years God will in this sense dwell with men, walk with men. We already have this to some extent in our experience as Christians. God is with men, and Christ and the Church are with men, more or less contradicting and putting to shame the things of darkness of the present time.

But with all these suggestions it is not necessary for us to suppose that the Kingdom will be earthly. On the contrary, the assurance of the Scriptures is that the Church must become spirit beings before they can inherit the Kingdom: “We shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” while those of this class who have been previously dead will have an instantaneous resurrection; and thus we shall be “forever with the Lord” —not forever with the Lord on the earth, but always in the spirit condition. R. 4973

He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

– Revelation 3:5 –

The glorified Church is represented, not as taking off the robe of righteousness, but continuing to walk in white raiment. It will no longer be an imputed robe of righteousness, however; our righteousness will be our own. To be clothed in white garments then will be to be recognized as one of the pure ones—not as now, in a robe of reckoned righteousness, but in a robe of actual righteousness. Although we have been begotten of God, we have never been introduced to Him—in His actual presence. Our Lord is not only represented as our Bridegroom, but also as our Elder Brother, and is pictured as waiting on the other side until we, His brethren, shall pass over. And as we shall pass over, Our Lord being the One to whom the Father delegated the work of instructing us in the School of Christ, it will be appropriate that He should introduce us to the Father. R. 5377

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, “Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.”

– Revelation 21:9 –

We are invited to “come hither” to the yet future standpoint and get a view of the Bride, the Lamb’s wife, and see how she will **then** appear. “And he showed me the holy city Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.” This, it will be noted, is given to mark the change of the symbol from a **Bride** to a **City**; just as elsewhere the figure was shown to change from “wheat” to “the Sun.” A city is a symbol of a government, and the calling of it the New Jerusalem city would signify—The new, antitypical government of peace. There has been no occasion for the use of such a symbol during the Gospel age, because the Church has not been in ruling power; and when glorified with her Lord the figure of a virgin-bride waiting for full union with the Bridegroom will no longer be appropriate as now; hence the change from the one symbol to the other. R. 1388

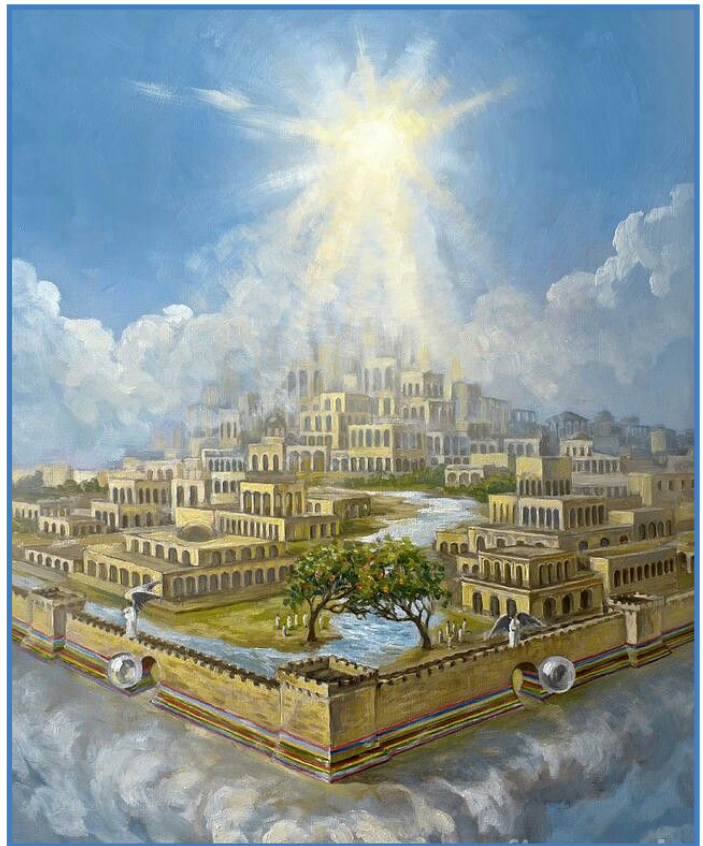
And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

– Revelation 21:10 –

It is at the conclusion of this book of symbols, from the eighteenth to the twenty-second chapters [of Revelation], that the close of this Gospel age and the inauguration of the Millennial age is pictured, and the triumph of the Lord and of his saints is shown. The introduction of that reign of righteousness, Christ's Millennial Kingdom, is shown, marked by wonderful events connected with our Lord's second advent, the glorification of his Church, the binding of Satan, the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, the blessing of the world, the scattering of its darkness, ignorance, etc. One would think that, even with no knowledge of the symbols of Revelation, no thinking Christian should have any difficulty in realizing that the book portrays trouble for the Church throughout this Gospel age and the triumphant Millennial reign at its close.

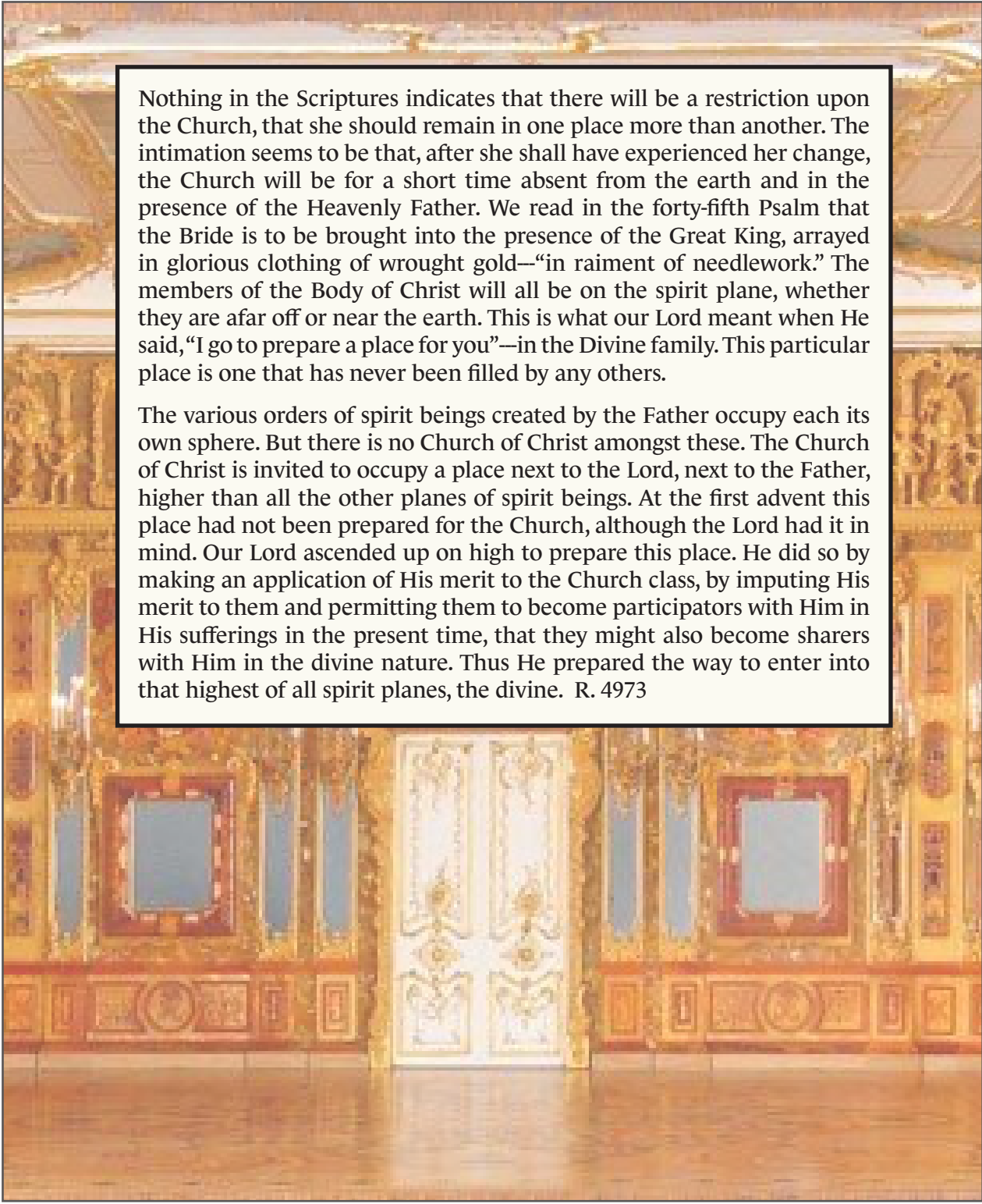
[This verse] pertains to the New Jerusalem, which in the preceding context is described as "coming down from heaven as a Bride prepared for her Husband"—beautiful, pure, gorgeous, resplendent. The City represents the Church in glory, this being indicated by the declaration that it was like unto a bride prepared for her husband, and the further demonstration is in the fact that the angel who called to John, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the Lamb's wife," showed him the New Jerusalem descending, etc. —Rev. 21:9-10.

The entire Gospel age has been the time for the preparation of this New Jerusalem. In one figure we are the city, in another we are the people of the city. The walls are living stones, such as the Apostle Peter describes; the foundation stones are the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The city as a whole comprises all the saints, from our Lord, the Head, down to and including the last member of the Church, which is his body. Not until all these have been chosen and found faithful and fitted and prepared for their places, will this city descend to earth in power and come into the possession or control of the earth. The coming of that city to the earth is the symbolical representation of the establishment of God's Kingdom in the earth, for a city is a symbol representing government, control. R. 3570



The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace. Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors. The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought. They shall enter the King's palace.

– Psalm 45:13-15 –



Nothing in the Scriptures indicates that there will be a restriction upon the Church, that she should remain in one place more than another. The intimation seems to be that, after she shall have experienced her change, the Church will be for a short time absent from the earth and in the presence of the Heavenly Father. We read in the forty-fifth Psalm that the Bride is to be brought into the presence of the Great King, arrayed in glorious clothing of wrought gold—"in raiment of needlework." The members of the Body of Christ will all be on the spirit plane, whether they are afar off or near the earth. This is what our Lord meant when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you"—in the Divine family. This particular place is one that has never been filled by any others.

The various orders of spirit beings created by the Father occupy each its own sphere. But there is no Church of Christ amongst these. The Church of Christ is invited to occupy a place next to the Lord, next to the Father, higher than all the other planes of spirit beings. At the first advent this place had not been prepared for the Church, although the Lord had it in mind. Our Lord ascended up on high to prepare this place. He did so by making an application of His merit to the Church class, by imputing His merit to them and permitting them to become participators with Him in His sufferings in the present time, that they might also become sharers with Him in the divine nature. Thus He prepared the way to enter into that highest of all spirit planes, the divine. R. 4973

To you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings.

– Malachi 4:2 –

The Scriptures call attention to the fact that there is a night of weeping in contrast with a day of joy. (Psa. 30:5.) The “night” is that period of darkness which set in after Adam fell. By one man’s disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as the result of sin. (Rom. 5:12; Rom. 5:19.) Evil has brought sorrow and the darkness of ignorance and superstition among mankind until human affairs have become demoralized. As the Prophet Isaiah says, “Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.” —Isa. 60:2.

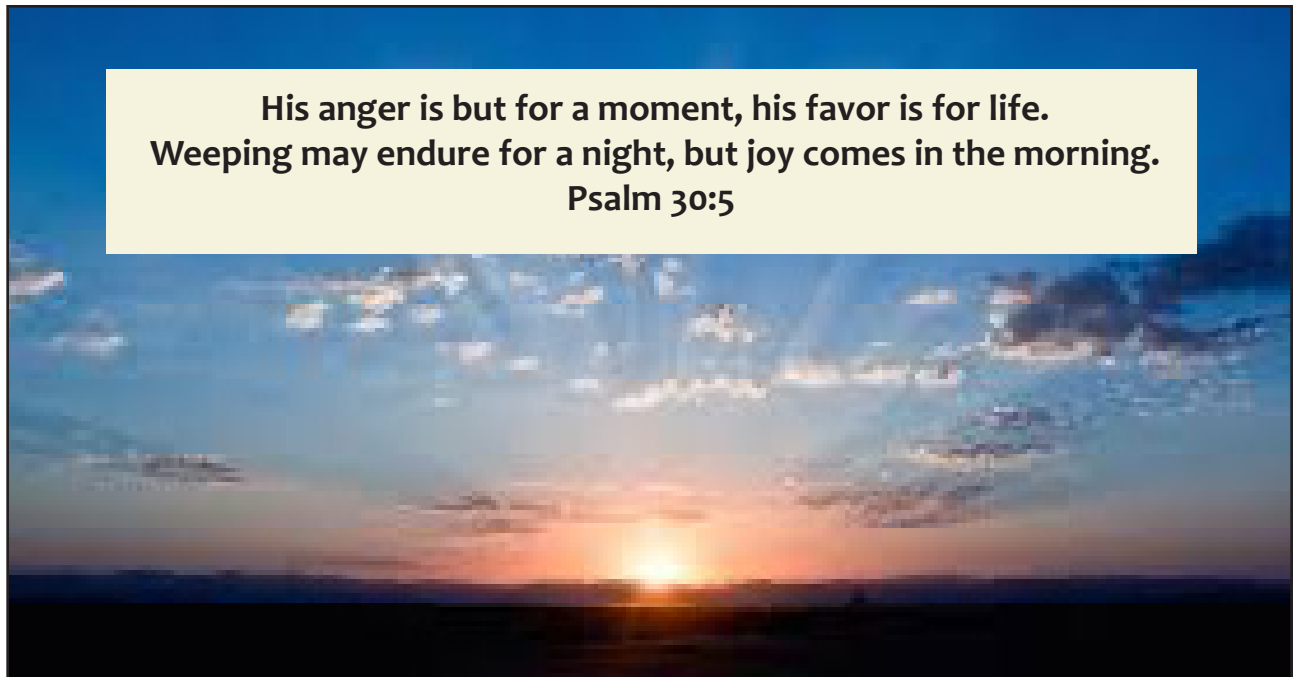
There is however a morning promised. That morning is to be ushered in by the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in His beams. (Mal. 4:2.) That Sun of Righteousness is Christ and the Church with Him. “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father” (Matt. 13:43) —Christ as the Head and the Church, which is His Body.

During the Millennial Day, the Day of Christ, the Day of the Lord in the largest sense, the light will prevail, and all the hidden things of darkness will be exposed. Those who love these things are the ones who will suffer disadvantage; while all who love the light will be blessed and will make progress toward human perfection.

The time for the still greater enlightenment of the whole world is yet future. In the Millennial morning the Redeemer and his elect Church (Mal. 4:2) will shine forth as the Sun of Righteousness with healing in its beams for the enlightenment and blessing of Israel and the whole world of mankind—including the millions who have gone down to the darkness of hades, the grave.

Soon the Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His beams. The Church in glory with her Lord will put down sin, will dispel the superstition and evil which now becloud the minds of men and will give clear light to the people respecting God and His Word. “I will turn a pure language [Message] to the people, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent.” (Zeph. 3:9.) The Message was originally given in its purity, but this freedom from adulteration it did not retain. It has been more or less obscured by ignorance and superstition. When through Messiah’s Kingdom the Lord shall make His Message pure and plain to mankind, then every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. R. 5097, R. 5340, R. 4557

**His anger is but for a moment, his favor is for life.
Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.
Psalm 30:5**



For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it. Because it will surely come. It will not tarry.

– Habakkuk 2:3 –

God has provided in His Word a great vision, a great revelation. It is a picture, so to speak. He has given this picture of His Plan more or less clearly through the Prophets and through the Law. The Jubilees prefigured Restitution to all the world. Other features of the Law, such as the Atonement Day sacrifices, etc., pictured other features of God's Plan. The Passover represented still other parts. These pictures were all harmonized into one great picture, or view—God's great Plan to bless the world. "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," God declared to Abraham. All this went to make up the great vision, or picture, that God purposed to give His people.

In proportion as we come to have the mind of God, we can understand more and more clearly what these things mean. The most important part of the picture was that Messiah would come, and that He would set up His Kingdom. All of these promises would be parts of that great view, or vision. Its fulfillment would seem to tarry long. Does it seem as though God had forgotten that promise to Abraham? the Prophet seems to query. It has sometimes seemed as though God had forgotten it. "But," declares the Prophet, "it will surely come; it will not tarry." It does not really tarry. There might be various times when we would expect to see more than we do see. We may have expected to see more of the trouble upon the world before this. But the vision is still for an appointed time; and we are not to give it up. We trust ourselves to God's arrangement.

The vision is **sure**. All these blessed things are positively certain to come; it is simply a matter of His time and of our understanding of His time. When you and I have fully grasped the main feature of all this matter, we are surely close to it. It was a very close hit that this great Time of Trouble began near October, 1914; and it is going on now at high speed. R. 5731

The Inauguration and Completion of The New Covenant

THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.

– Romans 11:27 –

There is no room to doubt that the Apostle here is referring to Israel's Covenant, the New Covenant, which God will make with them after this Gospel Day. The Apostle says the Covenant will be made when, or at the time that the Lord will "take away their sins." That time has not yet come. Israel is still under Divine condemnation, though we are now privileged to speak comfortably unto them and to assure them that the time for their deliverance is nigh, the time when the Mediator of the New Covenant will have taken on the last members of the spirit Body, the Gospel Church, "changed" by the power of the First Resurrection; the time when he will mediate that New Covenant, satisfy the demands of Divine justice on behalf of the world, as he already has satisfied it on behalf of the Church. Then he will become, as previously intended and declared, the great Mediator of the New Covenant between God and mankind in general—the Church being the exception, under the Covenant of Grace. Then will he begin his Millennial Kingdom: "For he must reign until he shall have put all enemies under his feet, and the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Then all who drank of his "cup," the blood [sacrifice] of the New Covenant, as members of the Spiritual Seed, will reign with him. —Gal 3:29. R. 4319

They shall be My people, and I will be their God. Then I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever, for the good of them and their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good, but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.

– Jeremiah 32:38-40 –

Both the Abrahamic Covenant and the New Covenant are Scripturally styled "The Everlasting Covenant," in contrast with the Law Covenant, which passed away, a failure because of its "unprofitableness." (Heb. 7:18.) The one is perpetuated in the other, even as the spiritual Seed (spiritual Israel) will rule and bless through the earthly Seed (fleshly Israel). Note the Scripture testimony that the original Grace (or Sarah) Covenant is everlasting. (Gen. 17:7; Gen. 17:13; Gen. 17:19; 2 Sam. 23:5; Psalm 105:8-10.) Note other Scriptures which apply the same term prophetically to the New Covenant. (Jer. 32:40; 31:31,32; Eze. 16:60.) Note carefully the context in each instance, that the reference is to the Millennium. R. 4321

It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer. And while they are still speaking, I will hear.

– Isaiah 65:24 –

“And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear”—so near will the Lord be, so mindful of all their interests. “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together [The reference here may be to men formerly of wolf-like or lamb-like character, or to animals, or to both—the expression signifying in any case a reign of peace]; and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and dust shall be the serpent’s meat [—another expression similar to, ‘His enemies shall lick the dust,’ signifying the destruction of the serpent, or rather of Satan, whom the serpent symbolizes]. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain [Kingdom], saith the Lord.” —Isa. 65:24-25.

Thus the birth of the true Zion will be a cause for rejoicing among all who truly love righteousness: for though it will first dash in pieces all their long cherished hopes, it is the dawn of real hope for all the world. It will humble all their pride, despoil them of all their cherished possessions and what they have come to esteem their rights, break down all their boasted institutions, civil, social and religious, and completely wreck all order and all hope, until they begin to see hope in the new order of things inaugurated by the Kingdom of God. R. 5211

Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad with her, all you who love her. Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her.

– Isaiah 66:10 –

Yes, rejoice with Jerusalem, Zion, and be glad with her, all ye that love her, as well as all ye that mourn for her now and try to dissuade her from her course, not seeing the prize at the end of her life of faithful self-sacrifice; for soon her glory will appear, not only to her own exceeding joy, but also to the joy and blessing of “all the families of the earth.”

This call to rejoice with Jerusalem immediately follows the prophetic announcement of the birth of Zion, the terms Zion and Jerusalem being here used interchangeably. The birth of Zion, the exaltation of the Body of Christ to Kingdom power and glory, will indeed be a cause for rejoicing on the part of all people. It is for this exaltation and manifestation of the sons of God that the whole creation waits, groaning and travailing. —Rom. 8:19-23.

When the true Zion is thus exalted, then will follow the great work of the Kingdom. The travail upon nominal Zion immediately succeeding will quickly liberate the true children of God still in her, and they shall come forth to larger views and higher principles, and to develop into nobler characters. The rule of the iron rod will quickly subdue all things, completely breaking up the whole present social fabric and accomplishing the leveling process which will make ready for the reign of righteousness. Then the great Millennial reign of righteousness will begin, when every man will have a full, fair opportunity to gain everlasting life by faith and obedience to the New Covenant. R. 5211

All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, and Your saints shall bless You. They shall speak of the glory of Your kingdom, and talk of Your power, to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.

– Psalm 145:10-12 –

Let us "talk" together now of his power as the Prophet has suggested. It will be a mighty power which will overthrow the reign of sin, which will bind the power of Satan that he shall deceive the nations no more, and which will establish the Lord Jesus and his glorious Church in power and great glory, with dominion over all the earth, with authority to execute judgment,—to punish sin and to reward every effort toward righteousness.

But the power of God as it will be manifested, will be still greater than all this; it will be a power which will lift up out of the miry pit of sin, out of the weaknesses of the flesh, out of his imperfections, mental, moral and physical, every member of the human family who desires to make progress and to return to the grand perfection of human nature represented originally in father Adam, and from which he and all in him fell, through disobedience. In this sense of the word it is a resurrection power, raising up, up, up, from the low conditions of sin and death to the high conditions of perfection and righteousness. It not only will thus take hold of the people who will not at that time have fallen asleep in death, but this mighty power of the Kingdom will take hold also of those who have gone down into the tomb, and who are in the great prison-house of death; even as our Lord declared, that he will open the prison-doors and say to the prisoners, "Show yourselves; come forth." "And all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth" (John 5:28-29), and the coming forth shall be unto a resurrection by judgment—that so many as will, may avail themselves of the blessed privileges and opportunities of that great judgment day (the Millennial age), and profit by the stripes and corrections in righteousness which will then be administered, and grow in grace, grow in knowledge, grow in love and grow in perfection of being, until by the close of the Millennial age, if they will, they shall have arrived back again into full harmony with God, and received fully all the perfections of human nature lost through the fall, and redeemed by the great "memorial" of divine favor.

No wonder, then, that the saints, when they glorify God, speak of the glory of his Kingdom and talk of the mighty power of God which shall then be manifested, and how then shall be made known to the sons of men God's mighty acts; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the original sentence as they do not now see it; how they shall then see clearly the meaning of the great redemption, as they do not now see it, and how they shall then see clearly the provision of divine power in the Kingdom for their blessing; —that seeing these mighty acts of God in their true light, they also may glorify the Father which is in heaven, and they may appreciate the majesty of his Kingdom.

The Prophet intimates that all the saints shall have the privilege of thus declaring the Kingdom, and of thus honoring the name of our God. R. 2714

**Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD,
when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and
with the house of Judah—not according to the covenant
that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them
by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt,
My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them,
says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make
with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD:
I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts,
and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
Jeremiah 31:31-33**

For this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

– Hebrews 9:15–

The New Covenant will have the same Law exactly, but the Mediator having by then paid over to Justice the ransom-price of the world, secured by his own sacrificial death, will then have full charge of mankind and be fully empowered to deal mercifully with their imperfections and to help them step by step out of their sin and death condition back to perfection, and to cut off the rebellious in the Second Death. At the close of the Millennium he will present the willing and obedient to the Father actually perfect.

Thus it will be seen that God's dealings with mankind under the typical Law Covenant, and under its antitype the New Covenant, is along the lines of **actual obedience** to the Divine Law, and not along the lines of **reckoned** obedience through faith. As obedience to the old Law Covenant held the reward of human perfection and life, so the rewards of the New [Law] Covenant will be similar—eternal life or eternal death.

Quite to the contrary of both of these arrangements, the Church is now called to a “heavenly calling under the Abrahamic Covenant—to be members of the Body of Christ, who, with Jesus her Head, will constitute the Mediator of the New Covenant. The Church is “not under Law, but under grace,” not judged according to the flesh and earthly restitution, but judged according to the heart and intention; and required to **sacrifice restitution rights** to the attainment of “the high calling” life and glory on the spirit plane as members of the Mediator of the New Covenant. R. 4549

By faith some of us have heard of the Lord's fame in advance of the establishment of his Kingdom; by faith some of us have come from afar and offered him our treasures, laying our all at his feet; by faith these have been accepted of him, and instead he has given us exceeding great and precious promises and hopes far outweighing and outvaluing the little all that we gave to him. The sons of God, the little flock with their Head the Lord Jesus, will by and by constitute the righteous who will be in authority, in power, in governmental control of the world by divine arrangement, based upon the great atonement sacrifice. Of that time and of that great ruler, head and body, it is written, “In his day shall the righteous flourish.” R. 3285

Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

– John 6:35,39-40 –

The Lord did not here discuss the further step to the high calling of this Gospel age. He is dealing merely with our first necessary step in approaching God,—justification. The thing necessary, in order to justification, is the acceptance of Christ as the Bread of Life—which must be preceded by the realization that we have no life in ourselves, death having passed upon all of our race through father Adam’s transgression.

[In verses 39 and 40] our Lord seems to distinguish between the two classes of saved ones, verse 39 referring to the elect class of this Gospel age, and verse 40 to the general blessing upon mankind to follow this age, during the Millennium, —and to the opportunity that will then be afforded to every creature to be blessed with this great gift of eternal life, purchased by our Lord at such



high cost as his own life. The 40th verse does not refer to those whom the Father specially gives to the Son to be companions and joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and whom he draws through his providences during this age: it refers to the remainder of mankind whose ransom price our Lord Jesus has paid, and who, according to the Father’s program, our Lord Jesus himself is to draw unto himself, during the Millennial age; as it is written, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.”

The drawing influence upon the world of mankind exerted by the Redeemer himself and by the Church, his body, associated with him in glory, will be a drawing which will yield much larger results, so that many will yield to it and come to the Lord truly and heartily, and receive of the blessings which God has provided in him. Their eyes of understanding being then opened, they will be able to appreciate, as they cannot now appreciate, the Lord and the covenant of eternal life which he offers to all who obey him.

It is God’s will that all who shall accept Christ then shall have everlasting life too; and that they shall be raised up by the Lord Jesus to perfection also, —though theirs will be an earthly, and not like the others a heavenly, perfection; and their raising up will also be “at the last day,” but not at its beginning as with the “elect” of the “first resurrection.” The overcomers of this Gospel age, the body of Christ, will be perfected in his likeness in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and then subsequently, throughout that age, the work of raising up the world of mankind out of sin and depravity and degradation will go gradually and grandly forward, until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient shall have eaten to their fill of the bread from heaven and shall be fully raised up, out of sin and death, to life eternal. R. 2652

Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

– Revelation 21:2 –

In the symbolism of Scripture a city represents a government; as for instance, symbolic Babylon is denominated "that great city [government] which ruleth over the kings of the earth." The New Jerusalem, as a symbol, represents the new spiritual government of the Millennial age. It is not earth-born, it is not reared by men, but, as here pictured, it descends from God out of heaven—it is spiritual in every sense of the word—of God and not of men. It is for this kingdom, this government, that our Lord taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come—thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." The declaration that the city is adorned as a bride for her husband implies its grandeur and beauty and perfection, as a bride's adornment on such an occasion is particular and elaborate to the last degree. But additionally to this it reminds us that in the government of the future, the judges of the world are the saints, now being selected through faithfulness in trial and tribulation, and that these are frequently called the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir in the Kingdom. The Revelator elsewhere strikingly brings this thought to our attention: the angel calls to him, "Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God."—Verses 9-11.

We are not to think of this holy city as being composed of literal stones, coming down through the air; we are to remember, on the contrary, that the saints of this present time are "living stones," as the Apostle Peter explains. (1 Pet. 2:4-7.) This glorious city will not be visible to the natural eye—neither Christ nor the saints in glory can be seen of men; only those "changed" from human to spiritual nature see these matters in the full; but the whole world will be quickly made aware of the fact that a new government has been instituted,—a government of righteousness, and with all power, and that thereafter whosoever doeth righteousness shall be blessed, and whosoever doeth evil shall be punished. R. 2832

As it was not until after Solomon had built the great Temple of God at Jerusalem that his fame was spread abroad and his greatness manifested, so with the antitype Christ; not until he, the antitypical Solomon, has erected the great Temple of God, which is the Church—not until it shall have been filled with the divine glory as the New Creation—not until the new Jerusalem shall shine resplendently with the riches of divine grace and the brilliancy of the Lord's polished jewels, will the fame of Emmanuel reach to the uttermost parts of the earth. Then, as the Scriptures declare, "Many peoples shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Israel; he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." —Isa. 2:2,3. R. 3285

Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

– Revelation 21:3 –

This verse associates this city [The New Jerusalem] with the other figure of a symbolic Temple, which the Lord is now preparing, of which the saints will constitute the “living stones” and “pillars;” for it is declared that the tabernacle (dwelling) of God shall be with men in this city (government or kingdom). God will dwell in this glorious city or government—it will be his Temple, and the world of mankind will approach God in it to receive the divine blessings, as Israel approached the typical Tabernacle and the Temple in their typical religious services. Thus God, represented in his Church (the Christ, Head and body) will dwell with men (the world of mankind during the Millennial age) and they shall be his people;—all mankind will be treated from the standpoint of reconciliation, the propitiation price for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2) having been paid at Calvary, and the due time having then come for the manifestation of divine favor, all peoples shall be treated as the Lord’s people; none of them shall be treated as aliens, strangers, foreigners from God and his promises and his blessings.

So far from God’s Plan terminating at the Second Coming of Christ, it will merely begin there, so far as the world is concerned. The Church, in one figure, will be the Royal Priesthood for the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Gal. 3:29.) In the other figure, the Church will be the great Temple through which all the world of mankind may have access to God and return to harmony with Him.

Thus, eventually, this glorified Church, or Temple, will be the House of Prayer for all people, all nations—not that they will pray to a house, but that they will approach God through the glorified Church, in which His Presence will be manifested and His mercy will be available to all. From this viewpoint, the Temple with its Shekinah glory represented the Church in the glory of the future, in association with Christ; and God will dwell in and operate through that glorious Church for the blessing of the world, represented by all those who will worship God looking toward His Holy House. R. 2832 and R. 5713

**Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun
in the kingdom of their Father.
Matthew 13:43**

The Church, the Temple of God, will be so filled with all the fullness of God, when made like unto the glorious Lord, that nothing could add to their blessing of knowledge and divine favor;—will be so filled with the glory of God that from her, as from the Sun of Righteousness, shall proceed the light of the glory of God, which shall heal and bless the world during the Millennial age. This is the Sun of Righteousness to which our Lord referred in Matt. 13:43, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" —our Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, of course being included. The same Sun of Righteousness is mentioned by the Prophet, saying, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." (Mal. 4:2.) Nevertheless, while so filled with the Lord's glory we are not to lose sight of the fact which the Apostle impresses upon us, saying that Christ is the Head of the Church, even as the Father is the Head of Christ Jesus. Hence the Lord Almighty and the Lamb will always be an inner Temple in this great Temple, which God has provided for the world's blessing during restitution times. —Rev. 21:22. R. 2832

Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

– Isaiah 2:3 –

Dating from the end of this Age and the completion of the Mediator Priest and King, our Lord and his Church, the antitypical Isaac and his Bride, the antitypical Melchisedec, Priest upon his Throne, will inaugurate his reign of righteousness in the great time of trouble and shaking with which this Age will terminate. The Ancient Worthies, as the firstborn of his children, receiving the perfection of restitution and its privileges, will be made “princes in all the earth.” To them and under their control will rally, first of all, the house of Israel and Judah, as they begin to see taking shape the earthly Kingdom for which they have so long waited. To these will gradually come restitution privileges—health and prosperity. The world, still weak and awe-struck, as the result of the time of trouble, will begin to take notice to Israel’s rising again to national life, and will notice the blessings bestowed upon them. “Many people shall say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house 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 Kingdom) shall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (the earthly Kingdom in the control of the ‘princes’).” —Isa. 2:3. The Millennial blessings will be conferred only upon the willing and obedient, but the knowledge of righteousness, of Truth, will fill the whole earth.

Since God’s favors are thus marked out for the heavenly and the earthly Seeds of Abraham—the earthly through the heavenly—it follows that the blessing of the other nations will come about through their affiliation with these. In other words, we may understand that the Divine Government established in Israel in the hands of the Ancient Worthies will be the center of Divine favor, and the people of other nationalities must come to this center for their supplies of truth and grace.

R. 4555 and R. 4320

It is after the sacrificing is all finished and the Church glorified that He comes forth the second time unto salvation, saving and blessing all the people. The high priest in the type did not return into the Most Holy again, but lifted up his hands and blessed the people. Then the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people, and the people gave a great shout and fell upon their faces. (Lev. 9:23-24.) So the people of the world will prostrate themselves before the great Messiah. And this will be the work of Christ during the thousand years --uplifting mankind and giving them the benefit of the Atonement Sacrifice. R. 5655

**In the dispensation of the fullness of the times
He might gather together in one all things in Christ,
both which are in heaven and which are on earth---in Him.
Ephesians 1:10**

**This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires
all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

– 1 Timothy 2:3-4 –

His good desires and plan, however, are all centred in Christ; hence he has appointed no other name by which we must be saved, and no other condition than faith in his blood (in his ransom-sacrifice) and obedience to his precepts of righteousness—love. No man can come unto the Father except by him. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that not the Son of God hath not life. —John 14:6; 1 John 5:12; John 3:36; 5:24. To this end, the sympathetic love of God toward all his fallen, disobedient creatures was manifested in the gift of his Son to be our redemption price—even while we were yet sinners.

**Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven
given to mankind by which we must be saved. (NIV)
Acts 4:12**

For the same reason, as a part of the same will of God concerning men, he hath appointed to establish his kingdom on earth, and that his King and representative shall reign to bless men, to bring them to a knowledge of his goodness, his perfection, his hatred of sin and his desire toward all that they might be saved from death and come fully back into harmony with him, and of his provision through Christ for them all to do so. —1 Tim. 2:3-6.

Yet God is not pleased to accept men without testing and proving them as to whether, after full knowledge, ability and choice, they will sincerely love the right and hate the wrong. Therefore he has been pleased to appoint a day [the Millennial Day] in the which he will judge the world in [try and prove men with reference to] righteousness. The Judge of all is to be Christ—Jesus and his Church; and the work shall be so thoroughly done that no lover of righteousness shall be sentenced to the second death, and no lover of evil shall escape that sentence. —Acts 3:23.

**This trial-test of all, after full knowledge of good and evil, is because our God hates sin
and every evil way. He is not a God that has pleasure in wickedness. —Psa. 5:4.**

"Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should turn from his ways and live?" "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn and live ye." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." —Ezek. 18:23,32; 33:11. R. 1273

And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “THE DELIVERER WILL COME OUT OF ZION, AND HE WILL TURN AWAY UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. FOR THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”

– Romans 11:26-27 –

Here the Apostle Paul shows that Israel after the flesh, not having zealously inquired for the new heart and the right spirit, not having sought it of the Lord, was unprepared in heart to receive Messiah, and instead with wicked hands crucified him. The Apostle shows us that, as a result, only a remnant was gathered out of Israel to be of the "bride" class, and that the nation as a whole stumbled into blindness, darkness, for a time determined of the Father—until the election to the "bride" class should be completed from among the Gentiles. Then, the Apostle assures us, Israel's blindness shall be turned away; they shall all be saved from that blindness. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

It is this covenant of the Lord to Israel to take away their sins and to give them new hearts and right dispositions that is referred to, and we look for the fulfillment with longing anticipation—realizing, as the Apostle points out, that Israel's recovery from blindness will mean nothing less than life from the dead; for if that nation, after crucifying Messiah, and being blind to the fulfillment of the prophecies made to their fathers, shall finally be awakened to see the Lord, and look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall have the spirit of prayer and of supplication poured upon them by the Lord's providential dealing, it will be a miracle similar to the causing of a dead person to live. And if God's mercy will thus be extended toward those who sinned most egregiously, and who crucified his Son, it will mean also the extending of divine mercy to all the families of the earth, according to the statement of the various promises. R. 2503

I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication. Then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

– Zechariah 12:10 –

This putting of the Lord's spirit, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of truth, the spirit of love, upon fleshly Israel (and similarly upon all the families of the earth), is abundantly stated in the Scriptures to be distinctly separate from the pouring out of the Pentecostal blessing upon the Church, the "little flock," the bride of Christ, during this age, and before the Sun of Righteousness arises, of which Sun of Righteousness these shall form a part.

The spirit of the Lord, the holy spirit, is the spirit of the truth, and when the truth shall be made known to Israel and mankind, with that truth will go its spirit, its influence, its power to correct the heart and life, and to bring it into accord with God. For then, in the light of the truth, many will see God's character and plan in Christ as "the desire of all nations," and the great King himself as the one "altogether lovely." R. 2504

**And it shall come to pass afterward that
I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.
Joel 2:28**

No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.

– Jeremiah 31:34 –

All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. The whole world shall have its eyes opened to behold the riches of divine grace and wisdom embodied in Christ, head and body, reigning in the New Jerusalem for the blessing and uplifting of the entire race of Adam—whosoever wills. The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep, and there shall be no need to say every man to his neighbor and every man to his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34.) The wisdom of the great King, the antitype of Solomon, will be exercised on behalf of not merely the one nation of Israel but on behalf of all those who shall come into covenant relationship with the heavenly Father, typified by this people which entered into a covenant with the Lord, and which because of that covenant was the object of his mercy and care. R. 3285

God's Word informs those who seek his counsel, that at that time Satan shall be bound so that he may deceive the nations no more, as he is now doing (Rev. 20:1-3): that during that period of Satan's restraint those whom he now blinds (2 Cor. 4:4) with various false doctrines, sophistries, superstitions, etc., will be freed from these, and have the eyes and ears of their understanding opened. It informs us also, that at that time he will establish as the King over all the earth his honored agent, who gave his life as a ransom for mankind; and that our Lord Jesus will establish the Kingdom of God amongst men, a Kingdom not merely in name, but also in power and in fact; one which shall rule the world, forcibly putting down sin, oppression, ignorance, superstition, darkness; and raising up righteousness, truth, and every good principle and influence for the blessing and uplifting of those whom he purchased with his precious blood. R. 2690

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 11:9

When Satan no longer has power to deceive men and to put good for evil and evil for good; when the eyes of their understandings have been opened to see and appreciate "the True Light,"—until "every man that cometh into the world" has been thus enlightened (John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:6); when the knowledge of the Lord fills the whole earth as the waters cover the depths of the sea (all **covered**, but some more deeply than others); when there shall no longer be necessity to teach, every man his neighbor, saying, "Know the Lord," because **all** shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest (Jer. 31:34); when the Lord's Kingdom shall have come and his will is done on earth **as** it is done in heaven—instead of the message of the gospel being limited to a few, all will know the plan of God; and the evidences of its truth will be so clear and convincing that none will have excuse for disbelief; for the conditions will be such that doubt would be more difficult than is belief at present. Nevertheless a personal acceptance of "the way" (Christ) and of the conditions of the New Covenant will be required of each individual thus enlightened.

Not only will men learn unquestionably that Christ died for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; but more, they will **see** and feel the restitution work begun, in themselves and in their fellows. (Acts 3:19-21; Ezek. 16:48-50,53-55,60-63.) They will see Righteousness ruling the world **unto** or toward Life, instead of as now Sin reigning and all of its influences tending **unto** death. They will see great changes in the climate of the earth because "he that hath the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14), will no longer be "the prince [ruler] of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), and "the wilderness and the solitary place shall rejoice" and "the earth shall yield her **increase**" (Isa. 35; Ezek. 34:27); for the microbes of destruction and disease shall be restrained and "nothing shall hurt nor destroy" in all God's holy Kingdom. —Isa. 11:9.

Sickness and pain and all diseases will yield to the power of the Great Physician upon the throne; and he will not permit death to befall any except those who shall intelligently and willfully refuse his offers of full restitution, by rejecting the terms of obedience required under the New Covenant then open to all. And even these shall be liberally dealt with; for our Lord willeth not the death of him that dieth, but would rather that all should turn unto him and live. Accordingly, while all will be forced to "bow," in at least outward recognition of that Kingdom and to "confess" it a blessed improvement upon the reign of Sin unto death (Rom. 5:21; 1 Cor. 15:26), yet their **will** must remain their own and their progress in restitution beyond the common advantages will depend upon their willingness or unwillingness to come into accord with that Kingdom and its righteous arrangements.

Although the condition of things in the Millennial age will differ greatly from present conditions so as to be almost the reverse, yet the laws of God, like himself, change not: it is merely the conditions that will have changed. God's law, when exercised by our Lord Jesus and his Church ("Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" 1 Cor. 6:2), and tempered with mercy (because of man's fallen condition for which as Redeemer our Lord paid the price in his own death) will be the same law in every particular that it always has been.

That law is Love.

Then loving deeds and words will be made compulsory upon all, though their hearts (wills) may still be tainted with selfishness; for God does not now, and never will, force the wills of his creatures. Although the reign or Kingdom of Life will continue during the entire age to lift the obedient out of death toward life, yet perfection of life will not be attained until the end of the process of uplifting or restitution; and none will get that grand gift of God except such as are **perfected** in love—not only in word and deed, but also in the very deepest thoughts and intents of their hearts. Such as thus believe the Son, accept of his grace and are conformed to his image, and such only, shall see **life**, in the full and absolute sense, and be presented unto the Father perfect and unreprouvable in love, when Christ shall deliver up the Kingdom, having thus accomplished the work begun by him nearly three thousand years before, when he bought the world with his own life, that he might give life unto all them that obey him. R. 1772

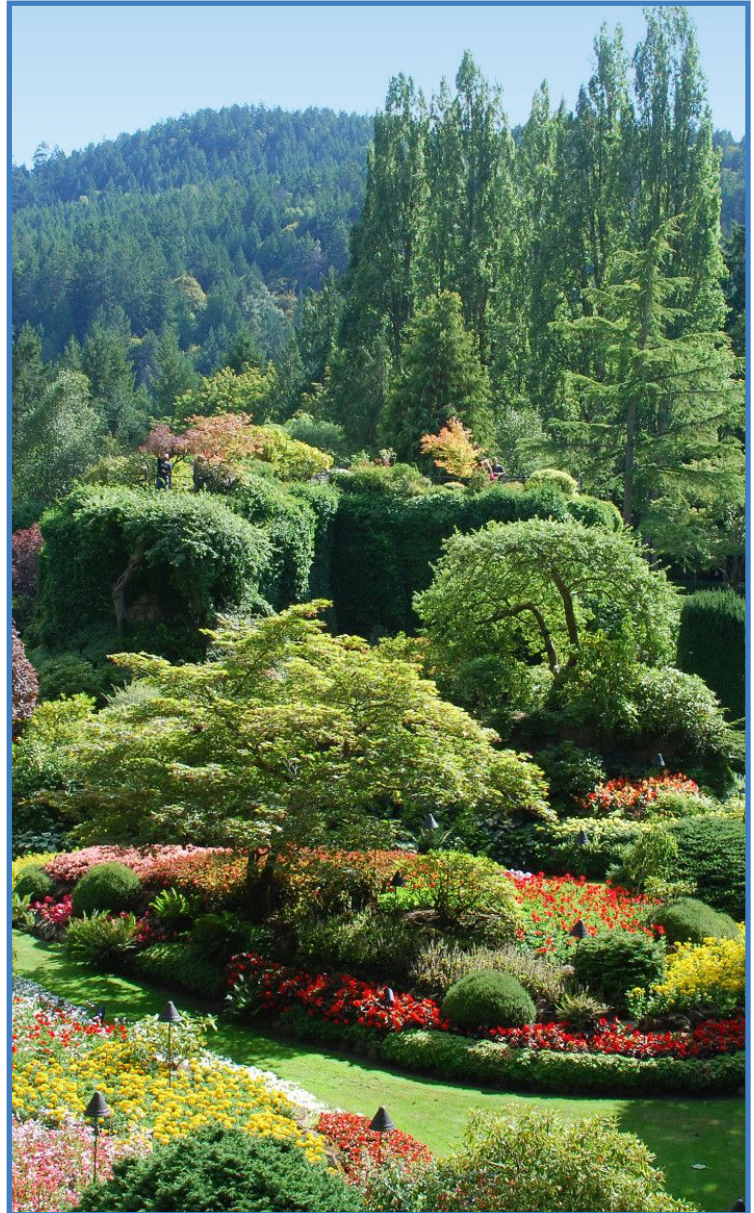
So they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the wasted, desolate, and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'

– Ezekiel 36:35 –

In connection with these transformations of heart and will, will come the blessing which the Lord promised upon the earth. It shall yield its increase; the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and the whole earth shall become a Paradise of God. The beginning of these blessings will be with Israel, and thus all the Gentiles shall have not only the lessons of the Scriptures for their instruction in righteousness, but also the illustration of divine providence operating on behalf of those who are influenced by the truth and its spirit. Thus will be fulfilled the declaration, "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden." —Ezek. 36:35.

Before sin had entered into the world, the Divine provision for our first parents was the Garden of Eden. As we think of this, let our minds turn to the future, guided by the Word of God; and in mental vision we see Paradise restored—not a garden merely, but the entire earth made beautiful, fruitful, sinless, happy.

Let us remember that God's promise respecting the earth is that, as Heaven is His Throne, so "the earth is His footstool," and He surely will make the place of His feet glorious. (Isaiah 66:1; 60:13.) R. 2504, R. 5057, R. 5364



**For the LORD will comfort Zion,
He will comfort all her waste places.
He will make her wilderness like Eden,
and her desert like the garden of the LORD.
Joy and gladness will be found in it,
thanksgiving and the voice of melody.
Isaiah 51:3**

Isaiah 35:1-9

The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice, even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it. It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there.



And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

– Isaiah 35:10 –



Close your eyes for a moment, if you can, to the scenes of misery and woe, degradation and sorrow, that yet prevail on account of sin, and picture before your mental vision the glory of the perfect earth. Not a stain of sin mars the harmony and peace of a perfect society; not a bitter thought, not an unkind look or word, but love welling up from every heart to meet a kindred response in every other heart; benevolence marking every act. Then there shall be no more sickness, not an ache, nor a pain, nor any evidence of decay—not even a fear of any such thing. Think of all the pictures of **comparative** health and beauty, of human form and feature, that you have ever seen, and know that perfect men and women will be of still surpassing loveliness. The inward purity and mental and moral perfection will stamp and glorify every radiant countenance. Such will earth's society be; and weeping, bereaved ones will have their tears all wiped away when thus they realize the resurrection work complete.

And this is only the change in human **society**. We call to mind also that the earth which was “made to be inhabited” by such a race of beings, is to be a fit and becoming abode for man. It shall no more bring forth thorns and briers, and require the sweat of man's face to yield his bread, but “the earth shall” easily and naturally “yield her increase.” “The desert shall blossom as the rose,” and the lower animal creation will be perfect, willing and obedient servants. All the grasses will not develop into trees, nor every modest flower into one monotonous form of beauty. No; nature with its pleasing variety will call to men from every direction to seek and know the glory and power and love of God, and mind and heart will rejoice in him. R. 612

God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away. Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

– Revelation 21:4-5 –

Since God is the Author of all the blessings of Redemption and Restitution, and since every good and every perfect gift cometh down from Him, the record appropriately declares that “God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes”—the eyes of mankind. Though Christ and the Church will do it, nevertheless the Heavenly Father will be recognized as the First Cause, the Fountain of Blessings. The wiping away of tears implies a gradual work, such as we see shall be the process of that glorious time. At the beginning of the Messianic Reign mankind will not be exempt from weakness, trial and difficulty; but as they conform to the laws of the Kingdom all cause for distress will gradually pass away; and the Restitution blessings will gradually lift them out of death into perfect life.
—Acts 3:19-23.

[Here] the work of the whole Millennial Age is summed up in a few words. What a glorious sunburst of blessing is in these words! What a grand fulfillment of St. Peter’s declaration respecting the Times of Restitution! This declaration, however, applies to the very end of the Millennial Age rather than to any previous part of that Age; for other accounts show us unmistakably that there will be imperfections, chastisements and stripes throughout that Age, while mankind are being lifted up. As our Lord expressed it, the raising up of mankind throughout the Millennium will be a “resurrection by judgment”—chastisements, disciplines. —John 5:28-29. R.V.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, then in the Throne of earth’s dominion, declares, “Behold, I make all things new.” This expression does not relate merely to rocks, trees, etc., but to the great work which our Lord undertook; namely, the regeneration of humanity—of as many of Adam’s race as will, under favorable conditions of knowledge, develop characters in full accordance with the Divine will. The end of the Millennial Age will see the work completed. All of the wicked—all who will not hear the voice of that Prophet, Teacher, King—will be cut off from amongst the people in the Second Death. But all the willing and obedient will be made new, brought to the complete perfection contemplated in the original Divine Plan. R. 6024

**He will swallow up death forever,
and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces.
The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth,
for the LORD has spoken. And it will be said in that day:
“Behold, this is our God. We have waited for Him, and He will save us.”
Isaiah 25:8-9**

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together. And a little child shall lead them.

– Isaiah 11:6 –



The reference in this 11th chapter of Isaiah to the change of disposition in the animal kingdom, so that the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the calf and the lion, will dwell in harmony, is in full accord with the general Scriptural outlines of “the Times of Restitution of all things.” Not only is mankind to be restored, to be brought back to his primeval condition of human perfection and harmony with his Maker, but the lower animals will also share in the blessing and the restoration of order to be accomplished by the Reign of Christ.

In the Genesis account there is no intimation that the animals over which Adam had control were wild, vicious, at enmity with man. On the contrary, the implication is that they were in complete subjection to their perfect master. We may reasonably suppose that while the race, under the disintegrating influence of man’s death sentence, gradually lost more and more of the likeness of their Maker in which the first man was created, they at the same time lost the power of control over the lower animals.

The restoration of mankind to that exalted position which was lost by sin implies naturally, therefore, a restoration of the brute creation to primeval conditions, such as is suggested in the prophecy which we are considering. The same thought is conveyed in the statement that “a little child shall lead,” or control, the wild beasts, when these are brought into their proper relationship with mankind. In chapter 65:25 of Isaiah’s prophecy, it is stated of the Millennial conditions that “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together.” The reference may be to men who were formerly of wolflike and of lamblike dispositions, or character; or it may refer to animals, or to both. The expression in either case signifies a blessed Reign of Peace. The Prophet continues, “And the lion shall eat straw like the bullock, and the dust shall be the serpent’s meat.” If this refers to literal lions, it would imply that they will lose their carnivorous dispositions, and that they will undergo some change which will make them herbivorous, as animals were originally created. (Gen. 1:30.) It would seem to imply that animals will not then prey upon one another. R. 5574

To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

– Revelation 2:7 –

Paradise, the garden of God, was applicable as a name to the Garden of Eden, in which our first parents resided while they were still in harmony with God, before their disobedience; and the same term is Scripturally applied as a name to the new earth when restitution blessings shall, during our Lord's second presence (the Millennium), be brought to perfection as the fit abode of those who, under divine favor, shall then prove worthy of life everlasting. It was to this paradise that the Apostle Paul was in vision "caught away" when given a glimpse of various features of the divine plan, not then due to be understood by the Church in general— "things not lawful to be uttered." (2 Cor. 12:4.) John the Revelator was similarly caught away in vision, and shown some of these wonders of the Paradise epoch; but only in symbols, which he was permitted to report.

It will be remembered that all the trees in Eden were trees of life, but that the one in the midst of the garden was then a forbidden tree, the disobedient eating of which brought death on Adam and his race. That tree in the midst of paradise was called the tree of knowledge, and our Lord's promise is that the overcomers of this present age shall have full liberty to partake of that tree of knowledge, and under most blessed and satisfactory conditions, when the knowledge will be of benefit to them under divine approval, and not bring a curse. It is this same paradise of the future on this earth that our Lord referred to when addressing the penitent thief, he said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee this day, Thou shalt be with me in paradise."

This Paradise, we recall, is elsewhere referred to by the Apostles as "the third heaven"—"a new heavens and a new earth." (2 Cor. 12:2; 2 Pet. 3:13.) As the "new heavens" does not mean a new place of God's throne, and a new throne of God, but new conditions, and signify the spiritual power and control of Christ and his Church in glory, so the "new earth" does not mean another planet, but a new social order on this planet. The declaration is that the former heavens and former earth (which are now) will then have passed away and be no more. All present institutions are to utterly perish in the great time of trouble with which this age is very shortly to end. "And there shall be no more sea." The sea is a symbol for the masses of people in a restless and unstable anarchistic condition, just as the land represents the social order, and as the mountains represent the kingdoms of the present time. As there is no reference to the physical earth and physical heavens being destroyed, so there is no reference to the physical sea being obliterated. The symbol signifies that under the new arrangement, under the control of the new heavens or spiritual powers, the reconstructed social order will be so satisfactory, so complete, so thorough, that there will be no more sea-class, no more restless people, no more dissatisfaction, no more anarchists; everything will be reduced to law and order; and law and order will under the new regime secure justice to every creature, obliterating the differences of wealth and power as they now exist. R. 2832



He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

– Revelation 22:17 –

This river of the water of life represents the blessed influence that will proceed to humanity from the glorified Christ, Head and body—from the Kingdom of God’s dear Son. When the blessed opportunities of that time are thoroughly open to the world, when the Sun of Righteousness shall have scattered all the darkness of ignorance and sin, when Satan shall have been bound, when the river of the water of life shall flow freely, then the invitation that will go forth will no longer be a call of the elect, but an invitation to every creature, every member of the human race, to partake of the blessings and privileges which God has provided in Christ, that they may have the everlasting life and everlasting joy which is to be the portion of those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and who avail themselves of the gracious provision in Christ.

It will be the work of the thousand years of Messiah’s reign to thus make known the pure Message of God, the pure Word of God. We all see, as we look back, that a pure Message of God has not been declared to mankind, but creed contradicting creed, making confusion worse confounded. The Lord, however, will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the great deep. (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14.) As the Revelator puts it, “the river of the water of life” will flow freely. —Rev. 21:6; 22:1,2.

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

We praise the Lord for the information afforded us in his Word, that although the water of life is now given individually, and enjoyed only by the “elect,” “even as many as the Lord our God shall call,” yet the time is coming that it shall no longer be thus a well of water springing up within the Lord’s people, but during the Millennial age will be a river of water of life, broad and full and clear as crystal, flowing out from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and of the Bride the Lamb’s Wife and joint-heir, to all the families of the earth: and that then there will not only be trees of life, whose leaves will be for the healing, restitution, of the nations, but that the Spirit and the Bride (then glorified) shall say, Come, and he that heareth may say, Come, and whosoever will may come and have the water of life freely. —Rev. 22:17. R. 3571, R. 4990, R. 2575

**Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.
But the water that I shall give him will become in him
a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.**

John 4:14

He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied.

– Isaiah 53:11 –

It is a blessed thought that many of those who are now aliens, strangers and foreigners from God through wicked works, are in this condition of opposition, not willingly, not intelligently, but by reason of the ignorance and weaknesses which came to them by heredity, under the reign of sin and death.

It is to be a distinct feature of the great Triumph of Immanuel that every eye shall be opened and every ear unstopped, that “the knowledge of the glory of God shall fill the whole earth,” during His glorious reign of righteousness. Are we not distinctly told of the time that will follow, in which all the willing and obedient shall receive the Holy Spirit, which then will be poured out “upon all flesh” even as now, during this Gospel Age, it is poured out upon God’s “servants and handmaidens” only? —Joel 2:28.

Oh, that will be a glorious Triumph for the great Redeemer! In the language of the Bible, “He shall see the fruitage of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.” What a glorious fruitage!—not only His own exaltation—not only the exaltation of His faithful Bride class, and the additional exaltation of “the virgins, her companions, which follow her,” and the exaltation of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the Prophets, but finally the deliverance to human perfection of all the groaning creation willing to accept the same upon the Divine terms of loyalty to God and to the principles of His Government, as these shall be made known to them. R. 5066

**All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the LORD,
and all the families of the nations shall worship before You.
For the kingdom is the LORD’s, and He rules over the nations.
Psalm 22:27-28**

I will make the place of My feet glorious.

– Isaiah 60:13 –

God could have made the entire earth perfect as easily as He “planted” the little garden in Eden. But He foresaw that if the earth were perfected the death-struggle would be longer, and the degradation of man greater. The poverty of the world has assisted in keeping mankind back from greater depths of iniquity. The sentence, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” was evidently intended as a blessing, that man might learn lessons of experience by battling with the earth for his living. As the Creator said to the man regarding the curse of the earth, it was “for thy [man’s] sake.” So man has learned that “The wages of sin is death.” The Heavenly Father has not, however, changed His Plan. When the Kingdom is set up, the earth shall yield her increase; and God assures us, “I will make the place of My feet glorious.” —Isa. 60:13. R. 5058

Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.

– 1 Corinthians 15:24 –

At the end of the thousand years, when the Messiah will have accomplished His work of Restitution, He will cease to act as Mediator. But the Covenant will continue to stand; for if that relationship with God were to be removed from the people, they would have no blessing of everlasting life. That blessing depends upon covenant relationship with God. Under the favorable conditions of the New Covenant, whosoever will may have an opportunity to become the children of The Christ, the Seed of Abraham.

The Kingdom will be spreading for the thousand years, not only from one individual to another, but gradually bringing them back to full perfection. We read that “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.” It will conquer everything before it. Nothing shall stop it. Every evil thing having been destroyed, every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth will be heard praising God. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess; and His Kingdom will be without an opponent “from the river unto the ends of the earth”—having accomplished its purpose.

The Kingdom will then cease, in the sense that Christ will deliver the authority over to the Father. (1 Cor. 15:24-28.) This does not mean that the Law of God will be disregarded, as it has been during the reign of sin and death. To meet the exigencies of the fallen condition of mankind, and to bring back as many as possible into harmony with the Divine arrangements, a special Kingdom will be established—the Messianic Kingdom—which will come in between the Divine government and mankind, because mankind in its weak condition will be unable to meet the requirements of the Divine Law. But when this Kingdom has restored mankind to perfection, it is the Divine purpose for Messiah to relinquish this subordinate Kingdom, which will merge into and become a part of the great Kingdom of Jehovah. Justice will then operate. There will be no place for mercy, and the Heavenly Father is not then represented as being a merciful King to His creatures. The Heavenly Father will then have made them perfect, so as to need no mercy, and they will be glad to meet all the requirements of the Divine Government, and will be blessed in so doing.

At the conclusion of the thousand years, the willing and the obedient receive the commendation, “Well done,” and will be accepted as fit for the condition of everlasting life on the human plane. R. 5164 and R. 4974

Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:7

Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

– Revelation 20:14 –

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

From the first, or Adamic death, a resurrection has been provided. All that are in their graves shall therefore come forth. The Revelator prophetically declares: “The sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell [hades, the grave] gave up the dead which were in them....And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened.” (Rev. 20:13; Rev. 20:12.) It was in view of God’s plan for redeeming the race from Adamic death that in both the Old and New Testaments it is called a “sleep.” In Israel’s history of the good and the wicked it is repeatedly stated that they “slept with their fathers.” The Apostles used the same symbol, and our Lord also. But no such symbol is used in reference to the Second death. On the contrary, the strongest figures of total and utter destruction are used to symbolize it; viz., “fire and brimstone;” because that will be a destruction from which there will be no recovery.

Blessed thought! the Adamic death (which claimed the whole race for the sin of their progenitor) shall be forever swallowed up, and shall cease in this Second death into which it is to be cast by the great Redeemer who bought the whole world with the sacrifice of himself. Thus God tells us through the Prophet, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave [sheol]. I will redeem them from death....O grave [sheol] I will be thy destruction.” (Hos. 13:14.) The first or Adamic death shall no longer have liberty or power over men, as it has had for the past six thousand years; no longer shall any die for Adam’s sin. (Rom. 5:12; Jer. 31:29-30; Eze. 18:2.) Thenceforth the New Covenant, sealed with the precious blood, shall be in force, and only willful transgressions will be counted as sin and punished with the wages of sin—death—the Second death. Thus will the Adamic death be cast into and swallowed up by the Second death. R. 2608

The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

– 1 Corinthians 15:26 –

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality [when the Church has been glorified with her Lord], then shall be brought to pass [during that Millennial reign] the saying which is written [as a general promise to the world— ‘He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people will he take away from off all the earth.’ By the close of that Millennial reign, it can be said] Death is swallowed up in victory! O death, where is [now] thy sting? [Sin and willful sinners being destroyed by that time, there will be nothing thereafter to cause death.] O grave, where is thy victory?” The Lord with his Church, his bride, shall have conquered Adamic death and the prison-house of death, the grave, shall have been opened, and all the prisoners shall have had fullest opportunity to accept Christ, and the everlasting life which he will offer to all, under the terms of the New Covenant sealed with his own precious blood; and all desiring life upon those terms shall have received it. R. 1855

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

1 Corinthians 15:57

That God may be all in all.**– 1 Corinthians 15:28 –**

While the Millennial Kingdom will be the Kingdom of God's dear Son, it will also be the Kingdom of God, because God's dear Son and his joint-heir, the Church, will be in absolute accord with the Father, and all that shall be done under their control will fully and completely represent the divine will respecting men. Nevertheless, it will be a separate Kingdom from that of the remainder of the universe, as the Apostle Paul indicates. (1 Cor. 15:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:28.) "He must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet.... And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject to him that did put all things under him....Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God, even the Father,"—at the close of the Millennial reign.

The Power of the Heavenly Father is boundless, so far as we can understand. If after we have considered the hundred millions and more of suns and planetary systems beyond the power of human mind to contemplate—if then we realize that the Heavenly Father has made the position of Christ illimitable, and He has exalted the Bride of Christ with her Lord, then it is reasonable to assume that the work of Christ and the Church will be limitless, and that some blessed work for creatures not yet born is the work of all eternity. We simply wonder in amazement! We wonder at the greatness of His goodness to us, which is to lift us—the faithful few who make their calling and election sure—from our low condition to future glories interminable! R. 2832 and R. 4974

Glory in His holy name.

Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD!

Seek the LORD and His strength.

Seek His face evermore!

He remembers His covenant forever,

the word which He commanded,

for a thousand generations.

Psalm 105:3-4,8

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!” And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: “Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever!”

– Revelation 5:12-13 –

Come now, and see the picture of his own glorification, given to us by our Lord, through his servant John. (Rev. 1:1.) It is recorded in Rev. 5. He that sits upon the throne is Jehovah. The scroll in his right hand is his plan for human redemption, sealed from all until the one “worthy” to carry out to completion its details should be found and proved “worthy.” The inquiry, “Who is worthy to open the book [scroll] and to loose the seals thereof?” had long been made: for four thousand years, from the giving of the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, it had been the query—Who shall be esteemed, by Jehovah God, to be worthy to perform his gracious purposes, and thus be honored above all others as the Servant (messenger) of the New Covenant of grace?

When silence prevailed, and none was found worthy either in heaven or on earth (representing the condition of things prior to the first advent), John began to weep, saying to himself: Alas! though God has some gracious and wise plans for the welfare of his creatures, we may never know them, because none is found worthy to know or to execute them. So it was that even our Lord Jesus, prior to the finishing of his sacrifice, as he then declared, did not know all about the Father's plans, and times, and seasons. —Mark 13:32.

But John's tears were soon dried, when the angel declared, “Weep not, for the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed [hath overcome, so as to be accepted and declared worthy] to open the scroll and to loose the seals thereof.” We know well who is meant; and the further unfolding of the panoramic vision leaves no doubt. Jesus our Lord is symbolized by a slain lamb restored to life, and to him was given the wonderful scroll which represents the divine plans, with authority and power to accomplish them all. Then (after his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father) he was glorified and received a name above every name; then all the angels of God worshiped him; then their thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads sang a new song, saying, “Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to loose the seals; because thou wast slain, and didst redeem* unto God with thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive the power, and wealth, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” And when to him was thus given a name above every name, all the holy ones bowed and offered sweet incense of prayer and homage; because God had honored him by delivering to him the scroll of wisdom, and the power and authority to execute all of its provisions. He is worthy; and the Apostle declares that it is now, therefore, God's will that all “should honor the Son even as they honor the Father.” —Acts 5:31; Phil. 2:9-11; John 5:23. R. 2156

**Oldest MS., with evident propriety, omits us, since the angels were not redeemed.*

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift! (KJV)
– 2 Corinthians 9:15 –

As yet, only the Church can now give thanks to God for His unspeakable Gift. But by and by the whole world of mankind will be in a condition to recognize that Gift and to render thanks. When, at the close of the Messianic Reign for the restoration of the Adamic race to their original perfection, all willful sinners shall have been destroyed, then “every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, to the glory of God.” Then every creature in Heaven, on earth and in the sea shall be heard saying,

**“Praise, glory, honor, dominion and might be unto Him that sitteth
upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, forever!”
for the Unspeakable Gift. R. 5927**

CONCLUSION

We see that the great work which God began in the person of our Lord Jesus, and in the sacrifice which he made for our sins and in his own exaltation in resurrection power, has not been lying idle since; but a work has been in progress in behalf of the world. Jesus personally has exercised the office of High Priest to and for the under priests, his “body,” during this Gospel age, selecting, instructing, fitting and preparing them for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the future in behalf of the world. And we can easily see also that this work of raising up the great Prophet (Head and body) from amongst mankind, to a higher nature, even to be “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4) will soon be accomplished. Then what glory! What blessing, when this great Prophet, Priest and King shall exercise, in the name and spirit of Jehovah, the authority of earth, to bless mankind, to cause the social uplift which the whole world so greatly needs, but which can come from no other source; to restrain, and ultimately to completely overthrow, the powers of evil, of darkness, and of sin, and thus to purify and cleanse the world and bring in the glorious time promised, when there shall be no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain, no more death, —because the former things of sin, and its penalty, death, will have passed away!

All who remain at that time, after that glorious reign shall have completed its work, will be in full harmony, mentally, morally and physically, in deed and in truth, with Jehovah God, and the righteous laws of his empire.

Hallelujah! What a Savior! What a wonderful and comprehensive plan is this, which our great Creator has mapped out, of which we are, first, the subjects, and afterward, by his grace, his active agents in bringing to the world of mankind. R. 2858

**To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,
and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father,
to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever.**

Revelation 1:5-6

Amen!



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Titles and Names For Jesus

You are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God
—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1:30

Advocate 1 John 2:1	Great Prince Dan. 12:1
Alpha and Omega Rev. 1:8	Great Shepherd Heb. 13:20
Anointed Luke 4:18, Acts 10:38	Head of the Body Eph. 4:15
Apostle Heb. 3:1	Head of the Church Col. 1:18
Archangel Dan. 12:1, 1 Thes. 4:16	Heir of All Things Heb. 1:2
Arm of the Lord Isa. 53:1	High Priest Heb. 2:17, Heb. 3:1
Author and Finisher of Our Faith Heb. 12:2	Holy One Luke 1:35, Acts 2:27
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Beginning and End Rev. 22:13	Horn of Salvation Luke 1:69
Beloved Matt. 12:18	Jesus Matt. 1:21
Beloved Son Matt. 3:17	Jesus Christ Rom. 1:3
Bishop/Overseer of your souls 1 Pet. 2:25	Jesus Christ Our Savior Titus 3:6
Branch Jer. 33:15, Zech. 3:8	Jesus The Christ Matt. 16:20
Bread of Life John 6:35	Jesus of Galilee Matt. 26:69
Bridegroom John 3:29	Jesus of Nazareth John 1:45
Bright and Morning Star Rev. 22:16	(The) Just Acts 3:14
Captain of Our Salvation Heb. 2:10	Just One Acts 7:52
Carpenter Mark 6:3	King Matt. 21:5
Chief Songs 5:10	King of Israel John 1:49
Chief Cornerstone Eph. 2:20	King of the Jews Matt. 2:2
Chief Shepherd 1 Pet. 5:4	King of Kings Rev. 19:16
Christ Matt. 16:20	Lamb Rev. 5:12
Christ Jesus Rom. 6:23	Lamb of God John 1:29
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Deliverer Rom. 11:26	Light of the World John 8:12
Door John 10:9	Light to the Gentiles Isa. 49:6, Luke 2:32
Emmanuel Matt. 1:23	(True) Light John 1:9
Everlasting Father Isa. 9:6	Lion of the Tribe of Judah Rev. 5:5
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Firstborn over all creation Col. 1:15	Lord 2 Pet. 2:20
Firstborn from the dead Rev. 1:5	Lord and Savior Jesus Christ 2 Pet. 3:18
First Fruits 1 Cor. 15:20	Lord of all Acts 10:36
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Foundation 1 Cor. 3:11	Lord of Lords 1 Tim. 6:15
Gift of God John 4:10	Lord of the Sabbath Matt. 12:8
Good Shepherd John 10:11,14	Man of Sorrows Isa. 53:3

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 Mediator 1 Tim. 2:5
 Mediator of the New Covenant Heb. 12:24
 Messenger of the Covenant Mal. 3:1
 Messiah John 1:41, John 4:25,26
 Michael Dan. 12:1, Jude 1:9
 Mighty God Isa. 9:6
 Mighty One Isa. 19:20
 Morning Star 2 Pet. 1:19
 Nazarene Matt. 2:23
 One John 8:18
 (The) One Mic. 5:2
 Only Begotten of the Father John 1:14
 Only Begotten Son John 3:16, 1 John 4:9
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 Son of God Luke 1:35
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 Son of the living God Matt. 16:16
 Son of the Most High God Mark 5:7
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 Sun of Righteousness Mal. 4:2
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 The One Man Rom. 5:15
 The Resurrection and The Life John 11:25
 The Righteous 1 John 2:1
 The Way, The Truth, The Life John 14:6
 The Word (Logos) John 1:1,14
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 Word of Life 1 John 1:1
 Vine John 15:1,5
 Wonderful Isa. 9:6
 Your Anointed Hab. 3:13
 Your holy Servant Jesus Acts 4:27
 Your Salvation Luke 2:30

**This is eternal life,
 that they may know You,
 the only true God,
 and Jesus Christ
 whom You have sent.
 John 17:3**

