

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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NEW YEAR GREETINGS, 1921

DEEPEST thankfulness and praise should fill the hearts of all the sons of God as they cross the threshold of the New Year 1921. Grateful indeed may we be that His grace has kept us from falling unto the present moment, and that continuing in this earthly tabernacle so many of us are still of one heart and of one mind in respect to our Father's Word, His Will and His service. Our appreciation must be increased by the remembrance that every testimony of the Word is to the effect that the time in which we are now living is one of special testing to all professing to be the Lord's people--"every man's work shall be tried so as-by fire." When we remember that the Adversary is to be permitted to bring "*strong delusions*" upon the Lord's people for the very purpose of separating all not truly His, that they may believe that which is false and depart from the Truth and be condemned as unworthy, "because they received not the Truth in *the love of it*" (2 Thes. 2:10-12), it surely should call forth our thanks to God that the opening of another year finds us still standing fast, appreciating the Truth and in full accord with all the Divine appointments by which He has kept us from falling.

The Scriptures remind us that rejoicings do not belong as properly to him that putteth on the armor as to him who, having fought the good fight to the finish, shall lay aside the armor and put on robes of glory in the First Resurrection. (1 Kings 20:11; 2 Tim. 4:7, 8.) Consequently we must not stop too long even to rejoice that we are what we are by the grace of God, but must go on! The new year is surely full of blessings for the *faithful*, according to all the precious promises of our Father's Word. We must grasp these afresh, allowing the Lord's faithfulness of the past to establish our trust the more firmly for the future. Without faith as the trolley to connect us with the current of Divine power we will fail to "go on unto perfection."

"Faith can firmly trust Him,--come what may."

Love, too, should be stimulated by a retrospective glance; discerning the mercies of the Lord toward us should enthrall us with loving zeal for Him and His. "We love Him because He first loved us!" We seek to do those things pleasing to our Lord because we love Him, and, in proportion as we love Him we will delight in such obedience and service--even at the cost of self-sacrifice.

Good resolutions and the re-examination of our ideal and standards of life are appropriate at this season, too. Not that the fully consecrated can add to their consecration, for, if proper, it included our all. Not, either, that we should have an annual round up when we would seek pardon and start out afresh, as typical Israel did each "Day of Atonement" at the beginning of their new year.

Spiritual Israelites, rather, are to live a daily, an hourly life of nearness to the High-Priest. We are to make use of the Divine provision of mercy -- the precious blood -- is to be continually invoked for the cleansing of the slightest defilement of conscience, that thus the wedding garment of our Lord's imputed righteousness

may not become bedraggled, but that the slightest spot being removed, we may have it "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

Nevertheless, self-examinations and good resolutions have a value at this season in particular. That reviews of business, taking account of stocks, ascertaining the profits and the losses of the year., etc., are profitable in respect to worldly affairs, all will admit; and the much more important affairs of the soul, the ascertainment of gains and losses as New Creatures, and how and when and where these came to us in the constant battle with the world, the -flesh and the devil, will surely profit all who make such reckonings with an eye single to the pleasement of the Lord.

LOOK, YE SAINTS, THE SIGHT IS GLORIOUS

Considering the outlook for the new year we believe that all who are faithfully carrying out their consecration have reason to lift up their heads with confidence and courage in that we still have before us the Narrow Way with all the wonderful privileges of walking therein in the footsteps of our blessed Redeemer and of attaining the glorious prize at the end-the crown of immortality. Through our correspondence with the dear friends of the Cause throughout the world we are made acquainted with the general conditions, and our hearts rejoice at the strong indications that there is a good number of brethren whose spiritual condition is excellent -- better perhaps than ever before. During the recent years the facts have been repeatedly pressed upon us that many throughout the Harvest period have received more knowledge than they have made use of in their daily lives-that many have been more interested in the letter of the Truth-in the knowledge of God's Plan, than in conforming their lives to the spirit of the Truth. Consequently we have realized more and more the appropriateness of drawing special attention to the necessity for receiving not the grace of God in vain, but on the contrary of permitting the Truth which we so dearly love to work in our hearts both to will right and so far as possible to do right-God's good pleasure respecting us. (Phil. 2:3.) Apparently the Lord has blessed the efforts put forth to assist the friends to see the importance of this matter.

EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

One of the most convincing evidences of spiritual development on the part of the brethren is, noted in the fact of their diligent and impartial study and investigation of the Word, with the object in view of settling every matter of doctrine and faith by the infallible guide of God's holy revelation. Thus in harmony with St. Paul's advice, the motto of the brethren in these days very wisely is, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." And well indeed do we recall the timely advice of PASTOR RUSSELL on this point. The following brief quotation is full of solemn significance:

"'Prove all 'things, hold fast that which is good.' However much they should ever come to respect prophesyings, or public preaching, the Lord's people should learn proportionately not to receive what they might hear without proper examination and criticism; they should prove all things that they hear, should exercise discrimination of mind, as -to what is logically, and Scripturally supported, and what is mere conjecture and possibly sophistry. They should prove what they hear, with a view to holding fast everything that stands the test of the Divine Word, and shows itself to be in accordance with the Holy Spirit; and they should

as promptly and thoroughly reject whatever will not stand these tests. Alas! the Lord's people today greatly need to give attention to this exhortation; for much is being presented in the name of the Lord -and as the teaching of His Word that is neither logical nor Scriptural -- that is supported neither by the letter nor the spirit of the Word-much that is not good, and should be rejected."--Z '03-26.

The letters we have received from the brethren the world over during the past year have generally been very refreshing and of much encouragement to us. We could wish that we might be able to answer these more at length and in detail, but owing to various duties in connection with the work, our limited time will not permit of this. We ask the friends to accept the message of the HERALD as our replies to your letters, which are always welcome. We rejoice that the communications received give evidence of a genuine work of grace in the hearts of the faithful. And truly it is the prosperity of the Lord's people from this standpoint, the standpoint of the New Creature, that specially concerns us and which we rejoice to see, rather than the outward prosperity represented in numbers and financial support, although the evidence in -this respect is by no means lacking. The friends will be glad to learn that the HERALD subscription list is gradually on the increase, and the loving zeal of a good number, is increasingly manifested in their substantial support of the work as represented not only in, the ministry of the HERALD, but in assisting brethren of ability to serve the household in a more public way, and in making possible the supply of free literature, to which we have called attention from time to time.

The new home for the INSTITUTE, notice of which appeared in these columns recently, we believe will prove of much advantage in furnishing permanent and comfortable headquarters for our office and its work, as well as saving considerable expense -in the way of rentals, etc. We appreciate indeed the remarks in many letters received expressing gladness and rejoicing with us in the advantages and blessings of the home.

"THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS"

While as we view the various lines of service open at present, we could wish for larger opportunities and more favorable circumstances, yet we would not strive to run ahead of the Lord, nor plan for Him the amount of work that His people should accomplish in the ministry of the, Truth.. The entire situation we recognize is fully in the hands of Divine providence, and He expects us to make use only of those opportunities and powers that are at our disposal.- We attach special importance to our doing with our might what our hands find to do, therefore we have encouraged the brethren everywhere to be as active in the Father's business in giving a testimony for the Truth, both by word of mouth and by the printed page, as their circumstances and talents will permit, and then co leave the results with the Lord.

If the numbers with whom we meet and have fellowship in the Truth are not large, let not this dishearten us. We have learned that from the Divine standpoint numbers do not count. Thus said our Lord, "Fear not, *Little Flock*." We believe by this time all the readers of the HERALD Well know that, in encouraging the ministry of the Truth we have no new sect, system nor organization to build up or support. We ask none to join anything, nor to subscribe to any system of faith. To

the contrary, we extend the right hand of fellowship to all consecrated believers in Christ, whether they see eye to eye with, us or not on all the details of the Truth. Surely this was the broad basis for Christian fellowship and Christian liberty established by the Apostles in the early Church. More and more we-trust all are coming to realize the true mission of the Church in the flesh-primarily that of making herself ready for union with the Bridegroom. And are we not closely approaching that glorious event?

OUR DELIVERANCE DRAWETH NIGH

Of one thing we may be sure: We are rapidly approaching the "end of all things," so far as this dispensation is concerned, and near the end of the Church's career in the' flesh; then we should not be dismayed if the field of activity now is smaller than in former *times. May it not be that we have reached the time when the language of John the Baptist is applicable, as it was at our Lord's First Advent: "He [the Christ in glory, beyond the veil] must increase, but I [the remaining members of 'the Christ in the flesh] must decrease?" If this is true now, it will surely mean a still further narrowing down of the activities of the Christ in the flesh, even until the last member has passed beyond into glorification. It is to that most solemn and significant event, the Marriage of the Lamb, that the faithful have looked forward from the beginning of the Age, Surely it is of no less importance now that we give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

The ministry of the HERALD we desire shall more and more turn the minds and affections of the Lord's people toward the Kingdom and incline their hearts to keep in the Narrow way. Many of the letters received in our office tell of how -much blessing and encouragement has been realized from the. pages of the HERALD, helping in the direction of the heavenly, eternal things. To Him our glorified Master we gladly render the praise for the evidences we see through our correspondence that the friends are appreciating more and more not only the heavenly prize, but also the trials and difficulties which, under Divine providence, are intended to develop our characters, and make us copies of our Lord, and thus to prepare us for the Kingdom and for the great privileges and work of blessing others through it. It is our desire, and we believe yours also, to still progress in this "Narrow Way" of self-sacrifice; to still recognize the Lord's hand in all of life's affairs toward "the called ones according to His purpose;" and the advantage of every trial and discipline rightly received; and to still be helpful to all who are in the way, assisting them to put on the armor of God., and to be clothed with all the graces-of the spirit, and to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, that they may tread faithfully this royal way opened up by our Redeemer., walking in His footsteps, until the Heavenly Kingdom has been attained.

THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION ENTER THE KINGDOM

We do not mean to say that there are no drawbacks, no difficulties, no discouragements, in any part of the field. Quite to the contrary, there are many such; but these also, interpreted in the light of the Divine Word, are encouragements to us, since we know that they are needful. We realize that the Lord Himself is pruning His "Vine," taking away the, branches that will not bear fruit, and that unto perfection, fully ripe. When we say, therefore, that the outlook

is encouraging; we mean the broad view, that the Lord is successfully gathering a faithful people unto Himself, and that soon this work will be completed.

We have learned, too, that sometimes matters which seem to be dark clouds and troubles amongst the brethren are really, under Divine providence, messengers of blessing, which, rightly received, do good in showing the brethren their own weaknesses and imperfections and in leading them to seek more and more of the grace of God to overcome these, that they may be filled with all the fullness of God. It is along this line, then, that we congratulate you and bid you be of good courage and continue to press along the line toward the "mark" of perfect character -- perfection in love; assured that if faithful we shall ultimately obtain blessings far beyond our present conceptions.

The thought that a certain standard or mark of character is necessary to all who will pass Divine approval as "overcomers," and hear the Lord's "Well done!" is an astounding one to many. Many have thought of the Christian race as merely an avoidance of open sin; others have included an avoidance of secret faults; others have gone still further, and have included a general disposition to sacrifice many interests of the present life; others have gone still further, and have understood the test of discipleship to be full self-surrender to the Lord, a full sacrifice of earthly life and all of its interests to the will of our Head, the Lord; but very few have the thought that all our sacrificings and experiences and, self-denials must lead up toward and eventually bring us to the "mark" of character which God has set for the "elect," else they will not get the prize of joint-heirship with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom.

Let us, then, set our spiritual aims, ambitions and endeavors still nearer to the perfect Divine standard; remembering the while our Lord's words, "Without me ye can do nothing," let us be strong and courageous in the strength which He supplies and promises to increase as we are able and willing. to accept it.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY XLV-JANUARY 9

THE TREADING DOWN OF THE HOLY CITY

(221) What is the significance of the "Holy City" used as a symbol in the visions of St. John, and particularly as referred to in Rev. 11:2? What further evidence bearing upon this matter do we gather from the Old Testament I as to the significance of Jerusalem, the Holy City? H Oct. 1, '19-282.

(222) What does the treading down of the Holy City refer to? Has this been fulfilled; if so, when? Explain the significance of the symbolical forty-two months. H Oct. 1, '19-282, 283.

(223) Explain the relationship between the treading of the Holy City forty-two months and the visions of Daniel regarding the "little horn" and the "time, times and a half time." When did this time period end? Dan. 7:24, 25; H Oct. 1, 119-283.

(224) What is the significance of the Two Witnesses, and their witnessing in sackcloth 1260 days, and when was this fulfilled? Studies, Vol. 111-122; H Oct. 1, '19-283.

(225) What is the meaning of the Two Olive trees and the Two Lampstands, and what is the connection between these and the "Two Witnesses"? What reference do we find in the Old Testament bearing upon this matter? H Oct. 1, 119-283.

STUDY XLVI--JANUARY 16

THE TWO WITNESSES THAT PROPHECY

(226) What is the lesson indicated in verse 5, "if any one desire to' injure them [the Witnesses], Fire proceeds out of their Mouth," etc.? In what sense will their enemies be killed? H Oct. 1, '19-283, 284.

(227) What general statement do we have from PASTOR RUSSELL bearing upon and elucidating this matter of the Holy City, the Two Witnesses, measuring the Altar, etc., etc.? H Oct. 1, '19-284.

(228) What is the import of, verse 6, "These have Authority to shut Heaven Authority over the Waters," "to smite the Earth," etc.; and to what incidents recorded in the Old-Testament do these symbolical statements evidently refer, and explain how they have been fulfilled? H Oct. 1, '19-285.

(229) What is the import of the statement, "when they shall have completed their Testimony? Explain in what sense their Testimony was finished before the end of the 1260 years. H Oct. 1, '19-285, 286.

(230) What is represented by the Beast that comes up out of the Abyss to make War with the Two Witnesses, and from what phase of life is this symbol drawn? H Oct. 1, '19-286, 287.

STUDY XLVII--JANUARY 23

THE FATAL WAR AGAINST THE TWO WITNESSES

(231) What general conditions and circumstances do we find recorded in history that appear to clearly fulfil this vision of the Papal Beast's War against the Witnesses? H '19-286.

(232) Describe the methods used in the War against the Two Witnesses; how were the Lord's faithful people effected? H Oct. 1, '19-286.

(233) In what sense were the Two Witnesses finally put to death, and how did the War that accomplished this matter differ from the previous persecutions of the faithful? At what point in the history of the Church did this occur? H Oct. 1, '19-286.

(234) Are we to, understand that when the Two Witnesses were put to death that all the faithful had suffered martyrdom? Does the historian make mention of certain faithful groups of Christians who lived during this dark period, or, was there a time when there were none to represent the Lord? H Oct. 1, 119-287,

(235) What is the significance of the statement, recorded in verse 8, "their Dead Body shall be on the Street of the Great City," etc.? H Oct. 1, '19-288.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES XLIV

THE OVERTHROW AND IMPRISONMENT OF SATAN

"And I saw an Angel coming down from Heaven, having the Key of the Abyss, and a great Chain on his Hand. And he seized the Dragon,--the Old Serpent, who is an Enemy and the Adversary, and bound him a Thousand Years, and cast him into the Abyss and shut up and sealed over him, so that he might deceive the Nations no more, till the Thousand Years should be ended; after these he must be loosed a Short Time."--Rev. 20:1-3.

IN the vision preceding the one here recorded, St. John had portrayed to him in symbol the last act in the final overthrow of the present order, that which is generally termed Christendom. We have seen that this most significant event will result in a dreadful and unspeakable destruction of human life; and that which has hitherto been termed Christendom will be left in a chaotic condition, without a government, either civil or religious, standing. But notwithstanding this fact the Scriptures teach that a remnant of humanity will survive that great catastrophe, and with these the new dispensation will commence. Nearly all the ancient prophets of Israel have depicted the various aspects of this utter collapse of Christian (?) civilization. Nor is the reason far to seek--the time has at last come for the fulfillment of our Lord's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," and before that Kingdom can control, the present kingdoms and arrangements. under Satan's dominion must first be displaced. The nations of Christendom have made boastful claims of being the most enlightened 'concerning what constitutes Christian ideals and requirements, and are therefore held the more responsible and will have more to answer for, on account of their inconsistencies, and unholy practices, and will consequently suffer most in these judgment troubles. (Isa. 24.) These judgments will also extend to those nations that have been in close commercial and other relationships with Christendom; but the heathen tribes and peoples will most naturally be the least affected and will suffer less, being less responsible than enlightened Christendom. When the new order of things is introduced--at Jerusalem, the heathen nations, together with the others, will then hear the true Gospel and become recipients of the great blessings of restitution that will then be due. -- Isa. 66:19.

SATAN A WORLD EMPEROR

Such a condition of affairs as is portrayed in the collapse of civilization in the end of this present evil world has occasionally in a limited, local sense occurred in past history. The French Revolution, particularly that aspect of it known as the Reign of Terror is an illustration in a local sense, of the conditions that will prevail in the whole civilized world when this present order is overthrown. All of these catastrophes in the past have been followed by a re-organization, a reconstruction of human affairs. Satan, the great adversary of God, is referred to by both Christ and St. Paul as the "prince" (ruler) and "god" of this world, or present order. This being true, it is most reasonable to suppose that at such times

he has exerted a powerful influence in the work of reconstruction and reorganizing governments. In so far as Satan has been able to accomplish this work, he has had as his object the continuation of his control and the furtherance of his empire upon the earth. This was true after the French Revolution, when Papacy, his chief agent in ecclesiastical matters, was reinstated. It will therefore be seen that before the earthly phase of the new, just, righteous government can be successfully organized, Satan, whether operating personally, or through the other invisible agencies under his influence-the demons-must be, placed completely under restraint, and this is the principal thing evidently that is intended to be described in this vision of the binding of Satan.

The recent world war, the most cruel in human history, the effects of which according to the world's statesmen, are even now threatening the overthrow of the present civilization, has made it necessary for the great leaders of the world to come together and formulate plans for a work of reconstruction, which would be better described from the Scriptural standpoint as a work of propping up the old world or order of things. This work is that which is occupying the time and attention of some of the world's greatest leaders and statesmen at the present time. We may be very sure that the "god" of this present order is, so far as he is able, exerting a molding influence in this work of so-called reconstruction. The reorganization of the affairs of Christendom, civil and ecclesiastical, in which the attempt will be made to prop up the present order, is portrayed in the Revelation visions which we recently considered. This, it will be recalled, is that of a great Federation of the three parts of Christendom. This, it would seem, will be Satan's final effort to continue his waning influence and power in human affairs and keep the present order from collapsing, but the visions plainly teach that it will fail, the present order will go down.

Humanity in general has little or no conception concerning the influence that Satan and the fallen angels (demons under Satan's control) have exerted in this world. Indeed, only a few, even of the Lord's people have any proper conception of this matter. However, when the Scriptures are carefully examined it will be found that he is at the head of a most gigantic and powerful organization of wicked, spirits whose chief interest and work has been to build up and establish a great empire over the affairs of this world, and to deceive and blind humanity concerning the attributes and character of God. The prime motive and incentive that has ever spurred Satan on to do this is not so much his enmity to man as it is his ambition to be exalted as a mighty ruler; hence his spirit of rivalry toward God and his hatred of Jehovah and righteousness. (Isa. 14:13, 14.) The Scriptures inform us that as the "god [mighty one] of this world," he it is that has "blinded the minds of them -that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:4); that he is the "spirit that now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2); and that he is the author of false doctrines, called, doctrines of demons. (1 Tim. 4:1.) In the book of Revelation (chapter 12) it is plainly taught that his seat of authority, the place where he received homage -in the beginning of the Age, was in the great system of Paganism, and that when Paganism 'fell, in the fourth century before a perverted, nationalized Christianity, he transferred his throne, influence, powers, into that so-called Christian system of Romanism.

SATAN AT THE COURTS OF EARTHLY GOVERNMENTS

We have a hint here and there in the Scriptures which indicates that Satan has his representatives at the courts of worldly governments. A remarkable suggestion to this effect was made by the angel Gabriel who had been sent from the court of heaven in response to the earnest importunate prayer of the saintly Daniel (who had discovered by reading Jeremiah's prophecy that the 70 years of captivity were closing) that his people might be 'restored from Babylon to the land of their fathers. The angel Gabriel's words to Daniel 'were, "Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and, I am come for [on account of] thy words [prayer]. *But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.*" (Dan. 10:12, 13.) It has seemed to expositors inconceivable that a human prince of Persia could withstand, hold back, for twenty-one days, a mighty angel who had been sent by God on so important an errand, and that before he could fulfill his commission the Arch-angel, Michael, would have to be sent to his assistance. For this reason the conclusion generally reached by expositors is that this one called by Gabriel the "prince of the kingdom of Persia," was a powerful, fallen angel" who secretly represented Satan at the court of Persia's king. It would not be a great strain on our imagination to believe that Satan has had in the past,, and has at the pre sent time, his ambassadors or representatives at all the worldly, national courts of earth.

It will, therefore, be seen that the binding of Satan has its two aspects: one affecting his power and influence amongst the fallen angels, the other, as it has to do with human governments, organizations, individuals. Furthermore, it would not be reasonable to suppose that the binding or restraint of his power and influence in either -if these directions would be accomplished in a moment, but would rather be brought about in a gradual way. And,, as still further bearing on the matter, the binding process would refer particularly to the gradual taking away or restraining of his power and influence, which when completed, would be followed by what is symbolized by his being cast into the "Abyss," 'etc.

TITLES APPLIED TO SATAN

The vision of St. John, describing this binding and imprisonment of Satan, has reference to the time when not only will the restraint of his power and influence be complete but when that which is represented by his incarceration in the Abyss also will be effected. In brief, the vision is a symbolical description of the taking away from Satan his power and influence amongst fallen angels and men, resulting in his own imprisonment. In considering the, particular symbols, it will be noted that he has four names given to him by the Revelator: the Dragon, that Old Serpent, the Devil, and Satan. These names evidently describe his evil characteristics in their operation amongst men. The Dragon is first mentioned in chapter 12 and is there portrayed as a great monster having seven heads and ten horns. This, of course, is not Satan himself, but rather is it a symbolic picture-of Satan's connection with the earthly government of Rome-Pagan. Regarding the symbolical Dragon in Rev. 12:9 being called that. " old Serpent, the Devil, and Satan," it will be recalled that we explained it in this way: Satan, the wicked-

spirit being, was the originator of Paganism and was the power behind the scenes, and in one part of the vision is represented as inciting and inspiring the Pagan Roman government in its warring against Michael and His angels. (H '19-351.) After the "Dragon" is cast down from his throne in the Pagan Roman power, at the- fall of Paganism,, he is represented as giving his power unto the "Beast" (Rev. 13:2) ; the "Beast" being another symbol of the Roman power when it was changed from Pagan to Christian (?). The Dragon is next mentioned as continuing to receive worship (Rev. 13:4), which would signify that Satan continues to exercise the same power and receive the same homage in the professed Christian power of Papacy. There is no special mention made of the

"Dragon" again until under the sixth vial (Rev. 16:13) he is seen acting in connection with the "Beast" and "False Prophet." In this mention of him, we have represented, it would seem, Satan's connection with the purely civil, political-governments of the present time.

Coming now to the vision under consideration, we apply the "Dragon" symbol as having special reference to Satan's connection with earthy governments-political World-powers. When these political world-powers are destroyed, swept away forever, the Dragon phase of Satan's power forever ceases. There seems to be a special significance in the fact that this particular designation as applied to Satan ceases with his pre-millennial imprisonment. When the thousand years are ended and he is loosed out of his prison for a little season he is not called by the name "Dragon." The significance seems to be that he never again after-his imprisonment at the beginning of the thousand years exerts an evil influence or gets possession of the sovereignties of the earth. When Christ begins His reign with His saints, Divine power holds control of the sovereignties, both heavenly and earthly, forever. Whoever these are, therefore, whom Satan succeeds in deceiving when he is loosed at the end of the thousand years, they cannot be the governing or ruling authorities, but are, as stated (Rev. 20:8), those that come from earth's distant corners. The "Dragon" phase of Satan's power will forever cease when the confederated kings, etc., meet their final end at the close of Armageddon.

"THAT OLD SERPENT THE DEVIL"

The name given to Satan--"Serpent of old" is evidently an allusion to the temptation in Eden, and designed to identify him with the one who tempted Eve and caused the fall of our first parents. The name "serpent" is also designed to refer to his subtlety, his character as a deceiver of mankind. It was in the form of a serpent that he deceived and beguiled Eve. It has been by the exercise of these same evil propensities that he has deceived the whole world, introduced his false doctrines and corrupted the Church. Since the temptation and fall in Eden and onward to the glorious apocalypse of Christ and His saints, Satan fulfils the character designation of the "Serpent."

The word Devil (Gr. *Diabolos*) is found about thirty-five times in the New Testament, and means an accuser or slanderer, a calumniator or malignant falsifier. These have also been prominent characteristics -or traits of Satan from the very beginning of human history. "He was a murderer [murderous liar] from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, for he is a liar, and the father of it," are

the words of our Savior concerning him. (John 8:44.) It was his lie to Eve, "Thou shalt not surely die," that has corrupted the Scripture teaching concerning the future life and more than anything else has caused God's character to be maligned and misrepresented amongst the nations and peoples of the earth, as also the ecclesiastical systems.

The word Satan means an adversary, an opposing spirit. It is a Hebrew word and is transferred into the New Testament. It is used in this sense very often in the Scriptures. It represents that characteristic of the chief of the fallen angels Who is described as the great adversary of both God and men.

PASTOR RUSSELL DESCRIBES BINDING OF SATAN

It is the one possessing all these particular characteristics that is represented in this vision as being bound and cast into the Abyss by a mighty Angel. Who or what is represented by this Angel is not stated. There have been several different interpretations by expositors concerning who this Angel represents. An interpretation given by PASTOR RUSSELL many years ago appeals to us as being the correct one, and his latest utterances concerning the same, as we shall endeavor to show, prove that he continued to hold to this interpretation up to the time of his death:

"The word angel signifies messenger, and this picture (Rev. 20: 1) shows that God will send some messengers with authority and power to subdue Evil-the adversary of truth and right. In this work of binding, many agencies will doubtless take part-an increase of knowledge probably being one of the strongest. Yet all of these agencies are typified by the one [angel] messenger. There is that about this figure which seems to indicate that Christ Jesus and His Body, the Church of the First Born is the one in whose hand is the power of authority to bind and control Evil--"To bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgments written, this honor have all the saints."--Psa. 149:8, 9.

"Many may be the instruments [angels] used in this work [of binding]; . . . some moral and upright infidels, honest in their unbelief; and some God-dishonoring and defiant unbelievers, to displace errors and prepare a place [the world] for the Truth. So too, among the nations,. He may make the wrath of man to praise Him, and perhaps use bloody-handed Communists, as advocates of civil rights, and for the overthrow of evil and oppressive governments. But the result will be that Satan shall be bound for a thousand years."--Z March '82-6.

According to these words of PASTOR RUSSELL, it was his understanding when he wrote them that (1) The Angel who did the work of binding represented those agencies of various kinds that Christ uses to accomplish this work. (2) The binding of Satan is the restraining of his power and influence to do evil, etc. (3) This binding work is going on in the period of the Second Presence of Christ, and is caused by His exercise Of Divine authority.

Concerning what is represented by the "key" and chain" PASTOR RUSSELL said that: "The key represents authority, and the chain represents strength."--Z March '82-6.

Twenty-eight years after this he wrote an article entitled, "The Binding of 'the strong man.'" In this article we discover only one change of interpretation and that

is concerning what is represented by the "chain." In this article the subject *is* more fully dealt with and seems to us to be a most reasonable, correct and remarkable interpretation of the vision as far as it treats it. Concerning the significance of the expression, the binding of Satan, he has thus briefly and in a general way explained:

"We believe that there is a personal Devil and that he will be literally restrained in some manner; but in the expression in the above text it, seems that the names 'Devil' and 'Satan' refer not merely to the person of the Adversary, but to all that system of things of which he has stood. as the representative or head or center; for instance, in Revelation 12:7-9, a great religious system [Paganism] is apparently spoken. of as the Devil."--Z '10-154.

SATAN'S EMPIRE PLUNGED INTO DISORDER

Concerning when this binding began and how it will proceed and when it *will* end we further quote his words:

"The Lord's parable respecting the binding of the strong man' seems to imply that it will begin in a sudden manner. He says that if that 'strong man' knew at what time the thief would come he would watch and not suffer his house to be broken up. He thus intimates that Satan would not know at what time the catastrophe would come upon him and his arrangements and that therefore he would be taken somewhat at a disadvantage.

"As to what constitutes the 'house' of this 'strong man' would be another matter. His 'house' here would stand. for 'his household, which at the present time would include the fallen angels. These fallen angels, who have been subject to Satan as their prince, will in some sense of the word be thrown out of harmony with him. The time at which we might expect this would be in the second presence of our Lord, and it would seem that, from about the time of our Lord's *parousia*, disorder began to operate in Satan's household and that these different endeavors that we see in many quarters [and in the world at the present time] to carry out certain schemes more or less antagonistic the one to the other, might be the result of this disorganization. It would further seem that there are different bands of evil spirits working upon humanity. These various hostile bands may work a great deal of havoc, perhaps equally as much as could have been done had they all remained in organized relationship to Satan himself. But still the undermining or overthrow of his authority, seems to be in progress."--Z '10-154.

Concerning the binding of Satan's power and influence in human affairs, and as to what is represented by the "chain" that was in the hand of the Angel, we have .another very interesting, reasonable and helpful comment by PASTOR RUSSELL. In this comment it will be seen that he applies the action and effects of truth to the chain. We quote his words- in this connection

CHAINS OF LIGHT

"We believe that every advance step of light and knowledge is that much of a restraint upon darkness and evil and superstition. We properly enough speak of the chains of superstition, the chains of darkness, which bound mankind for a long time; and very properly we say that these are of the Adversary. Now, have we anything to indicate that light will serve as a "chain"? Did we ever hear of light

being a chain? We answer that there has never yet been a manifestation of that kind. There is nothing in the past operation of light that served as a chain, but it seems that now it should operate thus. 'Whatsoever doth make manifest is light,' and that which makes manifest is a 'chain,' is a restraint upon that which is *darkness*. So here are the two-light and *darkness*; the Prince of Light and the Prince of Darkness. The Prince of Light has only recently invaded, as it were, the land of the Prince of Darkness to commence His work. This work is first, chiefly in the Church and in the restraining of the '[symbolical] 'winds' and the 'powers' and the troubles -coming upon the world; but meantime the whole world is getting awake, not necessarily to the light of truth, but -getting awake to the chains of darkness which are upon them and of which they are striving to rid themselves. . .

. "In connection with the binding of Satan, we read that he shall be 'bound for a thousand years, that he might deceive the nations no more till the thousand years be finished'--implying that deception was one of the main things in which he had been previously engaged and that henceforth he would be so restrained or disabled, whether by the light of 'present truth,' or by light of science, or whatever it might be, that he would not be able to. deceive the world in. the same manner as formerly.

"We believe that the restraining of his influence is in operation. In respect to the temperance question, also, we see that enlightenment is proceeding and people are making rapid advancement in the knowledge that alcoholic liquors are dangerous.

"And so the education of the world goes rapidly on . . . The knowledge that is spreading is wonderful. And the thought that practically all this is being accomplished by the world itself, and that we [the Lord's people] have little or nothing to do with it, makes it appear still more wonderful. This work is being done by people who do not believe in the true religion; they do not know God aright; the majority of them, so far as we can gauge their own testimony, repudiate the Bible. They believe in a vague way in a God of some kind . . . Nevertheless they are free from the shackles of the darkness of the past and apparently have no desire to go back, but forward. It would appear, then, that all of the things peculiar to our day in the way of restraining error are part of the binding. of the Adversary.* We may be doing our little mite in that direction by advertising sermons, giving out literature, etc.

"As to the question -when the great Adversary's binding will be accomplished, we believe that it will not be brought about until the time that the 'great company' class is completed."--Z '10-155.

The above exposition seems most reasonable. Summing up the interpretation, we would understand that all the agencies that have had to do with the exposing of the errors of the great systems and' organizations termed Christendom are symbolized, by the Angel employed by Christ by which Satan is, in the Harvest period now closing, being bound; and furthermore that the chain represents truth. More than this we think it in perfect harmony with this exposition to conclude that the binding of Satan referred to in the vision under consideration applies more especially to the particular time of its completion after the change of the "Great Company" class.

The period of Satan's -restraint is stated to be' for a thousand years. From the days of St. John down to the present time, expositors, with scarcely, an exception, though differing with one another regarding the nature and character of those times, have understood these years to be literal ones.

IN THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

After Satan's binding and the restraint of his power and influence in the affairs of humanity have been accomplished, and the overthrow and collapse of the present order of things is complete, there would remain yet one more thing necessary to make further evil operations of his power and influence impossible. This could only be accomplished -by either the destruction of himself and his 'demoniacal followers, or their being placed in a condition in which they would be utterly helpless to deceive, or in any way injure mankind who during that period of a thousand years would be having their judgment, trial or probation. We learn in the symbolic words that follow that this latter is what is to be done. We read that he was cast -into the "Abyss," which was shut up and sealed that he might deceive the nations no more until the thousand years would be ended. Concerning the symbolical significance of the "Abyss" we have already explained in a previous article. (H '19-229.) Briefly stated, it would signify a state or condition rather than a place. The abyss being without bottom is strongly suggestive that in this condition of restraint Satan will be without any foundation in which to hope for anything-no basis on which to formulate any plans-all will be total' darkness, uncertainty , hopelessness; he will be awaiting his final punishment, which will be, as we shall see later, his utter destruction.

The sealing up of the Abyss is designed to further strengthen the symbol-to show the utter powerlessness of Satan and his followers to do harm or to escape from the bonds that hold them. This binding and imprisonment of Satan and his hosts, portrayed in this Revelation vision, is not the only place in which it is mentioned in the Scriptures. Jehovah, through the Prophet Isaiah, had long before St. John's day anticipated, indeed, foretold it, as we read: "It shall come to pass in that day [see context], that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited." And it is also shown that it occurs in connection with the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom, as we read: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously. "-Isa. 24:21-23.

In this Scripture we have just as clearly revealed as in the one under consideration, the judgment of the great evil governmental powers, both the unseen, spiritual, and the earthly; and it is just as clearly revealed that the Judgment is governmental, not individual, and that it is not the final one.

It should be kept in mind that the Millennial period represents righteousness reigning on the earth, rather than righteousness in its full sense dwelling on earth. While it is true that righteousness shall flourish and be the predominating characteristic of those times, it is also a fact that the Scriptures teach that there will be exceptions to the general rule. We read in one of the prophecies respecting those times that "the strangers shall submit themselves unto Me." (Psa. 18:44.) In

the margin this is rendered "lie" or "yield feigned obedience," which evidently means that they shall submit to superior power, but not in heart; and this is implied in the next verse which reads: "The strangers shall fade away, and be afraid out of their close places." (V. 45.) The Prophet Isaiah also describing Millennial conditions has said, "when Thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants [in general, doubtless] of the world will learn righteousness," but further adds, "Let favor be showed to the -wicked [the goat class], yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness [the Millennial earth] will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." (Isa. 26:9, 10.) In this way the Prophet Zechariah speaking of the same times pronounces the punishment of those who do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the glorious King."--Zech. 14:16, 17.

THE FOUNTAIN OF EVIL REMOVED

With the binding of Satan and his being cast into the "Abyss," the forces of evil lose their great inspirer and leader. Evil itself is thus deprived of its source or fountain. As one has truthfully said, "While the stream- of evil may no longer flow from its 'source,' there still remains that which already issued forth to deal with; thus while Satan may no longer be permitted to send forth a further stream of evil to corrupt the nations, that which lids issued and been. absorbed by humanity must be removed. This removal constitutes the work of Christ and His Church in the coming Age; and it is surely encouraging to know that the source of this evil- has been cut off, thus making the task of eradicating evil in the human heart much simpler than if the 'fountain' continued its supply. What evil has been absorbed by humanity, still abiding in the hearts of transgressors, must be annihilated and replaced by righteousness."--THOUGHTS ON REVELATION.

The Divine reason given for Satan's being bound is stated to be, "that he might deceive the nations no more until the thousand years should be ended." A very important matter to decide in order to a correct interpretation of these thousand years as they are related to God's great Plan of the Ages is, Who or what is represented by the nations that are to benefit by this complete restraint of Satan and evil? In reply to this we will notice first, that the destruction described as occurring in connection with the great Armageddon battle resulted not in the destruction of the nation's or peoples, but rather of the great ruling powers. Governments may fall, and armies may be defeated, but the nations or peoples over which these governments rule may still continue to exist. To illustrate this matter, we may properly say that the defeat of Germany and overthrow of the Hohenzollern Dynasty, did not destroy the German people or the German nationality. The conquerors of Germany might have followed up the victory and given to the Germans entirely new laws and institutions and organized them under a new rule or government for an entirely new life. In such an event the conquerors would have done to and for the German peoples or nation something of a similar character to what is implied will be done to all the nations of the earth in the Millennium. They will all be placed under a new government. It will at first be an iron rule. PASTOR RUSSELL has thus described this matter "The nations will be ruled by force, irresistible force, until righteous order is established by a general submission; every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess Divine power and glory, and outward obedience will be compulsory."--STUDIES, VOL. IV-636.

As another has described it, "The battle of the great day of God Almighty is one thing; the shepherding with the rod is another. The two are closely connected. They are both judgment administrations. The one is the sequel to the other. But they are wholly different in their immediate subject, character and results. The one is temporary, the other is continuous. The sword comes first and strikes down the enemy in the field; and then follows the shepherding with the rod of discipline and new rule over the peoples, whose kings and armies are no more. The two together fulfil what is stated in Psa. 2:5-12, Isa. 11, and Matt. 25:31-46, where the same rod power and shepherding are further described. The Shepherdizer is the same who conquers in the battle with, the Beast and -his confederate kings. He is the All-Ruler, and it is His power and dominion which are thus. enforced with justice and with. judgment. But His army of glorified saints accompanies Him. They follow Him in His victorious treading down of His armed enemies . . . And particularly in this shepherding with the rod of iron, the Scriptures everywhere assign to them a conspicuous part."--SEISS.

It will be to the point to say in this connection that while this writer as well as many others of those who are termed Pre-Millennialists saw quite clearly the shepherding judgment features of these Millennial times, they failed to see that it would have any relation to the vast multitudes of the human family who lived and were deceived and blinded by the "god, of this world," and died without experiencing the enlightening influences of the great Shepherdizer. This is a matter that is described in a I another vision in this same chapter, the consideration of which will be taken up in a separate article of this series. It is the vision of the judgment of the "Great White Throne."

Thou, Lord, dost hold the thunder: the firm land
Tosses in billows when it feels Thy hand.
Thou dashest nation against nation, then
Stillest the angry world to peace again.
Oh, touch their stony hearts who hunt Thy sons
The murderers of our wives and little ones.

Yet, mighty God, yet shall Thy frown look forth
Unveiled, and terribly shall shake the earth;
Then the foul power of priestly sin and all
Its long-upheld idolatries shall fall. }
Thou shalt raise up the trampled and opprest,
And Thy delivered saints shall dwell in rest.

-From Hymn of the Waldenses.

JESUS TEACHING FORGIVENESS

--JANUARY 9--MATT. 18:21-35.

Golden Text.--"If ye forgive men their trespasses, -your Heavenly Father will also forgive you."--Matt. 6:14.

"SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN"

AFTER Jesus had explained to His followers how best to avoid taking offense from the brethren and how best to help brethren out of the wrong position of being offenders and being injurious, the matter was brought up afresh by Peter's question regarding the number of times that one should be willing to receive injuries from another and take- them patiently, and, exercising a forgiving spirit, should try to have the injuries discontinued. It will be noticed that the Lord is not laying down any rule by which we may deal with the world, but merely the rules which should govern amongst His followers. As respects the world we are to expect opposition, misrepresentation, slander, opposition of every kind. "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." "Whosoever will live godly in this present life shall suffer persecution." -John 15:18; 2 Tim. 3:12.

Such oppositions from the world we are to take as a matter of course, **and not** be surprised at the fiery trials that will try us, but to consider that the Lord is wise in permitting such experiences and able to make them all work out for our good. It is within the household of faith that the special trials sometimes come, from the very quarter whence we least expect them, but these also must be taken patiently; we must not render evil for evil nor railing for railing toward the Lord's members nor toward the world; we must, as the Apostle says, be patient toward all.

Notice that Peter's query is, If my brother trespass against me how often shall I forgive him? Seven times? Peter no doubt had in mind the thought that seven was the symbol of perfection, and that this might mark the reasonable limit of mercy and forgiveness. He did not, of course, consider that if that were a Divine law it would mean that He Himself might be forgiven of the Lord not more than seven times for imperfections, shortcomings, etc. Our Lord's answer is broad and sweeping -- "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven." Some are disposed to translate this until seventy and seven times, but evidently the Lord's intention was to imply that forgiveness should be granted as often as it is sought with any manifestation whatever of sincerity.

This is not merely advice from the Master to His followers--it is a command. It is not optional with us how we shall do toward our brother, for the great Teacher has assured us that if we have not the forgiving spirit we cannot be His disciples. His words are, "If ye do not from the heart forgive men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." All, then, who realize their need of Divine mercy and forgiveness and who receive the great Teacher's instruction on this point will be careful to cultivate in their hearts *in* every sense a forgiving spirit, a loving, generous disposition. And by this all men may know the disciples of the Lord of mercy.

Having seen in *Dr. Peloubet's notes* some good remarks by others whom we believe were godly men, we submit extracts which we think will be profitable to all:

"Jesus saith. . . . Until Seventy times seven. The Greek is uncertain here, and may be translated either 'seventy times seven,' that is, 490 times, or 'seventy and seven,' that is 77 times. Perhaps Christ made the words inexact purposely, so as to emphasize His thought that the true Christian's forgiveness is to be unlimited. If a person remembers wrongs enough to keep count of them, he does not really forgive them. 'I can forgive, but I cannot forget,' generally means, "I do not

quite forgive." We are not to take the pardoned offence, and carry it to a kind of "suspense account," to be revived if another is committed, but we are to blot it out altogether."--Alexander *Maclaren*. 'By proposing any limit whatever to forgiveness, Peter showed that he still considered that to forgive was the exceptional thing, was to forego a right which must some time be reassumed, was not an eternal law of the Kingdom but only a tentative measure which at any moment might be revoked; that underneath the forgiveness we extend to an erring brother there lies a right to revenge which we may at any time assert. This feeling wherever it exists shows that we are living with retaliation for the law, forgiveness for the exception. But Christ's law is, that forgiveness shall be unlimited. Seven was with the Jews the number of perfection. When time has run through seven days, it begins again; the circle is complete. So that no expression could more forcibly convey the impression of endless, ever-renewed, eternal iteration than "seventy times seven." '-*Marcus Dods*."

THE DEBT OF A KING'S OFFICER

By way of impressing this lesson our Lord gave a parable to His disciples. This parable represented a great king who, making an accounting with his officers charged with the collection of taxes, found one of them short in his accounts in a very large sum, ten thousand talents, estimated to represent nine million dollars. Justice laid hold upon the debtor and was about to execute its penalty when he appealed for mercy and extension of time in which to make good the deficiency. The king was compassionate, forbore the collection of the debt and let the servant go free.

This is our Lord's illustration of the proper exercise of mercy. The one thus dealt with does not represent the world of sinners, Adam and his race, for whose deliverance from the penalty a ransom price is demanded from justice. This parable is often thus used improperly against the Bible argument of the teaching of the ransom, that the death penalty against Adam and his race could not be lifted or set aside except by the payment of the ransom price, the corresponding price, our Lord's death. That this is not the teaching is clearly shown by the statement, "The Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a certain king which would make a reckoning with his servants," etc. This declaration respecting the Kingdom of Heaven lifts the parable entirely out of connection with the world in general, which is not either in embryo or otherwise the Kingdom of Heaven: it definitely locates the parable in the Church, and these servants of the king as amongst those who have already been justified through faith in Christ and, who have already made consecration of themselves to the Lord and become thus His servants entrusted with His goods. The signification of this feature of the parable, then, is that if any of the Lord's people, His disciples, come short they have a throne of grace and mercy to which they may approach that they may "obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."--Heb. 4:16.

THE DEBT OF A FELLOW-SERVANT

As representing the wrong course, the reprehensible course of some, the Lord in the parable before us pictures the forgiven officer as going forth, from his king's presence with the latter's kind words still ringing in his ears and in the exercise of his unmerited freedom, and, finding a fellow-servant who owed him an hundred

pence -a 'small debt, probably representing not more than a. hundred dollars proportionately in our money and time.. Instead of a proper and generous feeling toward his fellow-servant, instead of sympathy and love for him corresponding to that which had been bestowed by the king upon himself, this servant caught the lesser debtor by the throat saying, "Pay me that thou owest." The fellow-servant used toward him the very same words that he had used to the king, saying, "Have mercy upon me and I will pay thee all." But he did not, but cast him into a prison, He was hardhearted; not at all after the likeness of his generous master, the king. Even his fellow-servants recognized this; they felt a pity for the unfortunate one and told it unto their Lord, They knew well enough the king's generous disposition to be sure that He would not favor such an intemperate exercise of justice.

The king sent for his officer and upbraided him for the matter, saying, I remitted thy debt because thou besoughtest me; I showed mercy to you. Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow-servant? The question was left without an answer-the answer was clearly enough implied. He who had received so great mercy should have been moved with co ion toward a fellow-servant in a small affair. The king was wroth, was angry, with that servant, justly so. He had proved himself unworthy of the mercy bestowed upon him. Nor was it too late yet to punish him for the matter, for his. debt had merely been remitted or set aside, and not blotted out. Thus it is with all of the Lord's people; we are dealt with on the basis of faith; God is in earnest if we are in earnest. Our blemishes and shortcomings will not be permitted to stand between us and the glorious things, to which we have been called if we are faithful to the extent of our ability, and if as a part of that faithfulness we have the spirit of Christ, for if we have not the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit of forgiveness, gentleness, etc., we are none of His.

It is in line with this that the Apostle writes that sins shall be blotted out at the Second Coming of Christ. (Acts 3:19.), They will be blotted out when in the resurrection we come forth as New Creatures, sown in weakness, raised in power; sown in dishonor, raised in glory, sown natural or human bodies, raised spiritual bodies, glorious. Then that which is perfect having come, all the imperfections and blemishes will be fully blotted out, never to be revived either by the Lord or others. But meantime, while we have our standing of faith, our blemishes are merely covered while we are permitted to give a demonstration of the loyalty and sincerity of our consecration and earnestness of' desire to walk in the footsteps of the Lord.

WHAT THE UNMERCIFUL MAY EXPECT

Our Lord, after concluding the parable, makes a direct application of it to His -disciples, not to the world, although in a certain- sense or degree there is a general principle expressed which is applicable to the world in proportion as each comes under enlightenment and instruction., Our Lord says, "So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do also unto you if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." How solemn these words, how clear cut, how unmistakable their import. In no uncertain terms they assure-us that whatever our faith, whatever our works, they all amount to nothing if we do not attain to that spirit of love which is merciful, generous, long suffering, patient toward those

who do injury to us, whether they be brethren of whom we might expect the more, or whether they be enemies of the world from whom we must expect less, consideration. Mercy is an element of love, and love is the fulfilling of the whole law of God.. The propriety of the Lord in thus dealing with us is evident. He is seeking a special class for the Kingdom-to be associates with our Lord Jesus in the great work of ruling and blessing the world. If we fail to improve the various lessons and opportunities afforded by the Lord, to cultivate His character, then in the same proportion we fail to make our calling and election sure.

The king delivered the unmerciful servant to the tormentors. Such was the custom of oriental countries at that time and to some extent still. We are not to understand that our Lord had sympathy with those se barbarous customs, but that He was speaking to the people from the standpoint of custom which they would understand. Elsewhere the Scriptures assure us that any who are the true servants of the Lord and who fail to come into accord with His it willingly, will be turned over to Satan, to tribulation to hard experience, that by these they may be profited and learn to appreciate things from the Lord's standpoint. I Cor. 5:4, 6.) These tribulations correspond to the torments of the parable upon the servant who did not exercise toward his fellows the spirit of mercy, As again it is stated, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."--Matt. 5:7.

"FORGIVE US AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS"

It will be remembered that in our Lord's prayer He sets forth this principle for our instruction and guidance, that we must not expect of the Heavenly Father mercy for our shortcomings and blemishes, and continuance in His favor and ultimately joint-heirship in- His Kingdom, unless we cultivate in ourselves the same spirit. How beautifully and how simply the Lord states this matter in the prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." (Matt. 6:12.) How emphatically the Lord states it again, saying, "If ye forgive men their trespasses your Heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14, 15.) These trespasses, be it noted again, do not refer to the one original sin on account of which condemnation of death passed upon the whole .human family and on account of which Christ died and on account of which the curse is ultimately to be rolled from every member of the race so that there shall be no more curse. (Rev. 22:3.) These trespasses are our own individual shortcomings and blemishes which we have inherited and which the Lord is very willing to overlook and excuse for those who will comply with the conditions *of* their Covenant and be followers of the Lord Jesus, filled with His spirit and striving to walk in His steps.

We quote again from *Dr. Peloubet* on the words, "So shall also my Heavenly Father do unto you:"

'This does not mean that God revokes the forgiveness which he has once bestowed, but it is a symbolical way of saying that he who will not forgive another has not really himself been yet forgiven.'--*William M. Taylor*. 'If you get pardon from God, you will give it to a brother: if you withhold it from your brother, you thereby make it manifest that you have not got it from God.'--*Arnot*. Notice the words, 'My Heavenly Father.' Some think that God cannot be a loving Father if he does not, forgive every one, repentant and unrepentant alike; but

forgiveness implies reunion, and God can never draw near to one whose spirit remains the opposite of His. If ye forgive not every one his brother. 'Many Christian men read in their own private "Revised Version" of the New Testament: "Whosoever speaketh a word or committeth a wrong against God, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh a word or committeth a wrong against *me*, it shall not be forgiven him,"--certainly not in this world, even if it is forgiven in the world to come.'--*R. W. Dale*. From your hearts. 'The offence is to be blotted out, is to become as though it had never been.'--*R.W. Dale*. 'Of all the virtues which Christ inculcated, this, perhaps, is the most difficult. Let us forgive *for our own sake*. A unforgiving spirit is always his own worst Let us 'forgive *for our brother's sake*. How much for my brother my forgiveness may do! All love has within it a strange redemptive power. St. Augustine used to say that the Church owed Paul to the prayers of Stephen. , Might he not have said with equal truth that the Church owed Paul to the forgiveness of Ananias? Let us forgive for *Christ's sake*, because of that which God through him has done for *us*.'--*Rev. George Jackson*.

O man, forgive thy mortal foe,
Nor ever strike him blow for blow;
For all the souls on earth that live
To be forgiven must forgive,
Forgive him seventy times and seven:
For all the blessed souls in heaven
Are both forgivers and forgiven.'

"This is emphatically a parable of grace, forming a worthy ending of Christ's discourse in Capernaum and of His whole ministry of love in Galilee; teaching His disciples that the Kingdom of Heaven is a kingdom of grace; a kingdom among whose blessings pardon occupies a foremost place; a kingdom, therefore, in connection-with which ambitious disputes concerning places of distinction, and still more, vindictive passions, are unseemly and intolerable."--*Prof. A. B. Bruce*.

Illustrations. 'Take care how you offend me, for I never forgive,' said a man in the hearing of John Wesley. 'Then,' said Wesley, 'I hope you never sin; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.'

"The world knows no such thing as forgiveness. There is no forgiveness in the business world for a man who has, served his term for forgery. People say: "Forgive him! How do we know that he will not forge again?"--*Rev. John Henry Hopkins*.

"There are a great many people in the world whose first and last thought in life is of what is due to them. There are mothers and fathers in families who are so absorbed in the thought of what is due them from their husbands or-wives or children that life becomes a sharp, acrid, microscopic hunt for slights that were never dreamed of and for discourtesies that were never intended.'--*Bishop Potter*."

OUR ALL FOR THE KINGDOM

--JANUARY 16--MATT. 19:16-30--

Golden Text.--*"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."*--Matt. 19:19.

OUR lesson relates to what for centuries has been called "The Great Refusal." The rich young ruler, whose name is not given, although possessed of an abundance of the things of this life longed for an assurance of everlasting life. As a Jew he knew the Law; he understood that God had made with this nation, and with no other, through Moses the mediator, a covenant, under which everlasting life might be attained. He perceived, however, that even the best-men of his nation had failed to gain eternal life under this covenant-that all 'had died. He had heard of- Jesus, and that "never man spake like this man," and he knew that in many respects His teachings were of a very positive character, and that His manner and instruction were not like those of the Scribes and Pharisees, uncertain and equivocal;--that He taught as one having authority, and knowing what He taught to be true. He hesitated to go to this Teacher, but finally, seeing Him leaving a house in his own neighborhood, he ran out hastily and point-blank put the question: "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal [everlasting] life?"

Instead of answering his question directly our Lord inquired why he thus addressed Him as "good." Jesus' words do not imply, as some have surmised, a denial of being good. Rather, He would impress upon the young ruler the import of his own language, that When he got his answer he might appreciate it the more. Our Lord's words might be paraphrased thus: Are you addressing me as Good Master from the heart, or only as a complimentary salutation? If you really believe me to be good, you must believe in me as a teacher sent of God-the All-Good. More than this, you must believe my testimony, that I proceeded forth and came from God, that I am the Son of God. If my testimony is untrue in any particular I am not good at all, but a falsifier, a hypocrite, a blasphemer. If, then, you call me Good Master from the heart, and believe that I am the "sent of God," the Messiah, you will be the better prepared to receive my reply as the Divine answer to that question.

Without waiting to require that the young man should commit himself definitely on the point involved, but content with merely raising the issue in his mind, our Lord proceeded to answer the question.

We are not to understand our Lord's answer to this young Jew, at a time when the Law Covenant was still in -force, to be the same that He would give, or that we should give in His name, to-day, in reply to a similar inquiry. The young man was living under a covenant of works, of which the Apostle declares, quoting from the Law itself, "He that *doeth* these things shall *live* by them." (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5.) The New Covenant had not yet been sealed, nor indeed will it be, until all the members of the Christ have fulfilled their sacrificial mission and. the -blood applied for that purpose. Not until then could the New Covenant be' operative toward this young ruler or anybody else. Our Lord could not properly direct the young man's attention to any other -procedure than the keeping of the conditions of the Law Covenant *which was* still in force. Anyway; this was, what the young man inquired: "What good thing must *I do* that I may-have everlasting life?" It was for this reason that our Lord did not say, as we should say to-day in answer to such a question: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ-believe that He died for your sins, and arose for your justification, and accepting Him as your Savior and

Advocate, present, your life in full consecration of all its talents, powers and opportunities to the Lord's service, and enter into the Covenant of Sacrifice.

Our Lord did point out to the young man the only way to life everlasting then open--the keeping of the Law. He well knew that the young man could not keep this Law perfectly, and hence could not obtain everlasting life through it; but He would bring the matter before his attention in the most favorable form to be comprehended. Hence the form of His reply.

The Law was divided into two parts or tables, the first relating to Jehovah and the second to the neighbor. Our Lord ignored the first of these, realizing that the young man, so far from desiring to make or worship idols or another god, was seeking to know and to do the will of the true God. Our Lord would bring the answer down to the simplest possible proposition, and hence referred merely to the commandments respecting duty toward his fellowcreatures, and got the response that so far as the young man had discerned the matter he had kept the Law; but although he kept its outward form he realized that something was still lacking. He had no evidence that he had received any special blessing of eternal life, and wished to know of the Master what hindered, what he lacked of being a perfect man, keeping the Law and meriting the reward of that Law, life everlasting. No wonder Jesus, looking upon him, loved him; everybody who loves righteousness loves those who are righteous, or who are striving to the best of their ability to come up to the mark of righteousness-perfection.

THE GRACE OF ALL GRACES

Then Jesus told him plainly, "One thing thou lackest." You have been endeavoring to keep God's Law, and have done well, so far as the outward is concerned; but the spirit of the Law you have not apprehended at all--the spirit of the Law is *Love*. "The whole Law is comprehended briefly in one 'Word.'" "Love is the fulfilling of the Law'." (Rom. 13:9, 10.) You have been getting the outside, or shell of the Divine command, but have entirely overlooked the precious thing in it, the kernel, the essence--love to God supremely, and love toward your fellowman as toward yourself. Let me prove this to you by suggesting that you demonstrate your love for, your neighbors by disposing of your property for the assistance of poorer ones. Then consecrate your life in loving devotion to God's service, and come with me as my disciple, taking up the cross of self-denial thus involved.

The test was a crucial one, and manifested clearly the distinction between the letter and the spirit of the Law. The cross was too heavy for the rich young ruler. He had gotten the answer to his question, but oh! it was so different from what he had anticipated. He had felt comparatively well satisfied with himself, although realizing that something must still be lacking; He had rather expected Messiah's commendation, and perhaps some further advice, but nothing so radical. It was too much for him; he went away exceedingly sorrowful, says Luke; his countenance fell, says Mark; it, was a sore disappointment, For the time being he could not think of accepting the Master's prescription, the dose was too bitter, and he must at least think the matter over well.

Whatever course this young ruler may have subsequently taken we are not informed; but of one thing we may be sure; he had learned a great lesson

respecting the scope and significance of the Law. He had ascertained the impossibility of his attaining -eternal life under the Law Covenant.

It will be seen that we totally disagree with those who claim that the condition of this young man and our Lord's words to him apply to all young men or to those possessing wealth--though the spirit of the matter is applicable to all, under the different conditions of God's dealings. Under the Covenant of Grace, the Covenant of Sacrifice, God tells us, rich and poor, "Christ died for us, according to the Scriptures." He not only met the requirements of the Law, and fulfilled that Covenant and annulled it, but additionally He has appeared in the Divine presence with the value of that sacrifice and has appropriated of His merit to make good the weaknesses and imperfections of our flesh to which our hearts, our minds, do not assent. Accordingly, even if when some come to Jesus to inquire the way of eternal life, they :Should be unable to say, as did this young ruler, "All these things have I done from my youth up,"--if it should be even necessary for such to confess with shame, "All these commandments have I violated," nevertheless, the provisions of Divine Grace are such that even the vilest sinner who has turned from sin and who at heart desires henceforth to walk in the way of righteousness, and who, repenting of the sins of the past, gladly makes such restitution as is within his power--all such are accepted in the Beloved One, and reckoned as justified freely from all things, from which the, Law could not justify them..

Then such are invited, as was the young ruler, to come, take up their cross, and follow Jesus--come, prove, demonstrate, their love for righteousness, their devotion to ,God and every feature of His will; come, crucify self and selfishness, and receive into their hearts instead the spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. Love is the Holy Spirit, of which the Apostle declares, "If any man have not the spirit of Christ [love, in some measure] he is none of, His."

"TRUST NOT IN UNCERTAIN RICHES"

Our Lord took advantage of this episode to impart a lesson to His disciples, showing them the danger of riches--any kind of riches, honor of men, political in fluence, many and large talents or abilities, social. standing, fine education and material wealth--for one may be rich in any of these senses. "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (Revised Ver sion.) Our Lord does not here undertake to explain why there would be greater difficulties for, those possessing -riches. to enter into His Kingdom, but from other Scriptures we learn the reasons, and why it is that the heirs ,of the Kingdom will be chiefly found amongst the poorer 'classes. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not ,many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the mighty." (1 Cor. 1: 26, 27; Jas. 2:5.) The rich are "called," in one sense of the word, but not in another; they are equally invited but they are much less likely (than, others who are poorer) to accept the Lord's invitation and to present them selves according to the *terms* of the Kingdom call. In this sense of the word "called" only those who accept the call are meant; and they then divide themselves into two classes--those who make their calling and election sure, and obtain the, Kingdom, obtain a part in the First Resurrection to glory, honor and immortality, obtain, a place with Messiah in His, throne, to share with Him in His Millennial Kingdom; and others who do not make their calling and election *sure*, either by becoming repro bates,

and subjects of the Second Death, or by a failure 'to manifest a sufficiency of zeal in the race for the prize, and on this account being remanded to the class known as the "great company," who must come through great tribulation, washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb.-Rev. 7:9-15.

It is well that we note carefully what are the hindrances of these "rich," preventing them from having so favorable an opportunity as their (in earthly respects) less favored brethren. (1) The possession of earthly good things, "riches," is less favorable to the development of faith, without which it is impossible to be pleasing to God. (2) These earthly advantages are more likely to develop pride, a serious barrier to every grace, an impossible barrier as respects the Kingdom, which can be attained only through humility. (3) Riches of any kind bring with them friends and associates of the earth, whose hearts being generally out of sympathy with the Lord and the Kingdom will constitute them adversaries to the new mind, from whose influence it will be the more difficult to break completely away. (4) And summing up all of the foregoing, those possessed of such earthly riches have proportionately more -to sacrifice than those who are poorer in these respects; and the greater the things sacrificed the greater the difficulty in performing the sacrifice.

However, on the other hand, it may be said that whenever one who is rich in this world's goods (talents, etc.) does present himself a living sacrifice to the Lord and His service, it witnesses to a deeper heart-loyalty than if he were poorer. It implies a greater sacrifice, and it implies also the exercise of greater opportunities in the Lord's service. The servant who has five talents and who uses them faithfully, and doubles them, accomplishes a greater work-than the servant who, having one talent, uses it faithfully and doubles it,, and our Lord's understanding of this matter is shown in the fact that according to the parable the one will have granted to him authority over ten cities, and the other authority over two, although both will be commended--"Well done, good, faithful servant."--Matt. 25:14-30.

If we would look for illustrations showing wherein the rich (in talents, etc.) have been faithful, we would find at the head of the list our Lord Himself, "who was rich, but for our sakes became poor." As He was richer than all others in every sense of the word, so proportionately His sacrifice was greater than that of all others in every sense of the word, and His honor, glory and power are greater. "He is Lord of all." "Him hath God highly exalted and given a name that is above every name.", Similarly the Apostle Paul was rich-if riot in money and property, he was at least rich in education, in social advantages and privileges,. and in life's opportunities; and we may say that since the Apostle so faithfully sacrificed all these earthly riches for the sake of the Privilege of preaching the Gospel of Christ, his must -have been a much larger sacrifice than that of the majority of men: and proportionately we anticipate that his reward in the Kingdom will be great because he counted these earthly "riches" but "loss and dross that he might win Christ and be found in Him [a member of the Anointed One.]" -Phil. 3:8, 9.

So then, while we call attention, to the fact that few will be in the Kingdom who have had great opportunities, privileges, property or other "riches" of this world, we nevertheless encourage those who possess this world's goods of any kind, to consider that they thus hold within their grasp grand opportunities which rightly used will yield riches of grace, not only in the life that now is but also in the life

that is to come; working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, proportionate to their sacrifices and faithfulness in their stewardship.

PROMOTION IN THE KINGDOM

--JANUARY 23--MATTHEW 20:17-28--

Golden Text.--"The Son of man came, not to be ministered unto to but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." -- Matt. 20:28.

THIS lesson takes us down near the close of our Lord's earthly ministry. He with His twelve Apostles was *en route* for Jerusalem. He had just explained to them more particularly the ignominy, shame and death which He would experience, and repeated His assurance of His resurrection. The rich young ruler had just visited Him, and gone away sorrowful upon learning the terms of discipleship. Jesus had just said, How hardly shall they who have riches enter into the Kingdom; the Apostles had inquired what they should have since they had left all, 'and Jesus assured them that they should have a hundred fold more in this present time, with persecution, and in the world to come everlasting life.

The account given by another (Mark 10:32) says that Jesus was walking in advance of the twelve, who were discussing matters amongst themselves, overawed by the stupendous things which the Lord had declared to be imminent. The courage of our Lord in the Narrow Way fills us with admiration. What a strong character was His! He had no thought of turning back; He was intent upon accomplishing His Father's will-upon sacrificing Himself in the interest of others. A noble pattern the Apostles saw before them-greatness in humility, victory through service.

A GOODLY HERITAGE DESIRED

It was at this time that James and John approached the Lord in a private manner. Matthew tells us that their mother, Salome was with them and really made the request for them in their names. Salome is supposed to have been the sister of Mary, the aunt of Jesus, in which event James and John were His full cousins. Realizing that matters were drawing I to a crisis they sought of the Lord an assurance that they two might be very close to Him in the kingdom, one on His right hand and one on His left, the two positions of chiefest favor.

Our Lord did not reprove them, for doubtless He read in their hearts a great love and loyalty toward Himself and the desire for the positions indicated not merely the desire for the honors and authority implied, but specially because this would bring them closer to Himself. Had the Lord seen in their hearts an evil form of ambition, undoubtedly He would have reproved it on the spot. His -answer, however, was so framed as to impress these brothers and all of His followers since with what is implied in joint-heirship with the Lord in the Kingdom. Very forceful is the expression, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be. baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

Our Lord did not refer to the Memorial Supper cup, but to the experiences which-it symbolized, even, as He did not refer to water baptism, but to the baptism into

death which is symbolized by the. water immersion. How heart-searching was this question!

"MY GRACE IS, SUFFICIENT FOR YOU"

That these two noble Apostles were not inspired by selfish ambitions in this request is evidenced by their prompt reply to the Lord's searching question, and later on evidenced by their faithfulness even unto death. They said, "We are able"--that is, "We are willing. God helping us, we will sacrifice everything to follow in your footsteps; we will count nothing dear unto us; we will lay aside every weight and every sinful besetment; we will run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This we may assume to be a larger statement of their devotion.

Our Lord's love and sympathy went out to them afresh as He answered them, guaranteeing that with such willingness. of heart they should indeed have the experiences necessary to fit them for a place in the Kingdom. What a comfort this is to even the weakest of the Lord's followers who are sincere.

The Lord looketh at the heart, and if He sees there full devotion to Himself, He is pleased to grant to such His blessing, His aid, saying, will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness." We, too, are desirous of sharing the Kingdom with our Lord, yet not from love of exaltation above others, but from a desire to have this evidence that we please our Father and our Lord Jesus--to have this closeness of relationship to Him, and to have the privilege of participation with our dear Redeemer in the great work of blessing all the families of the earth in due time. It is well that we should have the Lord's answer clearly before our minds, and know that unless we partake of His cup and are immersed into His death, we can have no share in His Kingdom of glory. Let us then count all things else as loss and as dross to obtain this necessary experience. As it comes to us let us not be fearful, nor think strange of the fiery trials that' shall try us, as though some strange thing had happened unto us. On the contrary, even hereunto were we called, that we might now suffer with the Lord, and by and by be glorified together with Him.

As for the particular place to be occupied in the Kingdom by the sons of Zebedee or by us, our Lord pointed out that the assigning of such positions Was in the Father's hands--the choicest positions shall be given to those for whom they have been prepared by the Father. Not that we are to understand that the Father prepared the places in advance by any arbitrary divisions, but rather that the Father's pre-arranged plan is that each of the followers of Jesus shall have positions of honor in the Kingdom proportionate to the zeal of their faithfulness in the present time--for none shall have any part in the Kingdom who do not now prove faithful.

THE MEEKEST AND MOST ZEALOUS

It is not for us to decide the zeal and faithfulness of the Apostles--to say which two would better fill these positions of chiefest honor. The Father will make no mistake. It will not surprise us, however, should we find the Apostle Paul in one of these two positions. His faithful, loving zeal and loyalty seem to shine out conspicuously even amongst those who were also faithful and loyal. It is not for

us to have any ambitious feelings respecting this -matter, except that we desire always to serve the Lord and be pleasing to Him, and eventually to be as close to Him as possible. When we remember that the closer we come to Him in the present trials and experiences and sufferings with faithfulness, the closer we will be to Him in the future, it explains to us the meaning of the Apostle's words when speaking of his severe trials: he called them light afflictions but for a moment, working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.-' 2 Cor. 4:17.

When the ten other disciples learned the special mission of Salome and the request made by her for James and John, they were indignant at them. Possibly some of them, Judas included, were very anxious for the authority and power and dignity of the throne, but without the very special love and longing to be near the Master Himself which seem to have influenced James and John in their request. But Jesus set matters straight with them all, and turned their displeasure into an opportunity for another good lesson, by the assurance that the chief positions in the Kingdom should be given along the lines of meritorious service, and that thus each one of them would have his opportunity to strive for the chief position by striving to render service to the others.

No other lesson requires to be so carefully learned by the Lord's people as this lesson of humility. It has to do with the very humblest of the flock, as well as with those who are teachers and elders and pilgrims, etc. but the degree of force that seems to come with the besetment or temptation seems to multiply in proportion to the position and attainments of the individual. Pride and ambition may be in those who have no official position in the Church, often asserted in fault-finding and criticism which, to the hearers, is intended to imply superior wisdom or ability on the part of the critic – that his wisdom and ability only wait for opportunity to manifest above his fellows. We are not objecting to a kindly brotherly word of criticism given privately with a view to helpfulness, but merely to the kind which vaunteth itself and seeks to do injury to the reputation of another occupying a preferred position.

"BE NOT MANY OF YOU TEACHERS"

As the Apostle intimates, however, this besetment bears chiefly upon those who have some talent, some ability, and whom their fellows have to some extent honored as teachers. Little men, like little ships with broad sails, are in great danger of being capsized if too strong a wind of popularity play upon them. Not only so, but we believe that even the most humble, the most faithful, the most zealous to be servants of the cause, have continual need to be on their guard lest their good intentions should be used of the Adversary as a trap-for their ensnarement, Let us remember the Apostle's words, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that a man [who is a teacher] shall receive greater condemnation"--he is exposed to greater trials and temptations as a result. This must not hinder any who have talents from using, them, but it should make each one very careful that he does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think soberly,. If the judgment of the majority of the congregation does not recognize his adaptation to the service of a teacher, he should humbly accept its conclusion as correct, no matter how highly he had thought of himself previously. And even if the majority should conclude that he is worthy of a position as a teacher in Zion, he should tread very softly before the Lord, very

humbly, realizing that those who in any degree attempt to impart instruction in spiritual things to others are to that extent acting as representatives and mouthpieces of the Lord Himself, the Head of the Body;, and all should keep in mind the Lord's words in this Golden Text and His own exemplification of the matter--that he who serves lost and not he who lords it most should have the chief respect of the Lord's people.

ENCOURAGING MESSAGES

KEENER APPRECIATION OF THE- MASTER'S LOVE

Dear Brethren:

I am writing you this to testify my appreciation of the visit it of dear - Pilgrim Brother Blackburn. I so much enjoyed his sweet fellowship. He seemed so, charged with the Message of love-the Gospel of Glad Tidings that there was no room for malevolent backbiting and -slander of fellow-servants . . . Brother Blackburn, in all his discourses, emphasized the possessing of the spirit of -Christ Jesus as the all-important, qualification of Christian character . . . Ali! how can those 'Who have tasted of the heavenly gift be so lacking in the spirit of love as to smite brethren who cannot accept every wild speculation and vagary thrust before them! If those who do such things are thereby manifesting the spirit of the Lord, then I have read the Divine Word in vain. Every noble impulse of even the fleshly heart recoils from any such manifestation of vindictiveness. Our dear Pastor so beautifully shed forth the spirit of Christian love that it ,endeared him to every honest heart. He was surely a shining example of a true, faithful and obedient servant of the Lord. God bless his memory.

Well, we are told by the Word of Truth to expect severe trials -and. that from among the brethren. We have Just been reading from 1912 Tower where Brother Russell warned that we were likely to have some of our severest trials from false brethren.

Now, dear brethren, you who hold such a prominent and responsible place in the Lord's work, look steadfastly to Him who is mighty to save, for.. He- is -able to keep you safe. I do so thank, Him that He has kept you humble and submissive, and that you have been saved from any spirit of pride and unholy ambition. God be praised for this great blessing.

I do so appreciate the sweet letters appearing from time to time in the HERALD, freighted with the sweet incense of holy love rising up'-from consecrated hearts. Precious indeed is the fellowship :of kindred spirits. The Heavenly Father has doubtless permitted these recent fiery trials to come' upon His Church' to make us more and more appreciate His loving kindness and the privilege of fellowship with those who manifest His 'spirit. After pas sing through fiery trials and persecutions we are caused to have a keener appreciation, of our dear Master's love, and also the warmth of the love of fellow members who have not, manifested the prevalent spirit of strife and bitterness.

I pray the Master continually to keep you, by His holy power and make you able and loving ministers of His Word. There are doubtless many and heavy trials yet

before us, but let us take courage from our recent fiery trials, carrying the knowledge that' our Lord has kept us from falling victims of the strong delusion now sweeping over the world. I sometimes tremble when I think of how I escaped by, a seeming narrow margin. As I told Brother Blackburn, I was glad indeed to praise the Master for having kept me safe from. the "snare of the fowler."

Sister A. joins me in Christian love to you all.

Your brother by His grace, J. G., A.-Ala.

HOW DIFFICULT THE NARROW WAY

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of our Lord!

We have so much enjoyed, your service and message to us through the HERALD that we feel bound to extend to you some such expression of our appreciation as shall be of encouragement to you in your service, whereby you may be able to continue in the service of the Lord and the friends, even though it be through much toil and sacrificing, which is after all a reasonable service, and to be rewarded with an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory" when our work is done.

And our appreciation of your efforts to serve us is the greater as we realize more clearly how it has brought you in contact with the class called "thorns and briars," whose only mission seems to be 'to scratch and pierce, even as their ambition to be considered great and to be courted, flattered and admired has led them to oppositions and misrepresentations of those who are standing fast in the faith and in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free.

We see the many snares and delusions set for the unwary and how difficult the Narrow Way has become in these last days. Therefore, as we behold your calm and dignified conversation in the Lord, we rejoice that, by the grace of God our Father, His people are able to maintain such an attitude in the face of such manifold difficulties as are presented now when there are "divers and strange doctrines" being set before the babes in Christ the immature ones who know not the way of Truth and who have no power either to "stand" or to "withstand", in this-evil day.

With Christian love, Your Brother in Christ,

C. F.-Ohio.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. IV JANUARY 15, 1921 No. 2

OUTLOOK FROM THE WALLS OF ZION,

TO ALL the faithful Watchers the daily press presents news items and reports that testify in no uncertain tone that all things are onward moving. While the old order of things, the old world of the reign of sin and death still exists and while we are not, therefore, yet authorized to announce that it has passed away, contrary to *the* facts, yet we are privileged to observe 'the signs about us that mark the

approaching end of the Age and the incoming of the new. Both our Lord and the Apostles admonished us so to do.

The agitation toward the closer union and federation of the ecclesiastical powers continues on, as noted in recent gatherings and conferences called for the purpose of discussing the matter. Some of our readers will have noted the report of one of the late conferences of this **character recently held** in the city of Boston. We submit the account contained in THE BOSTON HERALD of December 28, 1920, under the following headlines'

"PRELATE URGES CHURCH UNION

BISHOP LAWRENCE'S PLAN WOULD INCLUDE CATHOLICS AND EASTERN BODIES

SPIRITED DEBATE. AT MEETING OF CLERGY

"A plan for church unity, to include the Roman. Catholic and the eastern churches, was presented. by Bishop Lawrence at a meeting of clergymen and laymen of various denominations held yesterday in the Swedenborgian Church, Beacon hill.

"Bishop Hughes of the Methodist church presided, and after Bishop Lawrence had outlined his plan there was a spirited discussion, and questions were put to the speaker from the floor. The plan of Bishop Lawrence is based on the conclusions of the Lambeth conference in England.

"INTERCHANGE OF ORDINATION

"Briefly, the plan suggests the interchange of some form of ordination through which one church will recognize and accept the minister of another denomination in the celebration of the one great sacrament of all churches-the holy communion. Bishop Lawrence expressed the opinion that, while the, plan might not lead to very great and practical results immediately, it was arrived at by earnest and sincere deliberation and indicated a possible avenue towards unity.

" 'I have felt, he said, that the re-union of churches can come by the quiet, subtle influence of prayer that will melt the differences. In the holy communion there is the test of unity. Let us have a vision of all Christian people, including the whole world, including the Roman Catholic church and the Russian church. If you are going to have unity you cannot do anything that will shut out that great body of Christian people.'

"The first question put to the speaker was whether the validity of the service of the other churches was recognized by the Church of England. Bishop Lawrence answered that much depended upon the meaning of the word validity. 'In the war,' he said, 'clergymen were sent out to minister to all.'

"Another asked whether, according to the Church of England an ordination in that church gives more grace and authority in the interpretation of the Scriptures!

"ADMINISTRATIVE FEATURE

'That is an administrative feature,' the bishop replied. "I do not believe I had any more authority or power the day after ordination than the day before.'

"Bishop Hughes then entered the discussion, saying he would not take another ordination for \$1,000,000. Referring to the historic part of the Episcopal church, which Bishop Lawrence had named, the speaker said: 'Of course, to me the apostolic succession is only a superstition. I could have you,' turning to Bishop Lawrence, 'at any time to take part in the service in my church, but I would have to decline to be ordained anew to take part in yours.'

"I am not quite sure that I agree with you about the apostolic succession,' Bishop Lawrence replied. 'There are 500 interpretations of it and you can knock down one and have 499 left. So it may be well to speak carefully of this subject.'

"Bishop Hughes then said that it was difficult for the brethren to speak of the apostolic succession doctrine and keep within the bounds of courtesy. He immediately explained that it was by an appreciation of the great knowledge, and authority lodged in Bishop Lawrence that the audience was sincere to obtain information.

"Go slow, conferring, praying, thinking, talking together , was Bishop Lawrence's parting advice, and he then pronounced the benediction."

Along with the above the following is also of interest, under the caption':

"UNION OF CHURCH AND STATE

"REFORMER ADMITS WORKING FOR THAT RESULT

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13--Dr. Wilbur F. Crafts, founder of the International Reform Bureau, announced today that within the next three years he is going to spend \$1,000,000 in safeguarding prohibition, extending the blue laws and amending the federal constitution so that the United States will be designated as a 'Christian Nation.'

"The work of securing the Christian amendment to the constitution has been one of the pet ideas of the International Reform Bureau for a number of years,' said Dr. Crafts. 'The Supreme Court on Feb. 26, 1892, in an unanimous opinion delivered through justice Brewer, declared, reviewing the nation's many recognitions of religion, that 'this is a Christian nation.'

"LINK CHURCH AND STATE

"One of the reasons which have prompted my seeking to get the Christian amendment into the Constitution has been that there might no longer be any excuse for the plea that Bible readings in the schools and similar American Christian institutions are unconstitutional.,

"You believe then that church and state should be linked by an amendment to the federal constitution?'

"My reply to that is,' said Dr. Crafts, 'that the main thing is to get the laws of Christ adopted as our laws as far as possible, and when we have so built up a Christian structure of law it will probably not be so difficult to get the Christian amendment put on as the logical roof.'

"EXPECTS MILLIONS SOON

"Asked when he expected to get the \$1,000,000 he requires in his enlarged reform program for Christianizing and dry cleaning and dyeing blue the United States, he replied quite seriously and in a very matter of fact way:

"Oh, I am expecting that million almost any day now. I could have had it long before this if it were not for the fact that I am so busy- with other things I had not quite- got to it."

Still another item is of no little significance as relative to the above, and as revealing the inward desires and purposes of the Papal system. This report recently appeared in the NEW YORK AMERICAN:

"DIPLOMATIC LINK WITH POPE TO BE ASKED OF HARDING

"INFLUENTIAL CATHOLICS CITE FRENCH AND BRITISH ACTIONS AS CRITERION FOR THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24.--A group of influential Catholics is urging that the new administration sanction establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican, so says a report received in Washington today.

"To bring this about it would be necessary for Congress to pass enabling legislation, at the request of President Harding, to provide funds for the maintenance of a legation in Rome.

"The action of France in re-establishing diplomatic relations with the Pope and the decision of Great Britain to make its war-time mission to the Holy See a permanent body have been cited, according to the report, as reasons why the United States should take similar action.

"At present the only representative of the Pope in Washington is an apostolic delegate, Archbishop Bonanzo. His activities are confined to matters of church discipline.

"It is understood that American Catholics have already selected a delegate to go to Rome to confer with the Vatican on the advisability of establishing closer diplomatic relationship."

Activities looking in the direction of the restoring of the Holy Land and the return thither of God's ancient people also continue to interest, all who are waiting for the consolation of Israel and are watching for the fig tree to put forth his leaves. The following, published in THE CHICAGO DAILY NEWS is suggestive and significant:

"RESTORE HOLY LAND BY SCIENCE, IS PLAN

CORRESPONDENT OF THE DAILY NEWS IN JERUSALEM TELLS OF ZIONIST ACTIVITIES

"JERUSALEM, PALESTINE, Dec. 8--Palestine is not 'flowing with milk and honey,' but the Zionist commission has now perfected a program for introducing modern science to bring, water from the rock and manna from heaven by means of the \$125,000,000 Zionist fund sought by a drive in the United States in the next few weeks. This marks the end of the preliminary stage of Zionist diplomacy and propaganda and the beginning-of the practical stage of development and hard work.

"How hard this work is I discovered when I saw the Zionist co-operative agricultural group at Diln transforming the rocks of a mountain into a fertile farm. Where formerly only scrub bushes grew there will be raised grain, vegetables, cattle, poultry and trees under scientific direction. This is typical of the heroic program of the Zionists, who are undertaking to apply science and religious zeal to make an impoverished land capable of sustaining hundreds of thousands of immigrants. The foundation fund, according to the leaders here, is to be devoted solely to economic development in conformity with the justice Brandeis' plan and not to charity or relief as heretofore.

"PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENT SEEN

"Twenty per cent of the fund,' said Mr. Ussishkin, chairman of the local Zionist commission, 'will be devoted to the purchase of land and the remainder to house building, industrial and farm credits, immigrants' settlements and public works. This will be an entirely productive investment. The Jewish pioneer thus aided will earn a-living. Immigration is now strictly limited, but eventually under scientific development the land will be able to support 2,000,000 more people than are now here.. It will be a refuge for Jews who are victims of pogroms in eastern Europe and a center. of Jewish art and literature!

"Typical of the economic development scheme is. the program of Pincus Ruthenberg for industrial power from the River Jordan, in which Jesus was baptized.

"This river,' said Mr. Ruthenberg, 'is capable of supplying power to all the industries in Palestine, large and small, and also to giving power to lighting and street railway plants. The plan will include the irrigation of a large part of northern Palestine and the draining of extensive malarial regions. This will make possible the eventual support of upward of 1,000,000 purely industrial people. The chief- dam will be just below the Sea of Galilee. We expect to begin work next spring and complete the main structures in two years at a cost of \$10,000,000.'

"BRITISH FAVOR SCHEME

"The Ruthenberg scheme has the full approval of the Zionist commission, and it is understood that the British government is favorable to it. Since immigration was formally permitted three months ago pioneers have been arriving at the rate of about 500 a week. Many are university graduates. The average age is 22 and the percentage of women is 17. Most of the work now being done is rock breaking and road mending under co-operative contracts with the government because funds for land development must be awaited.

"For the time being the Zionist organization is so poor that it cannot buy shoes for these pioneers, many of whom crossed the seas as fourth class passengers and came here from the coast on foot. One man came without any belongings save a complete set of Spinoza's philosophical writings. But all are warned that Zionism means terrific labor and ,suffering for years. The immigration, now limited to about 30,000 annually, will be increased as the pioneers develop land that will support an increased population. The technical and economic difficulties would make the Zionist program hopeless without religious zeal. Only sweat and faith can make Canaan a land of promise."

Still a further item reports continued progress in the pilgrimage of the Jews to the Promised Land:.

"EMIGRATION OF JEWS TO PALESTINE IS INCREASING

"VIENNA, Dec. 4.--Emigration of Jews to, Palestine is increasing rapidly in central and eastern Europe, and the new Palestine immigration regulations would allow of a controlled immigration of about 17,000 Zionists of the pioneer class during the coming year, said S. Landmann, secretary of the Zionist organization, in an interview.

"Mr. Landmann, now in Vienna on a special mission in connection with Jewish emigrants to Palestine, said the selection of the emigrants is being made by the Zionist organization, which has established Palestine offices in the important Jewish centers. Preference is given to young people, strong in body and determined in spirit, who have had actual experience in agricultural or other manual work and who know Hebrew.

"Several thousand such pioneers-known by the Hebrew name of Chalitzim--have already left and others are waiting in the large centers until proper arrangements for their transport can be made and until new openings for employment in Palestine are reported.

"One of the features of the pioneer movement is that it includes a fair proportion of girls of well-to-do families, who have decided to devote their lives to the new Palestine. *They* act as land girls and take care of the domestic arrangements in the Jewish colonies.'

The following, recently published in the TOLEDO NEWS BEE, will also be read with interest:

"KOSHER SHIP FOR JEWS

"STEAMER DE KALB TO HAVE SPECIAL BUTCHER SHOP

"Persons of Hebrew faith in Toledo are deeply interested in the recent announcement that an especially designed steamship now is nearing completion in New York, which will observe the ancient dietary laws of Moses.

"This ship, is probably destined in the near future to be one of the greatest mediums in, encouraging immigration both to America, and Europe by those of the faith.

"In the past the Jewish, immigrants have virtually been compelled to become vegetarians at sea because there have been no dietary provisions for them by steamship companies.

"KOSHER GALLEYS

"The name of the new ship is the De Kalb, an overhauled transport which, when finished will carry 1800 steerage passengers., The vessel is a complete 'Kosher ship' with specially 'designed galleys for those of the Hebrew faith. All of their religious rites will be observed on the ship, it is announced.

"Many Jews have hesitated in making sea voyages because of the inconveniences they suffer on board ordinary steamships.

'The Jewish dietary laws are very strict. It was to meet this condition that the 'kosher ship' was designed. Jews are not allowed to eat meat slaughtered or treated in the ordinary manner, and on most steamships, for this reason, cannot eat meat at all. Fresh meat kept in refrigerators, which have been approved according to dietary laws, will be served on the 'kosher ship.'. There will be a separate butcher shop for the Jews.

"MOSAIC LAWS

"Moses made the dietary laws and modern scientists have agreed that because of conditions in those ancient days they were excellent laws.

"According to his laws, if a knife is used for meat it cannot be used for butter. There are many other laws which Moses probably set because he knew they would check the spread of disease."

DR. STRATON'S VIEW OF THE MILLENNIUM

The Rev. Dr. John Roach Straton, Pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, famous in New York- City on account of his vigorous campaign against moral and social evils, has issued a statement describing his conception of the Millennium. It is quite evident that Dr. Straton has been reading the Bible prophecies, and in his application of them has reached conclusions remarkably in harmony with the expositions of PASTOR RUSSELL. We quote from the NEW YORK AMERICAN of January 10, 1921:

"At such a time as this, when there is so much vice and crime abroad in the world, we need to reassure ourselves with the inspiring thought that these things will not always be so.

"There is a good time coming. The human race has always dreamed of 'A Golden Age.' Plato, in his 'Republic,' Sir Thomas More, in his 'Utopia,' and many other high dreamers of the race have endeavored to picture for its the conditions which must prevail in the ideal state.

"But the Bible has given us the only authoritative presentation of this great theme. It teaches that the devil-the great deceiver and enemy of mankind-is finally to be driven out from the walks of man forever, and that there will be 'a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

CRIME CONQUERED

"And with this elimination of the devil from the affairs of earth, all the sin and suffering and sorrow which he caused will disappear. Every plague spot of vice and infamy will be blotted out; all the marshes and bogs of crime, all the gambling dens and drinking hells, and brothels, and haunts of shame, all the loathsome pest holes of hideous diseases, done away forever.

"All the depraved cabinets and the vainglorious courts and the self-seeking legislatures of the world adjourned. All rotten rulers and corrupt public officials, who use their offices for private gain through public plunder and to serve the advancement of their own political fortunes, banished in utter disgrace from before the children of men. All the cannon melted into church bells and the swords beaten into reaping hooks. All the emptiness and vanity which now

characterize social life exploded and true brotherhood and human sympathy smiling in their stead.

"SWINDLERS SIDETRACKED

"All the cheats and swindlers, and bogus goods, and frauds, and dishonest advertising and wooden nutmegs and half-cotton 'wool' and watered milk and pasteboard 'leather,' and excelsior breakfast foods and wildcat stocks and inflated securities sent into eternal limbo. Yes, all the awful lies that we now have to read and see, and wear, and even eat, banished -- and truth, in its simplicity and beauty, established forever.

"All the selfish and infamous cliques and combinations and rings-political rings, and whiskey rings, and vice rings, and society rings, and railroad rings, and mercantile rings, and bankers' rings, and labor rings, and building contractor rings, and walking delegate rings, and dancing masters' rings, and bolshevistic rings -- yes, and preacher rings -- and a thousand other rings-broken up, and in their place fraternity, love and sweet fellowship established!

"Every jail emptied out, every penitentiary in the hands of a receiver, every law court closed, every judge given a permanent vacation, all the forces that have to drive and restrain and coerce the sons! of men, and all those who work iniquity in any form, putting through rotten laws, crippling honest industry, corrupting the press exploiting the poor--whatsoever maketh iniquity or worketh a lie-ended by the power of the Almighty, and a clean, honest, healthy, pure-minded, straight-limbed, red-blooded, home-loving, woman-honoring, God-fearing race of men walking in the midst of a redeemed creation, lighted with beauty and blessed by the smile of an approving God!

"THE PERFECT FLOWER OF HUMANITY

"All that is, moves to some climax of self-expression. We see a root in the mud at the bottom of a lake, but there is no meaning in that alone: Then from that root we see a stem reaching tip through the darkness of the water and groping toward the light, but there is no meaning in that alone. Then we see a leaf spread upon the bosom of the lake, but there is no meaning in that alone. But pass that spot another day, and you will find there one of heaven's jewels, as lovely as an angel's dream. There you will find a water lily, with leaf of snow and heart of gold, wooed by the winds and kissed by the waves, and exhaling its sweet perfume to the breeze. Then the meaning of root and stem and leaf becomes plain.

"Surely, our poor old humanity is moving to some better goal than we have yet attained!"

THE GROUND OF THE BELIEVER'S PEACE WITH GOD

We are ever prone to look at something in or connected with ourselves as necessary in order to make up with the blood of Christ the ground of peace. We are apt to regard the fruits of the spirit within us, rather than the work of Christ for us, as the foundation of our peace with God. The Holy Spirit did not make peace, but Christ did. In the institution of the Passover, the unleavened bread and bitter

herbs were necessary, but not as forming any part of the ground of peace. The Passover lamb was slain. Death had to do its work; but God in His great mercy found an unblemished substitute for Israel on which the sentence of death was executed. The judgment that was due them fell upon the divinely appointed victim, and believing this, the Israelite could feed in peace within the house. The Israelite -not merely knew that there was -safety in the blood: he knew that he was safe. It was not anything he had done, or felt, or thought, but because God had said, "When I see the blood I will pass over you." It was not his own thought or feelings or experiences respecting the blood. What gave peace was in knowing that Jehovah's eye rested upon the blood and that He knew the value of it. In the matter of safety from judgment, nothing was needed but the blood; but in the fellowship that flowed out of this safety, other things were needed and were not to be neglected.

In the case of the Christian, something in or connected with him is indeed necessary to the continuation of that fellowship established by the blood. And there must indeed follow the fruits of the Holy Spirit within us if we would be conformed to the image of His dear Son and "grow up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ," at last to share-the glories of His nature and His Throne. But after all the foundation is in the blood.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES XLV

MESSIAH'S GLORIOUS REIGN

"And I saw Thrones (and they sat On them, and Judgment was given them), and the Persons of Those who had been Beheaded because of the Testimony of Jesus, and because of the Word of God-even those who did not worship the Beast, nor his Image, and did not receive the Mark on their Forehead, and on their Hand; and they lived and reigned with the Anointed one the Thousand Years."--Rev. 20:4.

SOBER and careful examination of the several visions recorded in these three last chapters of the Revelation will, we believe, bring us the settled conviction that they do not meet their fulfillment in consecutive order as recorded; but rather, that each one is designed to give a different aspect or picture of the thousand years during which Satan is bound. We shall endeavor to show that the details of these general pictures of this period constitute a large portion of the writings of the holy Prophets of Israel. St. Peter informs us that all the ancient Prophets spake of a period in the future from their day in connection with the unfolding of the Divine Plan, which he calls, "the times of restitution." (Acts 3:19-21.) It seems quite evident that the thousand years during which Satan and evil will be Divinely restrained is identical with the period described by these Prophets of old. While most all expositors see this in a measure, they quite generally make the mistake of placing the judgment of the "great white Throne" (Rev. 20:11-15), and the "new heavens and the new earth" (Rev. 21:1), at *the end of the thousand years*, instead of discerning that they are symbolic visions covering the entire period.

VARIOUS PORTRAITS OF THE WORLD TO COME

A careful review and a comparison of the words of our Lord, the Apostles and Prophets, with these visions of St. John, reveals the perfect harmony and beauty of the Divine program, and makes clearly manifest the fact that the fulfillment of these two visions-the new Heaven and new Earth, and the judgment scene, covers the whole period of the thousand years; and are designed to portray in brief symbolic statements certain developments looking toward the removal of sin and death and the curse from the earth to be effected by that new arrangement or order of things purposed for this earth under the administration of the Son of God and His joint-heirs. The most vital and essential features of that thousand-year judgment period will be the awakening of all the dead and the giving to each member of our race an individual judgment or trial purchased by the Redeemer; the results being eternal life to some and eternal death to others.-Acts 3: 21-23; Matt. 25:34 , 41, 46; John 3:16.

PASTOR RUSSELL evidently grasped the true thought concerning this matter as early as 1882, and his latest utterances show scarcely any changes as to details. His words elucidate very much and describe what we believe forms a basis for a correct interpretation of these most striking visions of the Revelator. His words are as follows:

"This repetition of the same things from different standpoints, and with other details, is a principle which applies especially to this last book of the Bible. A failure to recognize this, is, we think, one of the reasons why so many of those who study this book fail to get sense from it.

"The portion of Scripture we are about to consider [Rev. 20, 21 and 22], is frequently read as though it were one connected narrative, instead of several repetitions of the first statement. Because of failure to rightly divide, some get the thought, that the 'great white Throne' [Rev. 20: 11-15] is to be established after the Millennial Age, and after Satan is destroyed; consequently, are at a loss to know why the dead are raised at that time, or how they could have a probation after the Millennial Age, and are much confused generally.

"To better illustrate the distinctness and harmony of these portraits, we have diagrammed them as follows:

"(1) Satan bound for a thousand (1000) years-evil. and vice under thorough restraint. Satan (evil) loosed a little season, after the one thousand years.-Vs. 1-3.

"(2) Earthly thrones cast down and the overcomers reign with Christ a thousand (1000) years.--V. 4.

"(3) The holy and blessed of the First Resurrection, live and -,reign a thousand years with Christ. Satan loosed. The evilly disposed, deceived and destroyed.-Vs. 6-10.

"(4) The great white Throne. Heaven and Earth flee. The dead judged from opened books. Second Death.Vs. 11-15.

"(5) New Heaven and Earth. The Holy City. (Government). Its blessing to mankind-pain, sorrow and death abolished. Second Death of the unbelieving and abominable.--Rev. 21:1-8.

"(6) The Bride-The Holy City-The Kingdom of God--come to earth. The Light of the World. The good may enter the Kingdom.-Rev. 21:10-27.

"(7) The Water of life flows freely. The World's troubles healed., The Curse (sin and its result, death) destroyed.-Rev. 22:1-3." --Z March '82-5, 6.

As we have pursued our study of these wonderful visions in the light of the foregoing statements, our convictions have become thoroughly settled that PASTOR RUSSELES expositions of this matter are correct. To summarize further, these three chapters portray the different features or aspects of what are termed by St. Peter, "the times of restitution," and by St. Paul the world's great judgment Day and its results. (Acts 3:19; 17:31; Psa. 98:8, 9.) This matter will -be taken up in its order in connection with the interpretation of the vision of the great white Throne.

JUDGMENT WAS GIVEN UNTO THEM

In our exposition of the verse which is the special subject of this article, we will consider first who are represented as seated on the Thrones. "And I saw Thrones, (and they sat on them, and judgment was given them)." It will be noticed that the Diaglott rendering, which we are using, places the words, "and they sat on them, and judgment was given them," in a parenthesis. This arrangement of the text plainly teaches that those who are seated on the Thrones are those described as the overcomers of the "Beast," etc., and are the same ones that are represented in the last clause of the verse as reigning with Christ during the thousand years, and are also identical with those referred to in verse 6, as the kings and priests of God and of Christ. This interpretation seems to be the correct one for several reasons. The first we notice is that a vision of the enthronement of the saints is what we would most naturally suppose would follow the events described in the visions immediately preceding. These, we saw, portrayed the dethronement of the earthly rulers, civil and ecclesiastical, by the King of kings and Lord of lords and His armies, and which was followed most naturally by the vision of the dethronement and imprisonment of Satan, the unseen ruler, for a thousand years. We could not, expect that the saints would become enthroned to reign for the purpose of judging and blessing the people of the nations until the final conquest of evil would become an accomplished fact, and Satan was shorn of his power to deceive. The expression, "Judgment was given them," would mean in this connection the act or power of judging, which would comprehend the power to decide matters as judges and to execute judgment in harmony with these decisions. ALFORD, a most learned Greek scholar and translator, has remarked on the meaning of the Greek word translated judgment in this verse, that it signifies, "they were constituted judges." MOSES STUART has thus referred to this word as used in this verse: "The word *Krīma* in this clause may be interpreted as applying to the supervision or making of statutes, ordinances, arrangements, etc., by those who are in a superior station. This seems to many to be the most easy and natural construction." This judgment power is further expressed in the last clause of the verse, where it is said "they reigned with Him." The possession of judgment power is in the Scriptures intimately associated with sovereignty or ruling. We read that David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all the people.--2 Sam. 8:15.

THEY SAT UPON THRONES

It would therefore seem that both the text and context teach that these personages that St. John saw in the vision, sitting upon the Thrones, were none other than the risen and glorified saints of God, the overcomers. This conclusion is in perfect harmony with the many Scriptures that describe the greatest feature connected with the future occupation of, as well as reward promised to, the "overcomers." "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), are Christ's own words; and again we hear Him say; "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28) ; and the inspired Apostle Paul has said "do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" (1 Cor. 6:2.) Furthermore, this interpretation of these words is in full harmony with the Prophet Daniel's description of the same events. Referring to the „little horn," or Papacy's war against the saints, the Prophet's words serve to further confirm this interpretation: "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the Kingdom."--Dan. 7:21, 22.

It will be found upon careful examination of this vision of Daniel that it will hardly be possible to arrive at any other conclusion than that the two visions are identical and that they describe the same event. We place together the corresponding statements contained in the two visions:

(1) Daniel "beheld till thrones were placed."*--Dan 7:9. St. John informs us "I saw Thrones."--Rev. 20:4.

*The Common Version translation "cast down" is admitted by all modern translators to be incorrect. St. John informs us that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."--Rev. 20:4.

(2) Daniel "beheld . . . the- judgment set."--Dan. 7:10. St. John says, "They sat on them."--Rev. 20:4.

(3) Daniel says, "Judgment was given to the saints."--Dan. 7:22. St. John says, "Judgment was given to them."--Rev. 20:4.

(4) Daniel beheld "the time came that the saints possessed the Kingdom."--Dan. 7:22.

St. John informs us that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." – Rev. 20:4

Referring to this text (Rev. 20:4) as describing the judgment power to be given to the saints, a noted writer has thus both truthfully and eloquently expressed it: "Once it was the fate of believers to be judged by the ungodly world-powers. Jesus told His followers that they should be brought before councils, governors and kings, and that a time would come when men would think it a holy thing to adjudge them worthy of stripes, imprisonments and death. So Paul stood before

the courts of earth, saying, 'I stand and am judged.' But man's day has a limit, and then comes another order, when as Mary sung, God 'shall put down the mighty from their seats,' and 'exalt them of low degree,'--when the Pauls shall be the royal judges and the Felixes and Festuses and Agrippas and Caesars then in place, shall be obliged to accept the sentence of heavenly justice from God's immortal potentates, who once stood helpless at earth's tribunals; for so it is written, 'the saints shall judge the world' (1 Cor. 6:2), and 'shall take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom forever, even forever and ever' (Dan. 7:18) ; and Christ the victorious All-Ruler, according to His promises will give them authority over the nations to shepherdize them with a rod of iron' (Rev. 2:26, 27), invincibly and effectively."

IF WE SUFFER WITH HIM WE SHALL ALSO REIGN WITH HIM

As St. John no doubt recognized these enthroned ones as identical with those he had seen before in other visions enduring suffering and bearing testimony for Christ under most trying and difficult circumstances and conditions in many instances even to the extent of laying down their lives, would he not be most forcibly reminded of the words of St. Paul, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him" (2 Tim. 2:12); "and I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared 'With the glory that shall be revealed in us" -- Rom. 8:18.

It will need to be kept in mind when considering the various evils and evil systems that these enthroned ones had to combat, and become victors over, namely, the "Beast and his Image and Mark," that not only are the Beast, etc., to be understood as symbols, as we have hitherto shown, but that the beheading for the testimony of Jesus and the Word of God, is likewise a symbol; in other words, the beheading is a symbolic beheading. It is quite true that in the earlier centuries some of God's saints were literally beheaded, because in those times that was a way by which capital punishment was inflicted. However, others suffered death in - many different ways. It will, therefore, be seen that it would be giving special honor to the particular manner by which the Lord's people died for the Truth's sake to understand these words literally. PASTOR RUSSELL has written quite extensively on this expression, interpreting 'it symbolically:

"All constituting the Kingdom class are here referred to as beheaded--every member of the glorified Church must, eventually, have this experience, whatever it signifies. But we reflect that our Lord was not beheaded and, so far as history shows, few, if any, of the Apostles were literally beheaded; indeed, very few, if any, of the Lord's saints, from Pentecost to the present time, have died by decapitation. We are to remember, however, that this statement is from the symbolical book, and is therefore a figure of speech, a word-picture, and its meaning must be sought for accordingly.

"The Apostle gives us the key, saying, 'The head of every man is Christ; the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.' (I Cor. 11:3.)

As a woman Who becomes a wife accepts her husband as the head of the family, so the Church accepts Christ as its head, and each member of the Church thus comes into relationship with the Lord as a member of His Body--not the Head; and all of these, to be acceptable as members of the figurative Body of Christ,

must be will-less, headless; their own wills must be surrendered, so that, like their Lord, they can say, 'Not my will, but thine, be done! They must be headless in the sense of ignoring their own wills, being dead to self and actuated henceforth by the will of the Head of the Body, Christ Jesus . . . It is this self-surrender to Christ on the part of His Church that is represented in the symbolism of the text before us.'"--Z '01-227.

The symbolic significance of the Beast, his Image and Mark, etc., have all been very fully explained in pre-* ceding articles. Considering all that is represented in these various symbols, it will, we believe, be seen that all the overcoming class, the joint-heirs of the Kingdom, of the entire Gospel Age, are represented in this symbolism which portrays those who will be privileged to reign with Christ the thousand years.

A THOUSAND YEARS EARTH'S COMING GLORY

It is said by some (Adventists chiefly) that this vision of St. John is the only place in all the Scriptures where .a period of a thousand years is mentioned. These are not able to make it harmonize with their narrow, erroneous theories of God's great Plan of Salvation. While it is true that the exact words that Christ and the saints reign a thousand years is not found anywhere else in the Scriptures, yet it is true that the Scriptures explicitly speak of the judgment Day which is the same period as that of the reign of Christ and the saints. And St. Peter tells us that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day, thus clearly identifying the Divine standpoint of counting time; and it is also true that all the peculiar and striking conditions. that of necessity would' prevail in connection with man's life here on the earth if Satan and evil were restrained and Christ were ministering in-the affairs of earth's peoples, are portrayed in the Old Testament prophecies as well as in many New Testament statements. All these prophecies associate these grand and glorious scenes with the reign of Jehovah over the earth in the person of His Son. Indeed, this period of a thousand. years, when Satan's power is restrained, and Christ and the-saints are represented as reigning over the nations, is the chief theme of all God's Prophets of old.

These Millennial times, as already noted, are called by St. Peter, "times of restitution, spoken of by all the holy Prophets since the world- began." (Acts 3:21.) These Prophets describe a period when a knowledge of the true God shall fill the whole earth (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14); when the proud and haughty shall be humbled (Isa. 2:11-17.) ; when the evil influence and power of riches shall cease (Isa. 2:20) ; when the humble and poor and meek shall be exalted (Isa. 11:4; Psa. 37:11) ; when evil-doers shall be cut off (Psa. 37:9; Acts 3:23) ; when the inhabitants of the earth,' on account of God's judgments will learn righteousness (Isa. 26:9) ; when "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isa. 33:24) ; when deaths shall be so rare that only wilful sinners having full knowledge shall die (Isa. 65 -20, Lesser; Acts 3:23) ; when no one shall have any excuse for not learning obedience to God (Isa. 35:8; Jer. 31:29, 30) ; when nations will have ceased, warring forever (Micah 4:3; Psa. 46:9); when there will be a general seeking on the part of humanity to learn God's ways and to walk in His paths (Micah 4:2); when the multitudes of the "sea" class will be converted unto God (Isa. 60:5) ; when men shall no longer hurt or destroy (Isa. 11:9) ; when righteousness will be rewarded and Sin receive chastisement, and willful sin be

immediately punished (Isa. 11 :4) ; when the Great Ruler (and His associates) will be endowed with such Divine, super natural power that He will not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears (Isa. 11:3) ; when the desert places of earth shall bloom .and the wilderness places, rejoice, etc. (Isa. 35:1, 2.) In fact, it will be a time when. the Lord will make bare His holy Arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God (Isa. 52:10) ; a salvation that will mean freedom from sin and all its effects, when sickness and pain, sorrow, crying and death shall flee away and finally cease forever. (Isa. 35:10; Rev. 21:4.) It is unquestionably a fact then that the reign of Christ and His saints during this thousand years has as its object the consummation of the great purpose of God-the restoring of all the willing and obedient of, Adam's race to moral, mental and physical perfection, together with the complete restoration of paradise forever.

HUMANITY'S FINAL TRIAL FOR LIFE

That this Millennial period is the one foretold and described by the Prophets of Israel can hardly be questioned; that it is what is so frequently referred to in the Scriptures as the great judgment Day, and represents one of those transcendent truths made known in a special vision given. to' St. Paul, concerning which he said that it was not lawful for him at that time to make known (2 Cor. 12:1-4), seems also evident. The great truths that he was especially called to proclaim were those then due to be preached, namely, the call, enlightenment, and trial of those who would be joint-heirs with Christ in this Kingdom. This special feature of God's Plan is called by him, the mystery (secret) hid from other Ages. St. Paul distinctly declared that these thus associated with Christ, when changed to the glory and honor of the Divine nature, would become the judges of the world. (1 Cor. 6:2.) This Millennial reign of Christ and His saints over the nations could therefore be 'for no other purpose than that of giving a probation or trial to the world. The following words of PASTOR RUSSELL describe in a general way this Millennial Kingdom:

"Messiah's Kingdom repeatedly referred to throughout the Old Testament was the center of all Jewish hopes. But the fact that it will last a thousand years was not mentioned; it was merely' Messiah's Day. The Holy Spirit by St. Peter first declared, 'a day with the Lord is. as a thousand years.' St.' Paul did not mention the thousand years, but merely proclaimed Messiah's Kingdom, and that He would reign victoriously until He shall have put down all opposition to God's will. (1 Cor. 15:25.) It is in the book of Revelation that we have the clear statements that Messiah will reign for a thousand years; that His faithful Bride will reign with Him, a 'Royal Priesthood'; that during that thousand years Satan will be bound and the whole world will be granted a judgment or trial, whose results will be life-eternal or death-eternal . . .

"While the Jews, according to their light, looked for ward to Messiah's Kingdom as an earthly one, in which every man would 'sit under his own vine and fig tree,' and 'the wilderness would blossom as the rose, and God's footstool be made glorious-the Church, on the contrary, was given a different, a spiritual conception, of the Kingdom. We see the propriety of this: Messiah's Kingdom is to be in two parts, the spiritual, which will be invisible to men, but all-powerful; and the earthly, which will be visible to men. Christ and His faithful followers, His Bride, will

constitute the spiritual Kingdom; while Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the faithful of the Prophets down to John the Baptist will be the earthly rulers.--Matt. 11:11."-Angelophone Hymns--50.

BLESSED FUTURE AWAITING MANKIND

A measure of light began to come concerning the earthly conditions -of Millennial times when the claims made by Papacy that it was reigning in place of Christ were seen by many to be vain and empty. Clear light concerning the Millennium, however, did not come in until the. days of the "presence of the Son of Man" began to become known. The comparatively small company of believers called "Pre-Millennialists" of the nineteenth century had, and have at the present time, a considerable measure of light. While they came to believe that the thousand-year period of Satan's restraint was a probationary period, they seem to have failed to see that it would be a day of trial, probation also, for the vast numbers of the human family who had died without a knowledge of Christ. These believed that the probation was for those only who would live to pass over into that Age of trial. However, one of these writers-one whom we have frequently quoted in these expositions of the Revelation Series, seems to have grasped, or at least, was approaching the Truth. Cautiously writing concerning this matter in one of his several very remarkable volumes, we have these words "We need to remember that if we could perfectly understand and map out the whole procedure of the Ages to come, the scheme would be clearly human and not Divine. Let us pause where Revelation pauses, nor seek to be wise above what is written'; but let us search the Scriptures to see what they do reveal as to the future of humanity, and let our faith rest not on the traditions of men, but on the Word of God. It is important for many reasons that our views as to the, future of our race should be as clear and definite as Scripture warrants.

"Whether we accept this view as to successive ' generations of mankind in the new earth or not, we cannot in any case escape the conclusion that the Scriptures distinguish between the future portion of the Church of Christ, that of the Jewish people, and" that of the nations of the earth. Too many in their thoughts of the future leave out this last--the destiny of the Church figures so largely in their anticipations that they forget that 'the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world,' and. to lose sight of the blessed prospect that not only is the present Church to be saved out of the ruined world, to become the Eve of the Second Adam, but that the ruined earth itself is yet to be renewed, and *to become the happy home of saved nations who participate in the results of redemption.*

"The narrowness which sees nothing but the salvation of the Church of this dispensation is born of human selfishness and not of Divine love; it is founded not on the teaching of Scripture but on tradition and prejudice. The Bible in this, its last revelation on the subject, plainly teaches that while the peculiar glories of the Church are hers, and hers alone, that while the special privileges of the natural seed of Abraham belong to Israel, and to Israel only, that there is also a blessed future awaiting mankind under the gracious government of Immanuel; that one of the effects of the completed work of Christ will be to place the saved nations of the eternal kingdom in a restored paradise, completely delivered from the Tempter, and so established in righteousness that the Holy One can take up His abode among them forever. 'He shall dwell with them, and they shall be His

people, and God Himself, shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things have passed away.'

"The salvation of the Church of this dispensation is not the whole result of the death of Christ. There is to be in addition the establishment forever of a Kingdom of God in which His will shall be as fully done by men on earth as it is now done in heaven. The consummation for which we daily pray is destined to come at last; and holy and happy service, without a flaw and without an interruption is yet to be rendered to God, not merely by the glorified saints of the New Jerusalem, but by the redeemed nations on the earth, who walk forever in the light of the Celestial City.

"Such is the sublime vista of the future of our race, and of our earth to the eternal ages with which Scripture closes." -- H. G. GUINNESS--"*Light for the Last Days.*"

THE MILLENNIAL NOW DAWNING

And we may add, the Scriptures plainly teach that the accomplishment of this grand and glorious state of affairs in , this earth is assigned to God's dear Son; and associated with Him will be His glorified Bride. For the completion of this grand and noble work, these thousand years were set apart in the Divine counsels from before the foundation of the world; and all this is comprehended in the words, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."--Rev. 20:4.

PASTOR RUSSELL, just before his death in 1916, in a comment on the beautiful Hymn, "Beyond the century's swinging portal," thus most grandly portrayed and expressed his faith in the near ushering in of this glad Millennial Day:

"The portals of this wonderful Twentieth Century have been swinging but sixteen years; but more and more the glorious light of the New Dispensation is discernible. The Kingdom is coming, its glory is at the gates of the world! The political, social and financial rulers of earth recognize not the King's presence. Nevertheless, true to our Lord's 'own prophecy, in this very time, He is taking to Himself His great power, and is about to glorify His Church and begin His reign of righteousness. The nations are angry, and are bringing upon themselves the Divine wrath which has planned their utter destruction.--Rev. 11:15-19.

"How forcefully the poet pictures the present great war, which is leading on to the Armageddon of revolution and anarchy! How most prophetic are the words:

"'And while the earth with strife is riven,
And envious factions ' Truth do hide,
Lo! He, the Lord of earth and Heaven,
Stands at the door and claims His Bride.'

"But Messiah's Kingdom cannot take full control of the earth, nor the Sun of Righteousness scatter the ignorance and superstition, until. God's Elect Church shall have passed beyond the veil to be forever with the Lord, partakers of His glory, honor and immortality.Rom. 2:7.

"The object of the present great war, for the commercial supremacy of earth, for national enrichment, may be hidden from the people for a time under various pretexts-called uplift, culture, and civilization. But soon the weakening of all these nations, predicted in the Bible, will be accomplished. Soon the people will see the folly of such waste of human life and the entailment of financial burdens upon future generations. Then they will be angry, and the Bible declares, will dash their governments to destruction.--Psa. 2:9; Rev. 2:26, 27.

"This is the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty. It is man's part I Then God's part will come. He will smite the people with the Sword of His mouth, the Message of Truth, of love. The knowledge of God's goodness and love will cut them to the heart and lead them to repentance. Ultimately, the world will rejoice in God's Kingdom. It will be 'the desire of ail nations,' as God has declared.--Rev. 16:14; * 1: 16; Haggai 2:7."

JESUS GREETED AS KING

--JANUARY 30--MATT. 21:1-46--

Golden Text.--"Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."--Matt. 21:9.

THE lesson here set for our consideration brings us down indeed to the turning point in the experience of the nation of Israel-that of our Lord's presenting Himself as King. The first day of the week (our Sunday), our Lord early began His preparations for His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Although He well knew that "His own" people would not receive Him, but, as He had already testified to His disciples, that He would be put to death by the rulers, and intimated the night before that Mary's anointing was for His burial, it was nevertheless necessary as a part of the Divine Plan that He should formally offer Himself as King to the Jews, and thus fulfil to that people God's promise that His favor should be "to the Jew first."

Our Lord had previously resisted the disposition of some of the people to take Him by force and make Him King, withdrawing from their midst, etc. (John 6:15); but now the time, the due time, having come, and that to the very hour, He deliberately planned His triumphal procession, instead of, as previously, hindering it. He sent some of the disciples for the ass and colt, manifesting His super-human 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.

When the animal arrived, the disciples and the, whole multitude seemed to enter into the spirit of the arrangement; for it would appear that quite a number of those who came up from Jericho, and who had witnessed our Lord's power and teachings *en route* to the Holy City and the Passover, lodged at Bethany over' the Sabbath, as He did., These, with the disciples, constituted quite a little band, who began to hail Jesus as the King, and to -do Him homage, as was customary with notables at that time, by spreading their outer garments in the way for His beast to tread upon; and by plucking grass and flowers, and branches of palm trees, and strewing these also in the way.

Jesus, in the honored position, riding at the head, was followed by this multitude on the road toward Jerusalem. Then another multitude from the city, having heard that the great Prophet and Teacher was at Bethany, came forth to see both Him and Lazarus, and these, meeting the Lord and the shouting -company behind Him, turned about and became a vanguard, shouting like the rest, "Hosanna to the Son of David," which meant the King, one of the royal line., They probably were deterred from using the word "king" lest they should bring upon themselves charges of treason against King Herod and against the Roman empire, which sustained Him in power.

HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT

It was a grand or a ludicrous triumphal entry into the city of the Great King, according to -the -standpoint from which it was viewed. From the standpoint of the disciples and the multitude, full of Messianic enthusiasm and hopes that the longed-for blessings upon Israel were about to be realized, and full of faith that this great Prophet, who had the power to raise the dead and heal the sick, - could in His own time and. way make Himself and them invincible against all enemies, and amply fulfil all the glorious things foretold by the prophets, -- for these it was a grand occasion, a real triumph. For, notwithstanding the fact that.-Jesus had previously told them repeatedly of His death, and had even reproved Peter for speaking to the contrary, nevertheless His disciples and others seem to have been unable to receive His words in their true meaning, and to have interpreted them as merely a part of His "dark sayings" which would undoubtedly later become luminous in some grand significance. This is attested by their language, even after His death and resurrection: "We trusted that it had been He which should .have redeemed Israel."--Luke 24:21.

From the standpoint of Herod, Pilate, the chief priests and scribes, this triumphal procession was merely the parade of a fanatical leader and His ignorant and fanatical dupes. They saw in it evidently no more than this. King Herod and Pilate evidently had no fear that this despised Nazarene and his company would ever be able to organize and equip an army which would be of any force as against the order of things of which they were the heads. The religious leaders feared merely that the fanaticism might spread in some manner, and bring down upon -them the wrath and further oppression of the secular powers, who might make them an excuse for further interference with the liberties of the Jews. Quite evidently none of these chief rulers believed in Jesus as the Messiah sent of God for the fulfillment of the gracious promises of their Scriptures. To this the Apostles testify, saying, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers;" "If they had known they would not have crucified-the Lord of glory."--Acts 3:17; 1 Cor. 2:8.

That procession was viewed from still another standpoint by our Lord Himself and by the invisible multitude of angels, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation. These joined in the enthusiasm of the multitude, but from a totally different standpoint--realizing zing this triumph as merely a part of the Divine Plan, and merely a prelude to a greater triumph on our Lord's part through the completion of the sacrifice of Himself and the attainment thus of "all power in heaven and in earth;" and as a foreshadowing, too, of His coming glory and His triumphal entry upon the Kingdom on His return from the

far country (heaven) armed with a plentitude of power and authority, to put down sin and to bring all things into subjection to God; and to lift up out of the horrible pit of sin and disease and death all desirous of coming back into full harmony with the Father and the laws of His Empire. This, the most glorious standpoint of view of that triumphal march, it is our privilege, by the grace of God, to enjoy; and we may well say in our Lord's words, "Blessed are our eyes, for they see; and our ears, for they hear."

Luke's account of this matter informs us that certain of the Pharisees who were with the multitude at the beginning, although they could not object to anything which our Lord said or did, complained that He should permit His disciples and others of the multitude to hail Him as a King, shouting Hosanna! (Salvation, Blessing, Praise!) Then it was that Jesus, knowing of the prophecy bearing upon this subject (Zech. 9:9), not only refused to rebuke the disciples and hinder their acclaims, but informed the Pharisees that since God Himself, through the Prophet, had said, "Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem," therefore there must be some shoutings; and that if the people had' not arisen to that amount of enthusiasm to give such shoutings the very stones would have cried out, so that the prophecy should not be unfulfilled.

TRIUMPHAL MARCH INTO HOLY CITY

Though the distance is quite short to Jerusalem from Bethphage, where the Lord mounted the ass, nevertheless the city was hidden from view by the Mount of Olives, and it was when the Lord had reached the top of Olivet, and the city of Jerusalem came suddenly into view, that He halted the procession and wept over the city, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace I But now they are hid from thine eyes . . . because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation." (Luke 19:41-44.) From this language it is evident that our Lord did not consider the multitudes who were with Him, as in any sense of the word, representing the city and nation; for although those who were with Him were shouting the very words, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of Jehovah!" our Lord's language indicates that a time is yet to come when the heads of Israel, the chief ones representing the people, shall gladly acknowledge Him as King of 'kings and Lord of lords, at his Second Advent; but in the meantime their failure to recognize the time of their visitation meant to them a great loss of privilege; meant to them that their house must be left desolate, abandoned of the Lord during this Gospel Age, during which He would gather from amongst the Gentiles a sufficient number to complete the elect number, in conjunction with the faithful ones ' of Israel, the remnant who had or would receive Him.-See Matt. 23:39.

The objective point of this triumphal march was the Holy City, the capital city, the City of the Great King. .But our Lord did not go to Herod's palace, to demand possession of it; nor to Pilate's palace, to demand recognition of him; but as the representative of Jehovah, as the Messiah, sent of God to be the Savior of Israel and the world, He went appropriately to the Father's house or palace,--to the Temple.

"And when He was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?" Concerning the question asked by the multitude, "Who is this?" one , has

very appropriately said: "The question of that day is the question of this Age. The answer will come, not in words, but in deeds, in character, in the influence of your whole earthly career, and it will be to this effect: 'He is more than all the world to me. He is my teacher, my friend, my Redeemer, my life, my joy, my hope, my Lord, and my God!'"--WILLIAM M. TAYLOR.

The scene in the temple must have been a peculiar one. It was undoubtedly crowded with pilgrims from all parts of the civilized world, who at this season of the year came, to the number of hundreds of thousands, to worship the Lord and to observe the Passover, according to the Law. Probably many of them had heard something about Jesus of Nazareth, "mighty in word and deed." Many of them had been healed by Him, or had friends who were thus blessed; and we can well imagine the commotion created by the multitudes coming with Jesus and crying, "Hosanna in the highest," etc. ' The Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests, who were used to dominate the people in religious matters, and especially in the Temple, although filled with anger against Jesus, recognized themselves powerless to do Him injury under the circumstances, for He was doing nothing contrary in any sense of the word to the Law, and this would, be manifest to all.- On the contrary, as though to show that He was only doing what was in His power, our Lord began to exercise it as would be befitting a spiritual King-by reproving those who were violating the Holy Temple and its precincts, driving out of it those who sold doves for offerings, and the money changers who were reaping a profitable harvest from the necessities of the worshipers from a distance, whose money, not being Jewish, could not be accepted at the Temple, and which they must therefore have exchanged, at a loss-the profit of the money changers. We are not to understand that our Lord was interfering with the proper laws of the land nor of the Temple; He was in every sense law-abiding. On the contrary, He was thoroughly authorized, as was any Jew, under the directions of the Law, to use so much force as was necessary in the maintenance of the sanctity of the Temple.

JESUS AGAIN COMES TO HIS TEMPLE

Blind and lame people came to our Lord in the Temple and were relieved of their infirmities, and then He taught the people-continuing the healing and the teaching for several days, returning at nights to Bethany and coming the next morning to the Temple, but without any further demonstration, as a King, for that one demonstration had served the purpose intended. It had given to the officials of the city and nation the opportunity to formally accept Him as King, but their contrary spirit is shown by their coming to Him while the children in the Temple courts were crying "Hosanna!" requesting that He should put a stop to the matter; but our Lord answered them, quoting from the Scriptures, that this was in harmony with the Divine Plan: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." The worldly-wise did not appreciate this, and were blinded by self-interest; but little children, and especially those who in simplicity of heart and meekness became like little children, should be the instruments the Lord would use in shouting His praises.

In considering the best lessons we at the present time can draw from these incidents, we may properly keep in mind that the events in the close of -our Lord's ministry, and everything pertaining to the rejection and dissolution of the fleshly

house of Israel may have been intended to be illustrative of the things which are to be expected to transpire in the present time, in the end of the Gospel Age,--in the rejection and dissolution of nominal Israel of today, "Babylon."

There are strong indications that our Lord has been in His spiritual Temple, the true Church, teaching in an especial manner all those who have an ear to hear, opening the blinded eyes and helping those who are spiritually lame to walk in His ways. It is during this time that all who belong to the Temple class of true worshipers are permitted to hear and see wonderful things out of the Divine Word; and it is during this time also that the Lord is casting out of His Temple--all those who make merchandise of the Truth, and who are not true worshipers--the money-changers and dove-sellers, etc.; and it is during this time that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings the Truth is being proclaimed so often to the offense of the Scribes and Pharisees of today.

Shortly, the last members of the Body of Christ, the feet, already being anointed for burial with -the sweet odors of the Truth, will complete their sacrifice; shortly, the First Resurrection will be complete and all the members of the Body of Christ be glorified together with Him; -and then, the sufferings of Christ being ended, the glory will speedily follow. But meantime, before the glory is revealed, there will come a great time of trouble, symbolically a time of fire -(trouble) and smoke (confusion) upon the world, and especially upon rejected "Babylon," and all who do not escape from her before the great- tribulation comes, even as similar fiery vengeance came upon Israel after the flesh, and all who had not escaped from her.-Luke 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:38-43.

THE MARRIAGE FEAST

--FEBRUARY 6--MATT. 22:1-14--

Golden Text.--"Go out into the highways and hedges, and constrain them to come in."--Luke 14:23.

CAREFUL scrutiny of this parable, as found in Matthew's record, shows it to be in full accord with the similar parable recorded in Luke (14:16-24), though they differ somewhat in minor details. It is therefore wise to study the two records in unison.

Both records show three distinct calls to the Marriage Supper, or rather three divisions or parts to the one call which gather the guests. There can be no difference of opinion respecting what the parable signifies: the thought brought to our attention is the same which pervades the Scripture throughout, namely, that God is selecting from among mankind a peculiar people, a little flock, to be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus, their Lord, in His Kingdom and in all the gracious work of that Kingdom, and symbolized as a "chaste virgin" who 'enters into a covenant of betrothal to the King's Son, her Redeemer and Lord, in harmony with which ultimately the Great Marriage shall take place, and the virgin become "the Bride, the Lamb's Wife."

THE FIRST CALL

This thought was enunciated by John the Baptist who, in introducing our Lord, presented Him as the Bridegroom, saying: "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom, when he heareth the Bridegroom's voice, rejoiceth greatly; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." John heard the Bridegroom and rejoiced, though he was not invited to become one of the Bride class. The Lord had specially called Israel as His peculiar people, and had made ready His arrangements by which the first invitation to be the Bride of Christ was extended to the people of that nation. This invitation was given at our Lord's First Advent, during the three and a half years of His Ministry. His message, sent throughout all the land of Israel, was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; repent and believe the Good Tidings." This is the invitation mentioned in the third verse of our lesson, which was not heeded by Israel as a people. Following this, as we saw in our last lesson, their "house," or nation, was left desolate, Messiah was slain, etc.

But our Lord did not abandon the people of that nation, when He rejected the nation as a whole; and hence at His resurrection, in directing His apostles no longer to confine their efforts to Israel, but to preach the Gospel to every creature, He added, "beginning at Jerusalem." And we know that for a number of years following the crucifixion, the Gospel Message went again to Israel, under the power and blessing of the Holy Spirit, operating upon the Apostles. Speaking of this, the Apostle Paul said to some of the Jews, "It was necessary that the Gospel should be preached first to you."--Acts 13:36.

This was the *second* call to the Marriage, recorded in verse 4. It says, "Tell them which *were bidden*"--*previously* bidden, and who had during the three and a half years. of our Lord's ministry refused to come. Moreover, now the servants were commissioned to tell them that "the oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things ready." This comprehensive statement of readiness could not be made in the first invitation, before our Lord's death; for He Himself, in His own sacrifice for sin, was the Bullock that was killed, and it is the eating of His flesh, given for the life of the world, that is to bring eternal life to as many as receive Him.

THE SECOND CALL

To the first call none seem to have responded, save the servants only who bore the message. To the second call some responded, though only a remnant, as is shown by Luke's account (vs. 21, 22). Moreover, the second call is shown to have been not to the righteous and prominent ones among the Jews, but to the morally and mentally poor, blind, and maimed--not to the Temple class of Israel, the leaders of religious thought, the Scribes and Pharisees, but to the poor, found in the streets and lanes of that city or kingdom. This second message found a considerable number of this apparently inferior and unsuitable class, and gathered them for the wedding, where they were made presentable under the provided "wedding garments." Respecting the gathering, under this call, notice the record found in Acts 2:41, 47 and 4:4--three thousand were found willing in one day and five thousand subsequently. Nevertheless, as the Apostle Paul clearly shows, these Israelites who received the message of grace after the day of Pentecost, under this second call of the parable, were but a remnant as compared with the whole of Israel -but a part as compared to the entire number predestinated to be the number of the Elect Church, the Bride of Christ.

In proof of His assertion that only a remnant of Israel was acceptable to God, Paul quotes Isaiah, the Prophet, saying, "Isaiah also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number 'of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved." (Rom. 9:27.) Paul proceeds to show that "the fall of them was-the riches of the world," and that in consequence of their not completing the elect number, not providing the full complement of guests to the great Marriage Feast, therefore the invitation, was extended beyond them to the Gentiles, He points out that God spared not the natural branches of the-olive tree, but broke off the unfit ones, and during this Age has been grafting Gentiles into the places formerly reserved for Israelites according to the flesh, in connection with the root and fatness of the great Divine promises to Abraham's Seed.-Rom. 11.

It was after the remnant had been gathered out from the "streets and lanes," and after the great and influential of that nation had rejected the Divine invitation to the Marriage Feast, and had imprisoned the King's messengers, the Apostles, and had slain some of them (see Acts 8:1-4; 12:1-3, etc.), that God sent His judgments against that city or government; and utterly destroyed it, in a great time of trouble, referred to in verse 7 of this lesson. John the Baptist, speaking of that trouble, likened it in parable to "fire," whose work was to burn up the chaff of that nation. This was the baptism of fire which came upon them, in contradistinction to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which came upon the Israelites indeed, who accepted the invitation to the Marriage Feast. (Matt. 3-11.)

THE THIRD CALL

Thus the way was left open for the third division of the call to the Marriage Feast (the call of the Gentiles)* by reason of an insufficient number of worthy ones being found amongst those which were originally bidden--the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham. This third call, mentioned in verse 9 of our lesson, and in Luke 14:23, is in both the -accounts designated, as a call in "the highways" -- among the nations, the Gentiles, outside the city of the parable, which represents Israel. This call among the Gentiles has progressed for now more than eighteen centuries and according to various lines of testimony in the Lord's Word, it has about accomplished the purpose intended, namely, the filling up of the elect, predetermined number which shall constitute the joint-heirs in the Kingdom, by becoming the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Both evangelists state that a sufficient number will be found; and Matthew declares that "both good and bad" were amongst those found willing to participate in the feast. His description reminds us of another of our Lord's parables, illustrative of the same point, namely, the parable of the net which, being cast into the sea, caught fish, both good and bad,--suitable and unsuitable. The separation of the fish, gathering some into baskets for use, and casting the remainder back into the sea, implies a choice, a discrimination on the Lord's part, as between the numbers who eventually would profess to be of His Kingdom class and seek to share the feast, and those whom the Lord will esteem worthy, to certain conditions and tests of character.

This part of the parable brings us down unquestionably to the close of the Gospel Age; because the Gospel Age is for the very purpose of calling those who shall participate in the Marriage Feast. If, therefore, it be true that we are in the end of this Gospel Age, it implies that the number of worthy guests is about complete, or, to reverse the proposition, if the number of worthy guests is about full, it proves that we are in the close of this Age. And just at this point the parable introduces another feature -- for it was after the wedding had been furnished with a proper number of guests, that "the King came in" and began the inspection of the guests. It would appear that we have reached that point of time indicated in the parable and we believe, on the strength of the testimony of the Scriptures, our Lord has assumed the office of King, which He since holds, and will continue to exercise until He shall have overthrown present institutions, falsely called Christian institutions, dashing them "in pieces as a -potter's vessel," in a great time of trouble symbolically spoken of as a time of "fire" and of overflowing "floods," and eventually reigning in righteousness for a thousand years, during which all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

JUDGMENT MUST BEGIN AT HOUSE OF GOD

This date, at which the Bridegroom takes His kingly authority and power, marks a special feature of dealing in connection with His consecrated Church--the class gathered to the feast. The first part of the King's business, in the establishment of His Kingdom, is, -as we have seen, the judgment of the nations, and the Apostle Peter assures us that "judgment must begin at the house of God." This judgment of the house of God, the consecrated Church, is shown in the parable by the statement that the King inspected or examined the guests. Among them He found

worthy ones, evidently, and also unworthy ones which, in the parable are represented by one man -- a leader or representative of the class.

The unworthiness of this guest is represented in his lack of a wedding garment, hence it is important for us to ascertain the significance of such a garment. Secular history shows that the custom of that time amongst the Jews was that when any notable person made a feast of this kind, he provided for the occasion an outer robe or covering, for each guest, so that however different the guests might be in respect to their circumstances, wealth or apparel, on this occasion, while at the feast, as guests of one, host, they were on a common level; for the wedding garments were alike, probably of white linen embroidered. The significance is readily seen. The Lord's people, gathered from every nation and people and tongue, are dissimilar in their intellectual, moral, physical and financial conditions, but when they have accepted the Lord Jesus, the redemption in His blood provided, and an invitation to the wedding, they are reckoned as "new creatures in Christ Jesus," and all on a common footing the robe of Christ's righteousness making up for the deficiencies of each one, so that there is no difference as respects previous situation or condition, bond or free, male or female, they are all one in Christ Jesus.-Gal. 3:28.

The appropriateness of the illustration is still further heightened by the knowledge that it was the custom of that day, not only to provide these garments, but to insist that each guest who would enter to the feast should first have on the wedding garment. just so it is one of the explicit terms or conditions of the call to the great feast that God has prepared, that all who will come to it must first accept by faith the redemption which is in Christ Jesus our Lord-otherwise they can gain no admission. It follows, therefore, logically, that 'the guest found without a wedding garment must have taken off the wedding garment after he had entered as one of the guests, since he would not have been admitted without it. We can readily see the application of this in the Church. . While none could have access to the grace of God in Christ without first accepting by faith the merit of His sacrifice as the ransom price for their sins, yet after having entered the grace of God, we find so many who do despite not only to the King who made the, Marriage Feast, but also to the King's Son who has just assumed the office of King by rejecting the robe of His righteousness while attempting to enjoy the benefits of His grace.

PRESENT DAY APPLICATION

Where may we look for this class? We answer, we may look for them in amongst the others, who still -retain the wedding garment; and, as we should expect, it is especially in these latter times that the no ransom doctrines have come to the front--"denying that the Lord *bought* them." And these theories, in derogation of the ransom, seem to have a special fascination for certain classes. (1) For a class which is anxious to appear more independent in thought, and to be known as critics and advanced thinkers. (2) They have fascination for a class whose consecration is lax, or partial only, and who like to take a broad view and to claim universal salvation, partly because they realize that they are not walking in the narrow way of self sacrifice.

At all events, such a class is to be expected at the present time, and such a class we find quite numerous; some of them openly scoffing at the thought that a

ransom was necessary or was given, *others tacitly acknowledging the ransom, but in heart and in life denying it*: ignoring the logical consequences, and propriety of participation with the Lord in the sufferings of this present time.

The parable shows that at this juncture- the guests have been gathered, and are in the house of their host. We may imagine the provision for their entertainment, the reception. room, its brilliant illumination, etc., and these correspond in our case, to the blessings enjoyed by the living members of the consecrated Church now. With us, too, the light has been turned on; we are enjoying many of the blessings provided by our host, the Lord, and we have before us the menu describing to some extent "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him." We can even occasionally see some of the preparations for the great feast progressing, and it is from such favorable conditions, into the ignorance, uncertainty and "outer darkness" of the world, that all who do not have on the wedding garment shall be thrust or forced.

In this latter time the importance of the wedding garment was particularly drawn to our attention, and there has been continual evidence before us of the binding and going into outer darkness of such as have taken -off the wedding garment. Of course, it is not a literal binding: it is accomplished by the presentation of the Truth, in contradistinction to the error; the influence of the Truth being the binding or restraining influence circumventing the error, on this subject. It is the duty of all who see the Truth on the subject of the ransom to be thoroughly loyal to the King, and to thus assist in binding, restraining with the Truth, any whom they find exercising influence to the contrary. It is our experience that all who lose respect for and trust in the merit of the precious blood of Christ as the redemption price of the world go quickly into the outer darkness of the world in respect to the Divine plan, etc.

In the parable it is said that in the outer darkness there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The wailing and gnashing of teeth among those - of the outer darkness of the world and of the nominal church has not yet been fully realized;- but, as the parable states it, by and by, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And those who are now ejected from the light and from all participation in the joys and blessings of the present time will have their portion, their share in the great time of trouble coming upon the whole world, which is thus signified, "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." None then living shall escape that trouble, except the Little Flock, the Kingdom class, the Bride class, to whom the Lord said, "Watch ye, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world."

Our Lord sums up the significance of this parable, as meaning that "Many are called but few are chosen." How true! Not all have been called to this Marriage Feast. Hundreds of millions never heard a word about it all through these eighteen centuries, and hundreds of millions are living today without the slightest knowledge of it, -and none of these can in any sense of the word be reckoned among the "called." Nevertheless, many have been called-all of the Jewish nation who had ears to hear the Message were called, because they, by Divine arrangement, were a covenanted people, to whom the first call belonged; but only a few of them were chosen. And so, during the offer of the Gospel to the Gentiles, it has gone I to a comparatively small proportion of the whole Gentile world;'

nevertheless, it has reached millions during these eighteen centuries. And though it has reached many in our day, nevertheless they very generally choose to ignore the call: the vast majority find other attractions and ambitions--worldly and church power, wealth, influence, pleasure, ease, etc. Comparatively few therefore, care to accept the invitation. And finally, of those who have accepted, the Lord makes choice and separates and rejects all who do not accept the invitation and all its privileges-as a grace, a favor. The others constitute the Little Flock, addressed by our Lord, saying, "Fear not, Little Flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

. STUDY XLVIII--JANUARY 30

THE TWO WITNESSES REMAIN DEAD UNBURIED

(236) What significance may we reasonably attach to the time, three -and one-half days, during which the two Witnesses were lying dead, and what period in history do we locate as the fulfillment? H '19-298.

(237) How have some other expositors applied this time feature, the three and a half days? and point out the facts from history showing the fallacy of the application. H' 19-299.

(238) Describe the situation that would naturally be expected to exist when the two Witnesses were lying dead in the street of the city. H '19-299.

(239) What is the significance of the statement that the two Witnesses were denied burial, and upon what phase of life is this portion of the vision based? H '19-300.

(240) Describe the situation that prevailed in fulfillment of verse 10: "Those who dwell on the earth rejoice over them," etc. H '19-300..

STUDY XLIX--FEBRUARY 6

RESURRECTION OF THE TWO WITNESSES

(241) What, is the import of the statement in verse 11: "the Breath of Life from God entered them, and they stood on their Feet," etc., and what should we logically look for in fulfillment of this statement? H '19-300.

(242) What events and circumstances do we find recorded in history. that fulfilled this. vision, and what prominent character was instrumental in reviving the two Witnesses? H '19-300-302.

(243) What special events marked the crisis in the life and work of Luther and were of great importance in the resurrection of the two Witnesses? 'Name other leaders who co-operated in that work. Before what noted conference and eminent body of people was Luther called to answer for his protest against the Papal system? H '19-301, 302.

(244) Has the war on the two Witnesses been carried on since their resurrection, and what manifestation of this same spirit of the taking away of Christian liberty do we find in modern times? H' 19-301, 303.

(245) What is the significance of the statement that "Fear fell on Those who Saw them"? H '19-303.

STUDY L--FEBRUARY 13

THE ASCENSION OF THE TWO WITNESSES

(246) What is the import of the statement in verse 12: "And they heard a loud Voice saying to them, 'Come up hither.' And they ascended to Heaven in the Cloud; and their Enemies beheld them"? and what statement by our Lord would seem to elucidate the symbol? H '19-318.

(247) Explain how and when. this portion of the vision met its fulfillment; and what have been the agencies that have had to do with the ascension of the, two Witnesses? H '19-318.

(248) What has been the situation so far as the Bible and the true saints are concerned since the fulfillment of this vision? H '19-318.

(249) Did the fiery zeal of the Reformation Movement continue on unabated? If not, what change was there and what have been the results since? H '19-319.

(250) What part did the Napoleonic wars play in the matter of fulfilling the vision, and what has been the general influence and results amongst the nations of Christendom since the ascension of the two Witnesses? H '19-319, 320.

LESSONS ON CITIZENSHIP

--FEBRUARY 13--MATT. 22:15-22, 34-40--

Golden Text.--"And He said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and -with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second like unto it is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."--Matt. 22:37-39.

TODAY'S lesson considers the events of the last day of our Lord's public ministry. As already noted, He rested at Bethany over the Sabbath and participated in a feast to His honor that (Jewish) Sabbath eve. The next day, the first day of the week -- Sunday -- He rode on the ass, making a triumphal entry into the city of the great King. Mark informs us that He visited the Temple on that occasion, looking about on the condition of things, and that it was the next day, Monday, that He drove out the money-changers, etc. Now we come to the day following, Tuesday, the last day of His public teaching. Note the record thus: John 12:1 informs us that the Feast at Bethany was "six days before, the Passover"--Sabbath; Mark 11:1 records the events of the next day, Sunday; Mark 11:2-19 relates the events of Monday; Mark 14:1 shows that Wednesday and Thursday intervened before the Passover Feast began.

PERPLEXITY OF THE JEWISH RULERS

The leading men of all the various sects and parties were in perplexity how to deal with Jesus. They believed Him to be an impostor, because His claims seemed to them to be absurd, contrary to all worldly wisdom, the only kind which they possessed. True,, they recognized that He was a brilliant man, that He had great force and power with the common people, -but they said to themselves, "Although He does not publicly claim to be the Messiah, He nevertheless gives that intimation promising His disciples participation with Him in the Kingdom when He shall be exalted to power-and is leading the people to believe that by and by the long-expected Kingdom of God will be established. He is making headway, His miracles being especially effective in supporting His claims; He is establishing thus a new sect, a new party, that will prove antagonistic to all present sects and parties, and diminish our influence with the people. Although we have differences of opinion on many subjects we are all striving together for the favor of the great Roman empire, under whose control we are now. We are seeking to have greater and greater liberties and privileges, and if this new party succeeds, it will diminish our influence at Rome and appear to the emperor and senate like a rebellion. The Romans already have that opinion of us as a people, that we are rebellious, etc., and we have been endeavoring to allay that sentiment and establish confidence in the stability of our religious system and-its power over our people. This new religious system, therefore, threatens not only the prosperity of our various denominations, but also the prosperity of our nation. Jesus should be killed for the good of the cause: as patriots we owe it to ourselves and to the whole nation and its future welfare."

We are informed that they sought to kill Him, and that privately they had determined this from the time of His calling Lazarus back from the tomb. His triumphal entry at the head of a multitude shouting, "Hosanna to the son of David," increased their concern and their determination against Him. His driving out of the moneychangers, etc., from the Temple was a further- manifestation of His consciousness of His power with the common people. Apparently there was only one way to get to Him: the people evidently would not stand by quietly and see Him injured. Whatever was to be done must be accomplished in a quiet and stealthy manner and quickly. Moreover, the people had a reverence for the Roman soldiers, and it would be desirable therefore to have Him executed under Pilate's decree. But how could they bring the matter before Pilate? What charges could they make? It was the people who had proclaimed Him- king and not Himself. They must if possible get Him to commit Himself to some treasonable statement, on account of which they could bring Him before Pilate as an enemy of the Roman empire, and thus have Him legally executed in a manner which the public could not resist. The Romans permitted the Jews to govern themselves, merely stipulating for tribute and loyalty to Rome; and Pilate with his soldiers resided at Jerusalem, not to interfere with Jewish laws and customs, but merely to preserve the peace and the dignity of Rome.

AN ENTANGLING QUESTION

With a view to getting Jesus to commit Himself as an opponent of the Roman Empire, two groups of Jews came to Jesus with a question. The Pharisees in a general way held that the Jews as the people of God were to be the rulers of all other peoples, and that they should never pay tribute, taxes, to other rulers. Their teachings on these lines, however, were privately given, for fear of being apprehended as traitors to Rome. The Herodians, on the contrary, were Jews who took sides with Herod, and stood firmly and boldly and publicly for the suzerainty of the Roman Empire, claiming 'that it was to the advantage of the people of Israel to be under the Roman power, and that the paying of tribute was right and proper. The common people were understood to specially favor the view held by the Pharisees and were opposed to the view of the Herodians. Representatives of these two classes, coming to Jesus in public where He was teaching and where the common people could hear the question and note the answer, hoped to get Him, to do one of two things: either declare with the Herodians that the tax was right and proper and thus break His influence with the common people, or publicly to side with the Pharisees and common people, denounce the tax tribute, declare it improper and contrary to the Divine will, etc., and thus make declaration that under no conditions then prevailing could the instigation of insurrection amongst the Jews in opposition to the tribute tax be construed as traitorous.

Note the subtlety of the entire program: they addressed Jesus, saying, "Teacher, we know that thou art true and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of man, but of a truth teachest the way of God." Here all the stress was laid upon His courage to utter truth, to be faithful to God at any cost, to be a teacher of the people on whom they could thoroughly rely, fearing nothing for Himself. Then came the question: "Is it lawful [according to the Law of Moses] to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" Shall we give or shall we not give ?

A HEAVENLY-WISE REPLY

Our Lord understood the situation in an instant and said, "Why tempt ye me?"--Why do you- try to entrap me? Look at the motives in your own hearts and judge of how much sincerity or falsity is there. Get a lesson out of this matter that will do you good; show me the tribute coin. They handed Him a silver penny or denarius of Tiberius Caesar, stamped with the likeness of Caesar and an inscription concerning him, just as coins of today in Europe bear, the image and superscription of the reigning sovereign. Jesus inquired of His tormentors, "Whose image 'And superscription is this [on this coin] ?"

They replied, "Caesar's." Then He gave them the answer to their question, saying, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Jesus did not go into the question of how much advantage the Jewish nation was reaping from the protection afforded the Jews. against the assaults of other nations. He did not attempt to declare that justice was connected with every feature of the tribute tax, but He did sum up the matter in those few words, "If Caesar has some just claims against you, render to him accordingly- this will not interfere with God's just claims against you, which you should be equally ready to meet.." This answer was not merely an evasion of the question: it was an answer

in the full sense, probably far beyond what they could fully comprehend; but they did comprehend that they had failed to entrap Him, that He had answered their question in a manner which would never have occurred to them, that He had a wisdom far beyond theirs and all natural earthly wisdom. He had the wisdom from above, first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good fruits.-Jas. 3:17.

ADMONITION APPROPRIATE TO US

The Scriptural assurance that all things work together for good to them that love God is illustrated in this matter. The Pharisees, the Herodians, intended evil to the Lord and His Apostles, their teachings, etc.--they designed their overthrow. But in the Lord's providence the very reverse of this resulted. A lesson came to the common people who heard, a lesson which doubtless bore fruit in any who were in a right condition of heart; but the lesson was especially profitable, we are assured, to the Apostles and to all of the Lord's followers since. Its lesson is that we are not called upon to war with carnal weapons against the powers that be--that 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.

WHAT WE RENDER TO GOD

What we shall render to God, depends upon who we are and what we see and know respecting Him and His will. The world in general realizes some responsibility to a Creator or First Cause, but their, enlightenment being limited ' their responsibilities are, correspondingly limited. Those who have seen and heard and tasted that God is gracious, that His favor has been manifested in the redemption price paid at Calvary, have greater privileges than their less enlightened neighbors and correspondingly greater responsibilities. To these it is but a reasonable service that they should, present to the Lord the little all that they possess in this present life, and this becomes a still more reasonable matter when they learn that God has sent forth during His Gospel Age a special message of invitation to joint-heirship with His Son in the Kingdom. Those who are thus enlightened and who possess any measure of wisdom should, it would seem, joyfully lay aside every weight and besetting sin and earthly ambition, and strive to attain to the gracious things of the Divine promise to the seed of Abraham-Gal. 3:29.

But our Lord's opponents still hoped that they might find some one capable of vanquishing in argument Him who "spake as never man spake." One of the Pharisees, who was a Doctor of the Law, a scribe, bethought him that he would test our Lord with a theological question much discussed amongst the Jewish rabbis; a question upon which they were generally divided. He would at least get this, great Teacher confused and show the people that, while the Scribes had such contentions amongst themselves respecting the Law, this Teacher also, when treating theological subjects, would be confused. Although, it is said that he propounded the question temptingly, this does not necessarily mean that this Scribe was dishonest or in affiliation with others of the rulers who were, conspiring merely to entrap Jesus; for our Lord Himself testifies of him that he was "not far from the Kingdom of God."--Mark 12:34.

His question was, Which one of the Ten Commandments is the most important, the greatest?. Our Lord's answer was most direct. He divided the Law into two parts, as on the two tables of stone-, the one part relating to God and man's obligations to his Creator; and the second part relating to man's responsibilities toward his fellowmen. Man's duty to God our Lord placed as supreme, yet the other as linked with it and necessary to perfect harmony with God. The force of our Lord's words is found in the fact that they are mainly a quotation from the Jewish Law.--Deut. 6:4, 5.

Matthew's account does not include all the words which our Lord spoke, as recorded by Mark, beginning, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord [Jehovah] our God is one Lord [Jehovah]." This declaration the Jews were in the habit of calling, "The Shama," because the first word in the sentence in Hebrew is Shama, translated in English, "Hear." This Shama declaration was considered a sacred one amongst the Jews and was enclosed in their phylacteries, repeated in their prayers, etc. The Scribe, therefore, could have not the slightest objection to our Lord's answer: it was conclusive, and, as recorded by Mark, he acknowledged the truth saying, 'Well, Master, thou hast said the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He; and to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and

with all the soul [being] and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, - is more than all -whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."--Mark 12:32-34.