

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. IV APRIL 1, 1921 No. 7

HAS THE HARVEST OF THE GOSPEL AGE ENDED?

"He answering, said, 'He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the sons of the Kingdom; the darnel are the sons of the evil one; that enemy who sowed them is the Adversary; the Harvest is the end of the Age; and the reapers are messengers.'"--Matt. 13:37-39.--Diaglott.

THAT the Scriptures distinctly point forward to a special period in the end of this Dispensation marked by unusual and severe tests upon the Lord's people we presume is not disputed by any who are really familiar with the teachings of the Bible. The Apostles and Prophets alike make mention of that peculiar time, and declare that it will be a season of fiery trial in which every man's work shall be tried so as by fire. (I Cor. 3:12-15.) "In the last days perilous times shall come." (2 Tim. 3:1-5.) "There shall come in the last days scoffers," etc. (2 Pet. 3:3.) The words of the Savior, the solemn import of which is realized by all the thoughtful of our day, declare: "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12); and the Master with equal solemnity alleges that in the conclusion of this Age God shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity. Matt. 13:41.

Likewise in the parable of the wheat and tares, a portion of which is quoted at the beginning of this article, our Lord explains that a harvest period has been set for the end of the Age, the purpose of which obviously is, to bring together into the garner all the ripe fruitage of the Age, the wheat class, into the Kingdom. He declares that there shall be true and false growing together throughout the Age, but that in the time of Harvest a reaping work will be instituted, separating the wheat from the tares. In fact, the object in giving this noted parable, was to set forth to the disciples the effects of the proclamation of the Gospel Truth throughout the whole period of the Gospel Age. The important object of this preaching is shown to be that of selecting those who shall be Christ's joint-heirs in the Heavenly Kingdom, which when completed, and established over the world, will constitute the Divine agency for blessing all the families of the earth by giving all a full opportunity to obtain everlasting life. It will thus be seen that the Divine foreordained purpose for this present Age is an elective one, and the work of the Age was to be concluded with a harvest period. The good seed, Jesus explained, were the sons of the Kingdom; and when the time of the Harvest comes in the end of the Age, all these are to be gathered into that which He figuratively describes as the barn (granary). (Matt. 13:30.) That which is meant by the barn or granary He explains to be the Heavenly Kingdom: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father," (V. 43.) He further explains that the tares (darnel) will be gathered and burned in a fire. Some explain this last expression to mean that the whole world, all but the Kingdom class, will be either literally burned up or consigned to eternal torment. The true thought, however, evidently is that the term "tares" or darnel, while representing "children of the wicked one," is confined wholly to those who have come in

among the sons of the Kingdom and openly profess to be of this class. The two expressions wheat and darnel, therefore, have their application only to true and false professors of Christ, and not to what is termed, the world. The expression, "the end of the Age," means, of course, a period of time at the close of this Gospel Age. "In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers [messengers] . . . bring together the wheat into my granary." (V. 30.) This work of gathering has been understood by many to be accomplished by literal heavenly angels; this view we regard as unreasonable. The word, "angel" means simply messenger, and is frequently employed to mean human messengers. To show this we cite an instance where this is evidently the meaning. We read that John the Baptist sent messengers to Christ to inquire of Him whether He was the One [Messiah] who was to come, etc. (Luke 7:24.) The word in this instance is the same word as in the text under consideration. And therefore human messengers declaring a message, the effects of which will be to gather together the wheat and separating the same from the tares, is meant.

HOW LONG IS THE HARVEST PERIOD?

For a number of years past many of our readers pursuing the study of PASTOR RUSSELL'S expositions. have been made quite familiar with the lessons of this as well as other of our Lord's parables.* It is not therefore our purpose to specially review the details here. All the evidences brought together bearing upon the matter of the time has convinced us that for a number of years past we have ourselves been privileged to observe the Harvest work in progress. We have seen the fulfillment to a considerable extent of the details of the parable. A Harvest work has been going on, a separating work, which has meant indeed very severe trials for the Lord's people. The question of the length of the Harvest period is one of deep concern to all the saints at the present **time**. Some years ago many of the brethren, including the Directors of our INSTITUTE and the Editorial Staff of this journal, were under the impression that the Harvest was a period of only 40 years, and that it would come to an end by or during the year 1914. The circumstances and events, however, as we have been carefully observing them, cause us to seriously doubt the truthfulness of that impression, indeed, convince us that we were in error in our conclusion that the Harvest was 40 years long and ended in 1914.

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But it is asked, Did not the Harvest truly end in that year? and are we not to think that the work since that time is of another kind and not to be considered a part of the Harvest? Our reply is that we should require sound Bible reasons for all that we assume or believe. Looking for evidence that the Harvest ended 6 years ago, we look in vain. We can find not the slightest ground for assuming or concluding that the Harvest work ended in 1914 *or that it has yet come to a close*. While it is true that the work has not continued upon as large a scale and not all the same methods or instrumentalities have been continued in operation, yet it is nevertheless a matter of fact that the Message of Truth has continued to go forth enlightening the faithful and calling the attention of these to various babylonish

entanglements, which has meant of course that a gathering and a separating work has progressed unto this present time. Let him that readeth understand!

NO NEW WORK AUTHORIZED

We consider the evidence wholly lacking that the Harvest has ended. Nor is there the slightest evidence that the Lord has instituted another and different work. We most earnestly urge upon the Lord's people to use moderation in their reasoning upon this subject as upon all subjects to use the spirit of a sound mind and to require positive evidence, a "thus saith the Lord," for every doctrine or thought that we accept. Whatever others may do, whatever changes in the work others may presume to institute without proper authority, let us not be affected by it, nor be alarmed, but let us look carefully to the Lord and His Word for guidance in this matter as in every affair of life. "The meek will He guide in judgment and the meek will He teach His way." The Great Head of the Church is still our only Teacher and faithful Guide. There are no reasons whatever why we should institute some work different from that carried on by PASTOR RUSSELL. The Message has not changed the slightest. It is still the old, old story of Jesus and His love, the Message Of the risen Christ and of our hope of joint-heirship with Him in His glorious Kingdom, in the turning of the curse away from the earth, and the blessing of humanity. The great commission given by the Savior to His followers was that they should bear this Message unto the very end of the Age. We conclude, therefore, that it is pleasing and acceptable to God that we continue bearing testimony to the Truth in simplicity and in love, and allow the work of separation -- the Harvest work -- to go on under the providence and supervision of the Great Chief Reaper, fully conscious that He is able to have that work discontinued at any moment it may please Him.

As for the Harvest being a period of 40 years or as to how long this period is, this is a matter entirely proper for us to investigate and discuss. The question is, Is there anything in the Bible that will enable us to determine how long this work of harvesting in the end of the Age will last? Concerning this matter no expositor except one has expressed any opinion, As previously stated, it has been the thought of many brethren that the Harvest period would cover 40 years. This was PASTOR RUSSELL'S thought, and was held by him up to within a short time (in September) before his death, which occurred in October, 1916. His interpretation which was frequently expressed in his writings was that it covered a period of 40 years, beginning in 1874, and ending in 1914. In September, 1916, he still continued believing that the Harvest of the Age began at this date--1874. On this matter he thus expresses himself under the following heading:

"OUR MISTAKE RESPECTING THE HARVEST"

"Our readers will remember that the basis of our expectations respecting the Harvest time was the parallelism between the closing of the Jewish, Age and the closing of this Gospel Age. We found the beginning of the Harvest time clearly marked by the 1335 days of prophecy, and by the fulfillment amongst God's people of the declaration: 'Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth and cometh to the end of the 1335 days!' (Dan. 12: 12.) Surely great blessedness, great enlightenment of the eyes of understanding, great appreciation of our God and His glorious purposes came to the Lord's people at that time' in full agreement with

that prophecy! Ever since then a new song has been in the mouths of the Lord's people, as they have learned of His goodness through the Divine Plan of the Ages. We see no reason to question the date, October, 1874, as the beginning of the Harvest time and the parallel to the time when Jesus began His ministry in the Harvest time of the Jewish Age."--Z '16-264, col. 1, par. 5.

He next proceeds to show in what particular matters the mistakes were made. His words are:

"Our mistake was along the very line that we pointed out. Time and again, we reminded our readers that the parallelisms between the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age COULD NOT INCLUDE ANYTHING BELONGING TO THE NEW DISPENSATION. THE PARALLELS AFFECTED MERELY THE NOMINAL JEWISH HOUSE THERE AND THE NOMINAL CHRISTIAN HOUSE HERE."--Z '16-264, col. 2, par. 1.

Let all who are acquainted with PASTOR RUSSELL'S writings note these words carefully. Note that in them he states very plainly that the Harvest "parallels affected merely the nominal Jewish house *there*, and the nominal Christian house *here*."

Concerning what features of the parallelisms were referred to in his statement, he said:

"Both [nominal systems] were rejected because of failure to be in the right condition of heart for the truths that were due to them--both rejected for [a future] destruction. The Jewish system was a Church-State affair, paralleled here by the great Church-State systems of Europe, whose destruction BEGAN in 1914." -Z '16-264, col. 2, par. 1.

The important matters to be noted in this utterance bearing on the parallelisms are these:

(1) Both nominal systems were rejected, the Jewish *before* the Christian Age began, 33 A. D., which beginning was at Pentecost, immediately after their rejection (see Matt. 23:38) ; the nominal Christian house being rejected in the parallel date 1878.

(2) The rejection in both instances was on account of rejecting the truths then due.

He further goes on to show the peculiar significance and correspondence to the dates 33 A. D. and 1878 A. D. as bearing on their parallel events. We quote:

"Let us remember, however, that the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry [29 A. D. to 33 A. D.] were more a time of preparation of the Apostles to be the instruments for the harvesting and a sharpening preparation of the Sickle of Truth for the later work which BEGAN at Pentecost. There was NO 'GARNER' into which to gather the wheat prior to Pentecost [33 A.D.]." Z '16-264, col. 2, par. 2.

He next gives a diagram to demonstrate the JewishNominal Church and Christian-Nominal Church parallels, as follows:

"Jewish-Nominal Church Christian-Nominal Church

A. D. 29-33 A. D. 1874-1878

'They knew not the time of their visitation'

A. D. 33-36 A. D. 1878-1881

The Most Holy Anointed, Divine favor prolonged for three and a half years [to individuals of the nominal Jewish and nominal Christian house] to complete the 70 weeks of 'favor promised to Israel, their rejection being deferred [until 70 weeks had ended, 36 A. D.].

A. D. 36-73 A. D. 1881-1918

Because of the overspreading of abominations, He shall make it desolate, even until the consummation or UTTER DESTRUCTION-until all that God has predetermined shall be accomplished.-Daniel 9:24-27."

To get PASTOR RUSSELL'S conclusions on these parallels, which conclusions we now quote, our readers will need to consider very carefully his words, *for they are his last words on these matters and were recorded only about one month before his death:*

"NO PARALLELS AS BETWEEN THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH AND THE TRUE CHURCH NOW ARE TO BE LOOKED FOR."

He states, however, that because the resurrection of our Lord took place just *before* the Pentecostal Church began its history in 33 A. D., it is reasonable to believe that His resurrection, at that time would parallel the resurrection of the sleeping saints in 1878 A. D. Thus he said "the resurrection of Jesus *before* the Church harvesting began, may well be considered to have its parallel *here* in the resurrection of the sleeping members of the Church--1878 A. D."

Those who are familiar with PASTOR RUSSELL'S previous teachings concerning the matters we now call attention to will need to weigh carefully his words which we now quote in order to understand what *he himself states as his change of views*; and also to consider carefully the significance of *this change of view* concerning the Church's work at the present time; and still further the fact that *there is no way to determine the length and ending of the Harvest -neither* any way to determine the time of the destruction of - the nominal Church systems. In view of the fact that many since his death are in their teaching, saying that the Harvest is ended, or setting particular dates for these great events to occur, his words concerning these matters are in positive conflict with their teachings. Note the following:

"WE SHOULD NOT HAVE LOOKED FOR PARALLELISMS BETWEEN THE STARTING OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH [AT PENTECOST] AND ITS EXPERIENCES [THERE], AND THE STARTING IN THIS HARVEST TIME OF THE HEAVENLY CHURCH [SINCE 1878 AND ITS EXPERIENCES. THESE ARE NO PART OF THE PARALLEL. THE PARALLEL BELONGS TO THE NOMINAL JEWISH SYSTEM, which went to destruction [in 70 or 73 A. D.] and the nominal Gospel Church, which is now [in 1916, when he wrote] going [not gone] to destruction."--Z '16-264, col. 2, par. 5.

We would ask, Would it not be reasonable to suppose that to fulfil this parallel the nominal Church systems would need to have been utterly destroyed in 1918? It is a fact of history that they were not destroyed.

THE SUPPOSITION THAT HARVEST ENDED IN 1914 A MISTAKE

He next proceeds to show another mistake, that he desired to correct, and it will be seen that if his conclusions are correct, and had been heeded, very much of the confusion and erroneous teaching that has existed since in the Church would have been avoided. It will be seen as we quote his words that it was his thought:

(1) That the Harvest did not end in 1914; neither had it ended when he wrote, in September, 1916.

(2) Nor was there any Scripture that gave any date ahead of that time that would indicate the end of the Harvest.

(3) In other words, that the forty-year *time feature of the Harvest period was wholly an inference, and was discarded by him.* We quote his words to this effect:

"WE IMAGINED THAT THE HARVEST WORK OF GATHERING THE CHURCH WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE THE END OF GENTILE TIMES [1914]; BUT NOTHING IN THE BIBLE SO SAID. Our thought was PURELY AN INFERENCE, and now we see that IT WAS AN UNJUSTIFIED ONE. This Harvest work belongs to the New Dispensation [beginning in 1874] and cannot be identified with the Old. Anyway, the harvesting of the Jewish Age, gathering 'Israelites indeed' into the Gospel Church, did not close with A. D. 70, but progressed in various parts of the world thereafter. Quite a good many Jews, doubtless, profiting by their experience, were all the better prepared to be gathered into the Gospel Garner AFTER THE DESTRUCTION OF THEIR NATIONAL POLITY. Similarly we may expect that quite a good many will yet [since. September, 1916] be gathered to the Heavenly Garner, AND WE KNOW OF NO TIME LIMIT HERE."--Z 116-264, col. 2, par. 6.

Still further bearing on this matter, as showing that it was his thought at the time he wrote (September, 1916) that the forty years supposed by inference to be a type, applying to the nominal Christian system, might possibly meet its fulfillment in 1918, in the utter destruction of them, he next proceeds to say:

"Incidentally we remark that some historians put the end of the Jewish time of trouble as April A. D. 73, which would correspond to April, 1918."

As the end of the time of trouble on the nominal Jewish systems did not occur then, and the end of such a time of trouble would of course mean their destruction, is it not reasonable and Scriptural to say that the antitype, so far as it related to the forty-year time feature, has failed both as applying to the nominal and true Church? *Would he not have understood it this way if he had lived until April, 1918? Would it not also prove that the Gentile date of 1914 must be considered as having no direct bearing upon the change of the Church, but to Gentile authority only? And still further we ask, Would it not be much the wiser and the more Scriptural course of the Church to be looking to the fulfillment of events yet to come to pass, rather than to dates? Let him that readeth understand!*

In closing we quote PASTOR RUSSELL'S words concluding the same article:

"Are we regretful that the Harvest work continues? Nay, verily; we rejoice and have the pleasure each day of showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His most marvelous light; and we delight in seeing how others are being benefited and made to rejoice. Are we regretful of the experiences we have had in coming to this present point? Do we feel like repining that the Lord did not force upon us more careful attention to the parallelism? Nay, verily; The Lord's leadings have been good. Perhaps, indeed, we got benefit from the thought that the Harvest work would soon be ended. Perhaps it led us to deeper consecration and greater activity in the service of the Lord, in ourselves and for others. We therefore have nothing to regret.

"Who led us first, will lead us still,
Calmly we sink into His will.'

THE BURNING OF THE TARES

"In the parable of 'the wheat and the tares,' the Master puts very prominently the gathering of the tares and the binding of them in bundles for burning. We assumed that this burning would not take place until all the wheat had been gathered into the Heavenly Garner; but apparently this was an incorrect thought. *The garnering of the wheat continues; but apparently the consuming of the tares will correspond very, closely with the division of Jordan. The tares are a class of (often) noble people who have risen up out of the world infused with hopes and aims of a benevolent character, but misled into thinking that they are the Church. From the tare viewpoint, the wheat are an abnormal growth, a peculiar people, few in number, and not held in high esteem. The smiting of the waters will reveal the truth in respect to what is the real Church of Christ, and what are imitations; and the honest-minded tare class will be undeceived and cease to longer pretend that they are the Church of Christ-thus they will be burned or cease to be as tares, continuing, however, as noble-minded worldly people and will have a share in the general blessings of the 'sweet by and by' under the Kingdom, for which we still pray.

"Our present attitude, dear brethren, should be one of great gratitude toward God, increasing appreciation of the beautiful Truth which - He has granted us the privilege of seeing and being identified with, and increasing zeal in helping to bring that Truth to the knowledge of others. In the meantime, our eyes of understanding should discern clearly the Battle of the Great Day of God Almighty now in progress; and our faith, guiding our eyes of understanding through the Word, should enable us to see the glorious outcome-the Messiah's Kingdom. Furthermore, we can be fully content not to know how long the Harvest work will last-content that the great Captain, who by Divine appointment has the entire matter in charge, is too wise to err, and has promised us that all of our experiences shall work together for our good if, we love Him and are of 'the called ones according to His purpose,' seeking to make our calling and election sure."

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES L

THE RIVER OF THE WATER OF LIFE

"And he showed me a River of Water. Of Life, bright as Crystal, proceeding from the Throne of God and the Lamb. In the midst of its Broad Place, and Of the River, on this side and on that, was a Wood of Life, bearing twelve Fruits, yielding for each Month its own Fruit; and the Leaves of the Wood [grove] were for the Healing of the Nations."--Rev. 22:1,2.

ST. JOHN in these words continues his description of the Holy City, New Jerusalem. It will have been noted that the description thus far has been more concerning its external than its internal appearance. This seems to signify that its presentation in the vision has had to do largely with those matters which relate -to this 'Holy City's (Heavenly Government's) influence upon the dwellers of earth who come under its sway. Indeed, St. John saw very little of the inside of this Holy City. The reason for this would seem to be that it is hardly possible for the saints, the joint-heirs, whom St. John represents in their earthly state, to comprehend those features which represent the various departments of the organization, etc., of this Heavenly Divine Government, and as constituting the various offices assigned to them in the administration of its affairs for the blessing of the inhabitants of the Millennial Earth. Concerning these matters we now see them as through a glass dimly, but then face to face.

The opening words of St. John, "And he showed me a River of the Water of Life," etc., are designed to point out more particularly the one inexhaustible Fountain or Source from which these great blessings flow. It is stated to be "from out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb." This teaches that this Heavenly Government over the Millennial World order will have for its center of authority the Divine Law and the Divine Power, i.e., every feature connected with the laws and the administration of this Government over the new order, will be according to the Divine will.

HEALING WATERS FROM THE HOLY CITY

Some expositors have seen quite clearly the distinction between the heavenly and the earthly phases of this Millennial Government or Kingdom. One of these has thus pointed out this fact:

"We are of necessity reminded also of one of the closing visions of Ezekiel, while a comparison easily shows also the difference between the heavenly and the earthly in these pictures --the one being indeed the shadow, but no more than the shadow of the other. John here sees a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding -out of the Throne of God and of the Lamb! And in Ezekiel, the life-giving waters issue forth from the house of the Lord, and this is specially noted in connection with the fruit of the trees nourished by it: 'And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to its months, because their waters, they issued from the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.' How like the account in Revelation is to this, no one can fail to understand; even the language might seem to be taken from it; 'In the midst of the street of it, and on this side of the river and on that, was there the tree of life,

which bare twelve [manner of]. fruits, and yielded its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.'

"But in Ezekiel all is distinctly earthly, and the -blessing is. not [described by him as] yet full. The waters go down into the Salt sea and. heal it, so that a great multitude of fish are [enabled to thrive] in its waters; but there are miry places and marshes that are not healed, but given over to salt. With both the Old Testament Prophet and the New, we [thus] see that the earth is yet in the Millennial, not the eternal condition ; for the leaves of the trees are for medicine in both alike; there is in both need of healing yet [during Millennial times]. The waters are in both cases from the sanctuary, for that is. the character of the whole City of God. In Revelation they are specifically from the Throne of God; for 'here the one blessedness is, as we have seen, that God reigns,--God revealed in that perfect grace that is expressed in Christ-the Throne of God being also- that of the Lamb. Thus the water is the type, as always in its highest meaning, of the fulness of the spirit, the power of life and sanctification, indeed the power of God in all creation. The tree of life bears witness as in. the. earthly paradise at first, of dependence upon another, of life in dependence."--GRANT.

Another whom we regard as deeply spiritual, who lived and wrote many years ago, has ably commented on these words of St. John. It will be observed that he also saw clearly the distinction between the heavenly and earthly aspects of this New-Jerusalem Government. His suggestion. is that this portion of St. John's vision "would naturally lead us to Ezek. 47, where waters are seen issuing from the threshold of the Temple of God in Jerusalem in the Millennium, only that is of the earth, while this is from the Throne of God in heaven flowing down through the street of the City. As but one street is named here (v. 1, and in the former chapter 21:21) it would seem that it lay around the City, between it and the wall. No mention is made of inhabitants in this Millennial City, nor of 'walking the golden streets,' which we find sometimes in hymns, as there are neither streets nor walkers.

But if the City be the [symbol of the] assembly [of saints] in glory, the street would be the channel through which the blessings of the City flow to others; and if it would be between the City and the Wall it would show how God will make amends to the Gentile world for all the failure of Israel to bless the world when first established and throughout their sad history on earth; the fountain of the . . . blessings being the Throne of God, and thence, through both the Heavenly saints and [earthly] Israel, flowing out to all."--TAYLOR.

CLEAR AS CRYSTAL

The exposition given by PASTOR RUSSELL of the various features of this glorious vision of the Holy City, New Jerusalem, seems to meet all the requirements:

'The Throne of God and of the Lamb is represented as being in this City. That is to say, the Kingdom, the Government. that will then be established in the world, will have as its center of authority the Divine Law and the Divine Power-every feature of the Government will be in accord with the Divine will. From the Throne of God will proceed the River of the Water of Life, of crystalline purity, not muddy traditions with false doctrines. No impurity of any kind will be in it: it

will be the pure Message of the Lord, going forth from the Millennial Kingdom for the blessing, refreshment, rejuvenation and eternal life of the whole world of mankind or so many of them as will accept the blessed provisions. Not only will the Message of peace and the offer of life thus go forth from the Throne to the whole world, but, additionally, there will be Trees of Life on both sides of the River, bearing twelve manner of fruits and yielding their Fruits every month, and the Leaves of these shall be for the healing of the nations.

"The symbolic picture suggests nourishment and healing for the sin-sick, starving world, which then may partake freely of all the blessings and privileges thus symbolized. No longer will it be necessary to say to men, 'The weaknesses of your fallen flesh will be with you until death, for although the Lord has graciously covered your sins because of faith in the Redeemer and the desire to walk in His way, nevertheless there is no escape from the consequences of sin, there is nothing that will absolutely heal.' When the New Dispensation, represented by this symbolical City and its River of the Water of Life and the Trees of Life with their Leaves of healing, is made available to men, it will be the beginning of the times of restitution spoken by the Lord through the mouth of all the Holy Prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21.) the restitution will affect all the willing and obedient, not only physically but mentally and morally: the uplift will be individual and world-wide. This is the very object of providing the River of Life, the Trees of Life, their Fruits and their Leaves.--Z '05-171.

A passage that has been quite generally misunderstood by professed Christian teachers, and therefore misapplied, thus hindering to a considerable extent a proper understanding of this glorious vision of the future, is the one contained in verse 17 of this same chapter. The passage reads, "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This invitation is quite generally construed to have its application in this present time, this present Gospel Age. This, however, is very manifestly incorrect. The facts of history both past and present teach that there has never been, nor is there at the present time, such a gracious *universal* opportunity to partake of the blessings purchased by the sacrifice of Christ, and symbolically pictured in this "Water of Life." It is only the few comparatively that have heard this gracious invitation: it has only been a small minority of this few that have understood it. Furthermore, the channel through which Truth has flowed has been for centuries defiled with error. The message of the angel, "Behold I bring you Good Tidings of Great joy, which shall be to all people," has been little understood. Indeed, it was not necessary in order to accomplish the Divine purpose for this Gospel Age that it should be fully appreciated except by the few, in the present evil Dispensation. The Scripture that applies to God's elective purpose for this present Age is: "No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him." These are the words of Christ, Himself. This Gospel Age is the time when the Father is drawing out from believers those whom He would prepare to become the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. The invitation of the verse under consideration will not be in order until the Bride hath made herself ready; in other words, until the Divine purpose is complete and the "Marriage of the Lamb" takes place. These called out ones in this Age have been only prospectively the Bride now. One by one these have been hearing the call, accepting it, and have been making their calling and election sure. These,

until the Bridegroom should come, have fallen asleep in Christ. This class when complete in the end of this Dispensation will, as we have seen, share in the First Resurrection. Then will the Bride be complete, and this Message, "And the Spirit and the Bride say come," etc., be due to be proclaimed. As PASTOR RUSSELL has pointed out, "as soon as the Marriage of the Lamb shall have taken place, as soon as the New Jerusalem, the Church in glory, shall have been established in the earth, the drawing of all the families of the earth will ensue."--Z'05-171.

I WILL DRAW ALL MEN UNTO ME

This is in harmony with Christ's own words: "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Me." (John 12:32.) Again: "They will not be drawn, however, to the same things to which we [the Church] have been drawn; they will not be drawn to the heavenly things, to the joint heirship with Christ in His Kingdom; they will not be invited to become members of His Bride, for that Bride class, that Kingdom class, will then be completely beyond the possibility of any further additions." Concerning the symbol, "the River of the Water of Life," the following is a clear elucidation:

"This River of the Water of Life represents the blessed influence that will proceed to humanity from the glorified Christ, Head and Body--from the Kingdom of God's dear Son. When the blessed opportunities of that time are thoroughly open to the world, when the Sun of Righteousness shall have scattered all the darkness of ignorance and sin, when Satan shall have been bound, when the River of the Water of Life shall flow freely., then the invitation that will go forth will no longer be a call of the Elect, but an invitation to every creature, every member of the human race, to partake of the blessings and privileges which God has provided in Christ, that they may have the everlasting life and everlasting joy which is to be the portion of those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, and who avail themselves of the gracious provision in Christ.... There will be a Bride then, but there is no, Bride now. The Church is espoused, but the Marriage of the Lamb is deferred, not yet accomplished. The last members of His Church must complete their course, must pass their examination -and enter into glory with Him before the Marriage be consummated."-Z '05-171.

Concerning the significance of the "Fruit" from the Trees, and the "Leaves" which are said to be for the healing of the nations, some commentators see a distinction; some claiming that the Fruit from the Trees is for the saints in glory and the Leaves for the earthly nations. One expositor who believed that the New Jerusalem state is after the thousand years has thus expatiated on this matter: "The first Eden had its glad and glorious trees, 'the tree of life also in the midst of the garden.' (Gen. 2:9.) It was not one individual tree, but a particular tree as to its kind, as we speak of 'the apple' or 'the oak' denoting a species, of which there are many specimens. It has the name of Tree of Life because man in innocence was to keep and preserve his life by eating of its fruits. It was the symbol and support of eternal life. . . . And it is one of the special joys and provisions of the New Jerusalem that it is supplied with this same tree in the same multitudinous sense, fulfilling something of the same offices. *'In the midst of the street of the city and on either side of the river,'* John saw, 'the Tree of Life [in numerous specimens] producing twelve fruits [or kinds of fruit] accord to each month; and the leaves of the tree unto the healing of the nations.'

"In Ezekiel's visions of the renewed earthly Jerusalem, a similar presentation is made. There a river issues from the sanctuary and runs down into the sea of which the angel said, 'By the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade . . . and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf for medicine.' (Ezek. 47:12.) But that relates to an order of things on earth, which comes into being during the thousand years. What John describes is the order of things in the Heavenly Jerusalem." This writer goes on to say further:

THE TREES ON EITHER SIDE OF THE RIVER

"These trees, like the river whose sides they line, are first of all for the joy and blessedness of the dwellers in the Holy City, to beautify their eternal home, and to minister to their happiness. . . . it is sometimes asked whether the glorified saints are to eat in heaven. We may safely answer that they can eat, although under no need to eat, just as we can enjoy a rose, and yet not suffer from its absence. . . . And so the implication here is that these will be eating in this Eternal City, the eating of fruits, the monthly products of the Tree of Life. The inhabitants there drink Life-Water and eat Life-Fruits.

"The eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life in the first Paradise was the sacrament of fellowship with life, a commemoration, pledge, support and participation of life eternal. . . . Hence sin cut off man from it; and all the ordinances and ministries of grace since that time are meant for his recovery and readmission to that Tree. Hence also the promise was given to the Church at Ephesus, 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God! (Rev. 2:7.) And so again, 'Blessed they who wash their robes, that they may have right to the Tree of Life! (Rev. 22:14.) Like the golden table of shewbread which ever stood in the ancient Tabernacle and Temple for the priests to eat, so the Tree of Life stands in the golden streetway of the New Jerusalem, with its monthly -fruit for the immortal King-Priests of heaven. And whether they need it for the support of their undecaying immortality or not, it is everywhere presented as one of the most precious privileges of God's glorified saints. We cannot suppose that they ever hunger or thirst in that high realm, or that there is ever any waste in their immortal energies, needing recuperation from physical digestion; but still the participation of these Life-fruits bespeaks a communion with Life, the joy of which exceeds all present comprehension.

"But these trees are for a still further purpose. The leaves of them are for the healing of the nations. As the fruits add to the joys of heaven, the leaves add to the joys of earth. 'Who gathers them and how they are applied, and what the healing is they are to work, is not told us' and it is in vain to attempt to be wise above what is written. But 'nations' Are then to be who eat not of its fruits, though benefited by the leaves in connection with which the fruits are produced. Two classes of people are thus distinctively recognized in the -new heaven and earth-* a class in glory who get the fruits of the Tree of Life, and a class in the estate of 'nations' who get the leaves; but whether fruits or leaves, a great and glorious blessing. As there will always be need for the ministrations of these celestial King-Priests to those dwelling on the earth, so will those ministrations also bring them the healing leaves from the Tree of Life. As the Life-waters are not wholly shut up in the City, but descend in a form to men on the earth, so the Life-Tree, in

a form, yields its benefits to them too. The meaning is not that the nations are full of sicknesses and ailments; for these remains of the curse are gone then, though it may be from the virtue of these leaves. The meaning rather is the preservation of health and comfort, and not the maladies then existing to be removed. The Life-leaves are for the conservation and augmentation of Life-blessedness of men on earth, as the Life-fruits are for the joy of the saints in heaven."--SEISS.

THE LEAVES AND FRUIT FROM THE TREES

We have quoted extensively of the above exposition, *not* as *endorsing* or approving all the applications made, by any means, but because this literal interpretation as to the Leaves and the eating of the Fruit, etc., probably represents the conception of the majority who in more or less of a superficial manner have read and studied these visions. It is very manifest that the exposition last quoted literalizes this entire vision altogether too much. The River, the Trees, Fruit and Leaves, etc., are all literal, literal eating, etc., and this manner of application we believe does violence to the whole vision which is intended to be a beautiful picture of the Millennial Age and its refreshing blessing for humanity. In fact, as we have repeatedly pointed out in these pages, the general failure all along has been in making a too literal application of these various pictures and in not recognizing that the language of the Revelator is highly figurative and symbolical. If, as we have seen, the Holy City, the New Jerusalem itself, is symbolical, so also must be the River of Water of Life, flowing from it; and the Trees on either Side of the River are not literal but symbolical Trees. The Fruit and Leaves of the Trees are also symbols of restitution blessings. The River of Water of Life, as has been pointed out, suggests that Divine Message of Truth which will be the means of -giving life to humanity as they accept it. The Trees on the bank of the River are suggestive, indeed of certain agencies or forces that will be in operation for the healing and nourishing of fallen humanity. Some have with good reason considered the Trees as another picture of the offices and ministry of the glorified saints. Thus said PASTOR RUSSELL: "All the Lord's people need to remember that in proportion as they are ambassadors of the Lord, and His representatives, it will be their privilege, not only by and by in the Kingdom to 'comfort all that mourn,' but to be Trees of Righteousness, whose Leaves will be for the healing of the nations.-Rev. 22:2." (Z '00-215.) In the Old Testament Scriptures, the saints, the righteous, are thus symbolically referred to as Trees of Righteousness.--Jer. 17:8; Psa. 1:3.

The saints as Trees of Righteousness will give forth that which will bless and heal earth's sin-sick. The "Leaves" may very properly represent those teachings, instructions, dealings, etc., that will be full of sympathy and encouragement for all those who show willingness and desire to come into harmony with God. Humanity, terribly fallen and helpless will be in sore need of just such assistance. The "Fruit" of the Trees, may truly picture forth the fruitage of the lives of the saints, composing the "Little Flock" or Kingdom class. Their patience, mercy, long-suffering, gentleness and, love,, "fruits of the spirit," will be such as to nourish, assist and build up "the nations," the world of mankind, preparing them for the enjoyment of the Ages. of bliss to follow the thousand years reign.

HUMANITY, NOT IMMORTAL BEINGS, NEEDS THE TREE OF LIFE

We would not dispute that there may be grown in the earth, literal Trees of Life, such as existed in the Garden of Eden to which our first parents had access. (Gen. 2:9.) The restitution of that which was lost would seem to imply this original condition of Life-giving Trees, and of course, the symbolical picture in Revelation is based upon the fact that there have been literal Trees of Life and doubtless will be such again in the future.

As to the reference that MR. SEISS makes to Rev. 2:7: the promise made to the *overcomers* that *they* will be given to eat of the "Trees of Life," etc.: This also is symbolical. The *overcomers*, made partakers of the Divine nature-immortality, dwelling in light that man cannot behold or approach unto, will have no need of literal food or the fruit from literal trees, their realm and state of life being so much higher, they will have no need to partake of earthly food for they will possess life in themselves-immortality. The promise to the saints to be given to eat of the Tree of Life is symbolic of that vastly higher and more glorious life of which they will be made partakers in the First Resurrection as the reward of present faithfulness.

In view of the foregoing it is clearly seen that MR. SEISS, with many other expositors, makes the mistake of mixing the literal with the symbolical; and the fact that he places the New-Jerusalem Government after instead of during the thousand years becomes the occasion of his failure to see the significance of the expression, "And the Leaves of the Trees are for the healing of the nations" as referring to the healing for the sin-sick, starving world which then may partake freely of all the blessings thus symbolized. This is the very object of providing the River of Life, the Tree of Life, their Fruits and their Leaves. A concluding word from PASTOR RUSSELL is Of advantage here:

"But after the Marriage there Will be not only the Holy City, representing the Church in her official or governing capacity under Christ her Head, but there will be also the blessed work of the Church, the calling of the world's attention to the River of the Water of Life, to the Leaves of healing, to the Fruits of the Spirit; and the spirit, the power of God, will co-operate with the Message that will then be promulgated, and the result undoubtedly will be that all the world shall hear, and that all who love righteousness and hate iniquity will return again to life-eternal. It will require all the Millennial Age for the delivery of this Message to every creature and for them to avail themselves of the privileges."--Z '05-171, 172.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY LIX--APRIL 17

THE DRAGON AND THE PERSECUTED WOMAN-Rev. 12:13-17

(391) What may we reasonably suppose was the attitude of the true saints towards the victory of nominal Christianity in the days of Constantine's conversion and reign, in fulfillment of chap. 12:9-12? H '19-352, 353.

(392) How do -we harmonize the fact of the true Church's purity, indicated in verse 1, with the fact that she brought forth the Man child and then fled to the wilderness, continuing to represent the true Church? H '19-354.

(393) Explain how verses 13 and 14 were fulfilled: The persecution of the Woman by the Dragon and the flight into the wilderness. What is the significance of her being nourished for a "time, times and a half"? H '19-354.

(394) What is signified by the Serpent casting out Water as a Flood after the Woman; and the earth swallowing up the Flood, etc.? How was all this fulfilled? H '19-355.

(395) Explain the meaning of verse 17: the Dragon's continued wrath toward the Woman; his making war with the remainder of her seed. H '19-355.

STUDY LX--APRIL 24

THE WILD BEAST RISING OUT OF THE SEA--Rev. 13:1

(396) What is the revised rendering of chapter 13, first sentence of verse 1 ? and what is the significance of the symbol used in this verse of the wild Beast having ten Horns and seven Heads ascending from the Sea? What does the Sea here symbolize? H '20-6.

(397) What general conclusions may we reasonably come to with regard to the Dragon of chap. 12, the wild Beast of chap. 13, and the scarlet colored Beast of chap. 17? and what relationship do these bear to the fourth Beast of Dan. 7? H '20-6.

(398) About what point in history do we locate the fulfillment of this vision, and what interesting and reasonable suggestions do we have by SIR ISAAC NEWTON and MR. ELLIOTT as to what constituted the ten Heads (kingdoms) and as to their probable location in the Roman Empire at that time? H '20-6, 7.

(399) What explanation did PASTOR RUSSELL make elucidating this vision and that recorded in Dan. 7:8, 11, 25, and as showing the relationship of the two pictures, and describing the development of the Papacy and its mouth speaking great swelling things? H '20-7.

(400) How does St. Paul's description of the anti-Christ or Man of Sin (2 Thess. 2:3, 4) harmonize with the visions of Daniel and the Revelator and what date would seem to mark positively the era of anti-Christ's' establishment in power? Why is the number ten preserved all through this vision as designating the powers over which the Man of Sin prevailed? H '20-7, 8.

STUDY LXI--MAY 1

THE PAPAL BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS -- Rev. 13:2-4

(401) What is the general agreement amongst expositors as to the significance of the seven Heads of the wild Beast? What is the relationship between the seven Heads and the ten Horns? H '20-8.

(402) Upon which of the Heads of the Beast would we logically look for the ten Horns or kingdoms, and what bearing does chap. 17:9-11 have upon this matter? H '20-8.

(403) What are we to understand by the description of the Beast given in verse 2, and how does this description fit the Roman Beast at the time of the vision's fulfillment? H '20-8,9.

(404) What is the meaning of the statement, "And the whole earth wondered after the Beast"? 'Show how this was fulfilled. H '20-9.

(405) How are we to understand that the Dragon gave his authority to the Beast? In what sense was the Beast worshiped, and when do the words, "Who is like unto the Beast, who is able to make war with him" apply? H '20-9, 10.

BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT WORK

--APRIL 17--MARK 6:1-3; JOHN 5:17; 2 THESS. 3:6-13--

Golden Text.--"In diligence not slothful; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." -- Rom. 12:11.

WORK, the subject dealt with in this lesson, properly embraces the thought of activity, exercise, either manual or intellectual. Everywhere about us are lessons teaching that it is God's design that all intelligent creatures in their normal state shall engage more or less in some kind of exercise-shall be active, at work, not only so, but that the work performed shall result in good or advantage either to themselves or others. We have the great example of our Heavenly Father in this matter. The little of creation that we have the capacity to behold speaks volumes as to the vastness and the magnitude of God's work and as to how the Divine mind has ever been active during all the eternity past, and has been operating along lines that will ultimately be seen to be most fruitful in blessing for His obedient creatures.

GOD'S WORK

Astronomical photography now reveals nearly 125,000,000 suns, around which circle systems such as the one which circles around our sun, and of which our earth is a part. We deem it not unreasonable to assume, from the Scriptures, that the great work of ordering all those hundreds of millions of planets stretches forward into eternity, and that the work of Divine grace, begun on the planet "Earth," will be continued throughout the Universe, -not only in conjunction with the planetary systems we can discern, but probably with millions of planetary systems too far removed from us to be discerned.

Doubtless Divine methods in connection with other worlds and other inhabitants will display the manifold wisdom of God. For instance, we understand the Bible to indicate that while the permission of evil in the earth was wise, it will not necessarily be wise or expedient for any reason to permit a similar reign of sin and death in any other of the millions of worlds, in connection with their ordering or development and their peopling with glorious creatures who will show forth the praises of the great Creator without their passing through experiences with sin and death such as have been permitted in connection with the humanity of earth.

From the standpoint of the completion of Jehovah's great purposes and dealings with man and in respect to Him, will stand revealed the Foreknowledge and

Wisdom of God, who knew the end from the beginning and who foresaw how even the permission of a reign of sin and death could be made eventually to work out to His own glory and to the blessing and instruction of His creatures on both the human and the angelic planes. Then will be revealed to all, the glorious character of their Creator, and the necessity for His requirement of absolute righteousness and perfection.

Surely, the result eventually will be as the Scriptures declare, that all shall learn righteousness, and hate iniquity; and that every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth, shall acclaim both Jehovah, who sitteth upon the Throne of the Universe, and the Lamb, the Redeemer, forever.-Rev. 5:13, 14.

Were we to allow ourselves to speculate respecting the future--respecting the Divine purposes in relation to the millions of worlds around us, our speculations would run thus: Those instructed and used of Jehovah in conjunction with the initial development of the Divine Plan in the earth will thereby be fitted and prepared to be the Divine agents to other worlds. The Great Redeemer and His "elect" associates, after dealing with humanity for their uplift out of sin and death conditions, will surely be qualified for further service in other worlds, to "show forth praises of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."

And what shall we say of humanity when perfected at the end of Messiah's glorious reign? Will not all be well prepared, not only to approve righteousness in themselves, but to tell, in other worlds, to other races, the story of the fall and of the reign of sin and death resulting; and of the redemption accomplished by God's love; of the great restitution; and of the lessons learned?

We are not to suppose that God works, in the sense that He labors and toils such as to produce weariness and fatigue. The infinitude of the Great Jehovah places-Him above and beyond everything of that kind. Nor are we to suppose that it is God's will that any of His creation either human or angelic in their normal condition will be expected to work to the extent of weariness and pain for His Word teaches that everything in the way of labor, toil, pain, etc., belongs to the state of the curse .(Gen. 3:17-19.) which will be removed when the Divine Plan concerning man is consummated. But until that time arrives, and while the human race are still in the condemned state, the subduing of the earth has, under Divine fore-arrangement, been accomplished by *convict labor*; for are not all mankind convicts serving out a death *sentence*? And is not our Creator permitting man for his own good, to battle strenuously with the unfavorable conditions prevailing in the earth? And does not this battling serve to quicken man in his mental qualities, even though this quickening be chiefly along selfish lines?

"Cursed is the earth for thy sake;" it is thus unfit for you, in your own interest, because I foreknew your transgression and what conditions would be most favorable for you, that your death sentence might bring you the largest degree of knowledge and the largest degree of experience in the most helpful manner.

JESUS ALSO LABORED

In the life of our Lord Jesus we have a marvelous revelation of fruitful work and activity. Though the record is comparatively silent as to the details of how Jesus was employed prior to the time when He began His ministry, sufficient is said that we may be sure He was no idler but was engaged in profitable labor, and the

account clearly indicates that our Lord chose the carpenter trade with His foster father, Joseph. Commenting upon this point CANON FARRAR has well said:

"But if of the first twelve years of His human life we have only this single anecdote, of the next eighteen years of His life we possess no record whatever, save such as is implied in a single word.

"That word occurs in Mark 6:3: 'Is not this *the carpenter?*'

"We may be indeed thankful that the word remains, for it is full of meaning, and has exercised a very noble and blessed influence over the fortunes of mankind. It has tended to console and sanctify the estate of poverty; to ennoble the duty of labor; to elevate the entire conception of manhood, as of a condition which in itself alone, and apart from every adventitious circumstance, has its own grandeur and dignity in the sight of God.

"It shows, for instance, that not only during the three years of His ministry, but throughout the whole of His life, our Lord was poor. In the *cities* the carpenters would be Greeks, and skilled workmen; the carpenter of a provincial village-and, if tradition be true, Joseph was 'not very skilful'--can only have held a very humble position, and secured a very moderate competence. In all ages there has been an exaggerated desire for wealth; an exaggerated admiration for those who possess it; an exaggerated belief of its influence in producing or increasing the happiness of life; and from these errors a flood of cares and jealousies and meannesses have devastated the life of man. And therefore Jesus chose voluntarily 'the low estate of the poor'--not, indeed, an absorbing, degrading, grinding poverty, which is always rare, and almost always remediable but that commonest lot of honest poverty, which, though it necessitates self-denial, can provide with ease for all the necessities of a simple life. The Idumaeon dynasty that had usurped the throne of David might indulge in the gilded vices of a corrupt Hellenism, and display the gorgeous gluttonies of a decaying civilization; but He who came to be the friend and the Savior, no less than the King of All, sanctioned the purer, better, simpler traditions and customs of His nation, and chose the condition in which the vast majority of mankind have ever, and must ever live.

"Again, there has ever been, in the unenlightened mind, a love of idleness; a tendency to regard it as a stamp of aristocracy; a desire to delegate labor to the lower and weaker, and to brand it with the stigma of inferiority and contempt. But our Lord wished to show that labor is a pure and a noble thing; it is the salt of life; it is the girdle of manliness; it saves the body from effeminate languor, and the soul from polluting thoughts. And therefore Christ labored, working with His own hands, and fashioned plows and yokes for those who needed them. The very scoff of Celsus against the possibility that *He* should have been a carpenter who came to save the world, shows how vastly the world has gained from this very circumstance--how gracious and how fitting was the example of such humility in One whose work it was to regenerate society, and to make all things new."

No sincere disciple of Christ can fail to recognize from His example and teachings, as well as that of the Apostles, that inspiration that impels and spurs on to zeal, diligence and industry, in the work and service of God, as revealed by His spirit. All those taught of God are instructed to consider that no matter in what circumstances Divine providence may put them, no matter what occupations they

may be engaged in, they are to work and labor as unto the Lord for they serve, the Lord Christ.--Col. 3:22, 24.

LABORED WITH HIS OWN HANDS

The Apostle Paul whose faithful example of work and labor for the Lord and the brethren has wrought untold blessings to many weary and discouraged hearts, instructs the faithful to labor with their hands that they may have to give to those who have need, and this implies fore thought and provision in the way of laying up of money earned. The Apostle implies that the Christian who is fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, will not be slothful in any business (Rom. 12:11), and declares that "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."--1 Tim. 5:8.

Interpreting our Lord's words (Matt. 6:25-34) in harmony with the foregoing, their sense would be that the Christian is not to take anxious care respecting the future in matters beyond his control. He is, however, to take thought for every matter that is subject to his control. He is to seek to order his life so that it shall be useful to himself and to others. He is to remember the Scriptural injunction, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise," and is to follow the ant's custom of laying up provision in advance of necessity. This lesson is taught by all of our Lord's providences; for instance, the plowing and the sowing are to be done bountifully and in faith, not doubtfully and fearfully. So also the cultivation is to be done with patience, waiting for the harvest: and when the harvest comes the lesson of nature is that the reaper shall not merely reap what he wishes to eat, and let the next day look out for itself, but that he shall gather into barns, making provision for the winter and for the next seedtime. Our Lord's remark that the fowls of the air do not gather grain into barns, and yet are fed, nor do lilies spin, yet are clothed, was not intended to teach that His followers should adopt the method of the fowls respecting their food, nor expect to be clothed as the lilies. It was intended to teach confidence in God as our care-taker, and thus permit His faithful children to plow and sow in faith, to labor in faith, and to reap with faith, to lay up in store with faith, and to use with faith; recognizing every good gift as of the Lord (through the sun and rain, by plowing and reaping), the same who provides for the birds, though in a different manner. The Christian is ever to remember that man shall not live by bread alone: that he is not wholly dependent upon his own energies; that his affairs are in the Lord's hands for supervision, .and that the promise is, "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Putting this confidence in God's supervision of his affairs, while Making a true Christian restful in mind, will not make him slovenly' careless or idle in doing with his might what his hands find to do, as unto the Lord.

Reverting again to St. Paul's example in the matter of work and labor: rather than mention money the Apostle preached to the Corinthian brethren for more than a year without a suggestion as to remuneration; laboring with his own hands at his trade of tent making, rather than be chargeable to any. He reminds them of this later on in this same epistle.--2 Cor. 11 :7-9.

Let us note also the change which the full appreciation of the Gospel wrought upon the believers at Corinth. At first they were so negligent of their privilege that

seemingly they never thought of volunteering financial assistance to the Apostle while he was, serving them by the, labor of his own hands, and receiving some assistance from believers in other places. But, after the grace of God -entered more fully into their hearts and they began to appreciate the value of the Truth which they had received, that it had brought them priceless blessings of hope and joy and faith and character--they had a zeal, a "forwardness" to do something financially in the Lord's service. And now that the Apostle was absent from them, and after his course had proved to them that he sought not their money but themselves, to do them good; he felt free to draw their attention to the great blessing that would come from liberality in the Lord's cause in proportion to their ability and love.

SEED SOWN IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

Urging this matter he gave them a parable, saying, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And this reminds us of the proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is proper, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. 11:24,25.) The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see His people cultivate breadth of heart as well as breadth of mind;generosity in proportion to their knowledge of Him and His generosity.

The Scriptures nowhere declare that cases of absolute privation amongst the Lord's people are proofs that at some time in their past lives 'When possessed of means they failed to use a portion of it in charity, in the Lord's service; but the inspired words above quoted come very close to giving this lesson. At all events, it is profitable that we lay this testimony to heart and that each child of God shall be earnestly careful that out of the' blessings of the Lord coming to us all from day to day some measure be carefully, prayerfully and lovingly laid aside as seed to be sown in the Lord's service according to the best wisdom and judgment which He will give us. How many have that carefulness for themselves either in using every penny as fast as it comes, or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans, that they feel they can spare nothing for charity. How many such can afterward see that they made a great mistake, when their accumulations suddenly vanished, either by reason of sickness or accident or bank failure or what not; and how then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle.

The Apostle's faith and trust in the Lord have been a source of comfort to all in the Narrow Way from that time to the present, and yet he did not, like some of these, go to the Lord with requests for temporal good things, money, houses, lands, food, raiment, etc. We have his own word for it that he sometimes lacked, and that in such cases he labored, working with his hands at the ordinary trade of sail and tent making. Some far less holy than he, and far less in touch with the Lord, would not only have disdained so humble an occupation, but, spurning employment would have sought to do what they term "living by faith," that is, living without work, a matter which this same Apostle reproves very decidedly, saying, "if a man will not work neither should he eat." "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:10.) Many

who thus mistakenly think it the Divine will that they should live by faith, while others live by work and support them, are often bold to pray for money, food, clothing, etc., which they will not work for. We do not wish to intimate that all such are wicked; it is our belief that some of the Lord's people are in this wrong attitude of mind because of false teachings and misunderstanding of the Divine dealings and of the character of their calling. We are not disputing, either, that the Lord sometimes hears and answers prayers from such, even when those prayers are not in the fullest accord with the Divine will. We believe that the proper course for the New Creatures--the one most pleasing to the Lord--is that which follows most directly and particularly the instructions and practices of our Lord and the Apostles.

POVERTY AND WEALTH

APRIL 24--Amos 8:4-7--

Golden Text.--*"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."*-- Luke 12:34.

THROUGH Amos, the Lord foretold a speedy coming doomsday, a time of trouble and' retribution, upon Judah, Israel and the adjoining nations. These adjoining nations, Moab, Syria, Philistia, etc., had been subjugated to Israel, and incorporated in the Kingdom of Israel, under David and Solomon, but subsequently had separated themselves, and latterly had been recaptured and temporarily were again under the dominion of Israel. Probably it was because of their close identity with Israel, territorially and through intercourse, that they are made the subjects of this prophecy. (See chapters 1-4.) The principal burden of the prophecy, however, is against Israel, the ten tribes, and Judah, the two tribes, the Lord's covenanted people, the seed of Abraham.

The home of Amos was in Judah, where he Was a herdsman, but under the Lord's direction he went into the territory occupied by the ten tribes, to deliver. to them the **Lord's** message. **Amongst other things, the Lord pointed** out that the families of Israel (the twelve tribes) constituted His peculiar people, that He had brought out of Egypt, and of whom He had been specially careful to order their ways most favorably. He even declares of them, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities. Can two walk together except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:1-3.) The Lord had made Himself known to no other, nation, had recognized no other nation, had made a covenant with no other nation, had given His laws to no other nation; and hence this nation, Israel (in its two parts), had a special responsibility. Nevertheless, instead of God's favor making them loyal of heart to Him, they had continually resisted His favor, and were not even. faithful as eye-servants. The reason of this was that they were ,of a different spirit: they would not walk in harmony with the Lord while their hearts were really in harmony with sin and wickedness.

The Lord, in foretelling the troubles He would bring upon Israel, because of misused privileges 'and opportunities, and rebelliousness of heart, wished them to discern distinctly that these judgments of the then near future, like their previous judgments, were not matters of accident, not matters of chance, but of Divine

providence. Consequently, the message of Amos is likened to a trumpet of alarm, announcing the dire catastrophes that shortly would come. And the announcement is thus made in advance, not with a view to the bringing of repentance, but with a view to the proper appreciation of the judgments when they would come-that the people might know that the things coming were judgments and not accidents. Accordingly, it is written:

"Shall a trumpet be blown in a city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil [calamities, disasters] in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Surely, the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." (Amos 3:6, 7.) The Lord reveals His intentions thus that His people may know and profit by the chastisements, and experiences, and recognize them as of the Lord's hand.

WAR AS A FACTOR IN HUMAN PROGRESS

We are not prepared to say that all the, calamities, famines, pestilences, etc., which from time to time afflict mankind, are of Divine providence-judgments sent of the Lord. On the contrary, we believe that generally so far as the world of mankind in general is concerned, they merely take their chances as respects famine, storms, pestilence, etc.; yet there are marked instances in which the Lord has evidently interposed to bring calamities upon certain nations of the world, as chastisements, as judgments for their correction in righteousness: for instance, the United States Civil War which resulted in the freeing of millions of slaves and the general awakening of fifty millions of people. Unquestionably God has made use of wars and human selfishness to awaken various nations at various times, and to let in the light of civilization. This does, not prove that war is right, any more than it proves that pestilence and famine are desirable; but these things show us how God is able and willing to use even the wrath of man, and the selfishness of man, in the present time, and to overrule the effects indirectly for good, in harmony with His Plan.

But there are many calamities and troubles not only national but individual, in which we have no reason to believe there is any Divine providence whatever. There are epidemics of disease which very evidently are caused merely by lack of cleanliness, neglect of sanitary rules; and many calamities, such as earthquakes, cyclones, floods, etc., which give every evidence of being purely accidental, that is to say, without Divine or human intervention or responsibility. We do not consider these beyond Divine control, nor beyond Divine foreknowledge: we do consider that in general they are the natural operations of the Divine laws and regulations, which, as respects the earth at the present time, are not under special regulation for man's comfort and welfare: man's comfort and welfare being ignored, for the time being, because of sin and the curse -or penalty of sin which rests upon man and upon the earth, his home. For, although the ransom price has been provided for now eighteen hundred years and more, the results of the ransom, in the complete lifting of the "curse," have not yet been brought in, but are waiting for the Lord's due time -- The Millennial Age.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE OVER ISRAEL

With fleshly Israel, the natural seed of Abraham, the Lord's dealing was different: His covenant with them was to the effect that nothing should happen to them by

chance-in no sense or degree were they to be subject to the mutations of life, the accidents of nature, etc. This was God's special covenant with this one particular nation -it was a part of the Law Covenant as recorded in Lev. 26 Under that covenant, the seed of Abraham was to be God's peculiar people, devoted to His service, and He was to be peculiarly their God, careful of their interests. So long as that nation would be faithful to the Lord, no calamity could befall them personally or nationally; they would be spared from wars and disasters, spared from famines and pestilences; they would prosper in proportion as-they would be faithful to their covenant. But if unfaithful to their covenant, then they would not only be liable to the same accidents of nature with the remainder of the world under the "curse," but might know that God would assuredly bring upon them, as special judgments or chastisements, calamities of every kind, physical and mental, individual and national. This is distinctly stated to be the Lord's rule of dealing with them; and it was to this covenant that they gave their assent at Sinai. Consequently, their failure to keep their covenant made it to them a curse, a greater burden and disadvantage than rested upon the other nations of the world, with whom God had made no covenant, and to whom He had extended no promises, but who were "without God, and having no hope in the world."

With this thought in mind it will be seen to have stronger force, that the Lord calls His people's attention to the fact that whatever calamities, disasters, troubles (evils, pestilences, etc.), they suffered were and would continue to be a sure proof to them that God was again chastening them for violation of their covenant with Him. It is in harmony with this that He says to them:

"I have given you cleanness of teeth in your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholden the rain from you . . . and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereon it rained not withered. . . . Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your garden and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer worm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent amongst you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword [in war], and have taken away your horses ... yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord . . . Thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, Seek the Lord and ye shall live, lest He break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel [the city of idol worship]."

HIS DEALINGS DIFFERENT WITH SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Having noted the character of the Lord's dealings with Israel under their covenant, that all calamities were of His providence and for chastisements; and having noticed that in the case of the nations in general, the Gentiles, the world, the calamities which come are not generally chastisements or judgments, but only occasionally so, we turn with interest to the new nation, the holy nation, the peculiar people, spiritual Israel, the Royal Priesthood, now being gathered out of all the nations, peoples, languages and tongues,--and we inquire, How is it with these? Are all the calamities of life that may befall these of the spiritual house, to be reckoned as accidents, or are they all to be reckoned as judgments of the Lord because of sin?

We answer, Neither. As this is a "peculiar people," and being selected by the Lord for a peculiar purpose, it need not surprise us to find that He has a peculiar manner of dealing with them. He permits them in a general way to be subject to all the conditions that are upon the world, but guarantees to them that all of these calamities and difficulties which will befall them, as a part of the world, shall be overruled of Divine providence so as to bring them some blessing, instead of injury. Hence, as the Apostle says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God -- to the *called ones* according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) These have the satisfaction of knowing that any of the casualties of life which may befall them as a part of the human family, or even those which shall befall them as the ones against whom Satan and his blinded followers have a peculiar grudge and hatred, shall either be overruled and made, to work a blessing, or else be warded off. For we are assured that, -He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able to bear, but will with the temptation (too hard to be borne) provide a way of escape.

Thus we see that Divine providence deals differently with spiritual Israel than with natural. Israel, and still differently with the world. What a consolation to know that God is for us, not only to the extent of providing a Savior and redemption through His blood, but also to the extent of providing through that Savior "a present help in every time of trouble," and an ultimate salvation in the Kingdom to those who are faithful, loyal to Him, obedient to His Word.

The lesson, and its connection, points out that certain ones in Israel were in a very ease-loving and self satisfied condition, that many of them abounded in wealth, and drank the wine, of earthly pleasure and extravagance inordinately, in bowlsfull. They neither were solicitous for the Lord's praise and worship, on their own part, nor on the part of others: nor were they solicitous for the poor -- they were intemperately selfish, and hence the judgments were coming upon them, the evil days of their captivity and overthrow as a nation. That their sin of intemperance did not consist solely of literal drunkenness, nor perhaps specially of this, but rather that it consisted of a drunkenness of greed, by which many of the influential amongst them were disposed to swallow up the poor and the needy, is evident from the words of the Lord's reproof :

"Forasmuch, therefore, as your treading is upon the poor, and ye take from him burdens of wheat; ye have builded your houses of hewn stone, but ye shall not dwell in them; ye have planted pleasant vineyards, but ye shall not drink wine of them. For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins. They afflict the just, they take a bribe, they turn aside the poor in the gate from their rights, and make it prudent for those who see the wrong to keep silence.

"Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn, and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah [measure] small, and the shekel [price] great, and falsify the balancer by deceit? That we might buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell [them] the refuse of the wheat?

"The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. Shall not the land tremble for this, and everyone mourn that dwelleth therein?"--Amos 5:11-13; 8:4-8.

While this prophecy evidently applied specifically to natural Israel, and its captivity, nevertheless, some of the statements respecting that evil day that came upon Israel remind us of similar statements applied by the Prophets and Apostles and by our Lord to antitypical Israel--Christendom;--and hence, while noting the Lord's dealing with the natural Israelites, and their day of doom or punishment, it properly brings to our thoughts the judgments pronounced upon Christendom, "Babylon the Great," which are to come in the end of this Age. And as we compare the conditions, now and then, the thought that the words of Amos have to some extent a double application is strengthened.

PRESENT-DAY FULFILLMENT IN NOMINAL, SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

We find to-day a similar condition of things to that which the Prophet describes. Many are at ease in nominal Zion: many are boasting of their prosperity, and symbolically are resting upon beds of ivory, taking their ease, and trusting that the Church is being carried forward to the conquest of the world along a new pathway which the Master and the Apostles knew not of, a pathway of roses without thorns, a pathway that is not narrow nor difficult, nor steep, but that is broad, pleasurable, easy. The wealthy are very generally members of nominal Zion, or at least liberal supporters of her arrangements, services, etc., and she in turn is appreciative, and boasts of her wealth, just as she is pictured prophetically by the Lord, in His description of the Laodicean period of the Church. Nominal Zion to-day is saying, "I am rich and-increased in goods, and have need of nothing," and knows not that she is poor and miserable and blind and naked; and hence she neglects to purchase the true, gold and the only wedding garment. The announcement to-day to nominal spiritual Zion, of calamities coming upon her in the "day of vengeance" just at hand, is as unacceptable and disbelieved as was the message of Amos to those, who were prospering and at ease in nominal fleshly Zion, as recorded in our lesson. How unacceptable to the priests of Israel was, the message of Amos, is indicated by the record, which says:

"Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam, King of Israel, 'Saying, Amos hath conspired against thee, in the midst of the house of -Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words [he is disturbing the peace of those who are at ease in Zion]. . . . Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread and prophecy there; but prophecy not any more at Bethel for it is the king's sanctuary, and the king's court.'"--Amos 7:10-13.

But as Amos was faithful in declaring the message of the Lord, and was not deterred into silence from prudential reasons, so those who to-day are spoken to by the Lord through His Word and are instructed respecting the things that are shortly to come to pass upon nominal spiritual Israel, are not to hold their peace from prudential reasons for the fear of man bringeth a snare. *They are to speak the Truth in love, and to seek to pull as many as possible out of the fire of tribulation, and to bring as many as possible into the Little Flock of faithful ones, whom the Lord exhorted, saying, "Watch ye, therefore, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things coming upon the world, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

In this prophecy of Amos, the Lord points out that the wrath He, was about to permit to come upon Israel as chastisements, would, nevertheless, work out for

them a blessing, and that in His due time He would bring them back again into harmony with Himself, and that under more favorable conditions than in the past. We are not only to believe the calamitous portion of this prophecy, which we already see has been executed upon Israel in fullest measure, but we are also to believe the features of it which are favorable to Israel-the future blessings. For instance, we see how literally has been fulfilled the prediction:

"Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth [as a nation, a kingdom] ; save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord [the people of the nation were to be preserved as a separate people from others]; for lo, I will give the command, and I will shake about amongst all nations the house of Israel, as one shaketh things in a sieve, while not the least piece falleth down upon the earth."--Amos 9:8, 9.

The Lord thus shows His continued supervision of Israel, according to the covenant made with them. And how accurately this, has been fulfilled: the Israelites as a people have been scattered throughout the whole earth, yet they have not lost their identity; as a nation they were utterly destroyed, yet unlike every other nation, they have, preserved their national identity, and have not mixed and blended with the world in general.

And if this feature of the prophecy has been accurately fulfilled to-day before our eyes, we certainly have every reason to believe that the remainder of the prophecy will be just as accurately fulfilled-that portion which applies to the restitution times, after the true spiritual Israel has been selected, when natural Israel shall be brought back into covenant relationship with God, and become the earthly agent of the spiritual Kingdom for blessing, instructing and restoring the families of the earth, under the terms of the New Covenant. This is clearly set forth in the closing words of the prophecy:

"In that day will I raise up the standard of David which is fallen, and close tip the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this. . . . And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them, and I will plant them in their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land, which I have given them, saith the Lord God,"

We recall the quotation of this prophecy in the New Testament, by the Apostle James, and find it in full accord also with the words of the Apostle Paul, to the effect that after spiritual Israel has been developed as the true seed of Abraham, through Christ, then Divine favor shall return to natural Israel, and she shall obtain mercy, according to the terms of the Divine covenant, at the hands of spiritual Israel then glorified.--See Rom. 11 :1-25, 32; Acts 15:16, 17.

BIBLE TEACHINGS ABOUT EDUCATION

--MAY 1--DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9--

Golden Text.--*"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom."*--Prov. 4:7.

WE MAY safely assume that the Bible, above all books, is a source of true education -- knowledge. The committee who arranged the above title to this lesson may have had in mind what from the worldly viewpoint is termed education -- knowledge along natural lines. However, the Christian--the New Creature in Christ Jesus, learns that the highest and most valuable knowledge and education is that which relates to God and His holy will and purposes. In fact, the wise man well said, the reverence of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

As the basis of this lesson, knowledge and wisdom, we are referred to a portion of Moses' final message of instruction and exhortation to Israel at the conclusion of the 40 years' sojourn in the wilderness, enroute to Canaan; and who indeed may dispute the wisdom of this instruction! As the opening statement of the most important of all truths, the great Prophet, Moses, cried to the people, "Hearken, O Israel!

"JEHOVAH OUR GOD IS ONE--JEHOVAH"

If this statement was true at the time of its utterance, it is still true; if its importance put it at the very top of the list of injunctions, it should still be regarded as the most important amongst the doctrines or teachings of the Lord's Word. Yet what do we see? We see as respects fleshly Israel that they soon forgot the words of Moses, and time and again they were punished on the score of idolatry--for recognizing other gods, for forgetting the declaration that there is but the one and His name Jehovah. Quite similarly we find amongst Christian people a tendency to forget this great integral truth that there is but one God and His name Jehovah. - Our Roman Catholic friends make many gods: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, Saint Mary, all the Apostles and saints, are gods of higher or lower dignity, with various degrees of reverence, and objects of adoration and prayer. And even Protestants, while rejecting many of the lesser gods of Romanism, yet, contrary to this Scripture and every other Scripture and without any reason, persistently declare that we have three Gods in one; nevertheless they reject this statement also and reverse it, saying, that there is one God in three persons! If we attempt to question them and to ask a reason for their hopes and beliefs on this subject, they are silent, except to say that it is a great mystery, which neither they nor any one else can understand--how there could be three Gods in one person or one God in three persons. No reasonable mind could grasp this; it would be a mystery indeed.

The Bible teaching of the relationship between the Father and the Son honors both, does violence to neither Scripture nor reason, but leaves the teachable in a happy frame of mind, the more ready to be' taught of the Lord on all subjects.

How beautiful the thought that Jehovah God presented to His first-begotten Son--our Lord Jesus, in His pre human condition--the proposition that He should be the Redeemer of the world, and that this should be accomplished by the humbling of Himself to man's nature; and then the further humbling of Himself even to death, even the death of the cross; and that as a result of this humiliation and this evidence of loyalty to the Father, He should be raised from the dead to a plane of nature above and beyond His original glorious estate, made partaker of the Divine nature, and share in all the glories of that nature. How, grand the

thought that the dear Redeemer did thus manifest His love and loyalty, and that He is now exalted and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high, awaiting the time when in the Father's name He shall take possession of the dominion of the world to rule, to bless with light and knowledge, and to uplift the willing and obedient from the mire of sin and death to all-that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. Truly A who really hearken to the Word of the Lord are made both wiser and happier thereby.

Viewed from this standpoint the recognition of Jesus, our dear Redeemer, the Sent of God, the Savior of the world, is not in derogation of the command of our text "Jehovah, our God, is one"; for the Apostle assures us that, according to Divine authority, all should reverence the Son even as they reverence the Father-not reverence Him as the Father, but reverence Him as the Son whom the Father has appointed heir of all things, and who, as the Father's associate, is to bless all, the families of the earth, and who a thousand years later will deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that He may be all in all.

THE CHIEF OR PRIMARY COMMANDMENT

After calling attention to the one true God, Jehovah, we are exhorted, "Thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might." This is the summary of the first great commandment, as approved by our Lord Himself. (Matt. 22:37.) It is not in conflict with this that we love our Lord Jesus also, for the Apostle declares, "Every one that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him." (1 John 5:1.) He who loveth the Father must love the Son also, who is the Father's express image and who has manifested to us in His own flesh the glorious character of the Father. As the Son loved the Father, prayed to the Father, and felt that He must be about the Father's business, and finally died in the accomplishment of the Father's will-the work unto which the Father had sent Him-so with us, imbued with the spirit of our dear Redeemer, our Head. We as His members must have such a reverence for the Father and for His will as is here specified. The nation of Israel could not, love the Lord with all its heart, with its soul, with its might; this exhortation must be understood to be of an individual kind. Similarly the Church,, spiritual Israel, is not called upon to love the Lord with heart, soul, being, strength, but the individuals who are the Lord's and who are seeking to please Him, to serve Him, to lay down their lives in obedience to His will and in the forwarding of the Divine purposes, are called upon so to do.

"And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart." It 'is not sufficient, as the Lord subsequently pointed- out, that we should make a profession to be His people, for the "Lord looketh upon the heart." The complaint of the Lord through the Prophet against spiritual Israel of today is the' same as against Israel of old -"This people draw nigh unto me. with their lips, while their hearts are far from me"--not all, but apparently the great majority. (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8.) The lesson to us as spiritual Israelites is contained in the Apostle's words that this command of chief love shall be in our hearts. If so, this love for God will permeate everything; we will love Him and His service better than we would love sin and its pleasures, better than we would love friends, kindred, houses or lands or any other thing; and whoever has this first. great

commandment in his heart and is living in harmony with it, will be sure also to have the second commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

THE FRUITS OF SUCH A LOVE

That the Lord and Moses, His mouthpiece, did not seek to inculcate the mere nominal professions of love for God is clearly attested by the next verse, which declares respecting these Divine commands, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." One whose mind and heart would be so filled with love for God and the glorious attributes of His character would indeed be a saint. What time would he have for sin or frivolity? What a model home his would be! How well instructed his children would be in the dealings of Divine providence and all the gracious promises of the Divine Word! What moderation of word and of act would result from this intimate fellowship with God, and yet how the light would shine out from such a life!

The highest attainments under this exhortation were not reached under the Jewish Dispensation, as the Apostle most clearly sets forth. The Jew did recognize a grandeur in the Mosaic Law, but it was so far above him and all his abilities that he gradually drifted into mere outward and formalistic observance of its propositions. But the Apostle explains that the highest attainments under this Law may be made by spiritual Israelites during this Gospel Age. He declares, "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8:4.

In other words, although we are not more able to accurately keep that grand law than were the Jews, we who are in Christ, having His righteousness imputed as a covering for our blemishes and being made partakers of His Holy Spirit, are able to approximate in spirit this grand position.

All the saintly, we believe, are more and more watching and praying for the fulfillment in themselves of the Lord's will as here expressed. They are seeking to teach the Divine statutes, laws of righteousness, etc., to their children by word and by example. They talk of them continually in their leisure moments, in the house, on the train, on the street--and thoughts of the Lord and His wonderful Plan of salvation come first into their minds on awaking in the morning and are last in their thoughts as they retire to rest at night.

Nor would we discourage those who have not yet attained to anything like this, the proper standard for the Lord's people. Rather would we bid them be of good courage and continue to fight against the world, the flesh and the Adversary, and to continue to watch and to pray, and to strive to attain the conditions here set before us as those pleasing and acceptable to our Father in Heaven. To have the desire of heart is the first condition, and to heroically carry this forward in all the affairs of life is 'the second step. The two constitute overcoming the world. Thus God works in us first of all to will aright, and subsequently as we become stronger in faith and knowledge and grace, the spirit of the Truth works in us to do His good pleasure, so that in all our ways we acknowledge Him and request that He may direct our paths. The family worship, the *Heavenly Manna* at the table--if we 'give it as important a place as the earthly food--and the study of the Divine Plan

'are channels through which the Divine blessing is more and more entering the hearts and lives of the faithful. Proportionately each one is a burning and a shining light in his home or amongst his acquaintances, whether they acknowledge this or make little of it. His testimony is' pleasing to God and I hopeful to himself, and ere long the Lord's favor will be abundantly manifested.

THE JEWISH PHYLACTERIES

Our Lord Jesus referred to a custom amongst the Jews of His day which still prevails--of binding the phylactery upon their foreheads and their arms, while making void the law of God through their traditions. The eighth verse is the foundation for this custom. It says, "Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."

A phylactery is a little square leather box attached to a leather strap about a yard long. In the cubical leather box are placed parchments containing four passages of Scripture in four columns. (Exodus 13:1-16; Deut. 6:4, 11, 13-21.) These the Jews at times fastened upon the head, the box coming above and between the eyes; or again they fastened the box at the inside of the elbow, and wrapped the strap about the arm, holding the end in the hand. Poor Jews! they grasped with fervency an outward form, but, as the Lord pointed out, they missed the real kernel of the Law, namely, love out of a pure heart for God and for their neighbor. The wealthy and infidel Jews have of course abandoned this custom, but it is still in vogue amongst the most earnest or orthodox, who usually spend one hour in-prayer every day and in putting on and off the phylactery.

There is a lesson for us in this failure of natural Israel to catch the spirit of the Divine command. Our Lord said that while they thus made an outward show their hearts had vicious thoughts, unloving, unkind thoughts, and hence they were merely drawing nigh to God with their lips in a formal manner and were not acceptable. We spiritual Israelites do well to remember that, while we do, not use the same outward forms, we might bow the knee and pray long and much and yet be far from acceptable to, the Lord unless we allow His spirit of grace and truth to enter into our hearts and there produce that transformation which He tells us is alone pleasing and acceptable to. Him--a transformation which will make us less selfish, more generous, less proud, more humble, less children of this world, more the children of the Kingdom, seekers less of the things of this present time and more of the Kingdom of God and of the righteousness which it represents and will in due time enforce.

OUR OUTGOINGS AND INCOMINGS

"And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house and upon thy gates." It is doubtful if the Lord meant this to be understood and practiced literally. It is probable that, instead of introducing to the people phylacteries, the meaning of the Lord's Word was that they should consider the Divine laws as overshadowing everything that they saw and as affecting everything that they did with their arm (strength) and as affecting every affair of life, in the home and outside of it. However, if the spirit of the matter could have been retained by the Jews, their phylacteries, we presume, would have proved no, interference to the Divine blessing nor their method of complying with the last requirement (v.9). They complied with the letter by fastening in a prominent place in the doorway what

they termed, "*mezuzah*." This is a square piece of paper or parchment inscribed with Deut. 6:4-9; 11 :13-21. It is rolled and placed in a small cylinder usually of wood or tin. It is the custom of the pious Jew to touch this with his finger on each occasion, of his passing it, and say in Hebrew (Psa. 121:8). "The Lord preserve thy going out and thy coming in,!" etc.

The real thought which we attach to -this injunction is, that everything pertaining to us who are the Lord's, especially everything pertaining to the Church, which is the house, the family of God, is, sacred to Him and under His blessing, and we must confess Him in every matter -- in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. IV APRIL 15, 1921 No. 8

WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

OUR LOCATION ON THE STREAM OF TIME

"Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will inquire, inquire ye." -Isa. 21:11,12.

NO QUESTION can be of more absorbing and thrilling interest to the child of God than that of the *time* of the complete and permanent overthrow of the Empire of Evil on earth and the full and lasting establishment of the Kingdom of Righteousness, justice and Peace. Having been clearly informed in the Holy Scriptures that the establishment of that great Empire of Goodness and Truth will mean a thorough vindication of the character of God and of all those who throughout the Ages have stood in defense of His Holy Name, and that it will signify additionally the crushing out of evil, and the removal of sorrow, suffering and death from the earth, what child of faith would not realize every fiber of his soul stirred within him on being brought face to face with the facts. and evidences Showing the "time is at hand" for the "night of weeping" to pass, and for the 'morning of joy" to dawn. Such has been the happy experience of the watching and waiting people of God in these last times as they have continued to pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done." It has been the joyful privilege of these to know the fulfillment of the message of St. Paul: "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. . . . But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are 'all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thess. 5:1, 4-6.) Again the thrill and rapture of joy experienced by this class was well described by the Prophet Daniel: "Oh, the blessedness of him that waiteth earnestly, and cometh," etc. (Dan. 12:12.) As it Were, the heavens have been opened unto them and like the Seer of Patmos, it is as if they were transported to a great and high mountain from where they have been privileged to behold the-wealth of the New Jerusalem and the glory of the World to Come.

YE BRETHREN ARE NOT IN DARKNESS

But this cup of blessedness, like that of which the faithful of the past have supped, has not been without its mixture of the myrrh and the wormwood. For in addition to the suffering incidental to the fulfillment of their consecration, and in addition to the perils and fiery trials of these days, the Lord's people have been permitted to feel keenly the bitterness of disappointment with regard to some of their cherished hopes and expectations; and a wise Providence has seen fit to allow those circumstances to obtain that have tended to disturb and perplex and that give rise to doubts and fears, making it necessary for those who would hold fast to their faith and hope to earnestly seek the light of the Lord's countenance, the reflection of His Word and Spirit. Such in the past as have humbly and with their whole heart sought Him have not been turned away empty, nor been left in hopeless solitude, but have been made to drink abundantly of the springs of His Truth and Grace by which they have been enabled to press on with refreshment and renewed vigor to the end of their journey.

Amongst the illustrious examples of the Bible is that of the Prophet Daniel, who, out of desperate anxiety for the deliverance of God's people, sought the face of the Lord with his whole heart: "In those days, I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." In response a special messenger was sent from the Lord, to enlighten and comfort him: "And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, 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 thy words." (Dan. 10:2, 3, 11, 12.) And Daniel was made to understand concerning the matter that lay near to his heart, and he was given the honor of recording one of the most significant prophecies of the Bible.

Nor will those who now, out of humility and full consecration, seek the face of the Lord and guidance by His spirit be left comfortless with regard to the important matters that lie near to their hearts, and the great issues in which the spiritual interests of all the Lord's people are wrapped up. Thus it is our firm conviction, based upon the sure promises of the Divine Word, that the Lord will grant unto His people such vision and comprehension of the wisdom from above that they need not remain in doubt and perplexity with regard to the things in which they have been hoping and trusting.

VITAL QUESTIONS OF THE HOUR

Ever since this association of the Lord's people known as the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE was called into existence, nearly three years ago, the brethren to whom has been committed the interests of this ministry have been appealed to by other brethren from nearly all parts of the earth who have experienced deep perplexity as to many of the existing conditions, and as to the seeming failure of much that was hoped for and expected would be realized by the Lord's people by this time. During these days of waiting many of the brethren have very properly been making inquiry into the causes of the seeming delay of the fulfillment of our hopes. Some have asked why has not the Church realized her final deliverance and reward by this time? Considering the views we have entertained for a number

of years on the subject of chronology, as to where we are on the stream of time, and as to the end of the "six-thousand-year period" and the "Times of the Gentiles," etc., why is not the time of trouble over with by now-why has not the old order of things passed away, and why has not the Kingdom been established in power before this? Is it not possible that there may be an error in the chronology? None can dispute that these are questions entirely proper for consideration, and on which we may reasonably expect assistance from the Word of the Lord. And yet considering the responsibility of touching things that involve so much, and remembering, the Divinely solemn instruction, "Be not rash with thy tongue, neither be thou hasty to utter anything before God," it has been with much hesitancy that we have decided to speak with regard to these matters; but surely it is proper for us to speak where the Word of the Lord speaks, and likewise, we trust to remain silent where that Word is silent.

The earnest inquiries and heartfelt appeals from 'the brethren during these days have caused us indeed to earnestly and prayerfully seek the Lord and His Word for the Wisdom from above. We have humbly acknowledged to Him our utter incompetence to know or to accomplish anything of ourselves, and that our every confidence is in Him; that we are sure that as in the past, He is still able to use very weak vessels in His service to honor His Name. We have therefore asked that, if it was His good pleasure, we might be blessed with such understanding of His Word and will as would enable us to counsel others wisely and in a manner that would honor His Name and Cause.' And it is concerning some of these vitally and deeply important things that have perplexed the brethren, that we have undertaken to speak in this article and in others that may follow in succeeding issues of this journal.

"WE HAVE NOT FOLLOWED CUNNINGLY DEvised FABLES"

All the readers of this journal well know that we have not used these columns to promulgate any vain imaginations, or fanciful theories of our own. All can surely attest that the most conservative policy has been adhered to and rigidly followed out, to the extent of apparently being painful to some. It has not seemed to us to be the Lord's will, nor have we had any desire, to place before the brethren something new of our own manufacture with which to fascinate and startle' others or to satisfy idle curiosity. Nor do we now have any intention of departing from the policy and custom practiced from the beginning of this movement, We will not launch out into the field of wild speculation and idle guessing; but while endeavoring always to exercise that sobriety and conservatism becoming to all ambassadors of Christ, we purpose to maintain that alertness and watchfulness as to the signs of the times and the fulfillment of the "more sure word of prophecy" that we may discern the whole will of our God and thus be enabled to stand and to assist others to maintain faith, fortitude and courage in this very trying time.

We submit what is given below only after the most careful and prayerful search of the Scriptures, and only after both the Directors of our INSTITUTE and the HERALD Editorial Committee have reached the hearty and unanimous conclusion that what is here presented is well sustained by the infallible. Word of the Lord. As our own hearts and heads have been greatly refreshed and blessed in the examination of these matters and in the conclusions reached, we believe that a responsibility rests with us to make known these things. to others. We urge

nothing upon anyone. We will say nothing to coerce anyone to see the situation as we do. We merely say to all that these things look most reasonable and Scriptural to us and we are convinced that they are true, and we only ask that careful and earnest attention be given to the matters that we here review, believing you will realize therefrom a rich blessing as we ourselves have.

THE FAILURE OF OUR FORMER EXPECTATIONS

All who are acquainted with the writings of PASTOR RUSSELL are well aware of the fact that it was his conviction up to within a short time before October, 1914, based upon his study of the chronology of the seven times (2520 years) of the Gentiles, that that date would witness the complete overthrow of the Gentile nations indeed, the utter collapse of the present order of things, civil, ecclesiastical and social, and the full establishment of God's Kingdom, which last event of course would necessitate the change of all the Kingdom class to the glory and honor of the Divine nature. We cite a few of the many statements of this character:

"In view of this strong Bible evidence concerning the Times of the Gentiles, we consider it an established truth that the FINAL end of the kingdoms of this world, and the FULL establishment of the Kingdom of God, WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE END OF A. D. 1914. THEN the prayer of the Church, ever since her Lord took His departure--'Thy Kingdom come'--will be, answered; and under that wise and just administration, the whole earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord."--STUDIES, VOL. 11-99.

"The 'Gentile Times' prove that the present governments must all be overturned before the close of A.D. 1914; and the Parallelism above shows that this period corresponds exactly with the year A.D. 70, which witnessed the COMPLETE downfall of the Jewish polity." -STUDIES, VOL. 11-242.

Referring to the sixth Vial-Plague, which PASTOR RUSSELL believed had been in process of fulfillment for some years past, he said:

"The battle of the great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:14), WHICH WILL END in A.D. 1914 with the complete overthrow of earth's present rulership is [was at the time he wrote] already commenced."--STUDIES, VOL. II-101.

Three of the most stupendous events of Scripture. prophecy were thus expected by us to occur in October, 1914. First, the utter collapse of what is generally termed Christendom, which expression comprehends both the nominal Christian system or temple, and the so-called Christian civilization, as also the other Gentile powers. The events in Jewish history which corresponded or paralleled this great catastrophe was that of the overthrow of Jerusalem and the destruction of its Temple in Zedekiah's day, and the same events in 70 A. D. These parallel events *did not eventuate in October, 1914*, nor have they yet, as all are now aware. The second event that was to occur was the *end* of the great battle of God Almighty. Neither did this take place. The third event was that of the "full" establishment of the Kingdom of God, which is also plainly apparent has not yet occurred.

PROVE ALL THINGS HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD

In view of the utter failure to date of the three propositions above mentioned, as well as others, what would seem to be the proper course dictated by the spirit of a sound mind? One method would be to blindly close our eyes and say that somehow we must have been right in our former convictions regarding events, times and seasons, *anyway*. Another method would be to say that since so many of us for so long a time held the convictions that we did, it would not be wise policy for us to now question anything or make any investigation, Neither of the above methods appeal to us as representing the part of wisdom or the, spirit of the Lord. Rather we are deeply impressed by the attitude taken and the course adopted by our dear Pastor during his last hours. And what were the latest utterances Of PASTOR RUSSELL in regard to these matters ? How did he account for the manifest failure of our expectations? We reply: In 1916, he said along this line: "OUR EXPECTATIONS MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO WEIGH ANYTHING AS AGAINST THE FACTS." In other words, since the facts are that some things we expected have not been realized, we must not insist that our expectations were right anyway, but should accept the facts and recognize the failure of our expectations. Again, about two months before his death he thus expressed his convictions: Concerning Gentile Times he frankly admitted his mistake, and stated that instead of expecting the complete collapse of Gentile kingdoms, etc., we should have expected a simple running out of the lease of power to the Gentile nations. In other words, that the Divine decree, giving the dominion of the world to Babylon and the empires succeeding Babylon, which was for a period of "seven times" (2520 years), ran out then, October, 1914; and that the complete collapse would be due to occur in a few years from the time he wrote in 1916. He, however, fixed no date. His words to this effect are:

"The Gentile nations were guaranteed a certain amount of possession and control for a certain period of time. That time having expired, dispossession proceedings are now in process. . . . We see no reason for doubting, therefore, that the Times of the Gentiles [i. e., their lease of power] ended in October, 1914; and that a few more years will witness their utter collapse and the full establishment of God's Kingdom in the hands of the Messiah."--Z '16-264.

EVIDENT ERROR IN OUR RECKONING

The statement here cannot possibly be misunderstood, and is briefly this: that the date 1914 ended the 2520 years of lease of power to the Gentiles. This would of course make this lease of power to begin 606 B. C. It is evident from the statements made by PASTOR RUSSELL in September, 1916, extracts of which were published in the preceding issue of this journal, that he looked forward to 1918 as possibly marking the utter collapse of, and end of the present order. But now we are moving rapidly away from and beyond that date with the Gentiles, still in power and the present order of things intact. What would now appear to be our course of wisdom? Again we ask the reader to weigh and ponder carefully our Pastor's advice published in 1914, for we consider it most significant and the very essence of wisdom.

"If October, 1915, should pass, and we should find ourselves still here and matters going on very much as they are at present, and the world apparently making progress in the way of settling disputes, and there were no time of trouble in sight, and the nominal Church, were not yet federated, etc., WE WOULD SAY

THAT EVIDENTLY WE HAVE BEEN OUT SOMEWHERE IN OUR RECKONING. IN THAT EVENT WE WOULD LOOK OVER THE PROPHECIES FURTHER, TO SEE IF WE COULD FIND AN ERROR. AND THEN WE WOULD THINK, HAVE WE BEEN EXPECTING THE WRONG THING AT THE RIGHT TIME? THE LORD'S WILL MIGHT PERMIT THIS."--Z '14-5.

Surely what PASTOR RUSSELL said he would do in the event that matters were going on much the same several years beyond 1915, cannot be unreasonable or improper for us to do now, that we "find ourselves still here, and matters going much the same," etc., viz., to go back over the prophecies "to see if we have been looking for the wrong thing at the right time."

How frequently has it been the case with the Lord's people, in their investigation to discover the times for important events in connection with the unfolding of the Lord's great plans and purposes, that they have made the mistake of looking for the wrong thing at the right time. In connection with the most important event of human history--the First Advent of the Redeemer--the nation of Israel that had been so long looking for their Messiah, and who were accustomed to having the Scriptures relating to that event read publicly in their hearing every Sabbath day, made the most serious mistake in expecting that their Messiah at His First Advent was coming to reign, instead of to suffer and die; overlooking or failing to give heed to the fact that those predictions taught that He must first suffer, before He would enter into His glory. This was true not only of the nation as a whole, but even many of the disciples made the same mistake. However, in their cases because of their being true disciples their disappointment was overruled for their eternal good and not only so, but the Savior revealed to them later more fully the Divine Plan.

BLUNDERS OF THE PAST IN EXPECTING "WRONG THING AT RIGHT TIME"

Not understanding the nature of our Lord, the manner of His Second Advent, as also the object to be accomplished by the Advent, and a too hasty conclusion concerning the nature of the events that were to mark the end of certain prophetic periods, MR. MILLER, in 1844, a most godly disciple of Christ, and his associates, made the same mistake, and looked for the Lord to come in a body of flesh to literally burn the world and purify it by the fires thereof, to become the eternal home of all the saved.

Would it not be possible for the Lord's people who have gained a very much clearer and more consistent and Scriptural knowledge of the manner and object of the Second Advent to make a similar mistake in their fixing time for events to take place when certain prophetic periods seem to have run their course? May not this be true concerning the prophetic period of the "seven times" of the Gentiles? We have found that one of the wisest of God's servants, one more used of the Lord than any other for a century and more past, acknowledged just before he finished his course in death his mistakes with relation to the forty-year Harvest parallels. Would it not be best, in view of this, for the Lord's people to give heed to his words uttered in 1914 concerning what he would do if he found himself living in 1915 and certain things did not eventuate? And now that seven years

have passed since these words were uttered, and nearly five since his death, would it not be the much wiser course for us to pursue, instead of trying to reconcile what he acknowledged himself were mere inferences and have been proven conclusively to be such, to receive his words of advice, and look very closely to those Scriptures that mark the beginning of Gentile times, particularly that feature of the same which we and he failed to see, until after 1915 and 1918 passed, meant the cessation of a lease of power, instead of an overthrow and destruction of the Gentile nations and apostate Christianity? Would it not be more consistent and a better exhibition of the spirit of a sound mind, more pleasing to our Divine Lord, to examine and discover where the mistake is, than to do as many have been doing, building up theories based upon that which he himself acknowledged was wrong? We, certainly believe it would be best for us to do what he said he would do, and we propose to take up the matter where he left it and examine more carefully what he said was an error and which the events of history, have since proved to be such.

THE LEASE OF POWER TO THE GENTILES

Careful investigation has resulted in our locating the point of difficulty or discrepancy in what we have considered our -great chain of chronology. It is found to be in connection with the commencement of the "Times of the Gentiles," that designation, as we have seen, having reference to the sole or world dominion given to the Gentiles at the conclusion of Israel's kingdom, which dominion continues to control the nations of the earth. 'Concerning the fact that this lease of power began 606 B. C., there is scarcely a dissenting voice amongst Bible expositors who have given the matter attention; and furthermore, it is also agreed that this lease of power began 70 years before 536 B. C. Concerning both of these matters PAS TOR RUSSELL was in perfect agreement with these chronological writers. One of these writers has expressed the very general thought concerning the significance of this date 606 B. C. His words concerning its great importance as a chronological date are: "It has been justly termed the point of contact between sacred and profane history; and its importance in the sacred chronology is immense on account of its being the [beginning] epoch of the [70 years] servitude of Judah to Babylon."

This writer's thought is that the 70 years of servitude began with the date 606 B.C. and of course would end with the decree of Cyrus. The correctness of the date of Cyrus' decree, 536 B. C., has scarcely a single dissenting voice among historians. It will be apparent to all that as 536 B. C. marked the ending of the 70 years of servitude, it will make no difference what event in Jewish and Gentile history we decide as marking the beginning of the servitude, the date for the beginning would be the same 606 B. C. It is very important that we understand all that is meant by the word "servitude." We believe that all who are familiar with the Scriptures that refer to it, will agree that it relates to the period of time when by Divine decree the Jews were to serve. the, kingdom of Babylon: in other words, its beginning would mark the Divine decree giving the lease of power to the Gentiles, and the end of Jewish independence.

The important question then is, What events in connection with Gentile and Jewish history mark the date of this Divine decree? It will be agreed by all Bible students that the Scriptures, if they speak, must be that which settle once for all

this question correctly. Do they give information on this matter? and if they do, what do they, say? We turn to the Scriptures and read that "in the second year of Nebuchadnezzar [king of Babylon], Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams." The particular dream referred to is that of the great metallic image (Dan. 2:1, 31-35.) This great image is universally believed by Bible students to be descriptive of the outline of Gentile dominion as represented in the four great empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, and division of the last. The young Prophet Daniel, who had been a captive in Babylon for about three years was called upon to interpret this dream, and in his interpretation, which was Divinely given him, he states that the beginning of Gentile dominion or lease of power had at this time, the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, already begun. We quote: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven *hath* given thee a kingdom, power, and strength and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven, *hath* He given into thine hand and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou [thy kingdom] *art* this head of gold." (Dan. 2:37, 38.) The question then is answered-the event in Gentile history that marked the beginning of the Divine lease of power was at that time a matter of history; and was that of the accession of Nebuchadnezzar to the throne of Babylon.

DATE OF BEGINNING OF TIMES OF THE GENTILES

Let the reader remember in this connection the fact that it was in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar and in Zedekiah's eleventh year that the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple occurred (Jer. 52:1-12) ; therefore, about nineteen years after the Divine lease of power was given; and during all those years the Jewish nation and its kings, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah, were subject to the king of Babylon by Divine decree-were merely vassal kings, and made themselves liable to Divine penalty if disobedient.--See Jer. 27:11-13.

We next inquire, What event of Jewish history marked the beginning of Israel's servitude and the beginning of Gentile dominion or Gentile lease of power? We turn to the Scriptures for an answer and read: "In *the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim . . . king of Judah*, came this word unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Thus saith the Lord [hath the Lord said-margin] unto me: Make thee bonds and yokes, and put them upon thy neck, and send them to the king of Edom . . . I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground. . . . And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant.... And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him. And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve the same Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that will not put their neck under the yoke of the king. of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.-Jer. 27:1-8.

Let the reader note that this. Divine decree constituting a lease of power to the Gentiles was made in the *beginning* of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah. Jehoiakim reigned about eleven years; Jehoiachin, three months, and Zedekiah, about eleven years. Therefore' this statement concerning the decree was. 'given by

Jehovah to Jeremiah somewhere about twenty-two years before Zedekiah's overthrow.

The next inquiry is, When did this decree begin to be enforced on the Jewish nation? Again, we let the Scriptures answer: "In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, king of Judah, into his hand." (Dan. 1: 1, 2; see also -2 Kings 24: 1; 2 Chron. 36:6.) It was at this same time, the third year of Jehoiakim, that certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes, -amongst whom was Daniel and his companions, were carried captives to Babylon. (Dan. 1:3-6.) It was therefore at *this time* that the servitude of Judah to Babylon began; some serving in Babylon, others in their own land; the whole-nation, however, serving the king of the kingdom of Babylon, and their kings were Nebuchadnezzar's vassals. This servitude lasted throughout the whole length of the Babylonian Empire, and ended with the decree of Cyrus 536 B. C., about two years after Babylon's fall. The reign of Babylon over all nations, including the Jewish, therefore lasted 70 years-certainly no longer, which is a very important matter to keep in mind. when calculating the length of Gentile Times.

ISRAEL'S SEVENTY YEARS OF SERVITUDE

We inquire again, Is there any other statement in the Scriptures that teaches that the empire of Babylon, the first of Gentile empires, lasted 70 Years? What say the Scriptures? Their answer is: "Now these are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the Prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captives, and to the priests, and to the prophets, and to all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon;* . . .

*This letter was sent after the captivity of Jehoiachin in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year and was designed to comfort all those that were in captivity in Babylon.

Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives [both those in Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin's time] whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; Build ye houses and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; take ye wives and beget sons and daughters; . . . that ye may be increased there and not diminished, and seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it; for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace. . . . *For thus saith the Lord, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.*" (Jer. 29:1, 10-14.) Is not the obvious conclusion derived from these words of Jeremiah that the period of 70 years of servitude determines of itself that the reign of Babylon was also 70 years, and not 89 years, which it would be if we began the Gentile lease with Zedekiah's overthrow as has been our custom heretofore? However, we note further as establishing this point that not only was Judah subject to the Divine decree, constituting the king of Babylon their ruler, but all nations *at one and the same time*. '(Dan. 2:37, 38; Jer. 27:1-8) ; and this dominion by the Babylonian Empire over all nations was to be 70 years and no

more. Note the Scripture proving this: "The word that came to Jeremiah . . . in the fourth year of Jehoiakim . . . king of Judah . . . These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, *when seventy years are accomplished*, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans [Babylon], and will. make it perpetual desolations."--Jer. 25:1, 11, 12.

Is it not evident then from this Scripture also that the Divine decree, beginning with the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar, constituting all nations subject to Babylon, was for a period of seventy years? A careful consideration of these Scriptures makes any other conclusion impossible.

At this point we remind the reader that the servitude of Judah must not be confounded with the captivities, and desolation, as it generally is. The, captivity and. desolation that came later have nothing whatever to do with the original decree that Israel and all nations should be brought into bondage to the king Of Babylon. Nor would bondage or slavery to the kingdom of Babylon necessarily signify that the Jews or any other nation, would need to be carried away captive and their lands be left desolate. Let this point be clearly seen, therefore, that it was rebellion against the Divine de cree (which decree made the kings and people of Judah and their land subject to. Babylon) that brought upon the Jews and their King Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) 'the further judgment of a national deportation to Babylon in the eighth year of Nebuchadnezzar; and. the still more terrible punishment of the, "desolations," and captivity of Zedekiah and the nation in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar. It is unquestionable that it was in connection with this latter invasion of the land in Zedekiah's time that the desolations occurred, and the land began to enjoy her Sabbaths to fulfil 70 years. However, of this seventy-year Sabbath-keeping and desolation, and its ending, etc., we shall discuss fully later on. Our present object is to discover when the lease of power to the Gentiles began. The Scriptures that we have already considered make this event to synchronize with the first year of Nebuchadnezzar which was the third year of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and both these events synchronize with the beginning of the 70 years of, servitude which end with the first year of Cyrus, 536 B. C., about two years after the fall of Babylon in 538 B. C.

TIRE POINT OF ERROR LOCATED

We inquire then, Is it not the teaching of the Scriptures that the Divine decree giving a lease of power to the Gen tiles began 70 years before 536 B. C. which of course would be .606 B. C. ($536+70=606$); thus making the .point where sacred chronology unites with profane chro nology, the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar instead of the *nineteenth*, as PASTOR RUSSELL and we all supposed? and with the third year of Jehoiakim instead of the eleventh of Zedekiah as we also supposed, which of course, occurred about nineteen years later? Again, would it not make the servitude 89 years, instead of 70, as the Scriptures make it, if we allow that there was a period of 70 years beginning with Zedekiah's overthrow in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year to 536 B. C.? As a matter of fact it was only 51 years from Zedekiah's overthrow in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year to 536 B.C., and not 70 as we have heretofore thought. Still further, if we reckon the 70 years of servitude As beginning in Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year would it not make the reign of the empire of Babylon 89 years instead of 70, as the Bible

plainly declares it to be, and incidentally secular history also states it to be? Moreover, let it be observed that Jehovah declared through the Prophet Jeremiah that after the 70 years had elapsed (not after 89 years had elapsed) that His people in Babylon would call upon Him to fulfil His promise and restore them to their land and that then He would hear and answer them. We read Jehovah's words to this effect: "That after 70 years* be accomplished at. Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall, ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." (Jer. 29:10-13.) We inquire, Do we have in Scripture recorded that any of His people did call upon Him after the 70 years of servitude ended, and that He responded to their call? We reply in the language of Scripture: "In the first year of Darius, the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans [Babylonians] ; in the first year of his reign. I Daniel understood by books the number of. the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the Prophet, that He would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem. . . . And I prayed unto the Lord my God . . . O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain."--Dan. 9:1-27.

* This prophecy of Jeremiah being uttered long before the general deportation of the Jews to Babylon at Zedekiah's overthrow, relates to the servitude into which they went in Nebuchadnezzar's first year and in Jehoiakim's third year; also to the captivity of Jehoiachin and many in Israel in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year (II Kings, 24:12) ; thus marking 70 years from the time their servitude first began till the time when the Lord would visit them at Babylon, which was in 536 B.C.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR STARTS TIMES OF GENTILES IN FIRST YEAR OF HIS REIGN

We inquire, When was this? The answer is, Immediately after the fall of Babylon which was in 538 B. C. The fall of Babylon as we have seen had been predicted by Jeremiah to occur after its 70 years of rule over all nations had ended, which 70 years began with Nebuchadnezzar's first year. Both secular history and the Bible record that the combined armies of Darius, the Mede and Cyrus the Persian kings, were God's instruments in its overthrow, thus preparing the way for the release of His captive people and the commencement of the ending of the "desolation" period during which the land was to enjoy Sabbath keeping. However, the end of this desolation or Sabbath period was not reached until about six teen years after the decree of Cyrus, 536 B. C., which would be about 520 B. C. Concerning this we have most clear and definite statements of Scripture as we shall show later. Daniel was an old man at the time he offered up this prayer. If he was 18, or as some think, 21 years of age when he had finished his three-years' school ing at Babylon,' when he interpreted the king's dream, he would be at the time he offered up this prayer, either 88 or 91 years of age.* At the fall of

Babylon we read that at first Darius the Mede took the kingdom. (Dan. 5:31.) In the year 536 B. C., about two years after this, Cyrus began ruling. And in Cyrus' first year, he issues the decree releasing the captive people, as we read: "Now in the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and- out it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all, the kingdoms of the earth [as He did to Nebuchadnezzar 70 years before; thus continuing the Times of the Gentiles]; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem [as Nebuchadnezzar was to destroy the house] which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is the God) which is in Jerusalem," etc. Ezra 1:1-4.

*If we were to begin the lease of power in Zedekiah's day, he would be 19 years older, or 107 or 110 years old, which is practically out of the question.

We now inquire in closing this particular line of thought, Is it not the teaching of the Word of God which we have cited, that the lease of power to the Gentiles began in Nebuchadnezzar's first year instead of his nineteenth? Is it not also true that the 70 years of Judah's servitude began at the same time? Is it not also true that the Bible makes the 70 years of servitude to Babylon to be the length of time that the Babylonian kingdom according to Divine decree was given dominion? We ourselves can arrive at no other conclusion than that these things are so. The clear teaching of Scripture is, therefore, if the seven times are to be understood to represent 2520 years (and we believe they are) and that these years represent the length of the Divine decree giving a lease of power to the Gentiles (this we also think is true) then sure enough the 2520 years ran out in 1914 A. D., and that year marked the end of the lease of power, but not necessarily -the full end of the exercise of power, nor the complete fall of the Gentile governments, even as the kingdom of Israel did not fall and was not overthrown in the final and absolute sense until Zedekiah, a vassal king under Nebuchadnezzar, was taken captive nineteen years after the period of servitude began.

THE LOGICAL DEDUCTIONS

However, we desire to state the matter plainly here that all the facts may be clearly observed:

Whereas we have heretofore understood that Zedekiah's overthrow took place in 606 B. C., we now find that to be entirely erroneous, for it was but 606 B. C., nineteen years prior to his overthrow when Nebuchadnezzar in the first year of his reign began the exercise of his world dominion and commenced the period of the servitude of the Jews. Accordingly it was 587 B. C. when Zedekiah was taken captive, and not 606 B. C., and hence while the 2520 years' lease of Gentile power starting in Nebuchadnezzar's first year, '606 B. C., would run out in 1914, yet the full end of the Gentile Times and the complete fall of Gentile governments is not indicated as taking place till nineteen years later, or about 1934. For if the downfall and destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple in Zedekiah's day (which

was nineteen years later than the Divine decree of the lease of power) be regarded as marking the end of Gentile dominion as we have heretofore considered it, then the parallel event, the downfall of Christendom, could not occur until nineteen years later than 1914, which would be about 1934. In other words, the seven times or 2520 years counting from Zedekiah's fall and the fall of Jerusalem would end approximately in 1934: 587 B. C.+1933 A. D.=2520.

But now let us not be misunderstood, we are not prophesying--we are predicting nothing. We are calling attention to the facts as to the two points of time that stand out in Much prominence in the starting and full establishment of Gentile Times or Gentile dominion, viz.: 606 B. C., when the lease of power was given to Nebuchadnezzar, and 587 B. C., which marked the complete removal of the Jewish kingdom. The reasonable deduction is that the great changes and events which we have heretofore expected to take place in 1914 would, in view of the foregoing, be logically expected to be in evidence somewhere around 1934.

Another point which we ask the reader to carefully observe and that is this: In fixing the 606 B. C. date in Nebuchadnezzar's first year and King Jehoiakim's third year, instead of at Zedekiah's overthrow, nineteen years later, we are compelled to subtract nineteen years from the period of the kings in computing the 6,000 years from Adam. In other words, we have in the past been saying that the period of the kings was 513 years and then we added 70 years of servitude on to that which we said extended to 536 B. C. This we now find to be erroneous for we must go back into the period of the kings nineteen years to begin the 70 years of servitude, leaving therefore but 494 years as the time of Israel's kings, instead of 513. This in turn means that in computing the various periods of the past to make up 6,000 years of human history we are short nineteen years of the results we have heretofore regarded as correct; that instead of 1872 marking the end of 6,000 years of the world's history, that date (provided all the other periods of the chronology are correct) marked the end of 5,981 years.

Before taking up the consideration of the desolation period, during which the land was to keep Sabbath, we inquire, How do the foregoing conclusions, based upon positive Scripture statements,, agree with secular history? We reply, They are in perfect agreement, as will be seen from the following from the Canon of Ptolemy:

Nabokolassa, the Nebuchadnezzar of Scripture 43 yrs.
Ilvoradamus, the Evil-merodach of Scripture (Jer. 52:31) 2 yrs
Nerikassolassar 4 yrs
Nabonidus and Belshazzar his son 17 yrs
Adding to this the (about) two years that
Nebuchadnezzar reigned with his father, who was sick 2 yrs
About two years from Babylon's fall to Cyrus' first year 2 yrs
70 yrs

THE SEVENTY YEARS DESOLATION AND SABBATH KEEPING, A DIFFERENT PERIOD

The matter of special importance about which we next inquire is that of the desolation of the land, predicted by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11, 12), for the objection is-logically raised in connection with the foregoing discussion that by commencing the 70 years of servitude in Nebuchadnezzar's first year we are

including in the period all that time (the 19 years) before Zedekiah's overthrow and the destruction of the Temple during which the land was not desolate and was still filled with inhabitants, whereas Jeremiah's prophecy had said that the land should be desolate without an inhabitant (Jer. 26:9.) Is not this a vital and most serious objection? We reply that we think this objection is entirely eliminated when we consider all the facts. The sum of the matter is Jeremiah's prophecy does not state that the land will remain desolate without an inhabitant *70 years*. Even if we calculate that the seventy-year period began at Zedekiah's overthrow and extended to 536 B.C., it is impossible to find 70 years of desolation of the land *without an inhabitant from that point forward*. For as a matter of fact, the desolation of the land, without an inhabitant, did not occur at the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Temple in Zedekiah's eleventh year, which was Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth.' In proof of this we refer to the Scriptures, and read:

"Now in the fifth month, in the tenth day of the month, which was the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar . . . came Nebuzar-adan . . . and burned the house of the Lord, and the king's house; and all the houses of Jerusalem, and all the houses of the great men, burned he with fire . . . But Nebuzar-adan *left certain of the Poor of the land* for vine-dressers, and for husbandmen."--Jer. 52:12, 16.

As showing that about four years after this event there were still numbers of people in the land, we quote another statement of Scripture: "In the *three and twentieth* year of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard carried away captive of the Jews seven hundred forty and five persons."--Jer. 52:30.

It must be seen from these Scripture statements that the 70 years mentioned by Jeremiah does not refer to the land being without an inhabitant for full 70 years, although the time came during that period when the land was entirely depopulated, when finally all the people fled into Egypt. But if the 70 years of desolations do not have reference to the land being *all that time* without an inhabitant, the inquiry is proper and to the point, What does it refer to? A careful scrutiny of the Scriptures that have special reference to the "desolations" will discover that it has especially to do with the cessation of sowing and reaping; in other words, the cessation of agricultural pursuits until the Divinely appointed time for the land to enjoy her Sabbaths had ended. One of the several ordinances enjoined upon the Jewish people was that every seventh year, as well as every fiftieth year,

the land was to lie fallow, and it was in relation to this neglect to observe this ordinance that the era of desolations was decreed. (Lev. 25.) In proof of the fact that this is what is meant we quote a passage in 2 Chronicles, which passage is preceded -by a description in general of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of the land in his seventeenth year, which culminated in the siege of the City of Jerusalem, which siege lasted until his nineteenth year, when the City and Temple were captured and destroyed. The Scripture referred to reads:

"And them that escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him [Nebuchadnezzar] and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; to fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah *until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths*; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil three-score and ten years."--2 Chron. 36:20, 21.

DESOLATION OF THE LAND ADDITIONAL PUNISHMENT TO THAT OF SERVITUDE

Let it be kept in mind that these words do not describe the beginning of the 70 years of servitude or captivity, because the servitude and captivity both began nineteen years before, in 606, and ended with Cyrus in 536 B. C., as we have shown. This Scripture, it is very apparent, describes or refers to the 70 years of Sabbath-keeping of the land; and it is most reasonable to think that this could not *begin* until the whole land was desolated, by the invasion of an army. That this judgment-desolation began to count with Nebuchadnezzar's laying siege to Jerusalem in Zedekiah's ninth year several Scripture statements very plainly declare, each statement giving the year, month and day that it occurred. As we quote these Scriptures let the reader keep in mind when examining them that this desolation of the land was a Divine judgment which came upon the people of the land because of a failure to obey the Divine decree made nineteen years before. In proof of this we refer to Jeremiah's prophecy found in the 27th chapter. The Prophet is rehearsing the Divine decree given to him in the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, nineteen years before, and which Jehoiakim had disobeyed and incurred the judgment threatened, meeting finally a disgraceful death and burial. (Jer. 22:18, 19.) In the Scripture we now quote, Jeremiah is calling Zedekiah's attention to this Divine decree for he was disobeying it at the time. We read his words: "The nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in *their own land*, saith the Lord; *and they shall till it, and dwell therein*. I spake also to Zedekiah, king of Judah, according to all these words, saying, Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the Lord hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon. Therefore hearken not unto the words of the [false] prophets that speak unto you, saying, Ye shall not serve the king of Babylon; for they prophesy a lie unto you. For I have not sent them, saith the Lord, yet they prophesy a lie in my name; that I might drive you out, and that ye might perish, ye, and the prophets that prophesy unto you."--Jer. 27:11-15.

BEGINNING AND ENDING OF SEVENTY-YEAR SABBATHS

From the foregoing Scripture it will, therefore, be seen that that which was involved in the judgment-desolation was not so much that of a ruined city and temple; but rather a land laid desolate by the terrible scourge of an invading army, the effects of which would be followed by famine and pestilence, the continuing evidences of the Lord's displeasure. It is quite plain, therefore, that the 'true beginning of this desolating judgment is not, as some suppose, the capture of Jerusalem in Zedekiah's eleventh year, and Nebuchadnezzar's nineteenth year, but rather the invasion of Judea just previous to his investiture) or siege of the city. It will be apparent that from the time Nebuchadnezzar's armies entered the land, all agricultural pursuits ceased, were suspended, and therefore the desolation may be reckoned from the day the capital city, Jerusalem, was invested; namely, the *tenth day* of the *tenth month* (Tebeth) in the *ninth year* of Zedekiah, 589 B. C. In proof that this was the day, we quote: "And it came to pass in the *ninth year of his reign* [*i. e., Zedekiah's, see 2 Kings 24:20*], *in the tenth month, in the tenth day* of the

month, that Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and pitched against it; and they built forts against it round about. And the city was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. (2 Kings 25:1, 2.) This, it will be easily seen, was in 589 B. C. A very significant thing as establishing this date as the proper time for beginning this judgment desolation is the fact that the Prophet Ezekiel who was in exile, a captive in Babylon at the time this siege of Jerusalem began, was informed by the Lord concerning the solemn importance that this day would have in after Jewish history. Note his words:

"Again in the *ninth* year, in the *tenth* month, in the *tenth* day of the month, the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, write *thee the name of the day*, even of *this* same day: the king of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem *this* same day."--Ezek. 24:1, 2.

The further significance of this day as showing its sad importance on the Jewish mind is seen in the fact that for over 2500 years since it has been observed as a fast day, as will be seen by consulting a Jewish Almanac of Feasts and Fasts. (See *New York World Almanac*.)

And now before citing those Scriptures that plainly declare when this desolation in which the land enjoyed her sabbaths to fulfil 70 years ended, we call attention to the fact that the seventy-year desolations and Sabbath-keeping *did not* cease in the first year of Cyrus in 536 B. C., because only about 52 or 53 years had elapsed since 589 B. C., when the era of seventy-year Sabbath-keeping began.

The decree of Cyrus was the Divine fulfillment of the promise made to those of the captivity recorded in Jeremiah 29th chapter, and, as will be noted by the decree itself, granted all the captives in Babylon the fullest possible liberty to return to the land of Palestine. However, not until the seventy-year era of the desolations had run its full 'Course, was there any success achieved in building the Temple. The returned captives commenced to build (Ezra 3:10), but we learn that the work was immediately stopped by the adversaries of Judah, as we read: "Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded [started to lay the foundation] the Temple unto the Lord God of Israel-, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: . . . but Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the- rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia hath commanded us. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counselors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia." (Ezra. 4:1-5.) In the verses following in this same chapter, we read that these same adversaries succeeded in getting a decree from Ahasuerus, Cyrus' successor, against the work of building the Temple (See Ezra 4:7-24), and this continued to hold back the building until Zerubbabel succeeded in securing another decree from Darius,, Ahasuerus' successor, and the work was resumed again under the encouraging exhortations of the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah, divinely called for this service. One writer has thus commented on this cessation of the work in Cyrus' day: "Till the era of 'desolations' had run their course not one stone was to

be set upon another on Mount Moriah. And this explains the seemingly inexplicable fact that the firman [decree] to build the Temple, granted to eager agents by Cyrus in the zenith of his power, remained in abeyance till his death: for a few refractory Samaritans were allowed to thwart the execution of this, the most solemn edict in respect of which a Divine sanction seemed to confirm the unalterable will of a Medo-Persian king."--*The Coming Prince*.

EVIDENCE MARKING END OF THE SABBATHS

As showing that the desolations had continued and the Lord's blessing was withheld up to that time (520 B. C.), and the work of laying the foundation of the Temple was then resumed by the Lord's command, we quote from Haggai the Prophet: "In the *second* year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the Prophet unto Zerubbabel, the 'son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying' Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's- house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the Prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways [set your heart on your ways--marginal reading]. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Go tip to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. *Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man into his own house. Therefore, the heaven over you is stayed with dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn and upon the new wine and upon the oil and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labor of the hands.*"--*Hag. 1:1-11*.

Does not this plainly show that because of the peoples' wrong condition of heart the Lord had withheld His blessing as He said He would do in the beginning of their history, as we read, "Thou shalt carry much seed out into the field, and shall gather but little in; for the locust shall consume it. Thou shalt plant vineyards, and dress them, but shalt neither drink of the wine, nor gather the grapes; for the worms shall eat them. Thou shalt have olive trees throughout thy coasts, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shalt cast his fruit." (Deut. 28:38, 39.) This shows that from the days of Cyrus, sixteen years before, the Lord had withheld His blessing.

We now quote the words of the Prophet which plainly show that the special indignation of the Lord which started with the desolation of the land in Nebuchadnezzar's seventeenth year when he laid siege to Jerusalem and which was to continue full seventy years did not cease until this year--520 B. C. The words were uttered in connection with a vision given to Zechariah in the second year of Darius, in the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, the month Sebat; a vision in which the Lord declared the seventy years of indignation had then and only then ceased. "Then the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord

of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these *threescore and ten years*? And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words . . . Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it." (Zech. 1:7, 12, 16.) This was in the second year of Darius 11, 520 B. C.

"FROM THIS DAY FORWARD"

We ask what further proof do we need that the seventy years of desolating indignation did not cease until this year, 520 B. C., sixteen years after the 70 years of servitude had ceased? We now give the word of the Lord Himself in which the exact *month and day of the month* is given, when the desolation did cease, and the land began to receive the Lord's blessing by beginning to be fruitful. The words are from the Prophet Haggai:

'And now, I pray you, consider from this day and up ward [onward], from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the Temple of the Lord . . . I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the labors of your hands; yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord.

"Consider now from this day and upward [onward], *from the four and twentieth day of the ninth month* [Chisleu], even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's Temple was laid, consider it. Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, as yet the vine and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, hath not brought forth; *from this day will I bless you.*"--Hag. 2:15-19.

This Scripture states that the Lord promises His people through Haggai that from the day that they gave heed to the Prophet's words, and commenced in earnest the work of restoring the Temple which had been over fourteen years hindered by "the adversaries of Judah" (Ezra 4) ; (which hindrance was doubtless of the Lord, because of their wrong heart condition) God's blessing would come upon them and the defective harvests would cease and the year of drought and famine come to an end.

This was in the second year of Darius II, the *four and twentieth day of the ninth month, Chisleu*. The desolation had ended. Now note carefully, from the tenth day of Tebeth, 589 B. C. which as we have shown was the very day that Nebuchadnezzar's armies had desolated the land and caused all agricultural pursuits to cease, and the siege of Jerusalem began; the day that was mentioned by the Lord to Ezekiel as a sad day to be remembered (Ezek. 24:1, 2) ; the day which has been observed as a fast day by the Jews ever since--to the twenty-fourth of Chisleu, B. C. 520, was a period of 25,202 days; and seventy years of 360 days contain exactly 25,200 days. We may conclude therefore, that the era of "desolations," was a period of seventy years of 360 days, beginning the day after the Babylonian army invested Jerusalem and ending the day before the foundation--of the second Temple was laid in the second year of Darius--520 B. C. On the authority of a noted writer, we learn (to quote his exact words) : "The date of the Paschal new moon by which the Jewish year is regulated was the evening of the fourteenth of March in B. C. 589, and about noon on the first, of April B. C. 520. According to the phases [appearance] the first of Nisan in the former year was

probably the 15th or 16th of March, and in the latter year, the 1st or 2nd of April."--*The Coming Prince*-pp. 70, 71-ROBERT ANDERSON, L.L.D.

In regard to the use of luni-solar time, 360 days to a year, we note that this is the length of the year used, symbolically -a day for a year, in calculating the seven times of the Gentiles. In connection with Daniel's prayer- (Dan. 9) reference was made to seventy years fulfilled, and the prophecy given in answer -to the prayer foretold a period of seven times seventy (490), which we believe are computed on both the lunar and luni-solar scale. Again, are not the hundred and eighty days of Xerxes intended to be six months? (Esther' 1:4.) The following will be interesting in this connection:

"That the Jewish year was luni-solar, appears to be reasonably certain. If tradition may be trusted, Abraham preserved in his family the year of 360 days, which he had known in his Chaldean home.* The month dates of the flood (150 days being specified as. the interval between the seventeenth day of the second month and the same day of the seventh month) appear to show that this form of year was the earliest known to our race. Sir Isaac Newton states that 'all nations before the just length of the solar year was known, reckoned months by the course of the moon, and years by the return of winter and summer, spring and autumn; and in making calendars for their festivals they reckoned thirty to a lunar month and twelve lunar months to a year, taking the nearest round numbers, whence came the division of the ecliptic into 360 degrees.' And in adopting this statement, SIR G. C. LEWIS avers that 'all credible testimony and all antecedant probability lead to the result that a solar year containing twelve lunar moons, determined within certain limits of error, has been generally recognized by the nations adjoining the Mediterranean from a remote antiquity.' "--*Astronomy of the Ancients*.

-*Enc. Brit. (6th Ed.), title "Chronology," See also Smith's Bible Dictionary, title "Chronology," p. 314.*

INEVITABLE CONCLUSIONS

Finally let us hear again the words of the revealing angel of Zechariah's vision: "O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these *three score and ten years*," and we listen with wonder to the voice of the Lord in reply: "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it." The seventy years of desolation had ceased at the appointed time! The Lord's people had at last given heed to His words, and returned to Him with all their heart; therefore the Lord would again take up His abode in His holy Temple! The blessing. of the Lord, however, began, as we have shown from the Scriptures in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, the 24th day of the month Chisleu, in the year 520 B. C.

The Jewish month "Tebeth," corresponds (nearly) with our months, December and January; and that of "Chisleu" corresponds (nearly) with our months November and December. Using the above calculation as a basis then, Dec. 25, 589, would be the date that Jerusalem was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar and the

anniversary of this Jewish event has been observed as a fast for 2500 years by the Jews.

In consideration of the foregoing testimony of the Scriptures it seems plainly evident that Jeremiah's statement about the land being desolate 70 years cannot refer to the 70 years of servitude which began in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign but must be reckoned from another point. In other words, there is entire harmony on this subject of these two periods-the 70 years of servitude or bondage to the kingdom of Babylon beginning 606 B. C., and ending 536, B. C., the first year of Cyrus; and the 70 years of desolation or Sabbath-keeping of the land, starting at 589 B. C., when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem and stopped all agricultural pursuits, thus making the land desolate, and extending to 520 B. C., the second year of Darius Hystaspes, at which time all embargo was removed and the Lord plainly declared that from that time forward He would bless the land and the building of the Temple.

OTHER FEATURES OF THE CHRONOLOGY AFFECTED

And now arriving at this point in our examination of this subject of the "Times and seasons," additional objections and questions very properly arise, amongst which are the following: Will not this discrepancy of 19 years, or the taking out of 19 years from the period of the kings seriously interfere with certain other features of our chronological system, such as the end of 6,000 years of human history, the length of the Jewish and Gospel Ages, the Parallel Dispensations, the period of Israel's Double, the jubilee calculation, etc.? Yes, we answer quite true. It would be impossible to shorten any of the periods prior to our Lord's First Advent without materially disturbing the deductions that we have* heretofore regarded as correct. It was on this very point that PASTOR RUSSELL said in 1914, that the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, would imply some serious disorder in connection with *"the chronological arrangements-our view of the Harvest and all."*

In 1916, two years later, PASTOR RUSSELL set forth his changed view regarding the Harvest, and this we published in the preceding issue of the HERALD. Again, we emphasize his statement: "Our *expectations must not be allowed to weigh anything against the facts.*" As for the other features above referred to, 6,000 years-from the fall, the length of the Gospel and Jewish Ages, Parallel Dispensations, Israel's Double, Jubilees, etc., these we are leaving for examination and discussion in these pages later.

Sufficeth here to say, dear brethren, that we feel that there is nothing whatever for us to fear in re-adjusting ourselves to a new situation. There are no grounds whatever for us to feel a disturbance of our faith in the Lord and the wonderful knowledge of His plans and purposes, which we know is well established. Rather the fact that we are permitted to see the matter of the "times and seasons" set forth in this article in a clearer light should strengthen our faith and constitute a new impetus for our zeal and love in the Master's service. Note again in this connection the words of wisdom. by our Pastor, speaking with regard to the statement in Hab. 2:3:

"FOR THE VISION IS YET FOR AN APPOINTED TIME"

"This vision is to be made clear at THE APPOINTED TIME. We may not read the TIME features with the same absolute certainty as DOCTRINAL features; for TIME IS NOT SO DEFINITELY STATED IN THE SCRIPTURES AS ARE THE BASIC DOCTRINES. WE ARE STILL WALKING BY FAITH AND NOT BY SIGHT. We are, however, not faithless and unbelieving, but faithful and waiting. If later it should be demonstrated that the Church is not glorified by October, 1914, we shall try to feel content with whatever the Lord's will may be. We believe that very many who are running the race for the prize will be able to thank God for the chronology, even if it should prove not accurate to the year, or even out of the way several years. We believe that the chronology is a blessing. If it should wake us a few MINUTES earlier or a few HOURS earlier in the Morning than we would otherwise have waked, WELL AND GOOD! It is those who are AWAKE who get the BLESSING.

"If 1915 should go by without the passage of the Church, without the time of trouble, etc., it would seem to some to be a great calamity. IT WOULD NOT BE SO WITH OURSELF. We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and this is our expectation; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will. IF IN THE LORD'S PROVIDENCE THE TIME SHOULD COME TWENTYFIVE YEARS LATER, THEN THAT WOULD BE OUR WILL. This would -not change the fact that the Son of God was sent by the Father, and that the Son is the Redeemer of our race; that He died for our sins; that He is selecting the 'Church for His Bride; and that the next thing now in order is the establishment of the glorious Kingdom at the hands of this great Mediator, who during His Mediatorial Reign will bless all the families of the earth. These facts remain the same. THE DIFFERENCE WOULD BE MERELY THAT OF A FEW YEARS in the time of the establishment of the Kingdom."--Z '14-4.

The sum of the above language is that PASTOR RUSSELL was quite well prepared to adjust himself to different conclusions regarding the chronology in case it became necessary. We would add in this connection that in our investigation thus far we have found nothing to disturb our calculations with regard to the periods of Daniel's prophecy,, the 1,335 symbolic days, the 1,260 days of Papacy's reign, nor the 1,290 symbolic days, nor do we know of anything to unsettle our confidence in our Lord's Second Presence being an accomplished fact. All the evidence about us seems to but confirm the conclusions we have hitherto held with regard to these being the days of the presence of the Son of Man. The marvelous awakening of mankind in modern times, the wonderful inventions of to-day, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest seem in corroboration of our conclusions that we are in the Dawning of the New Age, and soon our long-looked-for deliverance and the joys of the Kingdom will be realized and earth's night of sorrow and weeping will pass away.

"Peace, troubled soul! thou need'st not fear;
Thy great Provider still is near;
Who led thee last will lead thee still;
Be calm, and sink into His will.

"The Lord, who built the earth and sky,
In love now hearkens to thy cry:
His promise thou may'st freely claim:
Ask and receive in Jesus' name.

"Open to God thine inmost heart;
He will His comfort then impart;
He will His grace most freely give,
And peace and joy thou shalt receive.

"Rest in His love though storms prevail,
No storm can there o'erwhelm thy soul.
Ne'er let thy faith and courage fail,
HIS shall work good by His control."

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES LI

THE CURSE REMOVED FROM THE EARTH

"And there will be no more any Accursed thing; and the Throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His Servants will serve Him; and will see His Face; and His Name will be on their Foreheads."--Rev. 22:3, 4.

AS ONE of the benign and most desirable results declared to come from- the New Jerusalem, the Holy City, St. John announces that the curse shall be abolished, indeed, shall be no more. This expression, "There shall be no more curse," contains a world of meaning. It is one of those powerful statements, sublimely comprehensive of the last and final achievement of this glorious City of God, and its meaning can be none other than that contained in the prayer of our dear Master, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in Heaven."

The first paradise was glorious, but sin entered and man was banished from it, and the curse came. Ever since, the whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain under it. And because of the fact that this sad catastrophe occurred once, the question might still be an open one concerning the possibility of a repetition of sin in the restored paradise with its ever-attending evil 'consequences. If man had once an access to the Tree of Life and lost it, might he not lose it again, with all its glorious blessings? St. John authoritatively answers this question: "There will be no more any accursed thing." Its disappearance from the New Earth will be everlasting. The glorious blessedness of paradise restored, will never again be lost or give place to sorrow, pain and death. This condition, however, will not be obtained because man's freedom will be any more under restraint than it was when he dwelt in Eden and sinned; but it will have been accomplished through a training, a discipline, that he will have experienced through the thousand years, during which he will have been permitted to contrast the blessedness of a righteous rule under Emmanuel and that of the present order. in which Satan has ever exerted an influence for evil. As it has been truly said that the lessons derived from man's training and experiences with evil and righteousness will then be of inestimable value to the redeemed, "which will stand like a wall between them

and danger; and the love and appreciation of what has been so dearly purchased will be so intense and high after all these ages of the reign of sin and death that they will never consent for anything to let it go. Holy angels stand fast in their blessedness forever, not because they are less free to sin than were those who kept not their first estate; but because having stood the test, the whole momentum of their moral being moves only toward what is true and good, and so they never fall. And such shall be the security of man redeemed. Stationed on the high vantage-ground of a victory won through pain and suffering, and made strong in the unfailing helps and mercies of his God, there will be no mote of fuel left in him for sin to kindle and no more curse and danger to him forever. Being innocent, man ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and learned to know evil. For all these weary ages he has been tasting and experiencing the bitterness of evil. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus they that believe in Him come to know good; and knowing good, there will be no more turning of their hearts from it, and hence no more sinning and no more curse. And man being finally and permanently redeemed, everything that has been disordered, disabled or cursed for man's sake shall also be permanently delivered.--Rom. 8:9-23."--SEISS.

"I WILL GREATLY MULTIPLY THY SORROW"

The judgments, "curse," pronounced on account of the sins committed in the first paradise are so far as humanity is concerned two-fold:

(1) "Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."--Gen. 3:15.

How terrible has been this curse: Given to be man's helpmate and companion she became his slave; for man in becoming a sinner became coarse, selfish. Might took the place of right, and the weaker vessel instead of being honored and cherished was oppressed and degraded. "Thy desire shall be to thy husband," or as it is better rendered, "Thou wilt be in subjection to thy husband, and he will rule [or tyrannize] over thee."

All this came because man sinned and thus became separated from the Creator. What a curse this has been! "The shameless, brutal degradation of woman by the stronger sex has been perhaps one of the very darkest results of the fall, and one of the plainest proofs of the ruin which sin has wrought in the nature of man. Save where Divine revelation has shed its beams of healing light, woman is to this day a slave or a captive or a victim. The Indian loads his wife like a beast of burden, with all his goods and chattels, drives her before him with her infant on her back as he would drive a brute, and walking unburdened by her side flogs her when her strength fails. The Bantu Chief in Central Africa dies; straightway a dozen of his living wives are forced into the great square pit which is to be his grave, to make a couch for the corpse and be buried alive to keep the dead company. How often, when the Hindu husband has died, has the wife been burned on his funeral pile, as a compliment to his memory! One hundred millions of women and young girls--fellow subjects of our own--are immured as prisoners to this day in the dark and loathsome Zenanas of India, doomed to a wretched, cruel, dreary life-long captivity, and to an ignorance which degrades them into mere talking animals; and this by the laws and customs invented and established by *men*. They may

never eat with their own husbands, or share any of his pleasures or pursuits, never walk abroad for exercise, or travel for health, instruction or amusement. They are simply slaves, life-long prisoners, defrauded of the first right of a human being, and worse off than any negro in the West Indies' in days gone by. Such is -the portion of woman in heathendom, and it is not much better among the . . . millions of Mohammedans. . . .

"Christianity, as we have seen, makes men new creatures in Christ, and does away with all of this; and even where it is a mere profession instead of reality', it still makes men ashamed of this up disguised brutality and selfishness so that some forms of the degradation and oppression of the weaker sex have disappeared in Christendom. But we must not think they have ceased to be because we see them *not.*"-*Divine Programme of the Worlds History.*--H. G. GUINNESS.

"IN SORROW SHALT THOU EAT"

(2) Unto the man when he disobeyed it was said: "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."--Gen. 3:17-19.

It should be kept in mind that these words do not merely announce a judicial penalty, but are a prediction of what would inevitably be a result, a consequence of sin, separating him from his Creator. Death is here stated to be the penalty for sin. "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." As the above author has said, "How simple these words, but how awfully sad and solemn their fulfillment! The echo of that sentence uttered ages ago in Eden rolls back upon us in ever multiplying funeral dirges from all lands' and ages. Death, death, death, universal, all-devouring death! Enthroned king in paradise, death reigned from Adam to Moses and has reigned ever since.. Every biography ends like the-patriarchal geneologies in Genesis 5, with the ever-recurring strain, 'and he died.' Our globe is one great cemetery. Successive generations of men have passed away to the grave, as the successive crops of grass fall in turn beneath the mower's scythe. 'We cannot hold mortality's strong hand; men must endure their going. hence e'en as their coming hither.' Two hundred generations of men have succeeded each other on earth since their Creator put into the hands of our first parents this program of the experiences of their race."

A fair estimate of the number who have lived and died in the long period since this sentence was pronounced is 20,000,000,000. According to this, twenty thousand million times has this. Divine sentence been executed. It is estimated that approximately a hundred thousand souls die daily. According to this estimate, from the Bible standpoint this Divine penalty is executed one hundred thousand times every twenty-four hours. In considering this death penalty, we must keep in mind the fact that sickness and suffering, pain and sorrow, disease and decay, form a large part of this death sentence, for these would never have come into our world had not man sinned. Indeed all these are a part of the awful penalty, and included in the "curse" that is stated by St. John shall cease at the time of the vision's fulfillment, forever.

"IN THE SWEAT OF THY FACE"

Another thing included in this "curse" that came in because of sin, as found in the statement of the Creator, is that of excessive labor. Labor of itself is not a curse, but rather a blessing. Adam when in Eden had his appointed tasks to perform. He was to "dress the garden and keep it" (Gen. 2:15); and for man in his fallen condition with all of his evil propensities, etc., labor is a necessity, indeed a manifestation of the wisdom and mercy of the Creator. However, it was to be a part of the curse. The earth not yielding spontaneously, human food, but instead, thorns and thistles, would as man increased in numbers, in order to make it productive, require labor, amounting to painful, incessant, wearisome toil. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, etc.

We quote again from the above writer:

"To note the fulfillment of this prediction, we must not confine our attention to agricultural labor merely. Glance over the world, again look back over the intervening centuries and abroad throughout 'all races of men! Has it not ever been so? Have not the multitudes, yea, the masses of mankind, even now to endure weary, wasting toil, that they may live? Is not life to the great majority a hard battle for existence? We must not think of the few who form the exception, but of the many who fall under the rule. We must note how the races who refuse to toil (like the Red Indians, who prefer to live by the chase, or the Bushman of the Kalihara, who depend on the natural produce of the country), die out by degrees and cease to be. We must note how even, with all their toil, millions of industrious Chinese, Hindus, and others, are periodically carried off by famine. Millions of our fellow subjects in India do not know what it is to have more than one meal a day, and are rarely free from a painful feeling of hunger. We must consider the overwhelming labors imposed on millions more by slavery; the arduous, exhausting and dangerous toil involved to still other millions in such operations as underground mining for coal and other minerals, navigating stormy seas as fishermen, or in pursuit of commerce. We must think of the life of drudgery and weariness led by multitudes of women and young children in factories of various kinds, of multitudes of poor seamstresses toiling all their lives for barest subsistence; think of the thousands of men employed in the great cities of the world as drivers of cabs, trains, omnibuses, and other public vehicles-men whose hands must grasp the reins for twelve or fourteen and even sixteen. hours a day, and that for seven days in a week! And even if we rise above the classes condemned to the lowest forms of labor, oh, how full of toil in this world! Rest and leisure for enjoyment are the rare exceptions; the, stern, rarely relaxed rule is toil, labor it the sweat of the brow!"

"If little labor, little are our gains,
Man's fortunes are according to his pains."

SERVE HIM AND SEE HIS FACE

"The glorious blessings and favors of that Millennial period, set apart by the Lord and declared by the mouth of all the holy Prophets to be times of restitution of all things spoken of, is summed up most completely in the declaration, 'There shall be no more curse.' In what more comprehensive language could the Lord declare the end of the reign of sin and death and the commencement of the reign of righteousness unto life eternal. There is a curse upon the world now, official, legal. It has been against us as a race for six thousand years. It is a curse or sentence of death. Although our dear Redeemer has died, the just for the unjust, although He was made a curse for us, nevertheless up to the present time release from that curse has come to only a small proportion of the race. In the Father's Plan the only ones released from the curse, the only ones who have escaped the condemnation which is still on the world, is *the class which has accepted Christ and is trusting in Him.

"These are not justified outwardly, actually-, but are justified in God's sight, justified by faith. . . . Those who can thus exercise the necessary faith have had the opportunity during this Gospel Age of consecrating their justified lives, to

have fellowship with Jesus in the sufferings of this present time, to have fellowship in His death, to be dead with Him. The promise to these is that if faithful in this matter they shall live and be with their Lord, partakers of His glory and sharers in His future work on behalf of the world.

"With the end of this Age, when the last members of the Body shall have finished their course and be glorified with Him, He as the Great High Priest, and they as the under-priests, His members, will be prepared to bless the world. Then will be presented to the Father on behalf of the world the, merit which came from our dear Redeemer's death. . . . Then Divine justice will declare the lifting of the curse from all the world of mankind, and then, the work of graciously blessing and uplifting and helping them out of their sinful condition into everlasting life will be possible and will begin. There shall be no more 'curse' against humanity, but, on the contrary, they may have fellowship with the Lord and the Throne of His grace and the evidences of His favor will be theirs, and all who desire shall have the opportunity to serve Him. All the night [v. 51 of darkness, ignorance, superstition and sin will be past; no longer will the world be dependent for light [not literal sunlight] upon the imperfect shining of such little candles as the Lord's people are now.

"All who come into accord with the Lord shall see His face, that is, there will be no earth-born cloud between, no hindrances to the Father's love and favor, and His name shall be in their forehead. [v. 4.1 They will confess Him, they will have His likeness, the various elements which go to make up His glorious name and character will be theirs and will be manifest in their faces. . . .

'THEY SHALL REIGN'

"The developments of that Millennial Age will bring the willing and obedient of the human family back to the original perfection, the image and likeness of Cod, and once more they will have direct communication with the Lord and not merely His written messages through Apostles and Prophets as now. 'And they shall reign forever and ever.' This does not refer to the Church, whose reign has been previously described. The reference is to the reign of those whom the Millennial Age shall find worthy of life eternal--all the unworthy being then cut off in the Second Death. The account here is in full accord with that of Matt. 25:34--the sheep of that Age will at its close be received into the fullest fellowship with the Lord, the goats of that period being destroyed.

"The nature of the reign then to be delivered to the world . . . will be the same reign or, kingdom which at his creation was bestowed upon father Adam, as it is written in Psalm 8:6, 'Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen with the beasts of the field and fowl of the air and fish- of the sea.' This dominion of earth was part of what. father Adam lost by his disobedience, and was a part, therefore', of what our Lord Jesus purchased by His obedience even unto death, and is to be an element of the restitution to be accomplished during the Millennial reign of Christ.

"At the close of that reign the Kingdom shall be .delivered up to God, even the Father, by being delivered over to those for whom the Father originally intended it, and who by that time will have been fully prepared to receive it. The whole

world of perfect men will be a world of kings, though doubtless one of their number will serve particularly as general or representative, just as in the Republic every individual is a sovereign and from their own number they choose a sovereign, a servant."--Z '05-172, 173.

This glorious vision has been read and pondered over by God's saints from St. John's day to the present time. This City of Gold has glittered in their imagination and been the theme of their song throughout the long centuries until now. While not understood by those who lived in past generations as clearly as it may be understood by God's saints in the present time, yet it has ever served to cause their hearts' affections to be set on things above, and not on things on the earth; thus encouraging them to faithfulness in their suffering, their trials and their perplexities, in overcoming sin and the powers that now control, and thus gain those blessed and glorious realities represented by that City of Gold. We conclude our consideration of this closing vision of St. John, of this Holy City, New Jerusalem, in the language of another-:

"Such is the final picture set before us in these wonderful prophecies and foreshadowings of the purposes of God. Such are the foreintimations of that new heavens and earth wherein eternal righteousness dwells. And such are the glimpses which our gracious Savior has given us of the dignities and blessedness to which we are called by His Gospel.

"See then, my friends, how very high our calling is, And shall we not value, cherish, and improve our chance for such an eternal home? Shall we slight the offers and opportunities of blessedness like this? Let fortunes' pass; let friendships be forfeited; let earthly comforts go unenjoyed; cast honors, titles, crowns, empires to the wolves and bats; but let not the privilege go by of, becoming an immortal king and co-regent with the Lamb in the Golden City of the New Jerusalem."

"Rise my soul and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things
Toward heaven, thy native place."

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY LXII--MAY 8

THE BEAST'S BLASPHEMY AND WAR AGAINST THE SAINTS--REV. 13:5-10

(406) What is signified by the Mouth speaking blasphemy that was given to the Beast, and what is the meaning of the word blasphemy as -used in this connection? H '20-10.

(407) Explain the symbolic fulfillment of the Beast continuing forty-two months, and his blasphemies against God, His Name, His Tabernacle, and those that dwell in Heaven. H '20-10.

(408) Explain the fulfillment of verse 7: the symbolic war with the saints, and the Beast's power over all kindreds, etc. H '20-10.

(409) In what sense was the Beast worshiped by all upon the earth, and what class is here implied as having their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life? H '20-10, 11.

(410) Explain verses 9 and 10: How have the Lord's people been tempted along the line of taking to the sword? What is implied in the statement, "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints"? H 120-11.

STUDY LXIII--MAY 15

THE SIMILARITY OF THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST -- REV. 13:1; 17:3, 9

(411) In our study of the Revelation visions thus far, what is our conclusion as to the different senses in which these terms Beast and Dragon are used and as to the distinctions to be noted? H '20-21.

(412) Explain the different shades of meaning indicated in the other symbols used in connection with the Dragon and the Beast, such as the term Babylon, Mother of Harlots, Papacy, anti-Christ, etc. H '20-21.

(413) How does the vision recorded in chap. 17 of the scarlet colored Beast having seven Heads and ten Horns harmonize with what we have been studying in chap. 13? H '20-21.

(414) What would seem to be the peculiar significance of the angel's statement, "Here is the mind which hath wisdom" mentioned in chap. 17:9? H '20-21.

(415) Why may we properly regard the angel's explanation concerning the Beast's seven Heads and ten Horns as representing the key to an understanding of the fourth Beast of Daniel 7, and how have expositors in general regarded this matter? H '20-21.

LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

DESIRES TO PROVE ALL THINGS

Dear Brethren:

I am interested very much in the Truth as our dear Pastor, taught us, and while we have all of his writings that we can get, including the reprint Towers, we are wondering what your publication is offering to the "thinking Christians."

Do you have tracts or anything for free distribution? Wife and I have put out thousands of tracts while Brother Russell was here with us. I would like to see a copy of your tracts and also your journal, for in these times it is well we think to put these things to the test-see if they agree with the teaching of the six Volumes of the Studies and the back Towers. We feel that we have a right to examine the literature that we are using, and if it does not stand the test, as some will not, then we do not want it. If yours will stand the test, we will be glad to see it.

Yours in Christian love,'

R. N. I.-Kans.

"IN THE FURNACE OF AFFLICTION"

Dear Brethren:

The Lord willing, I am going to try and write just a few lines so you may know how I appreciate your labor of love for the Lord's dear ones. I have been a shut-in for twenty-five years, and afflicted for thirty-nine years, and my hands are almost useless. For sixteen years I lived without God or -hope in the world, and then the dear Lord snatched me like a brand from the burning by sending me the Harvest Message, the wonderful Story of Jesus and His Love.

I know so well all about severe pain, severe trial and constant battles in life, but I also. know how strong are those "Everlasting Arms" beneath us. How tender is the Father's love that surrounds us! How precious are the promises that encourage us! How helpful the power of the Holy Spirit that sustains us! How blessed is it to realize the answers He gives to our prayers by sending whatever is best for our Spiritual welfare!"

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, praying that His richest blessings may rest upon you.

Your sister by His grace,

M. C.--R. I.

REGARDING EXCELLENT METHODS OF SERVICE

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing \$ Please send me two dozen copies of the June 1-15 HERALD concerning Hell, etc. The balance is to go to the Tract Fund.

Would like to have you send me some "Where are the Dead?" tracts, as many as you can spare, as we can make good use of all we can get. On account of the scarcity of tracts for general distribution we had been thinking of some way that we could find out who really were interested and who would read if they had the literature. If *this* could be done then we could supply them with some, always having enough on hand for that purpose. The enclosed card is the result and it was designed to describe the contents of the June 1-15 HERALD.

(Some of the friends use their spare time in circulating them from house to house. When we get an inquiry we immediately send them one of the HERALDS and one of the "Inauguration of Christ's Kingdom" tracts. After sufficient time has elapsed to have read the literature one of the sisters calls and loans the First Volume.

Our thought in doing *this* was to find those Who were really interested--those who "have an ear to hear," as that is 'still our mission--still the Work of this Age. While we have not had a great many inquiries (nor did we expect many) those who have written us in answer to the cards (14 to date), for the most part have shown much interest and gladly accept the literature.

Nor is this the most important part in our estimation. The effect that engaging in the work has upon those so doing is very beneficial, and we look forward each day for some inquiry from Truth-hungry ones whom we may supply with the Bread of Life. In some respects it is more gratifying than putting out the tracts (although we would do that if we had them), for we see some immediate results of our work, and this brings us in personal contact with the ones who wish to understand.

This is a very strong Catholic community, and I believe were it Protestant we would get more responses in proportion. . . .

With Christian love to you in which Sr. G. joins.

Your brother by His Grace, J. W. G.--*Mich.*

The following is a copy of the form or outline suggested in the above letter, printed on a slip about the size of a post card:

"He that hath an ear let him hear."--Rev. 2:7.

"Nineteen hundred years ago Jesus foretold the conditions existing in the world today, saying: "Upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity; the sea and the waves (the restless, discontented) roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking forward to the things coming upon the earth (society) ; . . . When ye see these things come to pass, THEN KNOW THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NIGH AT HAND."Luke 21:25-31.

Upon request literature will be sent you FREE containing: (1) An explanation as to why that Divine Kingdom or Government is about to take control, the manner in which it will be accomplished, and the effect of its establishment upon the earth amongst men. (2) An examination of every Scripture containing the word "Hell" and its original meaning in the Hebrew and the Greek, showing the Scriptural teaching concerning the state of the dead, and the only hope of release therefrom. (3) A satisfactory explanation of many of the parables of the New Testament, generally much misunderstood.

Address, P. O. Box

[We are deeply interested in the method of ministry above outlined and it appeals to us very much. We feel that we do well to recommend to the friends in general that they give it a fair and thorough trial and see if it may not be productive of much good and prove a means of rich blessing upon our own hearts if not upon others.--Ed. Com.]

GENERAL ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE BRITISH BRETHREN

The announcement that the General Annual Convention of our brethren throughout Great Britain will this year be held in London as usual, July 30, 31 and August 1, will no doubt be a matter of very keen interest to many. The BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, who Are largely instrumental in arranging for this

gathering, advise us that the British friends are looking to our INSTITUTE to again send a representative or representatives to the Convention, and that additionally they will be very glad to arrange for a general pilgrimage throughout Great Britain and Ireland for the American delegate, in case one is sent. We have of course written our British brethren assuring them of our deep and genuine appreciation of the fact that they think of -us in connection with the Convention, and that we esteem most highly their invitation to send to them .an American representative.. We have advised them, however, that our circumstances at this time do not permit us to come to a decision on the subject of sending a representative, as much as we are interested in their Convention and the work abroad. We are therefore waiting upon the Lord and looking to Him for guidance in this matter as in everything pertaining to His Cause; and should He open up the way for us to co-operate by sending a representative we shall most gladly do so. Meantime we assure our dear brethren across the sea of our heartfelt interest 'in their coming Convention, and of our earnest prayers that the Divine blessing may attend all the efforts and arrangements pertaining thereto.

The BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE Of course have charge of the arrangements, and all who desire further information regarding the gathering in London in August should communicate direct with the following address: BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, 23 High St., Marylebone, London, W. 1, Eng.