

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

VOL. IV JULY 1, 1921 No. 13

OUTLOOK FROM THE WALLS OF ZION

THE almost phenomenal, increase of knowledge along all lines in modern times has indeed greatly accentuated power in the hands of humanity, power which, if turned into proper channels and along right lines, would be productive of inestimable comfort and blessing to our race, but if perverted and turned into a wrong direction, may result in unspeakable woe and suffering. With Satan still in control of "the present evil world," the general law and rule of which is selfishness, we are informed by the authors of Holy Writ that the wonderful knowledge of these days will continue largely to be misapplied for a time, and will be permitted of the Lord to accomplish the complete undoing of the present order of things in order that the bitter fruitage of disobedience shall be fully appreciated and that men may be qualified and prepared to properly apply the lessons of truth and knowledge that will come to them under the new dispensation of things. -- Dan. 12:1, 4; Zeph. 3:8, 9.

As it is today, many are recognizing that the light of knowledge is not receiving its normal application; and as they look into the shadowy future, the thoughtful cannot but catch a vision of the dire consequences of indiscretion yet to be reaped. In this connection it is interesting to read the trend of thought set forth in an editorial in *The New York American* of June 18, 1921:

"The president of Dartmouth College, in a moment of trepidation and doubt, puts the questions:

"Has man explored the realms of science and appropriated knowledge of their potentialities beyond his capacity to control the forces he has released or combined?

'Are the magnitude, and the intensity, and the speed of life today within man's control, or is he a helpless passenger in a world run wild?'

"President Hopkins is not alone in his apprehensions. When we look out upon the world today and see the fruits of one war waged with the weapons with which modern science has equipped mankind, we may well wonder whether civilization itself could withstand another struggle in which the destructive arts shall have progressed as far beyond those which the peoples of the world were employing against each other three years ago as those were in advance of the methods of the European war in 1871.

"Time was that wars were fought for most part by professional soldiers. But the twentieth century has seen virtually all the adult males of the embattled countries under arms, or engaged in war industries. The recent war, with some few perhaps unavoidable exceptions, spared noncombatants and cities which were, not fortified, or bases for military operations.

"The next war will spare no one-the babe in the cradle a thousand miles from the main battlefields will have little more security, than. the soldier in the trenches. As Dr. Hopkins puts it:

"Deadly gases which give the individual man capacity to destroy whole, populations, availability of disease cultures and knowledge of the possibility of the propagation of these, genius for mechanical devices by which the culmination of the destructive force of shattering explosives can be delayed and timed at any desired place for maximum effect-such are the resources for the modern Samson, blinded mentally and spiritually, who would make the pillars built for the support of civilization become its, destruction.' he picture is appalling. The speaker does not exaggerate -no one could possibly exaggerate the power for evil of the new forces of death and destruction which man has discovered or subdued.

"But to them all--to the irresistible TNT, to the death-dealing chlorine gas, to the disease germs which spread pestilence afar--there is one force superior, one force by which .all may be controlled and to which each must yield, and that is the mind of man.

"The intellect that created or harnessed these forces can control them for good or evil. And only by the development of that intellect along spiritual lines will the control be for good.

"Not by ignoring the existence of forces with great powers for evil is good to be attained and kept, but by utilizing them for the advancement of man and the maintenance of peace.

"The spiritual development of man is the one answer to and corrective of the multiplication of the forces of destruction.

"Man, their master, will not employ them for his own undoing when he learns that among nations and peoples, as among individuals, -an injury to one is an injury to all, and that in. the end the Golden Rule is as safe a guide in international relations as it is in the every day associations of mankind."

While this editorial acknowledges the dreadful results of the next great war, the remedy, proposed, namely, that the forces of evil will yet be harnessed and subdued by the spiritual development of man, and the application of the Golden Rule, seems to us weak indeed; yet this is, the only remedy known to 'the majority, who see, not, the Divine Program--that the .Great Prince of Peace is about to take unto Himself His great power and will subdue and conquer the angry passions of humanity. Then, indeed, with the establishing of, His mighty, Kingdom, He will teach the nations to war no more, and under the benign influences of His holy -instruction, the spiritual development of men will take place--the restitution. to the image and likeness of God , of all. the willing and obedient, in which condition they will never again misapply the lessons of knowledge and truth, but in His favor, may live forever.

"THE BANKERS' REQUEST"

Another editorial, found in *The Chicago Evening Post* of June 4, 1921, is of unusual significance as showing the tendency of men under stress of trouble and when brought face to face with great problems and their own helplessness. What is indicated in, the following editorial is but a hint of what we may yet expect,

when all the present plans and hopes of men are wrecked and there is no arm of flesh on which to lean:

"A few weeks ago a prominent minister in New York received a letter from the Bankers' Association of Helena, Mont. It read somewhat in this fashion:

"Dear Sir: We have been having a series of addresses at our weekly luncheons.' Men of national reputation have discussed questions specifically related to banking, to the business situation, to foreign trade, rural credits and other such matters. We have decided that for the final luncheon of the season we want to have some one come and talk to us about God. Will you accept an invitation to address us?'

"The minister accepted, of course. From what we know of him we are confident the bankers of Helena listened to an address which they will long remember.

"But is not this invitation an interesting sign of the times and a confirmation of what we have said in these columns concerning the spiritual awakening which is coming in America and throughout the world?

"We have no doubt many of the Helena bankers are church workers and frequently sit beneath the teaching of the pulpit. There is nothing particularly significant in an individual banker being deeply interested in religion; but when a bankers' association, or any other body of men organized for the promotion of business interests, asks to be talked to about God, we think a significance worthy of note attaches to the request.

"These Montana bankers evidently have felt that there is some relation between God and banking. They have been disturbed, perhaps, as many another group of men has been disturbed, by the evidences of moral laxity, of disorder and conflict which abound in, the world today. They have been impressed by the fact that human authority seems incapable of controlling human passion and greed, or maintaining the safeguards which are essential to welfare and security. They have faced problems-some of which they have heard discussed for which human wisdom seems to have no adequate solution.

"So they write to a preacher and ask him to talk to them about God.

"One of the things that interests us particularly in -this request is the obvious inference that before inviting the preacher they must have talked about God themselves.

"Now, if the bankers of Helena, Mont., have gotten far enough along to talk among themselves about God, there is hope that in many another group of business men throughout the country we may soon see the stupid conventional restraints abandoned which have made any talk about religion impossible.

"The sense of the need of God is growing mightily in the life of America, and it cannot be long before it will become vocal in scores of places as unaccustomed as a western bankers' luncheon-room. When men feel strongly enough the need of God, they will not be silenced by the silly fear of being misunderstood, or any other of the inhibitions which now bar all discussion of the vital themes of life from the secular convocations of men.

"Religion must come back into the mart and the factory if America is to be saved. Men must bring it back. The Helena bankers are helping. And when it comes it will be the religion of Jesus, Brother and Comrade, and of a Father -- God."

Truly the Prophet declares, when the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants will call upon God and learn righteousness.--Isa. 26:9.

"DR MYERS ATTACKS BAPTIST LEADERS"

Through THE BOSTON HERALD Of May 30, 1921, we learn that Dr. Cortland Myers, well-known throughout New England, and for many years popular pastor of Boston's Tremont Temple, seems unusually awake to the fact of the moral and spiritual decline in the great ecclesiastical systems of Christendom, not excepting his own (Baptist) denomination. The report follows:

"The Rev. Dr. Cortland Myers, in his sermon yesterday morning at Tremont Temple, several minutes before his resignation had been read, characterized the leaders of the Baptist denomination as 'little, picayune, pin-headed men.'

"He declared the denomination was 'the most disintegrated religious body in America to-day, and predicted that the next Baptist convention in the Middle West will go to pieces because its members will give in to the higher Bible critics!

"Dr. Myers' address yesterday grouped the Roman Catholic Church, the Jews, Christian Science, the colleges of the country and, finally, his own denomination as arch enemies of the Bible. The colleges are crowded, he said, with teachers who are 'ambassadors of evil.'

"He closed his sermon and left the pulpit without waiting to listen to the reading of his resignation by the Rev. Herbert Handel, his assistant. On June 12, he will preach his last sermon at Tremont Temple."

This attitude assumed, and these remarks from Dr. Myers, give evidence that he has, in the light of the Scriptures, been making some deep discriminations, and recognizes to a considerable extent the difference between light and darkness, between that which constitutes belief and, that which is unbelief; and he appears to be heeding the earnest appeals of St. Paul and St. John: "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;" "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."--2 Cor. 6:17; Rev. 18:4.

We could indeed wish that Dr. Myers might continue advancement in the path of light and grasp fully the solemn significance of these times--that God is not recognizing the present church systems as connected with the Bride of Christ, but has repudiated them--they have been weighed in the balance and found wanting, and He is gathering out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity' that soon the faithful may shine forth in His Kingdom. All those blest with this knowledge are privileged to be of special assistance to others in these days of the decline of faith, in that, fortified with an understanding of the Word of God, they can unfold its meaning and call attention to its beauty and charms and thus confirm the faith of their brethren.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES 1

A VALUE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE VISIONS OF ST. JOHN

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John."--Rev. 1:1.

[In harmony with our statement in a previous issue of this journal, this article commences a series on the first three chapters of Revelation, the object of which is to enlarge upon what was presented in the original articles on this portion of the Revelation published over two years ago.--Ed. Com.]

THERE have been, and are, two principal schools of interpretation of the visions of the Revelation, which widely differ in their application. The first we notice is that of the Futurist, the claim of its adherents being that all the visions from chapter 4 and on to the close of the book refer to events yet future, in connection with and subsequent to the Second Advent; and it is quite generally taught by the supporters of this school that the fulfillment of its visions will occupy a brief period of twelve hundred and sixty literal days. This view had its origin amongst Papal expositors, Ribera, a Jesuit priest, being its author. "In its present form it may be said to have originated at the end of the sixteenth century, with the Jesuit Ribera, who, moved like Alcazar to relieve the Papacy from the terrible stigma cast upon it by the Protestant interpretation, tried to do so by referring these prophecies [of Revelation] to the distant *future*, instead of like Alcazar to the distant *past*. For a considerable period this view was confined to Romanists, and was refuted by several masterly Protestant works. But of late years, since the commencement of this [19th] century, it has sprung up afresh, and sprung up, strange to say, among Protestants." * We may be very sure that the Lord, who promised to guide His Church into all truth, would reveal that truth to His faithful people, who so much needed it, *and not to His enemies*.

*See H. G. Guinness, "Approaching End of Age"--95.

TESTIMONIES AND FACTS ESTABLISHING VALIDITY OF HISTORICAL SCHOOL

The second school is that commonly termed the Historical, which teaches that the visions seen by St. John are portrayals in symbol of the Church's relation to the world powers during the whole Gospel Age, up to the time of the Second Advent and her exaltation with Christ, and on through the Millennium.

History records the fact that the Historical school in its initial stage, had for its first pupils some of those who received their first instructions from Polycarp, a disciple of St. John. The early Church held, for instance, that the ten-horned Beast of Daniel and St. John are the same. *Irenaeus*, a disciple of Polycarp, in his book, "Against Heresies," chapter 26, says: "John in the Apocalypse . . . teaches that the ten horns shall be [the same] which were seen *by Daniel*." *Irenaeus* also taught that the division of the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms would

immediately precede the manifestation of the anti-Christ. We quote respecting this from the same work as above:

"Let them await, in the first place, *the division of the, kingdom' into ten*; then in *the next place*, when these kings are reigning and beginning to set their affairs in order and advance their kingdoms (let them learn), to acknowledge that *he who shall come, claiming the kingdom for himself*, and shall terrify these sons of men of whom we have been speaking, having a name containing the aforesaid number (666), is truly the Abomination of Desolation."

It will thus be seen that *Irenaeus*, a disciple of Polycarp, believed that the manifestation of anti-Christ would require the previous overthrow of the Roman Empire that in his day reigned supreme in the world.

Tertullian, who wrote towards the close of the second century, quoting 2 Thess. 2:6,--"Now ye know what detaineth that he might be revealed in his time, for the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now hinders must hinder until he be taken out of the way,"--has said: "*What obstacle* [in the way of anti-Christ's appearing] *is there but the Roman state*; the falling away of which, by being scattered into ten kingdoms, shall introduce anti-Christ, . . . that the Beast, anti-Christ, with his False Prophet, may wage war on the Church of God?"*

*"On the Resurrection," chapters 24, 25.

Victorinus, who, toward the end of the third century, wrote a commentary on the Revelation, is cited by MR. ELLIOTT, author of *Horae Apocalypticae*, as interpreting the going forth of the white horse and his rider (first Seal) of Rev. 6:2, to the victories of the Gospel in the first century.

MR. GUINNESS has said: "From *Irenaeus*, who lived close to Apostolic times [about 350 A. D.], down to *Chrysostom* and *Jerome*, the Fathers taught that the power withholding the manifestation of the 'Man of Sin,' was the *Roman Empire governed by the Caesars*. The Fathers therefore belong to the Historical and not the Futurist school of interpretation; for Futurists imagine that the hindrance to the manifestation of the Man of Sin is *still in existence*, though the Caesars have long since passed away."--*Romanism and the Reformation*,--121, 122.

In later years the Historical school had enrolled as members such devoted men as Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe, John Huss, Martin Luther, and many unquestionably consecrated men of God. This school contained the Waldenses, the Albigenses, the Lollards, the followers of John Wycliffe, and many others, many of whom laid down their lives in martyrdom for the testimony which they gave against the anti-Christ of Revelation. We give the names of the noted expositors of the Historical school from the Reformation to the present time: Luther, Bullinger, Bale, Chytraeus, Marlorat, Foxe, Brightman, Pareus, Mede, Vitranga, Daubuz, Sir Isaac Newton, Whiston, Bengel, Bishop Newton, Bicheno, Faber, Frere, Irving, Cunningham, Habershon, Bickersteth, Birks, Woodhouse, Keith, Elliott, Barnes, Lord, and Guinness.

SYMBOLS PORTRAY HISTORY OF CHURCH

The latest, and one of the most eminent and godly writers of the Historical school, has thus written:

"For the Day of the Lord's Presence cannot come until the falling away (the apostasy) has taken place, and until the Man of Sin has been developed and revealed out of that apostasy. . . . The various titles applied to this system are evidently symbolic. They do not refer as names to a single individual, but as character delineations to a corrupt religious and civil combination, developed within the nominal Christian Church, which, by its subtle opposition to Christ, the Head, and His true Church, His Body, well earns the name anti-Christ. . . .

"The system which fully answers the description given by inspiration must be professedly Christian, and must contain a large majority of those who claim to be Christians. . . . Its stealthy beginning was in the days of the Apostles,--in the desire of some teachers to be greatest. We need not look long to find a character fitting all the requirements perfectly; one whose record, written by secular historians as well as by its own deluded servants, we shall see agrees exactly with the prophetic delineations of anti-Christ. But when we state that the one and only system whose history fits these prophecies is Papacy, let no one misunderstand us to mean that every Roman Catholic is a man of sin; nor that the priests, nor even the popes of the Church of Rome are, or have been, the anti-Christ. No man is 'the' anti-Christ,' 'the Man of Sin,' described in prophesy. Popes, bishops and others are at most only parts or members of the anti-Christ system, even as all of the Royal Priests are only members of the true Christ." -*Studies*, Vol. 11-2,76, 277.

"But some sincere Christians, not yet awake to the decline of Protestantism, and who do not realize the relationship of the various sects to Papacy, may still be anxiously inquiring. The various Protestant sects (and we say it with all due reverence to, a comparatively few devout souls within 'them, whom the Lord designates as 'wheat,' in contradistinction to the overwhelming numbers of 'tares') are the true daughters of that degenerate system of nominal Christianity, the Papacy, to which the Revelator makes reference in applying to her the name, 'Mother of Harlots.' (Rev. 17:5.) Since Papacy, the mother, is not a single individual, but a great religious system, in keeping with 'the symbol we should expect to see, other religious systems answering to the illustration of daughters of similar character--not, of course, so old, nor necessarily so depraved, as Papacy-but, nevertheless, 'harlots' in the same sense; i. e., religious systems claiming to be either the espoused virgin or the bride of Christ, and yet courting the favor and receiving the support of the world, at the price of disloyalty to Christ."--*Studies*, Vol. IV--28, 29.

From the foregoing, it would seem' that the careful student, tracing the symbols of the visions of St. John, cannot avoid the conclusion that the Revelation of Jesus Christ was especially designed to portray in symbols the history of the falling away from the faith on the part of the Christian Church, and its culmination in a great counterfeit system which would blind and deceive all except those whose names were written in the "Lamb's book of life." (Rev. 13:8.) It is discovered also that the visions of Revelation describe in various symbolisms the history of the

comparatively few faithful, consecrated ones as they came in-contact with the world powers and endeavored to hold forth the Word of Truth, in -the midst of the surrounding ignorance and darkness, made so by apostate Christianity.

PLACE REVELATION OCCUPIES, IN HOLY WRIT

History clearly shows that there have been several epochs in the Gospel Age in which the testimony of the Lord's consecrated has exerted such a powerful direct and indirect influence as to turn the whole current of human affairs into new channels. The Revelation contains many visions describing in symbol these matters. It is evident, too, that several of its visions describe a successful movement in these closing days of the Age to give again the true Gospel to the Church and world. (Rev. 10:11.) These last visions, like the others, are symbolic and occupy a large proportion of the book.

The relation the Revelation sustains to the other books of the Bible is thus stated by an expositor of keen spiritual discernment:

"This book is supplementary to all the others. As Genesis opens out everything detailed in subsequent writings, of what God revealed, literally or in type:--God, creation,- man, Satan, sin, Christ, redemption, Israel, Gentiles, the assembly [Church] of God-so this book closes all, bringing before us God and man in the new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:8), as Genesis gave God and man in the first heaven and first earth. (Gen. 1.) It had to wait until all the counsels and purposes and truths of God ' had been revealed that had been held as secrets in the bosom of God, in order to wind up all, by showing that all must be accomplished in Christ, that all crowns shall be placed upon His head. It was given to Christ' Himself, and as a man with his betrothed, He sent it first to His betrothed assembly, to whom He must tell. all and who is to share all and reign with Him over all."--Taylor.

We may be very sure that the book of Revelation, which completes the Divine canon of inspiration, requiring as it did, supernatural method in giving it to the, Church, has been and is especially at the present time, of vital importance to her service and ministry, and also to her growth and development in Christ. It was given,, doubtless, to supply a special need, for the Church has always needed the help, encouragement and blessing which always accompanies a knowledge of the "sure word of prophecy a light shin ing in a dark place." (2 Pet. 1:19.) There is no book in the whole Bible that to so great an extent as the Revelation reveals the Divine, overruling of the events of history, both good and evil, for the Church's growth and development in grace and knowledge. While there has, been a gradual, progressive understanding of its visions as history has unveiled them, it was not until these closing years of the Age that a clear understand ing of its general scope could be given. The true character of the Divine Plan of human salvation be came so perverted and distorted by the fallen Church systems that it could not be fully understood until the errors of the systems became separated from the Truth, and a clear understanding of the same was restored to the Church. This we believe has recently taken place, and is now a matter of history; indeed, is the subject of several of the closing visions of the book. The fulfillment of these latter visions is of itself, as we shall endeavor to prove, evidence that "the days of the presence of the Son of Man," are here. The words of Christ, "And now I tell

you before it come, that when it is come ye may believe," are very significant in this connection.,

VISIONS OF ST. JOHN HAVE SUSTAINED CHURCH

It should be kept in mind in studying the book of Revelation that it was not designed to foretell *especially* the history of the world-powers ; for as it has been truly said, "The, Church exists in the world, and its outward history is, to- a very large 'extent, affected by it; and just as it would be impossible to write the story of one's life without taking into consideration his environment, so it would be impossible to write the history of the [true] Church without giving some of the history of the world in which. the Church is giving its witness -and testimony. Wars, -revolutions, etc., 'have to a remarkable l degree affected or been affected by the Church's testimony, and for this cause we have those occurrences in the past depicted under various strange and startling symbols. On the other ' -hand, the Church's inward or spiritual ' history is affected by unseen agencies, both Heavenly and Satanic; and so, as in some of the visions, we behold her sustained, cheered, revived, and her influence enlarged; we know .Christ', her "great Head, is acting in her behalf, as portrayed in the symbolic visions of His walking in the midst of the candlesticks [Churches]."

It is very evident that these marvelous, prophetic visions were given for the guidance, assistance and protection of the whole Church through the long, dark centuries of her witnessing to the Gospel. As we read of the experiences of God's consecrated ones of the past, we learn that they have proved to be a mighty power in their history, and that they have served to preserve the faith of the Church in times of peril and general apostasy. We have found that the knowledge of some of them and the testimony thereto have had the effect of giving birth to great reformation movements, particularly that of the sixteenth century; that they have inspired confessors and supported martyrs in the cause of Christ, some of whom sealed their faithfulness at the stake, while others suffered terrible deaths in other ways. A knowledge of some of these marvelous prophetic visions has been largely instrumental in breaking the chains of priestcraft, 'superstition and tyranny, and has, brought multitudes out of bondage of the same. And it is very important to keep in mind that the book of. Revelation is Christ's *last* message to the Church,--"I, Jesus, have sent mine angel [messenger] to testify these things in the Churches."--Rev. 22:16.

A DIVINE PROPHECY

We briefly call attention to some very important points which the book of Revelation itself mentions; points that are encouraging and very necessary for the student to keep in mind.

First: It is a Divine prophecy,--"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants *things which must shortly come to pass.*" (Rev. 1:1.) Other translations render it, "*that* which must come to pass speedily." It is not, as Futurists (who apply all its visions to the scenes of the Second Advent), would have us believe, the revelation or manifestation of the *person* of Jesus Christ, but rather is it a revelation which Christ makes to the Church. This latter is undoubtedly its meaning for the reason that it states that it is a revelation which God *gave to Him*; and because it is said that it refers to *things* that were

shortly to come to pass—in other words, it is an unfolding of *events* that were to take place, and not an unfolding of a person.

Very truly has the meaning of the word as used in this text been explained to be "a disclosure of an extraordinary character, beyond the mere ability of man, by a special communication from heaven. This is manifest, not only from the usual meaning of this word, but by the word *prophecy* in verse 3, and by all the arrangements by which these things were made known. The ideas which would be naturally conveyed by the use of this word in this connection are two: (1) that there was something which was before hidden, obscure, or unknown, and (2) that this was so disclosed by these communications as to be seen or known. The things hidden or unknown were those which pertained to the future; the method of disclosing them, was mainly by symbols." Another has said: "The book of Revelation is the one only book of New Testament prophecy. As the completion of the whole prophetic Scriptures, it gathers up the threads of all former books, and weaves them into one chain of many links which binds history to the throne of God. As *New Testament prophecy*, it adds the heavenly to the earthly sphere, passes the bounds of time, and explores with familiar feet eternity itself."

The latest and clearest of all expositors has thus written on these words:

"Note the simplicity of the introduction to this most wonderful book. The Apostle did not write the title as it appears in our Bibles--'The Revelation of St. John the Divine! On the contrary, he claim's no credit for the revelation; for it was not his. As he distinctly explains, it was from our Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him from God the Father. Nor was it to even St. John in a special sense; but, as he again declares, unto God's servants, sent by His 'servant John.' This simplicity, common to all the Apostles, commends them to us as men of humble mind—the very kind we should expect our Lord to use as special messengers to His people. This simplicity, this absence of boastfulness, so noticeable in the writings of all the Apostles, marks them as being in the ministry, not for the gratification of vanity, or for earthly rewards of any kind, but: simply as the servants of God, who delighted to do His **will**, and to tell the Good Tidings to the utter ignoring of themselves, except in —so far as mention of themselves and their affairs might be necessary."--Z '16-343,

GOD HATH SPOKEN IN SIGNS

Second: It is given in symbols: "And he sent and *signified* it [revealed by signs or symbols] by His angel unto His servant John." (Rev. 1:1.) To signify is to show or make known by signs or symbols. It is then a book of symbols, of symbolic visions. Therefore its true meaning is veiled in symbols, and to understand it, a process of translation has to take place. One has said as illustrating this: "If on opening a letter from a friend ' the first sentence that met the eye was, 'I write in Latin in order that my letter may not be understood by all,' we should at once be prepared to translate as we read; we should not pore over a certain combination of letters and syllables, trying in vain to make some intelligible English word out of them; we would say the word is so and so, but the *meaning is so* and so. In reading the symbolic portion of the Apocalypse, we are bound to do the same; on no other principle can anything like a consistent interpretation be attained.

The symbols employed are drawn from nearly every phase of life. We have the sun, moon and stars in ,the celestial world, and the earth, sea, rivers and their sources, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and fearful electrical storms, in the terrestrial. Strange and unnatural beasts are among the most prominent symbols. We have the true Church represented by a pure, chaste woman, and an impure harlot woman and her daughters to represent the nominal false Church. We have victorious Roman warriors, rebel conspirators, and unjust, oppressive civil, rulers also employed as symbols. Certain Divine laws must govern in the correct interpretation of symbols. First we must study the symbols themselves. When the sun, is employed as a symbol, we need to study the relation the sun sustains to the material universe and man. If an earthquake, we need to become familiar with its effects upon the earth and its inhabitants. Second, we will need to remember that the fulfillment of the symbols, as a rule, must be looked for in another phase of life from that which the symbol is drawn. It will, we believe, be found that all or nearly all the symbols of Revelation are used and explained in other Scriptures, especially in those of the Old Testament prophecies. It will also be found that the various things employed as symbols are not always used to describe the same things; as waters sometimes mean peoples, etc., and at other times, Gospel truths and blessings.

Third: It is not given for the world to understand, nor even for those who are merely nominal Christians.* It is rather for the purpose of showing unto God's servants things that are speedily to come to pass. "The Lord God of the Holy Prophets hath sent His angel to show *unto His servants* things which must shortly be done." "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches." "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."--Rev. 22:6, 16; 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.

*Studies, Vol. IV, Foreword--3.

BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH

Fourth: A *special* blessing is pronounced upon those who *read* and *hear* it read. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:13.) Surely a book, the contents of which our blessed Lord Jesus esteemed of such great importance as to require that it be given in such a special, supernatural way, and at its beginning introduced by such admonitory words as these, to study it, ought to be esteemed and prized highly. As another has said: "There is a blessing upon those who read this revelation, even though they ,do not understand, and a special blessing upon those who hear and understand the words of this prophecy and conform their lives to the things therein written." -Z '16-343.

It informs us of the condition in which the world and the Church systems will be when He comes to rule. It tells us what that Advent will bring to His prepared and waiting saints; what it will inflict upon luke-warm believers, what will be the end of this present order, ecclesiastical, social and political; in fact, what will be the great issues of the great Day of God Almighty. It portrays what the condition of the great professed Church systems will be until He comes; what the condition of

His true people will be all down through the Age till His Advent as a thief in the night. It pictures in strong and glorious symbols the Church's grand and blessed future, and the world's uplift through the gracious reign of Emmanuel and His overcoming saints. It is true that all these things and many others are portrayed in symbols; but a promise is implied in the words, "Blessed is he that readeth," that they all can be understood in a due time. Indeed, the time has now come for these things to be understood, and some are realizing the blessing promised. "St. John, the beloved disciple, in some measure or degree represented the last living members of the Body of Christ, a class that see with the eyes of their understanding the visions and revelations which the beloved disciple saw in symbols in a trance." --Z '16-343.

There is implied in these words that the first essential thing to understand and derive the blessing promised is to read it, or hear it, and thus get familiar with the visions and their orderly arrangement. All the visions of this most holy and sanctifying book may well be compared to the enacting of a great drama. This great symbolical drama is nothing less than a forecasting of the outward and inward history of the nominal and the true Church throughout their long eventful career until the Second Advent, and the exaltation to glory of the true Church, and the destruction of the nominal, in connection with that momentous event. Symbolic agencies, both animate and inanimate, are the performers. This Divine drama of symbols is most systematically arranged in three acts,--Seals, Trumpets, and Vials. Each act contains seven scenes. We believe it will be seen that the first six -Seals bring the history down to our times, and give us a view of the "Temple" class and the Great Company in glory. The occurrences under the seventh Seal are doubtless retrospective and cover much the same period as the first six. ' It would appear that the Trumpets and Vials, together with certain parenthetical visions, indeed, all the visions following, are included in the breaking or loosing of the seventh Seal. This arrangement of the visions was doubtless the one held by the later expositors and particularly that of DAVID N. LORD and PASTOR RUSSELL, as will be seen by their expositions hereinafter set forth in this series.

MUCH OF REVELATION NOW FULFILLED

It is the opinion of all Historical expositors that the visions of the book that refer to this present reign of evil, this present order, have nearly all met their fulfillment, and we are witnessing now the fulfillment of the closing ones. The latest of them all has shown in his writings that the seventh ' Trumpet has been sounding for over forty years past, and his expositions of the various symbols connected with this seventh symbolic Trumpet's sounding would fill a fair sized volume. Concerning this, we read:

"The Revelator designates the 'Seventh Trumpet,' the 'Last Trump,' in a series of symbolic trumpets. . . . The propriety of calling the 'seventh,' or last 'Trump,' the 'Trump of God,' is evident, too, when we remember that the events mentioned under the preceding six Trumpets of Revelation refer to humanity's doings, while the seventh refers specially to the Lord's work, and covers the 'Day of the Lord.' Since the six preceding Trumpets were symbols--and this is generally admitted by commentators and students who make any claim as expositors of Revelation -- it would be a violation of reason and common sense to expect the seventh, the last of the series, to be a literal, audible sound on the air. . . . The seven Trumpets of

Revelation are all symbolic, and represent seven great periods of time and their events. . . . Suffice it here to say that we find ourselves today in the midst of the very events which mark the sounding of the seventh Trumpet. The great voices, the increase of knowledge, the angry nations, etc., taken in connection with time-prophecies, establish this as a *fact*."--*Studies*, Vol. 11-148.

The following from an expositor who wrote as early as 1856 and who believed that six of the Trumpets had already sounded, is significant:

"The Trumpets belong simply to the scenery on the panorama by which these events were brought before the Apostle's view, and not to the events themselves. And, as there was no audible, startling, miraculous, wide-sounding, celestial bugle-note to announce to the world the fulfillment of the predications connected with the six Trumpets, so I infer and conclude that there is to be no audible trumpet blast from mid-heaven to inform the world when the Day of judgment has come. For aught you or I know, the last Trumpet 'has already sounded, or is now sounding, in the sermons and books of many able and earnest preachers. and laymen in various parts of the world, who are striving to awaken men's minds to a sense of what is approaching, and crying into the ears of a slumbering Church, '*Behold the Bridegroom cometh! Go ye out to meet him.*'"--*Seiss--The Last Times*.

TIME FOR REVELMENT AT HAND

Fifth: Lest we should be deterred from its reading and study because of the seeming difficulties to its understanding, and the various Satanic attempts to destroy its practical benefits to the Lord's people, we hear the revealing angel say: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand." (Rev. 22:10.) Surely the time has now come to understand these visions. The Church's earthly history is about closing. The visions that portray that history have nearly all met their fulfillment. The false religious systems' careers are nearly at their end. The visions that portray their rise and evil influence against the Truth and God's true saints have become clearly understood in the light of history unveiling prophecy. Only those visions or parts of visions that describe the closing struggles of the supporters of the systems to keep them from falling await fulfillment. The last condition or state of the nations, before their downfall, portrayed in these visions, has, at last been reached, and the visions only await their brief, final fulfillment., The condition of the whole present order is the one described in the visions as just preceding the final collapse. It is the time for the wise to study, to understand the visions of this wonderful revelation. And as, expressed by another, "we are not left in doubt as to the matters of this book, for it definitely announces itself a revelation. Instead of its being a sealed book, the opening of seals characterizes the greater portion of it. Instead of being hard to understand, it distinctly intimates the ease of understanding it, by pronouncing blessing upon those who hear it read; and this is certainly not closely inspecting and studying, for a hearer cannot do that, whatever he that reads it may do. It, therefore, invites the simple and unlearned, anyone with an ear for the things of Christ."

Verses 4 to 9, inclusive, are no part of the Revelation given by God, the Father, to Christ, but rather an *inspired* preface to these revelations, given by St. John, which deals more especially with his own feelings as he sits down to record or write a description of the wonderful, strange and startling things seen by him in

the visions which passed before him as he was in the spirit on the Lord's day. Segregating the various points contained in these verses, an eminent writer has very properly analyzed them as including:

(1) An Affecting Salutation: "John, to Those Seven Congregations in Asia; Favor and Peace to you from God, the One who Is, and the One who Was, and the One who is Coming; and from the Seven Spirits which are before His Throne; and from Jesus Christ, the Faithful Witness, the Chief-Born of the Dead, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth."--Vs. 4, 5.

(2) An Exultant Ascription: "To Him who Loves us, and freed us from our Sins by His own Blood, and made for us a Kingdom,--Priests for His God and Father; to Him be the Glory and the Might for the Ages of the Ages. Amen."--Vs. 5, 6.

(3) A Solemn Prophetic Allusion: "Behold! He is coming with the Clouds, and Every Eye shall see Him, and those who pierced Him; and All the Tribes of the Land [earth] shall mourn over Him. Yes, Amen."--V. 7.

(4) A Devout Theological Recognition: "'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, the One who Is, and the One who Was, and the One who is Coming-the Omnipotent."--V. 8.

Nearly all matters involved in these utterances are supposed to be quite familiar to the understanding as well as the experiences of true Christians, such being the ones for whom the visions that follow are given. As it is not the purpose in these expositions to deal specially with these lines of thought, we confine ourself to the consideration of the matters contained in verses 7 and 8.

"HE COMETH WITH CLOUDS"

It has been regarded by most expositors that the words, "Behold He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him," are to be understood literally, i.e., that Christ will appear in literal clouds and every human being will see with their physical eyes the Son of God, at His Second Advent. It is our thought, however, that while a *personal* advent of the Divine Christ is taught in this and other passages, it should not be understood that *human* beings will literally see Him. "I go my way [He once said] and the world seeth Me no more." He being the express image of the Father, no human being could look upon Him and live. The word translated "see" is the Greek *horao*, which, according to Dr. Young, means more frequently, to perceive, to discern, to take heed; and it seems to be in the sense of discerning that the word is used in this text. Many writers have taught that the Second Advent will be invisible to mortals and will be made known to the true Church through an understanding of the "sure word of prophecy," some time before the world will discern that it has taken place. The world will know later on through the great troubles, the like 'of which will never have been known before; also through the supernatural sights and occurrences that will be in evidence in connection with the overthrow of the present world or order of things. We quote two writers of note in regard to this whose statements present splendid elucidations. One of these wrote in 1856, and while it was his understanding that at the later stage of the Second Advent all will literally see Him' in its earliest stages it was his understanding that He will be present for some time, and the world be utterly unconscious of it. This writer has said:

"We are repeatedly told [in Scripture] that the Day of judgment shall come '*as a thief in the night.*' And how does a thief come? He not only comes stealthily, and at such an hour as we think not, but he is already on the premises, in the house and doing his work, before we are aware of his presence. And so shall it be with the coming of Christ and the Day of judgment. He will be here judging the nations before we [many] know it. . . .

"Of this one thing, brethren, I am fully assured, that the stupendous occurrences of the Day of judgment will glide in upon the world as by stealth, and before a great number of even pious people shall be aware that these great scenes have commenced; whilst the great mass of worldlings and politicians will not believe to the very last, when the Son -of Man will blast them forever with His terrific indignation. 'As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until Noah entered into the ark, and *knew not until the flood came and took them all away.*' Perhaps it had rained a month before those wicked scoffers began to feel any special alarm. Perhaps many of them beheld the ark taken up 'by the swelling waters, and yet stood up-on the hill-tops laughing at the old preacher's folly. Though the *valleys were all* covered and the waters rose higher and higher every hour, '*they knew not*' until all were swept away by the shoreless waves. And so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. The nations shall be undergoing their judgment, the sainted dead shall be raised, the sainted living shall be translated, and the whole earth !shall heave with the throes of judgment already present; and yet multitudes will go on as *before, and refuse to believe what is transpiring. Nations in their desperation will continue- to declare war, and make treaties, and form alliances, and join their armies, and gather together their warriors against the Lamb and His people, until at last, to their everlasting consternation the Son of Man will appear with his sainted host, and hurl upon them the mighty thunders of. His eternal wrath. If it is not to be so, why have Peter and Paul told us that the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night? If it is not to be so, why has the Savior told us so earnestly to *watch*, and pointed out so many signs by which we are to be guided, and so repeatedly admonished us to take heed lest that day come upon us unawares? All these things prove that the Day of judgment will come upon the world unknown except to the devoutest and most watchful of the children of men. How important, therefore, that we should study. with. the profoundest care what the inspired Prophets have written upon this subject for our learning! With what absorbing interest should we ponder the given signs by which we are to know when the great Day of the Lord shall come! 'Would it not be an awful calamity for the Church, which professes to be waiting for Christ, to be plunged in the midst of the scenes of that great Day, without so much as knowing that that Day has *come?*'"--*Seiss--The Last Times.*

HE DWELLS IN LIGHT THAT NO MAN CAN BEHOLD

Another, of more recent date, whose ministry has been of inestimable value to God's people in these last days, has expounded the text under consideration, "Behold He cometh with clouds and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him"; and all kindreds . . . shall wail because of Him:"

"This Scripture is generally quoted as a proof that' our Lord Jesus at His Second Coming will be visible to the whole human family; that they will all have great

mourning when they see Him; that it will be a sad day for them-especially for the Jews. Our thought respecting the passage, in the light of other Scriptures, is different from this. In the first place, the Lord Himself said, 'Yet a little while and the *world* seeth Me no *more*, but ye shall see Me.' Only the Lord's faithful followers were to see Him. The Apostle Paul explains that Jesus' followers will see Him because they are to be *changed in* the First Resurrection, 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' The Scriptures clearly indicate that our Lord's present condition is the Heavenly, the spirit condition, not only as 'high a condition as before He came into the world, but still higher.

"The Lord prayed to the Father that He would glorify Him 'with the glory that He had with Him before He came into the world-'before the world was.' The Father assured Him that He *had* glorified Him and would glorify Him *again*. (John 17:5; 12:28. Vatican MS.) The Scriptures also assure us that our Lord in His glorified condition is far above angels, principalities and powers. (Phil. 2:9, 10.) When he was a man, He was 'a little *lower* than the angels.' (Heb. 2:6-9.) The Scriptures declare that the Lord is now the express image of the Father's person (Heb. 1:3), and also declare of Him, 'Whom no, man hath seen nor can see.'

"Another Scripture tells us that the looming of Christ will 'be -for the blessing of the world. The very object of His coming will be for the lifting up of the poor and fallen rate. St. Peter tells us that there will be 'times of refreshing,' 'Times of Restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of *all* His Holy Prophets since the world began.' -Acts 3:19-21.

"How shall we harmonize this last statement with that of our text, which says that He shall come with clouds; that every eye shall see Him; and that all mankind 'shall wail because of Him'? The answer is that in harmony with other Scriptures the coming with clouds would signify 'the coming in a period of *trouble-the word* 'clouds' being used to signify trouble-in the dark Day., He is coming in clouds, in that the time in which He will first *manifest* Himself to the world will be a very dark Day *to the world*-a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation,' and, we are told, *never shall be again*. (Matt. 24:21.) That will be a dark, cloudy Day.

"In that Day, ultimately all eyes shall be opened; and all mankind shall see Him with the *eyes of their understanding* -- see Him in the sense that *we* [the Church] see Him now, and have knowledge of Him and of the Father. A blind man sees in the same sense. He says, 'I *see* now'--meaning that he sees with his intellectual sight. It is far better to see with the intellect than with the natural sight. . . .

"There is first of all to be a *parousia*, or presence, of Christ, -which will be known only to the Church, His, Bride class. The culmination of His work in the *parousia* will be the gathering of the Church to Himself in the First Resurrection. The Scriptures go, on to say that He shall be *revealed* in flaming fire, taking vengeance.

"The 'clouds of heaven' will represent the confusion in general. The world for a time will be in ignorance of His presence. But gradually they will come to know that they are in the time of trouble, the Day of wrath, in which this Age is to close. Then they will mourn. The whole world, will be in mourning. If the world has mourned in the past, much more shall we expect it to do so when the trouble will

be general. In the midst of that trouble, they will gradually learn of the grace of God. Human selfishness, they will find, has been so overruled as to lead up to the glorious Kingdom of Messiah, through which are to come all the blessings which God has promised."--Z '13-200, 201.

"THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA"

"I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, the One who Is, and the One who Was, and the One who is Coming-the Omnipotent [Almighty]." -- V. 8.

Commentators differ in their interpretation of this passage, some applying it to the Lord Jesus, others to the Father. MR. BARNES has said, "As there is . . . a difference of reading in this place in the Greek text, and as it cannot be absolutely certain that the writer meant to refer to the Lord Jesus specifically here, this cannot be adduced with propriety as a proof text to demonstrate His divinity." As we find the same expression in Rev. 22:13 applied to the Lord Jesus, also practically the same in 1:17, we see no reason why it does not refer to the Lord Jesus. Alpha and Omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. And the thought of their use here is explained to mean that Christ was the first and the last. In the light of other Scriptures we learn that reference is here made to the fact, as stated by St. Paul, that He was the "first born of every creature" (Col. 1:16), and by St. John, "the beginning of the creation of God." (Rev. 3:14.) This is also what is implied in the expression so frequently employed in the Scriptures concerning Christ, that of His being the Only Begotten Son of God, meaning evidently that He was the only direct creation of God, all other creatures and things being created by the Son, as, stated by St. Paul, "for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him and for Him."--Col. 1:16. "Our Lord's great honor is shown in that He was not only the first of God's creation, but the last. From this we are to understand that the great Jehovah did not directly employ His own power in creating either men or angels; but that He delegated His power to His Only-begotten Son."--Z '93-115.

The title Almighty is properly explained, we believe, as "an appellation often applied to God, meaning that He has all power," and used here with reference to our Lord Jesus to denote that He is able to accomplish what is disclosed in the book of Revelation. "It is since His [Christ's] resurrection that the message has gone forth--'All power in Heaven and in earth *is given* to Me.' (Matt. 28:18.) Consequently it is only since then that He could be called the Almighty."--Z '93-115.

SAUL PROCLAIMS JESUS AS THE CHRIST

--JULY 24-ACTS 9:19-30--

Golden Text.--"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."--Matt. 16:16.

SAUL the zealous Pharisee, loyal and appointed to the putting down of heretics, who so prided himself upon his zeal for the Lord, in one moment was humbled to the dust, not only literally falling to the ground, but crest-fallen in his mind and

self esteem. The city of Damascus, which he had expected to enter with great dignity as the representative of the Jewish High Priest, the head of the Jewish religious system, he entered very differently. Opening his eyes after the voice had told him to go into the city, Saul found himself totally blind, so that he required to be led by the hand. So overwhelmed was he that for three days he did neither eat nor drink. He was doubtless acquainted at Damascus or possibly stopping at a hotel, but evidently on the most aristocratic street of the city, called "Straight," because, it was really straight, as were so few of the streets of old-time cities. It was a very noble thoroughfare for those times of narrow streets. Its width was one hundred feet and it had a colonnade of marble columns separating the roadway from the building.

ANANIAS GOD'S MESSENGER

If one mentioned Ananias in the Scriptures was convicted of falsity toward the Lord, another of the same name was found faithful. He resided at Damascus. To him the Lord appeared in a vision directing him fully as to how he should find Saul and what he should do to him for the opening of his eyes. Ananias protested that there must be some mistake, because this man Saul had done much evil to the saints of Jerusalem. He knew also the purpose of his visit to Damascus.

The Lord's commendation of Saul to Ananias was, "Behold, he prayeth!" Ali! how much of a story is told in those three words! How sure we may be that those who similarly humbly address the Almighty are in no injurious mood! True, there are hypocritical prayers, just as our Lord illustrated in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, but, taken as a whole, private prayer may be considered a sure index to an honest, contrite heart. In our estimation, only the praying ones, even of the Lord's consecrated people, are at all likely to win the prize. If they do not love the Lord enough to render thanks for His mercies and to approach the Throne of heavenly grace and obtain mercy and strength to help in every time of need, then they are not likely to have sufficient strength to stand the trials and tests. We wish that we could feel sure that all who read these pages are faithful and earnest in the practice of prayer. We are sure of many of them, but as we long for their progress, we urge them to embrace this great privilege heartily.

Ananias is the first one accredited with the use of the word "Saints" in connection with Jesus' followers. As we well understand, the word signifies "holy ones," "sanctified ones." Surely it is a fitting name for all who profess and endeavor to follow in the footsteps of their Master. Let us each try to be worthy of the name, whether it ever be applied to us or not.

ST. PAUL'S THORN IN THE FLESH

Although the Lord, at the hands of Ananias, performed a miracle on the eyes of Saul, so that scales fell from them, and he was able to look upon Ananias, nevertheless, we have every reason to believe that his eyes were never restored to their former strength, and -that it was for this reason that the Christian brethren would have gladly plucked out their own eyes for him (Gal. 4:15); for this reason also, that although a learned man, he wrote very few of his own epistles, and was largely dependent upon his companions, though himself invariably the chief speaker and writer.

This was the "thorn in the flesh," which the Lord was not pleased to remove entirely, and which the Apostle learned to rejoice in ultimately, when he came to know that through this God's mercy and grace would abound toward him the more.--Gal. 6:11; 2 Cor. 12:7-9.

And *so* with us: we might be inclined to think that if we had greater talents and abilities, or we were relieved of certain weaknesses of the flesh, it would be better for us and for the Lord's cause; yet we are to remember the Master's words again, that we are to "seek first the Kingdom of heaven," and that all things needful of an earthly kind will be added to us. Our desires and prayers are not to be for the earthly things after which the Gentiles seek, but are to be chiefly for the spiritual things. We are to remember that as respects our earthly interests they have all been committed to the Lord, and that He knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him, and that He has promised to do for us in every matter exceeding abundantly better than we could ask or -think, as viewed from the standpoint of our spiritual and eternal interests. We surely would not want temporal blessings which would in any degree hinder our attainment to the exceeding great and precious promises -- the spiritual things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him.

Let us note carefully the message God sent to Paul through Ananias "The God of our fathers hath *chosen thee*, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that just One, and shouldst hear the voice of His mouth." Ah! how few indeed realize the truth of the Master's statement, "No man can come to Me except the Father which sent Me draw him." How few realize that God, during this present time, is not attempting to gather the world into His arms, but merely, as the Scriptures abundantly declare, is taking out from amongst the people a peculiar people, a little flock, to constitute the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir. If all who have heard the voice of Jesus speaking to them through His Word, and who, with the eye of faith, have seen Him, and into whose hearts the light of the glory of God, above the brightness of all earthly light, has shined, could but realize how great a favor has come upon them, it would indeed be a great stimulus to their appreciation of the privileges thus put within their grasp. They would see that all this signifies that we are called to be co-workers together with God, to be fellow-sufferers with Jesus in this Gospel Age of sacrifice for righteousness' sake, and to be fellow-heirs with Him in the coming Age, in which the reign of righteousness shall prevail to the blessing of all the families of the earth, and the subjugation of Satan and sin.

GREAT THINGS HE MUST SUFFER

This was the thought conveyed to Paul: that the meaning of the experience which had come to him was, that he had been found of such condition of heart as to be worthy to be a witness for God and for Jesus respecting the things he had seen and heard. And so with each of us; we are not to attempt to tell to others things, which we have not seen and have not heard ourselves; but first of all the eye of appreciation and faith must be opened, and the ear of understanding unstopped, and then out of that which we ourselves hear from the Lord, through His appointed agencies and ministers, we are in turn to repeat to others-dispensing the Divine favor according to our capacity for appreciation and for utterance.

The Lord's declaration to Ananias respecting Paul was, "He is a chosen vessel unto Me. . . . I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." (Acts 9:15, 16.) Thus it is with all of the Lord's chosen ones, like the Captain of our salvation, Jesus, each and all must learn and prove their obedience and loyalty to the Divine Plan by suffering in this present time, that they may be thus fitted and prepared for the glory, honor and immortality of the Kingdom. And to be chosen to suffer much implies qualification for the higher glory hereafter. Thus it was with our Lord and with the Apostles: and thus it is written, for our encouragement, that the sufferings of this present time work out "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."--2 Cor. 4:17.

Saul was peculiarly fitted by birth, by education and by temperament for the service for which the Lord chose him. He was a chosen vessel, and one of large capacity. And yet he was only a vessel. The good things that vessel was to carry were the Divine message of love and mercy. So it is with all the called "members" of the Church. We are merely vessels. The excellency, the merit, the worth, is of our Lord. We are merely servants to Him and to His Church. We are not to understand that Saul was chosen to go to heaven, but chosen to be a vessel of mercy. But even in this respect his choice was dependent upon his own willingness. Speaking of the matter himself he declares, "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Elsewhere the Apostle tells us that the "Lord called me from my mother's womb." Presumably he meant that the Divine providence evidently had ordered and arranged that he should be born under certain conditions and environments which tended to make of him just such a vessel for the Gospel as he now was. This choice did not interfere with his free agency, however. He himself declares that he might still become a castaway, even after he had preached to others. The same lesson is appropriate to all of us. The Lord may order our affairs so as to give us special opportunities and privileges in connection with His work, but He never interferes with our hearts-to be in His service against our will. We may at any time draw back from the service, "But," said St. Paul, "if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."--Heb. 10:38.

The chosen vessel was to bear the message of grace

- (1) To the Gentiles;
- (2) To Kings;
- (3) To Israel.

We can see the propriety of preaching to the Gentiles first in order. We can see also that such a person as St. Paul had special opportunities for serving the Truth, on such occasions as those in which he appeared and reasoned before Felix, Augustus, Agrippa and others-possibly before the Emperor Nero. (2 Tim. 4:16,

17.) His commission also mentioned Israel, and we remember how his preaching in various quarters was "to the Jew first."

How strangely it sounds, "For I 'will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake!" Is any other service than that of our Lord ever entered on these terms promises of suffering? Surely not. Yet how honest for the Lord not to call His disciples under any misapprehension of the facts! We are called to suffer with Him-to sacrifice ourselves, our earthly interests-to share His Cross and, by .these experiences, to prove that we have been begotten of His Spirit, and that it has been shed abroad in our hearts and constituted us copies of God's dear Son. Faithfulness to this cause insures the reward of joint-heirship with our Redeemer in His Kingdom; nor can those Kingdom honors be hoped for on any other terms. The Apostle understood this and seems to give the -thought, also, that the more any of the Lord's followers can share of the sufferings of Christ, in the flesh, proportionately will be his share in the glory which by and by shall be revealed to us-in the "members of His Body."

The expression, "For my name's sake," is comprehensive. It includes everything connected with the, Divine Plan, of which Jesus, the Messiah, is the center. It includes sufferings for the Truth's sake, because the Truth is vitally connected with the "only Name." It includes the brethren because they have named the name of Christ and they are under His name as members of His Body. It includes all the work of the Millennial Kingdom because He is the Head of it all, and His name, His honor, is associated with it all. Let us, therefore, be glad of any sufferings which come to us directly or indirectly, because of our faithfulness to the "precious name" and these various interests which are associated with it.

"APPEARED TO THEE IN THE WAY"

Assured by the Lord's leadings that the way was open to him to serve the Truth, Ananias hesitated no longer. In full confidence of faith he addressed Saul in the most kindly terms, saying, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee, in the, way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." (V. 12.) Promptly there fell from Saul's eyes something resembling fish scales. Evidently the intense light had destroyed the surface of the eye, which now peeled off. His sight was restored, though, to what degree of perfection is questionable. It seems evident that for the remainder of life he was afflicted with weak eyes, which hindered his writing his own epistles, except one which he remarked was written in large characters. We can fancy the disadvantage he would be under in some respects by reason of this affliction, that his bodily presence would be much less attractive than before, and that nothing but the Truth behind his words could longer influence his auditors.

Saul had been praying and fasting for three days and nights and now realized the Lord's forgiving love, as manifested in the sending of Ananias, in harmony with his dream, and with a recovery of a measure of his sight. With this evidence of Divine favor he would start. afresh. First he would be baptized and thus symbolize his allegiance to the Crucified One. Then he would eat for the refreshment of his body that the strength might be used in-the service of his new Master.

We read that forthwith Saul preached Christ in the synagogue of Damascus. We admire his courage, his honesty! We do well to let the illustration quicken our own minds and hearts with appreciation that we may be fortified for similar and all emergencies-to use every opportunity to serve the Lord and to undo anything that we have previously done amiss. Presumably the Apostle felt his need of special preparation for the ministry of the Cross of Christ. At all events it is presumed that it was shortly after his conversion, shortly after his preaching at Damascus, that he turned aside into the desert of Arabia. It is possible that those three years were spent studying out the various features of the Divine Program. Doubtless there he received visions which filled him with enthusiasm for the work of his great message, the blessings of which have come down through all the Age and are still with us.

"Lives of great men, all remind us,
We should make our lives sublime;
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time."

O! how precious, dear Redeemer,
Is the love that fills my soul.
I am thine and have this token
While I'm running for the goal.
Lo! I a new creation dawning;
Lo! I rise to life divine;
In my soul an Easter morning;
I . am Christ's, and Christ is mine.

SAUL TEACHING AT ANTIOCH

--JULY 31-ACTS 11:19-30; 12:25--

Golden Text.--"For a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people."--Acts 11:26.

ANTIOCH, at the time of our lesson, was the third city in the world in rank of commercial importance and population, the latter being estimated at 500,000. Its situation was about 300 miles north from Jerusalem--a long distance in those days of foot and camel and sailboat traveling. It is noted as being the first city outside of Palestine in which a Christian church assembly was formed; and indeed, we might say that as Jerusalem was the center of influence in Palestine, so Antioch became a center of influence as respected the Gospel amongst the Gentiles. It seems that the start of the work of the Lord at Antioch, the little spark of light and truth which started that important work, resulted from the persecution at the time of Stephen's death. Some of those forced out of Jerusalem by the persecution settled in Antioch, and, of course, they could not live and walk in the light of the Gospel without letting the light shine out for others. This at first was done only toward those who were of the Jewish faith, for in a large commercial city such as Antioch there were sure to be large numbers of Jews. We know not how many of these were reached with the Gospel; but it was confined to them,

surely, until the end of Israel's seventy symbolical weeks-until A. D. 37. At the same time that the Lord was sending Philip to the Samaritans and to the Ethiopian eunuch, and opening the door to the Gentiles through the Apostle Peter, He was ready to open the door to the Gentiles everywhere; and under the leading of Divine providence some of the Christian Hebrews got the proper thought at the proper time-that a Gentile who would receive the Lord Jesus, and conform his life to His teachings, could -be classed as a disciple equally as though he had been born a Jew. The work thus started amongst the Gentiles at Antioch Spread considerably, the Gentiles seeming to take more notice of it than had the Jews to whom the Gospel was first preached. There is a lesson here, to the effect that while the Lord made clear to the Apostles first the matter of receiving the Gentiles into the Church, He, nevertheless, did not confine His message to them, but was willing to use any convenient disciple, no matter how humble, as a mouthpiece for the Truth, and was pleased to bless the consecrated ambassadors and their service. So today let each and all of the Lord's people be alert to notice opportunities for service, and let those who occupy a position as teachers in the Church emulate the example of the Apostles, *who manifested no spirit of jealousy in respect to this broadening of the work* -rejoicing, rather, at the spread of the Good News by whatever instrumentality the Lord might be pleased to use. This is the true spirit of discipleship, the spirit of humility. It is in accord with the Apostle's words, "In honor preferring one another;" "Rejoice not in iniquity, but rejoice in the truth."

BARNABAS SENT ON SPECIAL MISSION

The news of the Gospel going to the Gentiles at Antioch, and that large numbers were turning to the Lord, reached the Church at Jerusalem-the head-center of the Christian, work, so to speak. The Apostles and all of the -brethren had already been prepared by the Lord's manifest dealing in the case of Cornelius, and this, undoubtedly, would take away from their surprise and largely correct any prejudice on the subject of the Gentiles as fellow-heirs of the promises, which had previously pertained to them alone. Nevertheless, we note that the record -does not say that this news caused rejoicing in the Jerusalem Church. We may infer, therefore, that they heard with some considerable trepidation that large numbers of the Gentiles were attaching themselves to the faith, and may have reasoned that this would have an injurious effect upon the cause they loved to serve--inasmuch as the Jews would say, Yes, your message is good enough for the barbarians or the Gentiles; it takes hold of the non-religious; but it attracts very few of the deeply pious of God's chosen people, to whom belong the promises and the covenants of the Lord, etc. It would appear, then, that the original motive in sending Barnabas to Antioch (visiting other intermediate churches en route) was that he might see and judge of the true condition of things, and give some report as to whether the new converts were worthy in their lives and characters to be ,recognized as -fellow-heirs with the saints. Barnabas, when he had come, took note of "the *grace of God,*" manifested amongst the believers at Antioch-it must have been manifest not only in their faith in the Lord as their Redeemer and Master, but also in their conduct as disciples or followers of Jesus. It is written, "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure," and we may suppose that Barnabas quickly discerned the cleansing and sanctifying power of the Truth amongst these believers at Antioch, and thus realized that the cause,

instead of being hindered by such accessions, would be honored. We read that he was glad; and we may assume, although it is not stated, that he promptly made a report to the brethren at Jerusalem, and that they were glad also. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, is always made glad by evidences of God's grace operating in himself and in others. It is one evidence of the possession of the Holy Spirit, and that in good measure, when we rejoice in all good things--"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." -Phil. 4:8.

Barnabas at once overflowed toward the Antioch brethren, and in the same comforting and helpful manner as at Jerusalem he *exhorted* them all. The Greek word 'here is from the same root as his name, and signifies comfort, stimulation, assistance. No doubt he saw various things needing to be corrected; but instead of beginning with fault-finding, instead of lacerating their feelings and chiding them, he began, properly, by acknowledgment of what he saw in them as a cause for rejoicing. His comforting message was to the effect that they should cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart. The word "cleave" here in the Greek signifies to glue, to adhere. He wished the dear brethren, new in the Truth, to see to it that their hearts were firmly united unto the Lord, that their minds were fully made up, that their consecration to Him was complete. This was the matter of first importance. Later on he might show them kindly, gently, certain weaknesses of the flesh to which they were' addicted; or their hearts being more firmly united to the Lord they might very speedily see these inconsistencies of themselves, without a word being said. The point we would impress is that it was not a restraining of the flesh, nor a perfecting of it, that was sought, but a much deeper work of grace than this; a purity of heart, of intention, a heart-adhesion to the Lord.

MISSION OF A FAITHFUL PASTOR

We today cannot do better than follow this same course in our endeavors to do good unto others as we have opportunity. The brethren need strengthening rather than tearing. They need building up in the most holy faith and love. They need encouraging in heart-adhesion to the Lord; criticisms of the flesh come in afterward gradually and very carefully and kindly. There were three elements co-operating which made Barnabas so suitable a person for this service, and the same three elements in any of us today will surely make us able ministers of the Truth. Those elements are stated here; viz., "He was a good man [moral, upright, reverential] full of the Holy Spirit [he had not received the grace of God in vain; it was in him a living power, the new mind guiding and controlling in all of his affairs] and of faith." ' However good a man may be, and however much of the Lord's character and spirit he may have, faith is essential. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Let us strive to have all of these qualifications in our ministry, that we may be true sons of consolation, helpful in the Lord's service, and to His people wherever we may be: No wonder we read that as a result of his labors at Antioch much people was added unto the Lord!

The last we heard of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:30) was that after the opening of the eyes of his understanding, after he became the disciple of the Lord. Jesus, he had

preached in Damascus, and then in Jerusalem; then his life being endangered, the brethren sent him down to Caesarea, and then probably by ship to his native city, Tarsus. We are not informed regarding the nature of his work in his home city, but can readily suppose that one of his character and disposition would not long remain idle. And if the sphere of outward activities was a narrow one we may be sure that his mind was active in the study of the Divine Plan, and that his great heart was active too, in comprehending the Divine grace and considering ways of service. He was in Tarsus while Barnabas was at Antioch, and the latter now had in mind the talents, the force, the logic, of Brother Saul, whom he had met in Jerusalem, and he concluded that Tarsus being not very far from Antioch, he would look him up, interest him in the service of the Antioch Church, etc. He probably remembered that Saul's ideas were extremely broad in respect to the Gospel--too broad, perhaps, for the brethren at Jerusalem to fully appreciate him when he was amongst them. But by this time all the brethren, and especially large-hearted Barnabas, had come to see the Divine Plan in a broader light--more nearly as Saul of Tarsus had comprehended it. Barnabas concluded that the conditions at Antioch were just such as would deeply interest Saul, and that the brethren there would be greatly profited by his assistance. He found him; he brought him to the Church at Antioch, where his influence was no doubt great for the good of all. We rejoice in noting the heart nobility of Barnabas. Many Christian men of smaller caliber would have reasoned themselves into a different course, and a wrong one; saying, As it is, I am the chief one amongst the brethren here, having had larger opportunities than the others, and having had close contact with the Apostles at Jerusalem; but if I bring Saul into our midst his superior abilities as a logician, as an expounder of the Scriptures, will cast me quite into the shade, etc. Brethren who reason thus are misguided by their own selfishness. They forget that the Lord's work is in His own hands, and with such a spirit they could neither please Him nor be prospered in His service, and that the reactionary effect upon their own hearts would be a serious one. All of the Lord's people should be noble and unselfish; and the closer any of us approximate this character the more will we be loved of the Lord, the more will we be loved of the brethren, and the more useful will be our sphere of influence for righteousness, for truth, for the Lord.

THE SECTARIAN SPIRIT NOT OF THE LORD

It is noteworthy that our Lord never gave any name to His people; He called them disciples, which signifies pupils, learners. The Apostles have applied to the Church various terms, "Church of the living God"; "Church of God"; "Church of Christ"; "the Church"; but gradually the name "Christians," identifying God's people with their Redeemer and Leader, came to be the general name throughout the world. It is a pity that any have thought it necessary to **adopt any other names than these; common to the entire Church of Christ**, or to use these names in a sectarian manner. Evidently the name Christian should represent one who trusts in Christ as the Messiah--one, therefore, who trusts in Him also as the Redeemer, and who accepts all the fundamental doctrines of the Scriptures, based, as they are, upon these two declarations--(1) that men were sinners, needing to be redeemed before they could be acceptable to God, and that they were redeemed--by the precious blood of Christ; (2) that they have accepted the name of their Redeemer, and are seeking to walk in His footsteps. There was a start toward

sectarianism in the early Church, some saying, I am a Christian, -but of the order of Paul; others, I am a Christian, but of the order of Apollos; others, I am a Christian, but of the order of Peter, etc. But the Apostle promptly rebuked this spirit, assuring them that the relationship in Christ was all that was necessary; that neither Peter nor Paul had redeemed them, and that neither, therefore, could occupy the place of a head to -the Church. The Apostle, furthermore, calls our attention to the fact that such a spirit on their part was an evidence of that much of carnality still remaining.; that much of a worldly partisan spirit contrary to the thought and teaching of the Holy Spirit. As the sectarian spirit was wrong in St. Paul's day, it is still wrong and we should deplore it as he did, and break away from all disposition to follow others except as they follow the Lord. Nor are we to halt in the path of 'light and gather around any one whom the Lord has used and refuse to advance or make progress into a clearer understanding of the Divine will.

It is to be regretted that ever since the Reformation times this spirit has prevailed to a large extent, some taking the name of Luther, others of Wesley, others of Calvin, others non-personal, but, nevertheless, sectarian or party names, as Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist and others. We are not claiming that those who do these things are wholly carnal, without the Lord's spirit, but we do claim with the Apostle that a disposition to such a partisanship is contrary to the spirit of the Lord, and to that extent is carnal, fleshly, and should be overcome by all who would be recognized of the Lord as overcomers.

Let no one misunderstand us to advocate one sect or party as instead of many. On the contrary, we know that if there must be sects there is an advantage in having many,' as they serve to keep each other within more reasonable bounds, serving to some extent to hinder gross arrogance and persecution. What we ought to have is one church, one household of faith, accepting the plain fundamentals of Scripture, and with limitations as to acceptance of more or less conjectural views outside of those fundamentals-all fraternizing, fellowshiping each other, and all known as Christians, and thus separated from all who deny the atonement, from all who deny the results of the atonement, !in the resurrection, and from all who deny the propriety of a newness of life in the present time. In this view of the matter each individual Christian would have an independence as respected his own thought, aside from fundamentals which are clearly stated in the Scriptures.

BENEVOLENCE A FEATURE OF PIETY

In view of the fact that the condition of the Antioch Church made Barnabas. glad, and in view of the instruction and assistance rendered it by Paul and Barnabas, we are not surprised that it was a living Church, instead of a dead one, and we are not surprised that, an opportunity offering through a famine especially affecting the vicinity of Jerusalem, this congregation of believers at Antioch was prompt to make up- a relief fund and send it to -the Church at Jerusalem, as an expression of its love and sympathy and oneness of spirit. It is more blessed to give than to receive, not only as respects the sentiment of the matter, but the results are still more blessed. No doubt the contributions sent were a comfort and a help to the Jerusalem brethren, but the blessing to the givers we may be sure was far greater, The Lord would reward them, and that in proportion as they had given, at some sacrifice as respects. earthly things, luxuries, etc.

"Is thy cruse of comfort failing?
Rise and share it with another,
And through all the years of famine
It shall serve thee and thy brother.
Love divine will fill thy storehouse,
All thy handful still renew;
Scanty fare for one will often
Make a royal feast for two."

We do not mean to say that this principle could be worked out now, under present conditions, with the nominal church full of "tares," and thoroughly soaked in false doctrines. What we do mean to say is that had it not been for the sectarian spirit which early crept into the Church after the death of the Apostles, there would not have been the present number of tares, professed Christians, nor the same amount of false doctrines discounting the true. Ambition for numbers and for influence led to the formulation of doctrines which attracted the tares into the Church. Without these false ambitions, and with the fundamentals of the ransom and full restitution clearly recognized by all, the nominal Church today would be amazingly smaller than it is, but it would be comparatively pure, and it would be at one with itself, and there would be no desire for any other name than that of the one Lord and Head.

Our proper course is to separate ourselves from all the Babylonian systems and to "stand fast in the liberty where with Christ has made free," and to own no other name than His, and to accept no other standards than those of His Word. Our duty, after coming ourselves into this position, is to help others into the same liberty, and to avoid putting restraints upon the brethren, or making tests of any kind, except such as are fundamental-faith in the ransom and full consecration to the Lord, which would include an honest desire to know the meaning of His Word. There can be no danger amongst such as are taking this position, and where only this class is recognized as the Church, and where this liberty wherewith Christ has made us free is strictly observed.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY LXX--JULY 3

THE VISION OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST (CONT.)

(446) What special organization and movement amongst Protestants appears to represent the early stages of the symbolical Image, and when did this commence? What bodies of Christians took part in the movement? Give a brief description of their object and work. H '20-55.

(447) What was the attitude of the true sanctuary class toward the Evangelical Alliance? What timely and appropriate remarks did PASTOR RUSSELL make regarding this matter ? H '20-56.

(448) What is implied and signified by the expression that the Image should "both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the Image of the Beast should be killed"?

(449) How may we expect this "life" or power to be given to the Image as suggested by PASTOR RUSSELL, and what recent incidents would confirm his interpretation? H '20-56, 57.

(450) Is the "worship" and the "killing" to be understood literally? What should be the attitude of the Lord's people when these conditions obtain? H '20-57.

STUDY LXXI--JULY 10

THE VISION OF THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST (CONT.)--REV. 13:14-18

(451) In what way has the two-horned Beast caused the formation of the Image? Has Papacy in any way ever recognized the Evangelical Alliance, thus confirming the thought of its resemblance to Papacy? H '20-57.

(452) What is the "Mark of the Beast"? and what lesson may we draw from this? To what do the terms "buy" and "sell" of verses 16 and 17 refer? H '20-58, 59. ,

(453) What should we understand by the statement, "Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding compute"? In the expression, "Number of the Beast" which Beast is referred to? What reasonable inference may we draw as to the significance of the statement, "It is a man's number"? H '20-58.

(454) What helpful suggestions have we from the expositor NEWTON as to the significance of the number 666? and what would Appear to have been PASTOR RUSSELL'S view? H '20-58, 59.

(455) Give a brief review of the significance of the terms Beast, Image of the Beast, Mark of the Beast and Number of the Beast.' H '20-59.

STUDY LXXII--JULY 17

THE VISION OF THE LAMB ON MOUNT ZION--REV. .14:1

(456) Give a brief review of chapter 13. To what period of time are we brought in the closing verses? H '20-69.

(457) What important event is depicted in the opening verses of chapter 14? ' What is the general symbolical significance of "Mount Zion," and with what particular incident in the Scriptures may we reasonably associate this vision? H '20-69, 70.

(458) What phase of our Lord's presence seems to be described by the Lamb standing on Mount Zion? What is the distinction between the *parousia*, *epiphania* and the *apokalupsis* as given by PASTOR RUSSELL? H '20-70.

(459) In what sense can the 144,000 be said to be with our Lord during all the period covered by the Lamb standing on Mount Zion? and does their being "with" Him signify that the Marriage of the Lamb has taken place? H '20-71.

(460) How are the Lord's followers, the 144,000, distinguished in this vision from those of the preceding vision who are associated with the false religious systems? What is the significance of having His Father's name written in their foreheads? H '20-69, 71, 72.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

THAT WE MAY BE LIKE HIM

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in His Name! Twelve of the friends met the evening of the 21st to commemorate our dear Redeemer's death for us; to realize afresh His sufferings and His sacrifice for us. We rejoice in the wonderful privilege which is ours of filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, of drinking of His cup, and being broken with Him as part of the one loaf, that in the future we may be with Him and be like Him and see Him as He is. . . .

We are very much interested in the chronology article. We have given it careful study, and it seems, both reasonable and logical as well as strong Scripturally. I mean to study it further in comparison with the Second Volume and shall await further chronology articles with a great deal of interest. I agree that it is time our chronology was looked into, and I thank God you have the courage and the faith to attempt it. I am praying that the Lord may guide and direct your minds, and that thus He may supply through you all needed help, assistance and encouragement to the Israel of God everywhere.

We are hoping Brother Blackburn will return East by way of Hutchinson. We feel that we need a Pilgrim very much. With much Christian love to, all the dear friends,

Yours in the service of the King,

E. M. A.-Kans.

OUT OF DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

Gentlemen:

I note in the HERALD that you are willing and anxious to send the paper to anyone who is an earnest seeker after the Truth, and who is not able to pay for same. My wife and I have for a long time, even since early childhood, been earnest seekers after the Truth, and have tried to lead the life which we thought would -be approved by the Master, but we have all the while been listening to such a babel from different denominations that we did not know what to do, and have on more than one occasion thought of connecting ourselves with some church, but we feel very thankful today that we never have.

Brother V. first brought our attention, to the Truth as taught by the INSTITUTE and we have had the pleasure of reading a few copies of the HERALD now and then, and it has increased our faith so much. We realize more fully the goodness of God, and His Divine Plan seems so grand and gracious. We can now love and trust Him more fully and are happier. As we are poor and unable to pay for a subscription to the HERALD, please enter my name on your mailing list and if we ever get in a position to pay you, which I think we will soon, we will remit up to date.

Thanking you in advance for the favor, I am,

Yours gratefully,

J. P.-Ala.

HEARS VOICE OF GOOD SHEPHERD

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing N. Y. Exchange for \$--, to be used in the Good Hopes fund, and it is my prayer that the dear Heavenly Father may direct you not only in the use of this, but of all funds coming into your hands. I assure you, dear brethren, that it is a genuine pleasure to send along this small contribution to further the promulgation of the Glad Tidings for I am in hearty sympathy with your views as expressed- in the different issues of the HERALD and I am persuaded that our dear Lord and Savior is directing you in the message you are sending forth. I often think of His statement "My sheep know my voice" and I just feel that I can hear it time and time again in each issue of the HERALD for it is perfectly clear to me that the brethren who are editing it are being led by the spirit of a sound mind and are not being carried off of their feet by speculation, fanciful interpretations, etc., etc. It is my most earnest prayer that you may continue in that attitude of heart and mind that will make it possible for our dear Master to continue to use you in ministering to us, which will, of course, result in a blessing to you as well as to us, for has He not told us that, our greatest blessing will come as a result of our being spent in His service?

Please remember Sister G. and myself in your prayers; in fact I will just include all of the Class in this request as I know they would want me to do so if they knew I was writing.

Your brother by His grace,

P. A. G.-La.

HOPES GOOD WORK WILL GO ON

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing \$-- for the Tract Fund. I want to tell you that I certainly enjoy the article in the last HERALD under the heading "Watchman, What of the Night?" I think it very convincing and stimulating to faith. I hope the good work will go on. I for one want to be influenced by the Truth wherever it is found, and I am glad to see that there is no speculation mixed with it.

I also wish to say that we enjoy the monthly visits of the brethren sent by the Institute to our little class. We wish for you all the Lord's rich blessing and guidance.

Very sincerely, **D. S.-N. 1.**

WORDS FAIL TO EXPRESS COMFORT RECEIVED

Dear Brethren -

Enclosed please find 25 cents. Please mail me four copies of the HERALD containing the article on the Jubilees. Words cannot express the comfort experienced from the two articles on the chronology.

I hope you intend publishing the Revelation Series in book form. I will take five copies, if this is the ease, and will remit this amount; i.e., your estimate of the cost of the volume -in advance, on word from you that you contemplate the work. It would be splendid to have the series in a convenient form, and one that could be distributed to those interested.

Your brother in the Truth,

J. F. G.-N. S.

PLENTY OF GOOD SPIRITUAL FOOD NEEDED

Dear Brethren:

Loving Christian greetings. It was with much pleasure that I received the two parcels of HERALDS (from January 1, 1919, up to date) this morning, and I thank you for your prompt answer to my request sent through the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE: of London. I am remitting the money in payment direct to the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, which I presume will be in order.

I have taken a rapid run through each of the issues, and am very pleased to note how much they are like the "Watch Towers" issued by our dear BROTHER RUSSELL. As I go into each article carefully, I know a great blessing awaits me. At such a time as the present it is needful that there be plenty of good spiritual food for all the Household, and I am convinced that the HERALDS are performing an active work in this direction.

Being much interested in the Revelation, I find personally that the articles give a very satisfying solution of the symbols of that book, and it is gratifying to find some one able to bring to light some of the truths that BROTHER RUSSELL gave us long ago. I know you do not wish praise, so I just thank my Heavenly Father for keeping the Truth and the spirit of the Truth still alive, and in His own due time, bringing me into touch with the food of His providing. Mother and I have for some time past sadly missed the spiritual upbuilding. . . . Now, in our extremity, we realize the Lord's leadings, and by His grace, intend to use these blessing& wisely and to His glory.

We wish to assure you, dear brethren, that we appreciate your loving zeal on behalf of Zion and that we are with you in spirit. We pray for you daily, that our Father may guide you in wisdom and make you truly a blessing to His people. What I have already read of the HERALDS has spurred me on to greater earnestness and zeal to "make my calling: and election sure."

With much love in the Lord from us both, and praying God's richest blessing upon you, I remain,

Your brother by His grace,

A. L. M.-Scot.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

ADMONITIONS FOR THE CONSECRATED

"I write unto thee that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house Of God, which is' the Church Of, the living God, _the pillar and ground of the truth."--1 Tim. 3:14, 15.

[Reprint from Pastor RUSSELL--1907]

IT is one thing to make our consecration to the Lord, to be His and to serve Him even unto death, and another thing to carry out that service day by day in all the little details of life. Our Lord's words--that he that is faithful in that which is least would be faithful also in greater things--is well illustrated by the fact that it would be comparatively easy, for *us* to finish our sacrifice by suicide, or even by going to the stake, and a much more difficult thing to day by day hold- our sacrifice on the altar in all the little affairs of life -- in self-denials, in patience, in perseverance, in brotherly kindness, in gentleness--to receive reviling and revile not again, to be smitten mentally or physically and not to retaliate; this endurance of a lingering crucifixion--death--is much more difficult. But we can readily see that the Lord's Plan is greatly to our advantage, in the sense that while the 'consecration evidences a right spirit, will or intention, the gradual carrying out of that consecration tends more and more to develop the character-likeness -of our Lord in us. Hence the Apostle urges that we leap to rejoice even in tribulations, knowing that they will work out in us the various fruits and graces of the Lord's Spirit, as we receive them in the proper attitude of heart and seek to learn the lessons they teach.

GOOD BEHAVIOR IN THE CHURCH

Recognizing that we are all defective according to the flesh) that none, of us come up to the Divine standard of perfection, and that our only perfection is that of the heart, the will, we must not wonder if occasionally we have trials and testings, aggravations, one from the other, though it must be the will, the desire; the intent of each to provoke one another to love and good works and hot to anger, hatred and evil works. (Heb. 10:24.) For ourselves we must recognize the very highest standard of God-likeness, and as for others of the ' Body, we must be prepared to allow, our love for them and for the Lord to cover a multitude, of blemishes should they appear to us. And each one, in proportion as he or she follows this course, is pleasing to the Lord' is pure in heart--a copy of God's dear Son--and, covered with the robe of the Redeemer's merit, is considered from God's standpoint, not according to his imperfect flesh, but according to his perfect-intentioned heart or will. To us, "in the Church" does not signify in a meeting-house, but amongst the Lord's people. Neither does it mean, merely when we are assembled together, but it, includes All of our dealings with them, every day and all the time. And we all should desire to learn the lesson how we ought to conduct ourselves in or amongst the members of the Church, the Body of Christ, the tabernacle of the Holy Spirit. amongst men.

Everywhere in the Bible the Lord sets before us perfect Love as the standard, and we must therefore suppose that all who have passed the standard of babes in Christ, and have come to some measure of, knowledge of the Lord through His Word and Spirit, recognize this love standard and are seeking to conform to it. We must therefore, suppose that the difficulties which from time to time arise

amongst such are largely be cause of imperfect development of knowledge and experience in applying the love standard, as: well as because of imperfections of the flesh.. Hence the Scriptural exhortation that we grow in grace as well as in knowledge, and that we be more and more filled with the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind, the spirit of brotherly kindness, the spirit of meekness, the spirit of patience-the Holy Spirit.

ARE CONTENTIONS NECESSARY?

We reply that they are sometimes, but not, nearly so often, as they occur. There is just one ground of contention authorized, and we find it in the words, "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to The saints." (Jude 3.) But since the spirit of contention is everywhere in the Bible reprehended, we must under stand the Apostle to mean that only the important points of our faith are to be 'Contended for. We must not give place to any who deny the personality of the Heavenly Father, and who would teach in the Church that God is a great big nothing, merely, a principle of good; and if there is anything good in the sense of useful-\ in the piece of, iron or wood or stone or in any other substance, there is that much of God in it.. We must contend earnestly against such vain philosophies, as being not only foreign to the faith I once delivered to the. saints, but antagonistic to it to -the last degree. We must contend also for the ransom, because it is the very foundation of the faith once, delivered to the saints--that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and that He rose for our justification. This would imply a contention against various false claims, such as that our Lord was not made flesh but remained a spirit being, to. whom death was quite impossible that He merely assumed for a time the human body, pretending that it was Himself, and pretending that He died when it died.

We must hold to the faith once delivered to the saints, that our Lord left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was, that He humbled Himself and was made flesh, and that He. did this not as an example, but that He by the grace of Goa "tasted death for every man"--that He might die the just for the unjust to bring us to God. This means additionally that we must Contend that His death was. a real death, the just for the unjust, else. our faith in Him as a Savior and Redeemer would depart. Furthermore if we did not believe that He really died, really gave Himself as a corresponding price, for father Adam,. thus, purchasing him and his race, how could we believe in His resurrection from the dead? How could anyone be resurrected from death if he had not gone into it? We, must also hold to and contend earnestly for the great fact that God's work during this Gospel Age is the selection of the Bride of Christ the Church of the First-born--and that this election, completed at our Lord's Second Coming, will have its consummation in the resurrection of the Little Flock to glory, honor and immortality in the Kingdom, as the Royal Priesthood under Christ their Royal Head, and High Priest, that as the Spiritual Seed of Abraham they may. fulfil the Abrahamic Covenant, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." For all these fundamentals of our religion, including the declaration. that sin entered into the world by Adam's transgression and that we are all partakers of his sin and of its penalty; and all need redemption--all these first principles of the faith we must stand for, contend for. To be indifferent to these and to allow, error to creep in and to be promulgated, taught in the Church, would be a serious sin and show

unfaithfulness on the part of those who had pledged themselves as soldiers of the cross to defend it.

But aside from such fundamentals, the Lord's people should., seek to. exercise great moderation. amongst themselves upon any point of doctrine riot clearly enunciated-upon the meaning of any parable not explained in the Scripture, itself. Neither -should 'there be any dispute or division as respects BROTHER RUSSELL or any other brother. Each should be allowed to exercise his own judgment in respect to things not specifically stated in the Word of God. Each should feel a delicacy or reserve about promulgating any doctrine or matter not specifically and clearly taught in the Scriptures, and above all, he should be sure never to teach or attempt to teach speculations if he himself is not thoroughly convinced respecting the same. Each one has, enough to. contend -with in the twists and kinks of his own imperfect judgment without having others add to his difficulties by the rehearsal of matters which they admit they do not clearly understand. There is so much in God's Word that is simple and plain and well substantiated that we can talk. about and think about, that we are well nigh inexcusable for far-away speculations. The Scriptures. declare, "The secret things belong unto God, but the things revealed belong unto us."--Deut. 29:29.

PATIENCE AND FORBEARANCE COMMENDED

If some dear brother has a peculiar theory or hobby ,and feels that he cannot rest until he has presented it to the, Church, there should be some opportunity given him to let off steam--even if it would not be advisable to hear him in the most public manner lest visitors should conclude that his fancies represented the general thought of the Church. But if after he has been heard on some occasion, and it be the, judgment of the Church that his theories are unreasonable, unscriptural, he should be content with having given his view; and if he be not content, but desires to ride his theory continually as a hobby, to the annoyance of, others and to the interference with the general spirit of worship and progress in study, it would seem to be the duty of the elders to call his. attention to the fact, and to remind him that he has been heard, and therefore' his urging the, matter is in the nature of a contention, not for a fundamental of the Truth, but, for a theory, and that such contention is reproved throughout the Scriptures as contrary to. the will of the Lord and to the good of His people, themselves included, and that therefor ' e they. cannot permit the matter to continue.. -- Titus 3:9.

The Apostle speaks of those who are "contentious and obey not the Truth." (Rom. 2.8.) The intimation is that the contentious spirit or disposition is generally found amongst those who are not living up to the spirit of the Truth which they have already recognized. They have been attempting to grow in knowledge without growing in grace--in love, in kindness, gentleness, meekness, patience, etc.; and those who are right at heart will be pleased to note this as their difficulty, and to correct the same, because what would it profit us to contend for our theories and cause confusion in the Church l of God, and be ultimately reprimanded by the' Lord and be unable to pass the examination for perfect love and Christ-likeness, and therefore be counted unworthy 4 place in the Bride class. Surely such contentions, such theorizings, are well worthy of the Apostle's reprimand,' and. well worthy to be heeded by us all.

The Apostle's exhortation that "nothing be done through strife or vain-glory" gives another suggestion, along this line, namely, that some have naturally the spirit of strife, and therefore more to overcome along this line than have some others. Some, it is intimated, have a vain-glorious spirit, the spirit of pride and ambition, which gets themselves and others into difficulty. But are we to reject those who are naturally 'combative, naturally ambitious? Are we to say that they therefore are not of, the Body, and cut them off? By no means; rather we should seek to so exemplify the proper course in our own conduct as to impress a lesson upon them and upon all with whom we have contact. Wherever we see a wrong spirit in another our first thought should be, Have I any of that disposition myself? and our first correction should be in our own hearts and conduct. Thus casting the mote or beam out of our own eyes, we would be the better prepared to approach our brother with gentleness and kindness, and unobtrusively to render him assistance in getting the better of his difficulties.

BEREANS WHO "FIGHT TO A FINISH"

Some of the Lord's dear brethren of excellent heart and noble intention seem to get the improper thought in connection with the Berean studies. They seem to say to themselves, There can be but one right thought on this subject, and that one the truth; and everyone else here, should want the truth, and we "should contend and dispute on this question if necessary all night and fight the matter until some one gives up and sees that he is wrong. This is an evil thought entirely, and is productive of great discomfort and disadvantage, and a hindrance to spirituality in various classes. On the one hand we are to appreciate more those who do some thinking of their own about a subject than those who do no thinking, and who merely swallow a statement set forth by others. But there is a proper limit to be observed: the Lord has had great patience with us all in our slowness to learn, and surely we 'should be' patient with each other. He lays down line upon line, precept upon precept, and is slow to anger and plenteous of mercy, and very generous toward all those who give evidence of desiring to do His will.

We certainly are not authorized to do less than this in His name, and as His representatives. Rather our realization of our own obtuseness in the past should make us very sympathetic with others who are slow to see, slow to hear, slow to understand. Each, therefore, should be content if he have a reasonable opportunity for presenting his view on any question, and should not attempt to enforce and crowd it in upon another. If the Editor has stated his view, and one or more do not see the matter exactly so, and the question is not fundamental,, then it, would be the proper course to let the matter rest there, and to allow the Lord eventually as the great Teacher' through His providence, to gradually bring us 'to where we could the more completely see eye to eye. In this we have the opportunity for learning the lesson of patience and forbearance, brotherly kindness, meekness, gentleness, -Love.

"CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER TO PROVOKE"

If anyone of a contentious mind would set himself, about it, he would have no difficulty in provoking in others resentment' and evil, works; but the Apostle 'urges, that having the Holy Spirit of love dwelling in our hearts, we should consider one another to provoke unto love and good works. We should study one

another's natural dispositions from a sympathetic standpoint, with a view to helping, each other over difficulties and weaknesses. And how much of this is, possible! Frequently it is possible by speaking a kind word, gently, sympathetically, lovingly, to help some dear brother or sister to keep balanced – to overcome some of his or her weaknesses, the expression of which would be injurious to himself as well as to the Church or others. How we should all study this spirit of helpfulness and recognize it as the spirit of love, the spirit of the Lord! Let us remember that a soft answer, a kind and gentle Word, may be helpful and turn away anger, but that grievous words, and strife words, cutting words, sarcastic words, are almost sure to stir up anger. (Prov. 15:1.) Let us therefore study more and more to be gentle toward all, and kind and affectionate one toward another, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.--Eph. 4:32.

Another point upon which forbearance and consideration seem very necessary is in" respect to the choosing of leaders. Some very devoted brethren seem to get the impression that they should have no part in electing as an Elder anyone they could not endorse in every particular. We agree that no immoral person should be chosen to eldership under any consideration, and that if an Elder be found to be immoral his resignation should be immediately called for. But usually this is not. the ground of difference: the Lord's people would never knowingly choose an immoral person as a standard-bearer or leader in spiritual things. But suppose that in a congregation, there be one person whom the majority may consider vastly superior and better qualified every way than any other of their number to be their-Elder or leader, and suppose that a minority of the congregation have a liking for the presentations or manners or what not of another brother, and suppose that another minority have a preference for still another brother, or at least a desire to. see him brought forward into the public service of the Church, believing that he has talents that could be used of the Lord to His glory. What shall each party do? -- fight it out on political, lines and say, We have power, and therefore authority to elect our man, and you must: either join in this or quit the company? By no means!

This might be "good politics" amongst the worldly, but it would be quite out of harmony with the spirit of love which must govern in the Church. 'In gaining such a victory we might wound one or more of the Lord's brethren, might offend our Lord, and do ourselves incalculable' injury in our race for the great prize. Such a "victory" would be a *defeat* of our real aims and aspirations--a victory for our great Adversary. Are we not to consider one 'another, and seek not every man merely his own preferences, but seek to build one -another up 'in the most holy faith? The spirit of love would therefore seem to dictate that more than one Elder should be elected in such a case -- two or three or more, as the supply of material and the desires of the company could be reasonably interpreted, without violating the general directions of the Lord's Word. A fair and reasonable decision should be such as would be proportionate. to the number of the brethren. Some might be found specially well adapted to the leading of one kind of meeting and .others to the leading of another kind, and the Apostle points out that we have need of every member of the body, so that the eye cannot even say to the hand or the foot, "I have no need of you." The thought we should have in mind is that there is plenty of room for all of the Lord's people to do service.

When the Apostle points out the qualifications of an Elder he, mentions the ideal, just as our Lord mentions the ideal to us all when He says, "Be ye like unto your Father which is in heaven," We cannot be like the Heavenly Father fully, completely, but we can have Him as our standard or pattern to which we are striving to attain. Similarly, few Elders may come up to the standard of qualification mentioned by the Apostle, but these qualifications should not be overlooked by any in their expression of a choice, or rather in their expression of what they believe to be the Lord's choice in the matter. "Forbearing one another in love," says the Apostle, O, how this forbearance' and consideration of one another's preferences, tastes, views, would help to make us all more and more like the glorious Lord Himself, and how it would smooth many of the wrinkles and difficulties, and bring peace in every little company of the Lord's people! We are not thinking of nor striving for the kind of peace and quiet that prevails in the graveyard or which prevails in the sleeping room, but the kind which the Lord would approve amongst those who are awake and alive and thoroughly consecrated to Him, and' forbearing and considering one another because of their love for the Head and for all those who are seeking to walk in His steps.

"LOVE SEEKETH NOT HER OWN"

All of the Lord's people should gradually come more and more to be ashamed of a self-seeking 'spirit and disposition and to appreciate more and more the spirit of love which thinks not of personal interests but of the good of others, especially those of the household of faith. If a brother thinks that he has some talents which he would be pleased to use in the Lord's service in the Church, it is proper for him to be on the alert for opportunity to use these, but also proper for him to avoid imposing himself or his services on the Church. While glad to serve the Church freely, without money or price; while glad to give time, strength, energy and every talent to the service of the Truth, the spirit of meekness as well as the spirit of wisdom should hinder him from crowding his services upon the Church more than the latter could appreciate., Better' go gently, and trust to the Lord to guide and to eventually indicate who shall serve the Church and to what extent they shall serve and in what capacity. This, the Lord's way, the Scriptural way, will be found to be the wisest one--any other course will sooner or later bring difficulty to all concerned.

"WHOM THE SON MAKES FREE"

It is difficult for many of us to keep balanced respecting our personal liberties: we are largely influenced by the customs, and practices of those surrounding us, and need continually to hearken to the voice of the Lord in His Word. Because in Babylon it is customary that nothing should be done without ordination, a feeling sometimes creeps in amongst those less developed in grace and truth that is somewhat in accord with that: the feeling, for instance, that no meetings must be held except as they are appointed by the Church and conducted by one of the elected Elders.

There are advantages coming from a recognition, of the oneness of the Church, and the appointing of meetings when and where they may be most helpful and to be led by those esteemed to have superior qualifications. But we must never lose

sight of the fact that neither the Lord nor the Apostles placed any limitations upon the liberties of individuals; and hence we may not do so.

Note our Lord's words--"Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:20.) That promise is as true today as it ever was, and places no restriction upon any of the Lord's people.

If, therefore, any of the Lord's flock feel that their best spiritual interests are not served by the arrangements already made, by the, Church, -- they are fully at liberty to start a meeting that will be more helpful to them--any kind of a meeting not in conflict with the provisions of the Scriptures. In case of such a necessity seeming to present itself to any, our advice would be that they seek to appoint such meetings at a time and place that would not be in conflict with the appointments of the general congregation. If then it be desirable, as we hold that it generally is, that the Church should take a general supervision of such matters, it should recognize its responsibility and, appoint a sufficiency of meetings and of the desired kinds, and under such leadership, as will meet the necessities of the dear people--that all may be fed, that all may be strengthened, that all may progress, and that all may be maintained in unity of heart and in love and fellowship and co-operation.

THE CONVENTION AT TOLEDO

ADDED to the other general Conventions of the season is now that of Toledo, Ohio, held July 2-4. Our hearts are indeed assured--that it was a blessed occasion and that it meant much of spiritual joy, love, peace, to all those present. The evidence is that all the brethren more than realized -their expectations in this regard.

Although in some respects the weather was most unpropitious on account of the extreme heat, yet even this unfavorable feature seemed not to prevent the friends from enjoying a large measure of -convention blessings. True enough, as is usual in these days, the gathering was a comparatively small one--probably not more than 70 of the brethren were present at the largest session; several States were, however, therein represented. But of course from a worldly viewpoint, from the standpoint of those who -believe that the Church's present mission is one of vast Magnitude and that she should now be pushing forward a movement backed by large finance and numbers--from such a standpoint, our assembly would indeed appear to be a despised company, so that one could hardly fail of being reminded of the words of the Poet:

"What poor, despised company
Of travelers. are those,
Who walk in yonder narrow way,
Beset by, many foes?"

And how true it is today, as it has been from the beginning of the Church's career nearly nineteen centuries ago, that followers of the Lamb have been a most limited company; misunderstood and misrepresented, despised and rejected of men, as was their Head; and as reported by St. Paul early in the Age, so likewise today they are counted as the filth, and offscouring of all things. But the Heavenly

Bridegroom bids all His followers be strong and of good courage to set their faces like flint Zionward, for soon He will appear to the glorification of all the faithful. Then shall they shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father and all their enemies shall be confounded and ashamed.

The new-life in Christ, the life of faith, and that which essentially relates to Christian development- and preparation for the Heavenly Bridegroom's presence was indeed the substance of the discourses of the brethren at Toledo. It was observed that the Master's words, "Be thou faithful unto death," ring clear and strong in the ears of all those who give evidence of spirit-begetting, and it was, recognized that faithfulness unto death signifies bearing the cross unto the end of life, in connection with which the fruits of the spirit--joy, peace, humility, long-suffering,, brotherly kindness and love, are appreciated as being most essential to enter the Kingdom, in harmony with the Master's words, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit."

All the brethren gathered at Toledo testified of the Lord's goodness and keeping power in these days of fiery trial, 'and, signified their intention of keeping the Lord always before them. The dear ones of. the home Class in Toledo surely fulfilled their part well in warmly welcoming the friends ' and in caring foe all their needs.

The public meeting was not all that we might have expected in numbers, on account, it. would seem, of the extremely hot weather. However it was estimated that there 'were between 150 to 175 present. The attention paid to the address on the subject, "Beyond the Grave," was encouraging, and we trust indeed that with the Lord's blessing some good was done. It was with- hearty thankfulness and worship to the Giver of all good that the friends separated, earnestly bidding one another God-speed until they should meet again.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

--SERIES II--

A ST. JOHN'S VISION OF CHRIST.,

"I John, your Brother and Co-partner in the Affliction, and Kingdom, and Patient waiting for Jesus, was in That Island which is Called Patmos, on account Of the Word of God, and the Testimony Of Jesus. I was in Spirit on the Lord's Day; and 'I heard behind, me a loud Voice as Of a Trumpet, saying, 'What thou seest write in a Scroll, and send to Those Seven Congregations; to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.'"--Rev. 1:9, 10, 11.

HAVING concluded his salutation to the Churches, St. John proceeds to address them, and at once states the circumstances and the conditions that surrounded him at time when he beheld the vision of Christ described in the succeeding verses. He begins by identifying himself with his, fellow-Christians, us ing the unassuming term of brother. He announces himself as simply a companion with his fellow-Christians in affliction, and as possessing the one hope, and . patiently waiting with them for the realization of the reward at the appearing of Jesus

Christ. It is well, known that St. John had been already severely persecuted, but he modestly refrains from making mention of this only as it is implied in his statement that he was a prisoner on the lonely Island of Patmos because of his faithfulness in proclaiming the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ. With becoming humility, the beloved John avoids mentioning his previous testimony for the Truth, which had brought him this- persecution, and also lightly passes over the persecution itself. .

It appears to be a well established principle, observed in God's providence, that faithfulness to Christi while it often brings persecution in some form, brings also clearer revelations of the, Divine plans and purposes, and 'though it may even mean imprisonment, the service to others is not hindered thereby, but rather increased. Joseph in prison became the "revealer of secrets." Luther translated the Scriptures into his own tongue while in prison, and gave to his fellow-ountrymen their first privilege of learning their contents, thus breaking the chains of superstition that bound them to Papal idolatry. John Bunyan wrote his world-famed "Pilgrim's Progress" while in prison. Likewise, St. John, while in his, lonely prison, was chosen to be the medium to complete the Divine canon of Scriptures. And those who have faithfully followed as he did in the footsteps of Christ have had, as a rule, given to them clearer unfoldings and understandings of the Divine Word.

IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY

St. John informs us that he was in the spirit on the Lord's day,, when he beheld this sublime vision of Christ. The word spirit may refer, as some think, to either the Holy Spirit, or to some state of mind such as the Holy Spirit produces--a spirit of elevated devotion--a state of high and uncommon religious enjoyment. A very worthy commentator, we believe has given a much better translation and interpretation of this expression: " 'I became in the spirit on the Lord's day.' It was- 'not simply in the right and, nor mal Christian state in which John found himself, as so many think, but carried out of himself by the power of the spirit; his senses closed to other things, his spirit awake to behold the things presented to him, and hear the voice that speaks to us also in him.'" Still another has very properly urged that "the visions granted to St. John, recorded in the book of Revelation, are in no sense and in no part to be understood as realities,, and this is the significance of St. John's statement in our lesson, 'I was in the spirit on the Lord's day.'" I

I would seem. then that the statement that the. Apostle John was "in the spirit" teaches us that the things he saw, in the visions were not realities, but symbolical representations of great facts and realities. The expression "on the Lord's day" is variously interpreted: "'On the Lord's day does not mean, as some suppose the prophetic. 'day of the Lord,'" for which there is a different expression, and which would not really apply at all to this first vision and what follows it. It is the Lord's day, the day of Christian privilege, in which in the joy of His, resurrection we look back upon His death. Yet this does not surely shut out the looking forward to His coming: 'Ye do show forth the Lord's death till He come.'"

The word here translated *Lord's* occurs in only one other place, namely, 1 Cor. 11:20, where it is applied to the Lord's Supper. It properly means pertaining to the

Lord, to the Lord Jesus. It is, therefore, apparent that the expression refers to some particular day distinguished from all the other days of the week, a day particularly devoted to the Lord Jesus, for this is the natural meaning of the word Lord, as used in the New Testament.' If the Jewish Sabbath was intended, as some Christians believe, the word Sabbath would have been used. The term Lord's day was generally used by the early Christians to refer to the first day of the week. Supplementing 'this thought further it is explained that "although the words, 'on the Lord's day,' might not unreasonably be understood to signify that St. John in vision was carried down the stream of time to the great Millennial Day, the Day of Christ, the Lord's Day, nevertheless, we think it reasonable to understand him to mean also that he saw this, vision on the first day of the Week., And how appropriate it was that our Lord, who arose on the- first day of the week, and who most frequently manifested His resurrection powers on that day, should on the same day reveal Himself and certain great instructions to the Church through St. John, honoring the same. day of the week. It is no wonder, therefore, that Christian people from the very earliest times have held the first day of the week in special reverence as the symbol of the fulfillment of all our hopes, whereof God gave us assurance in the resurrection, of our Lord Jesus on this day. . Besides, to confine the meaning of the expression to the Millennial Day exclusively, would be to ignore the fact that the larger proportion of St. John's vision related not to the Millennial Day, but to the intervening time."--Z '01-1187.

THE VOICE LIKE A TRUMPET

The fact that St. John's attention was first called in this vision by hearing, a voice *behind* him would suggest that, the beginning of the message was not in St. John's day nor from some future time, but that the things to be revealed *had already* commenced and were, already to some extent in the past. As an evidence that 'this is the correct thought the reader is asked to consider the statement in Revelation 5, in which Christ is shown receiving the scaled Scroll from the Heavenly Father, symbolical of what took place after His resurrection nearly a half century before St. John had the vision,. namely, His receiving the full knowledge concerning the history of the witnessing, suffering Church, etc, as well as His Divine commission to carry out and execute the eternal purpose of God.

The "Voice" that St.- John heard was "like a trumpet," which may either mean that its tones resembled' a trumpet or as though the voice spoke through a trumpet, seeming to imply that 'it was clear, distinct and loud. The-Hebrew trumpet is often referred to as employed on account of its clearness to summon people together upon public occasions, as well as for, the marshalling of hosts for battle. Thus the symbol would seem to teach that St. John as well as the entire 'Church of ' Christ whom he in some respects represented were being officially summoned by Him in no uncertain announcement--but by a message of great importance.,

VISIONS ARE NOT REALITIES

In addition to the words, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," (already mentioned in verse 8), the Apostle was instructed by the Voice to write down or make a record of what he saw, and of what he was to see, and to send the same to the seven Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, etc. St. John immediately', turned to see from whom the 'Voice proceeded and beheld: "Seven golden 'Lampstands, and in

the Midst of the Lampstands one like to a Son of Man, invested with a garment to the foot, and girded about at the Breasts with a golden Girdle; and His Head and Hairs white as white Wool, as Snow; and His Eyes as a Flame of Fire; and His Feet like to fine Brass glowing with fire, as in a Furnace -, and His Voice as the Voice of many Waters; and having in His/ Right Hand seven Stars; and out of His Mouth proceeding a sharp two-edged broad Sword; and His Appearance as the Sun shines in his Strength." Vs. 12-16.

Most commentators have understood that the vision was an actual appearance of Christ Himself; in other words, that 'Christ actually appeared to St. John on the Island of Patmos, instead of its being a vision of Christ. A vision is not a reality, but rather, something which is designed to picture, to symbolize, to represent the reality, As one has truthfully said: "Visions are not realities, though they symbolically represent them. This is true, whether the visions come, as Daniel describes his, as 'visions of my head upon my bed,' or whether they come in broad daylight, as with the transfiguration scene, which our Lord declared was, a vision. (Matt. 17:9)." "We are not to regard the word-picture of verses 13-16 as a portrait of our Lord in glory; for it is merely symbolical. When we shall see Him in glory He will not look as, here described. Nevertheless this symbolical picture 'has precious lessons for us, more valuable than an attempt to describe to our minds the appearance of our Lord as a spirit being, 'dwelling in light which, no man can approach unto,' and which we cannot appreciate -until, we shall be changed to 'be like Him and to see Him as He is.'--1 John 3:2; 1 Cor. 15:50-53."---Z '01-7187; i 6-344.

The principal and most important symbols of this vision are interpreted by the "Voice" that St. John heard, i. e., those of the "seven golden candlesticks", (Lampstands) in the midst of which the One like unto a Son of Man was standing, and the "seven Stars", which were held in, His right -hand. The explanation was made that "the seven Stars are the Angels [messengers] of the seven Churches .- and the seven candlesticks [Lampstands] are the seven Churches." This Divine explanation assists us to grasp the meaning of some of the other symbols; and other Scriptures where similar symbols are employed enable us to understand others of the vision.'

The appellation "Son of Man" is used. by the Prophet Daniel (Dan. 7) and is appropriated by Christ. to Himself, as we learn from frequent references to the same in the Gospels. This alone would be sufficient to prove, that the personage of the vision symbolized Christ. . | Thus the description that "His head and His hair as white as wool and snow tells us of His wisdom, His splendor and His glory.' His eyes like a flame of fire tell us in symbol that our Master is all-seeing, omniscient; that He is not deceived by outward forms and ceremonies; but that He can, and does, read every, thought and intent of the heart. The contemplation of His glance should of itself purge and, purify our hearts to the extent 'of our, ability, to put far from us everything which would have His disapproval.

"Having described the head, St. John mentions the hands and the feet. The remainder of the body was covered with a garment reaching from the head to the feet. This may possibly represent the fact that the glory of Christ Was manifested in His own person, in His own ministry, and in that of His twelve Apostles, His representatives -- St. Paul taking the place of Judas; and that with their death the

body of Truth was almost veiled throughout the eighteen centuries intervening, until now, in the end of the Age, the feet members of the Body of Christ will be illuminated by the Truth and will shine forth--not like the Head, but as polished brass."

"The' feet, described as like -furnace-refined copper would represent those members of the Body of Christ who serve in the sense of carrying forward, financially and otherwise, the Lord's work. Copper is a symbol of' humanity, and this copper being furnace refined would seem to say that those who belong to the Body of Christ, and whom the Lord would use in His service, 'the feet' members of the Body, must, in their contact and dealings with the world, be refined, purified, clean--'Be ye clean., that bear the vessels of the Lord's house.' The feet would thus represent the' living members , of the Body, all down through this Age-, and the refining process to each and all will be fiery trials.. i

"Thus, understood, the figure of a Son of Man (a human figure) in the midst of the seven candlesticks, etc., symbolically represented Christ standing criticizing, judging, directing, in the midst of His Church, upholding His chosen stars or, ministers,, and represented in the, various, members by His people, is an impressive picture- or symbol, full of instruction, leading us to expect the Lord's guidance in all the affairs of His Church and to realize that things are not happening to her haphazard. To so recognize that the Lord's people in every part of this Age have been 'feet' members of the Body,, carrying forward His work, is not to, contradict our previous application of Isa. 52:7, which merely represents the 'feet' members of the present time and identifies them as the ones who declare unto Zion, 'Thy God reigneth'--in this manner distinguishing these from their predecessors in the pilgrim--way."--Z '16-344; '01-188, 189.

THE TWO-EDGED SWORD

Commentators as a rule see no special symbolical significance in the expression, "and His voice as the voice of many waters." The suggestion offered by one presents the thought that there is a deep significance associated with it: "Waters tell of nations and peoples. The voice of men may have been flattering to the assembly [Church], but here is one voice equal to all. What shall be His verdict?"

An interpretation that seems to properly meet all the requirements is, "that, the Lord could and did speak to His Church sometimes as the voice of musical rippling waters of the brook, and sometimes as the roaring of the sea; or the many waters might be, understood as signifying peoples, nations and languages, as elsewhere' explained in this book, and that thus our Lord, present with His Church, would speak to her and through her by many tongues, in many languages." -Z '01-18.8.

We are next informed that St. John beheld proceeding out of the mouth of this 'symbolic personage, a sharp two-edged. broad Sword. "No part of the description could more thoroughly convince us that the description of our Lord given here is a symbolic one than does the statement that out of His mouth proceeded a two-edged Sword. As a symbolic picture, however, it is full of meaning, speaking to us of the Word of the Lord, the Sword of the Spirit, 'sharper than any two-edged Sword.' (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12.) It reminds us that our Lord's words are not one-sided, not directed, merely against sin in one class, hut that. His Word is

sharp, cutting in every direction, that sin is reprov'd . by Him as much when found in His most earnest followers as when found elsewhere."--Z '16-345.

The two edges of the sword cutting both ways is a striking symbol of the penetrating power of the Truth, or of the Word of God, proceeding from the mouth of God's messengers. In Isa. 49:2, a prophecy referring to Christ, it is said: "And He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword," and in Hebrews we read, "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword."

"And His countenance as the sun shineth in His strength." The overpowering splendor of the sun is here used to describe the majesty and glory, of the appearance of the countenance of Christ. This figure is employed frequently in the Scriptures. "Let them that love Him [the Lord] be' as the sun when lie goeth forth in his. might." (Judges 5:3 1.) "And He shall be as the light 'of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."--2 Sam. 23:4. ,

Thus closes the description that St. John gives of the glorious personage of the vision which symbolized our Lord in His conduct and office as these stand related to His followers, the members of His Body, and their experiences throughout this Gospel Age. It is probable, too, that the vision was, designed, to impress upon the mind of St. John and all of Christ's followers a sense of the glory and majesty of His person, and thus prepare the way to. appreciate the authoritative character and importance of the messages he was to receive and which he was to send to the seven Churches, particularly named by the. "Voice" he heard. And the full significance of the symbolical personage can only be understood by viewing it in the light of and in connection with, the history of the, true Church symbolized by the golden Lampstands.

ST. JOHN OVERWHELMED

St. John next describes the first effects that the seeing of the vision had upon him: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His Feet as dead" (.v. , 17), that is, as if he were dead-deprived of sense and consciousness. 'He was -completely overwhelmed with a sense of his own littleness. It is not probable that he would immediately recognize who was represented by the personage of the vision-not at all probable that the personage looked at all like the One whom he was accustomed to seeing and conversing with sixty year's before. The effect upon St. John was the same as that produced upon Daniel when he saw a. heavenly, spirit messenger; the same also as that produced upon Saul of Tarsus as he beheld a vision of the, same. Divine One., "So it is symbolically, with the Christian, when once he gets a glimpse of the glories of the Divine character. When once we get a true view of Him with whom we have to do, as the great Heart-searcher and caretaker of His Church, we fall before Him, humbled to the dust, realizing that we are imperfect, that we cannot stand before our Master, that we are unworthy of His favor and blessing. But as our Lord [the One who represented Him] touched St. John gently, raising him up, so He has spoken to us com fort, peace and love, assuring) us that we have a High Priest that can, be touched with a feeling of our infirmities', One 'Who is able to sympathize and merci fully to assist, One who has bought us with His own precious , blood, and who has accepted us and will number us as His

Body members as long as we abide in Him, seeking in our hearts to know and to do His will. To us His comforting assurance is:

"Fear not.' The same message the Father has sent, us through the Prophet, saying, 'Their fear of me is pot of me, but is taught by the precepts of -tpen.,' (Isa. 29:13.) This is one 'of the first lessons which we must learn. We cannot, come into close sympathy with our Lord and be taught of Him respecting other features of His Plan until we learn to fear not, learn to have confidence in Him as the One 'who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood,' and whose purposes toward us continually are for our welfare and, if we submit ourselves to His guidance, will bring us off conquerors and more than conquerors."--Z '16-345.

The expression, "I am the first and the last," -- having already been considered we pass on to the Words, "I am the Living One: I was even dead, but, behold, I am living for the Ages of the Ages"; this language would immediately identify Him in St. John's sight as representing the -Lord Jesus Christ; for to no other personage', could these words apply. He knew Christ had been put to death, and he also knew-that He was, raised from the dead by the Divine Father. This Was also designed to allay St. John's fears,. We are not to forget that While this was a vision of - Christ, it was as real to St. John as though the real Christ in His glory stood before Him. To him it would be as real as if the Savior -whom he had known in person sixty years before, the One whom he had so tenderly loved when in the flesh, the One whom, he -had. faithfully served for those long years since he beheld Him ascend out of their sight, was before him. To him it would be the same. as if he saw that One whom he had seen laid in the tomb ; the One who was to live forever.

Likewise all the faithful, catching the inspiration, of their Master's words to St. John, gladly Acknowledge Him as the One who was dead, "the One who really died for our sins, but who was as really raised out of death, by the Father., We must realize that He is -alive forevermore, that death has no more dominion over Him, that the work is finished, that neither sacrifices of the Mass nor death in any sense or form ever will be needed. His work is perfect; and, as He cried on the Cross, 'It is finished!'

"We must recognize that He has the keys, the authority, the power over the tomb, to deliver from it all who- are therein imprisoned. - We must also- realize that He has the key, the, power over death, in order that those whom He liberates from the prison-house of death, like those who have not yet gone, into the tomb, but who are under the death sentence, may all be ultimately delivered, set free from the dominion of sin and death, delivered into the full liberty of the Sons of God-righteousness and life everlasting. -- Rom. 8: 21."--Z '16-345.

THE VISIONS TO BE RECORDED FOR CHURCH'S BENEFIT

.In view of all this St. John was instructed: "Write therefore* the things thou sawest, even those which are, and the things which are about to transpire after these."--V. 19. This is undoubtedly a better translation of the original text than that of the Common Version, and. it makes clear the division or plan of the whole book of Revelation;

*There appears to be no excuse whatever for the translators of our Common Version to omit the word "*therefore*," from this text an omission that no previous translator had made. No question has ever been raised as to the right of this word to a place in the text. With what intention the illative particle is used is perhaps best referred to what immediately goes before: Seeing that I am this mighty One, the first and the last, who was dead and am alive, do thou, therefore, write; for the things declared by me are all steadfast and sure.

(1) "Write therefore the things thou sawest, even those which are, and

(2) "The things which are about to transpire after these."

The first, evidently, refers to the vision of Christ walking amongst the Lampstands, the significance of the Lampstands and the messages to the Churches, all of which are contained in the first three chapters; and the second-the things that are about to transpire after this-referring to the prophetic visions from chapters 4 and 5, on to the end of the book.

MR. BARNES interpreting the words- as rendered in the Common Version, has thus, we believe, very ably explained them as signifying the division of the book into three parts:

"(1) Write the things which thou hast seen. An account of the vision which thou hast had.

"(2) And the things that are. Give an account of those things 'which thou has seen as designed to represent the condition of the seven Churches. He had seen not only the Savior, but he had seen seven Lampstands, and seven Stars in, the hand of the Savior, and he is now commanded' to record the meaning of these symbols as referring, to things then actually existing in the seven Churches. This interpretation is demanded by verse 20.

"(3) And the things which shall be hereafter. The Greek phrase rendered *hereafter*, means "*after these things*"; that is, he was to make a correct representation of the things which then were, and, then to record what would occur '*after*. these things': to wit, of the images, symbols, and truths, which would be disclosed to him after what he had already seen. The expression refers to' future times. He does not say *for how long* a time; but the revelations 'which were to be made' referred to events which were to occur beyond those which were then, taking place. Nothing can be argued from the use of this language in regard to the length of time embraced in the Revelation -- whether it extended only for a few years or whether it embraced all coming time. The more natural interpretation, however, would seem to be that it, would stretch far into the future years, and that it was designed to give at least an *outline* of what would be the character of the future in general."

This same writer summing up the first chapter of the Revelator's visions has with becoming eloquence said: "Such is the sublime vision under which this book opens; such the solemn commission which the penman of the book received. No more appropriate introduction to what is, contained in the book could be imagined; no -more appropriate circumstances for making such. a sublime revelation could have existed. To the most beloved of the Apostles -- now the

only surviving one of the number; to him who had been a faithful laborer for a period -- not far from sixty years after the death of the Lord Jesus, who had been the bosom friend of the Savior when in the flesh, who had seen Him in the mount of transfiguration, who had seen Him die, and Who had seen Him ascend to heaven; to him who had lived while the Church was founded, and while it had spread into all lands; and to him who was now suffering persecution on account of the Savior and His Cause, it was appropriate that such communications should be made. In a lonely island; far away from the abodes of men; surrounded by the ocean, and amid barren rocks; on the day consecrated to, the purposes of sacred repose, and the holy duties of religion-the day observed in commemoration of the resurrection of his Lord, it was most fit that the Redeemer should appear to the 'beloved disciple' in the last Revelation which He was ever to make to man kind.' No more appropriate time or circumstance could be conceived, for disclosing, by a series of sublime visions, what would occur in future 'times-for sketch ing out the history of the Church to the consummation of all things."

CONCERNING COMMENCEMENT OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S REIGN

SOME of the brethren have written. us stating that in their recent study of the chronology they have met with some difficulties with regard to certain Scriptures which appear to be in contradiction to. one another; and we have been asked what we have to offer in explanation of and by way of harmonizing them. Amongst the points in question we are asked how we reconcile the statement in the HERALD of April 15, that the first year of Nebuchadnezzar was the third year of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1, 2), with the statement in Jer. 25:1, that the fourth year of Jehoiakim was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar.

As closely associated with the same matter, it is urged that it is plainly stated in Dan. 1:5, 18, that Nebuchadnezzar: kept Daniel three years in training before he admitted him to his presence to interpret the dream. (Dan. 2:1). If this be true, and if it be also true that Daniel was taken captive in Nebuchadnezzar's first year, the question is, *How* could the Prophet have been called into the king's presence-to interpret the dream in Nebuchadnezzar's second year? the thought being that at the very most, seemingly, .hardly two years had elapsed since Daniel was taken captive and the servitude had begun.

Before presenting our answer, we remind all that the principal and essential truth brought out in our treatment of the chronology, viz., that the Divine decree giving Nebuchadnezzar, the lease of power occurred in either the third or fourth year (we believe the third) of Jehoiakim, and not in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in Zedekiah's day, nineteen years later, is not in the least affected by the Scriptures cited above; whether the Gentile lease commenced in the third or in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign it matters not; and our former view of reckoning Gentile lease of power as beginning with Zedekiah's overthrow,. fixing that event and the others associated in 606 B. C., instead of 587 B.C., is still, seen to be nineteen years out of the way.

The difficulties above, referred to did not escape our notice when we presented our view on the "Times of the Gentiles," *and could be answered only* by reference, to secular history. Now, however, since it appears to be necessary, we are offering some suggestions, hoping to be of assistance to such as have expressed a measure of confusion in this connection.

These texts that appear to be more or less at variance may be explained in two or three ways. We will present what seems to us the most reasonable view. Indeed, we believe this explanation will be found to have no difficulties whatever, when the facts of secular, history as given in connection with Nebuchadnezzar's reign and the method of counting its years are compared with those of the sacred historian. In making the claim as we have done that the third year of Jehoiakim was 606 B. C., the first year of Nebuchadnezzar, our thought is that this year marked the first year of Nebuchadnezzar's rulership over the kingdom of Judah; in other words, the first year of Judah's servitude, which was to last seventy years.

There are several factors to be considered in connection with this matter: (1) The Jewish method of counting the years "of their kings" reign was to reckon from the month Nisan; so that if a king began his reign even one month before Nisan, that, would be counted as his first year; his second year would date from Nisan in such a case. We are not informed in Dan. 1, the month, date of Nebuchadnezzar's taking, Daniel and the others captive, but secular history makes it the summer of 606 B. C.

(2) The Babylonian count of years was from the time the king began, his reign. The second year of Nebuchadnezzar, according to secular history, when Daniel interpreted the dream, would be the second year of Nebuchadnezzar's *sole reign*. Berosus, the Babylonian historian who lived 260 B. C. records, according to Josephus, that the first expedition of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem was before his father's (Nabopolassar's) death. This, of course, was before history records his actual (sole) succession.

Thus, in comparing secular history with that of sacred history we notice that Ptolemy's canon, the only authority we have that enables us to determine the B.C. dates of this period (the accuracy of which has been fully established), Nebuchadnezzar's reign is reckoned as beginning 604 B. C., which means that this was the date of his accession, at the time of his father's death. This was in the beginning of Thoth (which fell, in January), 604 B. C. This is in agreement with all historians, and the record leaves no room for doubt, that it was early in that year. Examining the Scriptures carefully, we discover that what is commonly called the "great captivity" took place after Jehoiakim's death, and after Jehoiachin, his successor, had reigned only three months. It was at this time that Ezekiel was taken away captive, which was in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year (compare Ezek. 1:2 and 2 Kings 24:12); and in the thirty-seventh year of this captivity, Nebuchadnezzar had died and his successor was on the throne. (2 Kings 25:27.) This, it will be seen, would make Nebuchadnezzar's reign to be at least forty four years, whereas, according to Ptolemy's canon, and Berosus, the historian, confirms it, he reigned only forty three years, and was succeeded by, Evil-merodach, the Ilvoradamus of Ptolemy's canon. It is, very evident, there fore, that Scripture *antedates* the years of Nebuchadnezzar, computing his reign from 605 B. C. This would be sufficiently accounted for by the fact that from the con

quest of Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1, 2), the Jews acknowledged Nebuchadnezzar as their suzerain; as a noted writer has observed, "it has been overlooked, that it is in accordance with the ordinary principle on which they reckoned regnal years, computing from Nisan to Nisan." In 604 B. C. the 1st of Nisan, fell on about the 1st of April, and according to Jewish reckoning the Jewish king's second year would begin on that day, no matter how recently he had ascended the throne. Therefore, "the fourth year of Jehoiakim that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar" (Jer. 25:1), was the year beginning 605 B. C.; and the third year of Jehoiakim in, which Jerusalem, was taken and the servitude began (Dan. 1:1, 2), was the year beginning 606 B. C. This result is most remarkably confirmed by *Clinton*, who fixes the summer of 606 B. C. as the date of Nebuchadnezzar's first expedition. (Fasti Helenica, Vol. 1-328.)

We therefore observe that both the third and fourth years of Jehoiakim were current in the first year of Nebuchadnezzar in this way, namely, the third year of Jehoiakim, which began Nisan 606 B. C., ended in Nisan 605 B. C. at which time his fourth year began, a few months before Nebuchadnezzar's first complete year's reign over the Jews, ended. It will thus be seen that this affords the explanation of the statement in Daniel which has been triumphantly appealed to by skeptics in depreciation- of the value of the book of Daniel. If (it is urged by skeptics) the king of Babylon kept Daniel three years in training before allowing him to -come into his presence, how could the Prophet have interpreted the dream in his (Nebuchadnezzar's) second year?--Dan. 1:5, 18; 2:1.

The reply is that Daniel, being at the time a citizen of Babylon pd. also a courtier, would most naturally calculate his sovereign's reign according to the common era in use around him, as Nehemiah afterwards did in like circumstances. Now, as Daniel went into exile in 606 B. C., and as the record shows was immediately sent to school, his three years of probation terminated at the close of 603 B.C., whereas, the second year of Nebuchadnezzar, from his actual succession in 604 B.C. after the death of his father, extended to some date in the early months of 602 B. C. Consequently, when in the second chapter of Daniel we read of the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in the second year of his reign, it is to be understood that it was in the second year of his sole reign;, albeit, it was the fourth year from the time he actually entered upon his reign, two -years before his father's , death, when he made Jehoiakim his servant, and took Daniel to, Babylon; and this would allow Daniel and his companions to have the three years' schooling before he interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

The following will illustrate the matter:.,

To B. C. 606, Jerusalem taken; Daniel a captive, servitude began.--Dan. 1:1, 2.

To B C. 605, first year of Daniel's schooling

To B. C. 604, first year of Nebuchadnezzar's sole reign; second year of Daniel's schooling ended.

To B. C. 603, third year of Daniel's schooling ended, after which Daniel interpreted the dream in Nebuchadnezzar's second year, which second year extended to 'some date in the early months of B. C. 602.

PAUL IN CYPRUS AND IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA

--AUGUST 7--ACTS 13:1-52--

Golden Text.--*"Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*--Acts 1:8.

OUR Lord's commission, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations," was not, as some have supposed, a command to convert the world, nor is there any suggestion anywhere in the Scriptures that the preaching of the Gospel was with such an end in view. Quite to the contrary, every intimation of our Lord's parables illustrating the subject, and all of the words of the Apostles, were to the effect that at the end of the Age, at the second coming of Christ, He would not find faith predominating in the earth; He would not find God's will done on earth as in Heaven; but He would find merely a little flock, selected from the world through the preaching of the Truth. These would be made meet to be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, and joint heir with Him in the glorious Kingdom then to be established for the purpose of binding Satan, restraining evil, and causing Truth and righteousness to fill the earth and bless all the nations.--Luke 18:8; 12:32; Rev. 26:1-3

The commission meant merely--You are no longer restricted to the Jews in preaching this Gospel of the Kingdom; you may now deliver it to all the world, every nation, so that "he that hath an ear" may hear--to the intent that a little flock, the elect, spiritual Israel, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, may be *selected* from all nations for future service in the Kingdom. In accord with this, our Lord's instruction, as related by Luke, says, "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47.) And again, as recorded in our Golden Text, He said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The Apostles evidently did not at first comprehend the scope of the Master's commission. They were ready enough to begin at Jerusalem; ready also, as we have seen, to extend the work throughout Judea; ready also when the Lord's providence so led, to preach to the Samaritans; but it required very special instructions for St. Peter to preach to the Gentiles also. As the Gospel was not intended to convert all of the Jews, but only to take from them a remnant while the rest were left blinded for a time, so, likewise, it was intended to take from amongst the Gentiles also only a remnant, so that the entire company of the elect of this Age is properly termed "a little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give, the Kingdom, which Kingdom, it is, also the Father's good pleasure, shall bless all the families of the earth.

ACTIVITY IN SERVICE FOLLOWS BEGETTING OF SPIRIT

Antioch was the first church of believers, so far as we know, outside of Palestine--the first church amongst the Gentiles. Its members were probably chiefly Jews, and these chiefly foreign born. The Jews residing abroad doubtless appreciated the fact that amongst their Gentile neighbors were some of noble character, not less worthy of Divine favor than were the Jews; and these doubtless would, on this account, the more quickly fall into line with the Lord's instruction and leading respecting the Gospel -- that it was thenceforth not for Jews exclusively, but for people of all nationalities who were in heart-readiness to receive it.

A previous lesson showed us Barnabas and Paul meeting with the brethren at Antioch, for a considerable time, in the worship of the Lord and in the study of His Word. The result of these studies was to develop the Church ' as a whole, and to bring it to the point of considering and praying, about means for the service of the Truth--the spread of the Gospel. There were a number of prophets (public orators) and teachers in the Church, and evidently they began to think of how they might be used, to the glory of God and to the blessing of others, as they themselves had been, blessed by the Truth. This is always the, case with those who receive the Truth into good and honest hearts. Properly enough, -they desire to feed thereon themselves and to grow strong in the Lord, but just so surely, as the Truth is received, with, its spirit, it gives a strength and a desire to use that strength. This is as true today as it was then, the consecration which the Truth brings is identical with our begetting of the spirit; and the energy for service corresponds to the quickening of the spirit.

The Holy Spirit indicated that Barnabas and Paul should have a special work to do in carrying the message of God's grace to others, and the Church at Antioch ordained them The laying on of hands did for this missionary service. not signify the impartation to them of any spiritual or occult powers. It did not mean the giving to them of authority to preach. It did mean that the congregation of the Lord at Antioch recognized these two men as God's servants and authorized them to go forth as their representatives, and impliedly at their charges, to carry the message of Good Tidings to others. As the priests laid their hands upon the animals which were to represent them in sacrifice, so the Church laid their hands upon those who were to represent them in the service of the Truth.

The missionaries went from Antioch, a distance of eighteen miles, to the seaport town of Seleucia, where they took ship for the nearest large city in the Island of Cyprus. It was probably as good a place to begin as any, and had the advantage of being the home country of Barnabas, who would be familiar with the dialect of the people, their customs, etc. The missionary, tour, consumed probably considerable time, as they went from village to village, preaching Christ, until they reached the city of Paphos, at the far end of the island. But they did not tarry there. Its climate is miasmatic, And this is presumed. to have been the reason for a hasty departure for the high lands of Asia Minor-Galatia, etc. The Apostle is presumed to have referred to his own semi-invalid condition at this time when later, in writing the Epistle to the Galatians, he said,. "Through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel to you at first." (Gal., 4:13, 14.) Galatia was the name of a district or state in which were located a number of cities and churches mentioned in the account of Paul's missionary tours--Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Antioch on the borders of Galatia, in the state of Pisidia. This Antioch should not be confounded with the larger city, Antioch of Syria.

MARK'S RECOVERY OF LOST GROUND

John Mark, the writer of -the Gospel by Mark, cousin of Barnabas, and son of one of the Marys at, Jerusalem (Acts 12 :12, 25), is noted as being their minister, attendant servant, but he discontinued his service at Paphos and returned to Jerusalem; hardships or discouragements or homesick ness, we know not what, evidently, for the time quenched his zeal as a servant of the Lord and of the Truth, assuredly much to Mark's disadvantage. Whatever the cause, evidently the

Apostle Paul considered it quite insufficient; so that on another occasion, when Barnabas suggested Mark's accompanying them, similarly, the Apostle declined which he evidently would not have done had Mark's desertion been fully justified by considerations of health or necessity. It was a labor of love, however; no salaries were attached, and if Mark chose to discontinue his sacrifice it was his own business, and he was the loser.

So it is today, the Lord leaves His people free from restraints; free from threats; free from compulsion; to the intent that they may present their bodies living sacrifices day by day. Now, as then, whoever grows cold may discontinue his sacrificing, but himself will be the loser. We want to keep distinctly before our minds that while God condemns sin, and while His people have no liberty in this respect, but are obligated to do their best to withstand sin, it is different in the matter of sacrifice. The Lord is calling for free-will offerings, and whatever is not given with a hearty good-will, yea, with an earnest desire, with zeal, may as well be kept; but the rewards promised to those who imitate the spirit of the Master and His, devotion will be lost also.

There is an element of encouragement, however, in Mark's experience. Later on he evidently became quite a thorough and devoted soldier of the cross, was again accepted to the Lord's service, and we find that the Apostle Paul made acknowledgment of appreciation of his faithfulness. (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.) Mark's recovery of lost ground and his reinstatement by the Lord in His service, should be an encouragement for any who similarly have grown cold and lax as respects their devotion and sacrifice, and who have been consequently dropped out of active service of the Truth. The Lord is very merciful to us in our weaknesses and imperfections, and as He restored Mark, undoubtedly he is willing also to restore all who will similarly learn a lesson from their failures, and who earnestly desire and strive for reinstatement and the privileges of service.

The first stop made in Asia Minor was at Antioch of Pisidia. The usual custom was followed, of going first to the Jews to their synagogue. The missionaries were recognized as strangers and also as men of talent, and after the regular services of the synagogue had been introduced by the reading of the usual lesson from the Law, they were invited to address the assembled people, Jews by birth, and Jewish proselytes from the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul was the speaker, and made a telling address. He recognized the fact that his hearers had 'faith in God's promises regarding the coming Kingdom: he did not need, therefore, to emphasize the Kingdom feature in this discourse. Rather, his hearers needed to see that there could be no Kingdom and no permanent blessing of all the families of the earth, such as was implied in the promises made to Abraham, unless in some manner Divine, forgiveness of the world's sins could first be secured.

The trend of his discourse, therefore, was to show how God had 'established a (typical) kingdom in "the past, which had never reached the 'grand stage essential to the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises, and that the thing, *necessary* and lacking was a *redemption*, of the world and the forgiveness of sins. Then he presented to their attention Jesus as the Messiah-not merely a crucified Messiah; but also a risen one who, because of His death for the sins of the world, was able to -save unto the uttermost all that should come unto God through Him. Having

put the matter squarely before them, the Apostle, in the words recorded in verse 38 of our lesson, offered his hearers forgiveness of sins as the, very, essence of the Gospel.

WHAT IS OUR MESSAGE TODAY?

Forgiveness of sin is still the import of the Gospel; the, essence of the Gospel Preaching of today, as eighteen centuries ago, must be man's sinful and condemned condition, and his need of redemption, reconciliation and recovery from sin and its wages, death. This is the Gospel, which, is falling into disuse in the pulpits of churchianity, as well as elsewhere, in response. to the itching ears of the majority, the "tares," and their call for the preaching of smooth things.

Additionally, it is proper now to emphasize the Gospel of the Kingdom, which the Lord, and the Apostles made so prominent; and to show that the Little Flock, the elect of this Age, are to constitute the Kingdom, which, in the coming Age, is to rule and bless the world, by restraining Satan and every evil device, and causing the knowledge of the Lord to abound. Now, as then, the larger unfolding of the Truth, the Divine Plan of Salvation, is interesting to some--to the honest-hearted; and repulsive to some--the vain-glorious, the sectarian, the proud, the self-satisfied. Now, as then, when we are appealed to by those who have an ear to hear Present Truth, they should be encouraged to 'continue in the grace of God.'- They should not be told that their ignorance of Present Truth implies that they have none of, the grace of God, but that because they have received of, His grace into. good and honest hearts it is the will of God that they should continue therein and grow and increase and abound; that to this intent He has sent forth the Truth to His people in every quarter, that the true wheat may be ripened and gathered to His garner..

News of the new religion' supplemental to the Jewish, spread throughout the little city in which Judaism had evidently gained a good foothold and great respect; so that the whole city. gathered on the next Sabbath to hear the, message of the missionaries, probably the majority coming merely out of curiosity, to see the difference between the, doctrines of these and the regular Jewish teachers."The whole city" may, be understood hyperbolically, as signifying a large concourse; or that all, classes and conditions of citizens were well represented. The gathering of such a multitude could not be held, probably, in the synagogue, but we may presume, in the yard or court surrounding it, or both. Such attention to two strangers and their new doctrine, which threatened an overthrow of Judaism naturally awakened a spirit of jealousy in those whose interest was much in forms and ceremonies, honor amongst men and denominational pride, and, as a result, they contradicted, Paul's statements with blasphemy. Not that they blasphemed God's name, but that they slandered or blasphemed the Apostle and Barnabas, speaking evil of them; we may surmise, misrepresenting their motives,, their characters, etc.

THE SPIRIT OF PERSECUTION STILL ABROAD

This is the usual course of those who fight against the Truth, and it is so today. The Truth cannot be gainsaid; it is irresistible; but it can be misrepresented; it can be denied; *the presentations of it can be distorted, and its messengers can be slandered, villified. The Adversary seems to adopt this. method on every occasion.*

It is the method now in vogue. Those who oppose the Truth will not dare to meet it openly in public discussion before the people, *but they will distort and misrepresent it*, and say all manner of evil against its advocates and will persecute those who favor it.

The missionaries were not discouraged by the opposition but were rather made the more courageous, and brought to the point where they explained to their villifiers, plainly, the true state of the case; that they were rejecting God's favor, God's Plan, against themselves, to their own injury, to their own loss. They pointed out that God, in His mercy, had long favored Israel, and that in sending the message of Messiah, to them first He was still favoring them; but that, according to His direction it was their duty to proceed, and to tell the Gospel to whoever had ears to hear, to the Jew first, but also to the Gentiles. They pointed out that the Lamp of Truth which God had now lighted was not to be to the Jews, exclusively, as had been His previous favors, but, as the Prophet had already declared, was to be a light to "lighten the Gentiles"--salvation unto the ends of the earth.-Luke 21:32; Isa. 42:6; 52:10.

This feature of the Gospel specially aroused the opposition of such Jews as were in the wrong condition of heart, but was proportionately attractive to the few who were in the right attitude.

So we find it now; those of God's people who are in the right attitude of heart will be gladdened by this expansion and unfolding of the Truth: *no feelings of jealousy will be theirs*. But the majority, full of sectarian theories and plans and selfish sentiments, and blinded largely by false theology and by misrepresentations of the Word of God are violently opposed to any thought of God's general goodness being extended to *every creature*, not only those who have not yet gone to the prison-house of death, but -also to the fifty thousand millions who have already gone down into the silence of death, in ignorance of the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. But all the faithful, all the honest-hearted, -will ultimately rejoice at the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's Plan, to be consummated 'during the Millennium by the glorified' Christ, Head and Body.

Many of the Gentiles were glad as they heard of God's favor being broader than they had previously supposed -- some, we may infer, were merely pleased that something had been shown up- that was broader than the Jewish teachings, but some others, -- we are assured, believed, in the true sense of the word -- accepting Christ -- as their Redeemer and as their Law-giver. And so today also we see two classes among those who favor the Present Truth: some who hail it with joy -and gratefully worship and serve the Lord more fervently than ever; and some who are merely glad to find that there is no Scriptural ground for the popular theory of an eternal torment for the vast majority of mankind; but are not specially drawn or constrained by Divine love and mercy.

The more the Truth spread the more angry became its opponents, the Jewish leaders; and what they could not oppose with argument or logic they did oppose successfully with prejudice and superstition, -arousing these baser sentiments by misrepresentation. They secured thus the cooperation of some of the most honorable and notable people of the city, to such an extent that the missionaries were obliged to depart from them. The Adversary's methods are the same today in

this respect also, that by misrepresentation he secures for his agents, often' unwillingly, some. who are noble and honorable people. This teaches us two lessons: First, *to be -careful ourselves-to be on guard* against the Adversary's *methods, if we are honorable and well-intentioned; to see to it that we are not. inveigled into opposing the Truth while supposing that we are doing God service.* It teaches us also to have respect 'for those who are our opponents, and who give evidence of sincerity, even in their persecution. Some of the best friends of Present Truth today we're once its bitter enemies, revilers and persecutors. Some may not, get proper sight of the matter until, the Kingdom binds Satan and opens their, eyes; but others we may hope are the King's own and will be helped in time for them to make their calling and election sure in the Kingdom "Little Flock."

AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE, BELIEVED

The word "ordained," here, may properly be translated *disposed*; I and thus we get- the 'thought that as many of those who heard the Gospel and its offer of, everlasting life, and were disposed to accept the terms, became believers--obedient to the faith. So it is still. The Truth, wherever it goes, finds some who like it and some who dislike it; some who appreciate the doctrines and rewards which it presents, and some who prefer the pleasures of sin or the affairs and rewards of the world. It is the time, for each one who has heard to take his choice. Soon the number of the elect will be complete, and then the work of the elect will begin--the blessing of mankind.

We assume that the expression, "shook off the dust of their feet" is a figurative one, as we would use it today, meaning that we took our departure. Our departure, under such circumstances, would be a witness against those who rejected our message and those who persecuted us a witness which they would remember in coming time. Yet the departure of the missionaries was not in anger, for we are assured that they were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit--rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, and to have their names cast out , **as** evil; rejoicing also that they had, by the Lord's grace, accomplished something in the service. The expression, however, included more than merely the missionaries: it included those who remained as well as those who went. All were rejoicing. The Truth and its spirit are constant causes for joy of heart to those who have them. *On the contrary, the persecuting spirit, the jealous spirit, is always the unhappy one.* Let us see that our rejoicing is of the same kind--in the Lord, in the Truth, in the service, not withstanding persecutions, trials and difficulties.

PAUL IN ICONIUM AND LYSTRA

--August 14--ACTS 14:1-28--

Golden Text.--*"Thou shalt worship the Lord MY God, and Him only shalt thou serve."*--Matt. 4:10.

LEAVING Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium, about 100 miles distant. 'There also they preached the Word faithfully, and there also opposition was aroused and persecution threatened; "and when there was an assault made, both of the Gentiles and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use

them despitefully and to stone them, they were aware of it, and fled. unto Lystra." They did not allow fear to hinder them from the preaching of the Gospel with courage, boldness; neither did they fear threats; but when the persecution took a positive form they delayed no longer, but fled. Why did they not wait, and expect the Lord to grant them some. miraculous deliverance? Why did they not challenge their opponents to see, whether the power of God or the power, of Satan was the stronger? We answer, Because they were better instructed respecting the Divine will. They were following the instructions of the Lord. He did not say. to them, Be fearful of persecution, withhold your message, and put your light, under a bushel; but the reverse. He did not say, Flee in fear,,, when there is no danger; but He did say, When they persecute you in one, city flee ye to another."

Arriving at Lystra, the preaching of the Gospel was begun afresh, as courageously as though there had been no previous opposition., Amongst the auditors was a cripple, presumably a, Jew or a proselyte, who manifested much interest in the Apostle's words. Paul, perceiving this and that the man had faith, stopped in his preaching and called out to him, "Stand upright on thy feet"--a thing he had never done. He had the necessary faith and obeyed the Apostle's command; and. thus a miracle resulted, evidently to the astonishment of the entire congregation. The effect upon the people was electrical, and they shouted in their own dialect, "The gods have come down to visit us!"

The city of, Lystra figured as the scene of a mythological event, the tradition being that Jupiter and Mercury, two of the gods of mythology, having once come to their city in the form of men, had been everywhere refused lodgings until they came to the lowly hut of a poor man who entertained them to the extent of his ability. They rewarded him by turning his hut into a gorgeous temple, and punished the others of the city with a flood. These traditions were very old, but were perpetuated by a statue of Jupiter at the gate of the city, as its protecting god.

It is easy to. discern how a comparatively ignorant-and superstitious people might jump to the conclusion that the visit of Paul and Barnabas was a repetition of this visit of Jupiter and Mercury, handed down to them through tradition. They called Paul, Mercury, because in their tradition, Mercury was the orator, the speaker; and they called Barnabas, Jupiter, and forthwith the priest of Jupiter prepared to offer a sacrifice of oxen before the statue of Jupiter, at the gate of their city, in honor-of the supposed gods present With them as, men, in the persons of Barnabas and Paul.

PAUL AND BARNABAS REFUSE TO ACCEPT HONOR

The missionaries were probably preaching, or conversing and explaining quietly, to the more interested, Ones, when they heard of the commotion in the city, and of the sacrifice which was about to be offered. They did not for a moment think of taking advantage of the superstition of the people to make of themselves some great ones, nor did they attempt to turn the event to a service of the Truth by claiming that God was, Jupiter, and that Jesus was Mercury, and that they represented them. On the contrary, most earnestly and simply they entreated the people to desist; explaining to them that they were nothing but imperfect men like themselves, "of like passions , and that their mission was the very reverse of what they supposed, and that Jupiter and Mercury and their fabled deeds were only

products of imagination, Ignorance and superstition. They ran in amongst the people while they, full of excitement, were, preparing for the sacrifice, and with difficulty, even then, amid protests of their own nothingness, did they restrain the people from sacrificing in their honor. Noble men they were, and their faithfulness to the Lord and to the Truth attested the wisdom of the Divine choice in sending them on this missionary errand.

We may draw a lesson from the incident, helpful to all of the Lord's people who are to any extent His ambassadors, representatives, teachers of the Truth. The Truth itself, especially in the light of our day, is so wonderful, so brilliant that it naturally reflects some of its brilliancy upon those who represent it, causing, men to, marvel, and to say, as of old, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" In some instances it might lead to an undue deference, to an ascription of undue honor, and to a subserviency which it would not be proper for the Lord's ambassador's to receive and which they should as promptly and as thoroughly repudiate and refuse as did Paul and Barnabas refuse the honors which the Lystrians were about to bestow upon them. From the worldly standpoint this would be an unwise course. Those who will accept flattery and adulation and honor more than is due, are likely to be prospered in this course to some extent by the Adversary, and apt to find that the worldly spirit likes to worship worldly heroes, Jupiters, Elijahs, etc. The only wise course for the Lord's servants is, therefore, the one followed by these missionaries of our lesson--to repudiate the entire matter; to confess that they are men of like passions with others; to hold up the light of God's Word, and behind it to hide and ignore themselves entirely. Not alone will this be profitable as respects the finding and development of the true children of God whom He is now gathering out of the world, but it will be profitable also for the Lord's ambassadors; for in this way they will grow in the Lord's grace and likeness; of which humility was a prominent trait. Thus they will best abide in His love, and, ultimately attain to the still greater exaltation which God has promised to all of His children who are faithful and humble under present conditions.

THE PATH OF HUMILITY LEADS HEAVEN WARD

The Apostle, in pointing out to the Lystrians that their ideas were vanities, well knew that this could not bring him the favor of his hearers; -for it is not human nature to appreciate being told of our follies. To have worked his way into their good graces he would have needed to tell them a lie--that they were very wise, and that their course was a very proper one, etc. He, therefore, in his endeavor to be candid, and to serve the Truth, risked their disappointment and displeasure; and he was undoubtedly keen enough to know this in advance, and what result to expect. Nevertheless, as God's mouthpiece, he shunned not to declare, the whole message, whatever its results might be as regarded himself and his work. Here are good lessons for all of the Lord's people. It requires comparatively little courage to be a soldier of the Cross and faithful to the Truth amongst those of like precious faith and obedience; but it requires great courage to resist improper honor, of men when we know in advance that this resistance will not only deprive us of their honor and friendship, but make us ignoble in their sight, and turn them into enemies. True soldiers of the Cross, still have the same trial, and it still requires hardness--a hardening campaign of experience in the Lord's service, to endure these things and come off joyful in the Lord. The babes in Christ, the weak, the

untried, those who have not passed through trials and experiences and development of character, are not hardened, and could not stand such experiences. Hence it is that the Apostle advises the Church that even proper exaltation to a service in the Church should not be accorded to a novice, lest he should be puffed, up and thus be injured himself, as well as become injurious to others. (1 Tim. 3:6.) It requires time and seasoning to know, how to either rightly accept and appreciate the honors of, the brethren or others along proper lines, or to decline honors and dignities along improper lines.

The Apostle pointed out to his hearers that in times past God had been permitting all the nations to walk in their own, ways. He had interfered, particularly in the affairs of only the one nation, Israel; all the others had been permitted, to take their own, course, except in so as they might be crossing some feature of the Divine Plan. Thus the Prophet expressed the matter to Israel, "You, only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2.) The reference to "times past," implies the change of, dispensation which, had, just occurred in connection with the death of Jesus and the cutting off of Israel from any special favor, and the throwing open of the Gospel call to all who had ears to hear--to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Now God Was sending a message of instruction to all the nations, that they should turn from such vanities and should recognize the only living and true God, and His Son who had redeemed the world, and whom He had ordained should in due time become its King and Ruler, to put down sin and death, and bless with His reign of righteousness all the families of the earth. The Apostle paints out that although God had left the nations without the instructions of the Law Covenant, He had given them some indications of His care in making provision for their necessities,--causing the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

PERSECUTION AS A RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS

The sudden change of public sentiment, the result of the Apostle's explanations and plain statements of the Truth, led the Lystrians to look at the missionaries with very different eyes, now that they were, according to their own declarations, common men like themselves. We may even suppose that they felt rather mean about their own superstition, which had so quickly aroused them to do reverence to men who repudiated it and acknowledged their unworthiness of it. It was while the populace was in this spirit that certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium came thither, explaining to them that the missionaries were impostors, working upon the credulity of the people, "turning the world upside down," raising questions about theology, and disturbing the minds of the people. The populace was ready for just such leading in the reverse direction, and disposed to feel somehow that if these men were not really Jupiter and Mercury they were pretenders and falsifiers who had deceived them and should be put to death. As a result, Paul was stoned, and dragged, outside the city, and left for dead.

But God was not through with the Apostle Paul; he was not stoned because of God's indifference, nor because of His lack of power to protect His servant. On the contrary, quite probably the Lord was teaching the Apostle some great lesson, valuable both to himself and to the Church, for whom he was a general minister, and to whom even today he ministers, in the matter of these experiences. Quite probably the Apostle, while being stoned, remembered afresh the death of

Stephen, to which he had consented; and quite probably, too, the result was a fresh realization of his, own unworthiness to be so, prominent a representative of, the Lord and of His Truth--a humbling of his heart before the Lord, profitable to him and to .the Church also.

Had the incident of the sacrificing not been. thus followed by. some trying experiences, who knows but that the Apostle might have felt a little of self-gratulation, such **as would he natural** to any . man who, having honors thrust, upon hi l in, had voluntarily renounced them. He might have been disposed, to glory in his strength of character; but his experiences led him in an opposite direction, as he himself subsequently wrote, "I will glory in tribulation." All of the Lord's faithful ones can learn good lessons here; can learn to trust to the Lord's providences in all of their affairs--not only in those which seem to go favorably, but in those also, apparently are working disadvantage. The Lord said concerning' Paul, when **declaring that he was** .a chosen vessel for His service, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for. My name's sake'."From this lesson we may draw the inference that when the 'Lord's servants are permitted, to suffer for His name's sake (not for wrong-doing, not for anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, etc., but, for His sake) it is an attestation of the Lord's favor, in the acceptance of his sacrifice--as in the type, Abel's sacrifice was accepted with, fire.

As the disciples stood about the prostrate form of Paul, supposing, as the others had, that he was dead, he rose up and returned to the city. We are. not to, suppose that all of the citizens joined in' the mob which l stoned him, though we are to suppose that there must have been a general sympathy on, the part of the, majority, else such mob violence would not have been possible. It is quite probable, therefore, that the Apostle's return to the city was in a very quiet manner, so as not to unduly re-arouse the passions of the mob. The spirit of bravado which impels, some people seems to have been absent in the case of, these missionaries. They had the true courage and endured hardness as good soldiers in the way which the Lord approved; but we *never see them tantalizing the people by boastful manner or words. They, and not others who Misinterpret the Divine will by an opposite course*, should be our patterns, our examples, in such matters.

Their entire public preaching at Lystra was at an, end, and the next day the missionaries went to Derbe, a distance of .35 miles--which implies that the Lord wrought a -wonderful miracle in Paul, in that, after receiving so severe treatment,, a stoning unto apparent death, he was able on the next day to continue his journey. The Lord sometimes works marvelously for His people, a's in this instance; at other times He leaves them -to the general vicissitudes of life as other men.

No particulars are, given regarding the ministry of, the Truth at Derbe. We may presume that it was without special incident. Having gone thus far, instead of proceeding and returning homeward by the nearer route, via Tarsus, Paul's home city, the missionaries determined to retrace their steps,--their motive in so doing apparently being their realization that the little groups of believers at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia would by, this time need. some encouragement and establishment in the Truth; that because of the fierce opposition in these

places there would probably be more or less contention and trouble, and questions arising which the new converts would not be competent to solve.

The brethren of these various places were doubtless surprised that if the Gospel was of God, its servants, its ministers, should be so at the mercy of the forces of evil; and this may have tended to shake their confidence considerably, because the natural expectation would be that God would protect His servants. The Apostle explained, this to the believers--that tribulations are necessary for the perfecting of the saints, for the trial of faith, for the testing and the preparation of those who would be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom; and that after the permission of evil shall thus have served its purpose during this Gospel Age--the purpose of keeping the Little Flock separate from the world and polishing and refining them for the Kingdom--then the time will come when Satan shall, be bound,--when the righteous shall be persecuted no more, but reign as joint-heirs in Christ's Kingdom.

The missionaries returned; without further incident, to the Church whose special representatives on this journey they had been, and made their report to the Church at Antioch in Syria.