

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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VALUE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES

OUR OBLIGATION TO GIVE THE "WATER OF LIFE" TO ALL WHO THIRST

CAN WE DO MORE TO FURTHER THE MINISTRY OF THE TRUTH?

UNSPEAKABLE indeed have been the blessings of light, joy, peace and fellowship with God, experienced by those who have beheld the vision of the Divine Plan of the Ages God's purpose for the removal of the curse from the earth and the bringing in of eternal righteousness. Yea, it would truly be impossible to estimate the blessed results that have come to those who, out, of consecrated hearts, in these days have earnestly sought, and have been given to know "the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven" as contained in the revelation of the Divine program. Probably chiefest among these results is the realization of the sanctification of the spirit and of the transformed life--a state in which the heart can rejoice with unspeakable joy and confidently exclaim, "Old things have passed away, and behold all things have become new." As is well recognized by earnest students of the Sacred Word, the great center of the Divine Plan is the only-begotten Son of God, declared to be the First and the Last, Jehovah's Chief Representative in the execution of His purposes. The consecrated Christian soon learns, therefore, to sing:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the Solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand."

It was the Savior Himself who announced that the truth concerning God's character and Plan, and the knowledge of His righteous requirements, was to constitute the sanctifying power in the lives of His followers: "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth." In other words, the knowledge of God is necessary for those who would build character acceptable to Him. The true foundation upon which we should build, is faith in the righteousness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; faith that His sacrifice for sin was once for all a complete and full ransom price for Adam and all his posterity. It is those who build upon this foundation that may hope to multiply their grace and peace "through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." To the advancing Christian the knowledge of God means far more than merely to know that there is a God and that there is a Lord and Savior; to him it means an acquaintance with the Father and with the Son, a knowledge of the mind of Christ, which is a full and clear representation to us of the mind of the Father.

As our intimate knowledge of the Divine Plan and character increases, so must also our grace increase; for those who do not attempt to come into harmony step by step with that which they see of the Divine character, will soon lose interest in such knowledge, while those who have the interest which leads to further and further study, must of necessity be growing in grace continually. As they grow in grace, so, also will they grow in peace; for peace also is a progressive thing. Those who have made progress in the knowledge of the Divine Plan and character, have found their peace to be an ever-increasing one, and those who have advanced some distance in the good way, can speak of it in the language of the Apostles and realize it in their hearts' as being "the peace of. -God, which passeth all understanding."

"THE SWEETEST OF ALL STORIES"

Let us at this point pause to take at least | a cursory view of those essential truths of the Divine program, even though we have already considered them many times -- truths that have an important bearing upon our progress in faith, hope and love, and in the production of the fruits of the spirit.

First of all we are given great assurance, particularly in the New Testament, that our Lord Jesus is the Head of an Ecclesia, a body of specially called-out ones. (Eph. 1:22, 23.) There can be no question that the different members of the Church are being called, drawn by a selective process, from the world of mankind. The testimony of the Scriptures as to the object of the call seems also to be clear. The Apostle Peter says that the Church is a people for a purpose; i.e., God -has a special object or purpose in selecting the Church--they are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light," and "that men may see their good works, and glorify their Father which is in Heaven." -1 Pet. 2:9; Matt. 5:10.

God has purposed to make a New Creation in connection with the redemption of the world, and He calls the Church to be associated with her Lord in the Divine nature, "far above principalities, and powers, and every name that is named;" and as soon as the Church, this New Creation, | shall, have been completed, mankind will have an opportunity to learn the lesson of righteousness, to come to a knowledge of God, and will be raised up out of sin and death, out of the weaknesses that have come to them through sin. This uplifting time is definitely marked out in the Scriptures as "times of restitution"--the restitution of that which was lost. Since that which was lost was human perfection and Edenic bliss, mankind will not get heavenly things, such as the New Creation, the Church, inherit, but they will receive earthly blessings. God's will shall be accomplished. The world will be brought to perfection during the thousand years of Messiah's reign. The most important piece of, restitution work relates to man. The hard, stony, selfishness of heart which is worldwide is neither Godlike nor to God's glory.

"Man's inhumanity to man,
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Nineteen centuries of preaching show that the cure for this malady is not in our power, and that only. the few even desire to seek for the Lord's spirit of gentleness and tenderheartedness. But the Great King of Glory is also the Good Physician.

He alone can cure the disease of sin and its results. Through Him God's promise to Israel will be fulfilled: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 36:26.) This work will proceed from Israel to -all the families of the earth, uplifting all of the obedient out of sin and death to all that was lost in Eden and redeemed on Cal-vary.

Before sin entered the world,, the Divine provision indeed for our first parents was the Garden of Eden. The Scriptures tell us that after God had created various orders of spirit beings, He made man, "a little lower than the angels." (Psa. 8:5.) The human race began with Adam and Eve, who had ability to grasp and appreciate the Divine arrangement, as the brute creation have not. God made man in His own likeness. The fact that sin came in and brought father Adam under the sentence of death does not signify that the Heavenly Father had changed His arrangement. The purpose which He had in the beginning has never changed. Therefore, as we read, the promises of restitution, our minds turn to the future, guided by the Word of God, and in mental vision we see Paradise restored-not a garden merely, but the entire earth made beautiful, fruitful, sinless, happy. Thus, we recall the inspired promise so familiar to us--"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;" for the former things of sin and death will have passed away and all things will have been made new.-Rev.. 21:4, 5.

PARADISE, HOME OF REDEEMED WORLD

We can now see why the entire world was not made an Eden in the beginning, namely,, God intended to give the race a trial, and according to the record of the Scriptures, if the first pair had maintained their righteousness, their holiness, -they would have continued to be perfect and would have propagated a perfect race; and' if sin had not come in,, God would have been responsible for their Maintenance; but foreseeing that sin would come in, He merely made Eden perfect and allowed the remainder of .the earth to continue in an unfinished condition. Consequently God said to Adam, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou, return unto the ground."--Gen. 3:17-19.

God foresaw that if the earth had been originally perfect, the death struggle would be longer and the degradation of man greater. "The poverty of the world has assisted in keeping mankind back from greater depths, of iniquity. The sentence, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," was evidently intended as a blessing; that man might learn lessons-the experience of battling with the earth for his living. As the Creator said to the man regarding the curse of the earth, it was "for thy [man's] sake." So man has learned that "the wages of sin is* death." Had mankind remained perfect they might have learned the lesson of the sinfulness of sin in the same way that the angels have learned; but hastening to commit sin, they have learned evil first, and have been subject to all the vicissitudes of sin and death. The angels have learned the other lesson-what righteousness is, what God is, not merely in the abstract, but in an appreciative sense. The Heavenly Father has not, however, changed His original Plan. When the Kingdom is set up, "the earth shall yield, her increase," and God assures us, "I will make the place of My feet glorious." The evidences are that that time is near at hand. We see signs of

the promised blessings coming. What are our vast irrigation schemes by artesian wells and by aqueducts, but fulfillments of the prophecies pertaining to the reign of Christ, and the blessing of the earth? "In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." "The wilderness, and the solitary place, shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."--Isa. 35:6, 1.

"I SEE A NEW CREATION RISE!"

But, we ask at this point, where comes in the portion of the New Creation-the Church, of whom Jesus is the Head? The Scriptures answer that the Church is called out to be a privileged people and to become joint-heirs with our Lord in His Kingdom. We ask further whether He is really to have a Kingdom. The Scriptures answer, Yes, at the end of the Gospel Age, He appears not as a sin-offering, but as a great King, Prophet, judge, to dispense the blessings procured by His death. We ask respecting the share of the Church at the present time. The answer comes that those who faithfully follow the Lamb through good report and evil report, who take up their cross and follow Jesus, will be accounted worthy to be His associates in the Kingdom. We ask if the Church in the glorified state will be able to combat the evil tendencies of the world. The answer is, Yes; Satan will be bound for a thousand years, that he may deceive the nations no more till the thousand years have been fulfilled. During those years, the Savior's mission will be to bless mankind as the "Sun of righteousness," with "healing in His beams," and His Church is to have -a share with Him in the blessing of the world. Neither is this some new proposition, for we learn that this was God's plan and purpose from "before the foundation of the world." This is verily the Gospel, or Good Tidings, first declared to, Abraham: "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--Gen. 12:3.

God intended to bless all the members of the human race, all nations and kindreds and tongues, and purposed that the blessings should come to them through the seed of Abraham. The Jewish nation was merely the typical seed; the antitypical Seed is The Christ (Jesus the Head, and the Church, His Body) who will bless all the families of the earth: but the earth must wait for its blessing until the Church shall have been completed, shall, have passed beyond the veil, and shall sit with Christ in His throne.

Asked as to the success of the blessing which will attend the work of Christ and the Church, the Scriptures -answer that "every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess," and that the knowledge of God shall fill the whole earth." As to whether this means universal salvation--that everybody will be saved: the answer is, that as all die in Adam, so all are to be revived-brought back to the privilege of attaining everlasting life, through the merit of Christ's sacrifice-but that the attainment of everlasting life will depend upon the manner in which the privilege is used. None will be coerced or compelled.

The majority of mankind have such respect for righteousness that if its rewards were as sure and as desirable as are those of sin, unquestionably they would prefer to do right. Our observations reveal that many have been almost forced to do evil. Only the very few are willing to renounce sin and walk in the "Narrow Way". of obedience and self-sacrifice. While those who do so in this Age are to have a very special reward, others who love righteousness and hate iniquity will, under the

rule of Christ's Kingdom, have every assistance, without compulsion. They will have co-operation in their endeavors for righteousness. The Scriptures, however, with equal force declare that as death was the original penalty of sin in Adam's case, so it will always be the penalty for sin, and that whoever during the future Age persists in willfully sinning shall die the "Second Death," from which there will be no resurrection, no redemption, no hope of recovery. Thank God, the unwilling and disobedient will not be consigned to endless torture, but to an everlasting cutting-off.

The perfected earth will then abide forever for the ,glorious being, man, restored to God's image and likeness. Thus eventually, when all wilful sinners shall have been blotted out, we find the Scriptures state that "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and such as are in the sea," will be heard saying, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." (Rev. 5:13.) Thus the Lord will gather together all the faithful, both in heaven and earth, under the headship of Christ,, whose head is Jehovah. (-Eph. 1:10.) How grand the consummation!

The foregoing is surely the sum of the Divine Plan in brief. The contemplation of these messages of God's Holy Word cannot but have an ennobling and sanctifying effect. All who have truly caught this vision of the Divine Plan of the Ages have felt the impulse to go forth bearing it to others. Such have realized their commission, that they have been anointed to preach. First of all our Lord Jesus, then the Apostles, and subsequently a goodly number of others have throughout the Gospel Age been faithful to the call to "bear testimony to the truth," and, as expressed in the language of St. Paul, have not been "disobedient to the heavenly vision."

Nor have the closing years of this Age witnessed any less of privilege and opportunity, nor found those less zealous or faithful in the ministry. To the contrary, we may safely say that during the past fifty years most wonderful opportunities have been before the consecrated, and a goodly number have quickly responded and have entered upon the greatest of all privileges-that of proclaiming Glad Tidings of Great joy.

IS THE CHURCH'S MISSION HERE FULFILLED?

During the past five years, following the death Of PASTOR RUSSELL, certain unexpected developments, changes and innovations have come, and many of the brethren of the Truth have realized the opportunities for spreading the Truth greatly curtailed. This in turn has caused some to show weariness in well doing, while others have concluded that the Church's mission in the flesh is finished; that the time of her ministry is over; that the Church is complete, even though some are still in the flesh; and that we have reached the time for standing in idleness. Still others of the brethren seeming disposed to drift listlessly along with the tide, have realized a cooling of their spiritual ardor, and are reclining more or less in lethargy and in idleness so far as spiritual energy and activity are concerned. However, we are happy to observe that in the midst of all of this grave and unhappy situation, there are those who have kept the fires of their Christian faith, love and zeal burning, and have all along been inquiring, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

It will be remembered that our INSTITUTE was called into existence some three years ago by the brethren in different parts of the country in order that they might assist and encourage one another in holy things, and in order that they might unite their efforts in some general ministry. While there have been hindrances and discouragements of one kind and another, and while the efforts have seemed feeble, it has been plainly manifest that the Lord has blessed the arrangements made, and some splendid opportunities have been opened up for witnessing to the Divine Message. Addressing the brethren the world over in this message, we desire to say that while all along we have been endeavoring to be watchful, to note the Lord's providences and to observe any opportunities for service that He might present to ourselves or others, it has been especially upon our hearts recently to inquire if we are doing all we can in the Master's service in these last days, and if we may not reach out and lay hold of certain opportunities for giving the blessed "Water of Life" to others around us more than we have been doing. We cannot believe that the ministry of the Church in the flesh is at an end. Most assuredly there are, still members of Christ on earth "filling up that which is behind of His afflictions," and as there are still opportunities for sacrificing and serving, the inevitable conclusion is that the mission of the Christ in the flesh is not yet entirely fulfilled, and surely will not be until the last member has passed beyond. In preceding issues-of this journal we have presented the evidence which to our minds is convincing that the door into the "Narrow Way"--the door into the Church militant is not yet closed.* We conclude, therefore, that the commission given by Jesus in the beginning of the Age, to bear the Message of the Gospel to others, is still applicable, and for those, His consecrated Body members. More than this, experience convinces us that zealous activity in the ministry of the Truth produces most whole some results in the hearts of those so engaged, provided the service is rendered with, the right motive and from the true viewpoint-that of offering a message of comfort to others, and that of a desire to spread the name of, and to glorify our Father in Heaven.

*See H' 20-339, mailed upon request.

THE TIME NOT YET, BUT DRAWING NEAR

We believe that none can say just when the career of the Church in the flesh will end. So far as anyone can know, it may be for some years yet. We cannot know just how long. To our understanding there are several events of vital importance yet to come to pass before the Kingdom is established, events that for all we know may require several years. Amongst these is that of the restoration of the Jews and their establishment in a state of independence in their own land. We may truthfully say that much progress has been made in that direction in recent years, but there is room for much yet before that nation is ready for the Divine government, Messiah's Kingdom.

Another feature is that of the Triple Alliance. We believe there are certain plain statements in the Old Testament prophecies, as well as in the Book of Revelation, that indicate that it will be a still closer drawing together of the two great

ecclesiastical powers--that of Catholicism and Federated Protestantism--and some sort of co-operation with the civil government in an attempt to hold the present order of things together. Considerable, has transpired looking in the direction of the fulfillment of this matter in recent years, but there are still important developments to be expected before the results will be realized that we have reason to look for.

Another matter: The kingdoms of this world are still intact and exercising dominion of human affairs, and hence the old order of things presided over by the "prince of this world" still exists--"the present heavens and earth" have not passed away. These, the Scriptures tell us, must be "dissolved," before "the new heavens and new earth" appear--the establishing of the Kingdom.

WATCHING AND WAITING, YET ATTENTIVE TO OUR FATHER'S BUSINESS

We believe that none can say how many years may be required for the developing of any of the foregoing features; nor is it necessary for us to know. During the past few months we have been discussing in these pages. in more or less of a general way "the times and seasons.," feeling sure that this is a subject fit and proper for us to consider together, especially as it is a theme that is given considerable prominence in the Bible. We have endeavored to note ,that the failure of some of our cherished expectations really form no grounds whatever for discouragement with regard to our *real* hopes and expectations. The disappointments that have come have indeed proven tests of faith; and under the Lord's providence, if our hearts remain true and loyal to Him, what we have experienced along this line will Surely result in further spiritual good and not in any real loss. We have considered it proper to endeavor to see and to point out to others what has seemed to us to be a discrepancy of nineteen years in our chronological system, and by which we account for the failure of some things that we supposed would be in evidence long before this; and we have suggested, in view of our recent chronological deductions, which we still feel are well grounded, that it could not be unreasonable for us to think that there might be a culmination of matters and a climax reached in the passing away of the present order of things approximately around 1934: but *we had not thought, to place any halo around that or any other year* as marking beyond peradventure the exact time of the last end of this order of things and the conclusion of our. earthly pilgrimage; for we still feel that the evidence is not of that conclusive character that we would be warranted in *laying plans for any particular year*. This was not our thought at all in presenting the suggestions that **we**. did bearing upon the extension of the time. Our thought merely was, and still is, that by an examination of the chronological lines we might see something of a reasonable Solution to the present situation in which many of the Lord's people have realized themselves in more or less of a maze on account of their unfulfilled hopes and expectations; and we believe that we will be pleasing the Lord if we continue our investigation and look to Him for guidance, in obedience to His command to "watch," to note whatever further evidence and light upon this matter He may be pleased to bring to our attention. Meantime it seems to us that the course of wisdom for all the brethren is, not to insist that we must locate some particular year and positively settle upon that, for so far as we know, it may never be given unto us to have such

positive knowledge in advance *as to the exact time*. We think the important lesson to be observed and followed is, that whether we remain in the flesh one year, five years, or twenty years, we should be concerning ourselves with regard to our Father's, business--the adjusting and keeping spotless of our own robes, and persevering in the spread of the Truth concerning our Father's character and Plan.

CAN WE DO MORE TO COMFORT THE SORROWING?

What we now desire to bring before the consideration of the brethren is that of instituting some more effectual as well as substantial means of reaching other hearing ears and others who thirst; for surely there are some yet to be found, and who, for all we know, may be fully in line to be members of the Bride class. All about us are sights of wretchedness and sorrow, and vast numbers to whom we may offer assistance and the message of comfort contained in the Good Tidings. Some recent public meetings have made very evident that there are those hungering and thirsting for the Truth. More than this, but recently certain cases have come under our observation, some who have just accepted the Message and are delighted to meet in regular study of the Plan, and give evidence that they have full acceptance with the Lord and the blessing of the Spirit. All of these manifestations seem to speak to us of the Lord's will that we become more exercised and, active if -possible in the promulgation of the Message.

And in response to the question, What shall we do? we are impressed that there is no better or effectual means of bearing testimony to the Truth today than that of placing in the hands of others the First Volume of *Studies in the Scriptures--THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES*, which we have briefly reviewed in this article. We can think of no better, nor as good and substantial a statement of the Truth as is contained in this Volume. to this we believe all the brethren will agree. It may be truthfully said that in the First Volume of the Studies we have all the substantial and essential features of the entire six books so far as the foundation features of 'the Divine Message of truth and grace is concerned; all the necessary and important doctrines are thoroughly treated, with accompanying Scripture testimony bearing thereon. In the Chart of the Ages with its complete, explanation in the Volume, what a marvelous mine of Truth is opened up. We see truly the Stately steps of our God throughout the Ages. The doctrines of conversion, justification, sanctification and glorification are fully and most satisfactorily explained. The hope of the Church and of the world is clearly set forth. The Scripture teaching concerning the object and purpose of our Lord's Second Advent is exhaustively explained. The chapters treating the permission of evil the world's judgment Day--the Church's change of nature, together with the Three Ways--the Narrow Way, the Broad Way, and the High Way--and the subject, the Kingdom of God--all of these themes so beautifully explained are indeed rare gems of Truth. The closing chapters of the Volume leading down to the close of the present dispensation and dealing with the Scriptures that show the change of dispensation' from that of the present to "the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times," are also of great interest and importance.

BROTHER RUSSELL PRESENTS QUESTIONS OF SOLEMN IMPORT

Finally, in the closing pages of the last chapter we have a rare and beautiful statement bringing home to the reader and making practical application of the

lessons contained in the preceding pages of the Volume. Let the reader ponder well the following lines:

"A knowledge of these things, and the evidences that they are nigh, even at the door, should have a powerful influence upon all, but especially upon the consecrated children of God, who are seeking the prize of the Divine nature. We urge such, while they lift up, their heads and rejoice, knowing that their redemption draweth nigh, to lay aside every weight and hindrance, and to run patiently the race in which they have started. Look away from self and its unavoidable weaknesses and imperfections, knowing that all such weaknesses are covered fully by the merits of the ransom given by Christ Jesus our Lord, and that your sacrifices and self-denials are acceptable to God through our Redeemer and Lord-and thus only. Let us remember that the strength sufficient which God has promised us, and by use of which we can be 'overcomers' is provided in His Word. It is a strength derived from a knowledge of His character and plans, and of the conditions upon which we may share in them. Thus Peter expresses it, saying, 'Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge, of God, and of Jesus. Christ our Lord, according as His Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of, Him who hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature.'--2 Pet. 1:2-4.

"But to obtain this knowledge and this strength, which God thus proposes to supply to each runner for the heavenly prize, will surely test the sincerity of your consecration vows. You have consecrated all your time, all your talents, to the Lord; now the question is, How much of it are you giving? Are you still willing, according to your covenant of consecration, to give up all?--to give up your own plans and methods, and the theories of yourselves and others, to accept of God's plan and way and time of doing His great work? Are you willing to do this at the cost of earthly friendships and social ties? And are you willing to give up time from other things for the investigation of these glorious themes so heart-cheering to the truly consecrated, with the certain knowledge that it will cost you this self-denial? If all is not consecrated, or if you only half meant it when you gave all to the Lord, then you will begrudge the time and effort needful to search His Word as for hid treasure, to obtain thus the strength needful for all the trials of faith incident to the present (the dawn of the Millennium) above other times.

"But think not that the giving will end with the giving of the needful time and energy to this study: it will not. The sincerity of your sacrifice of self will be tested in full, and will prove you either worthy or unworthy of membership, in that 'little flock,' the overcoming Church, which will receive the honors of the Kingdom. If you give diligence to the Word of God, and receive its truths into a good, honest, consecrated heart, it will beget in you such a love for God and His Plan, and such a desire. to tell the Good Tidings, to preach the Gospel, that it will become the all-absorbing theme of life thereafter; and this will not only separate you from the world and from many nominal Christians, in spirit, but it will lead to separation from such entirely. They will think you peculiar and separate you from their company, and you will be despised and counted a fool for Christ's sake; because they know us not, even as they knew not the Lord.--2 Cor. 4:8-10; Luke 6:22; 1 John 3:1; 1 Cor. 3:18.

"Are you willing to follow on to know the Lord through evil and through good report? Are you willing to forsake all; to follow as He may lead you by His Word?--to ignore the wishes of friends, as well as your own desires? It is hoped that many of the consecrated who read this volume may by it be so quickened to fresh zeal and fervency of spirit, through a clearer apprehension of the Divine Plan, that they will be able to say, 'By the grace of God, I will follow on to know and to serve the Lord, whatever may be the sacrifice involved.'"

How plainly evident it is in the above lines that our beloved Pastor was endeavoring to impart to the consecrated a sense of their responsibility, inasmuch as they were given to know these blessed Truths set forth in the preceding pages of the Volume, that a proper sense of gratitude and appreciation of the Lord's goodness would lead them to seek to impart the blessing of the Truth to others. We believe it would not be overestimating the matter to say that we have in this Volume a quite complete presentation of the Gospel theme.

SHALL WE PUBLISH THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES?

It appears that in the last years of PASTOR RUSSELL'S life the fact of the importance of Volume 1, and the placing of this book in the hands of the people, was impressed upon his mind in a special way, for it is readily recalled that near the time of his death he was outlining large plans by which Volume I might be given a circulation far exceeding what it already had. Not only was he urging the regular colportaging for this book, but what was termed the Pastoral Work--a new and special feature which he was instituting by which the book could be placed in the hands of vast numbers as a loan. This particular line we remember he was arranging to push forward through a thorough organization in all the Classes throughout the country. We merely mention this to bring before our minds in this connection how the matter of Volume I was appealing to him about the time of his death. We know of no reason why it should not now appeal to us with equal force, and constitute an inspiration for us to look about us and see what we may do further in this direction.

We think in this connection of one Class now, the sisters of which have been very active in the Pastoral Work for the past two years. They report encouraging and excellent results in the way of the development of new interest through the placing of the Volume and subsequent Chart Talks.

A serious objection has been urged from time to time whenever the matter has come up about the circulation of this book, namely, that we do not at the present time have the volume, in a desirable and acceptable form, on account of the fact that it contains references to and *advertisements of other undesirable publications*. The brethren, we find, generally consider this objection a very *real* one, some Classes advising us that on this account they have decided to make no further effort to place this Volume in the hands of the public. The brethren of our IN.STITUTE share much the same impression; and we therefore submit the following proposition: Ever since our INSTITUTE came into existence, three years ago, the suggestion has come to us from various quarters, which we now recommend to the careful consideration of all; it is that our INSTITUTE undertake the publication of the First Volume; of course the book to contain the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE as publishers, and eliminate all undesirable and

extraneous references and advertising matter, such as the present form contains. The only change we would suggest would perhaps be merely the style of binding. This, of course, would give the book altogether a different appearance. We think it would be well to do this in view of the large circulation the Volume has had in its 'Present form and appearance. By placing it in a different style of binding, it would thus become disassociated from its previous circumstances and present-environment and make it all the more favorable for bringing to the attention of the public.

WHAT IS THE MIND OF THE LORD AND THE BRETHREN?

The matter of our publishing the book has been given consideration from time to time, but owing to our limited treasury and resources we have not arrived at the point of taking definite, action until the present time. Even now we do not have at hand the financial equipment for this task. We do not desire to undertake the matter unless we are sure that it would be pleasing to the Lord. Seeking to know what might be His will, it seemed to us that He might be pleased to reveal His leading and providence *by our ascertaining the mind of the brethren in general* . We believe that by getting out an edition of, say, 10,000 copies, the book, of about the quality of binding of that at present circulated, could be supplied, single copies, postpaid, approximately at 75c. per copy, or probably by sending them in lots of twenty-five or more they could be had for 60c. This price appears to be much in advance of what we have procured the books at in former years, but when we consider the vast increase in the cost of materials and printing in the past three years, it is about as reasonable as we can expect in these times. Then, too, it is remembered that BROTHER RUSSELL had the advantage of the lowest figure by securing the volume in large editions after the plates were made. In view of our lack of funds it would be necessary for those who favor the project to forward the price of the Volumes some little time *in* advance of receiving the books in order for us to go ahead with the publishing.

The question now is, in consideration of all the foregoing facts and items, do the brethren throughout the world wish to, co-operate in this matter of publishing the DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES for general circulation. We are asking that the friends everywhere give careful and prayerful consideration to the subject, and as soon as a definite conclusion has been reached, our wish is that you communicate with our INSTITUTE at once, and if you favor this suggestion please state how many volumes at the price mentioned foregoing you would be willing to pay for in advance of receiving the books. This suggestion, of course, applies to various individual readers everywhere as well as to Classes. We desire to hear from all as soon as reasonably possible. As we are sure that our dear brethren in other lands are as deeply interested and concerned in this matter as ourselves here, we trust to hear from them also, but, of course, the matter of transporting the volumes to other' countries is a feature that would involve extra expense which would need to be considered separately and which can probably be adjusted satisfactorily to all concerned.

Our INSTITUTE will not decide anything on this subject nor proceed with the project, until we have had time to receive a general response from the brethren, including those of Great Britain and Australia; and our decision, of course, will depend upon the nature of the response received.

With this expression we rest the entire matter and leave in the hands of Him who knoweth and doeth all things well to direct and overrule according to His wise and loving providence.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY LXXIX--SEPTEMBER 4.

REAPING THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH. -- Rev. 14:14-16.

(491) Describe the vision under consideration in this lesson. Where do we reasonably locate the fulfillment? H '20-118.

(492) Who is represented by the one sitting on the white Cloud? Give reasons for conclusion drawn. In what other vision is this same person seen? In these two visions, what enables us to determine the character of the work to be carried on? H '20-118.

(493) What is represented by the white Cloud? Give other Scriptures where this symbol is used, and show the difference in the significance and the method of interpretation. H '20-118.

(494) Give the significance of the golden Crown, and the sharp Sickle. What may we conclude to be the general object of the vision? What helpful suggestions are given by PASTOR RUSSELL and other expositors? H '20-118, 119.

(495) Who are represented by the angel? and what is signified by the Cry, "Send thy Sickle and reap; because the hour to reap is come"? What is represented by the Temple? H '20-120.

STUDY LXXX-SEPTEMBER 11.

GATHERING THE FRUIT OF THE VINE. -- Rev. 14:14-16

(496) What is the general picture given in verses 17-19; and from what phase are the symbols drawn? What distinction is there between this vision and the one preceding? H '20-120.

(497) How did our Lord describe the same events to His disciples? What relation does the "Vine of the Earth" bear to the "tare" systems? H '20-120.

(498) What other references in Scripture are there of this "Vine of the earth"? and show their application. H '20-120.

(499) What are some of the features of this fruitage of the "Vine of the earth"? What evidences of this fruitage have been witnessed during recent years? H'20-120.

(500) What phase of the time of trouble is forecast by the treading of the Winepress? Give reasons. H '20-120.

STUDY LXXXI--SEPTEMBER 18.

GATHERING THE FRUIT OF THE VINE.--(Cont.)--Rev. 14:17-19.

(501) Describe the ancient winepress from which this symbol is drawn. Cite some Scriptures referring to the winepress, giving the significance. H '20-121.

(502) Who is to tread the Winepress? and what will be the means used? Give Scriptures in confirmation. H '20-121.

(503) What is referred to by the "Sickle" in the hand of the angel? What is the distinction if any between the Sickle that gathers the wheat and that which gathers the tares? H '20-121, 122.

(504) Who is represented by the Angel? and the- Temple? In what other visions is the symbol of the temple similarly used, and what would be the logical conclusion as to the significance of this vision of the Angel coming "out of the Temple"? H'20-122.

(505) What is the interpretation of other expositors with regard to the Angel, and the Temple? and show how these are erroneous. H '20-122.

STUDY LXXXII--SEPTEMBER 25.

THE ANGEL HAVING AUTHORITY OVER FIRE.-Rev. 14:17-19.

(506) From what is the symbolism Of the Altar of verse 18 drawn? Describe the typical service with which the altar was associated. Is the description of our present lesson to be understood as the antitype? H '20-122, 123.

(507) What other vision of the Revelator seems to portray events related to those of this Altar symbol? Give a brief description and explanation of that vision and show the connection between the two. H '20-123.

(508) What does the Angel represent? and what is the significance of his cry? How does this meet fulfillment? H '20-123.

(509) What special transgression calls for this "cry" and causes the "Wrath-of God"? What similar transgression is mentioned by our Lord? H '20-123.

(510) What class may be involved, and what experiences and sufferings may have to do with balancing *the* accounts of justice? H '20-123.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

SERIES V-A

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO SMYRNA

"And by the Messenger of the Congregation in Smyrna write: These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and lived."--Rev. 2:8.

THE name Smyrna signifies myrrh, and is so translated in Matt, 2:11; Mark 15:23; John 19:39. It is the name of an aromatic sap from a thorny tree, having, a somewhat pleasant though bitter taste. It furnished one of the ingredients of the holy ointment, and was used by the ancients in embalming the dead. The use of myrrh, therefore,, for sacred purposes, being associated with death and resurrection, seems to mark it as expressive and symbolical of something that is desirable and pleasing to God. As has been said: "It well describes a. Church

persecuted unto death, and lying embalmed in the precious spices of its sufferings, such as the Church of Smyrna was. It was the Church of myrrh or bitterness, and yet agreeable and precious unto the Lord, holy in the midst of its tribulations." The words of the Savior, "who became dead and lives," seem to be intended to bring before their minds thoughts of His own sufferings, death and resurrection, thus making the hope of sharing in the First Resurrection bright, comforting and sustaining. No complaint, rebuke or reproof is contained in the message to this Church, neither are there any special works mentioned to its praise. However, the message alleges that there were those in their midst who were of the "synagogue of Satan," thus showing that they, like Ephesus, were tried by false teaching.

Those who recognize the Divine purpose for this Age, that of calling and disciplining a special class for a future mission with Christ in His Millennial Kingdom, will readily recognize that certain features of the seven messages stand out in special prominence as being related to the general progress of that glorious purpose. One phase of the developments of this Age clearly noted in the messages is that of the gradual decline and apostasy of primitive Christianity, until the "tares," the worldly element, assume full control in the conduct of the affairs of the Churches. This condition continues, with an occasional effort at reform, always relapsing into worse and worse conditions, until the end of the Age, the present time, is reached, when the professed Church is rejected altogether and the Divine judgments begin to come upon it.

Again it is observed throughout the messages that in the midst of this formal, worldly church, almost buried from sight, cast out, 'rejected, and generally looked upon as heretical by the world and the nominal body, can be seen the "little flock" of tried ones, true Christians, struggling to uphold their Divine Master's cause, sometimes encountering terrible persecution, even unto martyrdom; at other times earnestly contending for the true faith, against the errors and perversions of the true Gospel, that have ever threatened, if it were possible, to thwart the Divine purpose.

THE PERIOD OF PERSECUTION

In the prophetic application of these messages, Smyrna describes the period of Pagan Roman persecution of the second and third centuries. There appears to be no difference of opinion amongst expositors who hold to the prophetic interpretation of these messages, respecting this application. DR. SEISS, who gave a great deal of study to this matter, has said that it is very plain how the address to Smyrna suits this period, which lasted from Domitian's persecution now begun (at the time St. John had the visions) right on to Constantine, that is, for over two centuries. The power of Rome, absolute as it was throughout her wide-spread empire, when wielded against Christianity, left little room for escape anywhere, while as a heathen, pagan power, it was antagonistic to all who professed the name of Christianity. The address to Smyrna, therefore, comes exactly in place here; and the very name "myrrh," used as this was in the embalming of the dead reminds us of how "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." PASTOR RUSSELL has applied this message as beginning a little earlier than this period, as we read: "Smyrna means bitter. Myrrh and Marah are kindred words. This stage of the Christian Church was the period of most

bitter persecution, under the Roman Emperors from Nero to Diocletian."--Z'16-346.

The Savior here mentions, as He does concerning each Church, the fact that He was fully aware of the seeming disadvantages, persecutions and trials of His faithful followers; and this is expressed by Him in the words: "I am aware of your acts and afflictions and poverty." (V. 9.) These words imply that the Church at Smyrna was a poor church so far as possessing worldly goods was concerned, continually buffeted and persecuted. Such a church could hardly be expected to accomplish much in spreading the light of Truth. All that could be looked for in this Church would be to remain steadfast and true to the Lord, giving most of their attention to the development of spiritual graces, the true riches. Indeed, the Savior specially commends them for -this, in the words: "I know thy poverty [in this world's goods] *but thou art rich*;" doubtless rich in spiritual graces.

Interpreted from the prophetic standpoint, the message singles out one particular, special period of persecution to be endured by His faithful followers at this time. This is referred to in the words, "The Devil shall cast 'some of you into prison that ye may be tried, and ye shall have tribulation *ten days*." According to these words, Smyrna was to have a period of tribulation of "ten [symbolic] days"--a day for a year, and nearly all ecclesiastical writers agree in applying this prophecy to those persecutions that raged most fearfully during *ten years* from the decree of Diocletian in A. D. 303 to the Constantine edict of Milan in A. D. 313. Even the opponents of the prophetic view of these epistles agree that Smyrna represents excellently well the Church of this period in its last and most terrible struggles with Pagan Rome. Concerning this, it is also well said:

"Thus the Lord informed His faithful servants of this period that theirs would be a time of great persecution. Pagan Rome, here symbolized as the Devil, has been the most devilish of all earthly governments, when viewed in the light of its bloody persecutions. The ten symbolic days refer to the last and most severe persecution under the Roman Emperors--that of the reign of Diocletian, A. D. 303-313. Those who have read the history of this period can understand the depths of the words, 'that ye may be tried.' Some of the most sublime pictures of Christian endurance that the world has ever seen were enacted during the Smyrna period of the Church. The call was for faithfulness unto death; the promise was that the overcomers should 'not be hurt of the Second Death,' but should receive the Crown of Life--immortality."--Z '16-346.

In speaking of one of the Pagan Emperors (Marcus Aurelius) of the second century, whom secular writers have exalted beyond measure because of his, extraordinary wisdom and virtue the historian Mosheim has said:

"It is not in his conduct toward the Christians that we must look for the reasons of these pompous encomiums; for, here the clemency and justice of that emperor suffer a strange eclipse. . . . Without examining impartially their cause, he lent an easy and attentive ear to the most virulent insinuations of their enemies, especially to the malignant calumnies of the [heathen] philosophers, who accused them of the most horrid crimes. . . . So' that, if we except that of Nero, there was no reign under which the Christians were more injuriously and cruelly treated, than under that of the wise and virtuous [?] Marcus Aurelius. . . . This emperor issued against the Christians, whom he regarded as a vain, obstinate, and vicious set of men,

edicts, which, upon the whole, were very unjust. . . . In consequence of these imperial edicts, the judges and magistrates received the accusations, which even slaves, and the vilest of the perjured rabble, brought against the followers of Jesus; and the Christians were put to the most cruel tortures and were condemned to meet death in the most barbarous forms, notwithstanding their perfect innocence, and their persevering and solemn denial of the horrid crimes laid to their charge. The imperial edicts were so positive and express against inflicting punishment upon such of the Christians as were guilty of no crime, that the corrupt judges, who, through -motives of interest or popularity, desired their destruction, were obliged to suborn false accusers to charge them with actions that might bring them within the reach of the laws. Hence many fell victims to cruel superstition and popular fury, seconded by the corruption of a wicked magistracy, and the connivance 'of a prince [Marcus Aurelius], who, with respect to one set of men, forgot those principles of justice and clemency which directed his conduct toward all others. Among these victims, there were many men of illustrious piety, and some of eminent learning and abilities, such as the holy and venerable Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Justin Martyr, so deservedly renowned for his erudition and philosophy."

"MARTYRS OF JESUS"

Amongst the many martyrs of the third century were Vivia Perpetua and Felicitas, the former only about twenty-two years of age, Felicitas even younger, both young in the faith, of good family, liberal education and honorably married. The history of Perpetua's martyrdom, except the closing death scene, is related by herself, and is said to have been written by her own hand. The historian Milman has given a long account of the sufferings of Perpetua. From her own account we give a brief extract:

"When we were in the hands of the persecutors, my father in his tender affection persevered in his endeavors to pervert me from the faith [i. e., to persuade her to give up her faith in Christ]. Her reply, in the face of a terrible death, was: "My father, this vessel [pointing to one near], be it a pitcher or anything else, can we call it by any. other name?" "Certainly not," he replica. "Nor can I call myself by any other name than that of Christian?" My father. looked as if he could have plucked my eyes out; but he only harassed me, and departed, persuaded by the arguments of the, devil. Then, after being a few days without seeing my father, I was enabled to give thanks to God, and his absence was tempered to my spirit. After a few days we. were baptized, and the waters of baptism seemed to give power of endurance to my body. Again in a few days and we were cast into prison. I was terrified; for I had never before seen such total 'darkness. O miserable day! from the dreadful heat of the prisoners crowded together and the insults of the soldiers. But I was wrung with solicitude for my infant. Two of our deacons, however, by the payment of money, obtained our removal for some hours in the day to a more open part of the prison. Each of the captives then pursued his usual occupation. In my anxiety, I addressed and consoled my mother, and commended my child to my brother; and I began to pine away at seeing them pine away on my account. And for many days I suffered' this anxiety, and accustomed my child to remain in the prison with me; and I immediately recovered my strength, and was relieved from my toil and trouble for my infant,

and the prison ,became to me like a palace; and I was happier there than I should have been anywhere else.

"After a few days there, was a rumor that we were to be heard. And my father came from the city, wasted away with anxiety, to pervert me; and he said, "Have compassion, O my daughter, on my gray hairs; have compassion on thy father, if he is worthy of the name of father. If I have brought thee up to the flower of thine age, if I have preferred thee to all thy brothers, do not expose me to this disgrace. Look on thy brother; look on thy mother; look on thy child, who cannot live without thee. Do not destroy us all. . . . " And I was grieved for the gray hairs of my father; -and I consoled him saying, "In this trial, what God wills, will take place. Know that we are not in our own power, but in that of God." And. he went away sorrowing. . . .

"Another day, while we were at dinner, we were suddenly seized and carried off to trial. The report spread rapidly, and an immense multitude were assembled. We were placed at the bar; the rest were interrogated, and made their confession. And it came to my turn; and my father instantly appeared with my child, and he drew me down the step and said in a beseeching tone, "Have compassion on your infant;" and Hilarianus the procurator, who exercised the power of life and death for the proconsul Timinianus, who had died, said, "Spare the gray hairs of your parent spare your infant; offer sacrifice for the welfare of your emperor." And I answered, "I will not sacrifice." "Art thou a Christian?" said Hilarianus. I answered, "I am a Christian." And while my father stood there to persuade me, Hilarianus ordered him to be thrust down and beaten with rods. And the misfortune of my father grieved me; and I was as much grieved for his old age, as if I had been scourged myself. He then passed a sentence upon us all and condemned us to the wild beasts; and we went back in cheerfulness to the prison.'."

THEY LOVED NOT THEIR LIVES UNTO DEATH

The narrative then proceeds to another instance of the triumph of faith on the part of Felicitas, over the strongest of human feelings, the love of a young mother for her offspring. "She feared that her friends shared in her apprehensions, that on that account her martyrdom might be delayed. They prayed together, and her travail came on. In her agony at that most painful period of delivery, she gave away to her sufferings. 'How then,' said one of the servants of the prison, 'if you cannot endure these pains, will you endure exposure to the wild beasts?' She replied, 'I bear now my own sufferings; then, there will be one within me who will bear my sufferings for me, because I shall suffer for his sake.'" Concerning the last scene, we have the following most touching account:

"Perpetua maintained her calmness 'to the end. . . . When taken out to the execution. . . . they came forward in their simple attire, Perpetua singing hymns. The men were exposed to leopards and bears; the women were hung up naked in nets, to be gored by a furious COW. But even the excited populace shrunk with horror at the spectacle of two young and delicate women, one recently recovered from child birth, in this state. They were recalled by acclamation and in mercy brought forward again in loose robes. Perpetua was tossed, her garment was rent; but more conscious of her wounded modesty than of pain, she drew the robe over the part

of her person which was exposed. She then calmly clasped up her hair, because it did not become a martyr to suffer with disheveled locks, the sign of sorrow. She then raised up the fainting and mortally wounded Felicitas, and the cruelty of the populace being for a time appeased, they were permitted to retire. Perpetua seemed rapt in ecstasy, and as if awakening from sleep, inquired when she was to be exposed to the beast. She could scarcely be made to believe what had taken place. Her last words tenderly admonished her brother to be steadfast in the faith."

The historian concludes: "We may close the scene by intimating that all were speedily released from their suffering, and entered into their glory." We would say, to rest in sleep, to await the First Resurrection of the just, at our Lord's *parousia*.

THE REDEEMER ACCOMPANIED THEM THROUGH THE DARK VALLEY

We have given this little item of history, only one of very many, in order to give emphasis to the terrible trials that befell the footstep followers of Christ during the period from St. John's day, 100 A. D., to the edict of Milan in 313. The last ten years of this period are evidently the special time referred to by Christ in this message to Smyrna. We shall have occasion to refer to the sufferings of Christ's followers in this period. more particularly when we come to consider those visions that have special reference to the momentous events of those closing days of Pagan Roman history. The words of the Master, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer," "Be thou faithful unto death," were in the possession of Christ's suffering ones during those trying years; in deed, it was then customary to have these messages read in the Churches. It is quite essential to note that the Savior did not promise them exemption from suffering. They understood that to follow in His foot steps, to testify of Him, would bring suffering; and like the Apostles in earlier years, "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for His name." It was certainly comforting as well as encouraging to them to realize that He saw that they were to suffer, indeed that it was necessary, and that He was not unmindful of their faithfulness in their sufferings. He exhorts and encourages them not to be afraid; and they laid hold by faith on the promise that He would be with them. Their sufferings were that they might be tried i.e., that the reality of their faith might be subjected to a test to prove its genuineness. The permission and design of the sufferings were of the Savior, even though Satan was allowed to be the agent in bringing them.

"The words of the Master, "Be thou faithful unto death," meant to them literal martyrdom. It is, however, true of all sincere Christians, even to those who do not suffer martyrdom, that the same injunction and the same promise is applicable. Faithfulness to Christ until death, no matter how death may come, will bring the 'crown of life"--immortality. The overcomer is the one who by faith realizes the sustaining power of Christ, of the Gospel, at all times, under all conditions, in all circumstances, whether it be in times of persecution, or otherwise; who will not yield his principles when opposed or persecuted; even though the taking of such a stand may be in the face of death. These Smyrna believers were faithful to the utmost, and if what we have come to believe is the truth, that we are now living in the "*parousia*," the Second Presence of Christ, they are now enjoying the reward promised--immortality. As one has truthfully said, "The promise here made would

be all that was necessary to sustain them in their trials. Nothing more is necessary to make the burdens of life tolerable than an assurance that when we reach the end of our earthly journey we have arrived at the end of our suffering and that beyond the grave there is no power that can harm us. . . Religion, therefore, does not come to us with any promise that we shall not die. But it comes with the assurance that we shall be sustained in the dying hour; that the Redeemer will accompany us through the dark valley; that, the condition of death to us will be a calm and quiet slumber in the hope of the resurrection; that we shall be raised up again, with bodies incorruptible and undecaying; and that beyond the grave we shall not fear death in any form. What more is needful to enable us to bear with patience the trials of life, and to look upon death when it does come disarmed of its sting (1 Cor. 15:55-57) with calmness and peace ?"

THOSE OF THE "SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN"

Persecution, and that unto death, was not the only trial that these believers of the Smyrna period had to endure. The words of Christ, "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan," plainly teach this. Some, in interpreting these words have applied the term "Jews" to persons who professed, the Jewish faith or religion, but were mere professors of this religion, and not true Jews. This, however, does not seem to us the thought. Others apply the words to Jews who were bitterly opposed to Christianity in any form. It is claimed. by some that from two sources the troubles of Christians come: from the blaspheming Jews, and intolerant Pagans; both actuated by the Devil. When Polycarp was martyred, whom some regard as the angel of the literal Church here addressed, the Jews joined with the heathen in clamoring for the good bishop's destruction, and were most forward in bringing the fuel for the fire which consumed him.

What appears to be a more satisfactory explanation of the statement "which say they are Jews and are. not, but are of the synagogue of Satan" is, that during this time, large numbers began to identify themselves with the Christian profession and were really false professors - hypocrites -claiming to be spiritual Israelites in the sense referred to by St. Paul; Gentiles grafted into the stock of Israel and thereby becoming Israelites--"Jews." All such false professors would, of course, - simply be 'tares," claiming to be Christians but were not; a class similar in character to those Judaizing teachers referred to by St. Paul in his letter to the Galatian Church, who in their teaching were causing some believers who had experienced the blessing of liberty in Christ to get back tinder the bondage of the law. Understanding that the adversaries spoken of in the text refer to a class within the professing Church, similar to the Judaizers of St. Paul's day, we discover in them the formal outward root of decline, leading to apostasy, as in Ephesus we see in the loss of first love the internal principle of the same. With the loss of first love, a profession of Christ is generally kept up and that profession seeks to satisfy itself with forms and ceremonies. While this state of things has not in the past nor 'is it at the present time called Judaism, yet when the significance of the term is looked at closely, it will be seen that it describes the condition that was developing at that time and is existing all around us today in the great nominal Church systems. This, it is that has built again as it were a priestly hierarchy, as necessary mediators between God and the professed people

of God. It is this condition which, if it were possible, would rob God's people of their place and standing with God in Christ. It is this state of things that has caused true Christianity, true Christian experience, to be hidden to the great masses of professors as also the world. It is in this that we have exhibited the triumph of the great adversary, denominated by St. Paul as a form of godliness, lacking the power; and by Christ in this message, "the synagogue of Satan." This title describes most fully the gradual change that took place in the outward nominal manifestation of Christianity in the second and third centuries, and has continued from then until now. The word translated church means an assembly of "called out" ones. It is considerably different from the word synagogue. The assembly of God is Christ's Body, assembled for fellowship and instruction, and none but such are recognized by God as His Church, His assembly, no matter how many others may be gathered with them. "Ecclesia" is the assembly of those "called out." The word synagogue means merely a "gathering together," no matter of whom. Synagogue is, of course, a Jewish word designating an assembly of Jews under the old dispensation. Ecclesia is a Christian word, and relates to an assembly of Christians of the Body of Christ. The "synagogue of Satan" therefore in the Smyrna period would seem to imply the development and establishment in the Church of certain forces and influences corresponding in character and results to those Judaizing teachers of St. Paul's time, who sought to bring Christians under bondage to the Law and to forms and ceremonies, thus perverting the Christian faith, robbing it of its real life and the power of godliness. Another has well expressed the thought in saying that "Judaism decided the eternal state of none. As a dispensation of law, it could give no assurance of acceptance with God, and its servants could preach no justification. For if the law says on the one hand, 'the man that doeth these things shall live by them,' it says on the other 'there is none righteous, no not one.' And that was not merely the effect, but the *designed* effect: 'We know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world become guilty before God

"Thus as the law could not justify, it could not bring to God. The unrent veil is the characteristic of Judaism, as the rent veil is of Christianity. 'Thou canst not see My face, for there shall no man see Me. and live,' is the contrasted utterance to His, who says, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; as is, 'who can by no means clear the guilty' the opposite declaration to that of the Gospel, that we 'believe on Him who justifieth the ungodly.' The darkness is passed from the face of God and the true light--for God is light--shineth. We walk therefore in the light as God is in the light and have fellowship one with the other, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'

"The Judaizing of the Church means therefore first of all the putting God back (if that were possible; possible for our hearts it is) into the darkness from which He has come forth; replacing the peace which was made for us on the cross with the old legal conditions of uncertainty. Darker than the old darkness this, inasmuch as Christ for whom they looked is come, and come [from this false standpoint] but to put His seal upon it all; come, and gone back, and declared little more at any rate than was said before, and only definitely shut out hope of any further revelation."--GRANT.

NOT BE HURT OF THE SECOND DEATH

It will thus be seen that it was in this period of Church history that, the Second step was taken in the direction of apostasy; certain set forms and ceremonies being introduced gradually taking the place of the simple worship that was common in the little assemblies of the Apostle's day. This gradually led on to what may properly be termed a religion of ceremonies, penances, fasts, masses, formal prayers, vigils, abnegations, bodily macerations, purgatory and meritorious holiness of saints, by the observance of which the eternal salvation of its devotees was taught as secured. This developed very rapidly in the next, the Pergamos period and reached its fullest development in the Thyatira period, further on in Church history, as we shall endeavor to show, when we consider the Thyatira message.

The Savior concludes the message with the usual searching exhortation, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches," showing its application not only to that period but to all times. The very last words are: "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the Second Death." The Diaglott renders this passage: "The Conqueror shall not be injured by the Second Death," and Rotherham's translation is "He that conquers, in no wise shall be injured in consequence of the Second Death." There is room, of course, for a variety of thought here. In PASTOR RUSSELL'S early writings he presented the following suggestion:

"The death of the saints as a sacrifice with Christ, as members of His Body, sharing His death, is *their Second Death*. It was *reckoned* that our death as sinners in Adam was accomplished in the crucifixion of Jesus, and our resurrection as justified men as accomplished in Jesus' resurrection. *One* death was therefore in the past, hence, when we as justified persons, presented ourselves as living sacrifices, to be baptized with Jesus' baptism of death and to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, we then and there were covenanting a *Second Death*, and day by day, if obedient to our covenant, we are dying, and soon the Second Death shall have swallowed up this justified human nature. But will it be a great loss? It would be a sad and irreparable loss of our existence forever, *were it not* that the Father, who highly exalted Jesus, our Head, to the *Divine* nature, has covenanted similarly to exalt all the members of His Body--'So many of us as were baptized into Christ,' 'baptized into His death.'

"These, who during this Age follow in the footsteps of the Forerunner, are the overcomers of the world mentioned in our Lord's promise--'He that conquers, in no wise shall be *injured in consequence* of the Second Death.'--Rev. 2:11."--Z August, '84-3.

We believe all will concede that the foregoing reasoning is entirely sound whether or not this was the thought in the Savior's mind in making the statement with regard to the Second Death. It is to be observed that if the Second Death here mentioned does refer to the sacrificial death of the saints it is the only place in the Bible where it is so designated. Other references to the Second Death apply undoubtedly to the final punishment of the incorrigible, and it would appear that the Savior might in the verse under consideration have had the same thought in mind, viz., the Second Death penalty, in this way: Those who are of the overcoming class of this Age having successfully passed their trial for life at the

end of their course here, will then be free from all liability to failure and therefore free from all liability to the Second Death penalty. They will be immortal, beings and beyond the power of death. They will therefore not be hurt or injured by the Second Death, in that, having won the Divine approval, they will no longer be subject to imperfections or weaknesses, nor subject to any further trial in which loss in the Second Death would be possible. But the rest of humanity not having yet passed their trial will still be subject to the Second Death and may be injured by it. In fact, the Scriptures teach that some failing to meet the requirements of the Great judge during the next Age shall be consigned to the Second Death.

In Rev. 20:6, we read concerning those who share in the First Resurrection: "On such the Second Death hath no power." Here again the reference seems to be to the Second Death penalty-that the "blessed and holy," having passed their trial and having experienced complete deliverance, the Second Death can have no power over them.

We thus, in this Smyrna message see depicted the era of martyrdom under Pagan Rome, during which, on the part of Christ's true followers, was manifested that sweet savor unto God of faithfulness unto death; but marked with further developments of defection on the part of some, resulting in the perversion of the faith, and consequent departures from the holy and primitive simplicity of Church order instituted by our Lord and the Apostles. Thus was revealed in this second period of the Church's history a marked phase of Nicolaitanism, more commonly designated today, Clericalism.

ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

--SEPTEMBER 18-1 COR. 10:23-33; 3:16, 17--

Golden Text.--"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the, glory of God."--1 Cor. 10:31.

WE are glad that those entrusted with the arrangement of these International Bible Lessons have chosen an Apostolic exhortation which is applicable to temperance in every proper sense of the word. It is applicable not only to food and drink and clothing, but to every interest and affair of life; even as the Lord's people, consecrated to do His will, are exhorted that whether they eat or drink or whatever they do, all should be done to the glory of the Lord. We have the declaration that no drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven, and we assume that intemperance on other lines would equally prove in the Lord's sight a lack of proper character on our part that would bar us from a share in the Kingdom, and that therefore with equal propriety we might say, No glutton shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Neither those who devote their lives to fashion and folly, dress and frivolity.

The Lord is seeking for the Kingdom class persons of character, and has arranged that those who hear His message of grace in the present time and are accepted of Him through consecration shall sacrifice their own wills, the will of the flesh, to do the Lord's will, and therefore to no longer surrender themselves to gluttony or drunkenness or fashionable folly. The Lord is seeking those who surrender themselves to Him to be taught in the school of Christ, to there learn the lessons

of self-control, self-denial, patience, humility, meekness, and come to a proper appreciation of the various graces of the Holy Spirit, and so far as possible to live in harmony with their noble conceptions and desires. These are the ones whom the Lord is seeking for the Kingdom, and we may feel sure that He *will* accept no others. He will find a sufficient number of this kind to complete His predestination, and it is for us, if we have heard His voice and been accepted of Him, to strive daily to be dead to the world and to all fleshly desires that we may thus make our calling and election sure.

THE LAW GOVERNING SAINTS

The Apostle says that all things are lawful for him, 'but all things are not expedient. There is a limited and unlimited way of using language. Evidently the Apostle has no thought of using this expression, "all things," unlimitedly. It would not have been lawful for him to 'murder or steal or do other things which he recognized -to be contrary to the Divine will. He is discussing the proper liberties of Christians. Their one law is supreme love for God and consequently a love of all mankind. This comprehensive law is binding upon them-it is the law of their being, to disregard which would mean the loss of 'the Holy Spirit and, persevered in, would mean the Second Death. The Lord's children are not governed by "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," in respect to all the little affairs of life. It is left to them to apply the principles of. this law of love to life's general affairs, including its trivialities. The Jews were under laws respecting various little details, and the Gentiles, the heathen, had their customs, usages, laws. The Christian stands free from all those, bound only by the one law of love. He may do anything that would not so conflict with that law, but many things that would not so conflict might be inexpedient, inadvisable, because of the mental and moral condition of those about him who might misunderstand his course.

In this lesson the Apostle is explaining a difficulty which perhaps more than any other trivial question was troublesome to the early Church. The Apostles at the Council in Jerusalem, answering the inquiry of the Church at Antioch, had declared that the Jewish Law did not affect the Gentiles who had accepted Christ. Nevertheless they urged upon them amongst other things that they abstain from meats offered to idols. (Acts 21:25.) This proved to be a very difficult matter with them because of the customs of that day. In Corinth, for instance, nearly all the meats sold in the butchers' stalls ("shambles") was meat which had been offered to idols. The people, not knowing the true God, in exercising their, faculty of Veneration had come to suppose that all meats should be first offered to the heathen idols, in order that the partaking of them might have a blessing and be to their health. Meat of any other kind was scarce. The Apostle explains in our lesson that if Christians were invited to a l feast by some of their unbelieving neighbors or friends or relatives, as, for instance, a marriage supper, they would in a ll probability sit down to meat which had been offered to an idol. They were in perplexity in respect to the matter what they should do : the Apostle was endeavoring to make, plain to them the path of duty.

UNDER THE LAW OF LOVE

He sets forth, first of all, the basic rule that we who are Christians, we who are truly consecrated to the Lord, have given up our own wills and preferences in

every matter with a view to honoring the Lord and doing all the good we can in the world in His name. He urges, therefore, "Let no man seek his own but every man another's welfare." (V. 24.) The Apostle here would seem to mean that we are to be entirely regardless in respect to our own welfare that we may accomplish all the good possible for others; yet we believe that we would not be doing violence to the general tenor of the Scriptures to suppose the Apostle means that we are not to seek our own welfare *merely*, but are to keep in view also the welfare, the interests of others, so that where these would conflict we would be ready to make any reasonable and proper sacrifice, especially on any matter or subject which would relate, to the Lord and His Gospel Message, because we are God's ambassadors and representatives of the Truth, His Message, in the world.

In view of these things the Apostle advises that those who are advanced enough in the knowledge of the Truth to appreciate the fact that an idol is nothing, and that the offering of meat to that idol would in no degree affect it, might properly enough use their liberties and eat the meat, asking no questions, but remembering that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof"; and accepting the food as being part of the Lord's bounty, they may give thanks for it and eat it, regardless of where it has been, whether offered to an idol or not. But if some one should say to the believer, "That meat you are about to eat was offered to an idol," giving the inference that he believed it would be sin to partake of it, then our course should be different: not because our own conscience would smite us with the thought it was sin, nor with the thought that the meat had been injured by laying it before a piece of wood or stone, but for the conscience of the one, telling us, lest he should think we were committing a sin, And lest he should be thus led to think lightly of our professions or to similarly partake, and that in violation of his own conscience he thinking it to be sinful to eat such meat.

The Apostle Paul was thus in some degree stepping beyond the decree of the council at Jerusalem; but while standing up for all that the Jerusalem council had advocated, in so far as it would have any bearing or influence upon others, he nevertheless would recognize the liberty of the people of God, that they are under no law except love,. He therefore is in this Scripture endeavoring to show wherein the law of love would have its restraining influence Along lines of this question of eating meat offered to idols. The Golden Rule of love would bid us be careful not to stumble the conscience of others, but otherwise it would not strain us, for as the Apostle says, "Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" (1 Cor. 10:29.) If it is not my own conscience which reproveth me, why need I put myself under bondage in the matter if it will in no wise affect the interests. or conscience of another? It is in harmony with the use of this liberty that the Apostle has just suggested that the one discerning his liberty may eat food respecting which he may have his suspicions that it was offered to An idol, and ask no questions about it, so that no one's else conscience may be involved; but if the conscience of another were involved the Golden Rule Would immediately operate, and forbid us doing anything which would stumble or injure the conscience of a brother and break our good influence over, him.

THE OTHER EXTREME

In a very few instances we have heard of people who endeavored to use the Apostle's argument here to restrain others from their reasonable liberties on

various subjects. They put a false interpretation upon the Apostle's words, saying to the brother, "You ought not to do that because I do not Want you to do it," or "The Apostle says that you ought not to stumble your brother, and you are stumbling me by not going to church with me, As I wish you to do and as I think you ought to do."

This is a total mistake, a misapplication of the Apostle's teaching. It is an attempt to shackle and lead him as a slave, using the Apostle's words as a chain of slavery. If a Methodist brother should think that I ought to go with him to meeting on Sunday, a Presbyterian brother or a Lutheran brother or a Baptist or an Episcopalian or a Roman Catholic might each equally think that I should go to their services; yet none of these brothers could or would attempt to claim that the Lord had directed me to go to his particular services, nor could he claim that not to go with him would be a violation of any moral principle. The wrong in such a case would be done by the one who would seek to bring the brother into bondage, and would use the Apostle's arguments in a sophistical manner contrary to their true import and contrary to the Golden Rule, for he would be doing to his neighbor contrary to what he would wish the neighbor to do to him—he would be attempting to re-enslave his proper Christian liberties.

PARALLEL QUESTIONS TODAY

On the contrary, we have two matters in our day which closely parallel this difficulty in the Church in the Apostle's day, namely, the temperance question and the Sabbath question. The laws of civilized States usually provide for abstention from labor on one day of the week, and Christian people in general suppose that God has particularly required this of Christians—that it is a Divine law, a bondage upon them. This is an erroneous view; nevertheless Christians are glad of the opportunity to observe one day in seven for special worship and thankfulness and spiritual feasting. And seeing the general though erroneous view that believers have, it becomes not only our duty, but love makes it a pleasure and a privilege, to carefully abstain from any labors upon that day which the general sentiment of our neighbors would consider to be a violation of the sacredness of the day. Love for them and a desire not to encourage them to violate their consciences, not less than love for the Truth and a desire to have them appreciate the Gospel of which we are the ministers and ambassadors, should lead us to great carefulness on this matter.

The liquor question occupies a similar position in the minds of many. True, there is nothing in the Word of God which prohibits His people from using all the liquors that would do them good, but the majority of the Lord's people are well aware that they would be better without any, and hence that to use liquors in any measure or degree would be to abuse their own persons, and to more or less incapacitate themselves for the service of the Lord and to do good unto all men according to opportunity in His name. But even if we might use liquors *ad libitum* without injury there would be under present conditions and sentiments strong reason why we should avoid every appearance of evil in respect to intoxicating liquors. We realize more and more what a curse it is to the world, and that our influence, if thrown on that side of the question, might ensnare others, who, perhaps would be less strong to resist the encroachments and injuries from this demon. We can realize that under present conditions in this land it would be a

reflection against us, against the Message which we bear, against the Lord whom we represent, to have anything to do with the liquor traffic, or even to enter a liquor saloon on any other business, or to associate ourselves in any manner with so dire an evil, which even the unregenerate realize to be an enemy to righteousness in every sense of the word. Some of the Lord's people, we feel, are not, as particular as they should be in estimating the weight of their influence, and in determining that by the Lord's grace, as the Apostle urges, they will do nothing against the Truth, but will do all in their power for the Truth-for righteousness.--2 Cor. 13:8.

THE BREADTH OF ST. PAUL'S ARGUMENT

All must agree that the Apostle's argument is sound. On the one hand everything that we receive is, a gift from the Lord, and anything that we can render Him thanks for would be proper for us to use in a becoming manner, and none would have a right to condemn us for so doing. None should speak evil of us for doing a thing that we can do with good conscience and with prayer and thankfulness. On the other hand, however, while they have no right to criticize us, we have the right to judge our own conduct and to restrain ourselves, and to determine, as the Apostle elsewhere explains it, that if eating a certain kind of food would cause the stumbling of others, we would gladly agree never to use that kind of food. We are to see our liberties and to use them according to our judgment of the Lord's will, because all things are given us richly to enjoy. (1 Tim. 6:17.) Eating or drinking, whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God.

It is in accordance with this thought that the Apostle urges that every faithful, consecrated child of God, in whom God, by His Holy Spirit, dwells, is a temple of God, a royal residence of the King of kings, a holy sanctuary, this high privilege being ours through Christ, who first redeemed us by His precious blood, and thus made us eligible to the call of God to be thus sanctified and set apart wholly to His use--"for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

It was to this that our Lord also referred, saying, "If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him and *make Our abode with him*. . . . *The comforter which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*" (John 14:23, 26.) Thus each individual saint becomes "a habitation of God through the Spirit," a holy temple, a royal residence.

ST. PAUL'S PERSONAL EXAMPLE

Blessed is every teacher who can write, as the Apostle does here in this lesson, that his own personal course known to the people of God is in full accord with the teachings he has set before them respecting self-denial for the good of others--"even as I also please all men in all things, not seeking mine own advantage, but the good of the many, that they may be saved." What a noble character was St. Paul's! How willing to lay down his life for the brethren! yea, and in the hope of turning some from being aliens and strangers to make of them brethren through the message of the grace of God. Let us all more and more cultivate the Apostle's spirit and willingness to be and to do anything or everything that the Lord may be glorified and His cause advanced, and that His

people and all people may be blessed. This is the spirit of Christ, the spirit of self-sacrifice, the spirit of love, the spirit of a sound mind to seek to do others good at any cost.

We are not to understand the Apostle here to mean that he succeeded in pleasing all men, for we know that he was stoned, beaten, and finally suffered death because he did not please all men; but he was loyal to the Lord, which loyalty meant the disapprobation of men. The Apostle's meaning evidently is that he sought, so far as loyalty to the Lord was concerned and loyalty to the principles of righteousness, to do or be everything for the advancement of the Gospel and the blessing of the people.

THOUGHTFUL SERVICE FOR OTHERS: REVIEW

--SEPTEMBER 25--GAL. 6:1-10--

Golden Text.--"So then, as we have opportunity, let us work that which is good toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith."--Gal. 6:10.

REVIEWING the lessons of the quarter, showing the missionary labors of the Apostle Paul, and introducing to us a number of his co-laborers, our principal thoughts may well be that the same Gospel is still being preached Jesus and the resurrection ;-that the privilege of being ministers of this Gospel, and co-laborers with our Lord, is still open to us; that the rewards of such ministry may still be won by us; indeed, it is well that we get the thought that every member of the Church glorified will have been an active member of the Church militant-warring against the Adversary and his works and influence. Whether our warfare be of the more public kind or of the more private sort, there must be warfare, and more than this, there must be progress and victory, else we can never be accepted of the Lord as "overcomers."

Another thought should be borne in mind by us all: viz., that while we have gifts differing one from the other, and are, therefore, able to contribute to the Lord's cause relatively larger or smaller amounts of energy or service or wealth, the Lord in making His estimate will take knowledge of the spirit which actuated us, rather than of the results secured by our efforts; so that of some small talent it may be said, as it was said of the poor widow who cast in the two mites into the Lord's treasury, that the smaller gift was more appreciated by the Lord than some of the larger ones., In view of this, let us see to it, not only that we do with our might what our hands find to do, but also that our every sacrifice and gift to the Lord and His cause is so full of love and devotion that the Lord will surely approve it; as done from love for Him and His, and not from vainglory.

The Lord has been with His representatives in all their labors of love and self-denial, throughout the entire Age, noting their efforts, assisting, encouraging, sustaining them, and surely watering and refreshing all who are making His service their special object in life,--ministering His grace to others, watering and feeding them. And if this has been true in the past, all through the Age, how specially true we may realize it to be now, in the end of the Age, in the time of Harvest, in the time of our Lord's Second Presence! How we may realize that He

is with us, in sympathy, in co-operation, in assistance, in sustaining grace,--able and willing to make all of our experiences profitable to us, and to use us abundantly in showing forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light!

BEAR YE ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS

Let these thoughts quicken us to fresh and greater energies and to an appreciation of the fact that the things of this present time are but transitory (both its joys and its sorrows) ; and that the ambitions and hopes of the world are not worthy of comparison with these noble and laudable ambitions to serve and to please our Master, and to have His rewards, the chief of which will be fellowship with Himself in glory, and the privilege of being co-laborers with Him in the blessing of the world--the grand fulfillment of the Heavenly Father's gracious plans for the world of mankind.

The Scripture lesson cited in connection *with this review is in every way appropriate and timely. The consecrated the. Apostle speaks of as brethren and instructs them how they should deal with any of their fellows who might, be overtaken in a fault, who might become entangled with some form of sin, not, by reason of sympathy with sin, but by reason of weakness of the flesh or by unfavorable environment., The most spiritual ones of the Church should exercise themselves to bring about a restoration of the erring one to a condition of righteousness and fellowship with God. This they should do in a meek manner, remembering that they also are imperfect in the flesh, and that they also may at some time or other inadvertently fall into sin, contrary to their heart intentions.

In this manner they were to "bear one another's burdens"--assisting one another in battling against the weaknesses of the flesh and the besetments of sin. In this way they would be fulfilling the general law of Christ.

The law of Christ is a law of service and self-sacrifice in the interests of others. Those who, finding a brother overtaken in a fault, merely throw back their heads, denouncing the brother in a haughty, imperious manner, in a holier-than-thou manner, have not yet attained a proper appreciation of what is the Law of Christ--the law which is to govern all the members of the Body.

This Law of Christ, the Apostle points out, is a Law of Love. Governed by this Law of love, Jesus laid down His life, not merely for his friends, but even for ,His enemies. All, therefore, who would claim to be disciples or followers of Jesus should have the same mind, the same disposition, the same spirit, and should seek to follow .the same Law of love. Thus the Apostle says, "We ought also. to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16) -in seeking to assist the brethren out of difficulty and to bring them nearer to the Lord and to His standards.

TOO MUCH SELF-ESTEEM

The Apostle points out that one great danger which besets all the true followers of Jesus is headiness--thinking too highly of self and, therefore, not thinking highly enough of the brethren, especially of the brethren who stumble in some particular in which this individual has not himself as yet stumbled.

One of the first lessons to be learned is that we are really nothing, that we are bundles of imperfection, that on the strength of our own merit we could not commend ourselves to God nor have His favor. Furthermore, we are to learn that in proportion as we think of ourselves as somebody, to that same extent we are not pleasing to God, and are in His sight all the more nobodies, If, therefore, anybody think of himself as a somebody in God's sight, he should begin to realize that he is nothing, a nobody, unworthy of Divine notice, except through the favor of God in Christ. Such a person is deceiving himself and is hindering his own progress in the good way.

Each one, therefore, instead of seeking to judge or to reprove his neighbor or his brother in Christ, should seek to prove out his own work. He should carefully discern to see to what extent he has made progress in the things which God has declared will be pleasing in His sight. He should seek to ascertain to what extent he has put away anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, and to what extent he has put on the graces of God's Holy Spirit, namely, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

To whatever extent he can see that he is making progress along these Scripturally defined lines, to that extent he has ground for rejoicing, without in any sense or degree seeking to compare himself with others and thus to estimate himself wholly by the imperfections which he may see in others, By following this course, each should be seeking- to find out his own weaknesses, seeking to bear his own burdens and seeking, therefore, not to be a burden or a reproach to others--either to the Lord or to the brethren.

FAITHFUL CONTINUANCE IN WELL-DOING

In verses 9 and 10 the Apostle draws his argument to a conclusion. All who wish to do right--all who wish, to live according to the lines marked out by the Holy Spirit through the words of Jesus and the Apostles--should not only start out well by making a full consecration, but should continue faithful, and not be weary of striving against sin and of being faithful to righteousness.

God is seeking to develop and to fix character in His people; and in due time, after they shall have suffered awhile, fought and battled for a time against the weaknesses of the flesh, they will reap the reward; they will get the new bodies that God has promised--the Resurrection bodies. Then their battling and trials will all be ended; for the new bodies will be in perfect accord with the new will, and there will be no cause of conflict between the two. The work of grace will then go grandly forward, through them, for the blessing of the world.

And, says the Apostle,, let us not merely avoid harshness toward those who have been overtaken in a fault, let us not merely guard ourselves that we shall sow to the Spirit and not to the flesh, and let us not merely avoid weariness in this good way; but let us additionally, "as we find opportunity, do good unto all men, especially to those who are of the Household of Faith." In- so doing, we shall be copying our Heavenly Father's character. He is the Fountain of Blessing. From Him come the blessings of the present life -- the sunshine and the rain--upon both the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

As the Heavenly Father is continually giving blessings, rather than seeking favors, so we as His advanced and developed children are to seek to have the same

character-likeness, the same disposition, the same mind; namely, a disposition to do good to everybody, but especially an earnest desire to do good unto all who are the Lord's children unto all who are of the Household of Faith.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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HOPE OF HEATHENDOM NOT IN MISSIONS BUT IN MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Psa. 2:8.

THOSE who have been giving careful and devout consideration to the testimony of the Divine Oracles, have for some years been led to the conclusion that we have approached nigh unto the final judgment of Christendom, composed of the various ecclesiastical systems of the world; nor does time, nor up-to-date events, cause us to surmise that this conclusion is not well grounded. All the circumstances in the so-called Christian world appear to be in fulfillment of the "sure word of prophecy," which describes the confusion of symbolic Babylon in connection with the manifestation of Divine judgment that is to mark her end. Those who have been watching developments in ecclesiastical circles during these latter years, recognize the general inconsistency, and therefore the consequent confusion and embarrassment. Criticism of churchianity prevails so that none who are at all listening can fail to hear it; for it is to be observed and heard everywhere. This general expression of judgment and criticism recognized by the ecclesiastical leaders portends no good to Church institutions, and the necessity is felt for meeting the situation promptly and wisely (according to their own ideas), if they would preserve their institutions from the danger which threatens them.

The nominal Christian Church is charged with inconsistency in various directions. A wide distinction is marked, even by the worldly, between her claimed standard of doctrine, the Bible, and the conflicting and in many respects absurd creeds. Further, the professed ecclesiastical bodies of the world are charged with a marked lack of that piety and godliness which they profess; though the fact is admitted that a few, truly pious souls are found here and there among the obscure ones.

A further charge that is made against the nominal Church, and which is regarded as of a most sanguinary character, is that she has failed to accomplish what she has claimed to be her mission; i. e., to convert the world to Christianity. How the world has discovered that the time has come when the work of the Church should show some signs of completion, seems unaccountable; but nevertheless, just as in the end of the Jewish Age, all men were in expectation of some great change about to take place (Luke 3:15) ; so now, in the end of this dispensation, all men are in similar expectation. They realize from present disturbances and the general unrest, that we are in a transition period, and the horoscope of the twentieth century is full of terrors and premonitions of great revolutionary changes. Nor does the evidence that is accumulating daily with regard to the Church's efforts to

save the world, tend to lessen the spirit of criticism. We just now have before us a significant statement appearing in the columns of *The Literary Digest* of August 27, 1921, which tends to confirm the already unfavorable judgment as to the Church's failure. The statement referred to follows, under the heading:

"DIVISION IN CHINESE MISSIONS"

"A scandal of division threatens Chinese missions, says a writer in *The Christian Century* (Undenominational), who finds that now there are in the Protestant camp two distinct groups, one emphasizing the second coming of Christ and, therefore, the futility of many items of educational and philanthropic work; and the other adhering to a gospel of social service. It is the struggle between the pre-millennialists and the less literal group of the Church transferred to foreign soil, and the effect on the native population seems to be what neither would wish. The Chinese witness this serious division among the Christian forces, says the writer, 'and naturally they feel that the Christian religion is not the religion for China if it is not even able to hold in fraternity a group of ardently religious people at work at the same task in a distant land. This weakening of the Christian forces in the face of new hazards in Chinese life makes the future of missionary effort in China problematical, even though we have been feeling until recently that this was the most promising field in all the world.' Furthermore

" 'Students are returning to China from the various civilized nations of the world. Large numbers of these are going back with the report that the educated classes in Western countries are above Christianity and that the Church has but little influence upon the life of the people. Some Christian students are returning with a different assessment of the facts. There is every tendency, however, for the Chinese nation to follow the leaders who bring a materialistic philosophy from the West. In addition to the influence of these students, there is wide-spread resentment against the aggressions of Christian nations on the territorial integrity of China. Nearly every one of the larger nations of the West have some kind of territorial concession. The Chinese will never be happy until China is once more a land for the Chinese.

"With the missionary problem in China becoming more difficult by reason of the changing attitude of the Chinese themselves, the tragedy of the divisive movement within the Christian group is the more marked. With devotees traveling over China, spending ten minutes between trains to declare, "Jesus is coming," the intelligent Chinamen may be expected to mock. He has no background in his thinking for a catastrophic second coming. The denominational leaders may continue to get up big drives as a means of unifying the Christian forces, but what the Christian Church of today needs more than anything else is some honest thinking on fundamentals."

The above is only one of the many sidelights that are continually making manifest that there is something wrong about the claim of the Church to be commissioned to enlighten and convert the heathen, as well as all mankind, in this Age. Surely the Church must know that the eyes of the world are turned upon her; that somehow it has been discovered that while she has claimed that her commission is to convert the world, the time has arrived when, if that claim be true, the world's conversion should be almost, if not fully, accomplished. After all, it is

apparent to ' the observing that the Church herself differs little from the world except in profession. Having assumed that the saving of the world is her present mission, she has lost sight of the real purpose of this Gospel Age; namely, to "preach this Gospel of the Kingdom in all the world for a witness to all nations," and to aid in the calling and preparing of a "little flock" to constitute, with the Lord, that Millennial Kingdom which shall then bless all the families of the earth. (Matt. 24:14; Acts 15:14-17.) She is confronted with the solemn fact that after eighteen centuries, she is farther from the results which her claims would demand than she was at the close of the first century.

THE TRUE CHURCH DESPISED AND UNKNOWN

But the same Holy Message that describes the end of all the present order of things at hand and the dissolution of Christendom, offers the most cheering and comforting word to all those who are faithful to their Divine Lord. These are made to see that there is indeed a real Church of Christ, elect and precious, consecrated to God and to His Truth "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." These are not known to the world as a compact body; but as individuals they are known unto the Lord, who judges not merely by the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear, but who discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart. And however widely they may be scattered, whether standing alone as "wheat" in the midst of "tares," or in company with others, God's eye is always upon them. They, dwelling in the secret 'place of the Most High (sanctified, wholly set apart unto God), shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty, while the judgments of the Lord are experienced by the great religious systems that bear His name, in unfaithfulness. (Psa. 91:1, 14-16.) These have no share in the judgment of great Babylon, 'but are previously enlightened and called out of her. (Rev. 18:4.) This class is described and blessedly comforted in Psalms 91 and 46. In the midst of much merely formal and sham profession of godliness, the Lord' ' s watchful eye discerns the true, and He leads them into the green pastures and beside the still waters, and makes their hearts rejoice in His Truth and in His love. "The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. 2:19) ; they constitute the true Church in His estimation, the Zion which the Lord hath chosen (Psa. 132:13-16), and of whom it is written, Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced, because of Thy judgments, O Lord." (Psa. 97:8.) The Lord will safely lead them as a shepherd leads his sheep.

In due time, in the near future we trust, these with all the faithful since our Lord's First Advent, will shine forth as the sun, in the Kingdom of their Father, and to them, in the new dispensation, will come the honor and the privilege of executing the great mission that has been mistakenly assigned to this Age-that of the world's conversion-through one, thousand years of Millennial glory. Then, indeed, will be fulfilled the promise that Jehovah made to His Son: "Ask of me -and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARKNESS

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."--Matt. 5:9. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword."--Matt. 10:34.

THE united testimony of the Scriptures is that the great Head of the Church, our Lord Jesus, and all those who are to share His Kingdom and glory, must necessarily be lovers of peace and harmony. The great principles for which they essentially stand, require that their message and ministry, together with all the conduct of their lives, shall demonstrate in a most pronounced manner that they deplore everything in the nature of controversy, contention, strife and ill-will; and that they just as ardently labor and seek for that which is peaceable and peace loving, and that which is conducive to harmony and oneness of mind. This must have been the thought in the mind of the Savior when He pronounced His benediction upon the peacemakers, in which he sought to place a special premium upon the acts and conduct of those who would be truly instruments of peace.

But while the foregoing presents one viewpoint, and very truthfully, yet the Master. gave us to understand that after all, peace was *not* the most important thing. He taught this, not only in word, but in deed. His actions confirm His teaching that He came *not* to bring peace, but a sword. A paradox in the Master's teaching and example seems to be here in evidence; and yet when the two lines of thought are viewed in the light of all the facts and circumstances, and the development of the Divine Plan, everything is seen to be in full accord, and harmonious. The sum of the matter is that our Lord, as Jehovah's Chief Representative, came, as He said, "to bear, witness to the truth" of the Divine character and Plan, and as to the great principles of justice and righteousness that are at the foundation of the Divine, government. Our Lord knew that as He appeared upon the earth, Himself the spotless One, a perfect representation of the spirit and mind of the Heavenly Father, that His faithful ministry would at once antagonize the powers of darkness operated by Satan; and the Savior could well appreciate that after 4000 years of falling, under Satanic dominion, the spirit of truth and righteousness in the world, was considerably lost-the image and likeness of God badly effaced; and knowing that it was God's Plan to permit the dominion of darkness to continue on for a time (for at least nineteen centuries following His First Advent), Jesus could easily forecast what the results of His ministry would be, as well as that of His followers, who were likewise commissioned under Him to carry forward the work of teaching and of bearing testimony to the same truths.

THE DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism with the light of truth, and, consequently when His people lift up the light,--"let their light so shine as to glorify the Father in heaven" who has called them "out of darkness into His marvelous light,"the effect upon the darkened world will be to awaken opposition, antagonism; because the effect of the light is to make manifest the evils of darkness which would not otherwise appear; and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin, in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind

of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel; they Much prefer a measure of darkness.-John 3:20.

It is in consequence of this conflict between light and darkness that our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God, and who had at least a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by the Roman governor and the Roman soldiers of their own volition, for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate anything of the light which He displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light but who hated the brilliancy of the great light which shone upon them. Similarly, all the way down through this Gospel Age those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted, largely, we might say chiefly, almost exclusively, by those who had some light, but whose light was darkness in comparison to the great light of the Holy Spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they have hated Me, they will also hate you." "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove and polish His people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing influences to prosper, and persecute and oppose His "members," and thus to serve His cause in the preparation of His elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the Body, like the persecutors of the Head, are co-operating to fulfil the Divine Plan in a manner they little suspect.-John 15:18; 1 John 3:13; 2 Tim. . 3:12; 1 Thes. 2:14, 15; 2 Thes. 3:4; John 16:2; Acts 14:22.

NOT TO RULE THE WORLD NOW

We might multiply the Scriptural declarations that this is the call of the Church in the present time--to let the light shine and thus to attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly kindness, pity and love-toward the persecutors and toward all men.

As it was the mission of our Lord not to rule the world, nor to judge the world, at His First Advent, but to lay down His life for the world, so it is the mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, not to rule the world, nor to judge the world now, but to "lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.) Our Lord ' declares, "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) The Son of Man came to lay down His life for the world. (John 6:51; 10:15.) "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36.) And so the Apostle Paul assures us that we are not to reign now, but on the contrary to suffer with Christ, if we would reign with Him by and by: that we are not to judge, the world now, but on the contrary to judge nothing before the time-, but He assures us that in God's due time the saints shall judge the world, and that to the world's blessing. He assures us that it is our mission "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His Body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. 1:24.) He tells us, along the same line, that while we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, our service is to be specially to the household of faith. Our efforts that will go toward the world of mankind in general are to be only the side-glances, as it were, the overflow of our efforts

expended chiefly and directly upon the members of the Body of Christ, the consecrated Church, expended in building one another up in the most holy faith. -- Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 4:5; 6:2; Gal. 6:10.

In the light of the foregoing we observe the obvious reason why the Lord's people at times appear not to be acting and ministering along lines that bring harmonious results, and why, just as in the case of our Lord and the Apostles, the faithful throughout the Age have *appeared* to be promoters of controversy While all the time they have been the greatest admirers and lovers of peace. We see that though all true Christians *must* be lovers of peace they do not love "11 peace at any price," for they are taught that the truth and the principles thereof are more important, and these must be defended and supported even though it means peace and harmony appear to be disturbed and broken at times.

DO WE BELIEVE IN CONTROVERSY?

The brethren now conducting the affairs of our INSTITUTE have been more or less recently questioned along these lines. Our Editorial Staff has been asked by some to consider if we have not permitted a spirit of controversy to enter into the matter published in these columns, reference being made to certain recent Revelation expositions, and also to the presentations on chronology; and the explanation is made by the questioner that as these recent treatises on these subjects have not been endorsed nor agreed to by every person, and that as some-, even though a very small minority, took issue with some of the points, does this not imply that what we have presented is of a controversial nature, and therefore of a character that should come under the ban and not be allowed to appear in these columns at all? Moreover did not the HERALD promise in its initial issue of nearly three years ago that it was not started for the purpose of perpetuating controversy, or entering into any quarrel or discussion with others that would lead to controversy and contention; and has there not been a departure from this position? The question is further urged, Would it not be the wiser plan to publish in the HERALD only that which has been written and published by PASTOR RUSSELL *word for word*, and that *absolutely nothing else* be set before our readers?

In making reply to these points we would express, of course, our warm sympathy with the purpose and motive of the inquirer, and our appreciation of the fervent desire for unity and harmony thus expressed; but as yet we are not able to concur in the opinions and conclusions suggested. There has been no thought whatever to promulgate controversy or anything of that nature in what we have presented on the subjects mentioned foregoing. From one viewpoint, as has already been explained, *all Truth is of a controversial character during the present dark time of the reign of evil*; and we presume that no truth could be presented whatever *but what would be disputed and rejected by some people*. Hence, if we were to decide to publish only that which all could agree to it would mean that we should cease our efforts altogether, and preach and publish nothing. We cannot believe that this attitude and policy would please the Lord. In fact we have the instruction to the contrary, to persist in the proclamation of the Truth in the face of opposition and even at the expense of suffering, persecution and death. It then becomes a question of Christian judgment and the exercise of the spirit of a sound mind in what we shall teach and publish before others. What has been dealt with in these

columns along the lines of chronology, and the visions of St. John, has been of a character that we have considered profitable and good for the Lord's people to think upon and consider.

HEARKENING TO THE VOICE OF WISDOM

As we have explained, the subject of the times and seasons occupies great prominence in the Scriptures; and to this theme our beloved Pastor devoted much of the space in the books and journal of which he was the author. BROTHER RUSSELL was purposing to write an entire volume upon the symbols of the Revelation, showing his valuation of that phase of Christian knowledge; for he appreciated as we also do, the opening words of the beloved John's Message: "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy," also, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book." In presenting what we have in this journal on the topics above referred to, it was with the thought, of course, that there would be at least some who would not concur in what was offered; but we did not feel that this should deter us from setting before the brethren that which to our minds and judgments was of a wholesome and comforting character, and such as we believed would build up in faith, hope and love. And true to our surmise, the vast majority of the brethren with whom we are in correspondence have expressed in very warm terms their delight in and appreciation of what has been recently published. It seems to us that we must determine what the mind of the Lord is by the voice of His fully consecrated people, that is, *these as a class*, and we have had an expression from them in no uncertain terms. It would not appear to be pleasing to the Lord for us to yield to the preferences of a small number in these matters, while by far the larger number urge upon us a continuance of these investigations and expositions.

As we examine our own hearts and motives we have a deep desire to promote only peace and harmony among the brethren. We deplore everything in the nature of strife and contention; and we seek ever to keep before our minds the Apostle's admonition: "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be patient unto all men." We do indeed deplore everything in the nature of anger, hatred, malice, evil speaking, etc., believing that such qualities are of the darkness, and the great prince thereof.

As for the position stated in the initial issue of this journal that it was started for the purpose of edifying the Lord's people in holy things, and not for controversy, and would not enter into a quarrel with any: We believe this position and attitude have been fully and consistently maintained up to the present time. Our readers well know that we have had abundant opportunity to enter into many lines of discussion that were purely controversial and would be in the nature of contention and quarreling. No attempt has been made to defend ourselves against any personal criticism. We have considered that our reputations were in the hands of the Lord and that He is able to take care of everything of that character without our entering into a fight with any. We feel that we can still therefore truthfully say that our policy and purpose are and will continue to be *to enter into no quarrel nor perpetuate any controversy whatever*, for our desire and purposes remain unchanged, namely, that this journal shall be dedicated to only a holy ministry -- for the building up of the saints and for the glory of God.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S WISE PROVISION

As for printing in these pages *only* that which was published by BROTHER RUSSELL *word for word*; we cannot think that this would be the ideal course to pursue, nor productive of the best results; neither would it please the friends in general. This suggestion does not appeal to us as being a reasonable one either; not because we think that any of the brethren now serving are superior to him, nor even his equal by far; yet the voice of wisdom seems to speak to us that *time and events most unmistakably cast their reflection upon the testimony of the Divine Word making more luminous from time to 'time certain statements thereof*. Hence we are urged to walk in the light, to watch, to take heed to the more sure Word of prophecy, etc.

It is recalled also that our dear Pastor as he looked forward to his departure expressed certain desires in his WILL concerning the policy and management of his journal that would continue to minister after his death. While in his WILL he expressed his consent to the use of any of his sermons and writings by the Editorial brethren, if they chose, he did not specify that they should be limited to these in what they should express and print in the journal, and we believe it was the spirit of true wisdom on his part that he did not make any such specification, for he recognized, as he also taught, that the path of the just was a progressive one and that as he expected himself to see some matters more clearly as time went on, so surely he thus allowed that, subsequent to his death, brethren carrying forward the ministry should be accorded the same liberty that he, himself, desired to have, namely, the liberty of an "open Bible," and of individually studying it with the object of proclaiming whatever was seen to be the true message of the Lord from time to time. It is in accordance with this spirit and policy that our brethren have proceeded and will continue to serve in this ministry. Not only did BROTHER RUSSELL *not* request in his WILL that an Editorial Staff should be limited to his exact words in what they should publish, but specially provided *that other writings than his should be set forth* in the journal, in that he specified that *all articles appearing in the journal* should be approved by at least three of the Editorial Staff of five; thus implying that he intended that they should exercise that discrimination and discretion of printing other articles than those of his own exact words. We believe that we can truthfully say that the full requirements of our Pastor's WILL have been complied with up to the present time, by our brethren here.

Finally, while earnestly desiring conditions of peace and unity and striving in our labors for and communion with the brethren to that end, we must have before our minds first of all the pleasing of our heavenly Father; hence our great desire is to preserve in our hearts the essence of true humility and godly fear, and to keep ourselves as far as possible from all disposition to run ahead of the Lord or to speak where His Word does not speak. The brethren who are concerned and engaged in this ministry very keenly appreciate their weakness and insufficiency; and therefore as we have been -deing in the past, so we shall continue, relying upon the assistance of His promised grace and the wisdom from above, and guidance by a wise and loving providence. In a!! of these our humble endeavors, we rejoice to know that we have the prayers of many of the brethren whom we are also remembering daily at the Throne of Heavenly Grace.

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF BIBLE STUDENTS, EAST HAM TOWN HALL, LONDON

--JULY 30, 31, AUGUST 1, 2, 1921--

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the Beloved!

We are sending with this letter a short account of the Convention lately held in London, thinking perhaps YOU might like it to appear in the HERALD. It is with deep gratitude to the Lord that we report a blessed season of fellowship and communion. We are indeed encouraged, having every reason to believe that the Lord's smile of approval is with us. We now look forward to another year's experience, confident in our Father's precious promises and assured that if our part is faithfully done He will not fail us in any circumstance that may await us.

The brethren in Great Britain are still appreciating your ministrations through the HERALD, and esteem you all very highly for your works' sake. Our prayers are constantly ascending to God in your behalf that you may be kept humble and faithful amidst all your many privileges of service for His flock. With sincere love as ever,

Your brethren in Christ, BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE.

[The report of the convention follows.]

"THE MASTER'S PRESENCE FILLED THE PLACE"

It will be of general interest to the friends to know that for four days, ending on August 2nd, the Bible Students of Great Britain held their Annual Convention in the Town Hall, East Ham, London; the arrangements being under the care of the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE, as formerly.

The program was a very full one, including many addresses, praise and prayer services, testimony meetings, and Love Feast, all of which were greatly enjoyed by the brethren in attendance who gathered from nearly every part of the British Isles.

The spacious buildings provided ample accommodation for the assembly, which was not very large-probably 350 would cover the largest gathering. The meetings were held in the large hall, and the meals in the minor hall, whilst the Immersion Service was conducted in the Baths adjoining.

The messages of love received from the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE, from Australia, Sweden, Holland and other parts, were appreciated by all, and loving messages were sent in return, in conjunction with the following Scriptures: 1 Pet. 5:10 and Rom. 8:35-39. (Diaglott.)

Friends from Holland were in attendance, having come as a deputation from the brethren in that country, especially with the object of securing a closer relationship between the brethren of the two countries, and to solicit the assistance

of the British friends in respect to the interest of the Lord's work amongst the Dutch people, who have not enjoyed the many privileges that have been the portion of other civilized lands.

The Annual Meeting provided an opportunity to make known to the friends the varied activities of the Committee and something of the results accomplished under the Lord's direction. The Secretary's Report was found to be very interesting and encouraging, and the brethren assembled appreciated opportunities of service for the future which were brought to their attention.

The election of seven brethren to form the Committee for the ensuing year resulted in the appointment of the following: Brothers Crawford, Edgell, Hart, Hillary, Housden, Shearn and Tharratt.

Perfect harmony and good-will prevailed throughout the whole time, and, in the opinion of those present, the standard of spiritual unison, of lofty theme, and heart rejoicing, has never been excelled in their experience.

Some sadness was felt at the absence of loved faces from the meetings; and tender memories of the INSTITUTE'S representatives being in our midst on the previous occasion were with us. Yet the Master's presence just filled the place and warmed our hearts, and cheered us on our pilgrim way.

Fellowship with Jesus seemed to be the prevailing thought running through the addresses, and as the friends separated to go to their various homes, all seemed to be earnestly looking forward to that personal fellowship and companionship with the Lord which is to be part of the Treasures of Heaven.

CO-OPERATION AMONG BRETHERN ABROAD

The above report is indeed of interest to the brethren here and we rejoice to learn that so many of the friends in other lands are of one mind and are making use of the opportunities to advance the interests of each other to build up one another in the things that make for the Kingdom. During the past year the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE has been acting more or less as a correspondent to our INSTITUTE and has been rendering very efficient co-operation in the ministry. We are pleased to acknowledge that the results that have come through their co-operation are indeed very gratifying especially along the line of encouraging subscriptions to this journal. . We believe there is already a fruitage from these labors of love represented in a general work of grace and spiritual upbuilding among those who have had set before them in these pages some of the essential truths that edify and encourage in holy things.

It would indeed have given us special pleasure and joy to have -been represented at the Annual Convention in Britain this year, but, of course, while regretting that the way was not open we were resigned to the Lord's ' providence in the matter and felt that there must be some good purpose in not permitting any of our brethren to be represented at the London Convention. We here remark that suggestions have already come to us from leading brethren in Australia suggesting an International Convention of the brethren to be held in London next year, probably at the usual time that they have their conference there, about August 1. The plan is tunder contemplation, which, if worked out, would mean that Brother R. E. B. Nicholson, acting as secretary among the friends in

Australia, would be the representative to go from that country to London; and in making such a long journey the thought would be to cover as many of the prominent places as possible, and we - would hope, of course, that America might be included in such a tour by the Australian representative. . Such a pilgrimage it seems to us ought to be productive of a great deal of good. It would therefore seem that the matter of an International Convention at which there would be representative brethren from various countries including Australia and America would be one fitting and proper for the friends everywhere to have in mind in their petitions to the Lord, that if it is His will this suggested project might have His blessing and be a means of encouraging many to hold fast to their faith in these days of fiery trial and special need. We assure the dear British friends, as well as those scattered in other lands, that we commend them to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, making mention of them in our prayers, that the God of all grace may more and more make manifest His counsels and reveal to all the faithful what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES VI-A

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO PERGAMOS

"And by the Messenger of the Congregation in Pergamos write; These things says He who has the Sharp Two-edged Broad Sword."--Rev. 2:12.

UPON careful examination of the meaning and derivation of the word Pergamos, we have a suggestion, just as in the 'Cases of Ephesus and Smyrna, as to that Church's condition and especially that period in Church history represented by Pergamos, for we see in this Church and the *period* it covers that which corresponds to its name. The name signifies "fortified," "height,"--the thought, therefore, seeming to be, that which is exalted in an established or fortified position. Considering this in connection with the Savior's words, "I am aware where you are dwelling-where' Satan's throne [not seat, as in the Common Version] is, -- "Satan being called "the god [ruler] of this world;" -- the name suggests worldly height or elevation. This seems to be in perfect harmony, as we shall see, with the general picture presented in the Savior's words describing this Church. Some very worthy and able expositors have offered some interesting suggestions as to the significance of the word Pergamos. One of these states that "It is remarkable that the word 'Pergamos' has a double -significance. In the plural form, it is used for the, 'citadel of a town,' while it is at least near akin to *purgos*, 'a tower.' Again, divide it into two words, into which it naturally separates, and you have *per*, 'although,' a particle which 'usually serves to call attention to something which is objected to' (Liddell & Scott), and *gamos*, 'marriage,' Pergamos,--'a marriage though.' It was indeed by the marriage of the Church and the world that the 'city and tower' of [symbolic] Babylon the Great was raised, and such are the times we are now to contemplate [in this message of Christ]."--GRANT.

Another has said: "Contemporaneous with the flowering of Nicolaitanism was another interesting and characterizing feature manifested in the Church, of which

the name Pergamos itself is significant--a certain *marriage with worldly power*, which the Savior pronounces as adulterous, idolatrous and Balaamitic. Its development is located in the period immediately succeeding the Pagan persecutions [the days of Constantine the Great, and emperors succeeding], when the Church according to all historians, sacred and secular, did consent to one of the most marked and marvelous alliances that has occurred in its history. We know that there was then formed a union between the Church and the empire, which the fall of that empire hardly dissolved, and which has been perpetuated in the union of Church and State in the greater part of Christendom, down to this very hour. It was an alliance cried up at the time, and by many since, as the realization of the Millennium itself, and the great consummating victory of the Cross. But Christ here gives His verdict upon it, pronouncing it an idolatrous uncleanness; Israel joining himself to Baal-peor; a fearful and disastrous compromise of Christianity with the world, which disfigured and debauched the Church."--SEISS.

PASTOR RUSSELL thus refers to this matter: "Pergamos means an earthly elevation. The Speaker is 'He who hath the sharp sword with two edges' [Greek, two mouthed] -the Word of God. During this period, while the nominal Church was growing popular, the true Christians were tested and proved by the introduction and development of Pagan and Papal ideas. The Pagan priests, unwilling to lose their positions of honor and influence amongst the people, sought to bend their ideas to fit the new religion. Thus while nominally professing Christianity, they brought many of their former ideas with them into the Christian Church. They were eventually grafted upon the true stock -- 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'--Jude 3."*

*Z '16-346.

THE TRUE CHURCH A CHASTE VIRGIN

Another eminent Christian writer has thus described this period in Church history: "When the Church under Constantine became enthroned in the world ' she began, to be dethroned from her seat 'in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.' For then did she forget her high calling, and became enamored of earthly rule and dominion. This, let us not forget, was the fatal temptation through' which the Church lost her primitive purity, and brought upon herself all manner of dishonor and apostasy. What a tender, prophetic warning of such temptation is contained in that saying of Paul to the Corinthian Christians: 'I have espoused you to one husband that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve, through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.' (2 Cor. 11:2.) In-the world, but not of it, the Church, the Bride of Christ, was to await the return of her Betrothed Husband from heaven, that arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints, she might be presented to Him a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. If, during the time of her espousal, Satan could only alienate her affections by getting her enamored with the kings of the earth, so that she should accept their dowries instead of her heavenly inheritance, and put on

their royal purple instead of her virgin white, his triumph would be assured. And this is literally what he did."--GORDON.

The same temptation under which the professed 'Church' fell was presented by Satan to our Lord. The object was to seduce Him from His love for the Church that was to be redeemed by His own precious blood. That which was offered to Him was, "all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." "All these things will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me," was the alluring prize set before our Lord by Satan. This very prize that Satan offered was in God's due time to be given to Him. But the Divine program was that He should first suffer and then reign; that He must for a time appointed, after He had suffered, first sit upon His Father's throne, "till His enemies be made His foot-stool." The, Savior, however, 'resisted the temptation: "Get thee behind me, Satan," were His words. On another occasion, when He had spoken of His going up to Jerusalem to be rejected and suffer death, Simon Peter, who, doubtless, had before him the thought of a reigning Messiah, not understanding that He must suffer first, said to Him, "Far be it from thee Lord: this shall not be unto thee." (Matt. 16:23.) The Savior recognized immediately the old temptation, and resisted it with the same rebuking words, "Get thee behind me Satan." Thus was the Savior true to His vow of consecration unto death, and His affection for the Church, for whom He was to pour out His life's blood; thus "accepting a present cross and rejection, instead of a present crown and dominion; choosing to be cast out by a world that knew Him not, until after the 'times and seasons which the Father hath put in His own power should be fulfilled' and the announcement made, 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.'"

PERGAMOS YIELDS TO FATAL TEMPTATION

Thus the prospective Second Adam resisted the Temptation of the old serpent. The Church, which had passed through the terrible, sufferings of the Smyrna period, was now to have another, and in many respects a more severe trial--a test of her loyalty to her Divine Master. It was at this time that the primitive hope, the Lord's Second Advent, which had for some time been growing dim to the vision of many of the *Professed* followers of the Lord, suffered an eclipse, and even many of the true followers of the Lord were, for a time at least, deceived by the arch enemy. The Historian Gibbon, in referring to the effect this belief had upon Christ's followers for two centuries, said that "it was productive of the most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians, who lived in expectation of that moment when the globe itself and all the various races of mankind should tremble at the appearance of the Divine judge." The terrible persecutions which the Christians underwent in the long period from Domitian to Diocletian only had the effect to keep alive this hope of the Second Advent; particularly Was this so on the part of the truly consecrated, "earthly disfranchisement making heavenly citizenship more real and dear." When the political controversies and wars in the empire were finally settled, and Constantine ascended the throne, the more perilous trial of peace was encountered. Constantine, influenced, doubtless, largely by worldly polity, caused by an imperial decree all persecution to cease, and became the patron of the professed Church of Christ. The true followers of Christ, for a time at least, enjoyed this cessation of persecution, with the nominal Church. Now came the great test, which was: Would the Church "endure the test

of imperial patronage as she bore the test of imperial persecution?" This was the chief testing or trial that came to believers in Christ during this period. Those who remained true to the Lord, those who resisted the temptation of worldly patronage and desire to rule before the appointed time, constituted the overcomers of this period.

The facts have been well expressed by one who, in referring to the great change that took place in Christianity in this period, said: "This fall from heavenly to earthly citizenship was accompanied, moreover, by a gradual exchange of spiritual worship for carnal superstitions. Worse than carnal, indeed! Satan, who had tempted the Church into accepting earthly dominion from his hands, now seduced her into mixing his own ritual with her simple primitive services. For we must not forget that, according to the explicit teaching of Scripture, paganism is really demonism. 'The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God, (I Cor. 10:20) says the Apostle. Whether the deluded votaries of Jupiter and Mars knew it or not, it was really true that demons were the instigators and recipients of their worship. Idolatry is always and everywhere the religion of Satan, ordained for stealing from God the homage of human hearts and turning it to himself. And so, little by little, the elements of paganism began to mingle with the worship of Christ-holy water, candles, the wafer, images, processions, the adoration of saints and relics, the idolatry of the cross, and much more-of all which we may assert confidently what [the Roman Catholic] Cardinal Newman concedes concerning the first, that they were originally 'the very instruments and appendages of demon-worship.' "*

* A. J. GORDON, *Ecce Vomit*.

A FAITHFUL FEW PRESERVED

Those who understand God's purpose in the call and trial of those who shall be joint-heirs with Christ, are enabled to see that although the Church as a whole yielded to the subtle temptation of Satan, out of it was preserved a faithful company, who will at last be numbered amongst the elect ones, the one hundred and forty-four thousand who will constitute the Bride, the Lamb's Wife, and reign with Him upon His throne. A portion of this faithful number of this Pergamos period, are referred to and addressed by the Savior under the symbol of "Antipas, my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan is dwelling." In the Greek anti means "against," and papas signifies "father." The true followers of our Lord at this and subsequent times bore witness against this deliberate, disobeying of His words, "Call no man father." (Matt. 23:9.) It must be remembered that this was the period of Church history that gradually merged into Papacy. A most prominent feature of Papacy is that of enforcing celibacy upon its clergy, holding them to be married to the Church, and hence teaching all its members-sons and daughters-to call their clergy "father."

We now consider the particular evils mentioned by Him out of whose mouth proceeded the sharp, two-edged sword. One of these, that of Nicolaitanism, we have already considered in the Message to Ephesus.** We observe a very significant difference between the way it is mentioned in this Pergamos message

and that of the one to Ephesus. In the Ephesus Church it is designated the "deeds" of the Nicolaitans, which was seen by true believers in Ephesus to be an evil, and is something that is mentioned as being abhorred, "hated," by the Savior. We noticed that in that period Nicolaitanism referred to a tendency toward lordship in the Church-separating the Lord's people into two classes, the clergy and the laity. We see that what in the Ephesus period was manifested only in "deeds," gradually, in the Smyrna period, was developing (although under another name-"Synagogue of Satan") ; and in the Pergamos period had merged into a full-fledged doctrine (clericalism), and became an important principle in its creed, and has been held as such ever since by the great nominal Church systems. We have already dwelt upon this quite extensively, in considering the messages to Ephesus and Smyrna, and therefore rest the matter, to take up another very remarkable feature of this Church, which describes another noted evil that became manifest in this period of Church history.

**See H '21-247, 248.

THE SIN OF BALAAM IN PERGAMOS

It is called by the Savior "the doctrine of Balaam." The words of the Savior are: "But I have a few things against thee; thou hast there those holding the Teaching of Balaam, who instructed Balak to cast a Stumbling block before the Sons of Israel, both to eat Idol-sacrifices, and to fornicate." (V. 14.) It is generally understood that the meaning of the word Balaam is "destroyer of the people." *Brown's Bible Dictionary* gives it as a "swallower of the people," which practically means the same. Balaam seems to have been a prophet at one time, at least in outward nearness to the Lord. We may form a correct idea of his character as we read Jude's brief description of some teachers of his time, of whom he says, they "ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." He seems to have been a prophet who apostatized. "It will be remembered that Balaam, who had been a prophet of God, instructed King Balak how to tempt Israel to sin, and thus brought about what he could not accomplish by his own powers." * (Num. 23; 24; 31:16.) Balaam's sin was that, for wages, he counseled with the enemies of Israel, the Moabites, and advised Balak, their king, to draw the Israelites into forbidden friendships, and adulterous and idolatrous alliances, the result of which was that "twenty-four thousand were destroyed." (Num. 25:9.) The sin of Balaam evidently refers to the acts of those professed Christian teachers, the clericals, who counseled a union with the State, and a mingling on the part of God's professed people, in worldly gatherings, feasts and pleasures. "When the Church and the world be come on good terms with one another, and the Church has the things of the world to attract the natural heart, the hireling prophet is a matter of course, who for his own ends will seek to destroy whatever remains of godly separateness."

*See Z '16-346.

However it may be with individuals who allow the natural heart to draw them away from heavenly, spiritual things, however much individuals may be delivered and brought back, it is a fact proven by history that there is never a recovery of a Church that has thus, departed. There may be many reformations or at tempts to this end, but these are always more or less partial. The Church as a whole, in the age of Constantine, fell away to the world, and there has never been since, a recovery. This is one of the most vital matters connected with both individual Christians and assemblies of such. It is then a most important question: "How far are we as individuals and Churches to maintain a separateness from the world?" It is certainly true that "our associations are judged of God as surely as any other part of ' our conduct." "Be ye not: unequally yoked together with unbelievers," is God's Word. That this is a very important matter, indeed extremely important, we know from the fact that it is stated that God cannot be to us a Father and we be His sons and daughters except as we heed His Word: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." The "yoke" that is forbidden has various applications. It may be applied to anything in which we voluntarily unite to attain a common object. Among social relations, marriage is such a yoke; in business relationships, partnerships and such like; and in the foremost rank of all would come ecclesiastical associations.

THE CHURCH'S CALL TO SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD DEPICTED IN ISRAEL

This matter of the Christian's call and duty to separate himself from the world is well illustrated in Pharaoh's four subtle objections to the full deliverance of God's ancient people from the land of Egypt. The first objection is expressed in his words to Moses: "Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land [of Egypt] (Exod. 8:25.) The object in this proposal of Pharaoh, doubtless instigated by Satan, was to hinder full obedience to the command of the Lord to His people to separate entirely from Egypt' and its evil, idolatrous influences. Egypt is very generally understood to represent the world. Deliverance from Egypt represents deliverance from this "present evil world." (Gal. 1:4.) The tendency of professed Christians to define what "the world" or worldliness is, is to make worldliness begin a point or two lower, in their life, than where they are themselves. God's Word, however, defines it very explicitly and informs ' us that it is "all 'that is not of the Father" (1 John 2:16) ; hence the deeper our sense of fellowship with the Father, the keener will be our sense of what is worldly. "The more we are enabled in the power of an ungrieved spirit to drink in Christ's revelation of the Father, the more accurate does our judgment become as to what constitutes worldliness." It is most difficult to define where worldliness begins. One has said that it is shaded off gradually from black to white. It seems impossible to place a bound and say, "this is where worldliness begins"; but as the Christian walks close to the Lord, the keen sensibilities of his inner spiritual nature discern it. Possessing the power of the "new life" enables the individual Christian to mark the dividing line.

Moses' reply to Pharaoh was: "It is not meet so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abominations of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us? *We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God, as He shall command us.*" (Exodus 8:26-27.) There seems to be illustrated in

Moses' reply what is meant by true separation from the world. The "three days' journey into the wilderness" seems to represent what the death, and the resurrection of Christ three days after, signify to a true Christian believer; namely, his identification with Him in His death for sin, his identification with Him in His consecration, and being quickened by the spirit of Truth, to walk in a new life of separation from sin and worldliness.

Pharaoh's reply, "I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only *ye shall not go very far away*," indicated that "if he could not keep them *in* Egypt, he would at least keep them *near* it, so that he might act upon them by its varied influences. In this way they might be brought back again, and the testimony more effectually quashed than if they had never left Egypt. There is always much more serious damage done to the cause of Christ by persons seeming to give up the world and returning to it again, than if they had remained entirely of it; for they virtually confess that, having tried heavenly things, they have discovered that earthly things are better and more satisfying."*

*McINTOSH, *Notes on Exodus*.

The third objection of Pharaoh was that they might go worship and sacrifice to God in the wilderness, but leave their children in Egypt. The lesson seems to be to spiritual Israel that they are required to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), a lesson to which many Christians fail to take heed.

Pharaoh's fourth objection was that they should leave their flocks and herds behind. Moses' reply to this last attempt of Pharaoh to cause the Lord's people to compromise is a grand illustration of how in consecration, the Lord requires, not only that they give up themselves, but all they have—all they possess. "Our cattle also shall go with us; *there shall not an hoof be left behind*." (Exod. 10:25-27.) It is only when God's people take their stand upon this elevated ground of entire consecration, on which by faith Christ's death and resurrection places them, that they can have any clear sense of what the claims of consecration are. Moses' words, "We know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither," seem to teach that no one can have a -knowledge of the Divine claim, or their responsibility, until they have, figuratively speaking, gone "three days' journey into the wilderness." It is only then that we know that "we are not our own; we are bought with a price."

OVERCOMER'S PROMISE OF THE WHITE STONE AND THE HIDDEN MANNA

The promise to the overcomer of Pergamos, like those of the other epistles, is to be realized by all the overcomers; and yet, like each of the other promises, emphasizes the condition of those to whom they are primarily addressed. And the conditions under which these in Pergamos found themselves, and which they fully overcame, exist today. Therefore the exhortations and warnings applicable to them, are no less for us of today; yea, and the promises too. The promise contains Christ's words of encouragement for those who are battling and

overcoming the *world*; and the promise carries us beyond the scenes of strife, to the inheritance of which we already have the foretaste. The promise is twofold, the two things referred to being closely related the one to the other. The promise reads: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." (Rev. 2:17.) The manna that fell in the wilderness, and which constituted the food of the people of Israel *there*, speaks of Christ Himself--Christ coming down from heaven, becoming flesh, and giving His flesh for the life of the world, of which we were a part. We have come to understand this; He is our food. It is the design of the Word of God to reveal Him--what He has done for *us--to* us: It speaks of our *apprehension* of Him in His dying for us, and His living for us at God's right hand. The "white stone," on the other hand, speaks of the close relationship existing between Christ and the faithful believer. "In ancient times the Greeks and the Romans had a custom of noting and perpetuating friendship by means of a *white stone*. This stone was divided into halves, and each person inscribed his name on the flat surface, after which the parts of the stone were exchanged. The production of either half--was sufficient to insure friendly aid, even from the descendants of those who first divided the stone. A similar custom was sometimes observed by a king, who would break a white stone into two parts, one of which he would retain, and the other part give to a special ambassador. That part could be sent to -the king at any time and would insure aid. Thus the divided stone became a mark of identification.

"Rev. 2:17 seems, to refer to this ancient custom. The white stone signifies a precious token of the Lord's love, and the new name written in the stone suggests the Bridegroom's name. The statement indicates a special acquaintance with the great King of kings, secret between Himself and the individual. The overcomers are not to be recognized merely as a class -- the Bride class -- but each will have the personal favor of the Lord. Of this no one will know save himself and the King. There is an individual and personal relationship between the Lord and the overcomers, who may be said to receive the mark of identification--the antitypical white stone--now, in this life.

"This mark is the sealing of the Holy Spirit by which the Lord identifies the overcomers. While this is' said to be a part of the final reward of the Church, yet from the very beginning of our experience we have this personal acquaintance with the Lord. The full seal of the Holy Spirit will be given in the Resurrection, when we receive the new body. Then we shall have the complete knowledge of the name by which we shall be known to the Lord and He to us forever."*

*Z '12-315.

The manna eaten in the wilderness, then, represents Christ Himself and our apprehension of what He is to us; the white stone is a figure, expressive of His appreciation of us. How blessed is the interchange of affection thus expressed! The manna that fell down from heaven is wilderness food. It was in the wilderness that, it fell. In Egypt, the world, it was not known. When they 'arrived

in the borders of the land, the manna ceased. It speaks of the Divine provision in Christ for those who have come to Him and have been made to realize that they need God every hour, who have come to realize that they are brought into a place where no natural provision can supply the food necessary to sustain the new life,--where they are wholly dependent upon God for such food. God has promised--made Himself responsible to supply all our varied needs; each need itself is designed to draw out new evidences of the Divine resources, of the riches of His grace in Christ. It is thus that the Lord speaks to the one who,, true to his calling, finds in Christ his one necessity and satisfaction. "Bread shall be given him; his water shall-be sure." "Meat" shall be given which "endureth unto everlasting life," and "water" which shall be unto him "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

GLORIOUS AND ETERNAL RECOMPENSES

It is very significant to notice, however, that the promise of the text, while it is the manna of the wilderness, it is not the manna partaken of in the wilderness. It is the "*hidden* manna." The hidden manna was that placed by God's command into the Ark and carried into the land, that after generations might see (be reminded of) the bread wherewith He had fed them in the wilderness. In this case, however, it was not eaten; but the Lord promises to the overcomer here that he shall eat of it. The hidden manna was the memorial sample of what had fallen long before; in one way Of looking at it, it is typically the abiding remembrance of what we once tasted--the fresh taste in eternity of Christ as enjoyed down here. This will be when we partake of the Divine, incorruptible, immortal life then given and realized to the overcomer, which is typified by the *hidden* manna. In one sense it is a continuation of what we now receive, and we thus see (and it is. good and necessary to see) how closely connected is the life beyond with the present. It is thus that the promise of the hidden manna appeals most solemnly to us, while here. Our present life is closely connected with the future. The days of responsibility end *here*. It is the way we live *here* that effects our reward *there*. The hidden manna and the white stone are eternal recompenses of the present time. In other words, it is but the "meat" that faith lives on now, that is, the meat that endureth unto everlasting life." *So* that the spiritual experiences of the present time are the beginnings of what will continue in the life beyond. He who has fed of the manna in the wilderness and knows its taste, can feed of the *hidden* manna in the future.

In concluding our comments on this message, we note the inseparable connection between the two parts of the promise: The manna that fell. in the, wilderness speaks of our *apprehension* of Christ (His ransom sacrifice for *us*, as also His power to keep *us*) now; the hidden manna speaks of that Divine, immortal, incorruptible life, the reward of the future. The white stone speaks of Christ's appreciation expressed in His approval of *us*, both in the present life and that which is to come. "The appreciation of Christ by us, manifest in our bearing the fruit of the Spirit, is the necessary basis of His answering approbation of us." It is the greatest reward that we can possibly conceive of,--to have now in this present life, as well as at the end of our course, His approbation, His approval: ."Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

ST. PAUL IN CORINTH

--OCTOBER 2--ACTS 18:1-23--

Golden Text--*"For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."*--1 Cor. 2:2.

ATHENS did not prove to be a very successful field for the Apostle Paul's labors. He quickly perceived that, although its citizens were chiefly engaged in hearing new things and in philosophizing on every subject, including religion, nevertheless, the tendency of science and philosophy, falsely so-called, so occupied their attention and so satisfied their minds that they were not as ready for the Truth as some others less highly educated and less philosophical. The Apostle's experience in this respect coincides with that of all who, in sincerity, preach the Gospel of Christ stripped of all human invention and philosophy. His experience illustrates his declaration that God does not choose many great or wise or learned, according, to the course or standard of this world, but chiefly the poor of this world, socially, philosophically, and financially, to be heirs of the Kingdom; because this class is more inclined to receive the faith and to become rich therein.

Leaving Athens,- the Apostle journeyed about forty miles to Corinth, a prominent city of Greece, though very different from Athens. It was a commercial city, noted for its manufactures, architecture, paintings, Corinthian brass, or bronze, etc. It was much less moral than Athens, much less refined, much less given to the study of religious themes, but, nevertheless, a better field for the Gospel. Where religious forms and ceremonies become popular they are apt to have correspondingly the less weight and force. Where sin, immorality and irreligion are popular, those minds which have a religious-trend are apt to be freer, more open for the Truth, because unsatisfied by formalism, and because they more keenly recognize righteousness by its sharp contrast with the sin abounding. Similarly today, the Truth is likely to receive a cooler reception amongst those whose religious sensibilities are to some extent satisfied by forms and ceremonies: truth usually makes better progress today in places where to some extent irreligion seems to have the upper hand (as in Corinth), and where, therefore, virtue is at a higher premium. The heart most ready for the Truth is the one which is not satiated and stupefied with religious formalism; but which realizes to some extent the exceeding sinfulness of sin and longs for the righteousness which is of God. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is induced by such conditions. Like the Apostle, we are to discern the most fruitful fields, and spend our energies upon them, leaving the other fields for a more convenient season, whether it shall come during the present Age or during the Millennium. The Apostle apparently stayed but a few days at Athens, but abode a year and a half at Corinth -- the irreligious city, where he found many honest-hearted people, to whom the Lord directed the Gospel through him.

LESSONS IN FAITHFULNESS

The Apostle evidently lost no time in showing his colors-engaging with as much wisdom as possible in the preaching of the Gospel to the Jews and Jewish proselytes from amongst the Greeks in their synagogue. He was not in this an intruder, for such was the custom of the synagogue ;-that any person of ability had

the privilege of giving an exposition of the teachings of the Law and the Prophets.' The Apostle was a man of some ability, and apparently in every city he at first was welcomed.; the subsequent hatred of himself and his theme being the logical result of the wrong-condition of heart on the part of those who heard-their unwillingness to receive the Truth in the love of it-their preference for the traditions of the elders, with their more or less error, rejecting the light of the Truth as it came to them. We find similar ,conditions today in Christendom, and are following the Scriptural precedent when we approach as closely as we can to the synagogues of our time, and as nearly as possible do as the Apostle did,--reasoning with and persuading the attendants at Divine worship. Under the usages of our time it would be improper for us now to attempt such a discussion or reasoning inside church buildings. The nearest approach we have is through the printed page, on the pavement, near the churches, but far enough away to avoid reasonable prejudice and opposition. Let it be noticed also that the proper method of presenting the Truth today, as in the Apostle's time, is not haranguing, but by reasonable presentation--appealing to the testimony of the Word of God in a logical and a reasonable manner. Let us rejoice that we find ourselves in such good accord with Apostolic methods, and resolve that we will refrain from any other methods, however popular they may be with those who follow not with us.

How long the Apostle continued in this way is not distinctly declared, but in his first letter to that Church, written some time after, he remarks, "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling; and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, that your, faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The word "weakness" in this text may be properly understood to imply that the Apostle was physically weak, possibly for a time ailing to such an extent as to be unable to work at his trade, because, referring again to the matter (2 Cor. 11:9) he intimates that for a time he was in want. This noble soldier of the Cross was evidently permitted of the Lord to have a little season of measurable discouragement, when the sunshine of Divine favor was to some extent beclouded by temporal difficulties: probably his physical weakness to some extent produced melancholy--"trembling with fear."

He had no thought of abandoning the warfare in which he had enlisted himself even unto death, but apparently his recent experiences at Thessalonica, at Berea and at Athens, were causing him to wonder whether or not he was too aggressive in the presentation of the Gospel-whether or not he was inclined needlessly to bring upon himself persecution, and was thus perhaps interfering with the Lord's work, rather than helping it forward, as he desired. Now he was, for the time, at least, disposed to be extremely careful how he presented the Message, -- how that there is no salvation, no harmony with God, no eternal life by the law, nor by any other means than through the Lord Jesus Christ.

ST. PAUL COMFORTED IN AFFLICTION

It was about this time that the Lord comforted and encouraged the Apostle by the arrival of Silas and Timothy, whom he had left in, Berea. They brought with them not only the comfort and encouragement of a good report of the work behind them, the fruitage of his labors but additionally brought presents from the brethren, which supplied his necessities, and caused his heart to rejoice because of

the evidence of their brotherly love, and that the Gospel had reached their hearts and even down into their pocket-books. The presence of these two fellow-helpers, in whom he had so much confidence, was a refreshment of spirit to the Apostle. Their coming not only brought physical strength, but an energy of spirit-an increased earnestness and force to his preaching: he no longer felt so timid, trembling, fearful. This is still true amongst the Lord's people-the strongest of the brethren need the help, the encouragement, the assistance of others. The Lord has so arranged it that we may not feel ourselves entirely self-sufficient, and that even our proper leaning upon the Lord shall seem to require also the co-operation, encouragement, sympathy and love of the fellow-laborers in the vineyard.

Encouraged, revived in spirit, the Apostle was bolder now to tell the Jews and Greek proselytes plainly that there is no salvation except through Christ. The effect of this plain declaration was that he, was no longer made welcome in the synagogue, and the opposition becoming violent, he shook his raiment, as an indication that he had nothing further to present and would discontinue the discussion, declaring that their responsibility rested with themselves; that he had done all in his power to preach the Good 'Tidings to them first, as was proper; but that now henceforth, according to the Scriptural declaration, the Message should be proclaimed outside the synagogue, to any who had ears to hear it and hearts to receive it. The new meeting was started close to the synagogue, to the intent that the Message he had already delivered might be impressed more and more upon those who had heard it-that they should not forget his declaration that the promise made to the fathers was in process of fulfillment in Christ, and those who accept Him.

One of the chief men of the synagogue, and various of the people at Corinth were favorably impressed by the Gospel Message, and the Church of Corinth thus took its start in the house of Justus. The believers testified their acceptance by baptism-the true baptism of consecration, we may be sure, first, but also the outward symbolic water baptism, which would be a testimony to others and which is referred to in this lesson.

The Apostle, still meditating the propriety of greater moderation in preaching Jesus and the resurrection, was by this time, perhaps, feeling fearful of further difficulties with the Jews, and the trouble they could stir up with the authorities. Doubtless he had in mind previous experiences, and was debating mentally whether or not he should leave before the persecution set in-whether or not it Was the Lord's will that he should be so courageous in the presentation of the Truth as to awaken further hostilities against himself and all the brethren. The Lord came to the assistance of His faithful servant, and instructed him in a dream that he should neither leave nor hold his peace-that there were many people there of right condition of heart to receive the Truth.

"LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS"

It is an encouragement to us to note this, another evidence that the Lord Himself has supervision of His own work, and guides those who are truly His servants who seek not their own will nor their own honor, but to glorify Him in their bodies and spirits which are His. The necessity of such admonishing by dreams is less, today than in the Apostle's day, because the Word of the Lord is now complete, and in

the hands of His people in *convenient form, that they can, through the experience and instruction of the Apostles, know what to expect and how to do; whereas the Apostle was treading a new path and needed to be guided therein.

We should not dare to say that the Lord might not use a dream today to instruct and guide His people, as He did the Apostle, but we do say that there is less necessity for such special direction, since the general directions of His Word are now explicit and amplified. We do suggest, however, that as the Apostle says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," so we may well say to ourselves, Believe not every dream, but test the dream -whether it be of God or not. A dream must never lead us in opposition to the written Word of God, but if it can be understood in harmony with the Word and its reasonable interpretation, we should rejoice in it and be thereby encouraged to follow the Word. -If the dream agree not with this Word it is because there is no light in it. (Isa. 8:20.) We are confident that many dreams are not of God, the majority probably being of indigestion, and some quite probably of the evil one. Hence, we have the more need of care that we follow not a dream, because it is a dream, but at very most permit it to direct us to the plain instruction of the Lord's Word,

The Lord's promise that no man should set on the Apostle to, hurt was fulfilled; for, although a disturbance was created and he was taken before the magistracy, no violence was done him, and the case was dismissed by the Roman governor. As with the Apostle, so with us; in the Lord's wisdom varying experiences may be to our advantage. Sometimes it may be advantageous to us and the cause that we should seem to be defeated and forced to flight. We may rely, however that the Lord understands the situation fully, and will not permit his work to be disconcerted and interrupted to its real disadvantage. Long ago some one said, "I am immortal until my work is finished;" and we may rely upon it that this is practically true of all engaged in the Lord's service -that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." He will use and protect and guide them in their affairs, in ways that will be to His pleasement, and eventually to their highest welfare, to the intent that all of His good purposes shall be accomplished.

Why, then, should we fear what man may do unto us, or be distressed in regard to the Lord's work, as though Satan or any other, evil power could prevail against it? Nevertheless, it is for, us to show our devotion, not only by our zeal, but also by our prudence. While God knows what will prosper, He declares of us, "Thou knowest not which shall prosper, this or that"--therefore, we are to proceed in the Lord's work as though the entire responsibility rested upon us, but in our hearts are to recognize that the entire weight and responsibility rests with the Lord.

ST. PAUL AT EPHESUS

--OCTOBER 9--ACTS 19:1-41--

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

EPHESUS was in many respects the scene of the Apostle Paul's most successful work. He spent about three years there altogether, accompanied by Timothy, Erastus, Titus and possibly others. The influence of his work, either directly or

indirectly, extended to other cities round about. It is supposed that it was during this stay at Ephesus that congregations were started in the nearby places, mentioned in Revelation as "the seven churches of Asia" (Minor). He continued to present the Truth until opposition to it became quite marked, and certain of the Jewish adherents began to speak evil of the teachings and of the believers. Then the Apostle and those who believed, unwilling to continue a condition of strife, discontinued their attendance at the synagogue, and began a separate meeting, apparently in a rented public hall, called "The School of Tyrannus," because, according to the custom of that time, it was used by him for this purpose in the forenoons.

The Apostle probably labored at his trade during the forenoon, and daily, during the afternoon, preached the Message to such as had hearing ears, not only in the public hall, but also by visiting those whom he had reason to expect would be amenable to the Gospel. We are supposing a continuance of his usual manner of life, described in his first letter to the Thessalonians (2:9), "Ye remember our labor and toil, working day and night." The Apostle did not belong to a paid ministry. He had a Message to deliver, which he appreciated so highly that he was glad of an opportunity to spend his life in its promulgation--using for other purposes only so much time and energy as were necessary to procure life's necessities,--waiting for the great reward which the Lord has promised to all faithful servants of His cause. The Lord's ambassadors today can take no better pattern than his, if seeking with him Divine favor now, and glory, honor and immortality by and by.

SATAN'S CUNNING DEVICES

Satan's arts, employed in all parts of the world from the earliest dawn of history, have been in the nature of wonder-workings, magic, etc. The Scriptures call our attention particularly to the magicians of Egypt, to the soothsayers of Babylon; and in this lesson show us that the same practices, the same wily arts of the Adversary, were general throughout the 'Roman Empire, and especially in the wealthy city of Ephesus. The Lord performed through the Apostle Paul, while at Ephesus, many marvelous healings of the sick, and other miracles, as well as the casting out of the evil spirits referred to in vs. 11 and 12--doubtless as an offset to the blinding influence of witchcraft, magic, black art, etc. We may reason that the manifestation of Divine power here was necessary to the establishment of the Church, and to the general influence of the Gospel in that region--as an offset to the blinding influences of Satan's agents and power. The Ephesians were evidently so bound by these arts of the Adversary that an exhibition of him as the real father of them was almost indispensable. Besides, the miracles wrought by Paul served as an endorsement of him as an Apostle; an endorsement of his Message of Jesus, the Redeemer; of a resurrection as a means of rescue from death, the wages of sin; of a Millennial Kingdom as the means or channel through which that rescue would come; and of the calling out of the Church as the Body of Christ, to constitute that Kingdom, when, in due time, complete and glorified.

Perceiving the Apostle's power to be greater than their own, certain of the magicians essayed to use the name of Jesus as a charm or magic word, just as they were in the habit of using other magic words in their incantations. The effort of some of these, sons of one of the principal priests, resulted disastrously to them,

and beneficially to many others. Addressing the one possessed of an evil spirit, they demanded that the evil spirit leave the vexed one, "in the name of Jesus whom Paul preacheth," as distinguished from others of the same name, for the name was at that time a common one. The 'demon not only did not obey the command, but using the possessed one, and exercising through him demoniacal strength, the seven men were wounded and put to flight, losing, at least, their outer garments.

This matter becoming widely known, was a convincing argument to those who had long had confidence in such wonder-workers, and proved to them that the Apostle's teachings were correct-that the black arts were of Satan, while the Apostle's miracles were of Divine power. The resulting increase of interest in the Truth shows us clearly that the people were previously duped and unable to discern the true Message of God from the spurious teachings of Satan. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) We may safely conclude that the same general principle prevails throughout the whole heathen world today, and to a considerable extent, also, amongst Christian people-that the alienation of many, and their opposition to God and His Message through the Truth are probably to be accredited more to ignorance than to evil preferences.

SUPERSTITION ONE OF SATAN'S INSTRUMENTS

The statement of verse 18 is capable of two constructions: we might consider it as referring to those who practiced magic, and understand it to signify that they confessed certain deceptions connected with their practices, and showed their deeds,--how certain tricks had been performed; or, (and we think preferably) the words may be understood to mean that many believers confessed the Truth, and publicly showed it in the reform of their conduct. The latter view is supported by the statement of vs. 19, which seemingly refers to the whole number of believers, declaring that "not a few of them that practiced curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all."--R. V.

Satan's method of enslaving mankind seems to have been, from the first, largely through superstition. Gross superstition and darkness still dominate the great mass of mankind, and even where the blessed light of the Gospel lamp has gone, reproving the darkness, and setting forth the true way of life and blessing, the Adversary has been enabled to follow, and more or less to attach superstitious rites and ceremonies,- to the gross delusion of many known as civilized. We cannot doubt that the Adversary is connected with many performances done in the name of Christian religion and with many of the miracles wrought by "holy nails," "bones," etc., etc., and is generally effective in holding the deluded ones back from the study of the Lord's Word, and an understanding of the great Plan of salvation therein so clearly set forth.

The readiness of the Adversary to use now any and every means available to hinder the light of Truth, or to turn aside those who have already discerned it, is very manifest.

We have every reason to believe that the Adversary would be willing to use the black arts today, as in times past, in proportion as conditions would be favorable;

and incantation, by repeating certain seemingly meaningless words, is still practiced by some; also the making of peculiar stews and broths, which are supposed to have magical powers, affecting love, hatred, etc., and the wearing of charms, the making of the sign of the cross in the presence of danger, etc., to protect from evil.

Such mispractices and misbeliefs assuredly have the effect of holding their victims in the bonds of superstition, hindering them from the proper exercise of the true faith in the almighty power of God, by filling their minds with errors and superstitions. Even brethren who have received Present Truth are not exempt from the Adversary's besetments along this line.

SATAN'S MOST MODERN DECEPTION

One of Satan's latest devices of deception and one which seems to be attended with marked success, especially among those who profess to be of the body of "Truth people," is to work upon the mind and establish the impression that a certain individual, system or organization of the present time is referred to in certain statements, types or symbols of the Bible -- as being peculiarly under the control of the power and spirit of God and used by God in controlling and instructing His people of the present time as to what they are to believe and practice. *Thus a halo is created around such individual, system or organization, resulting in bringing the credulous believer into bondage by causing him to have a morbid dread or fear of going contrary to such person or system claiming to be a Divine agent or channel, and thus robbing him self of that God-given liberty to think and act for him self and make personal progress in the knowledge of the Truth. Such as come under this delusion are subject to great injury in being forced to bow to the decisions and edicts of others however wrong they may be, and permit ting these to have the place in their hearts that the Great Head of the Church alone should have. Surely this is another form of the old superstition. Let him that readeth understand! '*

To what lengths the Adversary may carry his delusions in this day and by up-to-date methods, we cannot, surely know; but our expectation certainly is that his delusions will be numerous, and of the kind that would "deceive, if 'it were possible, the very elect," as our Lord foretold.

The sincerity of some of the converts at Ephesus was manifested by the public burning of the books in ' which were recorded the various magic words, and receipts, by which incantations could be made, affecting and counteracting various of the ills of life. All books at that time were precious, 'as they were made of skins instead of paper, and pen-printed instead of printed by type; but these books were specially high-priced because each possessor of a copy was interested in restricting the information, and, hence, unwilling to permit the copying of his book.

This considerable sum was freely sacrificed to the Lord and to the Truth;--not that the Lord accepts as sacrifices any evil thing, such as those books were, but that the destruction of the books, representing a considerable value, represented also a sacrificing condition of heart. The books had a commercial value, and could have been sent to some other city and sold for a large sum, but this would have been spreading the evil which they were recognized as representing, and we note with

pleasure that they who gave up the books were unwilling to sell them, and thus risk injuring others, nor did the Apostle suggest that the books might be sold and the money turned into useful channels in the service of the Gospel. The Lord's people are never to do evil that good may follow.

The Lord is not poor; all the gold and silver are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. It is not necessary, therefore, to His cause that we shall put into it anything that in any sense or degree represents evil. With such a spirit prevailing amongst the believers-such a willingness to give up things contrary to the Lord, and that at a cost to themselves, involving, no doubt, a change of occupation, we cannot wonder at the statement of the last verse of the lesson, that "so the word of the Lord Jesus grew mightily and prevailed" over the evil influences opposing it. So it will surely be with the Lord's people today; where the proper zeal for the Lord and for righteousness are in the hearts of His people, the effect will be telling upon all with whom they come in contact.

"THERE AROSE NO SMALL STIR"

When Paul had spent nearly three years at Ephesus he purposed going again to Jerusalem, but before doing so would visit the churches of Macedonia -- Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica and Corinth. He sent two of his helpers, Erastus and Timothy, in advance. (2 Tim. 4:20; 1 Cor. 4:17-19.) It was this visit to Corinth that he evidently referred to in his epistle to them. (1 Cor. 16:1-4.) He proposed taking contributions from them to the poor in Jerusalem-not as seeking a gift, but as seeking evidence of their love for the Lord, in their desire to be helpful to the brethren at Jerusalem, who were chiefly poor, and greatly disadvantaged by their loyalty to the Truth. Apparently also the Apostle was planning a later tour, which would include Rome-little suspecting that he would be sent to Rome as a prisoner.

About this time occurred the riot described in this lesson, which probably would have determined the Apostle to leave Ephesus, if he had not already purposed so doing. The Lord permitted persecutions to drive him out of every place-thus seemingly indicating the proper time for terminating his ministry at each point. The account says, "There arose no small stir about that way." Very evidently the "way" of the Lord's people differed decidedly from the ways of others, not as concerned their future hopes only, but also regarding their course in the present life. All things become new to those who receive the *new mind* of Christ; and although their "way" may seem to the unbelieving to be a narrow and troublesome one, to themselves it is the way of peace and joy and blessing and harmony with God, and, ultimately, the way of life eternal. And the way is the same to this day, as concerns those who are faithfully walking close to the Lord and to the teachings of His Word. The difficulty with many is that they have gotten out of the way-so that nominal church ways are, alas! too much like the ways of the world, with very similar hopes, aspirations and endeavors.

In Ephesus there were trades-unions or guilds, and Demetrius, the leader of the riot, belonged to the guild of the silversmiths-probably its president, or chief. There is a stone now in the British Museum which was found at Ephesus, on which is engraved an inscription concerning a certain Demetrius. It is said to belong to about the date of this lesson, between A. D. 50 and 60. The name occurs again in 3 John 12, where the Apostle mentions the person as a Christian of good

report. Quite possibly the reference is to the person who led this riot, and who may afterwards have become an active Christian, as he was at this time an active opposer of Christianity, and a supporter of Diana; even as Paul, the zealous persecutor of the Church, became its zealous servant. The probability that this was the same Demetrius is strengthened by the tradition that the Apostle John with Mary the mother of Jesus afterward made Ephesus their home. Demetrius called together not only the men of his own craft, but those also of allied crafts. The finest of the shrines, or miniature temples of Diana, were made in silver, but others were made of inferior metals and of marble, and the cheapest of terra cotta. These shrines were manufactured of various sizes and in great quantities; not only for the people of Ephesus, but for export to various other cities and provinces where Diana was worshiped. The business was a profitable one, as Demetrius acknowledged; and it was upon the selfish instincts of the workmen engaged in this business that he based his strongest appeal--that this Paul was turning away much people from the worship of Diana, not only in Ephesus but in the surrounding cities and provinces. His reasoning was that if the people lost their respect for Diana and her temple, they would no longer purchase the shrines, and that the falling off in demand would mean loss for all engaged in the shrine business.

The argument of Demetrius inflamed the selfish sentiments of the allied crafts of shrine-makers--they became full of wrath, increasingly as the argument went on, and as they seemed to realize the ultimate discredit of Diana and ruin of their own business interests. They began to shout in a frenzied manner, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" doubtless inflaming themselves and others more and more with every shout, until a large mob collected, which they led toward the theatre, or Coliseum, variously estimated to hold between twenty-five and fifty thousand people. As they went they seized two of Paul's companions, taking them along, as though intent upon bringing charges against them, and having them summarily dealt with. Paul, full of courage, would not have been willing to allow his companions to endure the brunt of this difficulty alone, but would have gone to them and endeavored to secure the attention of the mob and to reason with them; but leading men of the city, who were his friends, cautioned him, in the interests of peace, not to do this.

WISDOM FROM ABOVE VERSUS WISDOM OF THIS WORLD

The uproar and excitement were intense, the majority not knowing certainly why they were there, but being in full sympathy with the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" they surmised that some insult or opposition to their religion had occurred. It was for this reason that when Alexander, motioning to them for silence, endeavored to make a defense, the people, though they recognized him merely as a Jew, and not as a Christian, clamored so as to make it impossible for him to speak, realizing that all Jews were opposed to their goddess and her worship. The senselessness of their proceeding is clearly manifest in the fact that they kept up a meaningless shout for two hours!. It is worthy of note here, that in proportion as people approach the proper conceptions of the Divine character and Plan and receive of the spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion they have greater soundness of mind. Consequently, we see that amongst Christians some who have made little growth in grace and knowledge are content to spend hours in

shouting or talking about that which has comparatively little meaning; but in proportion as any grow in grace and knowledge they become partakers of the spirit of a sound mind, and, correspondingly unwilling to waste either consecrated time or energy senselessly, unreasonably. In other words, rejecting the wisdom of this world, and accepting the wisdom from above, they are as a result the more reasonable.

By this time the town clerk (or recorder or mayor, as we might term him) arrived, and quieted the people, and made them an address consisting of four arguments. First, he appealed to their patriotic sentiments; that they were citizens of a great city, and that people far and near recognized Ephesus as temple-keeper for Diana, and suggested that since this was so well established as a fact they ought to do nothing rashly, for there could be no necessity for haste. Whatever might happen to Diana and Ephesus there certainly was no immediate danger. That temple of Diana was indeed a wonderful structure. Respecting its history says: "The crowning glory of Ephesus was the great temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. It glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and it was said that the sun saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. Made of the purest marble, it was 425 feet long, 220 broad. Its columns of Parian marble were 60 feet high, and 36 of them were magnificently carved. The ball was adorned with the most wonderful statuary and paintings." .

METHODS BECOMING TO SAINTS

The town clerk's second argument was that the men whom they had brought with them 'by violence, and against whom they seemed incensed, were not bad men--they had not been trying to rob Diana's temple, nor had they blasphemed the goddess herself. Very evidently the prominent men of the city, without accepting the Gospel preached by the Apostle, had received favorable impressions of it, and realized that their teachings did not develop bad citizens, but that they were, on the contrary, amongst the most honorable, peaceable, law-abiding, of the city. His words give us another thought; viz., that the Apostle, in his preaching, did not specially attack the errors of heathendom--idolatry, etc., but that merely denying all other gods, he preached the one true God and His message of mercy, the Gospel--the better "way." Commenting upon this incident Pastor Russell made the following significant statement: "THERE IS A LESSON IN THIS FOR THE LORD'S PEOPLE TO THIS DAY -- 'GO THOU, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL. LET OTHERS, IF THEY WILL, SMASH THE IMAGES AND ATTACK THE VARIOUS VICES IN AND OUT OF THE NOMINAL' CHURCH SYSTEMS. IN PREACHING THE GOSPEL WE SHALL HAVE QUITE A SUFFICIENCY TO DO, SO LONG AS THIS PRESENT AGE CONTINUES."

The town clerk's third argument was that this was a quarrel of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, and not a quarrel of the public in general; and that if any injustice had been perpetrated there was a proper channel of redress--the courts of law, attorneys, etc.

The fourth argument was that if this were not a dispute merely between Demetrius and his class and the propagators of Christianity--if the assembly had any other matter on which to charge them, they should bring them at the proper time, and in

the lawful manner, when regular assemblages were had for the trying of cases. (Dr. Hovy remarks, "An inscription found in this very theatre in which the words were uttered, illustrated their technical sense of 'the word 'lawful.' It provides that a certain silver image of Athene shall be brought and set at every (regular) assemblage, above the bench.") The town clerk pursued this last argument, pointing out that the meeting was nothing short of a riot, and that if it were reported to the Roman authorities and. an inquiry made of him, it would reflect to the discredit of. the city that such a turmoil had occurred without reason. His intimation was that there might be danger-of the city losing a privilege which it had long enjoyed-of being a "free city." His speech shows clearly that even amongst the unbelievers of that time there were men of reasonably sound judgment.