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OUTLOOK FOR THE YEAR 1922

ENCOURAGEMENT AND EXHORTATIONS FOR THE CONSECATED

AS a traveler, tired and worn, looks forward with absorbing interest to the end of his journey and counts the mile-posts along the way, so the Lord's people, sojourning in a country that is not their home, count the years as mile-posts along the way, as they anxiously anticipate the end of their earthly pilgrimage, whence they earnestly expect to reach the Eternal City and enter upon the glorious rest that remaineth for the people of God.

At this time we pass another of these year mile-posts on the Homeward journey, and indeed it signifies to us "one day's march nearer Home." The year 1922 is before us. It may, and no doubt will, have its storms, its difficulties, its trials; such experiences our Lord advises us are necessary to the development in us of character. What the effect of the trial will be lies with each of us to decide for himself. We may permit them to discourage us so that we would give up the race for the prize set before us in the Gospel or we may grow stronger and more Christ-like as the result of those experiences. Which will it be with us?

It may be a year of profitable progress in the knowledge and service of our Lord and Redeemer, and of helpfulness to the fellow-members of His Body, or it may be marked by increasing confusion and. Uncertainty--loss of a measure of the Lord's blessing

Which course do we choose, and with what degree of positiveness do we make our choice, at this, the beginning of this new year? Much of our comfort, joy and peace and usefulness in the Lord's service depends on our decision. It was so last year; it was one of increase or

else one of decrease in spiritual knowledge, strength and usefulness. It is so with every year--yes, with every week and every day.

Of course no one will decide to go into darkness and away from the Lord and the Truth. The test is a more crucial one than that. The question is: Will we take and keep the path that leads nearer and nearer to the Lord, and be permitted more and more, fellowship with Him, a fuller and fuller knowledge of the minutiae of the great Plan of the Ages which He is out-working, and a greater share in that work with the great Redeemer, or will we allow self-interest or self-conceit or ambition or spiritual sloth or the cares of this life to turn us aside, from the path of full consecration which our Master trod and in which we have pledged ourselves to follow, in His footsteps.

WHAT SOLEMN RESOLVES SHALL WE MAKE?

The right path is still the "narrow path" of self-abasement and self-denial--the path of meekness and humility; and it will require as much effort and grace to walk it this year as last, or possibly more; for the more we grow in grace and knowledge, the stronger will be the temptations to be boastful, puffed up, heady, high-minded; and the higher we climb in faith and hope and love, the stronger may be the pressure that will be brought to bear, and the severer the test that may be permitted of the Lord.

But this is only one side of the matter; for, while the more exposed to Satan's attacks and to severer tests of our hope, faith and love, as we go onward in our narrow way, we will have increasing spiritual joys, peace beyond compare, and we will be enabled to rejoice even in trials and tribulations, knowing that these are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We will be enabled to endure, as seeing Him who is invisible, as being upheld and led by His hand. We will have the promise of His presence in every trouble, and that He will never leave us nor forsake us; and that all things (even the seeming evils of life) He is able and willing to overrule for our highest good; because we love God and His way and His Plan more than self and self's ways--because we are called according to His purpose and have accepted the call, are in sympathy with its object and are seeking so far as in us lies to walk worthy of the Lord and His High Calling, and thus to making our calling and election sure.

Dear brethren, what solemn resolves do we intend to make to the Lord respecting our faith and zeal and self-denial in His service during the year before us? Let us promise nothing rashly, but after considering well our wonderful privileges and opportunities, let us promise and do with our might what our hands find to do in the Master's service. Are we still willing to drink of His Cup and be baptized with His Baptism? Are we still heartily desirous of bearing the cross after Him even unto death?

Surely, our answer to these questions must be, Yea, Lord! even though because of weakness of the flesh the answer be not joyous as it should be, but through unbidden tears. And with this answer on our part the Lord is pleased; and angels of His mercy--His promises exceeding great and precious--minister unto us and strengthen us.

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

That is the time to "fight the good fight"--and, triumphing over self-will completely, to accept the buffetings and slanders and misrepresentations of good intentions and good deeds with meekness and patience. That is the time when the Lord's spirit of love, dwelling in us richly, will manifest itself in the control not only of our words and actions, but of our inmost thoughts. If even so much as a bitter feeling against our traducers and maligners arises, it is to be fought, and so complete a victory gained over it that every fiber of our being will be in sweet accord with our Great Teacher's instructions, "Love your enemies. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Bless and injure not."

Eighteen centuries ago, when the Samaritans refused to sell bread for our Lord's company, the Apostles James and John, in loving zeal for the Master, said: "Lord, wilt thou that We command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" But Jesus rebuked them, saying: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."--Luke 9:54-56.

These words are to be the guide of all the Lord's followers today, as well as before. We are not to render evil for evil, nor slander for slander, but contrariwise, we are to speak kindly, lovingly, generously of those who, as foretold, will say all manner of evil against us falsely, for Christ's sake.

STAND FAST IN CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Looking over the history of the Church's experiences now, we observe how much trouble, how many heartaches, how much dissension might have been prevented if the admonitions of our Lord and the Apostles on the subject of love had been obeyed by His professed people. Early in the Age, in the Apostles' day, the great Adversary sought to rob the Lord's people of their liberty, so that it became necessary for the great Apostle Paul and others to sound forth a note of warning in no uncertain language--"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1.) The brethren at that time were put on guard against following human leaders, or giving unto them undue esteem or reverence. Christ, the great Head of the Church, was ever kept before them as the One who should claim first place as their Guide and Teacher. Believers were also warned that those appointed in their midst to be their elders and teachers were not to be regarded as lords over God's heritage; but, as humble under-shepherds, they were to be ensamples to the flock.

Evidently, even in the Apostles' day there were those who misused their position in the Church and attempted to exercise a dominating, lordly spirit. Then, soon after the Apostles fell asleep, the spirit of apostasy increased, and the Church was overrun by scheming and designing leaders who did not have the spiritual interests of the Lord's flock at heart, but sought their own selfish end, being themselves unregenerate, unsanctified, and sadly lacking in the knowledge and appreciation of Christian love. The result was that one great evil after another came in; man-worship, bigotry, intolerance and persecution were in full bloom and came to fruition, producing, every evil work of the flesh and of the Devil.

Let us not, dearly beloved, forget the solemn lessons of the past. We are to profit by them and remember that bigotry and intolerance belong to the Dark Ages. If the sacred and all-important principles of the Christ-life have been properly imbibed by us, it will signify that the love of Christ dwelling in our hearts will repell all disposition to abridge the liberty of our brethren, all disposition to take from them the right of individual judgment. More than this, the love of, Christ will heartily accord to each and all the right of personal judgment in every matter of faith and practice, the right to study the Bible, to

investigate and make every progress possible in the knowledge of the Truth.

"INTOLERANCE BELONGS TO THE PAST

The Christ-life in us means tolerance toward our fellow-brethren. But what is tolerance? We submit a definition offered by another: "The willing consent that others should hold and express opinions with which we disagree, until they are convinced by reason that those opinions are untrue." Still another defines tolerance: "Here is my friend who disagrees with me entirely. I disagree with him, but I respect him and want him to be true to his convictions; and while I claim the right and duty of arguing with him and trying to show him that I am right and he is wrong, I would not silence him by violence if I could. I would not for the world have him say that he thinks I am right, before his reason is convinced. That is tolerance."

It is therefore most obvious that tolerance is the very life and essence of patience, of love. To be tolerant is to be kind and long-suffering. It is utterly and diametrically opposed to the spirit of bigotry and persecution. History shows that it has been the impatient and intolerant that have done all the persecuting of the past; and though the times have changed and the circumstances are modified and different from what they were in the darker past, owing to the general spread of knowledge, yet impatience, intolerance and bigotry still exist and are manifest in various forms among those who name the name of Christ-unkind and bitter words, evil speaking, and harsh judging and criticism-practices that should be unknown amongst those who profess to have the love of God and the love of Christ shed abroad in their hearts.

If others do not see eye to eye with us on certain details of the belief, let us be patient and loving. The saints in the flesh probably never will see exactly alike on everything. Let us bear in mind that only the foundation truths, the essentials, such as faith in the precious blood and consecration--obedience to the will of God are to be made tests of fellowship; that on all other matters we must exercise a broad spirit of Christian liberty and a recognition of the right of individual thinking. Let us put away the spirit of intolerance, of persecution, of causing others to suffer; for such, a spirit should have no place in the Christ-life. We urge upon the readers of this journal, during the year 1922, more than ever before, that they shall seek to walk very close to

the Lord--in meekness, in humility, in patience and love to the brethren, and in love and zeal for the Lord and for the Truth.

OUR HOPEFUL OUTLOOK

Looking out upon the horizon of the new year, there is everything to give confidence and courage to the faithful. True enough, in the past years the brethren have met with severe disappointment as to the time of the fulfilment of their expectations regarding the deliverance of the Church and the establishing of the Kingdom, but our hopes and expectations have not utterly failed by any means. Many faithful saints have been disappointed in respect to the time of their deliverance, but their disappointment did not weaken them; for they kept on through the valley of shadows, still trusting. So may it be with us, dear brethren, for none of the promises of God have failed. They are still as sure as they have ever been. His faithful Church shall yet be glorified: His Kingdom will come: the sorrowing world will be uplifted and blessed.

While it is evident that we have not yet quite reached the time for the realization of these things, yet both Scripture testimony and the signs about us mark its close proximity, and we hear the Prophet from the ancient days saying to us: "Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. 2:3.) Without doubt the hand of Providence is in the apparent delay of some matters; in fact, the Bible teaching is that God's supervision has ever been, and still is, over human affairs" even during this dark time when the earth and the human race represent a rebellious province, and He is able to hasten or retard events according as it will suit the Divine purposes.

THE INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE

Some of the brethren have asked if we see any particular significance in the International Conference now in session in the city of Washington, D. C., for the purpose of discussing plans looking toward the limitation of armaments. We have replied that of course an event of such magnitude as this, involving the coming together of the chief rulers of the earth and for the purpose of discussing a matter of such importance, would seem to be of some unusual significance. However, we feel that it is outside of our province to attempt to forecast the results and significance of this conference. It has already resulted in

some striking developments. Certain agreements appear to have been reached which, if ratified, will signify a great decrease in the manufacture and preparation of great war vessels on the part of the leading nations, and this in turn will in time mean a lessening of oppressive taxation of the peoples, for, of course, it is always the money of the people that must pay for these vast armaments.

But are these gentlemen who are engaged in this conference actuated by the spirit of Christ, and purely of unselfish motive? We would answer that they are probably not. Nevertheless, it is not for us to impugn the motives of these the world's foremost statesmen who are carrying out these proceedings, nor to charge them with being animated by purely selfish purposes. The majority of these who compose this World Conference appear to be men of excellent ideals, of considerable nobility and honor. This does not mean that we regard them as followers of Christ, bearing the cross, and that they are being guided by the Holy Spirit in advocating a reduction of the world's armaments; but while recognizing that a certain amount of selfishness and worldly policy may be prompting them and entering into their projects, yet we do well to discourage all disposition to render harsh or unkind judgment with regard to these gentlemen who profess to be laboring for the betterment of humanity: and surely it is in every way becoming to the Lord's people, who are always to be found on the side of peace, to express and show their sympathy toward every good principle and every good work that men may attempt to establish in their midst.

While we cannot predict the results coming from this World Conference, it would be a logical deduction to suppose that if positive treaties are established, limiting the building of war materials, etc., on the part of the leading nations, this would seem to have a bearing upon the time of the final trouble with which the present order of things would pass away, in the sense of postponing and staving it off some distance. The cessation to any extent of the manufacture and building of war vessels would have a tendency to diminish the tension under which the distressed nations have been laboring as a result of the ravages of the world-war. As before indicated, to whatever extent the burden of excessive taxation is lifted, in that proportion would there be an easing off of the situation, constituting an influence or factor encouraging the nations to look more hopefully to the future and to be exercised more vigorously to recover themselves and to regain the terrible losses occasioned by the great world conflict.

REMARKABLE PROGRESS IN RECONSTRUCTION

In this connection it is but proper for us to say that we have at times been caused to wonder at the commendable progress that several of the war stricken nations have made in the work of reconstruction, in adjusting and settling not only their internal economic and financial difficulties, but in amicably settling disputes, and problems between themselves. At the conclusion of the war the nations were badly torn, weakened and impoverished both in blood and treasure, some of them even to the point of bankruptcy and desperation. The terrible financial depression brought increased discontent and unrest, resulting in more strikes, rioting and bloodshed. Instead of the governments being plunged into anarchy at once, the wisdom and masterful statesmanship of those in authority have succeeded remarkably well in stemming the tide so that the threatened fatal break between capital and labor has been averted--amicable understanding being generally reached whereby various strikes of greater or less magnitude have been prevented. Thus with few exceptions law and order have been preserved and "the powers that be" have been held intact. Not only so, but a considerable has been accomplished in the work of reconstruction by the adoption of wise measures for the adjusting of economic relations looking toward the regaining of normal conditions.

Another item of considerable importance to be observed in this connection is the recent settling of the Anglo-Irish question, by which a controversy and a state of hostility of several centuries' standing between the English government and the Irish people have been brought to an end. The eyes of the civilized world have been watching the developments of this case with more or less of expectancy that permanent agreements and peace between these peoples was impossible without further prolonged war and bloodshed. The signing of the terms of agreement between England and Ireland is a further evidence of the deep earnestness in which the nations are striving to restore peace in their midst.

But the question is asked: What do all these circumstances and developments signify to the follower of Christ and the student of prophecy? Does it mean that the nations are to succeed in effecting permanent peace and definitely averting the dissolution of the present order of things? Our answer is that we would not so conclude the matter. We are to bear in mind that this entire situation and all the affairs of men are in the hands of Providence and that under the Divine supervision all things are being worked out according to the counsel of His own will.

We see no reason for disappointment as to the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding the passing away of the present symbolic heavens and earth. All the conditions, about us, together with various significant events, establish beyond doubt that the latter days are here, that the time is nearly ripe for the establishing of God's Kingdom and that it cannot be many years hence. Whatever reconstruction is now going on, or whatever cries of peace, peace, we may hear throughout the world, cannot mean the establishment of permanent peace. When the great Divine clock strikes the hour, all things written shall be fulfilled--in Jehovah's "due time."

EARTH'S MILLIONS STILL ON ROAD TO TOMB

Some of the brethren have asked, In view of the fact that the Church is not yet glorified and the Kingdom not yet established, what is the duty of the saints?--what message do we have for suffering humanity? Our reply is that we are not authorized to say that the world has ended when it has not ended. We cannot announce that God's Kingdom is established, when such is not the case. We cannot truthfully tell our friends and neighbors of the world that they are not going to die, or that millions of the human race now living will not pass into the tomb; for this is a feature concerning which we have no positive Scriptural knowledge. All around us the race is dying. Fresh graves are to be found in every cemetery. The druggist, the physician, the hospital, as also the undertaker, are actively engaged--each in his own line. Whatever message we give to men must therefore be according to the facts as we know them; and the facts as they are apparent all around us are that the reign of sin and death continues on. Let us, dear brethren, exercise the most solemn care as to how we handle the Truth. Let us, like the Apostles of old, speak *that which we know* and have proven to be the Truth, and not proclaim to men that which would merely be "cunningly devised fables."

Our message is still the same as that announced by Jesus, quoting the Prophet Isaiah: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." We may indeed include with this, the forecast of the more sure word of prophecy which explains the meaning and the necessity for the general trouble in the end of this Age termed "the Day of Vengeance of our God." We may point to the signs of the times which, in the light of prophecy, make

manifest the close proximity of the end of the long winter--time of the reign of sin and death. We may and should indeed assure the world that the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer, "Thy Kingdom come," will signify that all the millions of the dead, as well as all the millions now dying, will come forth from the tomb--they will hear the voice of the Son of man--and will have opportunity to be uplifted and blessed and to attain eternal life in Paradise on the terms of obedience then offered.

As for the exact year when death will begin to cease in the earth, none can know, for that is one of the things not yet revealed; and we fail to see how it could please the Lord for us to proclaim as Truth that which would be purely inferential and speculation on this subject.

THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES, TO BE PUBLISHED

In the sacred and fully established truths which the Lord has put into our hands we have abundance with *which to* comfort our own hearts and others. We feel sure that the friends generally will be glad to learn of our decision to publish the First Volume of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES. With little or no exception, the response to the request we sent forth some weeks ago has been favorable. The sentiment of the brethren is heartily in sympathy with the project; and the work of publishing the Volume is to be commenced at once. It will of course be several weeks before the Volumes are ready to send forth.

As the financial outlay in getting out an edition of the Volume under the present circumstances of the high cost of labor and material is a considerable item, this matter is being undertaken solely on the basis of the financial assistance that has been promised and the tentative orders that we have received for the book. In this connection we would therefore advise that the assistance that has been proffered and amounts that have been promised on orders will be acceptable at once as, of course, a considerable portion of the means required to publish the Volume must be paid to the printers before the books are completed

The brethren will be interested in learning that we hope to present a book that will be quite substantial, neat and attractive in appearance, and one that we believe will be very pleasing and acceptable to all.

With this volume in the hands of the brethren once more, we trust that all will realize a fresh impetus to bring the Message of Divine Truth and grace before others--friends, neighbors, acquaintances; that we may all continue to be good heralds, for in comforting others we are sure to realize the Divine blessing in rich measure in our own hearts.

Let us, dearly beloved in the Lord, as we cross the threshold of the new year, inquire, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits to me?" and in accordance with this solemn question, take the cup of salvation and earnestly seek by thought, word and deed to prove unto the Lord the depth and sincerity of our consecration to Him, by "showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light."

CONCERNING AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF BRETHERN IN LONDON

Some months ago it was reported in these pages that the brethren of Australia and Great Britain had communicated to us their suggestion and hope that there might be an International Conference of the brethren held in London in the summer of 1922. This suggestion was replied to favorably; and it was explained that so far as we were able to judge, such an assembly of representative brethren from various countries ought to be productive, of much good, but that we felt that the time was then too far in advance for us to conclude anything definite as far as American representation was concerned. Since then we have had communications from brethren in other foreign countries, bearing upon the subject--Holland, Denmark, Germany and Finland. Additionally, further advice has come from both Australia and Great Britain, making mention again of the proposed Convention in London this coming summer. From all of these communications we gather that the International Conference is substantially decided upon. Meantime the brethren of our INSTITUTE have continued to have the proposition under advisement, with the result that it is the unanimous and fervent desire of our brethren that if the circumstances permit and the providence of the Lord is favorable, the brethren of America be represented by either one or two delegates going from this country to attend the Conference. At this time we are still unable to promise conclusively that some brethren can be sent from the United States. The expense of the voyage to Great Britain is far in excess of what it was some years ago. We are therefore not prepared to say that our treasury as it now stands will warrant the expenditure of the required amount. Some of the friends in this country, on learning of the

proposed Conference, have asked if .they might not have the privilege of contributing especially for the purpose; and they have suggested the advisability of our setting aside a special fund to take care of the trip to England. In reply to such queries we would say that we know of no reason why special contributions should not be made for the purpose of providing for the British trip; nor do we know of any reason why we should not set apart such special donations, thus constituting a special fund to be devoted to that object. It has seemed good to the Directors of the INSTITUTE, therefore, to authorize this statement, that a special fund is set apart for the aforesaid purpose and that other brethren throughout this country or any other who would desire to have a share in making the representation from America to the proposed Conference possible, may do so. Our opinion is that in consideration of all the circumstances of our time, and in view of the spiritual needs of the brethren in their present scattered state throughout the world, such an assembly of brethren from various countries would be most timely and constitute a means of not only giving special encouragement to those who may attend, but also to the friends of the various home lands. The representatives going from America would no doubt spend several weeks visiting Classes throughout Great Britain.

Looking to the Lord for His overruling and guidance, we trust that if it is His good pleasure, the friends of America may be represented at the general Conference this coming season.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES XII-A -- CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO PHILADELPHIA (Cont.)

"Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."--Rev. 3:8.

WE do well to have fresh in mind the fact that this language is addressed primarily to both the faithful minister (star) and Church of Philadelphia. Applying the words to the period of the great Reformation and up to very recent times, we would understand that the Reformers of that period, Luther, and the many associated with him (indeed, in a sense all who since their day have possessed the Philadelphian spirit, and have engaged in the Divinely predicted work of cleansing the antitypical Sanctuary, the Church), are the ones addressed and represented in the Church of Philadelphia and its messenger.

THE OPEN DOOR

The expression, "I have set before thee an open door," etc., is evidently employed to denote that an opportunity to bear witness to the Truth, with an assurance of special Divine protection in thus doing, would at this time be given by Christ to His faithful ministers. Keeping before our mind the fact that in the preceding centuries (those before the Reformation), faithfulness in bearing witness to the Truth made necessary the exposing of Rome's false claims, and that to do this meant torture by the Inquisition, imprisonment or death, will enable us better to appreciate the deep significance of this expression, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." The history of the Church reveals that the time had now come when in the Divine providence it was deemed best for the cause of Truth, which seemed to have been crushed to earth, that a clear testimony be given, not to the Lord's people only, but to the ruling powers; indeed, to the whole world, which had been deceived, blinded and enslaved by Papacy's erroneous teachings and oppressive domination. In the Lord's providence the Reformers were protected in their witnessing by some of the world's princes. It indeed seems very clear that the Reformers of those earlier times would have met the same fate as their predecessors, Wycliffe, Huss and others, had not Christ in some way caused the restraint of the powerful arm of the Papacy. Leo X, the then reigning pope, possessed almost absolute dominion over all the kings of Europe; and so great was the fear of his power during the times previous that none dared to interfere with his decrees. Under these conditions, nothing short of an exercise of Divine power would enable these men to give their testimony. The historian thus expresses the fears and convictions of Luther's friends for his safety when he was about to start on his journey to appear before the council of the Pope's prelates, convened at the city of Worms, to answer to the charge of heresy:

"His dejected friends believed that unless God should interpose by a miracle, he was going to meet his death." Luther's own feelings are thus expressed:

"The Papists,' said he, observing the distress of his friends, 'have little desire to see me at Worms; but they long for my condemnation and death! No matter! Pray not for me but for the Word of God. My blood will scarcely be cold before thousands and tens of thousands in every land will be made to answer for the shedding of my blood. The Most

Holy adversary of Christ, the father and master and chief of manslayers, is resolved that it shall be split. *Amen!* The will of God be done!" "Turning to Melancthon, he said with deep emotion: 'If I never return, and my enemies should take my life, cease not, dear brother, to teach and stand fast in the truth. Labor in my stead, since I can no longer work. If thy life be spared, my death will matter little.'

How wonderful was the Divine providence exhibited in the life of Luther from childhood, till he came to manhood's estate. He was a miner's son, one of the last, from the world's standpoint, to be chosen for such a work. But God's ways of selecting and preparing His servants are not usually man's ways. The great truths that he was to proclaim had to be first worked out in his own individual life. Indeed, he needed to feel to the utmost the evil effects of Rome's teaching, and the bondage of the same, before the truth of God's way of salvation could be seen and appreciated by him. He was caused to feel this bondage to its greatest extent; he was made to see experimentally how the truth had been perverted by Rome; he saw, not all at once, to be sure, how complete was Rome's apostasy. His first efforts were exerted wholly in the direction of a reform of the Church. After a few years, however, he became convinced of the hopelessness of such efforts, largely through coming to understand the Divine predictions of Daniel (Chap. 7), St. Paul (2 Thess. 2), and St. John in the Revelation, Which he interpreted and proclaimed as portraying the various phases or aspects of Romish apostasy.

GOD USES HUMBLE INSTRUMENTS

The message of the Savior continues: "for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." "Compared with the mighty hosts of their enemies, the little band of Reformers had but 'a little strength'; but they knew that they had the truth,' and they fully trusted the Giver. Thus the Master could say, 'Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.'" This was not only true of those in Luther's day who sought to recover true Christianity--the true doctrine of Christ--and give it again to the world, but it was true all through the Philadelphian period of those who instituted real and genuine revivals. The very richest truths of the *Gospel, the clearest testimony concerning the headship of Christ*, have nearly always come from those who have

*Z '16-347.

broken the fetters of sectarian restraints. How many there have been, however, who, having been used of God to hold up successfully the simpler, or even the deeper truths of the Gospel of Christ, through trusting in the power of God alone, have, after a time, sought the aid of human strength and worldly-wise methods, and thus have had the "door" of opportunity closed to their efforts. As soon as this occurs, as soon as there comes a claim that "we" are somebody or something, or there be an attempt to add to our strength -to hold our organization, our system, together, by the use of carnal methods-success of this character may possibly come for a season, but the door of testimony soon ceases to be held open for us. "Little strength" is evidently one of the essential elements, and is another characteristic of the Philadelphian spirit. God hath chosen the weak things to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence.--1 Cor. 1:27-29.

In every true attempt to recover the primitive faith and piety (and all such efforts describe one important phase of the Philadelphian spirit) if it has been in any measure successful from the Divine standpoint, it has been so by the exercise of that lowly, humble spirit shown by Saul when he was about to be chosen king over Israel. This spirit was expressed by Samuel when rebuking Saul for his departure from God in this respect, in the words: "When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?" (I Sam. 15:17.) The "little strength" must be held on to--the place of separation unto, and entire dependance upon God must be maintained. These are the chief qualities that ensure true success in God's cause and do always receive the approval of the Divine Master.

SUBJECT TO ONE MASTER ONLY

We inquire, To what end was this Divine strength given to these weak ones? The reply is, in the effects produced, as expressed in the words of Christ: "Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." How important it is, then, that we know what is meant by keeping God's Word! Surely it does not mean, as some have seemed to think, the fencing up of any portion of God's people by the formulation and the requiring of subscription to a creed. Who that has a true conception of Christ's Body, the Church, would ever think that he had the ability to frame a constitution and a confession, a creed, for it? It has always resulted in fencing off a greater or less number of the Lord's people from the rest; and as one has truthfully expressed it:

"If you cannot agree, you are at best dismissed to go elsewhere, and find or make a party for yourself. But he who will keep Christ's word can bind himself to none--*must preserve his individuality of conscience, subject to: one Master only*; as much so as if there were no other Christians but himself on earth: and in a true walk with God, the knowledge of Himself, acquaintance with His Word, increases with each step of the way. The light brightens to the perfect day, and in this brightening light we are called to walk, true to it, and to Him whose light it is. An immense thing it is, in a day like this, *to be keeping*, with an exercised heart, the word of Christ! Not a word here and there; not following it until the cost may be too much; but through honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report. For is there right obedience *any where*, when there is not in our purpose obedience *every where*?"*

The significance of the expression that they had not denied Christ's name, as it applied to the primitive Church of Philadelphia in St. John's day, may have referred to, some particular persecution at that time in connection with which the believers of the Philadelphian Church had been summoned before the magistrates and required to renounce the name of Christ to disown any relationship or attachment to Him, in a public manner. As applied to the Philadelphian period of Church history, it would indicate that those addressed were comparatively a small, exceptional people in the midst of a large profession of Christ; these last not being recognized by Christ at all as members of His Body, the Church. The "name" of Christ may also signify the different offices that He fills in the great work of salvation; as, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins." "They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." "And this is His name whereby He shall be called, the righteousness of Jehovah." "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Matt. 1:21, 23; Jer. 23:5, 6; Isa. 9:6, 7.) The meaning applied in this sense would be that they recognized Christ as the only one worthy of such titles, and the only one who could fill the requirements called for or demanded in such names.

THOSE WHO WORSHIP BEFORE THE FEET OF THE SAINTS

"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and

worship before thy feet, and to, know that I have loved thee." (V. 9.) Concerning who and what are meant by those who called themselves Jews, but were of the synagogue of Satan: this has already been considered in the message to Smyrna. It will be sufficient to note here that we have described in this epistle, in the expression "synagogue of Satan," the same class referred to in the Smyrna epistle, which Satan had used in the early centuries to work the downfall of the already declining Church. Judaism with its forms and ceremonies and ritual observances accomplished the Divine purpose in foreshadowing the various features of true Christianity and was set aside by God when it had accomplished its mission. The system known as "Babylon the Great" is merely a counterpart *or* prototype on a large scale of Judaism, and has taken the place of the *equal* or common priesthood of believers, and has substituted for the completed sacrifice of Christ and the salvation to be found only in Christ its own perversion such as the sacrifice of the Mass through which forgiveness of sins is offered. The many daughter systems that were born in connection with Rome's travail in the early years of the Reformation have taken on, to a greater or less extent, the ritualism, the sacerdotalism, of Rome, the Mother system. It is principally with this great but divided sectarian Protestantism that the true Philadelphians have had, to contend in bearing witness to the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The thought seems to be fully warranted that the Philadelphian caste of believers continues to describe the overcomers to the very end of the Age; and these are easily distinguished from the Laodiceans, of these closing days. Of this more will be said later.

If we look back over history, from the great Reformation onward, we will discover that *every revival of a study*

*GRANT, *The Revelation of Christ*, pp. 197, 198.

of God's Word, all earnest efforts at evangelizing, all effort put forth to draw and unite true Christians in the bonds of "brotherly love," have, when persevered in, had the effect of breaking down the barriers of sectarianism and of liberating all the liberty loving people of God; but, alas, history and experience show that the imitation class, the tare element, is always found wherever there are true wheat, and out of such bold moves for Christian liberty and freedom, there almost invariably develops another new sect, which becomes dominated by the same partisan spirit of bondage, resulting again in the taking away of personal liberties in Christ. These movements have originated generally outside of denominationalism. The most important movement of this kind since the great Reformation has occurred in this

present, the Laodicean period, but, like all the other movements of the past, has ended in sectarianism; and having accomplished its purpose, there has come the usual testings and siftings, which are designed of the Lord, at least in one particular, to make manifest who are possessing the Divinely required Philadelphian spirit of brotherly love and loyalty to Christ and His Word.

The words, "I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee," carry us forward to the time when the Philadelphians who are really the overcomers in all ages of the Church's history, will enter upon their reward of joint-heirship in the Heavenly Kingdom. The nominal and apostate believers, who have in past centuries despised, treated disdainfully, maligned and persecuted the true believers, will then be constrained to give homage to, and learn that these were the beloved of God. The Apostle Peter's words seem to have reference to the same thought, when he says: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." (1 Pet. 2:12.) A noted commentator, in 1856, applying these words of the Revelator to the present life, said:

"So far as the *word* [worship] is concerned, it may refer either to spiritual homage, that is, the worship of God; or it may mean respect as shown to superiors....The latter is the probable meaning; that is, that they would be constrained to acknowledge that they were the children of God, or that God regarded them with His favor. It does not mean necessarily that they would themselves be converted to Christ, but that, as they had been accustomed to revile and oppose those who were true Christians, they would be constrained to come and render them the respect due to those who were sincerely endeavoring to serve their Maker. The truth taught here is, that it is in the power of the Lord Jesus so to turn the hearts of all the enemies of religion that they shall be brought to show respect to it; so to incline the minds of all people that they shall honor the Church, or be at least outwardly its friends. Such homage the world shall yet be constrained to pay to it."* This, however, will never be until this present evil-world order has passed away and the corrupt religious systems have ceased to be, and the Church is glorified with her Lord.

THOSE KEPT IN THE HOUR OF TRIAL

"Because thou has kept the word of my patient endurance, I also will keep thee from that hour of trial, which is about to come on the whole habitable, to try those who dwell on the earth." (V. 10.) The "hour of trial" that was

*BARNES, *Notes on Revelation*, p. 117.

to come upon the whole world, as it had to do with the primitive Church of Philadelphia, is interpreted by commentators, who fail to see the prophetic sense of these epistles as applying to different periods of the Church's history, to be some widespread persecution as adapted to test the fidelity of those who lived to see it. However, the trial pointed out seems evidently to be the one spoken of by the Holy Prophets and Apostles, as well as the Lord Himself--the great time of trouble which will close the Gospel Age. Some of the scenes of this great time of trouble the Church has already entered upon. It is described as a time of trouble in which men's hearts fail them for fear of what is coming on the earth, in connection with which the whole present order of things will be terribly shaken, indeed, overthrown. Some Christians possessing the spirit of brotherly love, who find themselves in these times, will be severely tested, but will come off more than conquerors; others will fail to do so, and will lose the reward. The facts have been clearly expressed by another:

"Our Lord's words addressed 'to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia,' had their fulfilment, we understand, during the period which closed somewhere about the time when the Harvest of this Age began. We are not to think of the different epochs represented in the messages to the various Churches as being exact periods, as though there was a particular instant of beginning and a particular instant of closing. Rather "we are to understand each to be a general period which laps over the one on the other. So this period of faithfulness to the Lord's, Word of which our text treats seems to have been one of some length, just as this Laodicean period in which we live has covered a considerable time, but is nearly ended now, we think.

"For a long time God's Word was lightly esteemed. The transition from a poor understanding to a better understanding of it came on gradually. The Two Witnesses of God, the Old and the New Testaments, long clothed in the sackcloth of the dead languages, gradually ascended to heaven, the place of honor and power, as the Scriptures symbolically represent the matter. (Rev. 11:3-12.) Then came the general announcement that the time of the Second Advent of

Christ had come [was near]. This was sometimes called the Wolff Movement and sometimes the Miller Movement: for one was the leader [a light-bearer] in one part of the world, and the other [a star--light-bearer], in the other part....This proclamation of the Kingdom of Christ was a remarkable movement, which we believe is referred to, by our Lord in the Parable of the Ten Virgins, who awoke and trimmed their lamps. But it was a false alarm. The Bridegroom did not come.

"This disappointment caused a sifting among the professed people of God. Some became all the more interested in the Bible as the Word of God, and did not doubt, while others became haughty and skeptical....So these did not keep to the Word of God, but discarded its declarations. The promises and prophecies of the Bible relating to the Master's Second Coming, though *positive* and *numerous*, were abandoned by most of the great teachers."*

THE LIGHT HAS KEPT PROGRESSING

Among these teachers who did not abandon the Bible and its prophecies, but reverently studied them, were some who were not connected with the Miller movement. The significant *events* connected with the Miller movement, would of necessity include the special

*Z '15-199.

study of the "time" prophecies, the preaching of a set time (1844) for the Lord to make His Second Advent, the failure of these expectations thereby proving the incorrectness of the interpretation, the disappointment and consequent sifting as a result. These events covered a period of about forty years, beginning about 1829. (Mr. Miller's death occurred in 1849.) During this whole period of forty years or more, it should be borne in mind that the Lord had other faithful servants, beside Mr. Miller and his associates, who were not Adventists, who studied the Bible; and we have the results of their studies in their writings. Not a few of these, as their writings show, had very much more correct views of the Second Advent and its effects upon humanity than did Mr. Miller and those who labored with him. These were not expecting, as Mr. Miller was, a literal burning of the earth and its inhabitants, and the complete end of probationary Ages. These saw taught in the Scriptures that another Age of probation would follow the present one. However, while these had much clearer

views of the Lord's Plan, including the time features, even their knowledge was deficient when contrasted with the much clearer light possessed by the watchers of the present Laodicean time. These, whom we may truthfully say were faithful Philadelphians, also studied the time prophecies associated with the Second Advent era, and their writings show that they did not agree with Mr. Miller in regard to 1844 being the time--the general expectation among them being that the Second Advent might take place some half a century later than Mr. Miller predicted, although differing among themselves as to the exact date. *This serves to show that the light kept increasing, and that each generation of faithful students in turn were assisted to advance in the light of truth by profiting by the knowledge, as well as by the mistakes, of those of the preceding one.* We thus have emphasized the truth of progressive interpretation, which has always been God's method, particularly so since the Reformation of the sixteenth century. Those of the watchers living in the beginning of the Laodicean period are no exception to this general rule, even though the due time has come for a clear understanding of all the general features of the Divine Plan. Of this, more will be said when we come to consider the Laodicean message.

IN THE MIDST OF THE HOUR OF TRIAL

Continuing to refer to the Miller Movement as one occurring during the closing years of the Philadelphian period, we quote further the language of another, which describes some of its effects, and which notes that as a consequence of the great Church leaders' discarding the Bible, particularly the prophecies, "the people knew very little about the Bible. Of course, their faith could not be much greater than their knowledge.

"As a result, the work of the Miller Movement was a sort of separation, as between those who kept the Word of God with patience and those who lost their faith in His Word. This persistent, patient faith of the true saints of God is what we think is, referred to here by keeping 'the word of my patience.' The *general* hour of temptation [referred to in the Philadelphia message], therefore, would not come upon them, but upon those who came after them--the Laodicean Church. The Philadelphia Church, which had patiently passed through so severe a trial of their faith, would not be subjected to the later test.

"The hour of temptation' has come upon us now." This hour of temptation has been the Harvest time. In many respects it has tested

the Lord's people, and has proven who are faithful to the Word of God and who are not faithful to it. Hence the majority of the professing Christians of the world--probably more than three-fourths--have lost all faith in the Bible, and have fallen into the various false and delusive theories of our day--Evolution, Higher Criticism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Spiritism, New Thought, etc, They have fallen from faith, from loyalty to the Lord's Word. They are not able to stand in this 'evil day.' '*

Since the above words were penned and this remarkable writer ceased from his labors, other, and more severe tests have come; indeed, the test that finally comes to all is now on. It is that of holding fast, not only to the Truth, but, above all, that of "holding the head," and permitting no human teacher or system to come into the heart and take the place of the Great Teacher of the Church. Loyalty to Christ and His Message is indeed the test; and faithfulness to Him will just as surely mean that a large measure of His spirit will be exemplified in the life of every true disciple: it will be the Philadelphian spirit of brotherly love.

***z 115-199.**

ELIJAH'S CHALLENGE OF BAAL WORSHIP

--JANUARY 15-1 KINGS 18:1-46--

Golden Text.--"This is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith."--1 John 5:4.

IN the third year of Elijah's sojourn at Zarephath--the fourth year without rain--really three and a half years after Elijah's pronouncement to King Ahab (Luke 4:25; James 5:17)--the Lord sent His Prophet back into the land of Israel to Ahab. A less courageous man than Elijah might have hesitated, for he doubtless had knowledge of the fact that the king had instituted a search for him in every direction, probably with the intention of securing his revocation respecting the cessation of rain--of having him break the spell upon the weather and bringing rain--or to put him to death in the event he did not do so, or both. Elijah seems to have been a most courageous servant of the Lord in executing whatever commands he received from the great King, and in the present instance he would be encouraged with the thought that his mission to Ahab would be a most acceptable one, since the Lord had assured him that the due time had come for the sending of rain.

Doubtless the Prophet, too, as a lover of humanity and particularly of his nation, would have both a humane and appropriate sentiment that he would be pleased to serve in such a manner.

The famine, which was over all the land of Israel, was keenly felt at the capital city, Samaria. The king was finally aroused to an appreciation of the fact that something must be done or soon all the cattle would die of thirst. Apparently he was more solicitous for his beasts than for the poor of the people. The dying of his herds and the dying of his horses and mules would impair his power and dignity as a king as well as his wealth., Hence the proposition to seek for springs or brooks not yet dried up, where water could be found for the king's beasts, He sent the chief servant of his palace, one in whom he had absolute confidence, in one direction, while he himself, probably with a good retinue of servants, etc., went in another direction.

OBADIAH, THE TIMID SERVANT

Obadiah, who was entrusted with this service, we are informed, was a true worshiper of the Lord--not only so, but one who at the risk of his own life had protected the lives of a hundred of the prophets of the Lord on an occasion when the Queen, Jezebel, had ordered the slaughter of all such. Obadiah, therefore, should be reckoned not only as a true and noble, but also as a courageous servant of God in some respects, and yet we note a wide difference between his disposition and courage and that of Elijah. That he maintained his position in the king's family not only implies that his loyalty to the Lord made him a trusted and useful man in the king's service, but it implies also that in a household so given up to idolatry, he must have in large measure put his light under a bushel and avoided the advocacy of the Truth, else he never would have been acceptable and retained his position. We may be sure that the king, and specially the queen, never knew that their chief servant had negated the commanded death of one hundred prophets.

Comparing the characters of these two servants of the Lord, Elijah and Obadiah, we can find items to commend in both, but especially in Elijah. It is not for us to condemn Obadiah, and, indeed, we have no doubt that the Lord gave him in his life-time a blessing or reward for his service to His cause, and that He will give him a still further blessing and reward in the future. But if we would have before our minds the proper example to be followed, the proper courage to be exercised, our pattern would be Elijah, whose loyalty to God was so

thoroughly attested on every possible occasion. There are Christians of both of these types today, but Elijah stands for or represents the Little Flock with whom the Lord is specially pleased and who will with the Redeemer constitute the Kingdom class by and by. We rejoice also with the believers, the partially consecrated ones, represented by Obadiah, yet we could sincerely wish for them the blessing of greater zeal in the Lord's service--less care for the friendship of those who are God's enemies, and greater boldness in the advocacy of the Lord's cause and in proclaiming themselves in every proper manner His servants. We fear for such that being ashamed of the Lord to some extent, preferring advantages as respects the present life--to be in a prominent position, in good society, and surrounded by luxury maintained at the expense of a failure to properly confess the Lord--will mean to such eventually the loss of the great prize for which we are called to run in this present life. As already intimated, our expectation would be that such a class would eventually get a blessing from the Lord and a good position, but such a class surely, unless they turn about and become more courageous, will lose the great prize for which we have been called to run--joint heirship with God's dear Son in the Kingdom.

ELIJAH, THE COURAGEOUS

While en route in quest of the springs, etc., Obadiah met Elijah and at once recognized him as the special servant of the Lord and prostrated himself at his feet, saying, "Is it thou, my lord, Elijah?" and he answered, "It is I. Go tell thy lord Ahab that I am here." Immediately Obadiah's fear and caution came upon him as he thought of how Ahab would be anxious to find Elijah, and he surmised that Elijah would in some manner disappear during his absence and that in consequence the king's anger would be against his servant Obadiah, believing that he had deceived him in the matter or because he had not insisted on bringing Elijah as a captive to the king, knowing that he was searching for him. He feared that Elijah was thus inclined to do him injury, and related to the Prophet that he was a servant of the true God and not an idolater, and that he had protected one hundred young men of the school of the prophets, delivering them from death because of reverence for the Lord. Elijah assured him that this was not his intention, and that he would without question meet Ahab. His word was believed and the meeting of the king and the Prophet resulted.

When the king arrived where Elijah was he saluted the latter in a bold manner, implying that all the trouble that had come upon the nation

was properly chargeable to him, and that he should feel guilty of it. The king ignored the Lord's hand in the matter and ignored his own responsibility. He was a very different type of man from either of the others discussed in this lesson. Elijah was courageous for the Lord and for the Truth; Obadiah was less courageous and in some respects weak-kneed--lacking many of the qualities approved of the Lord; but Ahab was bold and defiant of the Lord and His Prophet, and after all the experiences through which himself and his nation had passed for three and a half years, his salutation to Elijah was, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah met him on his own ground exactly and replied, No, it was the king who troubled Israel through the institution of idolatry. The king's boldness appears to have wilted in--the presence of the Prophet's lancelike thrust of the truth, and the latter, assuming the place of command as the Lord's representative, ordered the gathering of the chiefest of the people of Israel from every quarter and with them all of the prophets of Baal, to meet at Mount Carmel. This evidently was a challenge as between the forces of Baal, represented by the king and government and all the heads of the ten tribes and all the prophets of Baal, and the one Prophet representing Jehovah.

Evidently King Ahab was considerably humbled by the experiences through which he had passed, and was now hopeful that at last the difficulties were to reach a conclusion. Doubtless the Prophet had told him that this was his mission, to bring blessings and refreshment through rain. At all events, there seems to have been no parley on the king's part but a prompt compliance with the Prophet's demands.

The principal lesson we see in this narrative is that of character and positiveness on the part of those who profess to be the Lord's people. It is not sufficient that we should not sympathize with Ahab's course of violence and opposition to the Lord and subserviency to his wife Jezebel, the head and leader of the idolatrous worship. It is not sufficient, for us, either, to copy after Obadiah's course and to serve and fear the Lord in secret, even though in secret also we strive to do good to some of the Lord's people. Obadiah's course is very much more honorable than that of Ahab, but still it is not sufficient. We all want to copy the general courage and loyalty of Elijah, and in a subsequent lesson we shall see that he is particularly a type of all the Lord's favored ones of this Gospel Age.

"IF THE LORD BE GOD, FOLLOW HIM"

Elijah's requirement of King Ahab, that the principal representatives of the ten tribes should gather at Mount Carmel, and with them the 450 priests of Baal, was promptly complied with. Ahab seemed to lose his bravado and to realize that he was, in a general sense at least, subject to Elijah as the Lord's representative, and that the claim of the latter that the three and a half years of drouth was the penalty for idolatry seemed reasonable. He evidently understood that the test of the two religions was about to be made; but since Elijah was only one in contrast with so many priests of Baal, with the heads of all the tribes, and with the king and his courtiers, and since this seemed the only course open to secure the coveted rain, the king seems to have offered no objection.

The top of Mount Carmel, the place of meeting, was about seventeen miles from the palace at Jezreel. It was an ideal place for just such a spectacle as occurred there. It was probably a few days before the invited persons assembled, but when they were come together, Elijah, in the audience of the people, proposed to the 450 priests of Baal a test to demonstrate whether Baal or Jehovah was God. Under the circumstances these men could evidently do nothing else than assent to the test, and it was an especially appropriate one, too; for Baal was noted for being preeminently the sun god, the god of nature, fertility, etc. The three and a half years of drouth already testified against Baal's power to bless the fields and flocks or his devotees with fertility and fruitfulness, and now, additionally, Elijah proposed that the God who would answer by fire should be esteemed the real one. The priests of Baal made ready an altar and laid upon it the sacrifice in the morning; then, after their custom, they prayed and importuned, sometimes in a loud voice and sometimes softly, that Baal would answer and demonstrate his power by fire from heaven consuming the sacrifice.

**CALL LOUDLY ON BAAL--"OUR GOD HEARETH IN
SECRET"**

As the noon-day sun shone out scorchingly in that climate, not only the stones of their altar became hot, but the fat of the slain sacrifice must have been sizzling with heat, and it would have seemed to require very little to have accomplished their object. Tradition says that, after the manner of many of the deceptions of heathen religions, a man was placed inside of the altar with a view to his setting on fire the wood under the sacrifice at the appropriate moment; but the legend declares that he was subsequently found suffocated. At all events, according to the Scriptural account, as the day advanced beyond the

time of noon, the priests of Baal became more and more desperate, calling, O Baal, hear us! hear us! As they cried aloud, Elijah made the scene still more impressive upon the minds of the elders of Israel by ironical remarks, suggesting that their god, Baal, was perhaps on a journey or perhaps asleep or what not, and he exhorted them to call still louder upon him. Chagrined, frenzied by their defeat, they called still more wildly, and ran about the altar after the manner of heathen priests in some parts until this day, yelling and cutting themselves, claiming that they had committed sins, that they would chastise themselves for these sins, and that Baal should thus be propitiated and hear and answer them. This continued until three o'clock in the afternoon, when Elijah proposed that in the cool of the evening he would make his test, assuring the people that Jehovah, who had withheld the rain, would demonstrate His power by sending the fire to burn the sacrifice offered in His name.

Elijah built an altar in the name of the Lord--that is, consecrated by prayer to the Lord. Presumably he had all the help necessary in its construction, and he added to it a feature not common to altars, namely, that it had a trench round about which he caused to be filled with water from a never failing Spring which is to be found on the slope of Mount Carmel. Four earthen jars (misnamed in the text barrels) were filled and emptied three times, until the whole altar, wood and sacrifice were saturated and surrounded by water. This would be a demonstration to the heads of the nations that the miracle to be performed would be genuine. Then Elijah prayed to God, "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."

The prayer is beautiful in its simplicity, manifesting that the Prophet had no boastful spirit in connection with his mission, but that humbly he recognized that he was merely a servant of the Lord. It showed, too, that his desire was not personal display of power, but the blessing of his nation and the drawing of their hearts to the Lord. The Lord responded, and fire from heaven came down in the sight of the people and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the earth with which the altar had been constructed, used as mortar, licking up the water in the trench. The people were convinced and gladly acknowledged the Lord Jehovah, thereby correspondingly denying Baal. It was a great victory for the cause of right, and would carry through the leaders of all the tribes full information to every quarter of the kingdom.

ELIJAH'S COURSE NOT OURS

At Elijah's command the 450 prophets of Baal were caught ("Let not one of them escape") and at Elijah's direction they were executed at the foot of the mountain--at the brook whence the water had been brought for the sacrifice. Infidels have been inclined to comment upon this slaughter of the priests of Baal as representing persecution and religious fanaticism. We are to remember, however, what we have already called attention to, namely, that God had peculiar dealings with this nation of Israel, and that Elijah, as the Divine mouthpiece of the occasion, was fully commissioned to carry out the Divine execution against these men, who had been exercising so baneful an influence among his people, leading them from light to darkness, from the worship of God to idolatry. This would give no right or authority to anybody at the present time to execute fellow creatures because of difference of religious belief, because the world in general today is not under an arrangement such as that which prevailed in Elijah's day between, God and the one nation of Israel. Today civilization frames laws and has courts of justice which decide on penalties for violations of those laws--the death penalty being usually reserved for murder or treason. We are to remember that in the peculiar relationship between God and Israel, under their covenant made at Sinai, God Himself was the King, the ruler of that nation; consequently these priests of Baal were traitors against, Him, and, according to the laws of our time, from this standpoint would be worthy of death.

However, there is a higher law than ours which we must recognize. It must be admitted that God is the proper judge of the whole world; that it is with Him to say who may live and who may not. Were the world living today under the direct government of the Lord, and were there today a properly certified Prophet of the Lord whom, as the mouthpiece of God, we had no reason to doubt, it certainly would be entirely proper for us to hear the word of the Lord and execute His sentences on any and every subject to the fullest extent.

SIN SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED

It was customary in olden times that when a general sacrifice was offered it should be followed by a feast, and apparently while the sacrificing was in progress throughout the day a feast also had been prepared on the mountain top, and it is in reference to this that Elijah

said to the king, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for I hear the sound of an abundance of rain." The Prophet may have been speaking figuratively, or possibly his words might be understood better, "I hear from the Lord the message of an abundance of rain coming." Ahab and his associates might much better have spent the time in fasting and prayer for Divine forgiveness for the idolatry which had brought upon them the drouth, and which now had led to the execution of the priests of Baal . Nevertheless the Lord, through the Prophet, did not urge upon them any avowals of sorrow that they did not volunteer themselves. Herein is one of the distinct differences between those who are at heart the Lord's people and others. Imperfections and failures each one finds in himself contintially, but those who are the Lord's true people, feel so aggrieved at their failures that they are promptly led to the Throne of Grace that they may obtain mercy and find grace to help in future time of need, but others take their failures lightly and fail to profit by them accordingly.

As for the Lord's people, some of them can testify that their failures have really resulted in great blessing to their own souls and great advancement in overcoming weaknesses The sentiment of the consecrated is well expressed by the poet, who says:

"O! May no earth-born cloud arise
To hide thee from thy servant's eyes."

While the king and the heads of the tribes were feasting Elijah was praying for the rain and waiting for it. Seven times in all he sent his servant to look in the direction from which the rain storms usually came, to see whether or not anything in the nature of a cloud was visible in the clear sky, and only at the last did he get the favorable report that his servant saw a cloud about the size of a man's hand rising in the west. Here we see beautifully blended the part of God and the part of man in respect to prayer. Elijah did not pray for rain until he understood that the Lord's time had come to send rain: then he prayed with all earnestness and expectancy--with confidence; for we cannot doubt that the one who built the altar and flooded it with water and expected and witnessed the consuming of the sacrifice by fire from heaven would be full of confidence respecting the sending of rain, for which, nevertheless, he prayed. Just so it is with the Lord's people today in the matter of prayer, God has definitely promised us certain things, and these we may as positively expect and may appropriately request; other things, however, not promised, we are not to expect.

WHERE CHRIST IS, HIS WORD IS STUDIED

This is the key to our Masters words, "If ye abide in Me and My Word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." For us to have the ear of the Lord it is requisite that we shall abide in Christ--as members of His Body, and through Him children of the Father. It is necessary also that His Word abide in us--that we study the Lord's promise, that we know what He has promised, so that we may ask only those things which He has already declared to us He is pleased to grant. Just another suggestion respecting what we may ask and what we may not request in prayer, leaving the fuller examination of the subject to another time. We may not ask the conversion of our friends, because the Lord has not told us thus to pray. He set us no such example, neither did the Apostles, and the entire teaching of the Scriptures is to the contrary. We may, however, with propriety pray for wisdom and grace upon our hearts and upon our lips, that we may know how to present the Lord's Message clearly and forcefully and convincingly to those we love and desire to see brought under the influence of the Truth. The Lord's arrangement is, "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."

God's arrangement is, further, that the Truth shall not be injected into our minds in some miraculous manner when this is unnecessary, but that it shall be proclaimed by those who already have learned it. Hence the preaching of the Gospel is the Lord's means by which He is pleased to grant the blessing of His Truth and through His Truth His grace, during this Gospel Age, to those who are in a proper attitude of heart to receive the same. Take another illustration: We are not taught to pray for money or luxuries, but we may labor and ask the Lord's blessing upon our labors, and such guidance of them as would be best, with a heart ready to receive with thankfulness much or little as the Lord may see best for us. Our only request may be for the absolute necessities as expressed, in our Lord's prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." We may also pray with propriety, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will, be done on earth as it is done in heaven," and may be sure that in the Lord's due time this petition, which has gone up for eighteen centuries to the Throne of Grace, shall be answered, and showers of blessing shall come from the presence of the Lord during the second presence of our King, flooding the world with times of restitution of all things.

When the little cloud was seen and reported to Elijah, a message was at once sent to the king to hasten his return to the palace before the great downpour of rain should come. The king evidently believed

Elijah implicitly and made haste homeward. Elijah, apparently endued with supernatural power, ran ahead of the king's horses as an act of courtesy, and as showing that he as a servant of the Lord nevertheless recognized Ahab as the king of the nation. Thus to some extent the shame and confusion of the king's position throughout the day was offset on his return home.

BE OF GOOD COURAGE

A, general lesson may be drawn from these incidents by the Lord's people of the New Creation today. The Elijah-like class have the lessons of courage and faithfulness and trust. Let us be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might; let us speak His word plainly and show forth on every suitable occasion and by every proper means the glories of Him who hath called us from darkness to light. It is not for us to vanquish the enemies of the Truth and put them to death as did Elijah, but it is for us to slay and utterly expose the errors and follies which are deceiving the people. The Lord's little ones, as the Scriptures declare, may be mighty through His power to the pulling down of the strongholds of error and to the turning back of the tide of deception and sin from those who are in the reasonable attitude of mind to receive the Truth--those who are merely deceived into error and not willingly and wilfully its followers and beneficiaries.

There is a great lesson here, too, for those who are today more or less bound by error and confused, and thereby led to render worship to that which is false or that which was never intended to be worshiped. Infidelity has in the past called upon many to worship the god of nature; and, through Higher Criticism and Evolution theories, the priests of error have misled and deceived many in spiritual Israel who really desire to know the Truth. Others today are being misled by one strong delusion or another, sometimes emanating from an individual, and sometimes from a human system, to which undeserved and undue worship and reverence are given. At various times in the past the Lord has made exhibits as between Truth and Error, which in many respects have been as astonishing and miraculous as the demonstration made at Elijah's bands. The period of the Reformation marks one of these remarkable exhibitions of the power and shining forth of the Truth, at which time the error of the great Apostasy was seen by many. Again during the past century, in the Day of His Preparation, the Lord has caused His Message to receive a further impetus. The Divine Plan of the Ages now shines forth with a brilliancy never before seen by God's people. Surely it is time for all the true and loyal servants of God who

have been in any measure of darkness on the subject to scrutinize the evidences carefully, and to decide as did the representatives of Israel, "The Lord He is God"--and to decline henceforth to recognize the errors of Babylon and the messages of self-appointed individuals and man-made systems which are being demonstrated to be false. It is time for all to come to a decision whether they are for the Lord, or whether they prefer to worship false systems and errors. In the language of Elijah, If the Lord be God let us follow Him--thoroughly, completely. Let us not only be sincere, but earnest in our religion. Let it take hold upon all the affairs of our lives, and, as the Apostle expressed it, not only let it direct our conduct and words, but back of this, our very thoughts. To use his language, "Let us bring even our thoughts into captivity to the will of God in Christ."

ELIJAH'S' FLIGHT AND RETURN

--JANUARY 22--1 KINGS 19:1-21--

Golden Text.--"I waited patiently for Jehovah; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry."--Psa. 40:1.

SUDDEN was the reformation which apparently in one day overthrew the religion of Baal, and destroyed his priests, and revived the religion of Jehovah, and brought his Prophet Elijah most prominently before Israel. But the influence of the slavery to superstition could not be easily eradicated. Reformation was not accomplished, but merely commenced by the test which the Lord had given at the hands of Elijah, in accepting the sacrifice with fire, and subsequently sending the promised rain. The people were lacking in those qualities of liberty and nobility of mind which are essential to a quick and thorough reformation. They lacked the courage of their convictions, and consequently were easily brought under the influence of that wicked woman, Jezebel, whose evil spirit and self will were courageous enough to combat anything, everything.

Ahab, and all Israel, seemed to be thoroughly humbled and converted, but Jezebel, fearing not God and regarding not man, was furious when she learned that the priests of the religion which she had championed had been put to death. Ignoring the king and the people of Israel entirely, she constituted herself the executive, and sent word to Elijah that he might expect to die also, as the priests of Baal had died, within twenty-four hours. It is altogether probable that this was merely a

threat, intended to drive Elijah out of the kingdom; so that she might the better overthrow the reform movement which he had so recently begun. Had she not become fearful that the killing of Elijah might have brought some disastrous results, either through an insurrection of the people or through a Divine judgment, no doubt she would have ordered his assassination, instead of notifying him of what she would do twenty-four hours later.

The notification had what we presume was the designed effect; Elijah, thoroughly frightened and discouraged, fled panic-stricken before a woman; whereas but a few days before he had courageously faced the king, and reproved him. Ah, who will say that a woman has no power in the world! And her power for evil is commensurate with her power for good. No one can read the history of the world without seeing that woman has played an important part in all the important acts of the world's great drama. Her influences have been potent, both for good and evil, truth and error, God and Satan. Let not the sisters despise their opportunities, but let them seek to use them ever and always on the side of the good, the true, the pure, the noble, the holy, and in harmony with the Lord's Word.

Elijah fled to the kingdom of Judah. Utterly discouraged, he went alone into the wilderness, and prayed that he might die. How severe his disappointment was we may judge. There had been three and a half years of preparation for this reform movement, and it had been inaugurated under such favorable conditions, and at first with pronounced results; and now to have the entire matter fail was certainly very discouraging.

But the Lord did not even chide the Prophet for his timidity, etc. "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust"; He makes allowance for our unintentional imperfections. God realized, better than did the Prophet, the physical exhaustion which he had experienced in connection with the great work which he had done within the past few days. So now, instead of chiding him, he was permitted to take rest in sleep and was provided miraculously with nourishment, and then sleep again; and, his vitality replenished, he arose refreshed, and ate again, before commencing a long journey and a long fast of forty days.

The lesson here to us is God's care over those who are fully consecrated to Him, and who seek to do His will. He cares for our bodily necessities as well as for our spiritual wants. "Your Father

knoweth what things ye have need of." Another lesson is found in the character of the food which the Lord supplied to Elijah. It would have been just as easy for Omnipotence to have provided dainties and luxuries for the Prophet, but instead the provision was very simple--bread and water. The bread is called a "cake," for the customary food of that country then was, and still is, bread made about a quarter inch thick, and somewhat in the form of a pancake, baked on heated pebbles. Our Lord's promise to us, as His faithful people, is that our bread and water shall be sure; we are not to ask for more than this; whatever is received more should be accepted with thanksgiving and to the Lord's glory. Elijah's food also was a symbol of the Church's spiritual food: water is a symbol of truth--water of life; the unleavened bread is a symbol of Christ, whom we appropriate to our needs, for our refreshment through all the journey of life.

LESSONS OF THE POWER AND GLORY OF GOD

Having journeyed to Mount Horeb (that is, Mount Sinai) the Prophet seems to have been without any special aim or purpose before, his mind, for he simply dwelt in a cave there. The Lord brings this fact that he had no definite purpose or aim in life, to the Prophet's attention by the inquiry, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

Elijah told the Lord how discouraged he felt, and why that he had in his zeal for the Lord attempted to do all that he could, but that apparently everything was wrecked, and the people of Israel had lost their courage and their faith in the Lord, and that apparently nothing further could be done to help them. And the Lord proposed to give Elijah a little lesson on various methods of work--so He sent him out upon the mountain, and there exhibited His power to him in various forms: (1) "A great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rock before the Lord." Here was an illustration of power such as Elijah had probably never before seen--wind with a velocity to rend the rocks; yet notwithstanding all this power, this was not God; it was merely the power of God. (2) He showed him an earthquake--the power of God to lift and to shake the mountains; yet neither was this the Lord, but an exhibition of His power. (3) A wonderful display of celestial fire, grand manifestation of omnipotence. (4) Finally, in a great stillness, he heard a small voice speaking to him. Ah, here he recognized God. It had an influence upon him that all the manifestations of power did not have. He wrapped his face in his mantle, and fled back to the cave.

We are not informed what the voice said to Elijah, but we see that he learned the lesson designed, namely, that God has a way of appealing to the heart of man more powerfully than by the wonderful gymnastics and phenomena of nature. Perhaps the small voice told Elijah that he should have had greater faith in God, and should have remained at his post, notwithstanding the threat of Jezebel, and that the Lord could have delivered him from her power. However, the Lord spoke to him again, intimating that he was doing nothing, and not in a place to do anything--"*What doest thou here?*" Elijah made the same response as before, about his discouragement, but by this time he had learned lessons of the Lord's providential dealing, and was prepared for the mission given him. The commission indicated that there was to be a general change in the affairs of Israel a new king instead of Ahab, and another prophet instead of Elijah. Hazael, who was anointed to be the new king over Syria, was to be the Divine agent in bringing the Divine judgment upon Israel and its king, Ahab, thus compelling reform and preparing for better conditions future.

The Lord's inquiry of Elijah may be variously emphasized, and may be applied fitly to each one of the Lord's consecrated people. It may be profitable to us if each one will ask himself the question, What doest thou here? What are we doing for the Lord and for His cause? What are we trying to do? Are we fleeing from the threats of the Lord's enemies? Are we discouraged in His service? Having begun in the spirit, are we hoping, contrary to His Word, to find earthly blessings and victories? Has the courage which enabled us for a time to fight, the good fight deserted us? After being courageous for the Lord and His Truth and His people are we in danger of being put to flight by a woman or a man, or any other creature? Is the Lord's arm shortened that it cannot help us and deliver us? Shall we receive of His marks of kindness and provision for our necessities of spiritual food, yet doubt His care and ability to supervise our temporal interests, and our endeavors to render service to His cause? Let us gather a blessing of instruction from the experience of Elijah, as delineated in this lesson, lest we be weary and faint in our minds. Greater is He that is on our part than all they that be against us. He will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape. His grace is sufficient for us. Nevertheless, for these things He will be inquired of by us, and He demands that we shall exercise faith in Him corresponding to His mercies and manifold favors to us for "without faith it is impossible to please God."--Heb. 11 :6.

ELIJAH'S LESSON SYMBOLICALLY CONSIDERED

Recognizing that Elijah was a typical character representative of Christ in the flesh (the complete Church, Head and Body) should lead us to scan every feature of his experience, to note, if possible, the correspondence to it in the experience of the Church. We have already pointed out that the discouragement of the Reformer and his flight represent the discouragement of many of God's people now, in view of the rising power of Papacy and the tendency of so-called *Protestants* to sympathy with Papal methods, and the general abandonment of faith in the "*ransom for all*" paid at Calvary.

It seems, therefore, not unreasonable to suppose that the *lesson* given to Elijah, just examined, represents a lesson which God has for His people now--to keep us at work undiscouraged or to revive the fainting. The lesson we see is this:

Protestants obtained from Papacy the false idea that the whole world must be converted during this Age. Experience and statistics prove that this is an impossible task; that the population increases at a tenfold more rapid ratio than even nominal conversions to Protestantism. Dismay and discouragement are followed by perplexity. But now as "meat in due season" the Lord gives His people an inkling respecting His *Plan* for man's salvation and it restores confidence and zeal on the part of His people. He shows them that His power will first be manifested and that afterward He will speak to the people by the still small voice of the spirit of the Truth which shall be surely heard.

The four exhibitions of the Lord, given to Elijah, represent, we believe, four manifestations in which the Lord is about to reveal Himself to mankind; the first three of which will prepare men for the final one in which will come the desired blessing to all the families of the earth. These are:

(1) The mighty winds rending the very rocks. Blowing winds seem to be used in Scripture as a symbol for wars.

And Revelation (7:1-3) teaches us that the wars, whose dark clouds have threatened the civilized world so ominously for the past fifty years, have been miraculously hindered to give opportunity for "sealing" the Lord's consecrated people in their foreheads (intellectually) with the Present Truth. We are therefore to expect that when the time shall come for the present order of things to pass away these winds of war shall be completely let loose, it will mean a cataclysm of warfare which shall divide kingdoms (mountains)--prefigured by the mighty wind shown to Elijah, which

rent the rock. But God's Kingdom will not follow the epoch of war: the world will not thus be made ready for the reign of Emmanuel. No, a further lesson will be needed and will be given. It is represented in

(2) An earthquake. Throughout the Scriptures an earthquake seems always to represent *revolution*, and it is not unreasonable to expect that an era of general warfare such as the world has just passed through, and other conflicts that are yet to be expected, would so arouse the lower classes of the various nations and so discontent them with their lot (and especially with the conditions which would follow such warfare) that *revolution* would be the next thing in order. If so, the earthquake made known to God's people is the one referred to in Revelation 16:18. But severe though those revolutionary experiences will be to the world, they are not sufficient to prepare men to hear the voice of God. It will require

(3) The fire from heaven--an epoch of Divine judgments and chastisements upon a maddened but unconverted world, wild in anarchy, as other Scriptures show us. The results of their wars and revolutions and anarchy, the failure of their schemes, and the lessons of Divine judgments will, however, have an exhausting and humbling effect, and prepare mankind for God's revelation of Himself in

(4) The still small voice. Yes, He who spoke to the winds and waves of the sea of Galilee will, in due time, "speak peace to the people." He will speak with authority, demanding the observance of His long neglected law of Love. "And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hear that Prophet shall be cut off from among His people." --Acts 3:23.

Mark the harmony of Psalm 46 with these thoughts drawn from Elijah's lesson. After portraying in symbol the dashing of the kingdoms of this world, the shaking of society by revolution and the figurative melting of society under the fire of God's judgments, and after every hope of man in his own power is gone, the still small voice is heard, commanding, "Be still and know that I am God! I will be exalted among the people, I will be exalted in the earth."

The difficulty with mankind is, in great part, their ignorance of God. 'And they fail to know Him, partly at least, because of their high opinion of their own wisdom and ability to get along without God. They will soon learn to the contrary and will then be willing to

hearken to Divine wisdom, and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain [Kingdom] of the Lord's house. He shall teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths."--Isa. 2:3; Micah 4:2.

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth."--Psa. 25:10.

The lesson to the Lord's people from these symbols is that God has the power by which eventually He will "subdue all things unto Himself," and bring order out of present confusion. We are to "wait patiently for Him," and labor on diligently and fervently to the extent of our opportunities and abilities and to "hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" for "in due season we shall reap if we faint not."--Gal. 6:9.

LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

"THE FATHER DID NOT FORGET ME?"

My dear Brethren:

Greetings! Phil. 1:2; Psa. 27:14.

Will you kindly accept the enclosed towards the cost of publishing Volume I, or if your Committee do eventually decide to abandon the scheme please use it as you deem best for the work. Kindly take from the amount sufficient to renew my subscription for the HERALD which is about due.

The past year has been one of painful surprise amongst the brethren in this district. I am astonished that they should have been so easily persuaded to adopt a method of witnessing so contrary to all former procedure under the guidance of our late dear Pastor. He was firm when necessary, it is true, but what always was manifest was his care to as wisely as possible utter his denunciations without being offensively rude. What a contrast today! I, amongst many other brethren, surrendered my office in the Class, as I could not take responsibility for such a work as was suggested, when the Class

adopted the same. It has meant much curtailment of opportunity for service, as well as heart-searching, and for a time I wondered if I had done right when it seemed that I was almost alone in protesting in the Class.

What I want to tell you is the comfort and help I received through the HERALD which was lent to me at the time when I made my stand. Many times have I thanked God for its tone and spirituality, and the encouragement and advice received has been invaluable; and in order that you may be encouraged to go on, is my purpose in writing thus. My case may and is but one amongst many. My heart was very sore and wounded, but the Father did not forget me and I thank Him.

What struck me so forcibly when coming in contact with the "Truth" eleven years ago, was the humility manifested by BROTHER RUSSELL and the *Watch Tower*. Now that your Committee desire to maintain that spirit as stated in the HERALD, it is my intention to induce others to read it, although prejudice is very strong. But still He will lead me as He leads you, and I pray in my life it may be manifested. The time may come when you will have many turn to you as I have done, and it will ever be my prayer that the spirit of humility and teachableness may guide you in all your ways.

The chronology findings are very welcome and satisfying. I have much enjoyed them, and now realize that time will be taken by God to work out the things we have been expecting so long. . . . May God bless and guide you all!

Yours in the bonds of loyalty to our Lord,

STRIVING TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS

Dear Brethren:

In appreciation for the daily food we have received of the Lord through your instrumentality we at this time give utterance of the beneficent effects--Counting our many blessings and seeing what God hath done. You have the assistance of our prayers that your hearts might be comforted and filled with good cheer, realizing withal that as

long as humility and passiveness in the hands of our Captain are practiced you will be meet for the Master's use.

We are still continuing in the things we have learned and have been assured of, striving to follow in the footsteps of the Master mid many adverse conditions. We need the assistance of your prayers that we may endure, and reflect the beautiful character of our Savior. Like an oasis in a desert land to a famished traveler have the many glorious messages in the HERALD been to us and they have served to enable us to still maintain the peace which passeth all understanding.

Enclosed find the amount of \$-----, which we are sending as evidence of our being in harmony with your desires to publish the First Volume of *Scripture Studies*. You are at liberty, however, to make disposition as you see fit. We intend from time to time to contribute as the Lord enables us.

We would be delighted if at any time it becomes possible for you to favor us with a Pilgrim visit if perchance one would be in our immediate vicinity.

Yours by His grace,

R. H. C., Sec'y.--*La.*

REALIZES FOOD FOR SOUL

Dear Sirs:

I have received one or two of your HERALDS through the mail, which was food to my soul, and enlightened my mind so much, and I am asking you to put me on your list. At this present time I am not able to send the money, but hope to be more able in the near future/and will be glad to pay for the subscription as I am very much impressed with the HERALD. It seemed like a God-send to me.

Thanking you kindly, and may God's blessing rest upon you for your kind offer.

Mrs. T. C. N.--III.

LONGS AFTER THE TRUE GOD

Dear Sirs:

I have derived great pleasure and assistance in reading several of your pamphlets kindly lent to me by a recently made friend of mine who is a Bible student. I have also read PASTOR RUSSELL'S "*Divine Plan of the Ages*" and "*The Time is at Hand,*" and found great comfort and light thereby, even far greater than I had ever dreamed.

I have, from my boyhood days, had a great longing after the "natural" and the true God, but my environments have been such that I could not get in touch with the right idea. It is but quite recently, after getting an insight into many sects of religion, and since meeting my friend, that I have turned to the Bible truths. And it seems as though I have had to cast off all my old associates and ties ere this was possible, which I have done, coming from the country to London about two years ago.

If you could advise me what best to read, or what mode of procedure the best to obtain all the Bible truth, I would be obliged. I do not wish for anything gratis--I am quite prepared to pay for any literature--but I am writing you because I need help and guidance in the right path. I would esteem it a very great favor if you would give me a helping hand in any way. Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

J.I.S.--Eng.

REFUSES TO SURMISE EVIL

Dear Brethren:

Please send me a dozen copies of the HERALD for November 1st, as the contents of this number seem to me to properly straighten out the

chronology concerning Israel's Double and I praise the Lord for this further blessing.

As, by His Grace, I choose to abide in the Beloved, to treat Him as my only and ever-present Head, and so make it possible for Him to use me at His pleasure, so He enables me ever better to see through His eyes and to regard others with something of His love and compassion. This means that not only will I refuse to surmise evil of any, but will always credit them with the best intentions, and so be enabled to think and to speak kindly of them. On the other hand, if I call myself by His name, and fail to abide in Him, fail to see that He and no other has full control of my every thought, then I am dishonoring my Head and laying myself open to be deceived by, and used of, the Adversary. In such case I need to lay hold, by faith, of grace to enable me to be perfectly loyal to my Master, to whole-heartedly do my duty to Him with a single eye to the glory of God.

With love in Him, dear brethren,

W. M.--*Scot.*

THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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OUTLOOK FROM THE WALLS OF ZION

WE read in *The Literary Digest* of December 31, 1921, an interesting article which clearly shows that there are some in these days who recognize that the spirit of sectarianism that has prevailed in Christendom for so long has produced anything but a desirable state—that the results are most unwholesome, and in every way contrary and damaging to the life of spirituality.

None can study the life and teachings of the Great Founder of Christianity without recognizing how grossly professed Christians have violated the spirit and essence of those teachings, in multiplying

divisions amongst themselves, and that, on the basis of certain non-essential matters. The Master's words in His prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel, "That they may be one, as We are one," stand out as a solemn rebuke to the spirit of dissension and sectarianism, as does also the illustrious admonition of Jesus: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another."

Evidently the writer in the above mentioned article is one who to some extent has caught the inspiration of the lessons of the Savior, in that in his concluding words he touches upon the key-note of the difficulty--the secret of the failure of professed Christians to attain the standard that Jesus set, namely, the lack of the spirit of consecration to God, and a sad deficiency of "the love of Jesus Christ." We submit the article, which was published under the following heading:

"DISARMING RELIGIOUS 'JINGOES'"

"Sectarian disarmament is said to be as necessary in the religious world as physical disarmament is among the nations, for, in proportion to their numbers and influence in every denomination, the sects 'embarrass and delay the progress of the kingdom of God! Like politics, Christianity has its 'war party,' 'jingoism,' 'dollar diplomacy' and its 'ecclesiastical Prussianism,' writes Rev. Edgar DeWitt Jones in *The Christian Century* (Undenominational), and as in the former field, so in the latter must effort be made to wipe out the devious forces of jealousy and distrust. Being a 'crude mixture of bigotry, prejudice, jealousy and intolerance,' sectarianism may be characterized as one of the most disruptive forces in Christianity, but the writer, who is a Disciples minister in Detroit, thinks 'it is too much to hope that it can be completely routed in any one or several generations! Limitation of sectarian armament, he holds, 'is as much as can be expected at present.' In common with many other surveyors of the field, this observer, who says he has practised what he preaches, declares that a reduction of unnecessary church building enterprises, with the consequent overlapping and duplication of activities, is imperative. As matters stand,

" 'Some portions of the country are woefully over-churched, other portions are without any church privileges at all. In 1911 in Colorado, one hundred thirty-three villages were found to be entirely without a Protestant church, over one hundred of them having no church of any sort. On the other hand, in a Pennsylvania village of four hundred fifty people there are six churches, each one struggling against heavy odds and presenting to the community an inadequate, a despairing and an utterly discouraged spectacle. In a New England village of one hundred fifty inhabitants there are six churches. In another Eastern township, eighteen churches minister to a population of about a thousand. It was Dr. Earl Taylor who said--and he was in a position

to know--"The great problem with the Protestant churches is not so much to get together as it is to keep apart--at least half a mile apart." Says Professor Drake: "The needless multiplication of churches means half-filled pews, half-hearted enthusiasm, a generally dreary and depressing atmosphere in which it is difficult to cultivate an eager spirituality; it means division of forces . . . impaired prestige . . . diminished power to fight sin and wrong. . . ."

" 'What a blessing it would be if communicants of churches could rid themselves of the idea that the only true church is the one to which they belong. There is no church that has fully apprehended Christian truth or that mirrors flawlessly the ideals of Jesus Christ. There are no "Christians only" in the fullest sense of the term. Those who are Christian are Christian plus some practises that are not Christian and minus other practises that are Christian. God has not given to any one race, any one nation, any one religion, a monopoly on Truth, or elected any particular communion to be the custodian of orthodoxy, not even my own. . . ."

"There is only one cure for the sectarian spirit, and that is love, even the love of Jesus Christ. Love is the only panacea."

"OUR JEWISH VISITORS AND PALESTINE DEVELOPMENTS"

An editorial taken from *The Boston Herald*, December 30, 1921, bears interestingly on the Jewish question, and in a general way reviews various items by which we gain what would seem to be a fair conception of the present status of the Zionist Movement and of the progress and developments in the Holy Land. The lesson to the prophetic student continues to be, "In God's due time."

"Boston has given welcome many times in the past to representatives of the Zionist movement, and this week its hand is warmly held out to the delegation which visits the city in the interest, not of Zionists alone, not of Palestinian Hebrews only, but of Jews everywhere. One thing we shall learn from these distinguished promoters of the movement which Theodore Herzl led so successfully is that the Holy land, despite all delays and setbacks, is today in a fair way of becoming a national home for the Jews! A few misunderstandings were inevitable, and a few anti-Zionist demonstrations followed the award of the Palestine mandate to Great Britain. But under the administration of Sir Herbert Samuel care is being taken to lessen the sources of conflict. The principle of absolute impartiality in the

treatment of races and creeds has been proclaimed with no uncertain voice. And full effect is being given to the provision that the advisory council shall be chosen 'from various sections of the people.'

"Chief among the sources of trouble that remain is the 'Arab question' so-called. The political aspect of that question was well disposed of by Mr. Balfour when he expressed the hope that the Arabs 'would not begrudge that small notch in the Arab territory being given to the people who for hundreds of years had been separated from it, but who surely had a title to develop on their own lines in the land of their forefathers.' The racial aspect was raised by fear of a 'Jewish majority' developing in the Holy Land, and that bugaboo is dispelled by the fact that the Arabs so outnumber the other elements of the population as to postpone the alleged 'danger' indefinitely. Such immigrants, moreover, as now enter the country are carefully selected in their places of origin with a view to their fitness for agricultural colonization, or with regard to their knowledge of a particular craft or trade. Meanwhile the controversy over whether Palestine is to form a 'Jewish state' or to furnish a 'national home' for the Jews is falling into the background.

"The logical outcome of the mandate and of the new settlement begun under the banner of Zionism is a better Palestine for both Arabs and Jews than it has ever been in the past. The Hebrew element, feared only to the extent that it is misunderstood, has already worked a revolution in the Holy Land. There are now seventy-two Jewish colonies in the country, owning among them 130,000 acres; since 1918 the Jews alone have spent more than \$10,000,000 on improvements in agriculture and in other enterprises. The early Hebrew colonists even under Turkish rule introduced modern machinery and methods; the new Jewish colonists have added other gifts, and the 'restoration' of Palestine, especially in the matter of agriculture, will depend increasingly on them. Meanwhile modern oil works, plants for the distilling of essential oils, silk factories, glass works and other industries have sprung into existence, with an effect on the foreign trade of Jaffa alone which has increased it to a total of nearly \$15,000,000 a year. It is further progress of this kind, to be attained only by hearty cooperation between Arab and Jew, which is to crown the work of Zionism in the Holy Land and make Palestine a benefit not only to its own people but also to the world."

THE MINISTRY OF SORROW

"Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord!" "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

--Psalm 130: 1; Job 34:29.

[Reprint from Pastor Russell]

THE life of every human being has its lights and shadows, its heights of joy and its depths of sorrow. These make up a large part of the warp and the woof of experience; and the web of character which flows from the active loom of life, will be fine and beautiful or coarse and homely, according to the skill and carefulness with which the individual weaves into it the threads of experience. In every life, in the present reign of sin and evil the somber shades predominate; and to such an extent is this true that the Word of God aptly describes the human family in their present condition as a groaning creation. "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth to gether until now," says the Apostle. The children of God are no exception to this universal rule; we also "groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the deliverance of our Body"--our company, the Body of Christ.--Romans 8:22, 23.

But while we are waiting for our deliverance, the daily experiences of life have a most important mission to us, and the manner in which we receive them should be a matter of deepest concern; for according to the use we make of them, each day's prosperity or its adversity and trial bear to us a blessing or a curse. Those experiences which we are accustomed to regard as prosperous often have in them subtle dangers. If wealth increases or friends multiply or a large measure of earthly joy comes to us, how almost imperceptibly the heart finds its satisfaction in the things of earth! But when the keen edge of sorrow and disappointment is felt, when riches or health fail, when friends forsake, and enemies take up a reproach against us, the natural tendency is to despondency and despair.

Just here is a very important part of the great warfare of the Christian's life. He must fight the tendencies of his old nature and must confidently claim and expect the victory, in the strength of the great Captain of his salvation. He must not yield to the alluring influences of favorable outward conditions, neither must he sink beneath the weight of trials and adversity. He must not permit any experience in life, however hard and painful, to sour and harden him or make him bitter, morose or unloving. Nor may he allow pride or love of show, or self righteousness, to feed upon the temporal blessings which the Lord in His loving providence has given him to prove his faithfulness as a steward.

DEPTHS OF SORROW LEAD TO HEIGHTS OF JOY

Sorrow and griefs may, and perhaps often will, come in like a flood, but the Lord will be our Stay and Strength in every experience which He permits. The soul that has never known the discipline of sorrow and trouble has never yet learned the joy and preciousness of the Lord's love and helpfulness. It is in seasons of overwhelming sorrow and grief, when we draw near to the Lord, that He draws especially near to us. So the Psalmist found it, when in his deep affliction he cried to God, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications." (Vs. 1, 2.) Feeling his own weaknesses and shortcomings, longing for full deliverance from every imperfection, and prophesying of the bountiful provisions of the Divine Plan of Salvation through Christ, he adds, "*If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities [imputing them to us], O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared [reverenced].*"--Vs. 3, 4.

How precious are such assurances when the soul is painfully conscious of its infirmities, of its utter inability to fully measure up to the perfect law of righteousness! How blessed it is to know that when our hearts are loyal and true, our God does not mark against us the unavoidable blemishes of our earthen vessel! If we come daily to Him for cleansing, through the merits of our Redeemer, our failures are not imputed to us, but freely forgiven and washed away. The perfect righteousness of our Savior is our glorious dress, arrayed in which we may come to God with humble boldness, courage--even into the presence of the great Jehovah, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

If thus God ignores the infirmities of our flesh, and fully receives us and communes with us as His dear children, we should so regard one another, considering not and charging not against one another the infirmities of the flesh, which each humbly confesses, and which they, like us, are earnestly endeavoring to overcome by the grace of God, to the best of their ability. To each one of the Lord's true children the words of the Apostle apply: "If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's Elect? Shall that God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Shall Christ that died?" (Romans 8:31, 33, 34--Diaglott.) The case is different, however, when the infirmities of the flesh are *cultivated*, indulged in without proper effort to correct them, and are justified, in order that the faults may be

continued. Then, indeed, they are charged against us, and if we do not speedily "judge ourselves," and take decisive measures to correct them, the Lord will Himself judge and chasten us.--1 Cor. 11:31, 32.

In the midst of the cares, perplexities and difficulties that come to the children of the Lord, we are to trust Him fully, and to possess our souls in peace and patience! We are to *wait* patiently for the Lord to outwork the issues of our experiences in His own good way. How *necessary* is the patient waiting on the Lord! The Psalmist says, "I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Psalm 130:5, 6.) In every experience of sorrow and distress, and when the strain of the jarring discords and the stinging vexations and wounds that make the heart bleed, threaten to overwhelm the spirit, let the child of God remember that "He *knows*, and *loves*, and *cares*," and that His ministering angel is ever near us, and that no trial will be permitted to be too *severe*. The dear Master is standing by the crucible, and the furnace heat will never be permitted to grow so intense that the precious gold of our characters shall be destroyed, or even injured. Ah, no! If by His grace the experiences may not work for our good, they will be turned aside. He loves us too well to permit any needless sorrow, any needless suffering.

THE REWARD OF PATIENT WAITING

"Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." (Psalm 37:5-7.) We must not be disappointed and allow our faith to falter when the test of patient endurance is applied, while the outward peace and quietness which we crave tarry long. Our Father has not forgotten us when the answer to our prayers seems to be delayed. Outward peace and calm are not always the conditions best suited to our needs as New Creatures; and we would not desire conditions in which the precious fruits of the Spirit would not grow and develop in us. Therefore, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you, but rejoice." (1 Peter 4:12, 13.) He who numbers the very hairs of our heads is never indifferent to the sufferings and needs of His weakest and humblest child. Oh, how sweet is the realization of such loving, abiding care! "When *He* giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

The saints have indeed in every sorrow and grief a blessed consolation of which the world is wholly in ignorance. None but the true child of God can know it. What is this consolation? Oh, you who have never enlisted under the banner of the Cross, who have never put yourselves wholly into the hands of the Lord to be moulded and fashioned into His glorious likeness, who have never made an earnest effort to stem the tide of the tendencies of your own fallen nature, who have never contended earnestly for Truth and righteousness in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, what can you know of the sweets of this Divine consolation? It is the precious balm of Gilead for wounded spirits on the battlefield of life, it is the stimulating, refreshing draught for fainting souls, hard pressed by the relentless foe. It is the soothing caress of a loving hand upon the fevered brow of the noble contender for Truth and godliness. It is the gentle whisper of hope and love and courage when heart and flesh are almost failing. This is Divine consolation, the only consolation that has in it any virtue of healing or refreshment. It is reserved alone for those noble souls who are faithfully bearing the burden and heat of the day in the service of the King of kings; while those who listlessly drift with the current of the world and the downward tendencies of the carnal nature can never have an intimation of its sweetness.

How loving and tender is our God, and how wise and strong! His promises have never failed those who have put their trust in Him. We may feel that our efforts to be good and to do good are very unproductive, that the opposition from without and within is very strong. But it is when we are weak, when we realize our own helplessness and incompetency, that we may be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. It is then that we may realize that His strength is made perfect in our weakness. The fact that we are weak and lame does not separate us from the love and power of our God, while we are striving to do His will; for "He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." Then let us more and more lay hold of this strength of the Lord, that we may courageously pursue our course in the narrow way of difficulty and trial. Precious indeed to the saint of God is the ministry of pain and sorrow!

"YE HAVE SEEN THE PATIENCE OF JOB"

The saints of every Age have learned the blessing of afflictions and sorrows. The Psalmist David says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes;" and again, "Before I was

afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy Word." (Psalm 119:67, 71.) God's faithful servant Job suffered almost overwhelming troubles, but the Lord brought him out into a large place when his testings had accomplished their designed effect. He was proven and strengthened by his sore experiences. Few if any of us could suffer more. He suffered the loss of all his property, then of all his children, whom he loved, then of the love and loyalty of his wife; and finally, he was smitten with sore disease--boils, from head to foot. To crown all, three of his friends came to see him on hearing of his great trials; and instead of being true comforters, they added to his sorrows by insisting that his own sins must have been the cause of all these disasters; that his experiences must surely be punishments from the Lord because of unfaithfulness on his part. Surely poor Job was afflicted!

But did he lose his faith in God? Hear him: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord!" (Job 1:21.) "Though, He slay me, yet will, I trust in Him." (Job. 13:15.) Job was indeed much cast down, but he maintained his integrity of character and his faith in the Lord through all. He did not charge God with injustice, and God did not desert His faithful servant. He reproved his accusers and required them to offer sacrifice, and instructed Job to pray for them, that their trespasses might be overlooked. In the end he was blessed more abundantly, than ever before. God made him a great type of the human family, of the troubles of their fallen condition and of their final restoration to all that was lost in Adam, with the blessings of added experiences to make them wise. How faithful is the Lord in all His dealings! Truly His children should never doubt His love; for

"Faith can firmly trust Him,
Come what may."

PRECIOUSNESS OF INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

It is when continued trust in the Lord and His many responsive providences in our lives have ripened into precious personal acquaintance and intimacy that we learn to delight in Him. Yes, it is when heart answers to heart, when pleading prayer brings recognized answers of peace, when the Divine love and care have been clearly seen in the guidance of our way, that we can recognize the abiding presence with us of the Father and the Son. Then, however dark may be our way, however severe may be the storm that rages about us, the thought of Divine protection is ever with us, so that as the children of

the Lord we are never in despair; though cast down, we are not destroyed; though persecuted, we are never forsaken. We know our Father's hand is ever at the helm, that His love and care are sure and unfailing.

Those who have come into real heart sympathy with God have learned to see Him as the Fountain of all goodness and Truth and blessing. To them He is the One altogether lovely. His Law is their delight. His friendship and love are their very life. When the heart has become thus centered in God, it is the most natural impulse to commit its way unto Him. These can truly sing with the poet:

"So on I go, not knowing, I would not if I might;
I'd rather walk in the dark with God Than go alone in the light;
I'd rather walk by faith with Him Than go alone by sight,"

Surely these have the desires of their heart, and no good thing shall be withheld from them. Their fervent prayers avail much, and in the Lord's good time their righteousness, however much it may now be misunderstood, misrepresented and evil-spoken of, shall be brought forth as the light--clear, cloudless and widely manifest; and their judgment, the justice and righteousness of their course and of their hearts, shall be brought forth as the noonday. Even while we remain here as aliens and foreigners in the enemy's land, we shall be fed, nourished, temporally and spiritually, and shall rejoice and be glad in the "house of our pilgrimage." Precious indeed are the promises of God; and to the praise of His abounding grace, His saints of the past and of the present all bear ample testimony to their fulfilment.

"Who need faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst to assuage?
Grace, which like the Lord, the Giver,
Never fails from Age to Age!"

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY XCVII--JANUARY 8

THE POURING OUT OF THE FIFTH VIAL--Rev. 16:10,11

(581) Name the symbols that are employed in connection with the pouring out of the fifth Vial. What are the effects produced? H '20-198.

(582) What is the general thought of early expositors regarding the application and fulfilment of the fifth Vial symbols. Point out wherein the application seems deficient and not to meet the requirements. H '20-198.

(583) What great Church system is affected by the pouring out of this Vial? What great Church system claims infallibility, and how is the term infallibility defined? H'20-198.

(584) Explain the meaning of the symbolic expression "biting their tongues;" and how is this fulfilled ? State how recent proceedings and utterances of the Papacy have a bearing on the interpretation of this symbol. H '20-198, 199.

(585) What condition is pictured to the mind in the expression "his kingdom was darkened"? H '20-198.

STUDY XCVIII--JANUARY 15

THE POURING OUT OF THE FIFTH VIAL (Cont.) --Rev. 16:10, 11

(586) Explain the circumstances and conditions that have caused Papacy to disannul many of her former decrees, H '20-199.

(587) Give Scriptures showing the Lord's method of destroying error and binding those who are its supporters. H '20-199.

(588) What are the facts which indicate in modern times a changed attitude toward the Bible and the appearance of reform on the part of the Papacy, more or less in conflict with her past proceedings? and

show how this has a bearing on the fulfilment of this vision. H '20-199, 200.

(589) What is the significance of the seat of the Beast? H '20-201.

(590) Has the fifth Vial, or any of those preceding, met complete fulfilment up to the present time? H '20-201.

STUDY CIX--JANUARY 22

THE POURING OUT OF THE SIXTH VIAL--Rev. 16:12-16

(591) What historic account is the basis of the symbolic picture furnished us in the pouring out of the sixth Vial? What particular feature of the symbol leads to this conclusion? H '20-213.

(592) *Give a description of literal Babylon And its downfall. H '20-213.*

(593) Cite other Scriptures referring to Babylon and her overthrow, and show the correspondency between literal and symbolic Babylon. H '20-213.

(594) To what does the "Great River Euphrates" refer? Give Scriptures in confirmation. H '20-213.

(595) What is signified by the "drying up of its waters"? What incidents in late years have a bearing on this, and how may we look for a complete fulfilment? H '20-213, 214.

STUDY CX--JANUARY .29

THE POURING OUT OF THE SIXTH VIAL (Cont.)--Rev. 16:12-16

(596) Who are represented by the "Kings of the East"? What is the interpretation generally among expositors and what difficulty do we meet in harmonizing this view with the rest of the vision? H '20-214.

(597) What is the antitypical significance of "the Dragon," "the Beast," and "the False Prophet"? H '20-214.

(598) What is represented by the three impure spirits like frogs? H '20-215, 216.

(599) Give the significance of Armageddon? How and when will this gathering to Armageddon be accomplished? What should be the attitude of the Lord's people in connection with these circumstances and conditions? H '20-216, 217.

(600) Explain verse 15 and show its significance in connection with the rest of the vision. H '20-216, 217.

STUDY CXI--FEBRUARY 5

THE POURING OUT OF THE SEVENTH VIAL--Rev. 16:17-21

(601) Give a brief description of the pouring out of the seventh Vial. What particular thought do we get from the fact that this is the seventh Vial? H '20-231.

(602) What thoughts of general importance are at once suggested to the mind in this symbolic picture? H '20-231.

(603) Explain the symbolic significance of the word "Air" as used in the Scriptures. Cite Scripture texts. H '20-231.

(604) What is the first result noticed after the pouring out of the seventh Vial; and what reasonable conclusion do we arrive at regarding the voice from the Temple? H '20-231, 232.

(605) In what sense is the seventh Plague distinct and separate from the preceding six, and what is there to be observed concerning the fulfilment or close proximity of this seventh Vial symbol? H '20-232.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES XIII-A -- CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO PHILADELPHIA (Cont.)

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."--Rev. 3:11.

IT will be seen to be of peculiar and solemn significance that the Savior in His message to Philadelphia announces the imminence of His Second Coming--that it is about to occur--is near at hand. The language, therefore, seems to say that when this period of the Church's history shall be reached, she will have approached closely unto the end of the Age, and it will then be a comparatively short time until the official Second Presence of Christ will be revealed on the earth for the purpose of gathering all the faithful unto Himself and the establishing of His Kingdom in fulfilment of the many Divine promises.

IN THE DAYS OF HIS PRESENCE

When the close of this period of time, covered by the Philadelphian phase of the Church is reached, the Second Coming of Christ will indeed be at hand. Only one message then remains to be delivered--that to Laodicea. In that message, the Savior announces not that He will come soon, but that He has come: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," which clearly implies that His Second Advent will then be an accomplished fact.

It is the steadfast conviction of many of the faithful watchers who have given the subject of time prophecy and of our Lord's Second Coming the most sober and careful consideration, that the Church has already merged from the Philadelphian period into that of Laodicea. The reaching of this conclusion has caused such watchers to earnestly examine all Scriptural testimony, in the light of the signs of the times, to discern if possible a line of proof evidencing the fact that Christ's Second Presence has already taken place. Such sober investigation appears to have been well rewarded in the revealing of such facts, such lines of truth, as have led us to consider seriously the teaching that the Master has indeed come, in an official capacity the second time, to execute the Divine Purposes and to fulfil all thing written. In fact, the evidences presented, appeal most strongly that the words of the Savior, "Behold, I come quickly," have met their fulfilment. He said that His coming was to be "as a thief." The signs about us of His presence are

many. Amongst these is the clear unfolding of the great Divine Plan of the Ages. The marvelous assembling of the various truths by which God's purpose throughout the Ages is fully appreciated by a good number of His people, is one of the many evidences that we are living now in the days of the Second Presence that He has come forth and served His people with things new and old out of His great storehouse. (Luke 12:37.) Other evidences can and will be noted in due time in the course of this study.

THE TRUE CHURCH BOUND TOGETHER ONLY BY LOVE

Philadelphia, located as it is, in the successive order of the seven Epistles, between Sardis and Laodicea, both of which latter represent conditions existing in the rejected church systems of Romanism and Protestantism, seems to stand, with its blessed principles of brotherly love, in marked contrast with these two Churches, as picturing that movement in which the brotherhood of God's saints is being more clearly made manifest. As already noted, Philadelphia does not seem to represent any system or organization, but rather that movement of the Spirit, the object of which is to emphasize the oneness of all true believers as children of the one Father, having one Lord and Master, one faith and one baptism, members of the one Body, united together by the one Spirit in the bond of peace. As there is not one single thing in Laodicea. to commend, Philadelphian conditions in Laodicea must not be looked for in an organized state, but rather as a *condition* manifested by individual believers both inside and outside of the organized profession. It is very apparent from the teaching of other Scriptures that all the true and overcoming believers in the Laodicean period will not be found in one organization of their own. This seems apparent from the fact that every religious *organization*, as such, will at last be "found wanting" and will go down in the closing scenes of the "hour of trial that is to try those who dwell on the earth." Therefore, all attempts to accomplish such a binding together, will of necessity fail. The true overcomers will be known as lovers and defenders of God's Word, and confessors of everything that is comprehended in "His name,"--free from human bondages; and beyond all this, recognizing and fellowshiping and cooperating in service, so far as they are permitted, with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. And they will be manifesting in its fulness the Philadelphian spirit of brotherly love.

This latter state or condition has always described the more than "overcomers" of all ages, and will continue to describe them in the rejected Laodicean period, even until the end.

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH THOU HAST"

Again, as noting a matter of vital importance, it should be remembered that Philadelphia is the only Church, but one, that received no rebuke, no reproof. This being true, most naturally there comes to our mind the question, What then is the overcoming? for overcoming is as much required of Philadelphian believers as it is of those in the other Churches, Ephesus, Smyrna, etc. There can be but one answer. It is contained in the solemn and Divine warning of the Savior: "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The overcoming, then, is represented in the holding fast the Philadelphian character of love-brotherly love. This is that which even now in Laodicea is trying, testing, proving, the hearts of those who claim to possess so much of Truth. Let the followers of Christ now living take heed, then, that they are found to be true Philadelphians, though they do not belong in the prophetic sense to that period, which is in the past. Whatever other tests there may be--and there are other tests--whatever more is required, the Philadelphian character, the spirit of brotherly love is the great test, the final test. *This test is not that of loyalty to a system, an organization, a human agent, a messenger, but loyalty to Christ*, which will be the holding fast of the Word and the Name and the patience of Christ. "Not the word of even the leaders of God's raising up. *The truth must ever commend the man, never the man the truth*. One great danger is, lest, having begun with the former principle, we slip into the latter. Even the truth they [the Divinely called leaders] teach is not truth *received* till it has been gotten at the Master's feet and in communion with Himself--till you can hold it, not with the eyes *shut*, but with eyes open--till you can maintain it for truth against the very instrument used of God to give it you, if need by. 'If we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.'

"Then, Hold Fast!, When it is no longer a question if it be the truth, but only of its consequences. Hold fast: though those who have held it with you, or before you, give it up; though it separate you from all else whomsoever; though it be worse dishonored by the evil of those who profess it; though it seem utterly useless to hope of any good from it; in the face of the world, in the face of the devil, in the face of the saints--'hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown!'

"For many a crown has been lost, and many a crown will be lost, if the Lord should tarry. Yet he who will hold fast shall find Christ's arms underneath him, Christ's hands upon his hands. He shall not only keep, he shall be kept; in the might of Christ's victory he shall stand, and the crown given he shall cast before the Giver of it as a trophy of His own conquest, and the fruit of His grace." *

The proper holding fast to the Word, the Name, and the patience of Christ, will always be in the Philadelphian spirit, the spirit of love, love for those whom Christ specially loves--those for whom He laid down His life. "[Though] no one has seen God at any time, [yet] if we love each other God dwells in us; and His love has been perfected in us." (1 John 4:12.) Therefore, "Let brotherly love continue."

A PILLAR IN THE TEMPLE OF MY GOD

Next we have the cheering promise to the overcomer: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out."

The "Temple" in this passage refers to the anti-typical Temple, the glorified Christ, Head and Body. The use of the pillar as a figure here seems to have reference to the purpose for which the two great pillars for the porch of Solomon's temple of old were used: the one was called Jachin, meaning "establisher"; the other Boaz, meaning "in which is strength." The Philadelphian, who has in the present time, "little strength," becomes in that great anti-typical Temple a pillar of strength. The true Philadelphian describes, in fact, the final overcomers; Philadelphia describes the company of such. Pillars are simply expressions of strength. The word is used in I Tim. 3:15 as descriptive of "the Church [house] of God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

"And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name."

Reference is doubtless made here to the custom prevalent in all ages of writing upon pillars or obelisks records and histories. During the long

centuries of the past, the great Babylon had been claiming to be this anti-typical Temple, the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God; and thus the true significance of the name of the New Jerusalem, of my God, the Temple of God, and its pillars, was hidden, except to a few, during these same long, dreary centuries; while a counterfeit, of Satan's manufacture, is so-called, having no resemblance whatever to God's Temple and its pillars, or Holy City. His faithful ones then will be pillars of strength in that Temple. They have, all down the centuries, been despised and looked upon as merely negating everything in the midst of the multitude of names claimed by the false church in this world. But at last, all the names worthy of being known are, as it were, permanently graved upon the true Philadelphian overcomers. They had gone forth to Him without the camp, in this life, but now, no more to go out, but fixed, established as pillars in God's great Temple, through which the whole testimony and character of God, written as it were on these pillars, will be made known to the world.

*GRANT, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, pp. 207, 208.

"AND HE SHALL GO NO MORE OUT"

One of the clearest, most edifying and soul-refreshing interpretations of this wonderful promise to the overcomer is that given by MR. BARNES, who wrote in 1851. It is strengthening to the faith of the devout believer as he discovers how God, from time to time, has unfolded His Word to various servants (who lived and wrote in the Philadelphian period, particularly in its closing years), for the encouragement and upbuilding of His people. While we do not find that they had the full, clear light of the "morning," they had on some matters as clear a vision as those faithful ones who have testified and are testifying outside of the various systems of the Laodicean period. This was eminently true of this Philadelphian writer. We quote from his comment on these words of Christ addressed to the Philadelphian overcomers:

"The promised reward of faithfulness here is, that he who was victorious would be honored as if he were a pillar or column in the Temple of God. Such a pillar or column was partly for ornament and partly for support, and the idea here is, that in that Temple he would contribute to its beauty and the justness of its proportions, and would at the same time be honored as if he were a pillar which was necessary for the support of the Temple. It is not uncommon in the New

Testament to represent the Church as a temple, and Christians as a part of it. (See I Cor. 3:16, 17; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:5.) *'And he shall go no more out.'* He shall be permanent as a part of that spiritual Temple. The idea of 'going out' does not properly belong to a pillar, but the speaker [Christ] here has in His mind *the man*, though represented as a column. The description of some parts would be applicable more directly to a pillar in others more properly to a man. Compare John 6:37; 10:28, 29; 1 John 2:19, for an illustration of the sentiment here. The main truth here, is that, if we reach heaven, our happiness will be secure forever. We shall have the most absolute certainty that the welfare of the soul will no more be periled; that we shall never be in danger of falling into temptation; that no artful foe shall ever have power to alienate our affections from God; that we shall never die. Though we may change our place, and may roam from world to world, till We shall have surveyed all the wonders of creation, yet we shall never 'go out of the Temple of God.' When we reach the Heavenly world, our conflicts will be over" our doubts at an end. As soon as we cross the threshold, we shall be greeted with the assurance, 'he shall go no more out forever.' That is to be our eternal abode, and whatever of joy or felicity or glory that bright world can furnish, is to be ours. Happy moment when, emerging from a world of danger and of doubt, the soul can settle down into the calmness and peace of that state where there is the assurance of God Himself that that world of bliss is to be its eternal abode.

"And I will write upon him the name of my God,"--considered as a pillar or column in the Temple. The name of God would be conspicuously recorded on it to show that he belonged to God. The allusion is to a public edifice on the columns of which the names of distinguished and honored persons were recorded; that is, where there was a public testimonial of the respect in which one whose name was thus recorded was held. The honor thus conferred on him 'who should overcome,' would be as great *as if* the name of that God whom he served, and whose favor and friendship he enjoyed, were inscribed on him in some conspicuous manner. The meaning is that he would be known and recognized as belonging to God; the God of the Redeemer Himself--indicated by the phrase, 'the name of my God.'

HOME AT LAST IN THE HOLY CITY

"And the name of the city of my God"--that is, indicating that he belongs to that city, or that the New Jerusalem is the city of his habitation. The idea would seem to be, that in this world, and in all

worlds wherever he goes and wherever he abides, he will be recognized as belonging to that holy city; as enjoying the rights and immunities of such a citizen.

"Which is New Jerusalem.' Jerusalem was the place where the temple was reared, and where the worship of God was celebrated. It thus came to be synonymous with the Church--the dwelling place of God on earth.

"Which cometh down out of heaven from my God.' Of course, this must be a figurative representation, but the idea is plain. It is (1) that the [glorified] Church is, in accordance with settled Scripture language, represented as a city [a government]--the abode of God on earth. (2) That this, instead of being built here, or having an earthly origin, has its origin in heaven. It is *as if* it had been constructed there, and then sent down to earth ready formed. The type, the form, the whole structure is heavenly. It is a departure from all proper laws of interpretation to explain this *literally*, as if a city should be actually let down from heaven; and equally so to infer from this passage and the others of similar import in this book, that a city will be literally *reared* for the residence of the saints. If the passage proves anything on either of these points, it is, that a great and splendid city, such as that described in chapter 21, will literally come down from heaven. But who can believe that? Such an interpretation, however, is by no means necessary. The comparison of the Church with a beautiful city, and the fact that it has its origin in Heaven, is all that is fairly implied in the passage.

" 'And I will write upon him my new name.' The *reward*, therefore, promised here is, that he who by persevering fidelity showed that he was a real friend of the Savior, would be honored with a permanent abode in the holy City of his habitation. In the Church redeemed and triumphant [symbolized by the New Jerusalem] he would have a perpetual dwelling, and wherever he should be, there would be given him sure pledges that he belonged to Him, and was recognized as a citizen of the heavenly world. [We would say, sharers in the Heavenly Government itself.]"*

**Notes on Revelation, pp. 118-120.*

We should hardly expect that this man of God, who may well be regarded as one of the light-bearers of the Philadelphian period, would

understand the full nature of the reward of joint-heirship with the Redeemer in His Kingdom. There were those, however, who lived in the latter part of the Philadelphian period who did have clear views of the reigning with Christ. From the writings of some of these faithful ones, we have already quoted, and will, in the interpretation of some of the visions farther on in the book, have occasion to quote more of them. However, MR. BARNES was what is termed a Post-Millennialist, and therefore would fail to understand the nature of this reward as having reference to the thousand-year reign of Christ and His overcoming saints. In a comment on Rev. 3:21, which mentions particularly the reward of the overcomers as being privileged to occupy the throne with Christ, he has said that they will share His honors and triumphs: 'Even as I overcame'--as I gained a victory over the world, and over the power of the Tempter. As the reward of this, He is exalted to the throne of the universe, and in these honors achieved by their great and glorious Head, all the redeemed [the overcomers] will share."

"WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH"

The Philadelphian message closes with the seven-times-repeated individual application contained in the words: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches." There seems to be some special significance in the fact that while Christ utters these words, the hearer is to give heed to what the "Spirit" saith. It would seem to be that only those who possess a large measure of the Holy Spirit would be able either to understand or heed Christ's words. That spirit will cause all to feel a dependence upon the Father; it is a submissive spirit to the Father's will--a prayerful spirit, a holy spirit, a meek and humble spirit, an uncom-promising, loyal spirit to the Truth, a self-sacrificing, cross-bearing spirit. In the very many tests that will be applied to the overcomer, *many* of them will have to be met and decided by the kind of spirit manifested by those who bring or cause the tests to come. In other words, in the various siftings and separations that come along doctrinal lines, of those possessing this Holy Spirit there will be some who will be able to decide where they stand only by the spirit manifested. In other words, it will be more the spirit that will be manifested that will enable them to detect error, etc.; and this, on account of inability to decide for themselves the correctness of some of the doctrinal teaching advanced by professed teachers.

ELIJAH IN NABOTH'S VINEYARD

--JANUARY 29-1 KINGS 21:1-29--

Golden Text.--"Be sure your sin will find you out."--Num. 32:23.

JEZEBEL is marked by the incidents of this lesson, if we had no other record of her evil way, as being a most diabolical woman. The tenderness which belongs to her sex had entirely given place to the feeling of envy, pride and ambition, incident to her great exaltation to power as the wife of King Ahab. She was ready to instigate perjury, and the foulest of murder, to gratify her whims, or to please those who truckled to her vanity. And the terrible degradation to which the people of Israel and their elders, who were presumably of average or more than average intelligence, had descended, is shown by their willingness to obey their wicked queen, in utter disregard of their own consciences and of justice. It is doubtful whether our disgust should be greater with the queen, who instigated the evil, or with the elders, who so supinely became her tools to accomplish it. This shows, however, that where a people lose sight of the grand teachings of the law of the Lord, and come under the influence of the devil, through other religions; there is no knowing where the corruption of morals will end--all sense of justice and right seems to become obliterated in proportion as people are separated from the Lord and from the word of His testimony.

The fact that infidels of today are not always immoral is no contradiction of this thought, for although they may reject the Lord in their hearts, they cannot reject nor get away from the influences of His law of justice which has come to be recognized throughout the entire civilized world, and made the basis of all civil law. Besides, they are continually in touch with Christian influences, and some of them (for instance, Robert Ingersoll) received from Christian parents a good moral basis of character, which would not exhaust in one generation, even though the faith were lost from it.

THE SIN OF COVETOUSNESS

The beginning of this crime perpetrated by Jezebel and the elders of Israel--the murder of Naboth--was Ahab's sin of covetousness. He coveted Naboth's vineyard, and wished to purchase it, and, as the sequel shows, although he did not perpetrate the crime of murder himself, he was quite satisfied with the crime and its results, and hastened to appropriate the murdered man's vineyard, at the earliest opportunity. There is a great lesson here for Christian people today.

While the crime of murder is recognized and thoroughly reprobated, the crime of covetousness is now not only general and common, but almost approved as proper. It seems to be generally practised, and almost without a suspicion as to its being wrong, sinful, condemned of the Lord, and fruitful of many evil works of the flesh and of the devil.

We do not mean to charge as covetousness a desire to prosper as well as one's neighbor: desires are covetous when we wish to possess and enjoy that which we see in the possession of our neighbor: it implies a willingness to take from him a part or all of his prosperity, and to appropriate the same to ourselves. This spirit of covetousness may be readily discerned among business men and manufacturers; less readily discerned, but nevertheless present, in the ranks of labor, and in the social circle. It is unnecessary to point out how business people envy one another success, and seek to attract from one another the trade which brings the success. And in the ranks of labor, especially where competition is open, it is not infrequently the case that the workman will disparage the work or character of a fellow-workman, in order to have favor with the overseer or employer, or in hope of personal advancement. These are illustrations of covetousness in operation.

In society it works very stealthily, very quietly, fearing that it should react upon the covetous one unfavorably; hence, in society, the effort to undermine the character of another and thereby to advance one's self in the good graces of others, is kept under cover, and ably assisted by its yokefellow, hypocrisy. When covetousness sees an other occupying a preferred place it stealthily conceals the dagger with which it would smite the Naboth that thwarts its ambitions. It sometimes assumes a mask of love, and strikes the dagger of scandal under professions of love and esteem, or of pity and sympathy. At other times it has the hypocritical mask of duty, religion, fidelity to God, etc., while it seeks to stab Naboth in his vitals, and to gain possession of the vineyard coveted, or whatever it may be.

Nor is the Church of God free from those who have this spirit of covetousness. It inspires many petty jealousies and envyings and strifes as to which should be greater, for honorable positions, etc. And how many large and small scandals have been the results of covetousness, and a desire to break down the influence of one, for the purpose of establishing the influence of another, or of himself or herself!

Ahab's covetousness was of the most approved kind, in that it sought to act through others, and stoned Naboth to death by proxy, rather than directly by his own act. That Ahab fully endorsed the conduct of Jezebel is shown by his ready acceptance of the fruits of her villainy; and this fact, in connection with the fact that the Lord sent the reproof as much to Ahab as to Jezebel, leaves room for the inference that he had intentionally worked upon the feelings of Jezebel, with a view to getting her (more courageous for wickedness than himself) to devise and carry out plans for the satisfaction of his covetousness. So some today seem to feel free to covet the possessions of others--social, religious, financial or otherwise--and to take possession of these, if possible, but they strive to have the dirtiest part of the work done by others, or at least not directly by themselves. But such unquestionably are sharers in every crime to which their covetousness by any road may lead others,

THE HEART DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS

Let all who have named the name of Christ be especially on guard respecting this deceptive, covert sin; and the best ounce of prevention that we can take against it (far better than any pound of cure after it, has entered in) is to have our hearts permeated with the spirit of love, of which we are told, "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor." And more than this, "Love envieth not, seeketh not her own [interests merely, but is concerned for the interests of others], is kind, helpful, generous, good."

As an illustration of how hypocrisy usually accompanies covetousness, seeking to cover up the real motives and intentions not only from fellow-creatures, but from one's own conscience, and from the Lord, note in this lesson how Jezebel accomplished her purpose through the appointment of a feast, and the giving of Naboth, the victim, a seat of honor in connection therewith. Alas, that it must be said that religion has often been injured by being made the tool of hypocrisy and covetousness. And similar principles are still at work in the world, and the same great prime mover and instigator of evil is still master of ceremonies, and as willing as ever to help forward every wicked cause and to prosper the evil work and way of the covetous. "We are not ignorant of his devices."

"My soul, be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise;

The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the prize."

But while the Lord did not interfere to Protect Naboth, nor to prevent the machinations of the Evil One and his servants, he nevertheless took note of the evil, and did not permit it to pass unpunished. Accordingly, when Ahab went in to take possession of the vineyard, and to rejoice his heart that his covetous desires had reached accomplishment, the Lord sent Elijah to meet him in the vineyard. Ahab recognized the Prophet at once, and evidently smitten by his conscience, exclaimed: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy!" And Elijah answered, "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord." Then follows the prophecy of violent deaths to his children, and that the dogs should eat Jezebel; all literally fulfilled later.

However, Ahab was learning to have great confidence in the word of Elijah, and in the power of Jehovah; and when he heard this prophecy, "he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth and went softly." On account of this degree of repentance the Lord sent word through Elijah that the calamities prophesied would not be in Ahab's day, but in the days of his sons. The fact that sinners may for a time go unpunished, the Apostle Peter shows us, is a mark of God's patience and forbearance, and not an indication that He will not reward both the well-doer and the evildoer.

Some one has said, "Covetousness is like drinking the salt waters of the sea, which only increase the thirst; or like piling wood on the fire, which only makes it burn the fiercer; or like climbing higher, which only enlarges the horizon of the desires." The only covetousness encouraged by the spirit of righteousness and the Word of the Lord is that mentioned by the Apostle, "Covet earnestly the best gifts"--the gifts of Divine grace and love which neither rob others, nor make God the poorer.

ELIJAH TAKEN UP INTO HEAVEN,

--FEBRUARY 5-2 KINGS 2:1-18--

Golden Text.- *"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."*--Rev. 2:10

THE closing scenes in the life of Elijah's career are indeed of intense interest to the Christian. The separation from Elisha by the fiery chariot, and his being carried heavenward by the whirlwind, are features that may be properly regarded as of special import, for the reason that they appear to be pictorial of matters and circumstances that pertain to the close of the Church's career in the flesh.

From the lessons which we have previously considered in the history of Elijah, it is quite manifest that his life in a general way was intended to be pictorial, illustrative. This we say, not as our surmise or guess, but because we have positive statements in the Scriptures which unmistakably indicate that Elijah was a typical character. The prophecy of Malachi, recorded in the last Book of the Old Testament, bears us down to the close of the present dispensation and identifies an Elijah class--"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." (Mal. 4:5.) Again, reference is made to Elijah in the New Testament, in connection with our Lord's First Advent. The work of John the Baptist was said to have been the work of Elijah; that is, a work more or less corresponding to the work of Elijah the reformer. (Luke 1:17.) Our Lord Himself identifies Elijah with the work that was going on at that time. (Matt. 11:14.) And Jesus said, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things."--Matt. 17:11.

TYPICAL FEATURES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH

It is only when we view the history of Elijah from the standpoint of a type of more wonderful things coming afterward on a larger scale, that we can grasp in any measure the force and meaning of the lessons taught through these types. In connection with the present lesson we will briefly note some of the striking pictures in Elijah's history.

We see in John the Baptist the repetition of the type, he being a fresh type corresponding to Elijah, as Herod corresponded to Ahab; and Herodius was an advanced type of Jezebel. Similarly John the Baptist, like Elijah, sought to effect a reformation in Israel, and similarly he failed. Let us glance very hastily at the antitype of these things portrayed in the Book of Revelation. There the antitypical Jezebel is distinctly pointed out, and, in harmony with commentators since the Reformation time, we understand the antitype to be the apostate Church, the Papacy--the civil government of the Roman Empire in its decisions corresponding to King Ahab, consequently the agent of the antitypical Jezebel in accomplishing her desires, in propagating her

system and destroying the prophets of the Lord. As had been predicted, so it was fulfilled: "She wore out the saints of the Most High God," and "was drunken with the blood of the saints."--Rev. 17:6; 18:24.

In the antitype, if Papacy represents the woman Jezebel, and if the civil power was the antitype of Ahab, where is Elijah? We answer that the antitypical Elijah all through this Gospel Age has been made up of the Lord's faithful people, the saints--a body of many members, yet in all a "little flock." We have already shown that the antitypical Elijah, who must first come and do his work before the Second Advent of Christ in the glory of His Kingdom, is the true Church of Christ in the flesh--of which Jesus was the Head, of which the Apostles were prominent members, and to which number all the true saints of the Lord from then to the end of the Gospel Age, while in the flesh, must belong. This Elijah class was invisible during a large portion of this long period of nearly nineteen centuries. As Elijah the Prophet disappeared just prior to the drouth and was not seen and could not be found during the drouth, so with the antitypical Elijah class. As a class they disappeared about the year 300 and were not seen for about three and a half symbolic years, namely, until the time of the Reformation, about 1550, even as Elijah disappeared after announcing the drouth and did not re-appear until nearly the conclusion of that period of three and a half literal years. The drouth really began about 539 A. D. and the copious showers of refreshing came three and a half symbolic years later in 1799 A. D.

This period of three and a half years, equaling forty-two months or 1260 days, is particularly mentioned in, all three of these different forms in Revelation. (12:6, 14; 13:5.) The whole world is witness to the great drouth that prevailed throughout Christendom from the year 300 until the time of the Reformation. It is particularly known as the period of the "Dark Ages." With the re-appearance of the Elijah class prominently before the world, represented in the Reformers of Luther's time, we have some measure of reassertion of the proper worship of God. The Reformation work up to the year 1799 was preparatory, just as the work of Elijah on Mount Carmel and with the priests of Baal was preparatory. Then followed the great shower of blessing, scattering the Word of God throughout the whole world in every language under heaven. Nearly all of the present Bible Societies were organized between 1803 and 1815. There has been a great and refreshing shower of Grace and Truth come to the world. The antitype of Ahab, civil government, has to a considerable extent recognized the general truth of the matter, but they are more or less closely affiliated with and under the influence of the Jezebel system, and alas! as

Revelation clearly points out, Jezebel today has daughters--systems termed Protestant--which, nevertheless, copy largely the Mother's spirit. It is through the influence of the Daughters that the antitypical Elijah may expect future persecutions, instigated by the Mother, accomplished through the Daughters, as typically represented in the case of John the Baptist, beheaded by Herod at the instance of Salome, but at the instigation of Herodias--Jezebel. This, however, is looking down to a period in the future.

Inasmuch as the close of Elijah's career was of such an unusual character, associated with such spectacular demonstrations, we feel justified in assuming that this also formed a picture designed for the edification and instruction of the Church, particularly as it forecasts or foreshadows the close of the Church's experience and her separation from earthly scenes through fiery trials (pictured in the fiery chariot and horses) and her departure to heavenly scenes (pictured in the whirlwind by which Elijah was lifted heavenward).

MODERATION IN FINDING TYPES

But while we may very reasonably and profitably see these general lessons and pictures in the career of Elijah, we are inclined to caution against making types of every detail and incident. We believe a great mistake has been made along this line and many have been led into vagaries and into idle and foolish speculation, resulting in much confusion of mind; as for instance, the smiting of Jordan with the mantle, by both Elijah and Elisha; their journeying to Gilgal, to Bethel, to Jericho, and thence to the place where the parting occurred; other related incidents, such as the anointing of Hazael, King of Syria, and Jehu, King of Israel, and the slaughters in Israel wrought by these kings--all of these matters are regarded by some as being positive types and pictures of circumstances and events that relate to the experiences of the Church. Neither is it for us to positively deny that some or all of the above points mentioned may be pictorial or intended as types: we are merely giving a word of caution in saying that we cannot be too sure respecting these related incidents and details that are connected with the lives of Elijah and Elisha; and for ourselves, we believe we would be making a serious mistake to attempt to draw positive conclusions and to base certain special activities in Christian work on our personal interpretation of these minor incidents in the history of Elijah and Elisha.

The brethren of our INSTITUTE have been appealed to repeatedly to attempt to fix something definite as to the significance of the smiting of Jordan and as to the significance of the various stops that were made by Elijah and Elisha in their journey just prior to Elijah's departure. Others have sent to us their manuscripts presenting results of many days of investigation of the subject, with the request that we publish their findings as newly discovered light. We can only say that up to the present time we have been unable to arrive at any definite conclusion that the various items mentioned foregoing were intended to be particularly illustrative of certain events and developments in the midst of the Lord's people in these latter years.

WE SPEAK THAT WE KNOW

Not that we would say that these things have no meaning to us at all, for we regard them as containing general lessons; but as for fixing them as positive types, the Lord has not yet given us to see that it would be pleasing to Him to do this. We freely acknowledge that in the latter years of the ministry of BROTHER RUSSELL, he did speak quite freely respecting some of these incidents in the experience of Elijah and Elisha, but his statements show that he himself had not arrived at positive convictions regarding a typical significance; as for instance, at one time, in expressing his opinion upon the subject, it would appear to him that the symbolical smiting of Jordan was in the past, and that the Elijah and Elisha classes of the present time were sojourning beyond Jordan, "walking and talking together, as they approached nigh unto the place of separation." Again, at another time, he would express the matter reversely, as though the smiting of the Jordan on the part of the Elijah class was still future. This appears to have been his latest thought. However, as we have before stated, our Brother gave us no utterance that would lead us to believe that he had conclusively fixed the interpretation of such points as this; and while we hold our minds open and ready to see whatever of further information the Lord may be pleased to give, we can only say that if the minor incidents, such as the journeying together of Elijah and Elisha, the smiting of the Jordan, etc., are intended to be positive pictures of events here, up to the present time the Lord has not given us to see the significance sufficiently clear to make any definite presentation, and we are content to wait patiently upon Him, believing that this attitude and course on our part are more acceptable than if we became feverishly impatient and determined that we must make positive pictures and types out of every item and detail in the career of Elijah.

As bearing upon the closing features of Elijah's career, which this lesson especially considers, we submit the exposition written and published by BROTHER RUSSELL in his magazine in August, 1904. Of all his writings that we have on this particular matter, we know of none that is more illuminating, clear and convincing than this. We therefore commend it to the careful consideration of all.*

*In this connection we would also recommend the careful rereading of Chapter 8 of the Second Volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, which deals quite exhaustively with the typical features of the life of Elijah.

BROTHER RUSSELL WRITES CONCERNING ELIJAH AND ELISHA

"The words, 'When the Lord would take up Elijah,' suggest that Elijah had a specially protected life--that it was not subject to the power of his enemies--that he was wholly under Divine control. And this is true also of the antitypical Elijah class of this Gospel Age. It was true, we remember, of the great Head of this class, Jesus in the flesh. The Scribes and Pharisees made many attempts at His life before the successful one, but could not harm Him previously because 'His hour Was not yet come.' So with every member of His Body in the flesh, every member of the Elijah class--not even a hair of their heads could fall without Divine notice and permission. These are not to esteem that any of their affairs are accidental, for being fully consecrated to the Lord and fully accepted by Him, all of their affairs, great and small, are under Divine supervision--their health or sickness, their rights or privileges, their joys or sorrows.

"We are not in this wishing to intimate fatalism, but rather a Divine supervision. If trials and disciplines and corrections, either of poverty or sorrow or ill health, be necessary for the correction of these, they will surely have them; and some or all of these may come to them even though not as chastisements, but as lessons of experience necessary for their development for places in the Kingdom or for their usefulness in the Lord's service in the present time--as was the case with our Lord. Those who are of the Elijah class, fully consecrated to the Lord, will be glad to have this Divine supervision of their affairs and will rejoice in it. This, however, would not mean that they may not and should not do whatever would appeal to them as being wise and reasonable for the maintenance of their health or its recovery, for the satisfying of their hunger or thirst, or for the betterment of their temporal interests. But while using what to them may appear to be reasonable means, they

will consider that these also are in the hands of the Lord, and, if successful, that they are His provision, to be accepted with thankfulness; while, if unsuccessful, they will be willing to accept the results without murmuring with full assurance of faith that God is able to make all things work together for their good.

"AT THE SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS"

"Elijah and Elisha were at Gilgal, one of the cities at which was located a 'school of prophets,' where piously inclined young men sought instruction respecting the Divine Law under the supervision of those who were recognized as prophets, and with a view to become doctors or expounders of the Law of God in the various cities in which they lived. Elijah and Elisha had been at this place for some time, and now Elijah proposed a journey, suggesting that Elisha go not with him. The latter, however, would not forsake the older prophet, whom he styled his master, and toward whom he performed the duties of a body-servant. So they went together to Bethel, at which was located another 'school of the prophets.' We are not told how long was the stay at Bethel, nor what the prophets did or said at the school, but we do know that the pupils, known as the sons of the prophets, came privately to Elisha and in confidential whispers asked him if he was aware that the Lord was about to take from him his master Elijah.

"Elisha's answer was that he did know it, but did not wish to discuss the matter. Evidently he was filled with sorrow at the thought of the loss he was about to sustain, for everything indicates that during the ten years or more that he had been Elijah's servant and co-laborer in the prophetic office, a deep personal attachment had sprung up between the two men, who in some respects were very dissimilar. Again Elijah suggested that Elisha should tarry while he would go on to the city of Jericho; but again, with strong vociferations of his earnestness, Elisha declined to leave his master. When they arrived at Jericho Elisha had a similar experience, the sons of the prophets again asking him whether or not he had heard of the Lord's intention to take up the prophet, and again he refused to discuss the matter. For the third time Elijah suggested to him that he tarry while he would go farther under the Lord's direction, not to a city but to the river Jordan, but Elisha would not tarry and they went on.

"These visits to the schools of the prophets before Elijah was taken away doubtless had a beneficial effect upon these students of the Lord's Word, who well knew the aged Prophet and his allegiance to

God and God's power manifested through him. This last visit would be impressed upon their minds and go with them to the various cities of Israel in due time. Meanwhile the revelation which had been made to them, that God intended to take Elijah by a whirlwind, would prepare them for this final miracle and attestation of him as a servant of the Almighty. Apparently the prophets of this last school, fifty in number, while modestly refraining from following with Elijah and Elisha, nevertheless were deeply interested in the event they knew was about to take place. They went to a prominent point near Jericho, high above the river Jordan and overlooking it, and there witnessed what transpired. In the distance they beheld Elijah take off his mantle and roll it into the form of a club, and therewith smite the waters of the river Jordan, dividing them so that the two passed over as the Israelites had previously done by the miracle which the Lord wrought through Joshua at very nearly the same point. On the Prophets went, up the steep hillside beyond Jordan--quite possibly Mount Nebo, where Moses died.--Deut. 32:49, 50.

"HARVEST SIFTINGS TYPIFIED"

"There has been considerable speculation respecting this account of the three times and places at which Elijah invited Elisha to part company with him: that Elijah was too modest to desire many witnesses of the final manifestation of God's favor toward him, or that he wished to spare Elisha the sadness of the later parting; but these suggestions are not satisfactory to us. To our mind these were a feature of the type whose antitype must be expected in this present time. As Elijah represented the consecrated ones who will as overcomers constitute the Body of Christ and become participants with our Lord in the glories of the Kingdom in the First Resurrection, so apparently Elisha would represent a consecrated class of this time, in some respects inferior. These will have an acquaintance with the Elijah class, will minister to them in various ways, yet not be identified with them as members of the same death-devoted company.

"In harmony with this illustration or type we shall expect that, as the present Age draws to its close and the Elijah class passes away entirely, there will come various siftings or testings to this class of inferior consecration to separate them from the company and fellowship of the Elijah class. Whoever will fall away in this sifting will cease to belong to the Elisha class. Those who endure the siftings and testings will thus maintain their position in the Elisha class, and some will thus continue according to the type down to the very close

of Elijah's experience, and will then in consequence of this faithfulness receive a great blessing--a double portion of the Elijah spirit.

"As the Two Prophets went on, Elijah said to Elisha, Make request what I shall give thee, as I go from thee shortly. Elisha's request for a double portion of the spirit of Elijah is not to be understood as meaning twice as much of God's power as Elijah possessed, for this would have constituted Elisha a prophet of double the power of Elijah. Besides, how unreasonable a request would it have been for him to make--that Elijah should give more than he himself possessed. We must understand him, therefore, to mean that if Elijah's spirit or power would in any wise be remaining with any prophets in the earth who would represent the Lord, that Elisha desired that he might have twice as much as any other one--not selfishly, we may assume, but that he appreciated Elijah's disposition and position as a servant of God, and desired that as far as possible he might enter into a similar work of service. His request was granted conditionally, but I he was told that it would be dependent upon his own watchfulness.

"The lesson which we draw from this request of Elisha and the conditions of its fulfilment is that the consecrated

class whom he represents in the end of this Age will need to be on the alert if they would discern the passing away of the Elijah class, and that only in proportion as they do discern the completion of the Elijah class and its passing into glory will they become the recipients of a proportionately large measure of the spirit and zeal of the Elijah class. From the Scriptures we get the thought that after the Elijah class shall have been completed, tested, proven and glorified, there will still remain a period of time before the full ending of the 'present evil world' or dispensation--before the full inauguration of the Millennial glories. During that period the class which we believe Elisha represented--namely, a consecrated class, but lacking in some measure the full spirit of devotion exhibited by the Elijah class--will be quickened and energized by the change of dispensation and the evidences of the fulfilling of the Divine Plan, so that thereafter they will be practically as devoted and self-sacrificing and zealous every way as the Elijah class had been.

"The receiving by Elisha of power from the departed Elijah seems to correspond in considerable measure to the 'foolish virgins' getting their oil and being able to trim their lamps after the 'wise virgins' have gone in to the wedding and the door is shut. As the foolish virgins were not evil but good--virgins--so Elisha was not an evil man but a good man

and a prophet: as the foolish virgins lacked something that the wise virgins possessed, so Elisha lacked something of what Elijah possessed, and that lack, which was supplied to the foolish virgins in the oil, is represented in Elisha's case in the mantle and blessing.

"As the Parable of the Virgins does not go on to show what happened to the foolish virgins except that they failed to enter into the marriage because the door was shut, so the Elisha picture merely shows that Elisha did not accompany Elijah, but on receiving his benediction and power he continued for a while the work that Elijah had been doing. So it is our thought that during the great time of trouble there will be a consecrated class who had not a sufficiency of zeal in self-sacrifice to be counted of the Lord as members of the Elijah class or Body of Christ, who nevertheless will experience a great time of refreshing and become thoroughly devoted after they realize that the Church has been glorified after they begin to see also the fulfilment of various Scriptures respecting Babylon. This class, whom we understand to be represented in the Scriptures as the 'great company' whose number no man knows, who wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, and eventually come up to spirit conditions, though not to be of the Royal Priesthood in the throne (Rev. 7:9-17)--these are represented as recognizing by and by that the Little Flock, the Bride class, the Elijah class, have passed beyond the veil and they are shown to rejoice accordingly, saying, 'Let us be glad and rejoice and give glory to God, for the marriage of the Lamb is come and His Wife hath made herself ready!' This class in turn, though not worthy to be the Bride, the Wife, is invited to participate in the great marriage feast which is to take place shortly after the glorification of the Church.-- Rev. 19:7-9.

"ELISHA, IF A TYPE, A DOUBLE ONE"

"We might here remark that although we are treating Elisha as a part of the type as well as Elijah, yet there is nothing in the Scriptures that positively intimates that this is the case--it is a mere inference. In Elijah's case, as we have already pointed out in a previous lesson, there is no doubt; beyond peradventure Elijah was a type of the elect Church *in the flesh*. But if Elisha was a type, we believe that we are justified in considering him a type of two classes. First, of the class already suggested, who are with the Elijah class and who maintain relationship to the class of Elijah's period and who then become partakers of his spirit. And this type would seem to extend as far as Elisha's re-crossing the Jordan, smiting it with the mantle of Elijah. If the crossing of

Jordan into the land of Canaan be taken to represent death, then the picture should be read as indicating that this 'great company' will all pass through death, which is just what the Scriptures elsewhere seem clearly to show--that in order to be on the spirit plane at all it will be necessary for them to 'all die as men.'

"In this view of the matter we assume that Elisha, after crossing the Jordan and entering Canaan, would represent another, a different class, namely, the earthly phase of the Kingdom--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets, the beginning of the restitution class. Elisha's work after crossing Jordan was restitution work in many respects, and in this particular would well correspond to what we may expect of the earthly phase of the Kingdom after its establishment--after the great time of trouble. But again we remind the reader that the typical character of Elisha is not beyond question, as it is nowhere affirmed in the Scriptures, but merely inferred by us because of his association with Elijah.

"CHARIOTS OF FIRE AND HORSES OF FIRE"

"The record is that Elijah and Elisha were separated by chariots of fire, but that Elijah was taken up not by these but by a whirlwind into heaven (margin). We might draw different inferences from this, but feel safer to adhere closely to the wording of the text. The fiery chariots and horses we infer to be a part of the type, and shall not be at all surprised to find the fulfilment in severe persecutions which will come upon the last members of the Elijah class--persecutions unto death possibly. If this be the correct interpretation of the type there would be a special significance attaching to Elisha's seeing the departure of Elijah. It would seem to signify close personal friendship and loyalty between them down to the very close, and that the effect of these fiery trials would be to energize those who had previously been less energetic in the carrying out of their consecration.

"The whirlwind in the type should be interpreted, in harmony with general Scripture usage, as signifying a fierce trouble--a trouble, too, which would agitate the heavens or ecclesiastical powers as an earthquake would represent disturbances of the social conditions. Thus read in advance of the fulfilment the type seems to imply that the end of the Elijah class will occur amidst great ecclesiastical commotions, accompanied by fiery trials--thus we think probably the change will come to the last members of the elect 'Body.' . . .

"CHANGED IN A MOMENT, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE"

"The change of these members at this time the Scriptures clearly indicate to be one which the world will not recognize. As the Scriptures declare, although we are sons of God, sons of the Highest, nevertheless we must die like men--we must go down like the great Prince, Jesus, into death, and must be raised to the newness of life, to spirit conditions, to the Divine nature. The Apostle assures us that those living in the end of this Age, during the *parousia* of the Son of man, will not need to sleep--to tarry in the death condition--for the moment of their death will be the moment of their change to glory, honor and immortality, the Divine nature."

ELISHA AND THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN

--FEBRUARY 12-2 KINGS 4:8-37--

Golden Text.- "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."--John 5:25.

ELISHA, recognized as Elijah's successor, and thus as a special prophet of the Lord, was naturally looked to by all the "schools of the prophets" as their leader and chancellor. Just the exact nature of these "schools of the prophets" we may not clearly discern. Apparently they were started in the time of the Prophet Samuel, and undoubtedly their members were Israelites who had a firm trust in God, and who, as the nation went more and more into idolatry, felt the need of fellowship one with an other and of holding up a Divine standard in their nation. It is quite probable that their gatherings were after the manner of what we today call summer schools--at times which did not conflict with their farming, husbandry, etc.

Elisha's ministry as a prophet covered many years. Apparently his home was at Mount Carmel, but from thence he probably made visits to the various "schools of the prophets" and to the city of Samaria, the capital of Israel. The route by which he traveled led him near to the village of Shunem, where lived a woman described in the Scriptures as "great." She was evidently widely known as a good and wise woman, and probably, judging from the records, she possessed a large estate,

which may have been of her birthright rather than her husband's. In those days there were no hotels, nor even what are now known as khans, in those parts--stopping-places at which travelers might rest, but usually without any arrangements for refreshments. This Shunammite woman, whose name is not given, but the story of whose hospitality and faith in the Lord have reached and blessed many of His people in many ages, noted the passing of the Prophet and urged upon him the hospitality of their home, desiring that Elisha and his servant Gehazi should stop and eat bread with them as he passed them in his journeys. Apparently this hospitality was partaken of on several occasions, and the woman's next step was to propose to her husband the building of a small guest chamber for the use of the Prophet and his servant, located upon the roof of their house, accessible from the outside stairway and furnished with a bed, a table, a stool and lamp. It was thus arranged, and thereafter the Prophet apparently made it one of his stopping-places in his journeys to and fro.

ENTERTAINING GOD'S MESSENGER

The Scriptures everywhere commend hospitality as exemplifying a condition of heart pleasing to the Lord: Thus in the New Testament the Apostle urges that those esteemed worthy of serving the Church as elders shall be given to hospitality, and again urges all, saying, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares," referring, doubtless, to Abraham's experience in this line. Our Lord also remarks that he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. (Matt. 10:40, 42; Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:2.) Present-day arrangements for public hotels, lodgings, etc., are calculated to hinder the development of the spirit of hospitality; few would think today of entertaining strangers, nor would it be generally wise so to do. But the people of Israel were in a particular sense one family, much after the same manner that all who are the Lord's people today are one in Christ Jesus. It is toward these brethren of Christ that we should be particularly careful to exercise hospitality, even though they be strangers to us, if we recognize in them the Master's likeness, His spirit. No kindness or service rendered to one of the least of these will fail of His notice and appreciation and reward. Nevertheless the hospitably inclined may find it necessary to exercise prudence in their hospitality according to the natural disposition of the person entertained.

In the present case the woman recognized Elisha, not only as a brother Israelite, but especially as a consecrated man of God. She perceived, doubtless, that his life was given to the Lord's service, and hence whatever she attempted to do for him was done as unto the Lord. Her wisdom, too, was exemplified in the moderation and simplicity of the arrangements provided--they were comfortable, but not extravagant. It was during one of these visits that the Prophet sent his servant Gehazi to speak to their hostess and inquire whether or not he could render her some kindness in return--mentioning her favorably to the King or to the chief of the army if she had any favors to request from either quarter, but she had none. Elisha then queried his servant as to what they could do for the woman that would show their appreciation, and the latter remarked that he had noticed that the home was childless and that the husband was in advanced years, in timating that, in harmony with the general views of the East, there could be no greater blessing come to the woman than to have a son; that otherwise her home was like the city of Jericho, beautiful for situation, but having a great dearth or lack.

Elisha grasped the thought instantly, and sending for the Shunammite assured her that within a year she would clasp a son to her bosom. She could scarcely believe it, even though she had full confidence in the Prophet, but in due time the promise was fulfilled. It was years after this, the Prophet still using the guest chamber provided, that the son was with his father and the servants in the harvest field, and apparently had a sunstroke and was sent home in the care of a servant. Shortly after he died, and the mother, making known the fact to no one, laid him, upon the Prophet's bed in the guest chamber and hastened to the Prophet's home on Mount Carmel. The boy was not really dead from her standpoint, for she had faith in God and in His Prophet Elisha. She reasoned that He who was able to give her the son was able now to restore him to her again, but she would communicate only with the Prophet. Avoiding the questions of his servant, she fell at Elisha's feet, her heart full of her sorrow, which, nevertheless, was well mixed with faith. Her inquiry was, "Did I desire a son of my Lord? Did I not say, Do not deceive me?"

EARTH HATH NO SORROW THAT HEAVEN CANNOT HEAL

The Prophet understood that her son was ailing or dead, and sent his own staff by the hand of his servant to lay it upon the child's face--much after the same style that the Apostle Paul sent napkins and

handkerchiefs to the sick. But the woman would not leave the Prophet, not having full confidence in the results of the servant's doings, possibly realizing that the servant was not such a man as his master in any sense of the word, as later on was manifest in his conduct. The woman's faith had its reward; the Prophet went with her.

We are not of those who claim that sickness and pain, sorrow, suffering and dying, are indispensable or in any sense of the word blessings. On the contrary we hold that all of these things are parts of the 'curse,' which affect more or less every member of the human family; but we do hold that the Lord frequently gives experiences of this kind, sickness, pain, sorrow, death, to those of His people who trust Him,--as agents by which to develop meekness, patience, faith. Apparently it was so in the case of the Shunammite. Had her son not taken sick, had he not died, she would have lacked that chapter in life's experiences which we doubt not proved to her a great blessing, which developed in her more and more of faith in the Lord and appreciation of His favors. While deeply agitated at heart, her faith in the Lord's goodness through His Prophet preserved her from excessive grief, and apparently from all outward manifestations such as tears, and thus the Apostle exhorts us who are of the household of faith in this Gospel dispensation, saying, that we should sorrow not as those who have no hope.

This woman had faith and hope that the Lord through the Prophet would restore her son. We well may have stronger and better hope that our dear ones going down to the tomb will in due time be recovered from it, because from our standpoint we perceive that Jesus died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and a redemption has been accomplished for the sins of the Whole world; and that it is the purpose of God, the Plan of God, that in due time those who sleep in Jesus will be brought by Him and through Him from the tomb, from the prison-house of death. The Shunammite's faith in the Prophet corresponds very well to our faith in the Lord Jesus, as God's power and instrumentality for our relief. And, so we read that in answer to the prayer of the Prophet and the instrumentalities he used in harmony therewith, the child was restored to life and to its mother.

THE BLESSING OF THE LORD MAKETH RICH

The fact of this miracle does not prove that it is the will of God to grant a miracle of recovery in every case. In Elisha's long experience this is the only case of the kind. We may even suppose that this

woman's husband died shortly after this without any interposition of Divine providence on his behalf, for we find the Prophet instructing the woman that there would be a seven-years' famine in the land of Israel and advising her to sojourn for the time in another country. On her return seven years later with her son she found her property in the possession of others, and called upon the king to repossess her of it, and her husband is not mentioned in connection with the going or the return. It was at this time that the blessing of the Lord through Elisha served her a secondary reward for her hospitality and her faith, because the king had just been talking with Elisha's servant respecting the mighty works which his master had performed in the name of the Lord, and when the woman cried to the king, the servant immediately informed him that this was the mother of the boy whom Elisha restored to life. Thus her case was brought directly to the king's notice and she received again the possession of her property.

Our Golden Text in connection with this lesson gives us the suggestion that while the Heavenly Father may not be pleased to grant us either for ourselves or for our children immunity from pain, suffering and death, nevertheless He has made a still grander and more glorious provision for us through our Lord Jesus Christ--the awakening and resurrection from the dead unto eternal life. But this gift of life everlasting is reserved for those who either now or in the future shall cultivate and exemplify hospitality, generosity, faith, love toward God and man. Blessed are we whose eyes and ears of understanding, are now open to know the grace of God, to appreciate the same--we who are now in the school of Christ to develop the fruits and graces of His spirit, the likeness of our Lord. For such is the Kingdom, the joint-heirship and blessings and privileges not only of eternal life, but of joint-heirship with Christ. As for the world in general, it will be required of them during the Millennial Age that they also shall develop the fruits and graces of the Lord's spirit if they would be accounted worthy of His gift of eternal life. Sonship implies likeness, and none are to have eternal life except those acceptable as sons.

LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM THE PRINCIPAL THING

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Inclosed please find One Dollar, fifty cents of which is to cover payment of the issues. of the HERALD you so kindly sent me, and the balance to pay for the following numbers, if you still have sufficient to spare them: . . .

Allow me this opportunity for voicing my thanksgiving to our Loving Heavenly Father and to you for your labor of love daily--and principally in the bringing forth of the truths now due re the chronology.

I have indeed received great blessing from the study of this, and with me a number of the dear friends in C-----. Though some seem fearful of being led away--"out of the Truth"--I daily have a clearer realization of the fact that "God is His own interpreter," and that if we "walk in the light as He is in the light," we have that "fellowship" with Him, which is the principal thing. We have now reached that period, I believe, in our earthly pilgrimage, where each one is required to stand and think for himself, regardless of the opinions of brethren or leaders, though I trust that all will see these matters more clearly beyond 1925.

For the joy set before me, I rejoice to be

Your brother in the Anointed,- H. E. H.--*Ont*.

"O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING",

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the Lord! It is with much pleasure and appreciation I read, your kind letter of November 23rd. In reply I may say that your kindly remarks concerning myself are very much appreciated, and I trust your wishes respecting my eternal welfare may be fully realized in your own case, and that you may indeed inherit the promise. (1 John: 2:25.)

Our hearts go out in sympathy for all those who once rejoiced to walk with us, but now, alas, being deceived as to the importance (?) of the many Bible interpretations lying outside the true Christian foundation principles of our Lord Jesus Christ, walk no more with us. If we are privileged to have an understanding of the liberty which is in Christ

Jesus, let us prize this knowledge and guard ourselves against an undue appreciation of our own wisdom, lest we become wise in our own conceit, remembering the words of our Lord in Matt. 7:24. Surely no one can claim any standing for their many tests and bondages which they seek to impose upon the Lord's people, from "these sayings" of our Lord as given in Matt. 5, 6 and 7. Rightly understood and appreciated, "these sayings" of our Lord would surely work a revolution amongst God's professed children at this time. What a little even the best of us possess of this Spirit of Holiness! We are much more ready to judge and condemn than to exercise forbearance and forgiveness. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." May our prayer ever be that of the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Psa. 139: 23, 24.)

Dear Brethren, I thank you for the consideration of my request concerning the, publication of BROTHER RUSSELL'S article, "The Ministry of Sorrow," in the HERALD. Should you decide to publish it, I feel sure it will mean a great blessing to all who are truly His people. We thank our Heavenly Father for all His blessings and mercies toward us, as manifested in the humble ministry of those who are sincerely seeking to do His will. (1 Cor. 15:58.) "O for a thousand tongues to sing my great Redeemer's praise, the glories of my God and, King, the triumphs of His grace!" Indeed, Brethren, we feel that had we "ten thousand times ten thousand" tongues, we should very inadequately express ourselves. Our personal regret is that we have so little of that "Holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." We feel very thankful that the Lord overlooks our imperfect endeavors to do His will, and that if there be just a willing mind, it is accepted of Him.

When we see a little of the longsuffering of God toward such as we, fitted only as we are for destruction, and realize that we must be of this same Spirit, it makes us less boastful of our growth in grace. Surely those who are unfit for the Kingdom (and there are many) have not appreciated God's requirement of all those who shall be found worthy to reign with Christ. Let us then, dear Brethren, give the more diligent heed to the making of our calling and election sure, counting Him faithful that has promised; and may the coming year be one of rich spiritual blessing to us all.

The past year has been the most happy and blessed to me since I started in the Christian pathway. True, it has been very rugged, and has

seen the disassociation of a few whom we love dearly; nevertheless we rejoice that the present time still finds us earnestly desirous of being approved of the Lord--still determined to continue "a follower of the Lamb." May "we see with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, be changed into the same image, from glory, unto glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

"Lord, give us grace to walk with Thee, through loss, or pain, or shame, that every act may henceforth be an honor to Thy name." Praying the God of all grace may fill you richly with all spiritual wisdom and understanding, and give you grace and strength to walk before Him as becometh saints (Acts. 20:32, Hymns of Dawn 293), I remain,

Sincerely, Your Brother in Christ Jesus, E. S.--*Eng.*

THE MASTER'S PROMISE ABUNDANTLY FULFILLED

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Please find enclosed \$1.25 for the renewal of our subscription to the HERALD, and also for a motto for 1922.

We desire to thank you, dear brethren, for the spiritual refreshments which you by the grace of God have presented to us through the columns of the HERALD during the past year.

We greatly enjoy the articles on Revelation, as they deal to such a great extent with conditions of the present time and the near future. We consider it a very important and blessed study, bringing to our attention many things not thought of or clearly understood before, and we find abundantly fulfilled in our own hearts the Master's precious promise given to His children in Revelation 1:3.

We are very sorry that we have not been able to donate fully what we had desired for the good work during the past year, due to much sickness and unemployment. Our condition may improve soon so that we will again be able to extend our little financial aid to your ministry of Love. We pray that our Heavenly Father's richest blessings may be

upon you during the coming year, that He may keep your hearts in the loving, humble attitude which you have manifested during the past year, that He may give you strength and wisdom for dispensing His Holy Word and Truth, and that you yourselves may drink freely and be filled with the water of life. Brethren pray for us. With Christian love,

Yours in the Redeemer,

Brother and Sister G. H. W.--*Wis.*

THAT LOVE OF GOD MAY FILL OUR HEARTS

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed please find renewal of our subscription to the HERALD. We wish to express our deepest and sincerest gratitude to the Editorial Committee and Staff of the INSTITUTE in general for the way the original purpose of the publication of the journal has been adhered to, and we pray that the love of God may so fill your hearts and keep you through any and all trials which our Adversary may use to try and beguile us all away from that love; We appreciate all the articles published on Revelation and the Chronology, so very timely and practical, and trust that the Lord's blessing may remain with you all to the end.

Yours in the One Hope, T. & S. C.--*Can.*