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REPORT OF CONVENTIONS OF BIBLE STUDENTS HELD IN NORTHERN EUROPE

THE Conventions announced in a former issue of this journal were duly held in Stockholm, Sweden, and Hel-singfors, Finland, in the early days of this year. The two brothers from England give report of an interesting trip which we submit be low, and from which it will be seen that they visited other centers beside the two cities mentioned. We feel sure this report will be read with much pleasure and interest by the friends throughout the world, as therein we have additional strong evidence of our Heavenly Father's abounding grace and providence, that in every nation and in every clime the Divine Message of Truth and Grace has wrought similar results--the fruits and graces of the Spirit, love joy, peace; longsuffering, etc. More than this, the spirit of the Great Head of the Church operating in His followers, constrains and draws together in one common bond of brotherhood in Christ. Truly,

"The fellowship of kindred minds

Is like to that above."

The report follows.

Pressing invitations had been received by the Bible Students Committee from friends in Finland, and also Sweden, requesting that British representatives be sent to attend Conventions to be held in those Countries, and to visit other centers with the object of encouraging and assisting the brethren.

On Sunday, December 25th, a gathering was held in London to bid farewell and God-speed to the two brothers who were to undertake this responsible privilege. Many messages of love and Scriptural

exhortations were received from brethren and Classes in various parts of Great Britain to be transmitted to our brethren whom we were going to visit.

On Thursday, Dec. 29th, we left England, via the Harwich and Hook of Holland route, spending the night on the steamer and arriving at the Hook at 6 a. m. the next morning. The S.S. "Archangel," by which we traveled, is a fine steamer of over 8,000 tons and completed the passage, a somewhat rough one, on time and in every way satisfactorily. Reminding ourselves that the Scriptures refer to our Lord alone when speaking of the Archangel, the chief Messenger, we rejoiced to realize that we were setting forth on a mission representing Him, and with His Divine approval and support attending our way: the thought brought us new courage and inspiration for the journey.

SOJOURNING IN FOREIGN LANDS

The trip through Holland proved somewhat uninteresting on account of the flatness of the country, but as we reflected that there would be practically no Holland but for the ingenuity of man, the vast majority of the country being below sea level, our interest was aroused considerably as we observed the skill of man pitted against the raging forces of the sea. The sea would claim the country for its own, but man by engineering skill is not only holding it back, but gaining further territory all the time, and if their latest hopes mature, the Dutchman's well known Zuyder Zee will be a thing of the past, and instead provide a huge nursery for their famous flowering bulbs, and other useful commodities.

At 10 o'clock that night we arrived at Berlin--bag and baggage--despite the Customs Officers and other impediments. We explained to the hotel officials that our train for Stockholm left Berlin at 9:30 the next morning and we would like an early call accordingly.

In reply we were told that the evening papers were full of a threatened railway strike which, if it matured, would prevent our journey being continued until it was settled. We were advised, however, to retire and get a good night's rest and talk of the strike in the morning; this suggestion was just suited to our mind and condition and was readily followed. The news next morning, that there was to be no strike at present, brought us some relief.

Our visit to Germany was of a very fleeting character, not of sufficient duration to enable us to form any definite views respecting conditions now prevailing there. It did occur to us that very few Germans appeared to be traveling by train. Our fellow passengers, and those around us, who spent their money freely, were foreigners like ourselves--a very mixed community.

With some difficulty we managed to get our train at 9:30 and commenced our journey North, and by evening we reached the port of departure from Germany for Sweden. It was a very wild wintry night with a strong blizzard blowing across the Baltic Sea, causing the waves to break over the topmost deck of the steamer and rush down the hatchways in great Volume. The trip across this narrow neck of sea usually takes something under four hours to accomplish, but that night it required over six hours of battling with the waves and storm. We arrived safely, however, and, having passed the Customs, took the night train for Stockholm.

We were, due to arrive there on Sunday morning at 9:45, but did not reach the city until 10:50 a. m. Awaking at day-break on the Sunday morning we glanced out of the carriage window upon a beautiful scene. We had reached the land of snow, which lay everywhere in thick profusion, and dotted in amongst the dark pines mingled with silver birches, were to be seen pretty country houses built after the Swiss style, and beyond, and above, was the golden circle of day-spring stretching out mile upon mile.

HAPPY MEETINGS AT STOCKHOLM

Waiting for us at Stockholm station were Brother Melinder and three other brothers, who conducted us to our hotel, where breakfast was served, and we enjoyed sweet fellowship together. We had now come in contact with the Lord's own people, and everything changed accordingly. The language barrier hindered free intercourse with most of the brethren, but those who understood our tongue readily assisted us in making ourselves understood.

As there was no meeting until the evening, the afternoon was spent in taking some necessary exercises in the beautiful sunshine. The city of Stockholm is a very attractive one, with its fine buildings, open spaces,

and wide streets. The river was frozen over and provided an excellent exercise ground for all, both old and Young.

The Convention was not due to commence until the following morning, but the friends in Stockholm held their usual meeting on Sunday evening. There were about 45 friends in attendance, who listened to a lengthy article on present day conditions from a Biblical point of view, read by Brother Sjo. The Chairman of the meeting intimated that the friends would like a word or two from the brothers from England. Accordingly a few words were spoken by each of these brothers, and more promised for the following day, when the Convention proper would commence.

On Monday, Jan. 2nd, at 10:30 a. m. began the first of the series of meetings arranged by the friends in Stockholm. The only Hall the friends had been enabled to secure was scarcely large enough for their requirements, having only seating capacity for 80 persons. The Hall was full when Brother Melinder, from Harnosand, opened the meeting in the usual manner, giving a short address to the friends, which was evidently much appreciated. Then followed a word from Brother Shearn and the reading of greetings from friends in other lands. Brother Edgell also addressed the meeting with words of counsel and encouragement. Much happiness and enthusiasm was apparent amongst the friends, but their expressions of appreciation were only understood by facial expression and by the hearty grasp of the hand. Brother Melinder acted as interpreter for us, and his services in this direction were invaluable, yet we did so wish that we could understand what others said and make ourselves understood by them. The experience made us long for those conditions when no such barriers will exist for ever.

In the afternoon Brother Edgell addressed the friends at 4 o'clock, and was followed by Brother Melinder at 5 p.m. At 8 p. m. Brother O. Ander, of Sweden, was the speaker, and was followed by closing words from Brother Melinder.

On the following morning, as requested, Brother Shearn addressed the friends on the conditions now prevailing amongst God's people in Great Britain, and explained shortly what steps were being taken to provide for the necessities of the brethren. He was followed by an address from Brother Axel Sjo, of Sweden, and, later, by a farewell word from Brother Melinder. The friends then filed past, bidding

farewell and God-speed to the three brothers who were about to journey forth to meet the brethren in Finland.

AWAKENING AND PROGRESS IN SWEDEN

The friends in attendance at the Stockholm meetings averaged from 60 to 100. All seemed to enjoy the good words of exhortation and encouragement that were spoken, and there was much evidence to show that the brethren felt strengthened and encouraged by the meetings, and drawn nearer to one another in bonds of love and service. We are very hopeful that good results will follow under the Lord's guidance, for it seemed evident to us that some concerted action would be very beneficial to meet prevailing conditions there.

The special trials and tests so prevalent today amongst God's people, resulting in more or less of a separating work, had begun to be in evidence in Sweden some two years ago, and continue to be felt as one after another of the brethren get a proper mental focus of the situation as it exists in these days. In that country a little paper is being circulated in the interests of the scattered friends, and some visitation of Classes undertaken. Immediately after the Convention had ended it was decided amongst the friends to hold a special meeting to consider the interests of the work for the future, and inquiry was made as to how matters were being conducted in Britain. It seemed manifest that the majority of the friends felt that some unification of interests was desirable, and there is little doubt that something will be done in this direction, The Lord will surely give to our brethren that soundness of mind, and broadness of vision, which will enable them to discern His will, and we hope and believe that they will exercise courage to undertake the course marked out by Him. Without doubt consecrated ability for service is at hand, and it only remains for means to be found how best to use it to God's glory and to the profit of His people. It is greatly to be hoped that Sweden will be well represented at the Conference it is proposed to hold in London in August next, when subjects of interest to all countries will be discussed, and reports from the various countries represented will be given.

OFF FOR FINLAND

At 7 p. m. our boat was due to leave for Abo, Finland: it was a cold wintry night, yet quite a number of the friends braved the elements and

came down to the quay to see us off, and we felt that it surely must be the love of God shed abroad in their hearts that prompted them to show such kindness. Through the porthole of the ship came messages of love, farewell hands, and many parcels of fruit and other good things for the journey. In this happy manner we left the shores of Sweden to visit the friends of Finland.

This trip is one of about 16 hours, largely through the sheltered waters of the Finnish archipelago. We spent a good night and enjoyed our breakfast on the boat next morning. Snow and ice were on every hand and the boat had necessarily to stay in a course kept more or less open by steamers passing that way: even then the water was frozen over and the boat had to crunch her way through ice for many miles.

We arrived at Abo at 1 o'clock the next day, amidst a heavy snowstorm. Much trouble was occasioned in getting the steamer into port on account of the thickness of the ice, but this was accomplished eventually and, after passing the Customs, we joined ourselves to the five dear friends who had ventured down to the quay to meet us. Quickly we were seated in a motor car and found ourselves flying along over snow in some places two or three feet deep. Shortly we were in a brother's home, with a meal spread before us, amidst some who could speak Finnish only, others Swedish, and we English only. Everything was strange, of course, yet loving hearts gave quick response to love, and most of our difficulties appeared to be removed. Although outside were many degrees of frost, and snow was falling fast, yet inside the house we found palms, cacti, begonias, camelias, and other hothouse plants flourishing abundantly, showing clearly that the heating arrangements were such as kept the house at a high and equable temperature, and these conditions we found widespread throughout Finland, greatly to our surprise.

At 6:30 that evening a meeting was held in the usual meeting place--a schoolroom--when 45 to 50 friends gathered, some few being Swedes but the majority Finns. According to their usual practice hymns, prayers, and all announcements, were spoken first in Swedish and then in the Finnish language. Many of the tunes were known to us and we took part in same in our native tongue; thus praises to God were raised in the meeting in three different languages and at the one time. We felt glad to think that He who confused the tongues of men could understand the speech of all. The meeting lasted for three hours, addresses being given by each of the three visiting brethren, Brother Melinder acting as interpreter, converting English into Swedish, and Brother Berg translating same into the Finnish language.

We retired that night at 11:30 and left Abo for Helsingfors at 7:15 a. m. the following morning. Brother Sjobloom had come from Helsingfors to welcome us, and to conduct us to that city. Three of the Abo friends were at the station to see us off and to send their greetings to the Convention. We arrived at Helsingfors at 1:15 p. m. having spent six hours in a very hot train, so hot was the atmosphere that we were forced to the conclusion that we had suffered more inconvenience from heat than from the cold since our arrival in Finland. The trains use wood for fuel, no coal being available, and wood for heating the carriages.

A ROYAL WELCOME

Finland provided a surprise for the visiting brethren. It was discovered that less than twelve months had passed since the brethren of that country had found it necessary to stand aside and make provision for their spiritual interests apart from their former associations; yet this was their third Convention within that period, the numbers showing a decided increase on each occasion. Already they have a journal in constant circulation with some fifteen hundred subscribers. A regular Pilgrim service is in being, as well as other evidences of activity and great love for the Lord. The idea of forming a Bible Students Committee, or some such body, in the interests of the work in Finland is being considered, and it is decided that representatives from that country will (D. V.) attend the London Conference. Some of the brethren are learning the English language with that object in view.

Our welcome into Helsingfors was a royal one indeed: some 50 or more friends had gathered at the station; most of whom stood in a long line to greet us as we passed out of the station. This hearty reception we found to be but a happy augury of what awaited us: for in Finland everything is done in a thorough, hearty fashion.

That evening a meeting was held in the usual meeting place, a fine Hall in the Government Buildings of the town, and was intended especially for the Finnish friends, over 200 being present. Brother Berghall (pronounced Berryhill), the chairman of the Convention, presided, and opened the meeting with an address to the brethren present. He then called upon Brother Melinder for an address, which was delivered in the Swedish language and translated, phrase by phrase, by a Finnish brother. Brothers Edgell and Shearn, from

London, then followed in the order mentioned. Their words were first translated into Swedish by Brother Melinder and afterwards into Finnish by a Finnish brother. Naturally the meeting was somewhat protracted, so that it was late before we left the Hall. During a short interval between the addresses the friends pressed forward to greet us with evident delight.

SITTING TOGETHER IN HEAVENLY PLACES

The meetings on the following day were to commence at 9 o'clock with a meeting somewhat similar to our Prayer, Praise and Testimony service. It was well attended, about 250 friends being present. This was followed by an address by Brother Edgell from 9:30 to 10:30, and by a further address given by Brother Patjas, a Finnish brother, from 10:30 to 11:30. From 11:30 to 12 was an intermission. From 12 to 2 o'clock, two meetings had been arranged for--an address to the Swedish friends by Brother Melinder in one Hall where some 150 friends gathered, and another to the Finnish public by Brother Edgell in another, where over 1,000 were in attendance. From 2 to 4 o'clock a Question Meeting with 500 present was conducted, over which Brother Shearn was to preside, but other arrangements had to be made as he was suffering from the effects of a slight chill. This meeting proved so interesting it was decided to continue it on the following morning.

The meetings on Saturday, January 7th, commenced at 10 a. m. and at 11 Brother Karkmin gave an address to the Finnish friends, some 300 of whom were in attendance. After an intermission for half an hour, a brother substituted for Brother Shearn, in giving an address to over 400 Finnish friends. From 2 to 4 a "baptismal" address was given by Brother Melinder to some 250 who were in attendance. The next meeting was from 6 to 9 p. m. with Brother Berghall as speaker, and over 300 friends were present.

The Sunday meetings began at 7 a. m. with a baptismal service when eleven dear friends symbolized publicly their consecration to God. We rejoiced to see that there are still to be found honest hearts who are prepared to avail themselves of the privileges of Divine grace. At 10 another Praise service was followed by an address from Brother Nortamo, a Finnish brother, who is giving his whole time to Pilgrim service in Finland. At 12 o'clock Brother Melinder addressed a Public meeting of Finnish people, when over 1,000 persons were in attendance. From 2 to 5 addresses followed from Brothers Edgell,

Melinder and Shearn, with 350 friends present, At 5 o'clock a Farewell meeting was conducted by Brother Berghall and proved to be the most touching thing of the kind it has ever been our lot to see. Manifestly the brethren were filled with happiness and many shed tears of joy. They seemed at a loss to express themselves, some being very deeply moved, as they bid farewell to the visiting brethren.

After the meeting the speakers and elders were assembled in the middle of the Hall and a photograph was taken of the group by one of the brethren. A larger group of friends had already been taken outside the Hall, when some 250 to 300 were present.

Monday was set apart for business purposes such as seeing to our return passages, and visiting the bank, etc. Several friends called on us at the Hotel to see if any little service could be rendered, and one brother accompanied us round the city to direct our course. To our surprise we were led off to a Church business meeting in the evening, when the final steps were taken in the election of elders for the ensuing year. It was decided to postpone the election of deacons, and other matters, for a week and to ask Brother Shearn to address the meeting instead: this was done, and the brethren continued lingering about the Hall until a late hour, some coming forward with signed photographs, and some, even of the very poorest amongst them, pressing little monetary gifts into our hands until we felt we could bear it no longer, and sallied forth to our Hotel surrounded by the friends.

FAREWELL AND HOMEWARD BOUND

Next morning, Tuesday, January 10th, the brethren were early at the Hotel taking us off to the station for Tammerfors; some fifty friends had gathered at the station to say farewell. They decorated us with flowers, and loaded us with gifts of fruit, and chocolates, and little models of Finnish craft, and sang hymns to familiar tunes to bid us farewell on our journey. Four of the dear friends accompanied us on our way through lovely country and wintry scenes.

We arrived at Tammerfors at 2:30 p. in. and found several friends in waiting. We were quickly conveyed to a brother's house by means of horse sleighs, where a meal awaited us. The meeting in the evening was of a semi-public character, some 150 being present, of whom not more than 50 were brethren. Each of the three visiting brothers spoke; a sister acting as interpreter for Brother Melinder, and a friend of one

of our brethren acting as interpreter from English to Finnish. The meeting was a very hearty one and, although it lasted over three hours, the public sat it out with evident interest. A sleigh ride to a brother's house, where supper was provided, and another busy day ended in pleasant converse.

Next morning fourteen dear friends assembled at the station to see us safely off for Abo. In this far off town of Tammerfors we noticed an almost entire absence of vehicles on wheels: everything was on runners after the sleigh fashion, because of the abundance of snow which lay in the streets in heaps. On the other hand, the telephones, and electric lighting were prevalent everywhere, and many instances of the latest mode of sanitation. The time here is two hours ahead of Greenwich. Brother Nortamo accompanied us to Abo, where we arrived at 5:30 p. in. and found 10 of the friends at the station to greet us. After supper at Brother Berg's (Berry's) house, we attended a meeting of the friends in a schoolroom, which was full to overflowing. Again all three visiting brothers spoke and the meeting was a long one; yet the friends were not tired. It would seem as though you cannot tire an audience of Finnish friends.

There being no boat from Abo that night we waited over for the following evening and took some rest. In the evening Brother Melinder addressed a public assembly of about 100 persons, after which we departed for our boat, which was due to sail at midnight. Some 15 to 20 friends were at the quay despite the wintry conditions. In this way we terminated our visit to Finland and the Finnish brethren. It had been a surprising experience for each one of us and leaves us wondering. Certainly the brethren in that country will have our earnest prayers that the Lord may grant them wisdom, encouragement, strength, and much of His Holy Spirit whereby they may be enabled to fulfill all His good pleasure in the midst of those wonderful people. We feel somewhat abashed by the experience--to think of the tempered enthusiasm amongst the friends who have possessed the Truth for so many years, and the rejoicing zeal of those in that far off land who have possessed it for probably no more than one third the time.

As our boat left her moorings at the midnight hour she had great difficulty in making headway through the channel, which had become more or less frozen over. Thus for miles we made slow progress towards the shores of Sweden, arriving at Stockholm at 3:30 p. m. on the following day. After attending to several matters connected with our trip, we continued our homeward journey. Our train left Stockholm

at 7:15 p. m., at which time we had to part company with our dear Brother Melinder, who had been a friend and guide to us, and whom we learned to, respect and love with much fervency.

THE BRETHREN IN HOLLAND

After a good night's travel we arrived at Treleborg, the Swedish port of departure, and took boat for Sassintz, the port of arrival in Germany. This passage, which took over 6 hours to accomplish on our forward journey, was done within 4 hours, the normal time for winter travel. We took train at Sassintz for Berlin, leaving the former place at 2 p. m. and arriving at Berlin at 8:30 p.m. The night was spent in a comfortable hotel, and on the following (Sunday) morning we took the 8:8 train for Rotterdam, Holland. We found that the snow had now reached mid-Europe extending all the way to Britain.

Two brothers from Rotterdam met us at Utrecht and accompanied us back to their city. In Holland the brethren are gathering strength, and discovering opportunities for public witness as well as service for the brethren. They have had considerable encouragement at their public meetings of late, also in the ready sale of the booklet, "The Golden Period," lately issued. Holland will be well represented at this year's Conference, and here again the English language is being studied for this purpose. On our arrival at Rotterdam we were quickly taken to the home of Brother and Sister van Halewyn, where a welcome meal and every comfort awaited us. The weather at the time was very wintry, unusually so, yet a few of the friends gathered on the following evening to hear something of our experiences and to show us welcome, also to see us off from the station by the 10 p. m. train for the Hook of Holland . We left the Hook at 12 midnight and arrived at Harwich at 6:30 a. m. and London at 9:30 a. m. Our bodies were feeling the strain somewhat, but our hearts were just rejoicing in the favor the Lord had granted us. The many messages of greeting and love from the brethren in Britain were delivered to the various gatherings during the journey. These were highly appreciated in every case as was evidenced by the enthusiasm with which they were received: the brethren reciprocating with much fervency of spirit, rising up in their places to acknowledge their grateful appreciation. We were glad to have met the brethren of other lands, whose hearts and hopes were one with ours. We were encouraged very greatly by what we saw and heard, and we hope that in some way, and to some extent at least, the Lord will be enabled to use our frail efforts to the upbuilding and comfort of His people.

Your brethren and fellow-servants,

F. B. EDGELL,

H. J. SHEARN.

THE MEMORIAL PASSOVER SUPPER

"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said 'Take eat; this is My body.' And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for the remission of sins!' "This do in remembrance of Me."

--*Matt. 26:26-28; Luke 22 -19.*

UNDER our Father's kind providence the Lord's people are approaching unto another memorial of the death of our blessed Redeemer, again to call to special remembrance the great event of all time, in which centers all real comfort and around which gathers all of our precious hopes and aspirations for the eternal future. Indeed, as the poet has well expressed the thought:

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time;
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

The date for the Memorial Supper Anniversary this year falls on Tuesday evening, April 11th, after six o'clock, according to Jewish reckoning. The primitive Church originally kept this Passover Memorial, as we now do; but in later times, the professing Church, in order to make the dates more regular, and also to draw the minds of Christians away from the thought of following the Jewish precedents too closely, slightly altered the method of reckoning. Thus the Jewish reckoning let the Passover fall where it might as respected the days of the week; but the change made the Anniversary of our Lord's death

come always on Friday, styled Good Friday, and His resurrection date always, therefore, to fall on the Sunday thereafter--the third day--styled subsequently Easter Sunday. The Jewish reckoning of time was by the moon as well as by the sun; thus the majority of the years with them had twelve months and occasionally one would have thirteen months. The Jewish reckoning of the Passover date begins to count, generally, with the first new moon after the spring equinox, the Passover date thus coming approximately on the full moon, fourteen days thereafter.

Let it be remembered, however, that it is not the hour or day of our Lord's death, but the fact that is chiefly important. This year such a Memorial service will be in order on Tuesday evening April 11th, after six o'clock (Nisan 14th). The next afternoon, Wednesday, April 12th, at 3 o'clock, will correspond to the hour of our Lord's death; the Jewish Passover Feast beginning three hours later.

WHAT WE MEMORIALIZE

We memorialize four great matters:

- (1) The death of our Lord Jesus as the Passover Lamb.
- (2) Our relationship or participation with Him in the sufferings of Christ, the death of Christ, as followers in His steps and sharers in His cup.
- (3) We celebrate incidentally and prospectively the great deliverance which soon will follow this passing over of the present night-time. The deliverance will affect first of all those passed over, "the Church of the firstborn," including all who were the antitypes of the Royal Priesthood and the Levitical host or tribe. The deliverance of these will come in the Morning, the Resurrection Morning, the Millennial Morning.
- (4) We also incidentally commemorate the great "feast of fat things" which will follow the passing over of the Church, when the passed-over ones shall be associated with their Lord in His Heavenly Kingdom as the great antitypical Prophet, Priest, judge, Mediator and King over all the earth, to bless and uplift the human family through

the merit of the same precious blood which He now permits the passed-over ones to participate in sacrificially, after the imputation of its merit to them has made them worthy.

These different points should be kept in memory separate and distinct from each other if we would have the greatest blessing from this Memorial.

Looking unto Jesus as the "Lamb of God," we behold His spotlessness--"holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." We behold how "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened He not His mouth." (Acts -8:32.) By speaking the word He could have resisted those who were intent upon His destruction. He assures us that no man took from Him His life; that He laid it down Himself--voluntarily, He laid it down not in obedience to the Father's Law, for justice could not demand sacrifice; but laid it down in accordance with the Father's will, saying, "I delight to do *Thy will, O My God*; Thy law is written in My heart." From this standpoint the Christian believer can rejoice greatly that the Redeemer spared not Himself, but freely delivered Himself up with the foreknowledge that in the Divine purpose the value of His sacrifice would ultimately redound, first for the benefit of His followers, and subsequently for the blessing of all the people. Hence in partaking of the broken, unleavened bread we memorialize the purity, the sinlessness, of Him who gave Himself to be, in God's due time, the Ransom Price for all mankind. From this important standpoint we realize that His shed blood signified that His death was necessary in order that our condemned humanity might be restored to life without infracting the Divine Law. Our hearts should pause here to appreciate, not only the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also the love of the Father, who designed the program; and the justice of God thus, exemplified; and the Wisdom of God in making the arrangement; and the faith also to grasp the Power of God, as it will ultimately be manifested in the full carrying out of all the glorious purposes and promises which we memorialize.

The second point is scarcely less important to us than the first. The first blessing from the Redeemer's sacrifice has been offered during this Gospel Age to such as have the "hearing ear" and the appreciative heart. This blessing is most astounding. It purposes a still further blessing to such of mankind as turn from sin and accept the grace of God in Christ by faith, and present their bodies living sacrifices, with full consecration, vowing to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. To all such, during this Gospel Age and until the completion of the elect number,

the Redeemer will *impute* the merit of His sacrifice, in order to make their *sacrifices* acceptable in God's sight--to the intent that they may suffer with Him in the flesh, and share with Him in the begetting of the Spirit now and in birth to the spirit plane in the resurrection. Thus as His glorified "members" they may be associated with Him in His Millennial Kingdom, when He shall act as "Mediator between God and men." The word *men* here includes all not begotten of the Holy Spirit to be New Creatures on the spirit plane.

Our partaking of the bread symbolically represents our partaking of the, fleshly perfection of the man Jesus. We partake of His perfections by faith, and not actually. He gives us, not restitution to human perfection, but merely an *imputation* of His righteousness, His perfection, as covering in the Divine sight the blemishes, the imperfections, of our fleshly bodies, which we have tendered to God as living sacrifices.

When as our great Advocate the Redeemer imputes to our offering the merit of His sacrifice, the Father accepts the same and begets the sacrificer to the new nature as a "member of the Body of Christ." And since we are not at once perfected as New Creatures, but still have mortal flesh, the Father "adopts" us in a sense that includes our justified flesh and all its interests.

It is only those who have thus partaken of the merit of Christ and whose sacrifice God has accepted that are directed in conformity to their Covenant of Sacrifice to drink of His cup and to daily be immersed into His death.

"MY CUP OF THE NEW COVENANT"

The cup is not ours, but the Lord's. The life or sacrifice symbolized by the blood is not ours, but the Redeemer's. We are merely given the privilege of drinking it, partaking of it. The blood of Jesus could have sealed the New Covenant between God and Israel, and on behalf of all mankind through Israel by the New Covenant, without being offered to us at all. The offering to us of the privilege of participation in the cup of Christ's sufferings and death is therefore not to indicate that it was insufficient nor that we could add anything to it. It illustrates the grace of God--that He is willing to receive us and make us joint-heirs with our Lord and Savior, if we have His Spirit. The spirit which actuated Jesus was a spirit of devotion to the doing of the Father's will--to the

smallest detail, and even unto death. Exactly this same spirit must be in all those whom the Father will now accept as members of His Bride, His Body, His Church in the heavenly dory. Hence the Redeemer emphasized the matter distinctly, saying that all who would sit with Him in His Throne must drink of His cup of self-denial, self-sacrifice, and must be immersed into His death.

This is exactly what St. Paul points out to us; namely, that our Lord is the true Bread, the true Loaf, which came down from Heaven, and that we are invited to be portions of the One Loaf, which ultimately will be the Bread of Life for the world during the Millennial Age. We not only partake of Christ, but accepted by Him according to the Father's Plan, we become members with our Lord in the larger Loaf, the multitudinous Christ. Hence, as St. Paul suggests, when we break this Bread together as a memorial, we not only symbolize our Lord's broken body, but in a larger sense we symbolize the breaking of the Church and our own breaking or dying as members of that Church. "The loaf which we break, is it not the communion [the common union or participation] of the Body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread."--1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

The cup of the fruit of the vine to us means the sacrificed life of our Lord. But additionally, it reminds us that we, in becoming His disciples, accepted His invitation to share His cup. To us this means faithfulness in self-sacrifice as the Lord's representatives, even unto death. "The cup of blessing which we bless [for which we give thanks as the greatest imaginable favor of God bestowed upon us], is it not the communion [the general union, the fellowship] of the body of Christ?" Does it not represent our Lord's sacrifice and our share with Him in His sacrifice, by His invitation and in harmony with the Father's pre-arranged Plan, in which He foreknew us with Jesus from before the foundation of the world?

Oh, what a depth of meaning attaches to the communion cup from this standpoint! Oh, what heart-searching should go with the accepting of it! How evident it is that this communion cup represents not merely turning from sin; not merely believing in Jesus; not merely preference for right over wrong, but chiefly the presentation of believers' bodies living sacrifices to God; sacrifices considered holy, because of the imputation of Jesus' merit, and which sacrifices God has accepted, begetting the offerer to the new nature as a New Creature.--Rom. 12:1.

No wonder the Apostle intimates that whoever lightly, irreverently, yet intelligently, partakes of this symbolic flesh and symbolic blood brings condemnation upon himself. It is of this blood, viewed from this standpoint, that the Apostle speaks in Heb. 10:29. He speaks of some who count the blood of the Covenant wherewith they were *sanctified* an unsacred or common thing--some who do despite to the spirit of grace, favor, which has called us with this High Calling during this Gospel Age. The Apostle intimates that God's providence for such would be the Second Death. We cannot understand the Apostle to mean that church members who have never made a real consecration to God, who have never understood the real grace of God, the real privilege which they enjoy, should be subjects of the Second Death. The context, on the contrary, intimates that the persons referred to had at one time a clear understanding of the matter; that they had been "once enlightened"; that they had not only been justified by faith in the precious blood to approach God thus, but, on the basis of that justifying faith, they had gone on to sanctification--presenting their bodies living sacrifices. The text cited indeed declares that it refers to only such as despise the blood of the Covenant (the cup we memorialize), with which they had previously been *sanctified* by the begetting of the Holy Spirit when they agreed to "drink of Christ's cup" in their consecration.

"EVEN YOUR SANCTIFICATION"

Our sanctification, which is the will of God and in harmony with which the present Gospel call is made, is effected not when we are "called," nor when we begin to turn from sin, nor when we begin to hear and heed the voice of God, but when, under the influence of these blessings and mercies of God, we come to the point of *full consecration*--full discipleship, full surrender, full sacrifice, of all of the earthly rights and privileges, that we might have instead the spiritual blessings, the Divine nature, joint-heirship with our Lord in His Kingdom. Is it asked, Who would despise such a favor as this? Who would repudiate the privilege of being joint-sacrificers with the Lord? Who would spurn "His cup" and "His baptism" into death in view of the privilege of being associated in the reward? The answer is that surely none would do so who still retain the spirit of begetting and faith-appreciation of the things not seen as yet glory, honor and immortality. If, therefore, any who have once tasted of the Heavenly Gift and been made partakers of the Holy Spirit and participated in the powers and privileges of the coming Age--if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance.

We cannot read the heart. We cannot know surely who have seen beyond the first veil, and who have not. We cannot know absolutely who have committed the "sin unto death," and who have not. We are not to judge one another. We are rather to accept one another's expressions, provided the course of life corresponds, in that it is not symbolically represented by the injurious thorns and thistles.

It may be possible that some who have professed to see the spiritual things, some who have professed a fulness of consecration even unto death, some who have professed to appreciate the participation in the breaking of the One Loaf and the drinking of the one cup of fellowship with Christ in His death, have never really appreciated these things. Perhaps they not only deceived us by their statements, but also deceived themselves.

Let us remember our Lord's words, "By their fruits ye shall know them." If those who once professed that they were sanctified, set apart, consecrated sacrificers as members of the Body of Christ and who partook of His cup of suffering and self-denial, and then manifested a spirit of holiness and gave evidences of developing the fruits and graces of the spirit, we may safely consider that they were spirit-begotten. If these afterward, either by their conduct or their words, repudiate the blood of the Covenant--if these now manifest no longer the fruits of the Spirit of God, but the fruits of the spirit of the Adversary, we may well fear for them that they not only have lost the light, but also lost the Spirit. We are not to expect that such would necessarily go to open deeds of violence, murder, robbery, etc. It would be sufficient evidence of their having lost the Spirit of the Lord if they should develop afresh the spirit of anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. These St. Paul designates works of the flesh and of the devil.

True, a sanctified member of the Body of Christ might be overtaken in a fault, or act in a manner that would imply anger, but he certainly could not have malice and hatred. Besides, if overtaken in a fault, he would soon realize his difficulty and not only go with the fault to the Throne of Heavenly Grace for forgiveness, but also go and make reparation and full apology to those wronged, injured, by the act. Whoever, therefore, indicates that his spirit has become a malicious one, gives evidence that he has already lost the Spirit of God and is "twice dead, plucked up by the roots," and belongs to the thorn and briar family and not to the vine.

"THE EARNEST OF OUR INHERITANCE"

In our Memorial service, let not our hearts merely meditate upon the sufferings of Jesus, nor merely upon the sufferings of the members of His Body as they walk in His *footsteps to sacrificial death*. On the contrary, let us receive a proper exhilaration of spirit from our participation in this cup. We read that Jesus rejoiced in spirit; and the Apostle urges all those who are drinking of the cup, saying, "Rejoice in the Lord; and again I say, Rejoice!" The Christian's life is not a sad or morose one, but a most joyful one, He can even be joyful in tribulation, "knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope;" knowing also that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"--beyond the veil. (Rom. 5:3, 4; 2 Cor. 4:17.) We thus partake in the cup of *suffering and joy* which is an earnest of our inheritance, which we will receive at the Second Coming of our Lord and our gathering together with Him as His members and His Bride class. This rejoicing in spirit is necessary to our courage and zeal in the service of the Lord. Note the operation of it in St. Paul, who, with Silas, could sing praises to God in the prison with his feet in the stocks and his back lacerated. And so it should be with all Christ's true followers in the Narrow Way. With the wound of every thorn, with the pain of every sharp arrow of bitter words with which we are assaulted for Christ's sake, we may have joy unspeakable.

JOY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

A further joy may be ours as we gradually comprehend more and more fully the significance of this New Covenant or New Testament blood in which our Lord offers us an opportunity to participate. He imputes His merit and thus enables us to be dead with Him. But it is offered only to such as pledge themselves to be dead with Christ. Even then it is not given, but merely *imputed* or loaned to us to make good or worthy our offerings when the great High Priest as our Advocate presents them and accepts them in the Father's name and grants us His Spirit of adoption.

These earthly rights which belong to our Lord Jesus alone, which are at His disposal, are to go by the New Covenant to natural Israel. (Jer. 31:31.) "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy." (Rom. 11:31.) We may therefore rejoice in sympathetic anticipation of the blessings about to come to natural Israel, in which all mankind will have an opportunity of sharing. If their casting away at the beginning of this

Age was preparatory to our acceptance, how glad we may be that our acceptance will not mean their everlasting loss, but, on the contrary, that they will be profited through the blessing of Spiritual Israel, members of the great High Priest and Mediator and fully "qualified servants of the New Covenant." (2 Cor. 3:6.) Thus to Israel eventually will be given the earthly blessings and promises which God originally set apart for them, and which were typified under the Law Covenant and its typical mediator Moses, who is like unto or a type of the great Mediator, the Christ of God, of which Jesus is the Head and the overcoming saints, His faithful followers, are accounted members.-- Acts 3:22, 23.

Let us then appreciate this glorious Memorial more and more as the years go by, seeing in it expressed more and more of the "Love Divine all love excelling," whose length and breadth and height and depth surpass all human comprehension.

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

We urge upon the Lord's people who recognize the foregoing facts and signification to meet in the name of the Master as His "members," and comply with His invitation, "Do this in remembrance of Me," and not as the Jews, in remembrance of the type: as St. Paul said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come" (1 Cor. 11:26): until at His coming He shall change the Church, which now is His Body of humiliation, to make it in the truest sense His glorious Body.

Again we suggest that where the dear friends possibly can, they meet together in little groups, and where this is impossible, they nevertheless should celebrate alone with the Lord. We do not urge that special effort be made to attend large gatherings on such occasions, but the reverse--that each little group or company meet by itself as a separate organization of the Body of Christ. "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there, am I in the midst of them."--Matt. 18:20.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST - SERIES XVI-A

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO LAODICEA (Cont.)

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; - and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. . . .

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."--Rev. 3:18-20.

THE Savior next counsels the messenger and Church of Loadicea to buy of Him gold tried in the fire, that they might be rich; and white raiment, that they might be clothed in order that the shame of their nakedness should not appear; and to anoint their eyes with eyesalve, that they might see.

There is an evident reference in these words to the boastful claims which He said would be made by the Laodicean ministry and Church, of possessing riches and having need of nothing. One has very appropriately expressed the thought suggested in this symbolic language: "So wealthy are they [the Laodiceans] that the Lord will not talk of *giving* to them. And indeed it would be a happy thing for them to exchange their riches . . . false glitter for true gold, 'gold tried in the fire'--a frequent symbol . . . in Scripture to represent what is divine."

THE TRUE AND IMPERISHABLE RICHES

Gold being the most valuable of metals, is used in the Scriptures to denote the most valuable of heavenly, spiritual things. In a general way it might be said truthfully that gold is emblematic of the religion of Jesus Christ, which makes the possessor of it rich indeed, even as it is enjoyed in the present life. Commenting on what constitutes the true riches of the Christian, a faithful one in the Laodicean period has well expressed the truth:

"We have said that the heavenly riches are to be attained in the resurrection, when the Millennial Kingdom shall be inaugurated, and the faithful overcomers, by their resurrection change, shall be richly endowed with all the good things which God hath in reservation for them that love Him, and who prove their love by present-time

devotions, sacrifices, etc. But we should notice that there is a foretaste of these heavenly blessings granted to the faithful in this present life. These heavenly riches granted us now the Apostle speaks of as 'riches of grace' (Eph. 1:7 18), and these grace-riches include faith, hope, and joy in the Holy Spirit, and an ability to see and appreciate with the eye of faith things actually not seen as yet. The Apostle declares that these treasures of wisdom and grace--knowledge of Divine good things in reservation, and the fellowship with God which permits us to anticipate and enjoy those blessings in a measure now, are all *hidden in Christ*, 'in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.' (Col. 2:3). We must come into Christ, as members of His Body, the true Church, by sacrifice, before we can have the opportunity of even searching for these hidden treasures or of finding any of them. And then, as we progress faithfully in our sacrificial service, as priests, walking in the footsteps of the great High Priest, we find more and more of these true 'riches of grace' day by day, and year by year, as we progress.

"Moreover, another kind of riches comes to the Royal Priesthood, faithful in performing their self-sacrifices. These are riches of the Holy Spirit. They find as they sacrifice the selfish interests, earthly aims, earthly projects, etc., in the service of the Lord and the Truth, that they grow more and more in likeness to their heavenly Father and to their Lord, and that the fruits of the Holy Spirit abound in them more and more--meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love.

"Furthermore, they find a peace and a joy to which formerly they were strangers, and which the world can neither give nor take away. This peace and joy come through realization that having given their all to the Lord, all of His exceeding great and precious promises *belong* to them. Now their faith can firmly grasp these promises as their own; they can realize that as their justification and call were not of themselves, but of the Lord, so all their course of sacrifice, in harmony with that call, is under Divine supervision and care, and sure to work out blessings; and that, to whatever extent they shall work out earthly hardships, trials and sufferings, God will proportionately make them to work out a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory in the Kingdom.--2 Cor. 4:17."*

"And anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

The reference here is to a medicament that was used for weak eyes. It was compounded of various substances supposed to possess a healing

quality. The lesson is very manifest, and the meaning is, that in respect to the spiritual sight, that which Christ would furnish them would produce the same effect on their apprehension of Divine things as would the medicament prepared for the physical vision. The thought conveyed is that those who were blind to the true character of God and the beauties of salvation would have their eyes opened to see the wonderful works and plan of the Divine One.

"Laodicea is indeed counseled to buy the true gold, the true riches of the Lord, and to use eyesalve that she may see, and to put on the garment of Christ's righteousness, that she may not be put to shame; but we have no intimation in the Scriptures that she will give any heed to this counsel; on the contrary, the intimation is that more and more she will become a Babel of confusion, and that she will go down with the political and financial systems of this present Age, in the great time of trouble with which this Age will terminate, and which will fit and prepare mankind for the Kingdom of God's dear Son, and its reign of righteousness. 'When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.'--Isa. 26:9."**

WHOM THE LORD LOVETH

The words, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," are evidently spoken of Christ's own followers, and not of the rejected, cast off Laodiceans. These words are in harmony with all Scripture referring to the Lord's dealings with such. One Scripture sums up His method of dealing in the words, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." (Heb. 12:6.). We are of course to understand this on the supposition that His children need chastening. It is, however, very doubtful if there have ever been any of God's children who have not at some time needed the rod of correction. Indeed, it is a proof, an evidence of His love, if when His children go astray, and as referred to in this particular instance, partake in any measure of this

*Z '01, pp. 55, 56.

** Z '01, p. 57.

Laodicean spirit which characterizes the professing Church in general of these days, He reminds them of it by permitting certain trials and

difficulties to come upon them as corrections and reproofs. Thus do earthly fathers call back their children who are disobedient; and there is no greater evidence of a father's love than when with sorrow and pain to himself he administers such punishment as will call his child back from the path of disobedience.

The words of the Savior which follow, "Be zealous therefore, and repent," seem also to be addressed to such of His followers who have become to some extent, at least, lukewarm, and who may have partaken in a measure unconsciously of the spirit of pride and boastfulness. This is possible; indeed, those who have been blessed by having imparted to them a wonderful knowledge of the Divine Plan are very susceptible to the temptation to be proud and boastful of their attainments. Such are exhorted to be earnest and ardent in the service of the Master, and to cultivate the spirit of meekness and humility. We may be sure that if any of His true children partake of this wrong spirit, they will receive His chastening rod. This is guaranteed because of His love for such.

THE SAVIOR AT THE DOOR

The expression, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock," is, of course, figurative, and is drawn from the common usage of every day life of one who has approached a dwelling and, reaching the door of entrance, gives the well-known sign of his presence by knocking; thus expressing his purpose to make known his presence, and also his desire for admission. It implies also that the one knocking recognizes the right of the one inside to open the door or not, as he may please. The knocker would not force an entrance; and when assured that he is heard, if the knock be not heeded, he would turn away. This figurative utterance of the Savior was understood, as we have already noted, by some teachers of the Philadelphia period to denote the presence of Christ, His Second Advent at some time in the Laodicean period. This was the thought of one prominent in the ministry during the Laodicean period. Referring to this in November, 1914, he thus expressed himself :

"We should expect that at the time of our Lord's Coming His people would hear His 'knock'--the knock of the prophecies, and whoever would open his heart and receive the things in a consecrated attitude of mind the Lord would gird Himself as a servant and would come forth and serve him."*

Commenting on the Savior's reply to the question of the disciples, "What shall be the sign of Thy presence?," we have the following by this same writer:

"We shall see the *sign* of the Son of Man [in heaven],' does not signify that the Lord's disciples then living will see *Him*, but that they will have an indication or evidence of His *presence* at that time. The *signs* of our Lord's Second presence will be found in harmony with, and corroborated by, the testimony of the Prophets, as was the case at the First Advent.--Luke 24:44-46.

"The sign or proof of His *parousia* will be given *in heaven*. Not in the heaven of the Father's presence and before the holy angels, but in the symbolic heaven, the ecclesiastical heaven, the same heaven which the preceding verse tells us shall be so terribly shaken as to shake out its stars [teachers]. It is *in this heaven*--the professedly spiritual class--that the sign or *evidence of our Lord's presence* will first be apparent. Some will 'see' the fulfilment of the prophetic declarations respecting this day of the second presence, in the marvelous unfolding of the Divine Plan of the Ages, and will recognize it as one of the *signs of His presence*.--Luke 12:37. . . .

* Z '14, p. 326.

"At the first presence, the humble Israelites indeed, whom God accounted worthy, were not confused, but enlightened, so that our Lord could say to them, 'Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear . . .' (Matt. 13:17.) So now in the second *presence* of the Son of Man, the opening up of the Divine Word, the discernment of the Divine Plan showing as well the Divine times and seasons, and the confusion upon 'Babylon' are satisfactory proofs of the presence of the King."*

THE KNOCK OF PROPHECY

In a reference made in 1904 to the significance of the "knock," we have the following from this same writer: "His presence will be made known by the knock, and the knock would correspond to an announcement, through some special servant or servants, either orally

or by the printed page, setting forth the evidences of the Master's presence. For instance, the publishing of time prophecies showing that the time is fulfilled that certain prophecies marking events belonging to the close of the Gospel dispensation and the opening of the Millennial dispensation are accomplished, and that certain signs mentioned in the Scriptures are fulfilled--such testimonies are in the nature of a knock, which would be heard by such of the servants of the Lord as would be awake at that time. It is not for the servants in general to do the knocking, but for the Master Himself to set in operation the forces and agencies He may choose to use for producing this knock and the announcement."**

So far as we are able to discover, it was the thought of this writer, even up to his death, in 1916, that this figurative knock of prophecy began to have its fulfilment in 1878. However, on account of certain predicted occurrences that had given rise to this conclusion, failing to eventuate by 1916, he expressed himself with less confidence about this being the exact date, just before his death. Of this we shall speak further later. His utterance in 1904 is as follows:

"These things, we hold, have already been fulfilled. The knock, or proclamation of the Lord's presence, as indicated by the Old Testament Prophecies, has been given since 1875, and is still being given. . . . The servants of the household are taking notice, and each one as he opens his heart and mind *to the fact of the Lord's presence receives a fulfilment of the blessing promised--receives a feast of fat things, spiritual--an understanding and appreciation of the Divine Plan and a soul nourishment and strengthening such as was never his before. That this serving of the servants by the Master should be understood to be an individual work and not merely a collective service and feast, is evidenced by the Lord's statement in Rev. 3:20. Here the Lord represents the same event in connection with His message to the last phase of His Church nominal, the Laodicean phase. He says, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man [individual] hear my voice [knock] and 'open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me.'***"

*Studies. Vol. IV, pp. 598, 599. Z '04, p. 123.

**Z '04, p. 124.

***Z '04, p. 124

It will thus be seen that this writer's thought was that the "signs" or evidences of the Savior's *presence* at the Second Advent would be twofold: (1) the fulfilment of certain chronological predictions; and (2) the fulfilment of certain, indeed, very many, predicted *events*, the chief one of all being the spreading of a spiritual feast; in other words, the impartation of light and knowledge concerning the Lord's great Plan of Salvation. Additional evidences are given in other Scripture prophecies proving the fact of the Second Presence, but these, with the discovery on the part of the Lord's people of the predicted apostate Laodicean conditions mentioned, are those taught in this message.

MAN'S GREAT WORK-WEEK AT AN END

Among the chronological evidences, the ending of the 6000 years (or the close of six great 1000-year days, from the beginning of human history) is considered a very important one. While there is no positive statement in the Scriptures that the ending of these years would prove that the Second Advent had taken place, there is strong inference that it would prove this. Six great 1000-year days of human history represent man's work-week, during which, under the unfavorable conditions of the curse, he has been laboring and toiling in the sweat of face, to earn his living and prolong life. They have indeed been six days of labor, travail and pain. And just as Israel of old in the typical arrangement was given the instruction that they were to rest and do no work on the Sabbath day, so this would be a strong hint that the seventh great 1000-year day of man's history is to be a period of rest, of cessation from the labor, the toil, and the anguish of the past 6000 years. Thus the period termed "the day of Christ," the day of His appearing and Kingdom, when He shall reign, is designated as one of these great epochal days--1000 years (Rev. 20:4, 6) ; presumably, therefore, the seventh thousand years of human history, which will be man's great Sabbath day of rest from sin and death. In that day the curse will be rolled away, which will mean that all in their graves shall come forth (John, 5:28), and all the willing and obedient will be ushered into everlasting life. **PASTOR RUSSELL** and many other writers are in agreement with this. We quote:

"And though the Bible contains no direct statement that the seventh thousand [years] will be the epoch of Christ's reign, the great Sabbath day of restitution to the world, yet the venerable tradition is not without a reasonable foundation."*

DR. SEISS, writing in 1856, quotes JOHNSTON, a distinguished writer on the prophecies, whose thought was the same on this point:

" Through the whole Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, there is a striking typical representation of some great and important Sabbath, as a great septenary that has not yet taken place, and which evidently appears to be the Millenarian septenary, as the great Sabbath of the whole earth. God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it. In the Decalogue this peculiar distinguishment of the seventh day or weekly Sabbath, was most solemnly renewed. Every seventh year was appointed a Sabbatical year. And the commencement of the year of jubilee, which was every fiftieth year, was to be fixed by the running of the septenary of the Sabbatical years. "Thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years." The number seven, because used in Scripture to complete all the sacred divisions of

Studies, Vol. II P. 39.

time, was regarded by the Jews as the symbol of perfection, and is used in this sense in the Scriptures. The question then arises, Is it to be supposed that all these events, which are interwoven in the Mosaic dispensation, which was itself symbolical or typical, and which are introduced into the New Testament, and abound so much in the book of Revelation, have no antitype to correspond to them?--no great Sabbatical septenary to which they all point, and in which they all shall be accomplished? Is it not highly probable that they are all typical of the seventh millenary of the earth, which is the great Sabbath?"

DR. SEISS remarks on these words:

"When we go back into antiquity, whether Jewish, heathen or Christian, we find a general and deepseated belief, that the world shall endure six thousand years in *its secular and toiling state*; . . . and then will follow a thousand years of holy rest, peace and joy,--the Millennial Sabbath or golden period of the world. . . . It was held and inculcated as a branch of Christian faith or truth by Barnabus [a companion of St. Paul], Justin Martyr, Papias Ireneaus, Tertullian, Cyprean, and all orthodox Christians for the first three centuries of the Christian era. Luther entertained it. Melancthon wrote it on the fly-leaf of the Bible, as a matter not to be disputed. 'I have shown,' this writer

further says, 'that Christ will come *before* the Millennium, not after it.'"

LIVING IN THE MILLENNIAL DAWN

As we examine these writers' conclusions, 'we find that all of them, in calculating the six thousand years, reckon from Adam's creation, but make the six thousand years refer to the toiling state of man under the curse. As the chronology of the Bible includes the Edenic period, and we have no positive way of determining its length, it becomes impossible to fix the *exact* date when the Millennium or seventh thousand years from Adam's banishment from Eden are ushered in. However, all chronologists, with the exception of Usher and a very few others who follow his conclusions, are agreed that the six thousand years from Adam's creation ran out at least thirty years ago; and, as it is perfectly reasonable to conclude that the sojourn of Adam in Eden was very brief--but a very few years, at most--then the six thousand years of man's history from the fall is passed, and thus we have another evidence in addition to those cited above, that we are now in the period of Christ's *parousia* or presence.

The writer just quoted, as well as about all students of chronology, reject Usher's findings, which concludes four thousand and four years at the birth of Christ. That reckoning places the Millennium one hundred years future. DR. SEISS gives the conclusions of many eminent students of Bible chronology; and an examination of them shows that they are all agreed that the ending of the six thousand years from the creation of Adam is in the past, and is now a matter of history. In this connection, he says: "Sylvester Bliss, author of a very valuable 'Analysis of Sacred Chronology,' computes the age of the world at Christ's birth at four thousand one hundred and twenty years," which makes the six thousand years end in 1880. "The Rev. R. C. Shimeall, in his 'Age of the World,' reckons twelve years from the present (1856) as completing the six thousand years," which would be 1868. "The Rev. C. Bowen, whose estimates and tables were adopted by Dr. Elliott and affixed to his exposition of the Apocalypse, computes the age of the world at the Savior's birth at four thousand one hundred and twenty-eight

**Last Times* pp. 266, 267, 268.

years." This would make the years run out in 1872. "Fynes Clinton, according to Bickersteth, . . . one of the ablest chronologers of the present time, whom Bowen mainly follows, and whose researches are deemed very valuable, computes the world's age at four thousand one hundred and thirty-eight years when Christ was born," making the ending of the six thousand years to be 1862. Others make 1866 to be the end. DR. SEISS then sums up his own conclusions as follows:

"If, then, we be allowed to correct Usher and Jarvis, by [these] more recent investigations, we have the concurrent testimony of these half-dozen learned and received chronologists, that *the six thousand years from Adam shall be fulfilled within the present* [nineteenth] century,--IN LESS THAN FIFTY YEARS [from 1856]."*

* Last Times--SEISS, 1856.

MAKING READY A HOLY PEOPLE: REVIEW

--March 26--

Golden Text.--"Jehovah is righteous in all His ways, and gracious in all His works."--Psa. 145:17.

THE lessons of the past quarter, drawn from the history of ancient Israel, are valuable from a practical standpoint, as well as from the spiritual point of view. Therein we have observed the continued activity of the powers and forces of evil, and have noted the downward tendency of sin as well as the fruitlessness of sin in the various forms in which it was prominent in Israel; namely, idolatry, selfishness, and covetousness.

For many centuries Ephraim, the ten-tribe kingdom, especially after Solomon's death, was extremely perverse: not more degraded, we may presume; than the surrounding nations, but their perversion was more wicked, more reprehensible, because of greater privileges, blessings, knowledge and opportunities which the Lord had granted to them as the posterity of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the inheritors of the great Oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob. One is amazed, in reading of the Lord's dealings with Ephraim and Judah, to note their general tendency toward idolatry, and this in spite of the Divine chastisements, corrections, etc., which evidently influenced only the few. In thinking of these matters we are

to remember that the surrounding nations were still more grossly steeped in idolatry and its lustful orgies, practised in the name of worship. These other nations were not specially chastised for idolatry as was Israel, but were allowed to practically take the course they chose, as the Apostle explains in Rom. 1:28: God gave them over to a reprobate mind and to doing those things which were not proper because they had not wished to retain Him in their minds.

VIEWED FROM THE DIVINE STANDPOINT

There is but one standpoint from which the history of Israel can be properly understood and appreciated; namely, Israel's inheritance in the Abrahamic Covenant. All of God's dealings with the children of Jacob were with a view to a selection of the two seeds of Abraham--a natural seed and a spiritual one. To this end their national experiences conspired--to find in that nation certain noble, loyal, reverential souls, such as David, Jonathan, and all the holy prophets, and to prepare that people by disciplines, prunings, etc., to be the people to whom Messiah would first present Himself and among whom He would find a goodly "remnant" prepared to be His followers.

The separation of the ten tribes from the two tribes at the death of Soloman was an important step in this selection. The Lord had distinctly stated in advance that the Law-giver whom He had promised should come out of Judah, and hence any Israelites indeed in the ten-tribe kingdom must have looked with longing interest toward Judah as the ultimate end of their hopes--the Messiah, and the fulfilment through Him of the Abrahamic Covenant. Throughout the varying history of these two kingdoms the greater religious faith and zeal were always to be found in Judah, and gradually many of the more religious in Ephraim removed to Judah and identified themselves therewith, because of the greater religious privileges and blessings there enjoyed. Thus Judah eventually represented the cream of the nation, and the records show that not only Hezekiah, the king of Judah, was favorably disposed toward his brethren of Ephraim and made them welcome to the religious assemblies, but that other kings, his predecessors, had done similarly. Thus seen the captivity of Ephraim was merely the rejection of the skim milk of the nation, and as we have already seen was really not at all to their injury so far as temporal interests were concerned. It was their cutting off from Divine favor in respect to the Abrahamic Covenant that was specially regrettable.

When a good while afterward the kingdom of Judah was overthrown and its people similarly taken into captivity and similarly scattered amongst the nations composing the Babylonish empire, it was merely a carrying out of a further development of the Divine Plan. By this last stroke the Lord would put away all the more grovelling, sensual and worldly-minded of His people. The desolation of the land for seventy years permitted all who would to forget the original covenant of which they were heirs, permitted them to intermarry with the nations around them if they would, permitted them to settle and prosper and be content in their new homes; and then the Lord in His providence opened up a way for all who were not satisfied with the good earthly portion they were enjoying to return to their own land--a desolated land.

We can readily see that none of them would come back under such conditions except those who had strong faith in the Lord and in the original Oath-bound Covenant made to Abraham and confirmed to Isaac and Jacob and the nation. All without faith and all of weak faith, all lacking in zeal, would surely find it much to their advantage every way to remain where they were. And so we find that only 55,000 out of all the millions of those two nations cared to return to the land of promise--for in the Lord's providence the proclamation of King Cyrus permitted all Israelites of every tribe to return to their own land. The faithful people who did return were the very cream of that nation, and their successors, to whom our Lord Jesus presented Himself as king, represented, in many respects, the noblest and best people in the world. We should not be misunderstood: while the majority of Ephraim and Judah commingled with the heathen, others preserved their identity as Israelites without returning to Palestine, just as we see the Israelites today in every part of the world preserving their religious institutions and faith. But then each preserved his tribal identity, whereas now all tribal lines are lost and obliterated. It is of these that the Apostle sometimes spoke as "our twelve tribes scattered abroad"--not lost but scattered, as today. The only ones lost are those who have become Gentiles, by utter disregard of the peculiar characteristics of the nation, of which by Divine arrangement circumcision was one.

Our lesson viewed from this standpoint is profitable. It shows us that God, is working out His great and wonderful Plan. Those favored in that Plan are not coerced, though graciously dealt with and appealed to; neither does their neglect or rejection of Divine favor estop the development of the Divine Plan.

"God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform."

ASA RELIES ON GOD

--April 2--2 CHRON. 14:1-12--

*Golden Text.--"Help us, O Jehovah our God; for we rely on Thee."--2
Chron. 14:11.*

THE Books of Chronicles are entitled in the Hebrew Bible "The Words of the Days," like our "diary" or "journal." The Greek translation has a title meaning "Things That Have Been Left Untold," bringing out the fact that Chronicles is supplementary to the books of Samuel and Kings, somewhat as John is supplementary to the other three Gospels. Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah form one historical work or group of works, by one writer or group of writers. The last two verses of Chronicles are the same as the first three verses of Ezra.

Our lesson relates to the two-tribe kingdom of Judah under its good king Asa, the great-grandson of Solomon. We have already noticed the tendency to idolatry stimulated by Solomon's marrying heathen women, and then, to please them, introducing their heathen religions. We have seen how only a small portion of the kingdom was left in the hands of Solomon's son Rehoboam, and that true religion for a time was stimulated by the adversities of the government. Nevertheless, idolatry flourished, not only in Israel under Jeroboam; but also in Judah under Rehoboam, and also under the reign of his son Abijah, mentioned in the opening verses of our lesson.

CONFLICT BETWEEN LIGHT AND DARKNESS

Under all the circumstances one is inclined to wonder whence Asa received his aspirations for righteousness and loyalty to God. We are to remember, however, that the gathering to Judah of many of the religious people of the ten tribes and the Levitical tribe gave true religion a strong foundation in Judah. The heathen religions were fascinating to the people, not only because they were showy, but because they contained a large element of licentiousness, and it is a weakness of the fallen human nature to want to be right and yet to be wrong at the same time--to pretend to be doing good and serving righteousness and exercising the religious elements of human nature, while at the same time ratifying the lower and baser instincts. The

entire human family is weak in this direction, as is evident by all the heathen religions of the world. The religion of the Bible is the only one that lifts its standard far above all baseness, and which demands of its followers the highest ideals, as represented in the exhortation, "Brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are reputable, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things."--Phil. 4:8.

Our Lord, in telling us to let our light shine before men, informs us that the darkness will hate the light, that there will be continually a conflict between the two, and that this will cause the "children of the light" continually to walk in the narrow and difficult way. Nevertheless the light reproves the darkness wherever it shines. We may be sure that some such conditions prevailed in the kingdom of Judah when the best people of the whole twelve tribes had gathered in Judah and were letting the light of their faith in God shine before their fellows. The influence of the Truth took hold upon the heart of Asa, and upon his reaching the throne at the death of his father Abijah, he promptly availed himself of the opportunity to strike a blow at idolatry--to take his stand on the side of the Lord and His Law, which the nation centuries before had accepted as the basis of their government with God through Moses.

ASA'S COURSE NOT A PATTERN

The work of reform consisted in the destruction of the altars erected on various hilltops, at which the orgies of heathendom were practised. These altars were surrounded by groves for the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth by those who affected to be in a large sense worshipers of nature, and groves of trees on hilltops were their temples. Asa not only destroyed these unlawful accessories to a false worship, but he caused a proclamation to be made throughout the kingdom calling the attention of the people to the true God Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and to His Law and all the commandments connected therewith.

Such action on the part of Asa has been misunderstood by many well-meaning Christian people to imply that other kings and rulers in other countries should similarly take active measures for the destruction of all false religion and for the establishment of what they conceive to be the true religion. This has meant religious persecution throughout the past. For instance, in Great Britain, Germany, France,

etc., time and again Roman Catholics coming into power have overthrown Protestant worship and persecuted Protestant worshipers, and reversely, Protestants coming into power have endeavored similarly to persecute Catholics. Sometimes the persecution has been between various sects of Protestants, sometimes between Mohammedans and Christians, etc. Of late years a more tolerant spirit has disposed intelligent people to let each other worship different gods or the same God according to the dictates of the conscience of each. Nevertheless, there are many today who, if they had the power, would feel it to be their duty to emulate the example of Asa and destroy any and every religion disapproved by their consciences.

Such misapprehensions of proprieties are built upon misunderstanding of the course of Asa and others of his time, who had God's approval in their course of opposing false worships. In order to grasp the situation thoroughly and to see the principles underlying it, we should remember that no nation in the world today occupies the same position toward God that Israel occupied in its day. God chose Israel--the natural descendants of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob--to be His peculiar people, to be His nation, They were thus separated from all other nations of the world, which were accounted heathen. In this His chosen nation God established His Law, and made a covenant with that people by which they were to be obedient to certain directions and to receive from Him certain blessings, protection, guidance, etc. It was in harmony with this special arrangement that Asa was properly doing his duty in destroying any and every religious system in his nation contrary to the Divine Law and Covenant.

"YE ARE A HOLY NATION"

However, Israel has ceased to be God's people since the time of their rejection of Messiah, and God has not adopted any other nation of earth to be His nation instead of Israel, and He is no longer in covenant relationship with any other nation. Believers in the Lord Jesus, consecrated followers in His steps, are from the Lord's standpoint, His "holy nation," His "Royal Priesthood"--spiritual Israel . But these do not constitute a nation from the worldly standpoint. They are the embryo members of the coming nation, the Kingdom of God's dear Son, which will be established in power and great glory at the Second Coming of the Lord and the establishment of His Kingdom. For this reason it would be entirely improper for any king or governor or president or emperor of earth today to attempt to use any such power as that exercised by Asa with Divine approval. During this Gospel Age

the Lord's Plan is that His people shall be as lights in the world in the midst of the darkness of sin and error, and that the light which they let shine shall reprove the world of sin, not nationally but individually, so that those who experience conviction of sin and who go on to repentance may become associated with the light-bearers, the Lord's people, and while still in the world and still of the world, according to the flesh, and still bound to it by certain obligations and laws of men, nevertheless, as our Lord expressed it, such, from the time they become members of the Royal Priesthood, the holy nation, are not of the world even as Jesus was not of the world, because He has chosen them out of the world.

King Asa built fortress cities in the highways connecting the land of Judah with the outside world, as a protection against attack from Egypt on the south and west, from Syria on the north and east, and from the ten-tribe kingdom on the immediate north. He organized also a militia army subject to call. These preparations for war had the Divine approval, but in no sense of the word indicated that we, the antitypical Israelites, should take a similar course. On the contrary, as the Apostle points out, we are to have on the armor of God, the armor of righteousness; we are to fortify our hearts against the attack of spiritual enemies in every direction; we are to note the quarter from which, the enemies are to be expected--the world, the flesh, the Adversary. The battles of typical Israel, represented or prefigured and illustrated the battles in which we spiritual Israelites are to engage and the victories which we are to win on a higher plane, for we contend not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and wicked spirits in places of influence.

The ten years of quiet mentioned in verses 1, 5 and 6, in which Asa instituted reforms amongst the people and equipped, them for defense, were evidently all needed for the struggle recorded in verse 9. Zerah, the Ethiopian, with an army of 1,000,000 men, is supposed to have been Osorkon II of Egypt, who was of Ethiopian descent. Others suppose that Zerah was the general of this king. In the days of Rehoboam the king of Egypt had invaded Judah and conquered it, and had taken away from it an immense treasure in gold accumulated by King Solomon, including the solid gold shields which Solomon had hanging from the pillars of the Temple. It is assumed that Judah became practically a vassal nation to Egypt as a result of this war, and that Asa's organization of the nation on a military basis and the erecting of fortifications meant a declaration of independence and a refusal to pay tribute to Egypt, and that Zerah's army was sent to punish him, to bring away more spoil and to reduce the nation again to the condition of a vassal.

KING ASA'S PRAYER FOR VICTORY

Asa called into requisition his army, which numbered only about one-half that of the invading foe, but his confidence was in the Lord, and he cried unto Him in prayer for help that the war might result favorably to the Lord's people, the Jews. His recorded prayer is beautiful for its simplicity of faith :--

"Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, there is none beside Thee to help between the mighty and him that hath no strength: help us, O Lord our God; for we rely on Thee, and in Thy name are we come against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee."

The Lord blessed the forces of the Jews. The enemy was discomfited, scattered, routed, and pursued through the land of the Philistines, who evidently were in league with them as enemies of the Jews. This was one of the most remarkable victories ever achieved by the Jews over any foreign nation.

Following the custom of Asa and David and Moses, and others of bygone times in Israel, it is the habit of Christian peoples of our day to offer up prayers for success in war. Many recall well the prayers that were offered for the armies during the Civil War of this country; we remember the accounts given of the prayers of the British and Boers during the British war; we remember in the Spanish war the prayers of the Catholics of Spain and of Italy for the success of the Spanish forces, and how the Pope's blessing was given to the Spanish war vessels. We have heard of how the Czar of Russia, on learning of the outbreak of the war between his country and that of Japan, repaired to the Cathedral for prayer to God, and how the leading Russian generals have similarly gone to confession and to prayer and for other public recognitions of the Almighty and appeals to Him for success to the Russian arms. We have seen pictures in the public press of how the regimental standards, flags, were blessed by the Czar and assisting priests, and the telegraphic reports declared that an image of the Virgin Mary, which was taken with the army in wars of long ago that were successfully waged, was taken to the far East as a kind of talisman to give good luck to the Russian side of the warfare. All will remember how during the great world conflict special days were set apart, during which thousands of prayers were offered for the success of the armies

on both sides of the conflict. How shall we view these appeals? Shall we view them as others do as being on a parity with the appeal of Asa in our lesson? Shall we consider that they are equally appropriate in God's sight and that they are bringing a blessing and victory? We answer, No. The prayers offered for the success of the Confederate armies did not bring them victory; the prayers and blessings upon the Spanish forces and vessels brought them no victory; the prayers of the Boers brought them no victory; the prayers of the French in their war with Germany brought the former no victory; the prayers of the Russians did not in any sense of the word stay or turn the tide of battle; nor do we believe that, the thousands of prayers offered on both sides during the late world war have anything to do with the victories or failures on the part of the contending armies.

GOD'S INTEREST AND CARE AND OURS

We would not be understood as declaring or even implying that God has no interest in the affairs of the world, and that He does not in any measure take a hand in the results of the wars of our time. Quite the contrary. We believe that the Lord's power, especially in this day, especially in this time of "harvest," is supervising and shaping the affairs of the nations with a view to bringing about the grand consummation of the Age so long foretold in the Scriptures, which will result in a great time of trouble through a social, political and financial upheaval which will prepare the way for the Kingdom of God's dear Son in its due time. But we deny the propriety of Christians attempting to pray or otherwise direct the Lord in connection with these matters, and the outworking of the Divine program, which we cannot fully and clearly comprehend. No nation in the world today is God's nation in the sense that Israel was His people. With no nation in the world today has God made a covenant such as that which subsisted between Himself and Israel for the centuries between the giving of the Law at Sinai and the rejection of the Lord at the time of His crucifixion. No nation or kingdom in the world can claim Divine authority or right or backing. The title, "Christian nations," is entirely a misnomer, unauthorized by anything in God's Word. All these nations, from the Scriptural standpoint, are "kingdoms of this world," Gentile kingdoms. The Lord acknowledges none of them, but describes them unitedly as great Babylon, which in due time would fall and give place to the glorious Kingdom which the Lord has promised--the antitype of the Jewish kingdom under a still more favorable covenant, under a still better Mediator, under a still more grand and glorious king than David or Solomon or any other.

The proper attitude, therefore, for the Lord's consecrated people to occupy is that of neutrals. "Ye are not of this world, even as I am not of this world; for I have chosen you out of the world, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." The fruit which the Lord's people are to bear is not strife and enmity and vain glory, but love, joy and peace in the Holy Spirit. This does not mean either that we are to quarrel with the world and seek to bring all mankind to the same position that we occupy. On the contrary, we are to realize that the world is of one nature and the Lord's consecrated and accepted ones are of a new nature; that the Lord has not given to the world the same law that He has given to His consecrated ones, and that He is not expecting of the world the same course of conduct that He is expecting of the house of sons begotten of His Spirit, adopted into His family and guided by His Spirit and His Word.

Let the world fight its fight: the Lord will supervise and the results will be glorious eventually. Let us who belong to the new nation, to the new Kingdom that is not of this world, who use no carnal weapons, but the sword of the Spirit--let us fight the good fight of faith, lay hold upon the glorious things set before us, and not only stand ourselves, but help all those begotten of the same Spirit and members of the same heavenly army corps to stand, complete in Him who is the Head of the Body, the Captain of our salvation. By and by God's loving care over all His creatures will be manifested in the glorious Kingdom of His dear Son, which shall bless and rule, instruct and uplift mankind in general. "The groaning creation" will then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God--so many of them as will then accept the blessing. Then all will see that God so loved the world as to give His Son to die for us and to thus open the way for His Kingdom blessings.

Asa's victory of trust may be the victory of every one of us,. "Asa's battle is our own battle, against pain and against sin. The multitude is the crowd of our impending failures, the assembly of all obstructing difficulties. Thus we stand confronting them. Thus we pray, taking that old prayer upon our lips and repeating that old battle cry of faith and courage: 'Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest in Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude.' "--*George Hodges*.

"I am trusting thee, Lord Jesus:

Never let me fall;

I am trusting Thee forever,

And for all."

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY CXIV--FEBRUARY 26

THE VISION OF THE WOMAN ON THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST

--REV. 17:1-3.

(616) Coming to chapter 17, What is the first impression that we logically receive from the words of the revealing angel, "I will show thee the judgment of that great Harlot"? H '20-246.

(617) In what previous vision, and under what other symbols, is the great Harlot seen? What was specially brought to St. John's attention in the vision recorded in chapters 17, 18, and 19? H '20-246.

(618) What would seem to be the lesson to be drawn from the symbolic picture of St. John beholding the woman on the scarlet colored Beast? H '20-246.

(619) How shall we understand the words, "And he conducted me in spirit into a desert"? H '20-247.

(620) What other symbolic picture in the Revelation stands out in marked contrast, and assists us to appreciate the force of the picture recorded in chapter 17? H '20-247.

STUDY CXV--MARCH 5

THE VISION OF THE WOMAN ON THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST

(Cont.)--REV. 17:3-5.

(621) Describe the Beast seen in this vision and state what particular features identify it with the fourth Beast described by Daniel (chapter

7). What is signified by the fact that St. John saw it with all its heads and horns? H '20-248.

(622) What is the significance of the Woman sitting on many waters, and how has this been fulfilled? Rev. 17:15; H '20-248.

(623) What is represented by the dress and decoration in which the Woman was arrayed? Show how this has had a literal as well as a symbolical fulfilment. H '20-249.

(624) To what does the "Golden Cup" refer in antitype? Cite Scriptures in which the symbol is used and point out the special significance in this vision. H '20-249.

(625) What characteristics are disclosed in the name of the Harlot Woman, and what is signified by it being written on her forehead? H '20-247, 249, 250.

STUDY CXVI--MARCH 12

THE VISION OF THE WOMAN ON THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST

(Cont.)--REV. 17:6, 7.

(626) Give a brief description of the different visions which portray the various aspects of the anti-Christian system and which call attention to its persecuting power. H '20-265.

(627) What condition is represented by the Woman being "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus"? Explain how and at what point of time this was fulfilled. H '20-265.

(628) How do we differentiate between this vision of the scarlet colored Beast and those of Rev. 12:3 of the "great red Dragon," and Rev. 13:1-3 of the Beast coming up out of the Sea? Briefly review the significance of each. H '20-266.

(629) What is the distinctive feature in all these pictures that assists in locating when their fulfilment began? H '20-266.

(630) At what time do expositors in general interpret this Beast to have begun its existence in prophecy, and what is the objection to this view? Show from Daniel's prophecy (chapter 7) how we may determine the matter definitely. H 20-266.

STUDY CXVII--MARCH 19

THE SEVEN HEADS ON THE SCARLET COLORED BEAST--REV. 17:8-11.

(631) Explain the significance of the seven Heads as seen upon the Beast in this vision. Rev, 13:1; H '20--21-25, 266.

(632) To what period of time does the "Beast that was" refer; and when, the conditions described as "is not," and "yet is"? H '20-266, 267.

(633) What is the meaning of the words "Here is wisdom"? What is significant in the words, "The seven Heads are seven mountains on which the Woman sitteth"? H '20-267.

(634) At what time could it be said "and there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come"? Was it true in St. John's day or how is this to be understood? H '20-267,

(635) In which period of the vision are present-day conditions pictured, and what phase is to immediately follow? H '20-267.

STUDY CXVIII--MARCH 26

THE HEAD THAT HAD TEN HORNS--REV. 17:12, 13

(636) What is the lesson to be drawn from the picture of the ten horns, and the fact that though three of the horns were plucked up the Beast is still seen to have ten: Dan. 7:8; H '20-267.

(637) Where in the earth, and during what period of time, do we look for the fulfilment of that portion of this vision pertaining to the ten horns? H '20-267.

(638) What important point should be kept in mind in our study of the Harlot Woman and the Beast of this vision? In what sense did they reign together? H. '20-267.

(639) What is the significance of the words of verse 13? Explain in what way the ten kingdoms gave their power and strength unto the Beast. H '20-267, 268.

(640), What is the significance of the term "the 'Holy Roman Empire,'" and what period in history is covered by that designation? H '20-268.

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TOLERANCE

"Love suffereth long, and is kind."--1 Cor. 13:4.

THERE is no quality of the Christian character more important than that of tolerance. The lack of it has been back of most of the terrible persecutions and martyrdoms that have come to followers of Christ since the introduction of Christianity into the world. Foxe's Book of Martyrs, and the many histories recording the dread-ful persecutions and manifold sufferings and tortures of Christ's true followers, would never have been written but for the absence of this most important trait of character-likeness to our Divine Lord and Master. Intolerance has existed in all ages, and has been that which more than anything else has misrepresented true Christianity. And

sad and strange to say, it has not only been manifested on the part of apostate Christians, but it is found to exist in the lives of true Christians: indeed, it will hardly be an exaggeration to say that nearly all Christians have at some time been guilty of giving expression to in-

tolerance, and have to a greater or less extent at some time in their Christian experience, exhibited it, even in their dealings with their fellow-Christians. It appears that but few people have a true and proper appreciation of what tolerance really is. Some learned, devout Christians have even questioned the correctness of our dictionaries in defining it. One of the reasons for this is, doubtless, because of the failure to see that tolerance is an *inner* disposition or state. In fact, all the various traits or manifestations of Christian character are based upon, and grow out of, the inward condition of the heart. Murder is defined generally as the commission of the act or deed in taking life. It is defined in the Scriptures as the *disposition* of hatred that is expressed in a desire or wish to commit the deed which has back of it hatred.

That we may appreciate the wrong views held as to the meaning of tolerance, we will examine what some others have said. A learned and godly writer has quoted some utterances of eminent men in regard to this matter. One of these has said: "The only foundation for tolerance is a degree of skepticism."* "John Harvard, in the university that bears his name, declared of the Puritans by whom that college was created: 'They were intolerant, as all men the world over in all time have always been and will always be when they are in solemn earnest for the truth.'" How utterly unscriptural, how unchristlike are these statements which imply that this disposition is a proper one to possess. This godly man who quotes the above writer, has given us a true definition of tolerance as exhibited in Christ Himself, the true model and example for His followers, and it is with a pleasurable feeling that we listen to his words:

*Charles James Fox.

"Tolerance is the willing consent that other men should hold and express opinions with which we disagree, until they are convinced by reason that those opinions are untrue."

TOLERANCE IS FORBEARANCE

As we have said, tolerance is a disposition, an inner quality of character; a *willing*, not a *forced* consent that others should hold and express opinions, until they are convinced by reason and Scripture that they are wrong. Toleration is the behavior in which that disposition finds expression. It is possible to have the latter and not possess the

former. "The consent is a *willing* one; it is not a mere yielding of compulsion." One has said:

"It might have all the power to put down the error by force which pope or parliament ever possessed, and *it would never for a moment dream of using it*. On the other hand, it is simply consent. *Tolerance is not called to champion the cause in which it disbelieves, nor to lend trumpets through which what it believes to be error may be blown*; for it is the very essence of tolerance that there should be a disagreement. . . . And the error, which is not to be yielded until it is convinced of its untruth by reason, must be attacked by reason; and so the right and duty of earnest discussion is included as a part of tolerance. And the tolerance which is patient toward what it counts *honest* error, is utterly impatient towards dishonesty, toward hypocrisy, toward self-conceit, toward cant, whether it be [exhibited] on the side of what the honest man thinks to be error, or of that which he thinks to be true."

Another writer has said that "it is the *natural* feeling of all of us that charity [we would say tolerance] is founded upon the uncertainty of truth." "I believe," says this same writer, "it is founded upon the certainty of truth." Two very strong evidences, then, of the existence of true tolerance in a follower of Christ are, positive conviction, and sympathy with other men whose convictions differ from our own. It is only by the possession of these two qualities that tolerance becomes "a clear, definable, respectable position for a man to stand in." Furthermore, true tolerance is exhibited toward our fellow-men just in "proportion to the earnestness with which we hold our well-proven truth." Conviction of truth is the first, and an absolutely necessary element to an exhibition of true tolerance. It is only when we are thoroughly convinced that what we hold is truth, that true tolerance has an opportunity to manifest itself. On the other hand, it is almost certain to be the case that when a Christian becomes the most thoroughly convinced of truth and its importance, that then it is apt to become to him a terrible thing for another to differ from him. Before we see the truth and its importance, it is a matter of very little concern or consequence to us what another believes about the matter. It is just at the point when we become thoroughly convinced of truth that the exhibition of intolerant bigotry is manifested and the temptation to "lift the axe or kindle the fires of persecution" has to be resisted, and the cultivation of true tolerance inculcated. The professed Christian, however, who is indifferent in the matter, who has no real creed or belief of his own, and who has no strong conviction that his belief is correct, has no opportunity to manifest true tolerance. He may call himself tolerant toward his fellow-Christians because he is willing that they should believe what they please, but he lacks the first element of

true tolerance, which is that of a strong conviction that what he holds is the truth.

IMITATIONS OF TOLERANCE

Tolerance, being a disposition of the heart, like other traits of character, has its imitations or counterfeits. We mention three. One of these may be properly termed the tolerance of indifference. If it is a matter of indifference to me whether a thing is truth or not, why should I not be perfectly willing to let my Christian brother believe what he chooses to believe. This is frequently defined as tolerance, but it is not Scriptural, Christlike tolerance. Then we have that which is akin to this, which may be denominated the tolerance of helplessness; i. e., we allow another to hold error because we cannot help ourselves. This is sometimes called the "tolerance of persecuted minorities." Neither is this true Christian tolerance, for the reason that the disposition of intolerance may be possessed, but because of a lack of authority or power to exercise that disposition, it is suppressed. Then we have what might be called the tolerance of policy, which means simply that we allow another to hold what we believe is error because we think it might stir up strife and division if we attempted to stamp it out. These three kinds of what are sometimes called tolerance, are not real Christian tolerance. While there may be some commendable qualities in them, they lack either a strong conviction of truth, as does the first, or the inner trait or disposition as, do the two last.

We will now endeavor to illustrate what calls for the exercise of tolerance; and this will help us to understand whether real, commendable tolerance is possessed. First of all, we notice what may be termed the tolerance that is exhibited because of pure respect for a man because he is a man. We may entirely disagree with a man's opinion or belief, and yet we may cordially acknowledge that if he is honest in his belief, he has as good a right to his own opinion or convictions as we have to ours--and this for the simple reason that he is a man and, as such, this is his right.

Next we have what is properly termed the tolerance that is exhibited as a result of Christian love and sympathy. We may feel sure that our Christian brother's opinions are wrong, but the fact that we know and recognize that he has the spirit of Christ and therefore is a true Christian, enables us, or should enable us, to willingly and cordially allow him to hold those opinions until either by our efforts or those of

some one else, or by his own reasoning powers, he becomes convinced that he is wrong.

THE PURPOSE OF TRUTH

Next we have the tolerance that is exhibited as the result of an enlarged view of truth. It should be much easier to exhibit true tolerance from this standpoint.

Such an one, if he have learned the truth at the Master's feet, and if he have (as such always have) made a proper use of the truth, will realize, possibly for the first time, that sacred truth is very much larger than his own conception of it. Such Christians experience, or should experience, an enlargement of the heart as they come to realize how great, how wonderful, is God's love for His creatures; that all sacred truth comes from Him; and that He is the great Caretaker and Preserver of truth. Such have come to know that the Bible, which contains His truth, is for man, and will eventually be known and understood by all. As God freely lets His truth be misunderstood, and waits in perfect patience for the time appointed by Him when it will be freed from misconceptions and shine out clear and bright, so *ought not we be patient*, knowing that this is His purpose.

While it is without question that truth is the most important of all the trusts committed to the servant of God, it should ever and always be kept before the mind that truth is not an end in itself, but is rather a means to accomplish an end. Therefore, truth is not committed to the servant of God as a sacred trust, to be guarded and defended as a miser does his treasures, but rather as an instrument to be used for the great and all-important work of character development. While it is commendable that we dread a stain of error on the truth, *we should dread vastly more the losing sight of what the truth was given for*. We will not be called to account, when we stand before our Divine Lord and Master to render up our stewardship, as to how faithfully we have fenced in, or contended for, or safeguarded, or defended the truth; *it will rather be concerning what use we have made of the truth in allowing it to change, to transform our characters* into the likeness of our Lord and Master. The larger our knowledge or view of truth becomes, the larger the measure of that character likeness of our Lord and Master will be required on our part.

It is possible, indeed it is with sorrow that we say it, that the real purpose or object of the enlarged view of truth now so graciously given, is thwarted in the lives of many who have received it by a *kind of pride that we know so much*, as well as a spirit of intolerance manifested among us. One of the very purposes of the truth is to make us meek and humble, as well as charitable toward one another, and patient and kind toward those who are blinded by the god of this world; and in the proportion that it fails to work this change in our own lives, in that proportion will we fail in recommending it to others and in drawing them to become meek and humble followers of the Divine Master.

SATAN OPPOSED TO BIBLE STUDY

Again, this feeling of pride exhibits itself in causing some of us to think that we possess all the truth; that we are no longer to be Bible students, truth seekers, in the true and proper sense of those terms. The moment we cease to search the Scriptures, that moment we cease to be either "Truth people" or "Bible students." Satan's efforts have ever been to hinder the progress of the Truth, for the success of his empire of darkness depends upon holding the people in darkness and ignorance. Consequently, varied have been his tactics by which he has sought to hold in check or throttle those who would press on in the path of light and truth. One of his most successful methods has been to arrest the attention of the truth seeker upon some visible instrumentality that the Lord has used in a special way to blaze and prepare the way for the onward march of others. How often in the past, multitudes have made the very grave mistake of supposing and concluding that their leader had received all the truth, had been made the complete custodian over all the volume of Divine revelation, and that there was nothing more to be learned, and accordingly have set about to make a little fence around their leader and the measure of truth they possessed, thus narrowing down their opportunities and preventing any further progress. It is amongst such as make this serious error that we so frequently discern the most radical intolerance and the largest measure of bigotry. Nor is the Christian leader to whom many may have been led to look, always to blame for the error his followers thus make. In fact, history clearly reveals that all real reformers, all true and worthy leaders, have never claimed to have mastered all the truth; have never taught their followers to believe that there was nothing more to be learned by those who came after them. To the contrary, we find that all true reformers and teachers of Divine truth, have humbly acknowledged the fact that what they have succeeded in bringing forth was only a part of the Truth--

their quota, or such as it seemed good to Divine Providence to impart to each in his day--and that there was more to follow. Such leaders have encouraged those who received their messages to continue to be truth seekers and to continue to progress in the path of light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The Bible, of all books, stands for liberty and progress, and bids the humble believer throw off all human fetters and bondages, and to walk in the light as Christ is in the light.

THE LIGHT IS MARCHING ON

No language is fraught with more significance and solemn meaning to God's people today than that of PASTOR RUSSELL on this very point, and his illustrious words should stand out as a warning against the tendency at the present time to fence in the truth that we have and to halt in the path of light. We quote his message.:

"Over 1800 years ago, when the Apostles 'fell asleep,' the enemy, Satan, got a free hand in the Church, the Lord's wheat-field; and as our Lord's parable prophesied, he sowed the tares of error unstintingly. (Matt. 13:24, 36-43.) Those errors more or less twisted and distorted every truth of the Divine revelation, with the result that before the fourth century had dawned, the Lord's wheat-field had practically become a tare-field with only a proportionately small minority of true wheat in it. The darkness of error more and more settled down upon the Church, and for ten centuries the 'Mystery of Iniquity' prevailed, and gross darkness covered the people. Those ten centuries are today denominated the 'dark ages' by a large proportion of the most intelligent people of the 'Christian world,' and we are to remember that it was in the midst of this gross darkness that the Reformation Movement had its start. The light of the Reformers began to shine amidst the darkness, and, thank God, it has been growing brighter and brighter ever since! We cannot wonder, however, that the Reformers themselves, educated in that gross darkness, were more or less contaminated with it, and that they did not instantly succeed in purging themselves of its defiling errors: rather we would have considered it nothing short of a miracle had they slipped from the gross darkness into the full, clear light of the Divine character and plan.

"The difficulty amongst the followers of the Reformers in the past three centuries has been that they have considered it meritorious to accept the creeds formulated in that reformation period, and have gloried in them, and have considered unorthodox any further progress toward the light. On the contrary, they and we, while honoring the Reformers and rejoicing in their fidelity, should remember that they were not the lights

of the Church, that they were not given to the Church to be her guides, and were but helpers at the very most. The Divinely appointed guides were, first of all, our Lord; and, secondly, His inspired and kept and guided Apostles; and, thirdly, God's holy men of old, who spake and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, for our admonition. It was because the Reformers were granted by the Lord a glimpse of true light that they were enabled to discern partially how gross was the darkness which surrounded them, and to make the heroic effort which they did make to escape from it and to get again into the light of the knowledge of God, which shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, and which, through His words and the words of the Apostles, is given us to be a lamp to our feet and a lantern to our footsteps, causing the path of the just to shine 'more and more unto the perfect day.' Whoever now would be a follower of the Lord and a follower of the light, should take heed that, while not ignoring human instrumentalities and their ministries, orally and through the printed page, they should accept from these only such assistance as will aid them in appreciating the inspired message recorded in the Scriptures: 'If they speak not according to this Word, it is because they have no light in them.'" *Studies, Vol. VI, p., 60.*

Surely God's people in these days have much for which to be thankful along the line of the unfolding of truth, but we do well to remember that neither ourselves nor those who have gone before us have mastered all the truth of Divine revelation; *that there is much in the Bible not yet revealed*, and therefore we should continue to search our Bibles for more truth, keeping in mind always the great end to be accomplished in the obtainment of truth. The character is the end to be accomplished; *the truth is simply the means to accomplish that end.*

A FITTING ILLUSTRATION

One has forcefully expressed to what a wide extent this end has been lost sight of, and the means lifted out of its true place. "It is not strange in this world," says this writer, "to see ends sacrificed to means; but it is no less sad because in history it has grown so familiar." This writer goes on to elucidate his thought and proceeds to relate an incident that transpired in Westminster Abbey, London, which not only forcefully illustrates this point, but also illustrates the other point we have referred to as prevailing among Bible Students; that of discouraging the continued searching for truth. He says:

"I remember a curious illustration of this which occurred some years ago in England. It seems that in Westminster Abbey, a good many Roman Catholics have been in the habit of coming on the day of his

sainthood, to pray beside the tomb of Edward the Confessor, at the old shrine where petitions of devout pilgrims were offered up for centuries. The late Dean Stanley loved the custom; it pleased his catholicity and his historic sense, and he gave it all encouragement. But it seems that it did not so well please one of the old vergers or sextons of the Abbey; and one day when the worshipers were numerous, this venerable official came to one of them and touching him on the shoulder as he knelt upon the ground, said: 'You must go away from here!' The man meekly looked up and replied, 'Why? I am doing no harm.' 'No matter, you must go away,' reiterated the verger. 'But why?' persisted the worshiper, still on his knees, 'I am only praying.' But the verger persevered, and gave his most conclusive reason. 'No matter, I tell you, you must go away; this thing must stop. If this thing goes on, we shall have people praying all over the Abbey!'

"There is a sort of verger Churchman, more sexton than Priest of the house of God, who is always for stopping free enquiry, because if this thing goes on, we shall have men seeking for truth all over the Church of Christ."

The true Bible student, truth seeker, knows that that is what is pleasing to Christ; that it is what the Church of Christ is for, and he welcomes it, not merely for the truth which such a searching will bring to light, but for the searcher's sake he welcomes it. The truths that are required to constitute one a Christian, while of paramount importance, are very few; and these, when experienced in the life, are all that are required to admit one into fellowship with other Christians; in other words, to make one a member of the true Church, which is the Body of Christ. More truth, to be sure, is required for the Christian's growth and development, but it should ever be remembered that while the various Churches of human organization have insisted upon more than these to make one a member of their Church, we do not find any others than these stipulated or taught by Christ and the inspired Apostles to become a member of the true Church which He founded. A noted Churchman, who did not have or claim to have the knowledge of the Divine Plan that many of us as "Truth people" claim to have, and doubtless do have, is on record as making a statement that even many of us will do well to emulate and profit by. Referring to his own Church organization, he said:

"The Church horizon . . . is always reaching out toward the Christian horizon, and trying to identify itself with it. If it could perfectly do so, all would be well. But there is not a Church in Christendom which can do so today. There is not a Church in Christendom not ours, nor any

other--which is not forced to own that there are men whom she will freely acknowledge to be Christian men, whom yet she is not ready and fit to receive into full communion and membership with herself, into full acceptance of her privileges and full enjoyment of her influence. Some dogma doubted, or some dogma held, or some peculiarity of thought or feeling on their part, stands in the way. Some *excess*, or some *defect* of faith, *keeps the Christian outside the Christian Church.*"

This noted Churchman, enlarging on this truly grave and lamentable condition, which, sad to say, so widely prevails, next asks:

"Is it not so? I can see nothing to do but frankly to face the fact and own it. A man comes to you who are a minister of our Church, and tells you of his faith, tells you how earnestly he loves, how deeply he honors the Lord Jesus Christ,--tells you how he is trying to give his whole life to the Master's service. Is he a Christian? Of course he is; you cannot doubt it a moment. You are sure what the Lord would have said if He had met him in Jerusalem. But can you, simply and solely because he is a Christian, throw wide open the door and bid him welcome to our Church's privileges? Are there no tests of doctrine, no definitions of orthodoxy, which lie within the absolute truth, which you must apply before you can bid that Christian welcome, and feel that he and it belong together?"

We listen to this man's words, and most naturally we say: This man has come to understand God's wonderful Plan, or he never could talk this way. We are astonished; and as he draws or sums up the logical conclusions which most naturally are the results of these sad conditions that exist all around us, and even among "Truth people Bible Students," we ask: CAN WE CLAIM EXEMPTION? ARE WE BETTER THAN OUR FELLOWS?

His conclusions are contained in the following brief but emphatic statement:

"If there are [tests of doctrine and definitions of orthodoxy], then, the Church is not prepared today to make itself identical with Christianity. If the chance to do so were freely given her, she is not ready to accept it. Therefore she is not Catholic; she is not prepared to lay claim to universality."

Of course, it would not be proper, or Scriptural to say that all that is required of a Christian elder or bishop would be this limited measure of truth. However, the true standards of fellowship and membership "ought not to be one whit more, as well as not one whit less than the standard by which a man would have a right to count himself, and to think that Christ would count him, a true servant of the Lord of Christians." If a company of the Lord's followers dare not make this their standard, they ought to "rejoice that there are forms of worship and groups of believers, in which those Christians for whom she has no place may find fellowship with one another and feed their souls on truth."

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN ON THE EVOLUTION THEORY

WRITES TO POST ON BIBLE vs. DARWINISM, IN SCHOOLS

ANY of our readers have no doubt observed in the public press sketches of Bible lectures given by Mr. William Jennings Bryan; and of course it is plainly manifest that his studies and reasoning are along the line of what would be called the old school--that is, he accepts the Bible as a Divinely inspired revelation, and therefore believes the Bible account of man's origin--his creation in uprightness and perfection in Eden, and his fall from that happy condition into sin and death.

Mr. Bryan has had much to say in refutation of the various lines of science, so-called, especially what is known as the Evolution theory. It is with genuine pleasure and satisfaction that we observe one like Mr. Bryan, possessed as he is of most unusual talents for presenting the truth, using his time and powers in defense of the greatest of all books, the sacred Scriptures.

He has recently prepared a special statement in which he lays bare a number of important, facts that ought to be the means of helping a large number of people to realize what they are confronted with and what they are standing for at the present time. As, no doubt, the majority have not seen Mr. Bryan's article above referred to, we are giving space to, the entire statement below, believing that all will read it with profit. It was published in *The Chicago Post* of February 6, 1922.

"MIAMI, FLA., VILLA SERENA, Jan. 31.--To the Editor of the Post. Sir: Your editorial of 'Defenders of the Faith'--a very happy designation, by the way--is written in such a spirit of fairness that I feel sure that you will give me space enough to set forth the real issue so that your readers can the more intelligently take sides. Observation extending over a third of a century leads me to believe that much difference of opinion arises from a misunderstanding of the real issue. Definition is often all that is necessary; in fact, truth is usually self-evident when it is plainly stated. Politically, the drawing of a line so that the two sides can be separated the one from the other is often the end of the conflict. It is with a view to setting forth as clearly as possible the difference between the two schools that I venture to address "you.

"The Bible account of man's creation was once accepted as authoritative by all Christians. Those of us who still hold to the Bible account are, therefore, in possession until we can be dislodged by those who dissent from the Bible account. According to the Bible, man was created by special act of God--created for a purpose and as a part of the Heavenly Father's plan.

The hypothesis advanced by Darwin is in direct conflict with the Bible account. His guess--for the word 'hypothesis' is merely a scientific synonym for guess--makes man a lineal descendant of lower forms of life. Darwin, himself, in his 'Descent of Man,' outlined a family tree which he thought was about two hundred millions of years old. It began with marine animals and extended up thru the fish, the reptile, the birds and the beasts and ended with monkeys, apes, chimpanzees, baboons, etc. After locating the 'first man' in Africa, he says, 'But why speculate?' This admission covers all of his guesses; he simply speculated. With millions of species of life they have never yet found a single instance in which it can be shown that one species changed into another.

"Last December, Professor Bateson of London, speaking at Toronto (see January issue of 'Science') told the members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science that the origin of species is still a mystery. He said that scientists had faith in evolution but doubts about the origin of species. This is the latest word from the scientists.

"Our contention is that an unsupported guess ought not be taught to the children of the public schools when it directly attacks the Bible. We have no objection to the teaching of any truth. No truth disturbs Christianity, but we do object to guesses put forth in the name of science before those guesses are confirmed or established by facts. Notwithstanding the failure to find even a single link to connect one species with another, Darwinism is taught in the schools as if it were an established fact. Books on biology and zoology purport to give a family tree connecting man with the animals and these imaginary trees cannot but make an impression upon the minds of the young people.

"We contend that teachers paid by taxation should not substitute guesses for the Word of God when those guesses seriously affect the philosophy of life. When Christians want to teach religion they establish and support schools for that purpose. They contribute the money necessary and employ the teachers. Why should not atheists and agnostics do the same?

"According to Professor James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr, Pa. more than half the prominent scientists of the United States do not believe in a personal God or a personal immortality. They have a perfect right to renounce God and to reject the doctrine of immortality; more than that, they have a right to open schools for the teaching of agnosticism and atheism, but why should they desire to undermine the faith of students and why should they be permitted to do so even if they do desire it?

"A Darwinite in Boston contended that a teacher had a right to teach whatever he pleased. That is a queer doctrine. Any man has a right to think as he pleases, but, when he asks compensation from others he must expect that his teaching will be controlled by those who pay him. Otherwise a comparatively small percentage of the country would assume control of the most fundamental things in our lives and assert the right not only to teach but to demand pay from those who object to their teaching. Such a contention is, of course, absurd. School boards direct the instructors and the people direct the school boards.

"The present agitation is merely an awakening of the Christian people to a knowledge of what is going on--not in all of our schools, but in many of them. Not all of our teachers, but many of them are undermining the faith of students and they are not willing that the Bible shall be defended in the presence of their students.

"For instance, the president of one great university became very angry because I presented the Bible side of Darwinism to the students of that university. In a public interview, given out next day, he declared that I was doing the students great harm when I tried to link their faith with what he called 'discarded scientific theories.' He said that my speech was of the kind that the parents and grandparents of the students used to listen to.

"Can Christians feel unconcerned when the president of a university ridicules the religious beliefs of the parents and grandparents of his students? Another university president in a speech on religion told his students that they should throw away their religion if they could not reconcile it with the teaching of biology, psychology, etc. What right has a professor, paid by the people, to advise his students to accept the guesses of biologists and psychologists in preference to the Word of God?

"Evolution, so far as it is applied to man, is nothing more than a guess and ought not to be taught as if it were a fact. It ought not to be taught even as a guess unless the teacher explains to his pupils that it is an unsupported guess. But why should a mere guess, without a fact in the universe to support it, be taught at all, when the effect of that teaching is to weaken faith in God and to undermine faith in the Bible as the Word of God?"

"Darwin brought an unanswerable indictment against his own hypothesis when, at the close of his life, he declared himself an agnostic. When he was a young man he believed in God; at the end of life he declared the beginning of all things to be a mystery insoluble by us. When he was a young man he believed in a future life; at the close of his life he said that the question must be decided by each individual for himself on uncertain vague probabilities. When he was a young man he believed that the Bible was the Word of God. He says that he was called orthodox and laughed at by some of the officers of the Beadle for quoting the Bible as an unanswerable authority on a point of morals. At the end of his life he said that he did not believe there had ever been any revelations, which, of course, excludes Christ as well as the Bible. He even asked whether a mind developed, as he believed man's mind was, from the mind of the lowest animal could be trusted when it dealt with God and immortality. He brought man down to the level of the brute and then judged him by brute standards.

"Do we deserve to be called fanatic when we insist that a teacher in the public schools should not impair faith in God?"

We have 'In God We Trust' on our coins. Why should a teacher lead a child to laugh at such an inscription? When the witness takes an oath in court, he appeals to God to help him to be truthful. Why should teachers be permitted to weaken faith in the oaths that we administer? The president takes his oath before an open Bible--why should a teacher, paid by taxation, be permitted to make fun of the Bible?

"Let your people understand the real issue, Mr. Editor, and there will be only one side to this question. The intolerance is not on the side of the more than 90 per cent of the people who are still Defenders of the Faith; the intolerance is on the side of a small percentage who exaggerate the mind's part and belittle the heart, out of which 'are the issues of life.'

"It was necessary to take the management of political parties out of the hands of the bosses and put the authority in the hands of the voters. If that was wise, why not take public instruction out of the hands of the atheists and skeptics and put it into the hands of the tax payers?"

"The Christians are not asking that religion be taught in our public schools; they are protesting against the teaching of irreligion in the public schools. They are not asking that any man shall surrender his opinion or violate his conscience; they are only asking that teachers who are atheist and agnostic shall either obey their employers or else build schools of their own for the spread of unbelief.

"If we are to have a neutrality in religion in our schools it must be a real neutrality, not a sham neutrality that ties the hands of Christians and turns education over to the members of the 'Ancient and Honorable Order of Apes! Those who look to the jungles for their ancestry can teach this doctrine to their own children if they wish, but they ought not be allowed to make monkeys out of all the children.

"Very truly yours,

" WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN."

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LONDON--AUGUST 5-8

By this time we have heard from our brethren in a number of foreign countries, who have not only expressed deep interest in the General International Conference that is proposed to be held in London this year, but have indicated their expectation to be present.

It has been the custom of the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE of London to hold their Annual Convention about August 1st. This year the dates suggested are August, 5, 6, 7 and 8. The gathering at this time it is expected will be on a somewhat larger scale than in years before, by reason of the plan to make it more general by having representatives or delegations from a number of countries take part.

The two brethren in London who recently visited Finland, Sweden and Holland on a Convention tour, gave an excellent report of profitable and blessed experiences in conference with brethren in other lands. We believe all our readers have enjoyed seeing the report. In that report reference was made to the fact that brethren in each of these countries visited are planning to attend the General Conference in London this summer. From Germany, also, we have some good communications, and it is hoped that that country will be represented. We have previously announced that the BEREAN BIBLE INSTITUTE Of Australia, composed of brethren of like-mind, are expecting to send a representative to the General Conference.

From letters received from various parts of this country we gather that the sentiment would be favorable toward a delegation composed of one or two brethren being sent from the PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE to represent the friends of like precious faith in America. This undertaking is considerable, as in addition to probably two brethren devoting between two and three months to the entire trip, including some general pilgrimage in Great Britain, the outlay in money will amount to quite an item; and owing to the fact that at this time our treasury is heavily drawn upon for the publication of Volume One and for other items, the Directors of our INSTITUTE have not felt up to the present that they could decide this matter of sending brethren to the Conference. Though some friends have written and contributed generously toward the European trip, the required amount is still considerable. While, as we said in a previous statement, our INSTITUTE would receive donations from those who desire to have a

part in contributing toward the fund, yet we have not urged any in this direction. Our thought is that our Heavenly Guide and Master is in charge of every feature and phase of the ministry and can easily provide the means and open the way for the tour to the English Conference, if it is His will. This does not mean that we would expect the Lord to work any miracle in this connection; but while making use of all reasonable and proper means at hand, we would suppose that if it was His will, His providence would be such as to imply His approval of the project.

We can only say that so far as we are able to see, such a general assembling of representative brethren as is proposed for this Conference, ought to be a means of special profit and advantage spiritually, not only for those who may be in attendance, but for other peoples whom they represent. All the facts show that many faithful brethren today are scattered and isolated--a considerable number are confused and bewildered and in sore need of assistance. Surely it is most becoming to the Lord's children that they desire and seek to get more fully in communication with one another, that they might have the advantage of one another's counsel and fellowship throughout these trying and stormy times. As we understand the matter, this Conference is not called for the purpose of forming or establishing some new religious combination or authority or headship amongst the brethren. So far as we know there will be no formulation of any new creed or the issuing of any edicts or decrees. The purpose of the Conference, to the contrary, we believe, will be solely and altogether that of provoking unto love and good works; of building up one another in the most holy faith; of taking counsel together with regard to those lines and issues that lie near to the hearts of all the faithful, and that have to do with making their calling and election sure.

In view of all the foregoing considerations, it is our firm conviction that the cause represented in this Conference is a very noble one, and that those so disposed and who desire to contribute toward making it possible, cannot themselves fail of receiving a rich blessing in rendering assistance. We rest the matter thus in the hands of the Lord.

Recent advice from the BIBLE STUDENTS COMMITTEE expresses the desire to have our decision concerning this matter in the near future in order that they may properly proceed with arrangements.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

SERIES, XVII-A

CHRIST'S MESSAGE TO LAODICEA (Cont.)

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."--Rev. 3:21.

IT is well known by many students of the Bible that PASTOR RUSSELL fixed upon 1872 as the ending of the 6000 years from Adam's creation. Basing his conclusions on the calculation that the 6000 years from Adam's creation ended in 1872, and making use of other chronological endings, as also seemingly clear chronological types and parallels, his conviction, as well as ours, was firm and confident in 1904, that at the end of 1915 all the governments of earth as also the professed Christian systems, would all be overthrown and a state of anarchy prevailing; that the Harvest of the Age would be ended; that the resurrection of the Church would be completed, as well as that of the Old Testament saints; that the Kingdom would be fully established; and that the Times of Restitution of the world would have begun. As these things did not occur in 1914, it would seem very evident that he and all associated with him in this belief were mistaken somewhere in the reckoning. In January, 1914, (and, indeed, about two years before this), we find that he began to modify his views, for we read his published statement saying:

"We are by no means confident that this year, 1914, will witness as radical and swift changes of dispensation as we have expected. It is beyond the power of our imagination to picture an accomplishment in one year of all that the Scriptures seem to imply should be expected before the reign of peace is ushered in."

In that same year he also said: "We may not read the *time* features with the same absolute certainty as *doctrinal* features, for time is not so definitely stated in the Scriptures as are the basic doctrines. . . . We believe that very many who are running the race for the prize will be able to thank God for the chronology [as understood up to that time], even if it should prove not accurate to the year, or even out of the way several years. We believe that the chronology is a blessing." It would be wise for all to note that *he does not say it should be made a test*, in the sense that one must continue to believe the chronology to be correct notwithstanding the facts of history have proven that there has been a mistake somewhere in calculating it. Knowing the remarkable wisdom and foresight of this great Christian teacher, the following

words, written at the same time, are worthy of consideration-- indeed, should be heeded at the present time, five years after his death:

"If 1915 should go by without the passage of the Church, without the Time of Trouble, etc., it would seem to some to be a great calamity. It would not be so with ourself. We shall be as glad as any one if we shall all experience our change from earthly to spirit conditions before 1915, and THIS IS OUR EXPECTATION; but if this should not be the Lord's will, then it would not be our will. If in the Lord's providence the time should come *twenty-five years later*, then that would be our will."

EXAMINING CHRONOLOGICAL DEDUCTIONS

He next proceeds to tell his readers what he would do if his expectations along all these lines should fail to be realized. Let those who would truly honor this great teacher consider carefully and prayerfully his words of pastoral counsel and advice:

"If October 1915, should pass, and *we* should find ourselves still here and matters going on very much as they are at present, and the world apparently making progress in the way of settling disputes, and there were no time of trouble in sight, and the nominal Church were not yet federated, etc., WE WOULD SAY THAT EVIDENTLY WE HAVE BEEN OUT SOMEWHERE IN OUR RECKONING. In that event we would look over the prophecies further, to see if we could find an error. And then we would think, Have we been expecting the wrong thing at the right time? THE LORD'S WILL MIGHT PERMIT THIS. .

..

"So far as we have been able to see up to the present time [January, 1914], the failure of a full development of matters in 1915, or before, would imply that all the chronological arrangements, as we have them, are wrong--our view of the Harvest and all. And we have *no reason* to believe that these are wrong. We remember that we are not infallible, and that our judgment is not infallible; but the wonderful inventions of today, and the light that is dawning in every direction, as well as the universal unrest, seem in corroboration of the chronology--that we are in the dawning of the New Age. BUT JUST HOW FAR ALONG WE ARE WE DO NOT POSITIVELY KNOW. We are waiting for the Sun of Righteousness to appear."

In seven months from the time of writing these words, the great world war began. Concerning its significance, we hear him uttering words which show that while he believed that this was the great conflict of the *nations* predicted by the Prophets, he had also come to believe that the great events mentioned above that had been expected before the close of another year (1915), should not be looked for. We quote:

"The present terrible war is not the great Time of Trouble in the fullest sense of the word, but merely its forerunner. The great Time of Trouble of the Scriptures will be brought on by anarchy--the general uprising of the people; as the Prophet says, 'every man's hand, against his neighbor; no peace to him that goeth out or to him that cometh in.' . . . The present war is the one we have expected. It will drain the world of blood and treasure. Then the nations, sick, weak, faint, will fall a prey to socialism, which will become anarchy. . . . While it is possible that Armageddon may begin next spring [1915], yet it is purely speculation to attempt to say just when. We see, however, that there are parallels between the close of the Jewish Age and this Gospel Age. These parallels seem to point to the year just before us [1915]-particularly the early months."**

In November of the same year (1914), we find from his words, which we quote, that his faith at this time in these parallels had not been shaken, as we read:

"We remember also that there is a certain parallel between the Jewish Age and the Gospel Age. The forty years' Harvest, of the Jewish Age, which began with Jesus' ministry, 29 A. D., ended in the year 69 A. D. just as we believe that the Harvest of this Age began with 1874, and ended with this fall, 1914. It was in the year following the expiration of forty years of the Jewish Harvest [70 A. D.] that the end of the Jewish polity came--at the destruction of their city. And so the parallels would lead us to suppose that *one year from the present time* [1914, which would be the fall of 1915] would finish this short parallel period, *this great work of disaster upon the world, the overthrow of the nations.*"***

*Z '14-4, 5.

**Z'14, pp. 259, 260.

*** Z'14, p. 327.

THE FAILURE OF CERTAIN PARALLELISMS

In 1916, about one month before this great Bible expositor's death, we find him humbly acknowledging a mistake in his interpretation of the parallel of the Harvest. We quote his words:

"Some of us were quite strongly convinced that the Harvest would be ended by now [1916], but our expectations must not be allowed to weigh anything as against the facts. The fact is that the Harvest work is going grandly on; it is not ended by any means. . . . At first we were inclined to surmise that the Harvest proper had closed in October, 1914, and that the work since going on was a gleaning work; but the facts seem not to bear this out. The progress of the work and the numbers who are being brought to a knowledge of the Truth and separated to the Lord are far too great to be styled a *gleaning*. Evidently it is a part of the regular Harvest."*

It is in connection with this utterance that he pointed out for the first time that what he once thought were harmonious parallels, he no longer considered as such. He explained that there was nothing in the Jewish parallels that indicated that the Gospel Harvest must be forty years in length and end in 1914, and his further words are plainly to the effect that there is nothing in the Scriptures to indicate at all the length of the Harvest. His words are:

*"We should not have looked for parallelisms between the starting of the Gospel Church and its experiences, and the starting in this Harvest time of the Heavenly Church and its experiences. . . . We imagined that the Harvest work of gathering the Church would be accomplished before the end of the Gentile Times [meaning the Gentile lease of power]; but nothing in the Bible so said. OUR THOUGHT WAS PURELY AN INFERENCE, AND NOW WE SEE THAT IT WAS AN UNJUSTIFIED ONE."***

How obvious it is from these words of our Brother that the events expected or predicted to come at the end of any chronological period, failing to eventuate, invariably *proves the chronological calculation to be incorrect*. Referring to the work of the Harvest, and the length of its continuance, he says: "AND WE KNOW OF NO TIME-LIMIT

HERE." We thus are compelled, as he was, to relinquish one of the parallels, which previous to this we so confidently held too.

In the same article, he goes on to say that while he could find no time parallel in connection with the true Church, he could at this time still see a time parallel in connection with the nominal Church. His words in this connection are: "The parallel belongs to the nominal Jewish system, which *went* to destruction [in 70 A. D.], and to the nominal Gospel Church, which is now [September, 1916] *going* to destruction."***

The latest date that would prove the correctness or incorrectness of this parallel calculation, was stated by him to be 1918. We quote his words: "Incidentally we remark that some historians put the end of the Jewish time of trouble, as April, A. D. 73, which would correspond to April, 1918." We inquire then, *Is it not a fact that this time parallel also, according to his latest utterance, has failed?* Nineteen eighteen has passed, and still the nominal Church systems are not destroyed. So far as *Harvest-time* parallels are concerned, the failure of these two leaves us without any. Furthermore, as the corresponding date, 1918, to that of 73 A. D., which would be the latest possible date for ending the Jewish Age, has passed, *then the parallel dispensations, which required that the two should be of the same length, has also failed, thus again proving the chronology which we have*

*Z '16, p. 263.

**Z '16, p. 264.

*** Z '16, p. 264,

held, to be inaccurate. The Gospel Age has not ended, and three years have elapsed since the last possible Jewish time parallel passed. We have already considered Israel's Double, which is inseparably associated with the parallel dispensations.*

THE DISCREPANCY OF NINETEEN YEARS

However, the fact that the six thousand years are without doubt, approximatey thirty years in the past, and that the 1335 years until the predicted time of blessedness are also, and that the *events* predicted to occur in the period of the Harvest, as they would have to do, with the

saints in the flesh, have been for at least thirty or forty years fulfilling, is sufficient evidence that we are in the days of the *Parousia*, the Presence of the Son of man. The "knock" of prophecy has been heard by many, and is being heard by others at the present time, and these things constitute sufficient evidence that the day is at hand and the effect of every vision.

In several issues of this journal of 1921, it was pointed out that there was a discrepancy or shortage of 19 years in the chronology from Adam to Christ as we have in past years been calculating it. This discrepancy was found in connection with our reckoning of the period of Israel's kings; that instead of there being 513 years up to the time when their seventy-year period of Servitude began, there were really but 494; for that brings us to the first year of the monarch Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, who captured Jerusalem and subjected Israel's king, Jehoiakim, commencing the seventy years of Servitude at that time, about 606 B. C. Israel's kingdom, as we saw, continued on as a vassalage for about 19 years longer, till Zedekiah, the last king, was dethroned and carried captive to Babylon, and Jerusalem destroyed. From that point forward, to the first year of Cyrus, 536 B. C., was but 51 years instead of 70--thus a discrepancy of 19 years.**

NO ROOM FOR DISCOURAGEMENT

The beginning of the seventy years of Israel's Servitude to the Kingdom of Babylon, we noted, was a most important point, since there, began to count the 2520 years of Gentile dominion, and this 19 years defection in the reckoning of the Times of the Gentiles seems to account for all the failures we have noted foregoing. And yet they are not all failures: The Gentile lease of power was given to Nebuchadnezzar in the third year of Jehoiakim, which was about 606 B. C.; the 2520 years lease ran its course at about 1914 just as it took nineteen years of trouble, of war and of conquest to complete the judgment upon the nominal typical Israel, ending in about 587 B.C. with the overthrow of Zedekiah, so this strongly suggests that it will require nineteen years of trouble, etc.; to accomplish the overthrow of the nominal antitypical kingdom, Christendom, which would seem to be about 1934.

We have made the foregoing remarks and observations in this and the previous Revelation Series, regarding various chronological lines by several leading expositors, *not with the thought of placing special*

importance on the establishment of some particular month or year as the time when the Savior's "knock," or His Parousia was due to be recognized, but rather by way of showing that there is a general agreement amongst expositors that six thousand years of the world's history are in the past; that for approximately the past thirty years we have very

*See H 21, pp. 333-335.

** And be it observed in this connection also that this discrepancy or shortage noted, of 19 years in computing the period of Israel's kings, and the seventy years Servitude, will also affect the ending of the 6000-year period, extending it at least 19 years beyond what we have heretofore calculated it.

probably been living in the seventh thousand years, or Millennium; and that this fact, taken in connection with various prophetic pictures of Christ's Second Presence, of the close of this Age and the dawning of the Millennial, (pictures -that are already being fulfilled in our midst), constitute strong and convincing evidence that the "knock" of the Savior is due to be heard in our midst today. Yea, and with what solemnity do we then hearken to Christ's message to the Church of Laodicea!

As the figurative knock and the promise in connection with it is a personal, an individual one, the following inquiries are of the greatest conceivable importance: Have we heard the knock? Have we opened our heart's door? Have we partaken of the feast spread? Do we know that we are in the Presence of the Son of Man? *The question is not, Do you know the exact date when our Lord came?* but rather, Have you the personal, individual, inward evidence that the Savior has come and, through His specially chosen instrumentalities, made known to you the wonders of the Heavenly Father's love, as manifested in the wonderful Plan of the Ages?

WITH CHRIST IN HIS THRONE

To the overcomer living in the Laodicean period and surrounded by the Laodicean conditions, which constitute the chief things to be overcome, the promise is that he would be granted the privilege of sitting with Christ in His throne, even as He overcame and sat down with His Father in His throne. The teaching is that Christ is Himself to

have given to Him a special Kingdom. And this is in harmony with all that the Scriptures have to say concern-ing Christ's future work in its relation to the human family. To His disciples on one occasion, He said: "I appoint unto you a Kingdom, even as My Father hath appointed unto Me." "Ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones," etc. "When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of His glory, before Him shall be gathered all nations," etc. "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." We might multiply passages in the Scriptures which plainly teach this truth. A careful comparison of them shows that this Kingdom or dominion is to be over this earth and its peoples; indeed, all who have lived on the earth since Adam will eventually come under this dominion. The object will be to restore such of them as will, to human perfection, and give to them everlasting life in a perfect earthly paradise. Concerning this feature, other Scriptures, as well as visions in the Revelation, deal more particularly; and in future expositions, these will be considered.

It is not the thought that this promise to the Laodicean overcomers is for them alone: rather, all the overcomers throughout the whole Gospel Age will share in this reward. Indeed, the promises to the overcomers in each of these seven periods belong to all alike, even as the conditions described in each epistle have in the individual believer to be overcome. It seems to be the thought that the rewards promised to the overcomers are adapted to their triumph in seven orders of their surroundings. The rewards increase in degree from the first one made to the saints in Ephesus, to the last one to the saints in the Laodicean period, as do the evils and the adverse circumstances over which the victories are won, increase in severity. It would seem, then, that we have taught in this, seven steps or degrees upward in the rewards of the saints, all of which each individual saint attains. They seem to have been framed so as to describe all the evils and trying circumstances to be overcome by each individual, as well as all the blessed realizations of deliverances wrought, and the glory and honor that is to be realized by each in the future glorious Kingdom of the Son as well as of the Father of all.

EXCEEDING GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES

The first, that of Ephesus, refers to a partaking of that which was prefigured by the "tree of knowledge" which was forbidden to Adam. This is secured by cherishing and holding fast to their "first love" for

the Master and His Truth. All the overcomers will realize this great reward.

The second, that of Smyrna, proclaims a victory over adversities, persecutions and afflictions by faithfully testifying to their Christian faith under these conditions. The reward was the "*crown of life*," and immunity from death forevermore, which will be the happy lot of all in the future who prove faithful under these circumstances.

The third, that of Pergamos, is the gift of the "white stone," etc., giving the assurance of Christ's acceptance and approval; and the "hidden manna," the Divine, incorruptible, immortal nature, as a reward for faithfulness in following the Master in a separation from worldliness and the desire for rulership without Him, and worldly patronage and friendship.

The fourth, that of Thyatira, promises authority and judicial administration over the nations, because of a recognition of Christ's authority over them, instead of the authority of the false and usurping Jezebel's Church-rulership.

The fifth, that of Sardis, holds out the assurance that the overcomer's name shall not be erased from the book of life, because of keeping the garments undefiled, when all around them is a spiritual deadness.

The sixth, that of Philadelphia, promises a part in the New Jerusalem government, as well as to become a pillar, an ornament, a support, in the great antitypical Temple of God, to go no more out forever, and this because of faithfully manifesting and striving to maintain the primitive spirit of brotherly love, and holding fast to the Word of His patience.

The seventh, that of Laodicea, describes a promise of sharing in a dominion, of which no higher honor could be imagined; because of persevering in separation from the Laodicean evil conditions.

In whatever way we look at these promises, when taken together, they describe privileges, blessings and honors, of which the natural eye hath not seen, or ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man. It has been truly said that these seven promises form by far the most

complete description to be found in the Scriptures of the good things which God has prepared for. His people, them that love Him. In the language of another:

"They set before us a destiny to which all the faithful shall attain, at which the lean, meagre, shallow, shadowy, flimsy thing some present as heaven, sinks into insipidity and contempt. They present us with something fitting and competent to brace up the courage of the Church, to carry her to the pitch of bearing the cross, and crucifying herself with Christ, and actualizing her profession of expatriation from this world. They open to us prospects which put upon the commonplaces of heavenly anticipations the disgrace and shame of scarcely having caught the first syllables of what is laid up for true saints of God.)"*

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

**Lectures on the Apocalypse--SEISS.*

The foregoing article, Series XVII-A, concludes our review and examination of the first three chapters of Revelation and also completes the exposition of Christ's messages to the seven Churches.

In view of the fact that the original Revelation series that appeared in this journal during the years 1919, 1920, 1921, have dealt exhaustively with the remainder of the Book of Revelation, from chapter 3, onward, we will not continue publishing in these columns this review series any further.

Communications from brethren throughout the world repeatedly assure us of inestimable blessings received from these studies. Some, indeed, have expressed difficulty in understanding one part or another connected with the visions and have presented to us their difficulties in question form. It is our thought to take up these questions from time to time and consider them in these columns; as of course when various points are raised, it can be seen how the explanation could have been differently worded and, in some instances, made more complete, so as to have more clearly elucidated the point in question. Hence in succeeding issues of this journal further suggestions will be offered on one portion or another of the Revelation expositions.

THE LORD PRESERVES JOASH

--APRIL 9-2 KINGS 11:1-17--

*Golden Text.--"Jehovah preserveth all them that love Him."--Psa.
145:20.*

ASA'S successor as king of Judah was his son Jehoshaphat, who reigned for twenty-five years, including five years when he was associate with his father on the throne, Jehoshaphat, in spite of some serious errors, was a good king. He upheld the worship of Jehovah, and made several strong efforts to put down idolatry. He sent princes and Levites to various parts of his kingdom to instruct the people out of the law of Moses. He built ships, established a system of law courts, and strengthened his military defences. For all this God blessed him, and when he was attacked by a formidable array of Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites from the southeast, he went out to battle claiming God's promises and singing songs of thanksgiving, and God gave him the victory without his striking a blow.

Jehoshaphat's great mistake was his too close association with Ahab and his wicked family, a mistake which arose from his laudable desire to end the strife between the two countries which had lasted for so long. To this end he did a dreadful thing, he married his son Jehoram to Ahab's (and probably Jezebel's) daughter Athaliah, doubtless an idolatress, and certainly a woman of base character. Also he joined Ahab in military expeditions, and in a commercial venture at sea, rebuked by his prophets, and getting no good from the alliance.

When Jehoshaphat died at the age of sixty, he left his son Jehoram (or Joram, not to be confounded with Jehoram of Israel), to ascend the throne of Judah. His wife Athaliah had led him into the depths of heathenism, and as soon as he became king he showed his cruel character by murdering all his brothers and some other princes of Judah. His reign of eight years was troubled and unfortunate, as might have been expected. The Edomites rebelled and became independent. The city of Libnah did the same. The warriors of Philistia and Arabia overran Judah and even carried away Jehoram's wives and all his children but the youngest son. Elijah, who sent him from Israel a written warning, prophesied the painful disease which finally carried him off to an unwept grave.

During the sickness of Jehoram his son Ahaziah was probably associated with him on the throne, and after his death he succeeded him. He was twenty-two years old then, and he reigned only a year. His mother, Athaliah, was his counsellor in wickedness. Like his father, he was involved with the evil house of Ahab, going with his uncle, King Jehoram of Israel, to fight against the Syrians. Ahaziah was with Jehoram when Jehu revolted against the latter, and when Jehu slew Jehoram he also killed the king of Judah.

Jezebel's daughter, Queen Athaliah, on the death of her husband became queen dowager of the kingdom of Judah, her son Ahaziah becoming king. In oriental lands the king's mother is still the highest authority in the kingdom; as, for instance, in China. This was the custom with the Jews. As queen dowager, Athaliah exercised a powerful and baneful influence against the true God and His Worship and in favor of Baal worship. This is not the only instance in which the intermarriage of the kings of Israel with the daughters of foreign royal houses brought great injury. Athaliah's mother Jezebel was another notable illustration. We remember also that it was King Solomon's foreign wives who ensnared him.

In line with all this we remember that the Divine command to all Israelites was that they should not intermarry with other nationalities. Every deviation from the Divine Law seems to have brought with it serious penalties. This is strictly in harmony with God's arrangement with that one nation alone; that they should be His people in a peculiar sense; that other nations were not His people; and that obedience to His Law would bring them blessings; but that disobedience would bring them adversities. (Deut. 7:6-11.) That Law is still binding upon the Jews, but it is not upon others.

A proper recognition of the antitype, or spiritual significance of that item of Jewish Law, should be observed by all. It is applicable to Christians, who constitute, from the Divine stand-point, "a holy nation, a peculiar people." (I Pet. 2:9.) Christians are not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2 Cor. 6:14.) Christians are to come out from the world and be separate. This, however, does not apply to nominal Christians, but only to the spirit-begotten class, who have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord. These are counseled to marry "only in the Lord"--only the consecrated. Those who disregard this Divine injunction endanger their own spiritual development, as well as their own happiness and that of the worldly person with, whom they become yoked.

MURDERING FOR POWER

When King Ahaziah was slain by Jehu (2 Kings 9:27, 28), his mother, the queen dowager, realized instantly that this meant her loss of rank and power--the power, the honor and the riches which her selfish, proud heart so loved. She realized that the moment her grandson ascended the throne she must vacate her position in favor of her daughter-in-law. Her selfish, proud heart resolved that on no account should this be. Rather, she would be a murderess. Forthwith she caused her grandchildren to be slain, except one, an infant, who was hidden by his aunt in a room used for the storage of sleeping mats, and styled in our lesson, a bed-chamber. Subsequently he was nursed until his seventh year, in one of the rooms connected with the old Temple, which was in disuse during Queen Athaliah's reign, as she favored and upheld the worship of Baal.

One lesson for us here is the power of pride. We may well hope that not many could be influenced to become murderers, even with such inducements. But not many of us will ever have such a temptation either to grasp a throne or retain hold upon one already possessed. Other illustrations of the power of pride leading to murder in the interest of a throne are mentioned in history. For instance, King Herod's murder of all the infants of Bethlehem of two years old and under was to preserve to himself and his heirs the throne of Israel. History tells us that Laodice poisoned her six sons, one by one, that she might, be Empress of Constantinople. Another mother named Irene, which name signifies *peace*, gouged out the eyes of her own son that he might be incapable of ruling the empire over which she sought to reign.

No wonder the Bible declares that the heart of man in his fallen condition is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked! (Jer. 17:9.) No wonder the Bible tells us that the blessing of the New Covenant which God will establish with the world through Israel, during Messiah's Reign, will operate to the taking away of the stoniness of the human heart and to the return to mankind of a heart of flesh--a proper human sympathy, such as the perfect man had when he was created in the image and likeness of God! (Ezek. 11 :19; 36:26; Jer.31:31-34.) How glad we are that Messiah's Kingdom will not merely restrain sin and sinners, but by restitution processes will take away the stoniness of heart and bring as many as are willing of

mankind back to tender-heartedness and to harmony with the Divine Law of love for God and for the neighbor!

Since we are not kings and queens and do not have their temptations, let us note that the same principle of hard-heartedness operates in the business world, in the social world and in the family. In the business world it operates to the destruction of a rival concern. In the social world it cuts rivals, prompts to misrepresentations, slander, etc. In the home, as between parents and children, brothers and sisters, it frequently means injustice. The correction for all this is a love of righteousness which will lead each to love and to obey the Golden Rule, and to comply as nearly as possible with the Divine will--"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy being and with all thy strength; and thy neighbor as thyself."

CROWNING THE BOY KING

The young king's name was Joash. He was kept in hiding for six years, and in his seventh year was crowned. Jehoiada, the high priest, whose daughter had rescued Joash, superintended the coronation ceremonies. With great wisdom he called together the chiefs of the nation at a time of festival, when their assembling would not be thought strange. Likewise the guards were so disposed as to give every protection to the young king and to leave the palace without protection.

The ceremony passed off successfully. The queen dowager heard the shouts, "Long live the king!" and came forth from the palace to the Temple to investigate. Realizing the situation, she cried, "Treason! treason!" So it is that sometimes injustice becomes so entrenched and fortified in human minds that an attempt to establish righteousness is considered treason, rebellion, outrage. To all the Lord's consecrated children the lesson is, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."--Prov. 4:23.

When the crown was placed upon the young king's head, on top of it was laid the parchment scroll of the Ten Commandments. Thus was indicated the fact that the Divine Law was superior to the crown. Such should be the estimation of the matter in every well-balanced mind. Divine Law comes first; human laws second. And human laws are usually up to as high standards as the people who make them are worthy.

Judah must have been considerably sunken in the qualities of patriotism and manhood to allow the queen dowager to usurp the throne by murder for six years. Similarly, states and cities that permit and recognize the domination of frauds and combines against the public interests are usually getting as good treatment as they deserve. It is the heart, the intellect, the mind, that is to be educated up to the higher standards. Then those higher standards will be attained by the body politic.

Following the coronation of Joash, Jehoiada the priest commanded that Athaliah be slain, giving specific directions to the proper military authorities as to how it should be accomplished. Indeed, nothing less would have insured Joash's safety, and as Athaliah was a murderess many times over, her life was justly forfeited. The orders of the high priest were carried out with precision, and thus perished the usurping queen, Athaliah, one of the darkest characters in Israel's history.

We read that Jehoiada the priest made a covenant between Jehovah and the king and the people. This would appear to be a renewal of the solemn covenant made first at Sinai, confirmed under Joshua after the settlement in Canaan, and repeated under Asa. The king and his people joined together in promising obedience to Jehovah, "that they should be Jehovah's people." Under Athaliah the people had been Baal's people rather than Jehovah's. The break which Athaliah made in the Levitic succession appeared to render very appropriate this renewed promise of allegiance to the legitimate royal family. The king similarly bound himself to the people, no doubt to rule in accordance with the Law as laid down in the book of Deuteronomy. Two acts completed this great event: the people rushed to the temple of Baal, which they destroyed, killing Mattan, the priest of Baal; and they conducted Joash in triumph to the palace, where they seated him upon the throne of his fathers.

The whole history of Judah and Israel shows us that, notwithstanding the trend of the majority towards sin, and idolatry, there were still amongst them Israelites indeed whose hearts were sincere towards God. We have examples of this in Elijah and Elisha, the sons of the prophets, the Shunnamite, and others. Nevertheless, in thinking of all these we are to remember that they were still in the dark as respects the Divine Plan. No revelation of God's great salvation had yet been made: only a dim light of a hope of the resurrection of the dead and everlasting life for those obedient to God had reached even the wisest

and best of them. In harmony with this is the statement of the Apostle, "The Law came by Moses, but grace and truth by Jesus Christ," and again his declaration that "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," and again the statement that this "salvation [in which we now rejoice] began to be spoken by the Lord."--John 1:17; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:3.

We are not, therefore, to compare present-day conditions amongst those who profess to be spiritual Israelites, with the old-time conditions referred to in this lesson, because in the meantime the true Light, the Lord Jesus, has come into the world; and although the world as a whole has not recognized Him, the Israelites indeed have had the eyes of their understanding opened, so that they are blessed and benefited by this true Light, which in God's due time shall lighten every man that cometh into the world--when the Millennial day shall dawn and the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His beams. Then, in the fullest sense of the word, the righteous shall be in authority--Christ, the great King, and the Church, His Bride and joint-heir in the Kingdom--and then the people will rejoice. They will rejoice in a manner not possible at present, for now, as the Apostle declares, even under the best of rulers, while Satan is at the helm, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together."--Rom. 8:22.

THE RISEN SAVIOR

--APRIL 16-JOHN 20:19-31--

Golden Text.--"The Lord is risen indeed."--Luke 24:34.

TODAY'S lesson leaves the Old Testament studies, to engage our consideration of, a theme appropriate to the Easter season, that of our Lord's resurrection. At the very outset we are confronted with certain errors which have gradually crystallized around the central truths of God's Word. One of these errors is the supposition that the resurrection of the dead, which the Scriptures hold forth as the hope of the Church and of the world, is to be a resurrection of the bodies which go down into death.

This mistake has given ground for Infidelity to sneer at this precious doctrine of the Bible. We are asked, How could the dust which once constituted the bodies of thousands of millions of humanity ever be re-collected and rearranged so that we could say that *those bodies* were

resurrected? The infidel urges that many of humanity have been eaten by fishes and animals, and many other corpses have been absorbed by vegetation, which in turn has been eaten time and again by man and beast, entering into the many organisms. The proposition is manifestly unanswerable, yet it does not refute the Bible teaching of the resurrection, but merely our creedal misapprehensions of the Bible teaching. What the Bible does teach is that the real man is the soul, the being, and that he persists while gradually his body keeps changing--sloughing off.

Scientists estimate that the human body undergoes a complete change every seven years, so that a man of fifty years old will have lost seven different bodies through natural wastes. None of those bodies was the man himself, for he is the soul, the intelligent personality, which used those different bodies. According to the Bible, the process of rejuvenation would have continued everlastingly had man by obedience continued in Divine favor and in the enjoyment of the everlasting life promised. It was sin, therefore, that brought the death penalty--the death of the soul. It was Adam's soul that sinned; it was Adam's soul that died. "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof *thou* shalt surely die;" "The soul that sinneth, it shalt die."

The result of this Divine sentence upon man would have been extinction--he would have been on the same plane as the brute, without a provision for eternal life, had not God in great mercy provided a redemption--that Jesus Christ by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The death which Jesus experienced was exactly the same kind as the one which destroyed Adam--the *soul* of Jesus died, as the ransom price for the soul of Adam (including Adam's posterity). Thus we read of Jesus, "He poured out His soul unto death;" "He made His soul an offering for sin."

It is by virtue of this corresponding price which Jesus laid down that ultimately Adam and all of his posterity, every soul of man, will be granted a release from the death penalty--a resurrection from the dead. It will be a resurrection, not of the dead bodies, but of the dead souls. In the resurrection God will give to each soul a body as it has pleased Him.--1 Cor. 15:38.

The few during this Age who have become followers of Jesus, begotten of the Holy Spirit, will be granted spirit bodies like to the Savior's. The remainder of mankind, not having been begotten of the Holy Spirit, will in the resurrection be granted human bodies, the same

as they previously had; and their raising up will bring them eventually to all the perfection of the first Adam, unless they refuse the grace of God, in which event they will die the Second Death, from which there is to be no resurrection.

PEACE BE UNTO YOU

As the news of our Lord's resurrection spread amongst His disciples it naturally drew them together seeking for fresh evidence respecting it. Then arose the fear that the spite of the priests, etc., which had seemingly been satisfied in the crucifixion of Jesus, would now extend to His disciples; and no doubt this thought was emphasized by the recollection that the Lord, speaking of His own sufferings and experiences, warned the disciples that they would be cast into prison and suffer persecution for His sake. No wonder, then, that when they met in the upper room that first Sunday night, the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, and we may safely conclude that this means that they were barred, bolted, locked in some manner.

Scarcely had the two from Emmaus finished their account of how Jesus had appeared to them on the way and at Emmaus, when suddenly they were all terrified at seeing a stranger standing in their midst. It was Jesus, and this was His third manifestation on this day of His resurrection (counting that of Matt. 28:9 and John 20:14 as the same; and that of Luke 24:15 and 34 as the same). He came into their midst, not by opening the doors, as some have suggested, but strictly as the narrative reads, "*the doors being shut.*" The security which was felt from having the doors fastened, caused the disciples to feel the more terror, when they beheld a stranger with them, but Jesus quickly assuaged their fears, saying, "Peace be unto you!" and then showed them His hands and His side, that they might note the marks of His crucifixion and the spear-wound, that thus they might identify Him with the crucified one. This evidence, added to what they had already heard, was convincing to all who were present, and they were glad. No doubt our Lord's previous manifestations were intended to lead up to this general presentation. He had stimulated and cultivated the faith, not only of the ones to whom He had appeared, but also of the entire company, through them, by the method adopted.

After the disciples believed, Jesus again used the words, "Peace be unto you," but now as believers the words had to them a new meaning; they began indeed to find a peace for their troubled hearts which they had not known for some time. Since they realized their Master to be

again alive they could afford to have peace, for they had learned to have confidence in Him and in His love, and intuitively realized that all things would work together for good to them, under His care, though as yet they knew not how. And so it is still. It is only those who realize in Jesus their Redeemer and Lord who died and who rose on their behalf, and who have given themselves to Him to be His disciples--only such can really receive of His peace--"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts. So today, as well as then, and even more abundantly under the Holy Spirit's guidance, they can realize that they are not their own, and that all things are under Divine supervision working for their highest welfare.

Then, saying to His disciples, "As the Father commissioned Me, so I commission you," our Lord breathed upon them, adding, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." The Father's commission to the Christ, the Royal Priesthood, was all addressed to the Head, the Chief Priest; we have no standing with the Father except through Him, and no other commission than His for our service. Our Lord's words imply that we as His disciples are to be engaged in the same work that He is engaged in. He did not finish the work completely, but merely finished one part of it--the part which He was to perform in the flesh, the redemption. Another great part of the work is to be accomplished at His Second Advent in power and great glory, viz., the blessing of all the families of the earth with a knowledge of Divine grace and an opportunity for returning into full fellowship with the Father and to eternal life.

The breathing upon them was evidently symbolical; an illustration of His words, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," by which, when, fifty days later, they would receive the Pentecostal blessing and adoption of sons, they might know that while the Holy Spirit is of the Father, it is nevertheless by the Son. And so the Apostles understood it, as St. Peter subsequently explained.--Acts 2:33.

"WHOSESOEVER SINS YE REMIT THEY ARE REMITTED"

We are not to understand that either the Father or the Son gave over to the Apostles or to others the *power* of remitting sins. We see, indeed, that sins could not be remitted by power, but only by the satisfaction of justice, and that hence it was necessary for Jesus to die for our sins, and to rise for our justification, before those sins could in any sense of the word be remitted. The most that could possibly be understood from our Lord's words is that He would so supervise the words and writings of the Apostles that in every instance they would lay down such

directions respecting sins and their forgiveness as would be in full accord with the Divine arrangement--that thus they might act as mouthpieces of God explaining to men the nature of sin and the terms of its forgiveness. This view we know is fully borne out by the facts in the case. The Apostles did define sin and the terms of forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, etc., in a manner entirely satisfactory, in a manner in which our Lord Himself never explained these things; because He left this work for His Apostles to accomplish in His name and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

This commission is grossly misunderstood and misapplied. by Catholics, who claim for the pope, the bishops and the lower clergy of their institution the right, the power, the authority, to forgive sins, to determine what penalties shall be inflicted, and to offer release from such penalties on certain conditions of their own making. It is in support of this claim, and as an adjunct to it, that Papacy has established "the sacrifice of the Mass," by which it claims that all of its priesthood can so consecrate flour and wine and water as to make of these the actual flesh and blood of Christ, which then being broken they claim is Christ sacrificed afresh, as the basis or authority for *their* forgiveness of sins.

We claim, on the contrary, that all of the Royal Priesthood (under Christ, the Chief Priest, and under the directions give them through the chosen Apostles), are fully empowered to declare to the world *the terms* upon which sins will be covered, canceled, remitted, and consequently the terms without which there is no remission. The right to do this comes, not through any power or authority enjoyed by the under-priesthood now, but as a result of the information which they receive of the Holy Spirit, through the inspired utterances of the Apostles. By these means "we have the mind of Christ," and know clearly the terms upon which He is willing to receive sinners; viz., upon repentance, and faith in Him, and consecration to His service. Any and all of the Royal Priesthood are privileged to tell this good message to whoever may have an ear to hear it; but we are instructed of the Lord not to expect that many will have the hearing ear now, but to know that the present is rather the time when only the few specially blessed of the Lord will be able to understand and appreciate this grace of God by faith.

"BE NOT FAITHLESS, BUT BELIEVING"

One of "the eleven," Thomas, was not with them on the evening mentioned. This would imply that he had disbelieved the stories told by the sisters respecting the message of the angels and the Lord's manifestation to Mary. He evidently thought them laboring under some delusion and excitement, which he ought to discountenance, and he therefore did not meet with the others to confer respecting their newly begotten hopes; they might enjoy such ephemeral hopes if they chose, but as for him, he could not do it. Having seen the crucifixion and the wound in the side, he could believe nothing else than that the Lord was still dead. And even when the Apostles met him the next day, and told him how Jesus was in their midst and showed them His hands and His side, Thomas still disbelieved, and told them that he would not trust to the sight of his eyes, which might be deceived. On his part he would want also an opportunity to feel the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into the spear-hole in the Lord's side. If he could have such evidence he, could "believe, but not otherwise.

Our Lord's followers today, as then, differ constitutionally to a considerable extent. Some find it easier to exercise faith than do others, It was right that Thomas should take care not to be deceived in the matter, but it was wrong that he should be so deficient in faith as to stand out stoutly in disbelieving when he had his evidence from so many of the brethren whose honesty he could not doubt. However, the Lord is very patient and longsuffering toward us all, and so He was with Thomas to the extent of granting him the very evidence which he had said would be satisfactory.

A whole week passed without any manifestation of the Lord to any of the disciples. However, the next first-day of the week (Sunday, "the eighth day," the Jewish method of counting including both days) found the Lord's followers gathered in hope of some further reports, evidences, etc., connected with His resurrection, when Jesus again "appeared," and we may well suppose them full of interest and suppressed excitement, not unmixed with disappointment, and fear that they might see Him no more. But all this was a part of the lesson they needed; for meantime they must have reasoned out that a great "change" had come to our Lord; that He was no longer a man as before, but a spirit being, who exercised the powers of angels in respect to His appearing and disappearing--coming and going invisibly "like the wind." Thomas meantime, although still skeptical, had become sufficiently interested to want to be present, to want to receive any proofs or evidences that could be adduced by which he would know that his dear Lord was now alive again. As before, Jesus came into their midst, the doors being shut, and again gave the word "Peace."

Immediately our Lord addressed Thomas, thus indicating His thorough knowledge of his doubts and fears; He invited him to come forward and have the very evidences which, he had declared would be necessary. We presume that Thomas did as he said, although the account does not mention it; it is implied in his prompt confession of his faith in the words, "My Lord and my God!" We are not to suppose that by this expression Thomas meant that he recognized the risen Jesus as being the Heavenly Father, as some would suggest: on the contrary, we are to remember that amongst the Jews the word "god" signified mighty *one*, and was sometimes applied to angels, and sometimes to great, influential men, as well as to the All-mighty one, Jehovah God, mighty one, was an appropriate title to apply to our Lord Jesus; but in no event should Thomas' words be understood either to be wiser or truer in any sense than our Lord's own expression of a few days previous, when He said, "I have not yet ascended to . . . My Father and your Father; My God and your God." As the angels were *elohim*, mighty ones or gods, to mankind, so Jesus, God's beloved Son, was properly recognized by His disciples as being far more than man, as being a mighty one, a god; and Jesus, in turn, recognized the Father as His God as well as ours. With this view all is reasonable, consistent and harmonious. With any other view of the subject there is confusion.

"AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE"

Our Lord did not reprove Thomas for his hard-headed determination to have indubitable proofs before he would believe; but He did tell him of a more excellent way--that while it is good to believe upon the basis of physical sight and physical touch, there is a still higher attainment of faith than that, which is able to see things that cannot be seen with the natural eye, and to feel things which cannot be felt with the natural touch. He would have Thomas and us all realize this well; so that we might the more cultivate this spiritual sensibility: not that He would have us credulous and ready to believe without evidence or testimony, but so filled with true faith and confidence in the Father's mighty power, and in Christ's own promises, that we would be ready to believe certain things upon the evidence of others, yea, to expect those things.

And this has been the condition of acceptance with the Lord throughout this Gospel Age. We have not seen Jesus except with the eyes of our understanding; we have not heard His voice except as we have heard with the ears of our hearts; yet this is the more blessed

faith; the kind more appreciated by the Lord Himself than the kind which would be satisfied with nothing but a tangible demonstration. A time is coming in which God will give to the whole world of mankind tangible evidences respecting all the features of the Divine Plan. Faith will then be swallowed up in sight, but when that time shall have come the rewards of faith which are now held out will no longer be open. Other rewards will be given, rewards of obedience; but they will not be so great as the rewards of faith.

Now, while it is dark, before the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in His beams, to scatter all the doubts and fears and hindrances, the Lord puts a premium upon faith, and only those who can and do exercise it may and do have certain rewards, privileges, opportunities and blessings. Of the Gospel Age "little flock" it is written, "We walk by faith and not by sight." We endure, "as seeing Him who is invisible;" we run for a crown and a throne which we may see only with the eye of faith; we obey the voice of Him who speaketh from Heaven, but whose voice now is the still small voice, which only the few who exercise faith can hear, appreciate and understand. By and by the time will come when this voice shall shake the earth and cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth. Obedience then will be proper and bring a blessing; but obedience now, even unto sacrifice of earthly interests in following the footsteps of Him who set us an example, brings the greater blessings--the blessings which pertain not only to the life which now is, but also to that which is to come--the blessings of glory, honor and immortality.

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

THROUGH DEEP WATERS OF AFFLICTION

Dear Brethren:

I wish to express my sincere thanks to you for publishing in the last HERALD, January 15th, the reprint Of PASTOR RUSSELL, on "The Ministry of Sorrow," and through you my thanks to the dear Brother "E. S., Eng.," for his thoughtfulness of others in requesting the reprint. It seems that I can express myself in no other way than to say it, seemingly, if not in reality, was a God-send to me, in that I was passing through deep waters of affliction. Of course I was taking it to the Lord in prayer, but the trial seemed so strange and severe, and

among other texts the words in 1 Pet. 4:12 came to me: "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial," etc., but the trial or chastening was still not joyous but grievous. On the second day of my trial, when the morning mail came and brought the HERALD, I began to tear off the wrapper. I wondered if it had any words of comfort and consolation for me. In looking over the contents I saw the title, "The Ministry of Sorrow." I turned to it at once and read, with great interest and profit, and I was wonderfully encouraged and helped, so much so that I was impressed to write you to encourage you in "your work and labor of love."

I am reminded of the experience that Brother A. gave us in his sermon at the meeting of the Class here on Sunday last, New Year's Day; that he had greater trials last year Of any year Of his life, also had received greater blessings. This, too, has been my experience, and seems to be continuing in the new year.

Your brother by His grace, F. L. A.--*Ohio.*,

EXPERIENCED FLOOD-TIDES OF PEACE AND JOY

Dear Brethren:

I just want to write a few lines to tell you how wonderfully the Lord blessed me through the HERALD Of January 15th by the two articles, "The Ministry of Sorrow," and "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." Surely, to me it was "meat in due season."

What various and mysterious ways and means God uses to work out the good pleasure of His will towards His people. Truly, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform." I had wanted to attend our testimony meeting, but was asked to accommodate a friend by keeping watch over their home while they went out for the evening. I could not quite understand at the time why the Lord should permit this to be, nevertheless I believed it was His will, and therefore submitted to it and trusted the matter to Him. Now, after three hours alone with God, it has all been made clear:

I took the HERALD along with me--and such a feast as the Lord provided! The flood-tides of peace and joy and refreshment that

flowed into my soul cannot be expressed in words. I thought, Could I have received such a blessing at the testimony meeting? Possibly so; but the grace is supplied always suitable to the occasion. And that is how the "shut-ins" and isolated ones are so bountifully fed.

I just had to pen these few lines to tell you what wondrous things the Lord performed for me; and I am confident He will do the same for all His people.

Your brother in Christ, H. P. J.--R. I.,

ENABLED TO HOLD TO THE LORD'S WORD

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I deem it a pleasure to send in my appreciation at least once in a year to the dear brethren who have labored so abundantly on behalf of the Lord's little ones. I received the first HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM that was published and have been a subscriber ever since, and look forward to its visits with eagerness, for the contents are always a help to me in seeking to walk the narrow way of sacrifice. So much of the Lord's spirit is manifest, and when it is necessary to show untruth or error, you always put it in such a kindly manner, just as our late Pastor did, that it seems to me that any who could discern the Lord's spirit could not possibly take offense. I wish that all of the Lord's people could read the HERALD; and I do what I can in giving a sample to any who show any interest whatever, hoping that in reading for themselves they may be able to overcome any prejudice they might have entertained by being misinformed or otherwise.

I believe the Lord has indeed blessed you in many ways, and through your efforts others have been blessed and enabled to hold to the Lord's Word during a very trying time--a time of severe testing; and I can truly say that you have my prayers, and co-operation to the best of my ability. May God bless you and all our efforts to serve Him even better this coming New Year.

Your sister by His grace, S. M. A.--Colo.

