

# THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

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## OUTLOOK FROM THE WALLS OF ZION

HUMANITY'S malady--sin, evil in various forms--has always baffled the world's wisest philosophers and masters, and continues so to do. Even those who profess to believe in the progress of Christianity, that in this dispensation it is destined to conquer evil, freely acknowledge the facts as they are apparent to all. Thus reads one of the September issues of *The Literary Digest*, under the following heading:

### "DENOUNCING THE WAR'S LEGACY OF HATE"

"The hatred and prejudice spawned by war have so sapped our moral vitality as apparently to destroy the spirit of goodwill which it was so fervently hoped would follow the advent of peace. After the great conflict was over and the soldiers were returning home, says the *Western Christian Advocate* (Methodist), which thus confesses its alarm at the situation, the 'blasting plagues of a reprobate mind' were released among us, and the aftermath of war is as much to be regretted as the days of carnage themselves. Even good men, we are told, are victims of this spirit of the age, and, instead of peace for which the world had hoped, we have race prejudice, religious intolerance, group arrayed against group, and a spirit of Americanism which is the very antithesis of that which animated the founders of the nation. Hardly had the war ended, we are told, than the evil of race prejudice began to rear its head, driving a cleavage through the social and even the political life of the nation. Anti-semitism demanded a hearing, and exclaims the *Advocate*,

"It drove home with a prejudice against the Jew that was frightful, violent, without reason and with a blindness that defied the Spirit of Jesus Christ and suspended the application of all His teaching. It came with a narrowness; it blundered forward with a blindness; it acted with the violence of ignorance and sought to encourage the Spirit that rules in the depths where despair and darkness dwell. Hatred and suspicion of the Jew have been a bugaboo of the twilight after all wars for almost 2,000 years. It came upon us during the last three years as a thief in the night. It sought to work a cleavage from the highest economic realms of the nation to the lowest and most humble unit of the community circle. But when Christians hate, the imps of hell rejoice and rise to claim a place in the little world drama of tragedy and comedy upon which all the company of the damned are witnesses.

*With this hatred of the Jew has come a dislike and distrust of the Negro.* Violence has broken out against him in different parts of the country that has staggered the conscience of the best citizenship. Indeed, mob aggression has nullified the Constitution and desecrated the most sacred principles of our liberties. We have had to hide our faces in shame at the ruthless manner in which the Negro has been dealt with during the past four years. That ugly, diabolic thing, "race prejudice," would scourge the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and when aroused would spit in His face if He should presume to protest against its actions. It would again press down upon His brow the crown

of thorns. It would again crucify Him amidst fire and flame on a wicked cross; for there is no restraint to human wickedness when it is commanded by race prejudice.

*"Then there is that growing hatred of the foreigner. It cries out, "America for the white man--for the native sons." It calls for 100% Americanism; it wants to close the gates of the country against immigration; it is fearful and suspicious; it is patriotic; it is narrow and blundering. If it had its way it would undermine all our national liberties. It would restrict free press, free discussion, free speech, free assembly, free religion, free development. It is having its way in a most unusual manner. Who will rise to call its regime to an end?"*

*"In the face of these statements, do not forget that hatred and prejudice have also shown their presence and activity against the Roman Catholic Church. There has been sent forth for public consumption propaganda against this historic communion of such violent character as to stir into action age-long ill feeling and of such ugliness as to blot out the face of God in the life of any man who makes place for it. The deadly opiate for the Christian conscience is hatred. One should fear it as fire and deadly explosives."*

"Adding fuel to the fires of hatred and encouraging race animosity is a fraternal organization which 'appeals to those fundamental human prejudices that can never be released or encouraged without great loss to the Christian spirit. It announces that it is against the Roman Catholic Church, against the Jews, against the Negro, against the alien, and stands out and out for Simon-pure Americanism.' Yet, we are told the organization is thriving and commanding unwittingly the support of some of the most level-headed citizens. This appeal to prejudice has a deadly aim, and the *Advocate* warns us:

"Watch the man or the organization who appeals to your prejudices. They will bring a poison into your soul that will rob you of your friends and take away your peace of mind. They will in the end becloud the face of Jesus Christ and turn your path into spiritual darkness. No man can afford to sympathize with or encourage in the least any man or group of men who appeal to hatred and prejudice. The ministry must be free and quick to see the peril. Keep themselves aloof, and in the name of Jesus Christ save the members of their flocks from the evil that walketh at noonday.

*"And now abideth hatred and prejudice and violence, these three; but the greatest of these is prejudice. '"*

## **"THE DEGRADATION OF THE AMERICAN HOME"**

In another recent issue of the *Digest* we read the following:

"American home life is in a state of chaos, and the Church must take note of the fact in some way other than merely personal exhortation on the subject, declares a report on the average American family life drawn up by the National Council of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The report--resented in some quarters as a slander on the majority of American homes is to be officially presented at the forty-seventh triennial convention of the Episcopal Church at Portland, Ore., in September, and the commission will ask that it be made the basis of propaganda directed toward remedying the 'discordant home life of the American people.' Among other things,

the report recommends that 'the criminal, feeble-minded and morally vicious be prevented from propagating their kind,' and also urges an 'insistence on health certificates as an antecedent to marriage.'

### **"SOME STARTLING FIGURES"**

In still a later issue of the same magazine the writer deplores the sad lack of religious education:

"Four-fifths of the young manhood of the country has little or no vital connection with the Church, and behind this detachment lies a deep misunderstanding of the faiths by which Christian men and women live, or the ideals of life which they hold. Thus reports the International Sunday School Council of Religious Education, which recently met in Kansas City. Again, the report discloses that there are more than 27,000,000 American children, nominally Protestant, not enrolled in any Sunday school or cradle roll department and who receive no formal or systematic religious instruction, and we are told that there are 8,000,000 American children, less than ten years old, growing up in non-church homes. Estimating the total number of youth under twenty-five years of age at 42,000,000 the *Dayton News* says this is 'a most startling percentage.' Putting these statistics in another way, and summarizing them briefly, the *News* comments further:

"Nineteen out of every 20 Jewish children under 25 years of age receive no formal religious instruction; 3 out of every 4 Catholic children under 25 years of age receive no formal religious instruction; 2 out of every 3 Protestant children under 25 years of age receive no formal religious instruction. Or, taking the country as a whole, 7 out of every 10 children and youth of the United States under 25 years of age are not being touched in any way by the educational program of any Church. This calls up a vital question--How long may a nation endure, 7 out of 10 of whose children and youth receive no systematic instruction in the religious and moral upon which its democratic institutions rest?"

The outlook as presented in the foregoing statements is surely of a most sanguinary character when viewed from the human standpoint, but from the standpoint of Divine revelation, all is clear and the outlook most hopeful. More and more the selfishness of humanity is manifest, the downward tendency of sin, and the dependence of our race upon the great Creator for His wisdom and power to bring the desired relief and the only remedy.

None knew better than the Savior the significance of man's state under the curse of sin and death. He declared that the remedy was to be looked for in the establishment of the Kingdom of the heavens, and thus in His model prayer, He taught us to pray for the coming of that Kingdom, when God's will shall be done on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

Likewise the Apostle Paul recognized the true state of affairs in his day, and acknowledged that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." He did not trust in any of man's efforts toward human uplift, nor in movements instigated by human philosophy, as the remedy; but to the contrary declares that "The earnest expectation of the creature [creation] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." He was hoping for the fulfilment of Jesus' prayer; namely, that when the time should come for the new dispensation to be ushered in by the Second Presence of Christ and the exaltation of His faithful Church as His Bride, to

share His Kingdom, then would commence the mighty work of human uplift and the turning away of all the effects of the curse of sin and death from the earth through one thousand years of restitution glory.

"Haste ye along, ages of glory;  
Haste the glad time when Christ appears,  
O! that I may be one found worthy  
To reign with Him a thousand years."

## **IS THE APOCALYPSE A JEWISH OR CHRISTIAN PROPHECY? - PART**

### **1**

#### **IS IT TO BE UNDERSTOOD LITERALLY?**

##### **PART I**

WHATEVER differences of opinion expositors and Bible students may hold regarding the correct interpretation of the Apocalypse, all must agree that it is a Divine prophecy. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." "And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:3; 22:10.) Further- more, that the Divine predictions are contained in symbolic visions, is certain. "He sent and *signified* [revealed by symbols] by his angel unto his servant John."--Rev. 1:1.

No one will question the fact that if the Apocalypse is to be understood literally, it has never yet had a fulfilment. Literalists must therefore be futurists. When we are prepared to recognize it as symbolic and begin to translate the symbols into ordinary language, it is no longer a self-evident fact that it must be unfulfilled.

The only way, therefore, to discover whether it has been fulfilled or not is by comparing its *translated* symbols with history. If, when we do this, we discover one of its symbolic visions has met a fulfilment, we have reason to believe that we are on the right track towards a correct interpretation of its other visions. If we discover this to be true of two or three or more, we know that we have not only found the Divinely intended method of interpretation, but also that it has been in process of fulfilment during the Gospel Age.

#### **IS A KNOWLEDGE OF HISTORY NECESSARY TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHECY?**

Strange as it may seem, we find some who claim that the Apocalyptic visions cannot have had a fulfilment in history, because, *as they say*, we are told to search the Scriptures, and are nowhere told to search the historians. God, they say, is His own interpreter. Such reasoning we believe is fallacious and unsound. How could we ever know that the prophecies of Daniel have met their fulfilment without acquainting ourselves with the records of history? A knowledge of history is absolutely essential to the intelligent understanding of prophecy.

Bible history begins with an account of our first parents in Paradise, and reaches to within about four hundred years of the birth of the great Redeemer, and then ceases until that event is reached. It then takes up the history of the Savior's earthly life, especially the last three and one-half years of that life. After giving an account of His death, His resurrection, and a few incidents in connection with the forty days before His ascension, we have a brief history of the preaching of the Gospel in the Holy Land, in Asia Minor, and in certain portions of Europe; and then Bible history ceases altogether, about 60 A. D. On the other hand, Bible prophecy reaches on to the Second Coming of the Lord in glory to establish paradise on earth. We have no sacred or inspired history of events since A. D. 60, though we do have reliable records of what has occurred. If we are to accept the claims of certain objectors, we are not authorized to make use of these records. We are not to compare prophecy with uninspired or profane history. According to this theory, then, there could, not have been any prophetic light thrown on the period of four hundred years prior to the First Advent. The same also would be true of the last eighteen hundred years. In other words, God did not intend that the Church should have any benefit or help derived from prophecy. If we were to suppose a fulfilment as clear as daylight had taken place, we must remain altogether in ignorance of it, unless God should be pleased to add to the canon of Scripture an inspired history of all that has occurred in connection with the Church's career in its contact with the world powers. We can only put aside such reasoning as being, unsound and unworthy of our acceptance.

When the Apostle exhorted that we do well to take heed to the more sure word of prophecy, he evidently intended that we should look to the events and occurrences recorded in history to see the fulfilment of what had been predicted by the Prophets; else how could we be profited by giving heed to the more sure word of prophecy? Let us consider for instance the prophecy of Daniel. In the vision of chapter 7, a tenfold division of the Roman empire was predicted to take place before the establishment of the Kingdom of God over the earth. We know from Bible history that the Roman empire was existing in its undivided form up to about 60 A. D. However, we are dependent upon profane, uninspired history, to know that it was still existing as a universal empire when St. John was Divinely used to close the canon of Scripture, by having imparted to him the visions of the Apocalyptic prophecy, which prophecy *repeats this very same prediction of Daniel*. How do we know that this prediction of Daniel which is repeated in the Apocalypse has or has not met its fulfilment, unless from profane history? Profane history records a fact that cannot be successfully denied; that just such a division of the Roman empire occurred nearly fifteen hundred years ago. It is then an indisputable fact that our knowledge of the fulfilment of prophecy is dependent upon the faithful records of uninspired historians. The Savior's words, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe" (John 14:29), are sufficient to show that such reasoning is false.

Another unreasonable, indeed rash statement made by some futurist interpreters is, that the events connected with the history of the Church of this Gospel Age are not subjects of prophecy. Those who make such a statement seem not to see that a knowledge of history is needful even to warrant such an assertion! How, we ask, without a knowledge of the history of the Gospel Age, can it be known that the visions of St. John in the Apocalypse do *not* present a connected outline of the leading and important events of Church history? "*A knowledge of what has actually taken place is as needful to justify a denial, as an assertion of the fact. We must know a person as well before we can pronounce that a certain portrait does not resemble him, as in order to assert that it does.*"

"Trustworthy historians record events which *they* neither invented nor caused, but what occurred under God's providential government; it was He who caused, or permitted these events; they are in one sense as Divine as prophecy; that is, both proceed from Him. Prophecy is God telling us beforehand what shall happen; authentic history is men telling us what has, in the providence of God, taken place. . . .

"We dare not for these reasons exclude the light afforded by history, in the endeavor to answer the questions: Is the prophecy of the Apocalypse fulfilled or partly so, or is it still unfulfilled? and is it in its general scope Christian or Jewish?"

## **WHAT IS THE TEACHING FROM ANALOGY--CONCERNING THE CHURCH BEING A SUBJECT OF PROPHECY?**

God's ancient people were never left without the guidance of the "lamp of prophecy." Is it reasonable to suppose that the Church of this dispensation would be left without this lamp? It was because of a failure to give heed to the predictions of their Prophets, which were read every Sabbath day in their synagogues, and which were being fulfilled before their eyes, that the Jews fulfilled them in rejecting and crucifying their Messiah. (Acts 13: 27.) Indeed, their history, as well as that of the condition of their homeland, during the last eighteen hundred years, was foretold by their Prophets. Furthermore, their future restoration to favor, and the great tribulations they are to encounter just prior to their conversion to the Messiah, are all described by their Prophets, not simply in a general way, but in the most minute detail. It is to this latter that Futurists wrongly apply the visions of the Revelation. We ask, Why do this, when all the events connected with these matters were all so minutely foretold by the Old Testament Prophets? It has been wisely asked: "Is it likely that there should be no analogy, but a perfect contrast, in the history of antitypical Israel? Has she no Egypt to leave, and no wilderness to traverse, no land to inherit, no oppressors to tyrannize over her, no evil kings to mislead her, no reformers and deliverers to arise no Babylon to carry her captive, no Temple to rebuild, no Messiah to look for, no judgments to apprehend?"

"Are the Church's foes so much more obvious, her dangers so much more potent, that it should be superfluous to supply her with prophetic light to detect them? Because the Jews were an earthly people, and she a heavenly Church, is she therefore not on earth, and not surrounded by the ungodly? Are her enemies heavenly because the Church is so? Nay, but most earthly, for the "Wicked spirits against whom the Church wrestles, wage their warfare incarnate, in earthly, sensual, devilish systems, and in actual men, as did Satan in the serpent in Eden. Every conceivable reason would suggest her *greater* need of prophetic light. Now the Apocalypse is the book of the New Testament which answers to the prophets of the Old. If then it contain predictions of the first spread of Christianity, of the hosts of martyrs who sealed their testimony with their blood, during the ten pagan persecutions, of the reception of Christianity by Constantine and the Roman empire, of the gradual growth of corruption in the Church, of the irruptions of the Goths and Vandals, and the break up of the old Roman empire into ten kingdoms, of the rise and development of popery, of the rise and rapid conquests of Mohammedanism, of the long continued and tremendous sufferings of the Church under papal persecutions, of the fifty millions of martyrs slain by the Romish Church, of the enormous political power attained by the popes, of their Satanic craft and wickedness, of the Reformation, of the gradual decay of the papal system, and the extinction of the temporal

power of the popes: *if it contain predictions of these events, which we know to have taken place in the history of antitypical Israel*, the Church, then we have a *perfect analogy* with the Old Testament. If on the other hand the Apocalypse alludes to none of these events, but passing them all over in silence, gives only the history of an Antichrist, who has not yet appeared, and of judgments not yet commenced, nor to be commenced until the Church is in heaven, then instead of a striking Scriptural analogy, we have a glaring and most unaccountable contrast.

"It is evident there is nothing in the peculiarity of this dispensation, which precludes the Church from receiving predictions of specific events to take place, because the epistles of St. Paul and St. Peter contain such predictions. The fact that the Holy Spirit has announced to the Church events reaching through the whole dispensation cannot be denied. For an illustration we read, 'He who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way; and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.' (2 Thess. 2:7, 8.) The hindering obstacle, whatever it was, was in existence when the Apostle wrote, and was to continue in existence until another event took place, the rise of the man of sin, and that man of sin, that wicked one was to continue until the Lord's coming. Here we have a prophecy, the fulfilment of which, starting from its own date, reaches to the consummation, and covers the whole interval, leaving no room for a break.

"There is therefore no ground for asserting that the fulfilment of the Apocalypse must be future, because the Church cannot be the subject of prophecies whose sphere is earth. If she may be the subject of one or two, she may equally well be the subject of a hundred, and the question must be decided on other grounds. If the first generation of Christians were forewarned of the fall of Jerusalem, we may be forewarned of the fall of Babylon. If they knew beforehand that Jerusalem was to be encompassed with armies, we may know that the power of Turkey, that had possession of Palestine so long, is to decay. In principle, there is no difference; a dispensation that admits the one, admits the other."

### **THE TEST THAT DETERMINES APPLICATION OF APOCALYPSE**

The principal test to determine the period covered by the Apocalypse is a comparison with history. That much of it has met its fulfilment has been thoroughly proved. And as Jewish unbelief and blindness refuses to perceive that the prophecies concerning the earthly life, mission, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, fulfilled the long series of the predictions of the Old Testament concerning their Messiah, likewise it is possible that there may be a Christian unbelief, which fails to perceive that the anti-Christian power predicted in the Apocalypse has met its fulfilment, and that all that remains of these predictions are those that relate to its last struggles to attain ascendancy again, and its complete destruction.

"The Futurist would have us believe that the Church needed no guidance, no comfort, no sustainment, in the long years of her earthly pilgrimage--that He who knew all the trials that were to beset her in the long period of her history, withheld a knowledge that would buoy her up, and enable her to stand true to her Lord and Master. Strange that such an idea should find a place in Christian hearts! What! Shall our Lord be less kind than an earthly friend or parent?"

### **ST. JOHN, ONE OF THE TWELVE WHO MINISTERED TO THE CHURCH**

It is claimed by those who believe that the visions of the Revelation have not yet been fulfilled, but are yet future, that the Apostle John was given a series of symbolic pictures that pertain, not to the Church of the Firstborn of this Gospel Age, but to fleshly Israel of the Old Testament times, to various events and developments that relate to the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding their regathering and restoration to the land promised.



Again the facts compel us to express positive disagreement. The Apostle John, who was given the visions of the Apocalypse, has the distinction of being one of the Twelve chosen by Jesus to specially represent Him and speak Divine truth for the Church of the entire Age. These Twelve are therefore designated, "The twelve Apostles of the Lamb," "the twelve foundations of the new Jerusalem." All the facts and circumstances connected with their being chosen to these positions show that the object was that they should teach the Church; that they were commissioned to bear testimony to certain great truths that would relate to the confirming and comforting of consecrated Christian believers and their growth and development in Christlikeness, etc.

This being true, why, therefore, should it be assumed that the last book of the New Testament, the Apocalypse, written by St. John, is an exception, and that it was not intended for the Church, Christian believers of this Gospel Age, but relates to God's typical people, fleshly Israel, of a previous age? We ask, What authority have we for so concluding? Is it not far more reasonable to suppose that, as St. John, who in fulfilment of the great commission given him had throughout the preceding years been faithful in the proclamation of Gospel truth, was here on the Isle of Patmos receiving further information from the Lord by which he would continue his ministry on behalf of the saints and the work of this Age, and was not therefore given symbolical messages pertaining to Israel's future history?

More than this, the Apostle Paul is our authority for claiming that the Jewish Age and fleshly Israel were in a general way pictorial or illustrative of the Gospel Age and those who share in the blessings of this spirit dispensation. (Heb. 10:1-5; Col. 2:14, 17.) As the type or shadow is of comparative insignificance alongside the reality or the antitype, so the Jewish Age and the people of Israel occupy a place of far less importance in the Divine Plan than that of consecrated believers in this Age. We cannot imagine St. John, who was called to be one of the ministers of this dispensation of the spirit, being commissioned of God to revert to the Jewish Age and the Jewish people in anything like so important a sense as he would be doing had he in the Book of Revelation been describing scenes and events relating merely to the restoration of the Jews in the future. The evidence seems overwhelming that the testimony concerning the Jews and their restoration was quite full and complete at our Lord's First Advent; that the various Prophets had thoroughly covered the ground of Israel's future history and their restoration to their own land, without it being necessary for one of the twelve Apostles who was called to minister to consecrated Christians, to turn aside from this commission and devote the most important statement of his ministry on behalf of merely the future of the Jewish race.

## **APOCALYPSE: A CHRISTIAN PROPHECY PROVED FROM THE ADDRESS, IN ITS INTRODUCTION**

TO WHOM IS THE REVELATION ADDRESSED?

The following quotations are fair statements of the Futurist's reply to this question:

"The Revelation does not pertain to the Church of this Gospel Age, [but] has reference to the Jews in 'that day.'

"The Apocalypse does not have for its subject the Church of God, but relates to our Lord's judgment of dealings with, and blessings of Jew and Gentile, after the Church has finished its course."



Our reply to the above question is that every statement that has any bearing on this matter contained in the Book itself, shows that it is addressed to Christ's servants, the Church. The Epistles of Paul, Peter, John, James and Jude are all addressed to the "saints and the faithful in Christ Jesus," or to the Church, in such and such a place. We reason rightly from the Epistles that they are not for the world, not for the Jews, but for consecrated believers in Christ alone. Confusion has and will always be the result if unbelievers, either Jew or Gentile, take these Divine messages as addressed to them. Why does not this argument apply with equal force to the Apocalypse?

We answer, It certainly does. We note first, that it is addressed to Christ's servants--"The Revelation of Jesus Christ . . . to show unto His servants." Who were Christ's servants at the time St. John had the vision? There can be but one answer--those who were serving Him at that time; those from among the Jews and those from among the Gentiles, who had become Christ's followers, His disciples.

Some Futurists have endeavored to avoid this most natural interpretation of these words, by saying that if the words were addressed to Christ's followers, the address would read, "to show unto His sons," etc.--in other words, because the Jews of the Jewish dispensation were called servants--and not sons, therefore Jews are meant.

How unsound is this reasoning! In the first place, the Jews had been rejected, cast off from favor at the time St. John was given these visions. They were no longer God's servants, they were *never Christ's* servants. They could only become His servants by receiving Him as their Messiah and by yielding themselves entirely unto Him. They would then become sons, serving sons, if you please, not serving servants. No one doubts, that St. Paul, while a son of God, and an Apostle, was also a servant. The same is true of the other Apostles and, indeed, all who have come into harmony with God through Christ.

### **THE REVELATION ADDRESSED TO THE CHURCH**

Again, we read that the Revelation was addressed to the seven churches of Asia Minor, not to Jews or assemblies of Jews living in Asia Minor. St. John was told, "What thou seest, write in a book, and send unto the seven churches." Now who constituted the churches of Asia Minor? There can be but one answer--Those who had received Christ as their Savior and Lord, whether from among the Jews or Gentiles.

Again we read the words of Christ Himself: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in *the Churches*" (Rev. 22:16), not to testify these things to Jews, or Jewish assemblies.

And finally, as forever settling this particular point, we have the Savior Himself saying, at the close of each of the seven messages: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches;" not what the spirit saith unto the Jews at *that* time, or even of some *future* time, as Futurists would have us believe. "On reading these distinct declarations, simple, unsophisticated minds would surely conclude that Jews and unbelievers have no more to do with this prophecy than they have with the Epistle to the Ephesians. They may possibly be alluded to in the one as in the other, but it is not for them, it is not mainly concerned with them; *it is*

for us; Christians alone were Christ's servants in the days of Domitian, when John saw and heard these things; to Christians alone was it sent; the seven Churches represented the *whole* Church; and they take the children's bread to give to outsiders, who would rob the Church of her Lord's last gift.

"It is no use to say, 'Yes! but though given to the Church, it might still be a revelation of the counsels of God about others than herself.' *It might*, the Epistle to the Ephesians *might* have been a treatise on the state and prospects of the lost ten tribes, but it was not; the vision of Nebuchadnezzar might have been a vision of the restoration of Israel, but it *was not*; the visions of Daniel might have been visions of the seven Churches in Asia, but they *were not*, nor was it likely they would be, nor is it likely that the Lord Jesus in His last prophetic communication to His cherished Church, from whom for eighteen hundred years He was to be hidden, would have nothing more pressing, personal and important to reveal to her, than the destiny of a future Jewish remnant, with which she has nothing in common."

Another very significant matter as proving that Christians and only Christians are addressed in this prophecy, is that the ascription of praise in the address recorded in chapter 1, verse 5, is none other than *Christian* praise, as the words, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood," very plainly teach.

The very next statement of the Apostle shows who are referred to in this passage. It is those who are to be made kings and priests. We read: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." Are the kings and priests unto God and His Father to be Jews, taken out from either this Gospel Age or any Age prior to, or to follow this? Surely not. The ones referred to here are those mentioned by St. John as subjects of the First (chief) Resurrection. "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." (Rev. 20:6.) Who can doubt that the ones referred to by St. John in chapter 1:5 are the same who are in chapter 20 said to have part in the First Resurrection?

*(Continued in next issue)*

## **MEMORIAL OF THE FAITHFUL**

SACRED memories attach to those who have been taken out of our fellowship and have gone from us in death, in proportion to our acquaintance with them, and to the extent that they have been near to us and have exercised a blessed and hallowed influence in our lives.

Those who under the Lord's providence have been placed in positions of special responsibility amongst God's people, and have in their ministry been faithful unto death, we delight to honor more abundantly; and the memory of such we cherish in a special way. Year by year, since the death of our dear BROTHER RUSSELL, many of the brethren feel constrained to observe, and take delight in, some simple commemorative service on the occasion of the anniversary of his death. The brethren associated in the ministry of this INSTITUTE are amongst such. There is a satisfaction in such a service, for the reason that in thus honoring the life, work, and memory of our worthy Brother, we are honoring the Lord; for He has explicitly stated His mind on the subject: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in

the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake." "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine."--Rom. 13:7; 1 Thess. 5:12, 13; 1 Tim. 5:17.

The Word of the Lord teaches us that the Great Creator, our Heavenly Father, is to primarily have our worship and adoration; that next to Him, the Lord Jesus, His well-beloved Son, is to be adored and worshiped. We are to honor Him because He has proved, His right to be the world's Redeemer through costly sacrifice, and God has set Him at His own right hand as the Head and great Teacher over the Church, which is His Body. Then, next to our Lord Jesus are worthy ones who under the Lord's providence have been placed in the Church as its guides and teachers. Amongst these are, first, the Twelve Apostles; then such as St. Paul designates "pastors," "teachers," "evangelists," etc., throughout the entire Age.

BROTHER RUSSELL, we believe, well deserves a place in the Church amongst the great servants of God of the entire Age. This we say, not in any spirit of man-worship, but in consideration of his abundant service, spirituality, faithfulness and devotion to the will of God. His example is a shining one, and contains much inspiration for those who have come under the influence of his ministry. That the "spirit of the Lord God" was upon our Brother in no small measure, is abundantly testified to in his great discernment and ability to expound the Word of the Lord. As a result of his deep desire early in his youth, to know and serve the Lord, he was richly blessed in being guided year by year in the pathway of light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. In the midst of surrounding darkness, confusion, and conflicting voices, he whole-heartedly sought the Lord for a clearer vision of Divine Truth. He recognized truly that the majority of the creeds, of Christendom were dishonoring to the name and Word of the Lord. In the course of his years of study and progress, he very clearly exhibited in his teachings and writings that a better vision and comprehension of the Plan of God was given him; and unto the day of his death he set himself resolutely to the task of clearing the name and character of Jehovah of the stain and dishonor that human creeds had put upon them; for surely none can pursue the study of the Divine Plan of the Ages as expounded by BROTHER RUSSELL without appreciating the fact that our God is a God of Love, Justice, Wisdom, and Power. We do not then marvel that our dear Brother was given great ability to handle the Word of God. He held the Sword of the Spirit, and was able to thrust it through and through the fabric of error, through and through even caloused hearts. He was one with St. John and St. Paul in his doctrine, and it seemed natural for him to compare Scripture with Scripture and bring out meanings not often emphasized.

The indomitable courage and the living faith displayed in the life of our Brother are most worthy of our emulation; indeed, these were the secret of his great success in the Christian life. He well knew that his faithfulness to duty and to the will of God meant that many were arrayed against him as enemies. Thus he said:

"The nearer we approach to the Truth, the more likely we are to find numerous enemies, but it is reserved to the pure Gospel, and those who uphold it, to be everywhere spoken against, to have few zealous friends outside its own little consecrated band; but it will not always be so. By and by Satan will be bound, and his deluded subjects will have the eyes of their understanding opened. (Isa. 35:5; Rev. 20:1.) 'Then shall ye return'--turn about--see things from the Divine standpoint, 'and discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not'--discern a marked difference from the present time--that the evil-doers will suffer, and that those who do the will of God will be greatly blessed and no longer be everywhere spoken against."

No wonder then that BROTHER RUSSELL sought for himself and in behalf of others of the Lord's people the fullest understanding possible respecting the passing away of the dark night of weeping, and the coming in of the morning of joy. He, with all of God's waiting, faithful people, longed to know when the King of glory should enter in, when the faithful Church should enter upon her glorious epoch of exaltation and blessing.

Let all of us who long for the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ and for association with Him in His Kingdom more and more seek that closeness of walk and fellowship with Him in sacrifice and suffering that there may be in reserve for us the "crown of glory that fadeth not away."

## **JESUS THE GREAT TEACHER**

**--NOVEMBER 12-LUKE 6:1-49--**

*Golden Text.--"As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."--Luke 6:31.*

AGAIN we gather at the feet of the Great Teacher of the school of Christ to hearken for His further instructions. Our lesson, pictures to us Jesus and His disciples in a public pathway across a wheat-field (in old English called a corn-field). The wheat was ripe or nearly so, and the disciples, feeling hungry, had plucked a few of the heads and rubbed them in their hands to remove the chaff for the eating of the wheat. The Pharisees, appreciating the shell rather than the meat of the Divine Law, were very particular for outward observances of it, while entirely overlooking and neglecting its real sentiment or spirit. Here they thought they saw an opportunity for showing off their religious devotion by calling attention to the disciples of Jesus as being law-breakers, and to Jesus Himself as being little better, in that He as their teacher had not reproofed them. We see frequently this same spirit in our day: Some today would be scrupulously careful not to ride in a street-car on the Sabbath who would think nothing of allowing their minds to rove not only after the worldly things but worse, to dwell upon evil subjects, or perhaps meditate how they could take advantage of their neighbor the day following. This is hypocrisy, one of the worst sins from the Divine standpoint.

It is really amusing how the Jews, while neglecting, the real essence and spirit of the Law toward God and man, exaggerated that Law as respects the trifling and unessential matters. For instance, the ruling of the Rabbis was that catching a flea on one's person was hunting, and therefore prohibited on the Sabbath; that rubbing the grain in both hands and blowing away the chaff constituted winnowing and threshing, and violated the rest of the Sabbath. Our Lord did not accept the reproof, but, on the contrary, pointed out that His disciples not only had His approval in their course but that they were fully justified by the course of others whom the Pharisees recognized. Our Lord's illustration of what constituted necessity and mercy was drawn from the Bible narrative of David's eating the shewbread, lawful only for the priests to eat, because of the necessities of his position, his hunger. Also the labor performed every Sabbath in the Jewish Temple, in connection with the worship there, by the priests and Levites. Our Lord held logically that these approved matters showed the proper principle governing the Sabbath. He did not claim that reaping, threshing and winnowing on the Sabbath day would be justifiable; His argument was that no such interpretation should be put upon the Law as would make the satisfying of hunger, as the Apostles did, a crime, a violation of the Sabbath commandment.

**"LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH"**

But after convincing them from the Scriptures that their position was untenable, our Lord asserted to them His authority as an interpreter of the Law, saying, "I say unto you, One greater than the Temple is here." If it was right for the Levites to perform the Temple services on the Sabbath, Jesus was greater than the Temple in that He was the Son of God, the mouthpiece of God, and His disciples might therefore rest secure in anything done in His service and with His approval. What a personality our Lord must have possessed that He could make such a statement before His enemies without its being challenged! We are convinced that He not only spake as never man spake, but that His appearance must have been superior to that of members of the fallen race.

Mark His statement again (Matt. 12:8)--"The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." As the Lord of the Sabbath, as the great Teacher, He had not indeed the right to abolish this feature of the Law except by fulfilling it, "nailing it to the cross;" but as the Lord of the Sabbath He was the proper Teacher to set, forth its real significance to the Jew. Our Lord called the attention of His critics to the testimony of God through the Prophet, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Hosea 6:6.) Our Lord declares that if they had given heed to this direction their thoughts would have been more merciful, more in line with the Divine sentiment, and this would have hindered them from condemning the disciples, who the Lord declared were entirely guiltless of any violation of the Sabbath day commandment.

Similarly we may say today that the great lack of many critics and fault-finders is their lack of mercy, lack of love. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has most of it will come nearest to the standard. The possession of love is always indicated by mercy--toward our friends, toward our brethren, toward the world, toward our enemies. Proceeding to the Synagogue the same question was raised--the predominance of Love above any law was manifested. A man there had a withered hand, and the Pharisees, seeking to prove Jesus and to catch Him, inquired whether or not it would be right to heal on the Sabbath day. They fain would condemn Him on some score; His defense of His disciples was complete would He now commit Himself to a matter of healing on the Sabbath ?

Our Lord's answer was along the lines of the prophecy He had just quoted, namely, that mercy was higher in God's estimation than sacrifice, and He proceeded to show mercy to the afflicted man. First, however, He showed them from their own course in life that they were inconsistent; that if they owned but one sheep and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day it would be rescued--not for love of the sheep but for fear of the loss of its value. Our Lord inquired, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day." This question as to the superior value of a man over a beast, is one that the world seems to find difficult to answer, but one which should be quickly answered by the Lord's people of spiritual Israel. The Lord set the value of a man when by the grace of God He gave Himself a ransom for man. Those who receive of His spirit should more and more count it a privilege to do anything they can for the relief of their fellow man in matters temporal or spiritual.

The Pharisees were answered at every point, and, less popular in Galilee than in Judea anyway, they felt that their influence before the people had been lessened by their conflict with the Lord, the great Teacher. So when Jesus had healed the withered hand by word they went out of the Synagogue angry, to take counsel against Him how they might destroy Him. They were rabid sectarians, fully convinced of their own importance. They felt that anything that discredited them must be injurious to the Lord and to His cause, that they were the orthodox body, and that they would be fully justified in murdering anyone whose words and conduct so overmatched them as to hinder their influence from spreading more and more over all the people of Israel. A similar spirit prevails today, we aver, amongst many who are outwardly very zealous for religion. They are so deficient in mercy, love, so bound by the sectarian systems with which they are identified, that they would be willing to

persecute as thoroughly as opportunity would permit any of the members of the Master's Body whose presentations of the Truth today would seem to diminish their honor and standing before the world. Let us, dear friends, remember the Master's word, and understanding and appreciating our relationship to the Lord, let us be obedient to the very spirit of it.

After one of His days of loving and ceaseless toil, Jesus, as was His custom, found rest and peace in prayer. "He went out into a mountain"--or, as it should rather be rendered, into *the* mountain--"to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." There is something affecting beyond measure in the thought of these lonely hours; the absolute silence and stillness, broken by no sounds of human life; the stars of an Eastern heaven raining their large lustre out of the unfathomable depth; the figure of the Man of Sorrows kneeling upon the dewy grass, and gaining strength for His labors from the purer air, the more open heaven, of that intense and silent communing with His Father and His God.

It was at dawn of day, and before the crowd had assembled, that our Lord summoned into His presence the disciples who had gradually gathered around Him. Hitherto the relation which bound them to His person seems to have been loose and partial; and it is doubtful whether they at all realized its full significance. But now the hour was come, and out of the wider band of general followers He made the final and special choice of His twelve Apostles. Their number was insignificant compared to the pompous retinue of hundreds who called themselves followers of a Hillel or a Gamaliel and their position in life was humble and obscure. James, John, and Peter belonged to the innermost circle of our Lord's associates and friends. They alone were admitted into His presence when He raised the daughter of Jairus, and at His transfiguration, and during His agony in the garden.

Such were the chief of the Apostles whom their Lord united into one band as He sat on the green summit. We may suppose that near here He had passed the night in prayer, and had there been joined by His disciples at the early dawn. Henceforth there was to be no return to the fisher's boat or the publican's booth as a source of sustenance; but the disciples were to share the wandering missions, the evangelic labors, the scant meal and uncertain home, which marked even the happiest period of the ministry of their Lord. They were to be weary with Him under the burning noonday, and to sleep, as He did, under the starry sky.

### **THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

The observations of Canon Farrar regarding the Sermon on the Mount will be of interest to our readers:

"And while the choice [of the Twelve] was being made, a vast promiscuous multitude had begun to gather. Not only from the densely-populated shores of the Sea of Galilee, but even from Judaea and Jerusalem--nay, even from the distant sea-coasts of Tyre and Sidon--they had crowded to touch His person and hear His words. From the peak He descended to the flat summit of the hill, and first of all occupied Himself with the physical wants of those anxious hearers, healing their diseases, and dispossessing the unclean spirits of the souls which they had seized. And then, when the multitude were seated in calm and serious attention on the grassy sides of that lovely natural amphitheatre, He raised His eyes, which had, perhaps, been bent downwards for a few moments of inward prayer, and opening His mouth, delivered primarily to His disciples, but intending through them to address the multitude, that memorable discourse which will be known forever as 'the Sermon on the Mount.'

"The most careless, reader has probably been struck with the contrast between the delivery of this sermon and the delivery of the Law on Sinai. We think of that as a 'fiery law,' whose promulgation is surrounded by the imagery of thunders, and lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet sounding long and waxing louder and louder. We think of this as flowing forth in divinest music amid all the calm and loveliness of the clear and quiet dawn. That came dreadfully to the startled conscience from an Unseen Presence, shrouded by wreathing clouds, and destroying fire, and eddying smoke; this was uttered by a sweet human voice that moved the heart most gently in words of peace. That was delivered on the desolate and storm-rent hill which seems with its red granite crags to threaten the scorching wilderness; this on the flowery grass of the green hillside which slopes down to the silver lake. That shook the heart with terror and agitation; this soothed it with peace and love. And yet the New Commandments of the Mount of Beatitudes were not meant to abrogate, but rather to complete, the Law which was spoken from Sinai to them of old. The Law was founded on the eternal distinctions of right and wrong--distinctions strong and irremovable as the granite bases of the world. Easier would it be to sweep away the heaven and the earth, than to destroy the least letter, one *yod*--or the least point of a letter, one projecting horn--of that code which contains the very principles of all moral life. Jesus warned them that He came, not to abolish that Law, but to obey and to fulfil; while at the same time He taught that this obedience had nothing to do with the Levitical scrupulosity of a superstitious adherence to the letter, but was rather a surrender of the heart and will to the innermost meaning and spirit which the commands involved. He fulfilled that olden Law by perfectly keeping it, and by imparting a power to keep it to all who believe in Him, even though He made its cogeny so far more universal and profound.

"The sermon began with the word 'blessed,' and with an octave of beatitudes. But it was a *new* revelation of beatitude. The people were expecting a Messiah who should break the yoke off their necks--a king clothed in earthly splendor, and manifested in the pomp of victory and vengeance. Their minds were haunted with legendary prophecies, as to how He should stand on the shore of Joppa, and bid the sea pour out its pearls and treasure at His feet; how He should clothe them with jewels and scarlet, and feed them with even a sweeter manna than the wilderness had known. But Christ reveals to them another King, another happiness--the riches of poverty, the royalty of meekness, the high beatitude of sorrow and persecution. And this new Law, which should not only command but also aid, was to be set forth in beneficent manifestation--at once as salt to preserve the world from corruption, and as a light to guide it in the darkness. And then follows a comparison of the new Law of mercy with the old Law of threatening; the old was transitory, this permanent; the old was a type and shadow, the new a fulfilment and completion; the old demanded obedience in outward action, the new was to permeate the thoughts; the old contained the rule of conduct, the new the secret of obedience. The command, 'Thou shalt not murder,' was henceforth extended to angry words and feelings of hatred. The germ of adultery was shown to be involved in a lascivious look. The prohibition of perjury was extended to every vain and unnecessary oath. The law of equivalent revenge was superseded by a law of absolute self-abnegation. The love due to our neighbor was extended also to our enemy. Henceforth the children of the kingdom were to aim at nothing less than this--namely, to be *perfect*, as their Father in heaven is perfect."

### **THE PERFECT STANDARD**

Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount is not a regulation for the world, but merely applies to saints--to those who have consecrated their lives fully to follow in the footsteps of Jesus--to suffer with Him that they may also reign with Him. Even these may not be able to live up to every feature of the Master's instructions because of weakness in their fallen flesh. We must take the Master's words here and elsewhere addressed to the faithful as



representing the full, complete, perfect standard. It is for each disciple to recognize this supreme standard and to measure and gauge his thoughts and words and doings thereby, and to as closely as possible attain this standard.

We are to remember, however, that as no Jew could keep the Law in its spirit, perfectly, neither could any of any other nationality keep it. The Jew's failure to keep the Law meant his failure to gain everlasting life, but we (the followers of Jesus) are not under the Law Covenant, but under Grace. We are to keep the Divine Law as nearly as we possibly can and to accept by faith God's arrangement for us in Jesus--that "by His stripes we are healed," our shortcomings are made good.

Thus doing our very best, yet surely coming short, the Apostle's words apply to us: "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." We walk after the spirit, and would walk up to it if we could, but being unable to do so, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." This is the happy state of all who through faith and consecration become children of God during this Gospel Age. Their faith and good intentions and good efforts, by the grace of God, make good their deficiencies.

As for others than God's people, He does not speak to them at all, except to tell them that they are sinners, under the sentence of death, but that He has made provision for their reconciliation through the blood of the cross, and that whether they become disciples of Christ or not under the call to Brideship, nevertheless their words and conduct in the present life will all advantage or disadvantage them in the life to come. In this secondary way the world--all mankind aside from the Church, the consecrated--may be measurably enlightened by the Master's teachings in this lesson, even while it is not addressed to them. They may see its high standards and appreciate them to some extent, but not fully, unless they realize that the Church class, called in this Gospel Age, is required to undergo special trial, testing, proving, as to loyalty to God, meekness, gentleness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

### **"BUT I SAY UNTO YOU"**

The two tables of the Law given to Israel were a requirement of Justice, but Jesus and His followers take a still higher plane and, waiving their own rights, they become sacrificers of their own comforts, preferences, desires, to the doing of the Divine will, to the serving of the brethren and mankind in general. Justice never requires sacrifice. Thus discipleship and attainment with Jesus of a share in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow mean something more than merely rendering to every man his due, for no one has a right to render to another less than his due, nor to do injury to another. Jesus not only did no injury, but, additionally, He sacrificed His own rights on behalf of mankind, and He set His disciples an example that they should walk in His steps.--1 Pet. 2:21.

The path of love is, therefore, as Jesus describes it, under present conditions, a "Narrow Way;" narrow is the gate, difficult the way of life now open. Only the saintly few will be willing to walk therein, and only these will gain the great Prize, "the pearl of great price," joint-heirship in Messiah's Kingdom. Hearken! Do not merely observe the Golden Rule toward your enemies, but love them, and "do good to them that hate you, and bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you."

The Master's expression, "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other," is to be taken as signifying simply, Do not render evil for evil, even though he smite thee on the other cheek also. Our Lord Himself, when smitten, according to the report, did not invite the smiting of the other cheek, but rather He defended Himself to the extent of criticizing the evil deed. But if He had been smitten on the other cheek also, let us not for a moment think that He would have resisted, in the sense of rendering blow for blow.

The next statement is more comprehensively given by St. Matthew. "If any man sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, withhold not thy cloak also." The follower of Jesus may flee from an adversary, or he may resist him to the extent of proper expostulation, but he is to be thoroughly responsive to all government; if the court decides that his coat and his cloak shall both be taken from him, he shall uncomplainingly submit, even though he realize that such a procedure would be unjust and quite at variance with the Divine regulation. St. Paul as well as Jesus used argument in his own defense, not only with the mobs, but also before judges; but they resisted the law--never.

### **"THIS IS A HARD SAYING"**

"Give to everyone that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again." The broadest interpretation we could consistently give to this would be--Be generous, tender-hearted, err on the side of too great generosity rather than to be hardhearted, selfish. The Lord could not have meant us to take His words with absolute literalness; as for instance, Give a child a razor if it cries for it; or, Give money to the dissipated, that they may injure themselves still more. The spirit of a sound mind forbids that we should understand the Master to teach that we should do anything for another or assist him in any manner that would be really to his injury. This is expressed in the next statement: "As ye would that men should do unto you, *do* ye also to them likewise." We would surely not wish men to grant a request of ours if they sincerely believed they would be injuring us. Our Master's words inculcate love, beneficence, and must not be construed to the contrary.

Very evidently our Lord was setting up His teachings in contrast with the maxims of the Pharisees, the holiness people of that day. He wished His disciples to see His teachings in their ultra light. To love another because he loved us, or to give to another in the hope that he would equally befriend us, or to do any good act with a hope to have as good or better return, would have nothing specially creditable in itself. It would be doing from a selfish motive.

Jesus' disciples, on the contrary, are to do good for principle's sake and for goodness' sake--to be in full accord with the Heavenly Father, to have His smile and approval. They are to take Him as their Example, and to remember that in proportion as they are Godlike they show forth the spirit of sonship. As, therefore, God is kind to the unthankful and to evil-doers, so we should be who have His spirit and who are seeking to walk in His way, in the footsteps of Jesus. The Heavenly Father is the Example, and although we cannot come up to that Example, we can show our loyalty, our faithfulness, by copying Him to the extent of our ability.

### **MERCIFUL TO OBTAIN MERCY**

The world during Messiah's Kingdom will be under instruction and lessons, which will include mercy, and an assurance to the willing and obedient of perfection by the close of the Kingdom. But the Church class, now called out, will have no such long period for their character development, and since they will not attain that perfection here but will require Divine mercy, through the imputation of Christ's merit to cover their blemishes, therefore the Lord has arranged that these must expect mercy only in proportion as they will show mercy to others. In other words, all the followers of Jesus have many imperfections to be covered by Divine mercy, or else to be atoned for by stripes, punishments, before they die.

In order to develop His saints in generosity and forgiveness, mercy, the Lord has agreed that He will be merciful to them in proportion as they will be merciful to others. What a wondrous reward and what a wondrous incentive! Our Lord's prayer is in agreement with this: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." This does not relate to the Adamic guilt of the saints, but to their daily shortcomings, Their share in original sin and condemnation was canceled through the merit of Christ before they were accepted as His disciples or became followers in His steps as sons of God. What an incentive to God's people to be generous, forgiving, largehearted, thus cultivating the Heavenly Father's spirit and character, and to be in that condition of heart where they can receive richly of Divine bounty and mercy at the Throne of Grace!

### **"OWE NO MAN ANYTHING"**

Love may go beyond the Law and do more than justice could require--in self --sacrifice--but it cannot do less. He who loves his neighbor will be fulfilling the Law toward him to the best of his ability. Hence, as the Apostle explains, to those who are in Christ all the commandments are covered in their covenant of love. They would not injure their neighbor's interests, either by stealing from him, or by bearing false witness against him, or by coveting his things or interests, desiring to take possession of them, or by murder or adultery; nor in any other manner would they encroach upon their neighbor's rights and interests.

Although not under the Law of the Ten Commandments, the Christian is under the Law of the New Commandment, the Law of Love, which is so much higher that it includes every other law that could be given. Love works no kind of injury to its neighbor; love, therefore, is the fulfilling of that feature of the Divine Law which applies to our duty toward our neighbor, to love him as ourself. But love can do more than this, and in the case of Jesus it did more, for in love He surrendered His rights, privileges, etc., and died, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. And He is our Example as surely as we are His disciples, followers, and prospectively His joint-heirs in His Kingdom.

### **HUMILITY A CHARACTER FOUNDATION**

The parable of a man with a beam in his own eye trying to pick a mote out of his brother's eye was a forceful method whereby the Master inculcated the necessity of humility on the part of those who would be taught of God. Humility is here as elsewhere put as a foundation virtue. The Latin word for humility is humus, ground. This implies that it is the soil out of which other virtues are produced. Those who think they know everything can learn nothing. As Chalmers has said: "The more a man does examine, the more does he discover the infirmities of his own character." As Wheatley remarked, "Ten thousand of the greatest faults in our neighbors are of less consequence to us than one of the smallest in ourselves." A knowledge of our sins and imperfections

should make and keep all humanity humble; but how beautiful it is to realize that the perfect Jesus was humble and that all the holy angels are so!

### **GRAPES OFF A BRAMBLE BUSH**

While the Scriptures forbid God's people to judge one another, they do commend to us another kind of judging. We are not to judge in the sense of condemning, sentencing, etc., those who claim to be honest, sincere, reverential, merely because they differ from what we would expect; God knows their hearts and to his own Master each servant must stand or fall eventually.

But while not condemning the heart we are to judge of the outward conduct. The parable which our Lord in this lesson gives respecting the gathering of grapes from bramble bushes illustrates this point. God's people are likened to the grape-vine, which produces no thorns but luscious clusters of fruit. Mankind in general are likened to bramble bushes, ready to scratch, tear, injure, on the slightest provocation, and are merely self-sustaining, not bringing forth fruitage that would be a blessing to others. We are to distinguish between such characters and God's people: "By their fruits shall ye know them."

It is said that, at times a bramble bush will be entirely covered by a vine, so that the grapes would appear to be coming from the bush. We are not to be mistaken. A good tree cannot bring forth an evil fruitage, neither can an injurious tree bring forth a good fruitage. The lesson, applied to humanity, is that those who are really God's people cannot live injurious lives or fruitless lives; they must be fruit-bearing else they are none of His. And should we find some of the fruits of the spirit commingling with a thorniness of life, an evil, injurious disposition, we are to assume that in some sense of the word the fruitage is merely put on and does not belong to the bramble-bush character.

It is therefore; useless for any man to tell us that he has given his heart to the Lord in fullness of consecration and that he has received the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit and yet find him rejoicing in sin, taking pleasure in iniquity, injustice, selfishness and a course of life injurious to his neighbors. If his heart be changed, the results will be manifest in his daily life, because "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

### **THE HOUSE ON THE ROCK**

The closing parable of this lesson is in full tune with its opening verse. In the first parable the blind who trust to the leadership of the blind fall into the ditch. In the parable now before us the picture is that of a householder. If he be wise he will not build upon the shifting sands, which either a wind storm or a rain storm may undermine, and cause a wreck, but he will seek a solid, rock foundation which will endure the storm.

This parable illustrates two classes of believers. Both hear the Great Teacher's instructions and both believe and both rear faith structures and entertain heavenly hopes. But the one is more prudent, more careful than the other. One seeks for the doctrines and principles of the Divine Word, and builds his faith structure upon that true

foundation which the Divine Revelation affords. His faith cannot fail whatever storms may assail; it is surely founded on the Divine promises.

The unwise believer takes too much for granted and builds upon the traditions of the elders, the creeds of the Dark Ages, etc. He fails to appreciate the necessity for having a proper foundation for his faith and his works. In the time of stress and storm with which this Age will end, all such will find the foundation swept from under their faith structure. There will be a general fall of Babylon, as the Scriptures declare everything not well founded upon the sure Word of God will give way; "That day shall declare it." St. Paul mentions the same class and applies the lesson specially to our day in his letter to the Corinthians. Those whose faith structure will fail will thereby suffer great loss, though they themselves may be saved as by fire--through great tribulation.--1 Cor. 3:13-15.

## **JESUS THE FRIEND OF SINNERS**

**--NOVEMBER 19-LUKE 7--**

*Golden Text--"Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."--1 Tim. 1:15.*

OUR Lord had again reached the town of Capernaum, where He had fixed His temporary home, when He was met by a deputation of Jewish elders, to intercede with Him on behalf of a centurion, whose faithful and beloved slave lay in the agony and peril of a paralytic seizure. It might have seemed strange that Jewish elders should take this amount of interest in one who, whether a Roman or not, was certainly a heathen, and may not even have been a "proselyte of the gate." They explained, however, that not only did he love their nation--a thing most rare in a Gentile, for, generally speaking, the Jews were regarded with singular detestation--but had even, at his own expense, built them a synagogue, which, although there must have been several in Capernaum, was sufficiently beautiful and conspicuous to be called "*the* synagogue." The mere fact of their appealing to Jesus shows that this event belongs to an early period of His ministry, when myriads looked to Him with astonishment and hope, and before the deadly exasperation, of after days had begun. Christ immediately granted their request. "I will go," He said, "and heal him." But on the way they met other messengers from the humble and devout centurion, entreating Him not to enter the unworthy roof of a Gentile, but to heal the suffering slave (as He had healed the son of the courtier) by a mere word of power. As the centurion, though in a subordinate office, yet had ministers ever ready to do his bidding, so could not Christ bid viewless messengers to perform His will, without undergoing this personal labor? The Lord was struck by so remarkable a faith, greater than any which He had met with even in Israel. He had found in the Gentile what He had not found in the Jew; and He drew from this circumstance the lesson, which fell with such a chilling and unwelcome sound on Jewish ears, that when many of the natural children of the Kingdom should be cast into outer darkness, many should come from the East and the West, and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven. But the centurion's messengers found on their return that the healing word had been effectual, and that the cherished slave had been restored to health.

It is not strange that, after days so marvelous as these, it was impossible for Jesus to find due repose. From early dawn on the mountain-top to late evening in whatever house He had selected for His nightly rest, the multitudes came crowding about Him, not respecting His privacy, not allowing for His weariness, eager to see Him, eager to share His miracles, eager to listen to His words. There was no time even to eat bread. Such a life is to the last

degree trying and fatiguing, especially to a refined nature, rejoicing in noble solitude, and finding its purest and most perfect happiness in lonely prayer.

### "WEEP NOT"

If the common reading in the text of St. Luke (v. 11), be right, it was on the very day after these events that our Lord took His way from Capernaum to Nain. He was usually accompanied, not only by His disciples, but also by rejoicing and adoring crowds. And as this glad procession were climbing the narrow and rocky ascent which leads to the gate of Nain, they were met by an other and a sad procession issuing through it to bury a dead youth outside the walls. There was a pathos deeper than ordinary in the spectacle; for this boy was in language which is all the more deeply moving, from its absolute simplicity, and which to Jewish ears would have involved a sense of anguish yet deeper than to ours--"the only son of his mother, and she a widow." The sight of this terrible sorrow appealed irresistibly to the Savior's loving and gentle heart. Pausing only to say to the mother, "Weep not," He approached, and--heedless once more of purely ceremonial observances--touched the bier, or rather the open coffin in which the dead youth lay. It must have been, a moment of intense and breathless expectation. Unbidden, but filled with indefinable awe, the bearers of the bier stood still. And then through the hearts of the stricken mourners, and through the hearts of the silent multitude, there thrilled the calm utterance, "Young man, arise!" The dead arose, and began to speak; and He delivered him to his mother.

No wonder that a great fear fell upon all. They might have thought of Elijah and the widow of Sarepta; of Elisha and the lady of the not far distant Shunem. They too, the greatest of the Prophets, had restored to lonely women their dead only sons. But *they* had done it with agonies and energies of supplication, wrestling in prayer, and lying outstretched upon the dead; whereas Jesus had wrought that miracle calmly, incidentally, instantaneously, in His own name, by His own authority, with a single word. Could they judge otherwise than that "God had visited His people"?

It was about this time, possibly even on this same day, that our Lord received a short but agitated message from His own great Forerunner, John the Baptist. Its very brevity added to the sense of doubt and sadness which it breathed. "Art Thou," he asked, "the coming Messiah, or are we to expect another?"

Was this a message from him who had first recognized and pointed out the Lamb of God? from him who, in the rapture of vision, had seen heaven opened and the Spirit descending on the head of Jesus like a dove?

Even before Jesus had come forth in the fulness of His ministry, the power and influence of John had paled like a star before the sunrise. He must, have felt very soon that his mission for this life was over; that nothing appreciable remained for him to do.

Not once or twice alone in the world's history has God seemed to make His very best and greatest servants drink to the very dregs the cup of apparent failure--called them suddenly away by the sharp stroke of martyrdom, or down the long declivities of a lingering disease, before even a distant view of their work has been vouchsafed to them; flung them, as it were, aside like broken instruments, useless for their destined purpose. It is but a part of that merciful fire in which He is purging away the dross from the seven-times-refined gold. But to none could this disciplinary tenderness have come in more terrible disguise than to John. For he seemed to be neglected not



only by God above, but by the living Son of God on earth. John, was pining in Herod's prison while Jesus, in the glad simplicity of His early Galilaeen ministry, was preaching to rejoicing multitudes among the mountain lilies or from the waves of the pleasant lake. Oh, why did his God in heaven and his Friend on earth suffer him to languish in this soul-clouding misery? Had not his life been innocent? had not his ministry been faithful? had not his testimony been true?

**"ART THOU HE THAT SHOULD COME, OR DO WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER?"**

Jesus did not directly answer the question. He showed the messengers, He let them see with their own eyes, some of the works of which hitherto they had only heard by the hearing of the ear. And then, with a reference to the 61st chapter of Isaiah, He bade them take back to their master the message, that blind men saw, and lame walked, and lepers were cleansed, and deaf heard, and dead were raised; and above all, and more than all, that to the poor the Glad Tidings were being preached: and then, we can imagine with how deep a tenderness, He added, "And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me"--blessed (that is) is he who shall trust Me, even in spite of sorrow and persecution--he who shall believe that I know to the utmost the will of Him that sent Me, and how and when to finish His work.

We may easily suppose, though nothing more is told us, that the disciples did not depart without receiving from Jesus other words of private affection and encouragement for the grand prisoner whose end was now so nearly approaching--words which would be to him sweeter than the honey which had sustained his hunger in the wilderness, dearer than watersprings in the dry ground. And no sooner had the disciples departed, than He who would not seem to be guilty of idle flattery, but yet wished to prevent His hearers from cherishing one depreciatory thought of the great Prophet of the Desert, uttered over His friend and Forerunner, in language of rhythmic and perfect loveliness, the memorable eulogy, that he was indeed the promised Voice in the new dawn of a nobler day, the greatest of all God's herald messengers--the Elias who, according to the last word of ancient prophecy, was to precede the Advent of the Messiah, and to prepare His way.

"What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft clothing are in *kings'* houses! But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and far more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face, who shall prepare Thy way before Thee."

And having pronounced this rhythmic and impassioned eulogy, He proceeded to speak to them more calmly respecting Himself and John, and to tell them that though John was the last and greatest of the Old Dispensation, yet the least in the Kingdom of heaven was greater than he.

Many who heard these words, and especially the publicans and those who were scorned as the "people of the earth," accepted with joy and gratitude this approbation of their confidence in John. But there were others--the accredited teachers of the written and oral Law--who listened to such words with contemptuous dislike. Struck with these contrasts, Jesus drew an illustration from peevish children who fretfully reject every effort of their fellows to delight or to amuse them. Nothing could please such soured and rebellious natures. The flute and dance of the little ones who played at weddings charmed them as little as the long wail of the simulated funeral. God's "richly-variegated wisdom" had been exhibited to them in many fragments, and by many methods, yet all



in vain. John had come to them in the stern asceticism of the hermit, and they called him mad; Jesus joined in the banquet and the marriage feast, and they called Him "an eater and a wine-drinker." Even so! yet Wisdom has been ever justified at her children's hands.

### **THE DEEPLY COMPASSIONATE CHRIST**

But not even yet apparently were the deeds and sayings of this memorable day concluded; for in the narrative of St. Luke it seems to have been on the same day that, perhaps at Nain, perhaps at Magdala, Jesus received and accepted an invitation from one of the Pharisees who bore the very common name of Simon.

The cause or object of the invitation we do not know; but as yet Jesus had come to no marked or open rupture with the Pharisaic party, and they may even have imagined that He might prove of use to them as the docile instrument of their political and social purposes. Probably, in inviting Him, Simon was influenced partly by curiosity, partly by the desire to receive a popular and distinguished teacher, partly by willingness to show a distant approval of something which may have struck him in Christ's looks, or words, or ways. It is quite clear that the hospitality was meant to be qualified and condescending. All the ordinary attentions which would have been paid to an honored guest were coldly, and cautiously omitted. There was no water for the weary and dusty feet, no kiss of welcome upon the cheek, no perfume for the hair, nothing but a somewhat ungracious admission to a vacant place at the table, and the most distant courtesies of ordinary intercourse, so managed that the Guest might feel that He was supposed to be receiving an honor, and not to be conferring one.

The beautiful and profoundly moving incident which occurred in Simon's house can be understood only by remembering that as the guests lay on the couches which surrounded the tables, their feet would be turned towards any spectators who were standing outside the circle of bidden guests.

An Oriental's house is by no means his castle. The universal prevalence of the law of hospitality--the very first of Eastern virtues--almost forces him to live with open doors, and any one may at any time have access to his rooms. But on this occasion there was one who had summoned up courage to intrude upon that respectable dwelling-place a presence which was not only unwelcome, but positively odious. A poor, stained, fallen woman, notorious in the place for her evil life, discovering that Jesus was supping in the house of the Pharisee, ventured to make her way there among the throng of other visitants, carrying with her an alabaster box of spikenard. She found the object of her search, and as she stood humbly behind Him, and listened to His words, and thought of all that He was, and all to which she had fallen--thought of the stainless, sinless purity of the holy Prophet and of her own shameful, degraded life--she began to weep, and her tears dropped fast upon His unsandaled feet, over which she bent lower and lower to hide her confusion and her shame. The Pharisee would have started back with horror from the touch, still more from the tear, of such an one; he would have wiped away the fancied pollution, and driven off the presumptuous intruder with a curse. But this woman felt instinctively that Jesus would not treat her so; she felt that the highest sinlessness is also the deepest sympathy; she saw that where the hard respectability of her fellow-sinner would repel, the perfect holiness of her Savior would receive. Perhaps she had heard those infinitely tender and gracious words which may have been uttered on this very day "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And she was emboldened by being unreprieved; and thus becoming conscious that, whatever others might do, the Lord at any rate did not loathe or scorn her, she drew yet nearer to Him, and, sinking down upon her knees, began with her

hair to wipe the feet which had been wetted with her tears, and then to cover them with kisses, and at last--breaking the alabaster vase--to bathe them with the precious and fragrant nard.

### **THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS, HOLIER-THAN-THOU SPIRIT**

The sight of the woman, the shame of her humiliation, the agonies of her penitence, the quick dropping of her tears, the sacrifice of that perfume which had been one of the instruments of her unhallowed arts, might have touched even the stoniest feelings into an emotion of sympathy. But Simon, the Pharisee, looked on with icy dislike and disapproval. The irresistible appeal to pity of that despairing and brokenhearted mourner did not move him. It was not enough for him that Jesus had but suffered the unhappy creature to kiss and anoint His feet, without speaking to her as yet one word of encouragement. Had He been a prophet, He ought to have known what kind of woman she was; and had He known, He ought to have repulsed her with contempt and indignation, as Simon would himself have done. Her mere touch almost involved the necessity of a ceremonial quarantine. One sign from Him, and Simon would have been only too glad of an excuse for ejecting such a pollution from the shelter of his roof.

The Pharisee did not utter these thoughts aloud, but his frigid demeanor, and the contemptuous expression of countenance, which he did not take the trouble to disguise, showed all that was passing in his heart. Our Lord heard his thoughts, but did not at once reprove and expose his cold uncharity and unrelenting hardness. In order to call general attention to His words, He addressed His host.

"Simon, I have something to say to thee."

"Master, say on," is the somewhat constrained reply.

"There was a certain creditor who had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he freely forgave them both. Tell me then, which of them will love him most?"

Simon does not seem to have had the slightest conception that the question had any reference to himself--as little conception as David had when he pronounced so frank a judgment on Nathan's parable.

"I imagine," he said--there is a touch of surprised indifference to the whole matter in the word he uses--"I presume that he to whom he forgave most."

"Thou hast rightly judged." And then--the sterner for its very gentleness and forbearance--came the moral and application of the little tale, couched in that rhythmic utterance of parallelism which our Lord often adopted in His loftier teaching, and which appealed like the poetry of their own prophets to the ears of those who heard it. Though Simon may not have seen the point of the parable, perhaps the penitent, with the quicker intuition of a contrite heart, *had* seen it. But what must have been her emotion when He who hitherto had not noticed her, now turned full towards her, and calling the attention of all who were present to her shrinking figure, as she sat upon the ground, hiding with her two hands and with her disheveled hair the confusion of her face, exclaimed to

the astonished Pharisee--"Simon! dost thou mark this woman? I was thine own guest: thou pouredst no water over My feet: but she, with her tears, washed My feet, and with her hair she wiped them. No kiss gavest thou Me; but she, since the time I came in, has been ceaselessly covering My feet with kisses. My head with oil thou anointedst not; but she with spikenard anointed My feet. Wherefore I say to you, her sins--her many sins, have been forgiven; but he to whom there is but little forgiveness, loveth little." And then like the rich close of gracious music, He added, no longer to Simon, but to the poor sinful woman, the words of mercy, "Thy sins have been forgiven."

### **THE HOLY FORGIVING SPIRIT**

Our Lord's words were constantly a new revelation for all who heard them, and if we may judge from many little indications in the Gospels, they seem often to have been followed, in the early days of His ministry, by a shock of surprised silence, which at a later date, among those who rejected Him, broke out into fierce reproaches and indignant murmurs. At this stage of His work, the spell of awe and majesty produced by His love and purity, and by that Holy Spirit which shone in His countenance and sounded in His voice, had not yet been broken. It was only in their secret thoughts that the guests--rather, it seems, in astonishment than in wrath--ventured to question this calm and simple claim to a more than earthly attribute. It was only in their hearts that they, silently mused and questioned, "Who is this, who forgiveth sins also?" Jesus knew their inward hesitations; but it had been prophesied of Him that "He should not strive nor cry, neither should His voice be heard in the streets;" and because He would not break the bruised reed of their faith, or quench the smoking flax of their reverent amazement, He gently sent away the woman who had been a sinner with the kind words, "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace." And to peace beyond all doubt she went, even to the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to the peace which Jesus gives, which is not as the world gives. The general lesson which her story inculcates is the lesson that cold and selfish hypocrisy is in the sight of God as hateful as more glaring sin; the lesson that a life of sinful and impenitent respectability may be no less deadly and dangerous than a life of open shame.

### **THE PERFUME OF SWEET ODOR TO HIM**

How few there are who seem to have a large measure of the spirit of Mary Magdalene! How few are really very helpful to one another. How few pour upon one another the spikenard ointment of comforting words, helpful suggestions and encouragements.

Those who are thus helpful will be found filled with a genuine love for the Head, for the Body in general and even for the "feet." And the secret of their love as in Mary's case will be found to be a large appreciation of their own imperfections and of the Lord's mercy and grace toward them, in the forgiveness of their sins. The Apostle expresses the sentiments of these helpful and loving members of the Body, who are the only ones who are making their calling and election sure, saying--"For we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto Him who died for us and rose again."

Let us, then, avail ourselves of the privileges day by day of anointing the feet members of the Body, realizing that whatsoever is, done unto one of the least of these His brethren is done unto the Lord Himself, and is a perfume of sweet odor to Him. Let us be more gentle, more tender, more careful in our honoring and dealing

with the feet members. Let us remember that they have trials and difficulties enough in their conflict with the tiresome journey of life, and that there must be no neglect of them on our part, for the opportunity of thus manifesting our love and devotion to the Lord is too great a privilege to be over-looked or slighted. Nor need we wait for opportunities to do great things: kind words and looks, a little assistance, may be the tears or the perfume as circumstances may permit.

## **BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION**

STUDY CXLVI--OCTOBER 15

### **The Last Rebellion--Rev. 20:7-9**

(781) What will be the result of the loosing of Satan at the end of the Millennial Age? What will be the nature of the tests applied? And what is the purpose of these tests? H '21-40.

(782) Will any be deceived by Satan's sophistries during this "little season"? What class will be peculiarly susceptible to the tests of that time? Give Scriptures bearing upon this. H '21-40.

(783) To what do the terms "beloved city," and "the camp of the saints" refer? H '21-41.

(784) What is implied in the expression "compass" the camp of the saints, etc.? H '21-41.

(785) Between what parties is the battle, mentioned in verse 8? H '21-41.

STUDY CXLVII--OCTOBER 22

### **The World's Final Judgment--Rev. 20:7-9**

(786) In what way or by what method is it reasonable to suppose that Satan's deceptions during the "little season" will be presented to mankind? What would be the attitude of loyalty to God? H '21-41.

(787) Will the world still be under the Great Mediator during this period? H '21-41.

(788) At what time will the Son deliver up the Kingdom to the Father? H '21-42.

(789) What is the distinction, if any, between the judgment of the Mediator and that of the Father? H '21-42.

(790) What is one of the distinctive features of God's dealings with mankind that will also be manifest during this last trial? What will be the outcome of this final judgment? H '21-42.

STUDY CXLVIII--OCTOBER 29

**The Lake Of Fire--Rev. 20:10**

(791) What is the difference between the "Abyss" and the "Lake of Fire"? H '21-42.

(792) In what connection is the term "Lake of Fire" used in a previous vision of the Revelation? Show the unreasonableness of a literal interpretation. H '21-42.

(793) Give other instances where this expression is used, and its meaning. H '21-42.

(794) What seeming objection to a symbolical interpretation of the Lake of Fire is contained in the vision of our study? H '21-42.

(795) How may we understand the expression "forever and ever?" Give the interpretation of verse 10 in harmony with the general teaching of the Scriptures. H '21-42.

STUDY CXLIX--NOVEMBER 5

**The Great White Throne-Rev. 20:11**

(796) What is the view generally held regarding this vision of the Great White Throne, and of the judgment Day? H '21-52.

(797) What erroneous teaching seems to be the cause of confusion and misunderstanding on this subject? Show wherein this erroneous teaching is unscriptural. H '21-52.

(798) Explain in this connection the Words of our Lord in John 5:29. H '21-52.

(799) At what time does this vision of the Great White Throne meet its fulfilment? H '21-52.

(800) Are the "heaven" and the "earth" mentioned in verse 11, literal or symbolic? How does this feature enable us to locate the time of the vision's fulfilment? H 121-52.

**THE HERALD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM**

## THE GOSPEL IN THE BRITISH ISLES

AS one journeys through the cities and towns of Great Britain, he is continually reminded of the trials and difficulties, the persecutions and the struggles, which the true followers of Christ have encountered in the long centuries since Christianity was first planted in the British Isles--these because of their earnest endeavors to be loyal to Christ, and to the Truth as they understood it. A careful examination of the meager facts of history will make manifest that the Roman Catholic Church was not the first to preach Christianity in these islands. There are many who believe there is sufficient evidence to show that the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel in Great Britain. One Scottish authority says:

"For centuries no one disputed the claim of the Culdees in Scotland to have received the Gospel from the Apostle John, if not in person, certainly by his writings. . . . During the lifetime of the Apostle John, who lived until the commencement of the second century, there was considerable trade kept up between these islands and Asia Minor, Greece, and Alexandria. Among those traders there were earnest Christians, who had embraced the Gospel under the teaching of the Apostles, and rejoiced to be the heralds of the Glad Tidings to the people of this and other lands. History also records that British prisoners had learned to know Christ and His salvation during their captivity, and had brought back to their countrymen the knowledge of the Messiah."\*

It is stated as a fact that in the early centuries the island was known as "The Isle of the Saints." These ancient British Christians, like their brethren in other parts of the Roman Empire, received their share of bitter persecution from the Pagan government, which experience caused the Christians in the south of the island to flee to Scotland. This occurred *before* 323 A. D., at which date the emperor, Constantine, professed the Christian religion. It was in this early period that a pure Christianity was introduced into Scotland. It is said that these Christians lived such holy, happy lives as to impress the Scots with the reality of the religion of Christ.

According to the Scottish authority quoted above, the Gospel was introduced into Ireland in the very early part of the fifth century. He thus describes this event "In the year 372 A. D. an event happened that had far-reaching consequences. On the banks of the Clyde, not far from Glasgow, in the little Christian village of Bonavern, now Kilpatrick, a little boy, whom his parents called Succat, was born. His father, Calpurnius, was a most pious man, and a deacon in the Christian Church at Bonavern. His mother, Conchessa, was a sister of the celebrated Martin, Archbishop of Tours. They carefully taught their boy the precious truths of the Gospel. One day, while he and his two sisters were playing on the seashore, some Irish pirates carried them all off in their boats and sold them to a petty chieftain in Ireland. While herding the swine in solitude, he meditated much upon the lessons his pious mother had taught him; and at the age of sixteen, after passing through a severe mental and spiritual struggle, he found peace and joy through believing in Jesus. 'The Lord opened my eyes,' he says, 'and I was converted with my whole heart to the Lord my God. The love of God increased in me, with faith and holy fear.'

"Twice a captive and twice rescued, Succat, afterwards known as St. Patrick, felt an irresistible desire in his heart to carry the Gospel to Ireland, where he had first found Christ and the blessings of salvation. His parents endeavored to turn his mind from his purpose, but he could not turn aside the call of God. It was a great struggle to leave his parents, but he overcame. 'It was not done in my own strength,' he says, 'it was God who overcame all.'

*\*The Gospel in Great Britain--SAMUEL MACNAUGHTON, M.A.*

"He went to Ireland, not by way of Rome, as a Roman Catholic writer of the twelfth century asserts without a shadow of evidence, but direct to his work commissioned by God alone. The people flocked to hear the simple preaching of the Gospel, and large numbers were converted to Christ."

Nearly two centuries after, in one of the Churches formed by St. Patrick, there arose a man named Columba, a grandson of King Fergus. "In company with several earnest Christians he set out in a small boat [for Scotland] and eventually landed on the island of Iona, in the year 563 A. D. Columba and his companions erected a small chapel, a portion of which still remains, being built into the walls of the large cathedral, which is now an interesting ruin. Columba was filled with the missionary spirit of the Apostle Paul, and went from house to house and from kingdom to kingdom, proclaiming the Glad Tidings of salvation. Presently he had the gratification of seeing the king of the Picts embrace the religion of Christ, as well as very many of the people. A school of theology was founded in Iona, for the training of missionary preachers. There was no sacerdotalism here, nor salvation by works.

Columba taught that the Holy Spirit alone made a servant of God. When the youths of Caledonia assembled around these holy ministers, they were taught such truths as these: 'The holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith.' 'Throw aside all merit of works, and look for salvation to Christ alone.' 'Beware of a religion that consists of outward observances. It is better to keep the heart pure before God than to abstain from meats.' 'Christ alone is the Head of the Church.' 'Bishops and presbyters are one and the same. They should be the husbands of one wife, and keep their children in subjection.'

"The presbyters of Iona knew no such doctrine as transubstantiation or confession to a priest, or purgatory or prayers for the dead, or the celibacy of the clergy. They used no lighted candles or incense in their worship."

### **FACTS ABOUT THE REFORMATION**

It was not until Papacy became thoroughly established, in the sixth and seventh centuries, that professed Christianity in these islands became subject to the Roman See. England's break with Rome occurred in the early part of the sixteenth century under Henry VIII. However, this break with the Papacy constituted no part of the great Reformation movement of those times. "No one who knows anything of history will give Henry VIII the credit of being a true reformer, much less 'the father of the English Reformation.' It was simply a coincidence that Henry VIII sat on the throne of England when the reformers and the Romish hierarchy measured swords with each other--the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, with the authority of the Pope. However, Henry's quarrel with the Pope is a matter of history; and although it was not either the cause or the completion of the Reformation, yet it no doubt hastened the rupture that forever separated England from Rome. It certainly was a powerful instrumentality in exposing the hollowness and duplicity of the Papal court, and in preparing the English people to shake off that religious superstition which constrained them to reverence and cling to the Church of their fathers, notwithstanding its known departure from the teaching and practice of Christ and the Apostles."



It was the bishops of Henry VIII that did all in their power to stamp out the revival of primitive Christianity and love for God's Holy Word. Henry VIII supported them in this unholy war against the Gospel. "God, by His Word and Spirit was raising up in England a spiritual Church, before He broke the fetters that bound her to Rome. . . . The scholars of Oxford and Cambridge must receive the crown of martyrdom the baptism of blood; for 'except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.' . . . Garret, and Dallaber, and Clark, and Fryth, and many others were thrown into prison, for that which is a monstrous crime in the eyes of Papacy--reading and circulating the Word of God.

"The same mercy was meted out to the scholars of Cambridge. Bilney, Latimer, Stafford, Barnes and their friends were pounced upon; but most of them had time to conceal their books before the agents of Wolsey arrived, and thus obtained a short breathing time. . . . The Sacred Scriptures were placed under the ban. The clergy declared that they contained a pestilent poison. On the 24th October, 1526, the Bishop of London enjoined his archdeacons to seize all copies of the New Testament in English. And the Archbishop of Canterbury issued an injunction against all books containing any particle of the New Testament. Such was the treatment that the words of Christ and the Apostles received at the hands of that organization which arrogantly claims to be the true Christian and Apostolic Church. But Rome had a stronger power to fight against than the scholars and teachers of Oxford and Cambridge. God was on their side; and He would see that His Word should have free course and be glorified. Faster than they could destroy the New Testament, new editions poured in from the Continent. And thus, in defiance of the king and the clergy, the good seed of the Word was disseminated throughout the land.

"But a more determined effort was to be made to suppress the Word of God. At the meeting of Convocation, in November, 1520, the Bible, and a number of books by Tyndale, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Fryth, and others, were proscribed. It was declared to be unlawful for the laity to read the Bible in their mother tongue. It was classed among heretical books; and Henry issued a proclamation that no one should keep any heretical book in his house. How, then, can it be said that he was the patron and father of the Reformation.

"Before the close of 1531, Bilney, Bayfield and many others, for the single offense of possessing God's Word, by the authority of Henry VIII, cruelly perished at the stake."

## **TWO GREAT STRUGGLES**

From Henry VIII, who died in 1547, down to the eighteenth century, there was witnessed two great struggles. There was first the struggle between Catholic and Protestant governmental ascendancy, and next the struggle between Presbyterian forms of Church government and those of the Anglican or Episcopal. In both of these struggles Catholics and Protestants vied with each other as persecutors. In the midst of the religio-political struggles, there arose a body of independents, who objected to both the Presbyterian and Anglican doctrines and Church government. These discussions were more matters of politics, but served to enlighten the world of the necessity of a separation of Church and State. The spiritual condition amongst professed Christians when the eighteenth century opened was at a low ebb.

"Great occasions usually make great men; and it is no less true that in the good providence of God, great men--men of noble purpose and brave heart--are raised up for great and trying occasions. Such men as a rule have no

direct successors; and after they pass away there is usually a dearth of true disinterested greatness. Among the Nonconformists there was but little inducement for capable men to devote themselves to the ministry. There was no certainty that any extended sphere of usefulness would be open to them. The one thing to which they could look forward with certainty was the unmitigated opposition and abuse of the High-Church party, both in Church and State. . . Of the spiritual deadness of the Church, and the lack of zeal and earnestness among the clergy at this time, Bishop Burnet says, writing in 1708, 'I have lamented during my whole life that I saw so little true zeal among our clergy.' . . . Addressing the clergy, he adds, 'Without a visible alteration in this you will fall under a universal contempt and lose both the credits and fruits of your ministry.' . . .

"A brilliant galaxy of literary men had indeed endeavored to stem the terrible tide of corruption and ungodliness, which threatened to destroy every sentiment of religion, and even the very instincts of humanity. Addison, in chaste and elegant language, pleaded ably for the much neglected Christian virtues, and did something toward regenerating public taste and morals. Berkeley, with cogent logic and most fascinating language, made a vigorous onslaught upon the subtle skepticism of the Freethinkers. Samuel Johnson rose in the might of his great intellectual strength against every form of irreligion and false doctrine. They were manly teachers of a sound morality; and in all honor to them for the part they performed in exposing the vices of their day, in reforming public morals, and in refining literary taste."

### **OTHERS WHOM GOD RAISED UP**

However, something more than sound moral teaching was needed. There must be spiritual life. And this greatest of all gifts, that always distinguishes true Christianity from false, must come through the power of the Spirit of God and the Word of God. The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ can only arouse the people and reach their hearts, when preached with the convincing power of the Divine Spirit. There can never be any real reformation of life produced without the preaching of the Word of the Gospel, being accompanied by the demonstration of the Spirit. The names that are more closely associated with the revival of true evangelical Christianity in the eighteenth century are those of John and Charles Wesley, and their eloquent and enthusiastic co-laborer, George Whitefield. John Wesley's ancestors were men who were in the front rank of the true reformation and suffered for their loyalty to Christ. The great revival of true piety and godliness that occurred in this the eighteenth century, had a very humble and small beginning. "Four earnest young men, desiring to maintain a closer walk with God, while pursuing their studies at Oxford, met daily for prayer and the study of God's Word. Two of the members of the 'Holy Club,' as they were called, were Charles and John Wesley. They commenced to meet in 1729. In a few years they were joined by James Hervey, George Whitefield, and several others. The term 'Methodist,' which had been previously used to designate certain religious sects, was first applied to them in jest by a fellow-student, and may have been suggested by their strict, methodical lives.

"The members of the Holy Club gave themselves up to quiet meditation and prayer, fasting, labors of love, such as visiting the sick and those in prison and reading to poor families the precious Word of God. They pondered over the marvelous pages of Thomas a Kempis, which filled them with holy longings to imitate Christ. Whitefield and the Wesleys were also powerfully affected by the study of Law's 'Serious Call,' and Jeremy Taylor's 'Holy Living and Dying.' As yet, however, they had not found peace with God, and had no assurance of being 'accepted in the Beloved.' They had not felt the quickening touch of the Divine Spirit regenerating their lives, and giving them power in service. This precious experience was still in the future."

'It was not until after a visit to America, which took place in October, 1735, that the Wesleys experienced what we may Scripturally term the begetting of the Holy Spirit. "During a severe storm at sea, they were greatly moved at the calm behavior of a number of Moravians, who, in the midst of the great danger and seeming near prospect of death, betrayed no signs of fear, but with perfect composure continued singing their hymns of faith and trust. John Wesley asked them if the women and children were not afraid, and received the beautiful answer, 'No; our women and children are not afraid to die.' Although he had believed in Jesus as the Savior of men, yet he had not been saved from fear. He knew nothing as yet of the precious doctrine of union to Christ and being safe in Him."

The historian says that "their mission to America was a failure for the simple reason that they were not fully equipped for service. It was under the influence of the Moravians in London, in May, 1738, that Charles and John Wesley found peace and joy through simple faith in the sinner's Savior. And with peace came a gracious sense of pardon and power for service. What Patrick and Columba, Wycliffe and Huss, Tyndale and Latimer, Luther, Calvin, and Knox were to the respective Churches of their day--great centers of spiritual life and evangelical teaching--that were the Wesleys and Whitefield of the eighteenth century. The Church ever since their time has been richer, and brighter, and better for their earnest, loving ministry, and for their efforts to lift up professing Christians above mere forms, and ceremonies, and doctrines, into conscious fellowship with Christ, and a holy, happy, consecrated life."

## **A CONVENTION OF THE JOYFUL PEOPLE**

MUCH of what was recently reported in these pages of the Providence Convention applies equally well to the gathering of the brethren at St. Louis, October 20-22. The fellowship was indeed precious. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." (Psa. 89:15.) We know of no convention of the brethren that better illustrated this text than the one at St. Louis. It was a joyful, meeting of happy people. Not merely did the association conduce to happiness, but all were happy as New Creatures before they came, and merely increased their joys by their fellowship there with the Lord and with one another.

Some in attendance perhaps realized more fully than others the blessedness of this occasion, for in their home surroundings some are isolated and alone so far as spiritual fellowship is concerned, and do not have the advantage of regular meetings with brethren of like precious faith.

All present seemed to realize very keenly why they had come together. They were constrained and drawn by the greatest and most precious of all bonds--that of Love Divine. No earthly family reunion can compare with the gathering of the Lord's family and their loving interest in each other's welfare. All seemed to feel that, so much the more, as they see the Day approaching, they should seek to avail themselves of every means of grace--to draw near to the Lord and to one another for mutual help, and comfort. The discourses, too, served to direct the thoughts of the friends toward the great things that pertain to our Heavenly Calling and that of winning the Divine approval.

The fact that the gathering at St. Louis could not be counted by the hundreds or thousands did not detract any whatever from the blessedness of the fellowship. The friends were reminded that the Lord is doing "His strange work" in this Age. He is seeking for a choice company who willingly bow to all the terms and conditions of

discipleship, and who, at the cost of all they hold dear, are willing to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. The number of such saintly characters never has been large; and may it not be that we have approached that period in the Age when the number of such is growing smaller instead of larger? At any rate, we have the words of the Master--"Fear not, *little flock*; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom."

Again at St. Louis we had occasion for encouragement in the testimony that was given on behalf of the public. Upwards of one hundred strangers were present at the Sunday afternoon meeting, which had been advertised. The excellent attention given to the discourse, on the theme, "Beyond the Grave," clearly revealed that there are many anxious hearts who are seeking consolation and are hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Many expressed themselves at the close of the meeting as much interested in the message they had heard.

As the brethren were together at St. Louis they felt sure they had the prayers and earnest wishes of others of the happy people, who also would have been present had the Lord's providence permitted. In the prayers and testimonies the Lord's dear family everywhere were remembered, and petitions were repeatedly offered that our Heavenly Shepherd would continually guide and protect and richly bless all of His faithful flock.

## **IS THE APOCALYPSE A JEWISH OR CHRISTIAN PROPHECY? - PART II**

### **CONSECRATED CHRISTIANS, SAINTS, THE CHURCH, THE BRIDE-ALL ONE CLASS**

AGAIN, St. John speaks of himself as a brother and companion in tribulation of those who are addressed: "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." (1:9.) Who can believe that St. John was speaking of the Jews as his brothers! It is difficult to understand how any one can so construe the statement. At the time he wrote, the Apostle was suffering tribulation because of his loyalty to his Master, Christ. The same was true at this time (which was the time that Pagan Rome began its persecution) of many others whom he addressed, as history records. How appropriate, then, are his words! St. John was speaking as a Christian confessor at this time (not a confessor of the Jewish religion), as the words, that follow show: "I John, . . . was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for *the testimony of Jesus Christ.*"

Again, in chapter 6, under the fifth Seal, we have a symbolic vision having reference to martyrs, of whom it is said that they were "slain for the Word of God, and the testimony which they held." This evidently means that they were slain for confessing their *Christian faith*; in other words, like St. John, they suffered because they were Christians.

In chapter 7, under the sixth Seal, there is presented to us a company in heaven, of whom it is said, they came out of great tribulation. These were not Jews, for it is stated that they were gathered out from "every nation and kindred and tongue." It is also said of them that "they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Unquestionably these were Christian martyrs, also.

In the eighth chapter mention is made of "the prayers of all saints," and "the prayers of saints." Prayers ascend from supplicants on earth; and "saints" in New Testament language means *Christians*. "We have no right in the last book of the New Testament to revert to the Old Testament signification of this word. Let the general tone of John's Gospel and Epistles be recalled, and his choice of *this* word [saint] to designate true Christians, in the midst of an ungodly world, and falsely professing church, will be felt to be in beautiful harmony. What is the grand distinction made in John's Epistles between true Christians and those who are not? It is *holiness, saintship*. 'If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.' . . .

"Such language shows that in the eyes of St. John, practical purity and holiness, *saintliness*, is the grand characteristic of Christians. When, therefore, we find *him* consistently designating a certain body by the distinctive appellation of 'the saints,' we conclude that those so called are *true Christians*, in opposition to the ungodly or to false professors. Where does John ever apply such a term to Jews? Where in the whole New Testament can the term be found so applied? Why then should we assert that it is applied to Jews here? Paul uses it forty-three times, and in every case as a synonym for Christians. Luke uses it four times in the Acts, and Jude twice in his epistle, in the same sense; in fact, only once is it used in any equivocal sense in the whole New Testament. ('Many bodies of the saints which slept arose.'--Matt. 27:52.)

"We observe these 'saints,' who are thirteen times mentioned in the Apocalypse, doing and bearing exactly what we know from other Scriptures the saints of the Christian Church must do and bear in this dispensation. We find them watching, waiting, praying, enduring tribulation (chap. 13:10), resting in heaven (chap. 14:12, 13), and at last manifested as the Bride of Christ, and as the 'armies which were in heaven,' clad under both emblems, with the 'fine linen clean and white, which is the righteousness of saints;' we find them associated with the martyrs of *Jesus* (chap. 17: 6), a clear proof that they cannot be Jewish saints.

### **CALLED, CHOSEN, AND FAITHFUL WALK THE NARROW WAY**

"In short, so far from the Church being actually and exclusively in heaven, at the commencement of the prophetic drama of this book, *she is seen on earth during the entire course*. She is seen *collectively* under various symbols, such as the one hundred and forty-four thousand, the two witnesses, the sun-clad woman, the armies of heaven, the New Jerusalem; and her members are seen *severally* as 'the saints.' They are seen first in their sufferings, and then in their glory; first slain for Jesus' sake, then enthroned beside Him. Can it be questioned that the saints who pray, and wait, and suffer, and die as martyrs of Jesus, are the *same* saints, the 'called and chosen, and faithful,' who are seen with the Lord afterwards, as His Bride, and as His white-robed followers? If they are *not*, the unity of the book is gone, it becomes an incomprehensible confusion. If the saints who form the Bride of the Lamb in chapter 19, are not the saints who in the previous chapters witnessed for Him in life and in death, then the lesson written most legibly on the pages of prophecy,--the lesson that, in spite of ignorance and obscurity, the Church in all ages has learned from it, the truth that sustained millions of martyrs in their protracted sufferings and cheered them in their dying agonies,--the truth with which this prophecy seems instinct, '*If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him,*' is utterly obliterated from its pages! The suffering 'saints' get no reward; and the happy, blessed Bride, rises not from a surging sea of sorrow and suffering to the joy of her Lord's embrace, and the glory of His throne. One of the great morals of the book is gone, as well as its dramatic *unity*. . . .

"This system of interpretation involves, besides, a logical inconsistency. The Bride is the Christian Church; her raiment *identifies* her with the previously mentioned 'saints,' and the 'saints' [this wrong interpretation says] are a Jewish remnant.\*

"The only way of avoiding the force of this argument is, to deny that the Bride of the Lamb, is the Church; for it is evident that the Bride is identical with the saints, and it is evident also, that the saints are on earth, during the whole course of the book. Those who are resolved to prove that the Church is *not* represented on earth in these visions, must therefore not only deny that the saints *are* the Church, but seeing the saints are identical with the Bride, must also *deny that the Bride is the Church*; . . . and many Futurists are to be found, who actually *do* deny this. . . .

\*The future existence of a Jewish remnant is not denied, though their history and experience are mapped out by a certain school of prophetic interpreters, far more definitely than by the Word of God. That the remnant or remainder of the Jewish nation, will be restored to Palestine, before the Millennium, brought there into great trouble, and prepared by it to say, 'Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, that Christ will appear for their deliverance, and that they will be converted at the sight of Him, this much seems clear from Scripture. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance, and He has not cast away His people whom He foreknew."

"The Bride of Christ a Jewish remnant! It is then of the Jewish remnant that the Apostle Paul speaks in Ephesians 5; it is of the Jewish remnant that Eve and Rebecca and others . . . are types. It is of a Jewish remnant that Paul says, 'I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ!' . . .

"Let it be granted, then, that, fulfilling all these types from Eden downward, and realizing all the figures of most intimate association and union which language can convey,--the vine and the branches, the head and the members, the bridegroom and the bride,--the white-robed saintly bride of Revelation 19, is the Church of the redeemed and we claim that without all contradiction, *the Church is on earth during the action of the Apocalypse, and that therefore the Apocalypse is a Christian prophecy, fulfilled in the Christian era.*"

### **IS THE APOCALYPSE A SEALED BOOK?**

"Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."--Rev. 22:10.

These words were spoken to St. John by the angel who was the agent employed to show him the visions of the future glory of the suffering saints. He saw illustrated the words of St. Paul: "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him." The witnessing, suffering saints of the Gospel Age, who were seen by St. John in the visions all through the Apocalyptic drama, were now observed by him as the Bride of the Lamb, reigning with Him. They had "filled up that which was behind of the sufferings of Christ." The words, "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand," were uttered by the revealing angel at the close of the prophetic visions. The meaning and deep significance of the words are very strongly emphasized when considered in connection with the words of the heavenly messenger to the Prophet Daniel with respect to certain visions relating to events then future: "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the



time of the end. . . And he said, Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end." (Dan. 12:4, 9.) In the case of Daniel, it was, Seal the words *until "the time of the end"*; in the case of St. John it was the very reverse--"Seal not the words of the prophecy of this book: *for the time is at hand.*"

To most minds, these words of the revealing angel to St. John would be a sufficient answer to the question, Are the Apocalyptic prophecies sealed? The answer would be, No. Unlike those of Daniel, the Apocalyptic prophecies are *not* sealed. One who holds that the Apocalypse describes events that have to do with the Jewish remnant living on the earth *after* the Church is glorified, takes the position that it has been sealed during the entire period of the Gospel Age. His words are:

"The book is called a 'Revelation,' and one would naturally think that it would be so plain that a wayfaring man though a fool, need not err in understand it, because to 'reveal' a thing is to make it known and understandable. Furthermore, the command was distinctly given: 'Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book.' (22:10.) How then shall we explain the fact that the book is not generally understood, but on the other hand, seems to be more tightly locked than any of the other prophecies? I believe that the explanation of this enigma lies in the statement found in chapter 1:10, that when this Revelation was given to John on Patmos, he was 'in the spirit on the Lord's day.' Here, then, is where the Book will be really what it claims to be. It will then be a revelation, when the day of the Lord arrives. The day of the Lord stands in contrast to man's day. See I Cor. 4:3, margin; or Diaglott."

We cite this statement because it is a fair illustration of the extreme Futurist view.

### **ONLY SAINTS UNDERSTAND MYSTERIES OF KINGDOM**

In reply to the statement that because "the book is called a revelation, one would naturally think that it would be so plain that a wayfaring man though a fool need not err in understanding it," there is this to be said: We have not yet reached the time when the Word of God--His Revelation of Truth--is plain and clear to all humanity. The revelation of Divine truth is reserved for only the faithful in this Age. Indeed, both the Scriptures and the facts of history teach that only a very few who have read the Scriptures up to the present time have come to understand the purposes of God as contained in them. The Savior settled once and for all this matter when He said to His disciples: "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand." (Mark 4:11, 12.) And furthermore, the recorded prayer of our Savior teaches the same thing--"I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."--Matt. 11:25.

We will examine first the words of the revealing angel: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book." It is observed that it is the *prophetic* portion of the book that is specially referred to in these words. The book is by Christ divided into three parts, as we read: "Write the things *which thou hast* seen, and the things *which are*, and the things *which shall be hereafter.*"--Rev. 1:19.



The things which St. John saw, which he was to write, are thus mentioned: "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, *I saw seven golden Candlesticks; and in the midst of the seven Candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man,*" etc.--Rev. 1:12, 13.

The "*things which are,*" that is,, the things which *were* in St. John's day, have reference to the conditions that existed in the seven Churches of Asia, which conditions are described most fully in chapters two and three.

The things "*which shall be hereafter,*" are those which were symbolically represented by the sealed Scroll seen by St. John in the Throne vision, in the hands of the One seated on the Throne, recorded in chapters four and five, as we read: "After this [that is, after St. John had seen the vision of the Son of Man walking in the midst of the seven Candlesticks, and had been instructed to write the messages to the seven Churches] I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee *things which must be hereafter.*"

### **THE APOCALYPSE UNSEALED BY OUR LORD**

We thus see that as the messages to the seven Churches, describing "*the things that are*"--the conditions existing in the seven Churches--*were preceded by a vision of the Son of Man walking amidst the seven Candlesticks,* likewise, we have the vision of "*the things which shall be hereafter*" beginning in chapter six, preceded by the Throne vision, of chapters four and five. The prophetic portion of the Apocalypse *begins*, then, with the vision of the Lamb unsealing the Scroll. (See 6:1, 2.) This vision conclusively shows that the Apocalypse was unsealed over eighteen hundred years ago. It should be kept in mind that this vision of chapters four and five is an entirely new one, and was designed as a fitting introduction to the prophetic portion of the Book, just as the vision of the Son of Man, walking in the midst of the Candlesticks, was a fitting introduction to the messages to the seven Churches. The great central truth taught in this vision is very simple, and easy to be understood by those of God's servants who diligently seek to know its meaning. Briefly stated, leaving out the details, the vision that St. John saw was this:

(1) "A Throne set in Heaven."

(2) "In the right hand of Him that sat on the Throne [was held] a Book [Scroll], written within and on the backside, *sealed* with seven Seals."

(3) An angel is heard by St. John proclaiming with a loud voice: "Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seven Seals?" St. John relates that for some time no response was heard, and that he wept, supposing that no one was found able to loose the Seals.

(4) And while St. John was weeping, one of the Elders besought him to weep not, "for, behold: the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven Seals thereof."

(5) Then St. John beheld in the vision a Lamb that seemed to have been slain, whom he doubtless recognized as representing the Savior, the Lord Jesus.

(6) He then beheld in the vision this Lamb come up to the Throne and receive the Book from the Occupant of the Throne.

(7) After great rejoicing on the part of the numerous other symbolic personages of the vision, St. John beheld the Lamb break the Seals, one after another, and also witnessed certain interesting transactions in connection with the loosing of each one of the Seals until the complete Scroll was exposed to his view.

The interpretation, stated briefly, seems clearly to be this: That it represented our Lord Jesus being given a full, complete knowledge of the purposes of God the Father. If we can discover when this knowledge was revealed to Him, we will be enabled to locate the particular time in the history of our Lord Jesus to which this part of the vision relates. It could not have been at His consecration at Jordan, for the reason that while wonderful things were revealed to Him at that time, we know that He did not have a complete knowledge of the unfolding of God's purposes and plans. He Himself, just before He was rejected and went to the Cross, said that He was ignorant of the time of His Second Advent. Neither could it have been at the time St. John beheld the vision, about the close of the first century. The time when our Lord received this knowledge was very evidently when he proved Himself worthy. This He did when He had finished His sacrifice at Calvary. His resurrection from the dead by the Father was a demonstration of His worthiness, and it was at this time that "all power was given to Him in heaven and in earth." All power would of necessity include all knowledge of the Heavenly Father's purposes. The sealed Scroll represented those revelations not known at that time by the Savior. The receiving of the Scroll would represent His receiving this revelation. This occurred over nineteen hundred years ago. It is very evident that the "sayings of the words of this prophecy" were no longer hidden to Him, therefore unsealed.

### **TO SHEW UNTO HIS SERVANTS**

The object of making these things known to Him is stated to be "to shew unto His servants things which must shortly [at that time] come to pass." The words of the Savior in this connection are very significant as elucidating this statement; "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15.) "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come. . . . he will shew you things to come."--John 16:13.

In the visions of the Apocalypse St. John represents the Church. His seeing the visions represents the Church seeing the fulfilment of them. The words: "to shew unto His servants things that must shortly come to pass," as also the words: "Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter," plainly teach that the prophetic visions are open for the Church's study. Not, however, that they would be understood all at once, but gradually, a little at a time, as the events of the Church's history unveiled their meaning. This vision of chapters four and five explains most fully and clearly the opening verse of the Apocalypse, in the light of which we are enabled to read it thus:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ [symbolized by the Scroll seen in the right hand of Him who sat on the Throne], which God [the One on the Throne] gave unto Him [symbolized by the Lamb receiving the Scroll], to shew

unto His servants the things which must shortly come to pass [the things symbolized by the sealed Scroll--the prophecies of this Book]; and He sent and signified it [made it known by signs or symbols] by His angel unto His servant John [a special servant]."

We briefly sum up our answer to the question, Is the Apocalypse a sealed book:

(1) God gave to Christ an understanding of all the prophecies of this book. This occurred after His resurrection, before His ascension to heaven.

(2) Christ gave, or caused St. John to see, all the visions that were represented in this sealed Scroll, over sixty years after.

(3) St. John, according to Divine instructions, wrote these visions and gave them to the Church at that time.

(4) The visions themselves have been in the possession of the Church ever since that time.

(5) St. John, seeing the visions represented by the things in the sealed Scroll gradually, a little at a time, represents the Church seeing the fulfilment as history has unveiled their meaning.

(6) They have therefore been unsealed, that is, open for the Church's study since they were given.

(7) The Church is very specially exhorted to read or hear the words of this prophecy, and is promised a blessing in so doing. The reason for this is that "the time is [was *then*] at hand."

(8) The facts of history show that some of the Lord's servants all down through the Age have read, and of course studied, the visions; and the results of their studies have been published and they show a gradual, progressive understanding of them up to the present time; therefore the visions have been unsealed, that is, they have been open for study ever since St. John's day, and more or less clearly understood.

While it is true that God's servants are not *commanded* to study the Revelation of Christ, it is undoubtedly true that those who have, in the proper attitude of mind and heart, heeded the encouraging and persuasive words of the Savior to read or hear it read, have received the blessing promised. Furthermore, it is most reasonable to suppose that to receive any blessing whatsoever, at least a measure of understanding is required and therefore given.

*(Continued in next issue)*

**JESUS THE GREAT MISSIONARY**

## **--NOVEMBER 26--LUKE 8--**

*Golden Text.--"The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost."--Luke 19:10.*

IT is to this period of our Lord's earlier ministry that those mission journeys belong-- those circuits through the towns and villages of Galilee, teaching, and preaching and performing works of mercy--which are so frequently alluded to in the first three Gospels, and which are specially mentioned at this point of the narrative by the Evangelist St. Luke. "He walked in Galilee." Let us in imagination, stand aside and see Him pass, and so, with all humility and reverence, set before us as vividly as we can what manner of man He was.

St. Luke tells us that when Jesus saw Himself, surrounded by a great multitude out of every city, He spake by a parable. We learn from two other Evangelists the interesting circumstance that this was the first occasion on which He taught in parables, and that they were spoken to the multitude who lined the shore while our Lord sat in the boat which was kept for Him on the Lake.

The great mass of hearers must now have been aware of the general features in the new Gospel which Jesus preached. Some self-examination, some earnest careful thought of their own was now requisite, if they were indeed sincere in their desire to profit by His words. "Take heed how ye hear," was the great lesson which He would now impress.

And, therefore, to show them that the only true fruit of good teaching is holiness of life, and that there were many dangers which might prevent its growth, He told them His first parable, the Parable of the Sower. The imagery of it was derived, as usual, from the objects immediately before His eyes--the sown fields of Gennesaret; the springing corn in them; the hard-trodden paths which ran through them, on which no corn could grow; the innumerable birds which fluttered over them ready to feed upon the grain; the weak and withering struggle for life on the stony places; the tangling growth of luxuriant thistles in neglected corners; the deep loam of the general soil, on which already the golden ears stood thick and strong, giving promise of a sixty and hundredfold return as they rippled under the balmy wind. To us, who have read the parable side by side with Christ's own interpretation of it, the meaning is singularly clear and plain, and we see in it the liveliest images of the danger incurred by the cold and indifferent, by the impulsive and shallow, by the worldly and ambitious, by the pre-occupied and the luxurious, as they listen to the Word of God. But it was not so easy to those who heard it. Even the disciples failed to catch its full significance, although they reserved their request for an explanation till they and their Master should be alone.

### **GREAT LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER**

The good seed of the parable is the Word of God, the Truth, even as false teaching, human philosophies and doctrines of devils, are not wheat-seed but tareseed; our Lord is not showing in this parable what will be the result of sowing good or bad seed, but merely that the good seed can accomplish its work only in certain classes of hearts.

The class of heart that is like the "wayside," solid and compact with selfishness, not open and generous, is very unfavorable ground for the Truth; nothing need be expected from such ground. The sower will let as little as

possible fall on such, but whatever does fall upon it the Adversary will soon take away. "Wayside" hearers are not necessarily bad people in the sense of grossly wicked, but they are bad in the sense of being unsuited to the Lord's present work and call, They will need to have the furrow run through them again and again, that troubles of various kinds may make them more generous, more open, more ready for the message. But in many instances the Lord will not run the plowshare of truth through such soil in this present age; rather, He will leave it for the Millennial Age, when He will be dealing, not only with these hearts that were partially prepared and which have become suitable, but when also He will have a work to do with the great masses of mankind, which, like the virgin forests and prairies of earth are yet uncleared, unplowed and unbroken. The great time of trouble at the beginning of the Millennial Age will be a time, we believe, in which the Lord will run the plowshare of truth in every direction throughout the world, as it is written "The plowman shall follow close after the reaper." (Amos 9:13.) And, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9), and thus be prepared for the new sowing time of the New Age, under circumstances more favorable in some respects than the present, though less favorable in other respects.

Another class upon which the same good truth falls at the present time is one that has a good appearance upon the surface--fine soil, etc., but underneath, and but a few inches from the surface, is rock. The soil on the surface is but a veneer to hide the rock; it has the appearance of depth of character, sympathy and love, but this is merely a deception. Civilized customs have popularized at least an outward imitation of the graces of the Holy Spirit, and appearances of good heartedness, but down below in the real heart and intention is selfishness, that would merely follow the ways of righteousness because of popularity or because of some hoped-for gain, but thoroughly unable to appreciate self-sacrifice for anything or anybody. This class of shallow characters sometimes receives the truth with avidity, with joy, and seems to contain some of the truth's most enthusiastic followers; but this is merely for a little while, because of novelty or pride to show off, and not from love of the truth. The selfishness which is the substratum of their character will not permit them to endure hardness for the truth's sake. Consequently, as soon as they find that with the truth always goes something of persecution and tribulation they are surprised, thoroughly disheartened, and all their interest speedily dies out. This class has no hope for the Kingdom either. They are not of the kind that the sower expects will yield a crop to maturity in the present Harvest.

### **THAT ON THORNY GROUND**

The third class of hearers favored by the truth in this present time is referred to by our Lord as "thorny ground." This does not mean poor ground, for the thorns are to be found in the very best of ground, especially the thorns of Palestine, to which our Lord undoubtedly had reference. Of these Prof. Thomson says, "These thorns are not briar bushes or brambles, but are an after-growth of a variety of thistles, which come up quickly in every wheat-field of Palestine." We may say, then, that every Christian who receives the wheat or Word of God into a good and honest heart during this Gospel Age is in danger of having it choked with the thorns, and of thus becoming one of the class referred to in the parable, a class that was favored, that had every advantage, but which brought forth no crop worth gathering, because the thorns took possession of it to such an extent as to choke out the wheatseed.

We have heard Christian people describe the thorns which threaten the good seed in the hearts of God's people to be theatres, card-playing, carousals, etc., but this is a great mistake; the hearts that are beset with such things are probably not good ground in any sense of the word, and probably have never received the good seed. But how reasonable is the interpretation which our Lord Himself gives--the thorns are the cares of this life and the

deceitfulness of riches just exactly what every Christian realizes. The cares of this life are not gross immoralities, but the home duties, family cares, business cares, etc. The deceitfulness of riches is not merely the baneful influence which is exercised upon those who possess riches, but especially it represents the snares, the difficulties, the entanglements, the misleadings of efforts to become rich. How many Christian people can testify that their spirituality, their love for the Lord and for the truth and for the Kingdom have been choked in great measure by wealth-coveting and wealth-seeking! How many can testify that the cares of this life have crowded out their fellowship with the Lord, and the power of His Word in their hearts, and how as a result their lives are barren, unfruitful of anything in the way of character development, service of God and for the "brethren" and others.

What can such as realize that thorns are growing in their hearts and choking the Word of the Lord do to get rid of them? How can they overcome this difficulty of permitting the cares of this life to absorb their time, their talents, their influence? How can they get rid of the false allurements and attractions of riches? How can they become fruitful toward God in good works, in riches of grace in their hearts and characters, in riches of the knowledge of the Divine Word and Plan?

It is a difficult matter to get rid of these thorns, if they spring up and get well under way after we have received the wheat, and it will probably be a slow and tedious business to root them out; and one in which we could not hope at all for success by ourselves, unaided. All such must go to the Lord Himself for the aid which He alone can give, and the method and process by which the Lord will assist them will be in the transforming of their minds so that they will mind not earthly things but heavenly things, set their affections on things above, not on things beneath, set their affections upon true riches of the Divine nature and high calling, instead of on earthly riches, which are but transitory and unsatisfactory, even if attained.--Matt. 6:19-21.

And the way to effect this transforming of the mind, this uprooting of the thorns, is to draw time and attention away from the earthly things in a compulsory manner, limiting the time that we will give to earthly things, and devoting more and more time to spiritual interests in our own hearts and in the hearts of our families and friends. This will mean more time for the study and practice of the truth; and as the truth comes in it will be found to be the sanctifying power of God which alone can uproot the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, and keep our hearts in the right attitude to bear much fruit to our Master's praise.

### **THE "GOOD GROUND"**

The "good ground" hearers are those whose hearts are in good condition, ready for the Word of the Lord, plowed and furrowed by experiences. This class, free from thorns, is ready to bring forth an abundant harvest, and yet even of this class all may not yield the same amount of fruitage to our Master's sowing, for He represents that some will bring forth thirty, some sixty, and some an hundredfold. He does not speak slightly of those which bring forth but the thirtyfold but leaves it to us to discern that those who bring forth the hundredfold are the most pleasing in His sight. We have much to do with this matter of the amount of fruitage which we yield to the Lord; it will be measured by the degree of our zeal, our love for Him; consequently the class bringing forth the hundredfold represents, those Christians who love the Lord the most fervently, whose hearts are warmest for Him, His truth and His people. The Apostle Paul was undoubtedly one of this hundredfold class, the Apostle Peter was another, and no doubt there have been many in humble positions unknown to fame, whose love for the Lord, and zeal for His cause have been counted to them as hundredfold



return for every seed of truth they received. Let us each with more and more care seek to bring forth much fruit, and as one means to this end let us seek to keep down the thorns and everything that would choke or hinder the influence of the truth in our hearts, in our daily lives, and in our words. Let us cultivate the seed and not the thorns.

A method of instruction so rare, so stimulating, so full of interest--a method which, in its unapproachable beauty and finish, stands unrivalled in the annals of human speech--would doubtless tend to increase beyond measure the crowds that thronged to listen to our Lord's words. And through the sultry afternoon He continued to teach them, barely succeeding in dismissing them when the evening was come. (Mark 4:35.) A sense of complete weariness and deep unspeakable longing for repose, and solitude, and sleep, seems then to have come over our Lord's spirit. Possibly the desire for rest and quiet may have been accelerated by an endeavor of His mother and His brethren to assert a claim upon His actions. They had not indeed been able "to come to Him for the press." After dismissing the crowd, the disciples took him, "as *He* was," in the boat. He yearned for the quiet and deserted loneliness of the eastern shore. The western shore also is lonely now; but the eastern shore is loneliness itself. In our Lord's time the contrast of this thinly-inhabited region with the busy and populous towns that lay close together on the Plain of Gennesaret must have been very striking; and though the scattered population of Perea was partly Gentile, we shall find Him not unfrequently seeking to recover the tone and calm of His burdened soul by putting those six miles of water between Himself and the crowds He taught.

### **"JESUS SAVIOR PILOT ME"**

The little vessel spread, her sails for the voyage. Yet even now Jesus was, as it were, pursued by followers, for, as St. Mark again tells us, "other little ships were with Him." But they, in all probability--since we are not told of their reaching the other shore--were soon scattered or frightened back by the signs of a gathering storm. At any rate, in His own boat, and among His own trusted disciples, Jesus could rest undisturbed, and long before they were far from shore, had lain His weary head to rest and was sleeping the deep sleep of the worn and weary--the calm sleep of those who are at peace with God.

Even that sleep, so sorely needed, was destined to speedy and violent disturbance. One of the fierce storms peculiar to that deep hollow in the earth's surface swept down with sudden fury on the little inland sea. With scarcely a moment's notice, the air was filled with whirlwind and the sea buffeted into tempest. The danger was extreme. The boat was again and again buried amid the foam of the breakers which burst over it; yet though they must have covered Him with their dashing spray as He lay on the open deck at the stern, He was calmly sleeping on--undisturbed, so deep was His fatigue, by the tempestuous darkness--and as yet no one ventured to awake Him. But now the billows were actually breaking into the boat itself, which was beginning to be filled and to sink. Then, with sudden and vehement cries of excitement and terror, the disciples woke Him. "Lord! Master! Master! Save! We perish!" Such were the wild sounds which, mingled with the howling of the winds and the dash of the mastering waves, broke confusedly upon His half-awakened ear. It is such crises as these--crises of sudden unexpected terror, met without a moment of preparation, which test a man, what spirit he is of which show not only his nerve, but the grandeur and purity of his whole nature. The hurricane which shook the tried courage and baffled the utmost skill of the hardy fishermen, did not ruffle for one instant the deep inward serenity of the Son of Man. Without one sign of confusion, without one tremor of alarm, Jesus simply arose from the dripping stern of the laboring and half-sinking vessel, and stilled the tempest of their souls by the quiet words, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?" And then, standing in all the calm of a natural majesty on the lofty stern, while the hurricane tossed, for a moment only, He gazed forth into the darkness, and His voice was



heard amid the roaring of the troubled elements, saying, "Peace! be still!" And instantly the wind dropped, and there was a great calm. And as they watched the starlight reflected on the now unrippled water, they whispered to one another, "What manner of man is this?"

### **THE DEMONIAK HEALED**

Not even on the farther shore was Jesus to find peace or rest. On the contrary, no sooner had He reached that part of Perea which is called by St. Matthew the "country of the Gergesenes," than He was met by an exhibition of human fury, and madness, and degradation, even more terrible and startling than the rage of the troubled sea. Barely had He landed when, from among the rocky cavern-tombs, there burst into His presence a man troubled with the most exaggerated form of that raging madness which was universally attributed to demoniacal possession. Attempts had been made to bind him, but in the paroxysms of his mania he had exerted that apparently supernatural strength which is often noticed in such forms of mental excitement, and had always succeeded in rending off his fetters, and twisting away or shattering his chains; and now he had been abandoned to the lonely hills and unclean solitudes which, night and day, rang with his yells as he wandered among them, dangerous to himself and to others, raving, and gashing himself with stones.

It was the frightful figure of this naked and homicidal maniac that burst upon our Lord almost as soon as He had landed at early dawn; and perhaps another demoniac, who was not a Gadarene, and who was less grievously afflicted, may have hovered about at no great distance, although, beyond this allusion to his presence, he plays no part in the narrative. The presence, the look, the voice of Christ, even before He addressed these sufferers, seems always to have calmed and overawed them, and this demoniac of Gergesa was no exception. Instead of falling upon the disciples, he ran to Jesus from a distance, and fell down before Him in an attitude of worship. Mingling his own perturbed individuality with that of the multitude of unclean spirits which he believed to be in possession of his soul, he entreated the Lord, in loud and terrified accents, not to torment him before the time.

It is well known that to recall a maniac's attention to his name, to awake his memory, to touch his sympathies by past association, often produces a lucid interval, and perhaps this may have been the reason why Jesus said to the man, "What is thy name?" But this question only receives the wild answer, "My name is Legion, for we are many." The man had, as it were, lost his own name; it was absorbed in the hideous tyranny of that multitude of demons under whose influence his own personality was destroyed. The presence of Roman armies in Palestine had rendered him familiar with that title of multitude, and as though six thousand evil spirits were in him he answers by the Latin word which had now become so familiar to every Jew. And still agitated by his own perturbed fancies, he entreats, as though the thousands of demons were speaking by his mouth, that they might not be driven into the abyss but be suffered to take refuge in the swine.

That the demoniac was healed--that in the terrible final paroxysm which usually accompanied the deliverance from this strange and awful malady, a herd of swine was in some way affected with such wild terror as to rush headlong in large numbers over a steep hillside into the waters of the lake--and that, in the minds of all who were present, including that of the sufferer himself, this precipitate rushing of the swine was connected with the man's release from his demoniac thralldom--is clear.

That the whole scene was violent and startling appears in the fact that the keepers of the swine "fled and told it in the city and in the country." The people of Gergesa, and the Gadarenes and Gerasenes of all the neighboring district, flocked out to see the Mighty Stranger who had thus visited their coasts. What livelier or more decisive proof of His power and His beneficence could they have had than the sight which met their eyes? The filthy and frantic demoniac who had been the terror of the country, so that none could pass that way--the wild-eyed dweller in the tombs who had been accustomed to gash himself with cries of rage, and whose untamed fierceness broke away all fetters--was now calm as a child. He was sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind.

### **DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT**

"And they were afraid"--more afraid of that Holy Presence than of the previous furies of the possessed. The man indeed was saved; but what of that, considering that some of their two thousand unclean beasts had perished! Their precious swine were evidently in danger. With disgraceful and urgent unanimity they entreated and implored Him to leave their coasts. Jesus Himself had taught His disciples not to give that which was holy to the dogs, neither to cast their pearls before swine, "lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." He had gone across the lake for quiet and rest, desiring, though among lesser multitudes, to extend to these semi-heathen also the blessings of the Kingdom of God. But they loved their sins and their swine, and with a perfect energy of deliberate preference for all that was base and mean, rejected such blessings, and entreated Him to go away. Sadly, but at once, He turned and left them. Gergesa was no place for Him; better the lonely hill-tops to the north of it; better the crowded strand on the other side.

And yet He did not leave them in anger. One deed of mercy had been done there; from one soul the unclean spirits had been cast out. And just as the united multitude of the Gadarenes had entreated for His absence, so the poor saved demoniac entreated henceforth to be with Him. But Jesus would fain leave one more, one last opportunity for those who had rejected Him. On others for whose sake miracles had been performed He had enjoined silence; on this man--since He was now leaving the place--He enjoined publicity "Go home," He said, "to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." And so the demoniac of Gergesa became the first great missionary to the region of Decapolis, bearing in his own person the confirmation of his words.

The events just described had happened apparently in the early morning, and it might perhaps be noon when Jesus reached once more the Plain of Gennesaret. People had recognized the sail of His returning vessel, and long before He reached land the multitudes had lined the shore, and were waiting for Him, and received Him gladly.

A ruler of the synagogue, or chief elder of the congregation, to whom the Jews looked with great respect, came to Jesus in extreme agitation. It is not improbable that this ruler of the synagogue had been one of the very deputation who had pleaded with Jesus for the centurion-proselyte by whom it had been built. If so, he knew by experience the power of Him to whom he now appealed. Flinging himself at His feet with broken words--which in the original still sound as though they were interrupted and rendered incoherent by bursts of grief--he tells Him that his little daughter, his only daughter, is dying, is dead; but still, if He will but come and lay His hand upon her, she shall live. With the tenderness which could not be deaf to a mourner's cry, Jesus rose at once and

went with him, followed not only by His disciples, but also by a dense expectant multitude, which had been witness of the scene. And as He went the people in their eagerness pressed upon Him and thronged Him.

### **"GO IN PEACE: THY FAITH HATH SAVED THEE"**

But among this throng--containing doubtless some of the Pharisees and of John's disciples with whom He had been discoursing, as well as some of the publicans and sinners with whom He had been seated at the feast--there was one who had not been attracted by curiosity to witness what would be done for the ruler of the synagogue. It was a woman who for twelve years had suffered from a distressing malady, which unfitted her for all the relationships of life, and which was peculiarly afflicting, because in the popular mind it was regarded as a direct consequence of sinful habits. In vain had she wasted her substance and done fresh injury to her health in the effort to procure relief from many different physicians (Mark 5:26), and now, as a last desperate resource, she would try what could be gained without money and without price from the Great Physician. Perhaps, in her ignorance, it was because she had no longer any reward to offer; but from whatever cause, she determined, as it were, to steal from Him, unknown, the blessing for which she longed. And so, with the strength and pertinacity of despair, she struggled in that dense throng until she was near enough to touch Him; and then, perhaps all the more violently from her extreme nervousness, she touched the border of His garment--unnoticed by others, but not by Christ. Perceiving that healing power had gone out of Him, recognizing the one magnetic touch of timid faith even amid the pressure of the crowd, He stopped and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" There was something almost impatient in the reply of Peter, as though in such a throng he thought it absurd to ask, "Who touched me?" But Jesus, His eyes still wandering over the many faces, told him that there was a difference between the crowding curiosity and the touch of faith, and as at last His glance fell on the poor woman, she, perceiving that she had erred in trying to filch the blessing which He would have graciously bestowed, came forward fearing and trembling, and, flinging herself at His feet, told Him all the truth. All her feminine shame and fear were forgotten in her desire to atone for her fault. Doubtless she dreaded His anger, for the law expressly ordained that the touch of one afflicted as she was, caused ceremonial uncleanness till the evening. But His touch had cleansed her, not her's polluted Him. Oh that the experience of all the Lord's people might be like that of the Master; that our contact with sin and evil uncleanness might not mean our defilement, but that having our hearts so filled with His spirit of holiness and purity, our association with those who are defiled might result in their purification and cleansing. So far from being indignant, He said to her, "Daughter" and at once the sound of that gracious word sealed, her pardon--"go in peace: thy faith hath saved thee; be healed from thy disease."

### **"FEAR NOT, ONLY BELIEVE"**

The incident must have caused a brief delay, and, as we have seen, to the anguish of Jairus every instant was critical. But he was not the only sufferer who had a claim on the Savior's mercy and, as he uttered no complaint, it is clear that sorrow had not made him selfish. But at this moment a messenger reached him with the brief message--"Thy daughter is dead;" and Jesus answered, "Fear not: believe only and she shall be healed."

The message had not been addressed to Jesus, but He overheard it, and with a compassionate desire to spare the poor father from needless agony, He said to him those memorable words, "Fear not, only believe." They soon arrived at his house, and found it occupied by the hired mourners, (Mark 5:38.) First stopping at the door to forbid any of the multitude to follow Him, He entered the house with three only of the inmost circle of His

Apostles--Peter, and James, and John. On entering, His first care was to still the idle noise; but His kind declaration--"The little maid is not dead, but sleepeth"--was only received with coarse ridicule. When calm was restored, He took with Him the father and the mother and His three Apostles, and entered with quiet reverence the chamber hallowed by the silence and awfulness of death. Then, taking the little cold dead hand, He uttered those thrilling words--"Maid, arise!" and her spirit returned, and the child arose and walked. An awful amazement seized the parents; but Jesus calmly bade them give the child some food.

The maid awakened to life and consciousness. She did not come back from heaven or from hell, but merely awakened out of the sleep of death, and renewed the experiences of life as before. Such an awakening from sleep--such a restoration of the life forces that had been temporarily suspended, is of the nature of a resurrection, but is not a resurrection. To have resurrected her would have meant to have lifted her completely out of death in every sense of the word, out of mental, moral and physical degradation, up to the grand heights of perfection of mind and body, as represented in the person of father Adam, and our Lord did nothing of this kind. He merely awakened her, leaving her upon the same plane of death on which she had been born, and had thus far lived for twelve years. The maiden will still have her opportunity of sharing in the general "resurrection by judgments" or restitution during the Millennial Age--unless at some subsequent time she accepted the Gospel of the Lord Jesus, and became one of His followers, a member of the Church of this Gospel Age; in which event she would, if faithful, be accounted worthy of a part in the chief or First Resurrection to glory, honor and immortality.

Truly was it said of Jesus, "He went about doing good." His life was one of self-denial and sacrifice in the interest of those about Him--the continual giving out of His best powers on behalf of others. Let us be diligent, beloved, in following in His steps, in laying down strength, time, means--our all--in His service. Soon the time acceptable for sacrifice will have been completed, the Bride will have made herself ready, and all opportunity for proving our devotion and love to the Lord by following the way of the cross will have been forever ended. Let us "consider Him" and give the greater diligence to "walk as He walked," for He hath left us an example that we should follow in His steps.

## **JESUS SENDING OUT MISSIONARIES**

**--DECEMBER 3--LUKE 10:1-24--**

*Golden Text.--"The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He send forth laborers into His harvest."--Luke 10:2.*

OUR Lord had previously sent forth the twelve Apostles as heralds of Himself and the Kingdom. (Luke 9:1-6.) The sending forth of seventy was evidently some little time afterward, probably in the last year of His ministry. Their commission reads almost in the same words as that given to the Twelve, though they are not recognized anywhere as Apostles on an equality of authority with the Twelve. The fact that seventy men would voluntarily go forth as ministers of the Lord, without hope of earthly reward or salary, is a sufficient evidence that a strong influence had already been exerted by Jesus' teaching. In this connection we remember the Apostle's statement that above five hundred brethren were sufficiently advanced in knowledge and zeal to be accounted worthy of meeting the Lord after His resurrection, which implies a keen interest on the part of several times that number. We may reasonably suppose that these seventy were representatives of a much larger company of deeply interested ones. They were sent into the various cities and villages, whither the Lord Himself would go. They

were to prepare His way by announcing the Kingdom at hand, and by performing the miracles intended to demonstrate the authenticity of their message.

An explanation of why they were sent forth is given (verse 2): it was because the harvest was great and the laborers too few to properly consummate the work in the time appointed of the Father. All interested were expected to share in this appreciation of the greatness of the work, and the necessity for more laborers being sent forth; and it is but reasonable to suppose that the seventy sent were chosen from amongst those appreciating the situation and anxious to be commissioned.

The expression, "The harvest is great," does not necessarily mean that the amount of ripe "wheat" to be garnered is great. It means rather that the difficulties and oppositions, and multitudes of "tares," make it difficult to reach all of the "wheat" class. The mass of Israel professed to be the Lord's people, but their piety was little more than profession. They drew nigh to the Lord in attendance at the synagogues, and in celebrating the feasts, felt full and self-satisfied, and looked with pity upon the Gentile nations, and had a great spirit of missionary aggressiveness, and "compassed sea and land to make a proselyte" to Judaism. Nevertheless, the Lord, who read the heart, recognized that theirs was only a formal lip service, and that their hearts were far from Him; and we see conditions today very similar to this, in nominal spiritual Israel.

None were fit to be sent out as heralds of the Kingdom except those who thoroughly believed in the Kingdom--such as had accepted Jesus as the Messiah; such as believed in His presence--such, therefore; as could speak forth with earnestness and power the message they were sent to bear. And so it seems to have been in this Harvest time. Only such as recognize the Kingdom as nigh, even at the door; only such as recognize the *Parousia* of the King; only such as have a zeal to tell the joyful tidings to others, have been used and blessed of the Lord in the gathering together of His elect--the ripe "wheat," His "jewels."--Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:16, 17; Matt. 13:39, 41.

### **SERVANTS OF THE HARVEST**

It is not supposable that our Lord meant that any should appeal to Him to send forth more laborers into the Harvest, who at the same time would not be willing and anxious, to the extent of their ability, to enter this Harvest service themselves. There may be some, but we trust very few, who would be prepared to pray: "O Lord bless, I pray Thee, Thy work, and send forth more laborers; but do not send me. Permit others to sacrifice time and strength and zeal, that I may rest, and have neither part nor lot in the matter, sacrificing little or nothing." Only those are properly qualified to petition the Lord on such a subject, whose hearts are burning with a desire to do with their might what their hands may find to do, according to their opportunities. Such, in praying, would be anxious, first of all, to themselves be used as servants of the great Chief Reaper; for it is "he that reapeth that receiveth wages and that gathereth fruit unto eternal life" now, as it was also in the Jewish Harvest. Those who are most zealous to serve the Lord, and most willing to sacrifice on behalf of His cause, are the ones who will receive the greatest present blessing of spiritual fellowship with the Lord, and who will be the best prepared to share the glories soon to be revealed.

It is questionable just why the Lord chose seventy for this work. However, we remember that Moses chose seventy of the elders of Israel for his assistants, and that this number, seventy, was from that time onward

preserved in Israel, and known as the "*Sanhedrin*," or committee of seventy chief men and judges. In the light of this fact, it would, appear that if the nation of Israel had been in proper condition of heart to receive the Lord, the chiefs of that nation would already have embraced His cause, and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin would by that time have been proclaiming the Messiah through the length and breadth of Palestine. But since they had not received the King, and had not prayed Him to commission them to announce Him, our Lord commissioned others, and the work went on, the honor and privilege passing by those of influence and education who might have enjoyed it had they been worthy. Doubtless the seventy sent forth were, like the Apostles, chosen from amongst the honest-hearted of the common people, and not many, if any of them, were rich, wise or learned.

That the Lord did not expect the seventy to convert and gather in all Israel is very distinctly shown in His statement, "Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves." The Master knew that the majority of the professedly consecrated Israel of God were consecrated to self and selfishness, to sect and party, and not to the Truth. The majority were represented as voracious wolves, not sheep. Nevertheless, there were lambs and sheep amongst the goats and the wolves, and these all must hear the message, and thus be prepared to receive the Messiah, when He should present Himself to them.

### **THE LESSON OF DEPENDENCE UPON THE LORD**

Special instructions were given to these specially sent-forth ones. They had a peculiar work to do and the conditions accorded. They were not, therefore, a criterion for subsequent workers under different circumstances. They were to carry neither purse, nor valise, nor extra shoes, and were to salute no man by the way. They would thus be dependent on the generosity of those to whom they ministered the Truth. And the effect of this would be beneficial in several ways. (1) It would test the faith of those who went forth, and keep them continually depending on the Lord's supervising care, and trusting that He who had sent them knew how to make provision for their necessities while they complied with His commands. (2) It would furnish an opportunity for hospitality to those to whom they preached, and who, by reason of the necessities of the case, would be constrained to reach a decision promptly as to whether or not they were in sympathy with the message, and hence with the messengers, and willing to entertain them. The same lesson of dependence on the Lord was implied in the provision for no change of raiment. Besides, it was to be but a short tour.

The injunction not to salute any one by the way, may be understood to refer to the custom in Oriental lands of travelers stopping frequently to chat with each other respecting the news. The disciples had but one message, the Good Tidings, and they were to give all diligence to its promulgation, and not to be general newsmongers. On arriving at a house they were to take careful note respecting their reception, and were to anticipate this with a prayer that peace, blessing, favor, might be upon that house and its inmates. If a son of peace, a child of God, resided there, they might expect that under the Lord's providence they would have a kind reception, and were to accept it as of the Lord's arrangement. If they were not so received, they were to consider it as an evidence that such a place was not the home of God's people, living in covenant relationship with Him, and were to take their departure, seeking another and another place. Peradventure they found no entertainer in the village, they were, nevertheless, to give their testimony. And it should be given in a striking manner; viz., by the shaking of the dust from their shoes, which, to the Oriental mind, would signify a very solemn and final testimony; and then they were to say, "Notwithstanding, be sure of this, that the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you."



All who are engaged in the Lord's service at the present time may learn some very profitable lessons here, applicable, indeed, to the Lord's people at any time while engaged in His service. We have no time for the ordinary converse. The time is short; our time is consecrated; we must labor while it is called day, knowing that a night cometh wherein no man can work. We have consecrated our lives even unto death; we are commissioned of the great Lord of the Harvest to seek for the true "wheat," and to gather it into the barn. What time have we for frivolities or worldliness or the many social amenities? Rather, we must content ourselves with giving very little attention to these things, and must press along the line, engaging heartily in the work given us to do, if we would have the approval of our Master, His "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Although it is not customary today, as it was in Palestine nineteen centuries ago, to salute a house and say, "Peace be to this house!" nevertheless all of the Lord's people should be peacemakers, peace-promoters, peace-lovers, and a blessing of peace and restfulness should go with them wherever they go. Alas! how many of them are slow to learn that God has not called us to strife, contentions, bickerings, anger, etc., but to love, joy, peace, etc. How few, comparatively, have learned how to speak the Truth in love; and always to give a soft answer which turneth away wrath; and always to avoid the grievous words which stir up anger. Like the seventy of our lesson, in our daily avocations and efforts to minister to others, let the peace of God go with us, shining in our faces, governing our actions and intoning our language, so that, as the Apostle expresses it, our speech shall be always seasoned with grace.

Conditions in civilized lands today are very different from what they were and still are in Oriental lands, so that here and now it would be unusual to be expected to entertain strangers; nevertheless, all who are of the Lord's true people should be on the lookout to entertain hospitably any servants of the Lord, who they are sure carry His message, the Gospel of the Kingdom. And, as the Apostle indicates, they should be just as careful not to entertain, not to assist, and not to bid Godspeed to any who are bearing a false gospel, and denying that the Lord bought us.--2 John 10.

### **REJOICE IN THINGS UNSEEN**

When the seventy returned from this mission they were full of joy; saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us, in Thy name." Our Lord assured them that this was what He expected, and intended, when He sent them forth, and explained respecting His own knowledge of Satan in His pre-human condition, that there and then He had been a witness to Satan's fall from high glory and privilege and position to his present attitude of chief adversary of God. "I beheld Satan as lightning [as a bright one] fall from heaven." It is for those who deny the personality of Satan and who deny there are any fallen angels, to explain away these plain statements of Scripture. The true children of God, the true sheep who hear the voice of the Shepherd, will not be deceived upon this point any more than upon others. What matters it to us that we did not see Satan fall from his glorious condition? Our Master did, and He has borne testimony, not only respecting Satan's personality, but also respecting his fall from brightness and honor. What is it to us that others deny that there are fallen angels, demons, who seek to impersonate the dead, through spiritualism, etc.? We have the Master's words, and the words of the Apostles, to the contrary, and as true sheep we both hear and heed the Shepherd's voice and through those whom he controls, telling us that there is no devil, that there is no Second Death, etc.

Our Lord proceeded to tell the seventy that it was He who had given them the power they had enjoyed, and that it included immunity from the bites of serpents and scorpions, and from all the power of the enemy--all



enemies, but specially the enemy, Satan, the same one mentioned also in the prayer which our Lord taught, saying, "Deliver us from the Evil One." It may not be amiss to note here the fact that these powers and authorities over Satan, poisons, serpents, etc., were confined to the twelve and to the subsequent seventy, and were never given to the Church in general. The only Scripture which even seems to so imply is Mark 16:9 to the end, and these verses are not found in the oldest Greek MSS., and are evidently interpolations, added probably about the fifth century: they are omitted from the Revised Version and others. But while no such immunity from poisons and bites and stings is granted to the Gospel Church in general, we have what serves every purpose in this respect; viz., the Lord's promise that nothing shall by any means *hurt us* as New Creatures--that the Lord will permit nothing to happen to His consecrated ones that He is not both able and willing to overrule for their *good*, their highest welfare.

While rejoicing with the disciples in their increased faith and joy, resulting from their activities in His service, and in the exercise of the gifts which He had bestowed upon them, our Lord cautioned them against *thinking too highly* of such miraculous gifts, and assures them that their chiefest cause for joy lay in another direction--in the fact that they had been accepted as sons into God's family (John 1:12); in the fact that their names were written in heaven, as prospective joint-heirs with Christ in His Kingdom--prospective members of the Body of Christ, to suffer with Him, and thus attest their fidelity, and by and by to be glorified with Him to all eternity. This is in harmony with the Apostle Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 13:1, where he assures us that the miraculous gifts conferred upon the early Church by the laying on of the Apostles' hands, such as speaking with unknown tongues, interpretations of mysteries, etc., are not proofs of spirit begotten conditions; that a greater proof is the possession of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love that never faileth.

The more of the spirit of love we possess the greater is our likeness to God's dear Son, our Redeemer, and the more will we be fitted and prepared for a share with Him in His heavenly glories. If, therefore, the Lord permits us to do some little service in the present Harvest, or to bear some burdens in the heat of the day, or if He grants us the privilege of successfully contending against the great Adversary and his servants, and *hinders us from being stung* or "hurt" by their words or looks or deeds, and if He grants us opportunities for helping others out of soul-sickness by administering the good medicine of the Present Truth, let us rejoice in these privileges and opportunities; but let us rejoice still more that under the Lord's providence we are His children, begotten of His spirit--that our names have been recorded as members of His family, and that by and by we may expect to be joint-heirs with our Elder Brother. Yea, in these good hopes we will rejoice.

## **BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION**

STUDY CL--NOVEMBER 12

### **EARTH AND HEAVEN FLED AWAY-Rev. 20:11**

(801) Explain the meaning of the statement "the earth and the heaven fled away." Mention other Scriptures where the expression is similarly used. H '21-52, 53.

(802) In this connection explain 2 Peter -3:6, 7, 10-13. H '21-53.

(803) What is the significance of the statement "no place was found for them"? H '21-53, 54.

(804) Who is represented by "Him that sat on the Throne"? H '21-54.

(805) Cite some Old Testament prophecies describing a work preparatory to the establishing of God's Kingdom, and show the relationship to the text under consideration. H '21-54.

#### STUDY CLI--NOVEMBER 19

#### **THE HOPE OF HUMANITY--Rev. 20:12, 13**

(806) What fundamental truth should be appreciated in order to rightly understand the picture of verses 12 and 13? H '21-54.

(807) What Scriptures specially describe man's present state and its cause, the work of Christ and what it has secured? H '21-54, 55.

(808) How does a knowledge of the ransom and its effects assist in rightly interpreting this vision of St. John? H'21-55.

(809) What is the general interpretation of these verses given by many expositors? H '21-55.

(810) Show wherein this is faulty and out of harmony with the general teachings of the Scriptures. H '21-55.

#### STUDY CLII--NOVEMBER 26

#### **THE BOOKS WERE OPENED---Rev. 20:12, 13**

(811) Who are the dead referred to in verse 12, and what is signified by their standing before God? H '21-55, 56.

(812) From the teaching of this and other Scriptures what will be the general condition obtaining upon the earth during the judgment Day? H '21-56.

(813) What is signified by the statement "the books were opened"? H '21-56.

(814) How will the dead be judged "out of those things written in the books"? What is the significance of the word "judge" in this text? H '21-56.

(815) Explain verse 23--the significance of the "sea," and "death and hell." H '21-56.

STUDY CLIII--DECEMBER 3

**THE BOOK OF LIFE--Rev. 20:12-15**

(816) What bearing will the conduct of mankind during the present life have upon their trial during the judgment Day? Explain in this connection Gal. 6:7. Give other Scriptures bearing on this. H '21-56, 57.

(817) How will the two great qualities of Justice and Love be operative in God's dealings with the world during its Judgment Day? H '21-57.

(818) Define each of these attributes and show how they have been operative in the execution of the various features of the Divine Plan. H '21-57.

(819) What is the "book of life," mentioned in verses 12 and 15? In what important respects will the world's judgment in the Age to come differ from the judgment of the Church during the present Age? H '21-57.

(820) What is the symbolical significance of the "lake of fire" into which death and hell, and also all those whose names are not found written in the book of life, are cast? H '21-57.