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THE PUBLISHING OF THE REVELATION SERIES GIVEN FURTHER CONSIDERATION

IN the July 15 issue of this journal under the caption "*An Important Question Concerning the Revelation Expositions*" we brought to the attention of the brethren the question of publishing in book form the series on the Revelation that has appeared in these columns during the past four years. As explained in that article, the question was brought before the friends because, during the past two years or more, repeated suggestions and appeals have come to our office from various parts, asking us to consider the advisability of preparing the Revelation matter in book form, and we desired to ascertain more definitely what the wishes of the friends are on this subject. Though all have not written us personally, yet there has been a general response to the question during the past three months from various sections of the world, especially where the English language is used. With but few exceptions the friends have expressed the earnest desire to have the Revelation matter published in a book. Nearly all who have written us have again enthusiastically expressed their appreciation of the Revelation series and of the comfort and blessing upon heart and head in their study of the same.

Of course by this time the friends quite generally understand that it is not the thought of the brethren of the INSTITUTE, that the book if published would constitute the final and last word on the subject. In fact we have never entertained such a thought; nor has this sentiment been expressed in any of the Revelation articles themselves. All who have been reading the matter well know that there has been no disposition to be dogmatical nor to consider that any brother or number of brethren would have any right to publish an exposition and call it the last word, as though there was to be no further unfolding of the visions. Then if some are disposed to reason and say that since we cannot present an exposition that contains an unfolding of all the visions in the final and last sense of the word, why publish a book at all until such time as the Lord would make known to some one the unfolding in its completion, to this we would reply that such does not appear to us as being a reasonable way to look at the matter; for, as we have seen in our study of the subject thus far, the visions of the Revelation constitute a series of prophecies covering the history of the Church and her contact with the forces of the Adversary from the beginning to the end of the Age. Therefore, it has been a matter all through the Age of history unveiling prophecy, and generally the symbols have not been understood until they became matters of history. The Lord's people therefore all along through the Age have been blessed in their study of the Revelation, to the extent that they have been enabled to read the fulfilment of the visions in the events and occurrences of their time. There has been every propriety in Christian leaders and teachers publishing what light they have been enabled to glean from the Revelation, without waiting for the time to come when everything would be fulfilled and clearly understood.

So it is in our day. There is every indication that a large portion of the book of Revelation is now a matter of history, but there are some important visions yet to be fulfilled, and we freely acknowledge that the future will make manifest more distinctly the truth respecting some of the symbols whose fulfilment is in the past, as well as those whose fulfilment is in the future. We do not think it a reasonable conclusion, that because the details of the visions of the Revelation are not so fully understood that all the truth concerning the same can be stated

dogmatically and without question therefore no one should attempt to publish any exposition of the Revelation. True enough, much has been published on the Revelation that is erroneous, misleading, and unprofitable, but the same can be said of the entire Bible more or less. No one, for a moment, would contend that because all the Bible is not fully understood therefore no one should attempt to write an exposition of any part of it. Looking back now over God's dealings and the history of His people, we find that there has been a gradual revealing of the truth as it has become due to be understood, and godly men who have found themselves, under the Lord's providence, in positions of responsibility toward their brethren have done what they could in their day to clarify the truth and assist in its understanding. Particularly during the past century, a number of these have published very valuable expositions of the Revelation. They did not claim for them inspiration, nor that theirs was the last word on the subject, but they advanced in the light as far as it was then shining.

This, then, is the thought of the brethren connected with this ministry--that though we have not yet reached the perfect day when all truth is revealed, and though there are certain visions and parabolic statements of the Bible the fulfilment of which is still future, yet it is our privilege to declare the truth to the extent that it is seen, and thus to derive all the encouragement and comfort possible from the Divine Messages, that were uttered so long ago, for the purpose of sustaining the faithful. What has thus far been presented on the Revelation, or what we may hereafter publish will not therefore, be considered the last word on the subject, by any means, for we are sure that time and events will make manifest more clearly certain details of truth that can not be so fully understood in advance of the time of their fulfilment. What we desire and are endeavoring in the Revelation expositions is to bring together the best thoughts available at this time--thoughts that have come from godly men who have in reverence and humility given the subject a great deal of study. More than this, the attitude we have repeatedly expressed is that the brethren themselves should endeavor to prove all things and accept nothing until they are fully persuaded that it is the truth, and that each so far as possible should make the truth his own.

AN EARLY RESPONSE DESIRED

Regarding the publishing of the Revelation matter, what we desire to say at this time is this: We can not proceed with the project until we have definitely ascertained from the friends their mind on the subject sufficiently to warrant us in going ahead and getting out an edition. Our INSTITUTE, of course, does not possess a treasury adequate to finance the matter in advance. In order to proceed with the undertaking, therefore, we should have definite word from the friends indicating *bona-fide* orders for the books. Many in the past have merely stated that they were in favor of the publication without indicating to what extent they wished to cooperate. We are, therefore, asking that those who favor the publishing of the Revelation matter shall indicate how many volumes they wish to order or to what extent they would otherwise cooperate in making possible the publication. Some have already done this, but there are many others, we are sure, who have not yet definitely indicated the extent of their cooperation.

Since publishing the article in the July 15 issue, the question of publishing the matter in one, two, or three volumes has been more fully considered, and we have reached the conclusion that the purposes in a general way will be best served by getting out the matter in two volumes of about six hundred pages to each volume. We have also taken up the matter with the printers and can now well assure the friends that we can supply the two books of about six hundred pages each, containing the entire matter, for One Dollar per copy postpaid. The size of the print used will be the same as that in *The Divine Plan of the Ages*, which we recently published; also the quality of binding will be fully as good. Our printers advise that they can use a little lighter paper so that the

books will not be bulky, and that each volume will not exceed an inch and a half in thickness, including the covers.

We trust, therefore, that the friends everywhere who are interested in the publication will respond *immediately* and supply the information requested above, as we hope thus to ascertain the mind of the Lord upon this question, for our decision to proceed with the matter will depend altogether on the response received. If the demand for the books and the cooperation proffered is not sufficiently large, this will of course be regarded as an indication that it is not the Lord's will that we undertake the publication. Concerning the friends in other lands, including Australia and Great Britain, in order to expedite matters, we think best for all, individually, to communicate *direct with our* INSTITUTE, specifying the number of books they desire, or to what extent they will cooperate otherwise, in order that we may have information at hand as soon as possible. Let us all take the matter before the Throne of Grace and look for the Lord's leading that thus we may have Divine guidance in the same.

IS THE APOCALYPSE A JEWISH OR CHRISTIAN PROPHECY? PART III

IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY

NOTWITHSTANDING the clear evidences that the Apocalypse is addressed to the Church, and that its visions have reference to the history of the period in which the Church is on earth--the Gospel Age--and that it is Divinely designed to be read by and to the Church, and that a blessing is promised to both the reader and hearer, there are some who, failing to see, or ignoring these evidences, tell us that the expression, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day," proves that it applies to a class that will be living on the earth--the Jews--*after* the Church has been translated to glory. The argument presented by these is that the expression, "The *Lord's* day," has reference to the time referred to in the Old Testament prophecies as the "day of Jehovah." The argument is that if St. John was in the spirit on the day of Jehovah, then the visions must refer to the day of Jehovah. Concerning this, one who favors this interpretation, has said:

"Until such time as the visions are due to be understood, neither piety or learning can find them out. The Revelation is not sealed; because it belongs to 'the day of the Lord.' It is sealed so far as any earlier day is concerned."

While we believe that what has been presented in the foregoing articles of this series is sufficient of itself to make manifest the error of this interpretation of the words, "the Lord's day," yet, as it is set forth by some of those who hold the Futurist view as a strong argument of their position, it would therefore seem to require special consideration. In so doing we deem it necessary to keep in mind that the utterance of St. John, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day," is no part of the visions themselves, but is simply a part of the statement written *after* receiving the visions, in which St. John was making known to the Lord's people, the Church, some facts in relation to the *time*, the *place*, and the *conditions and circumstances*, in connection with which he beheld the particular vision that he describes in chapter one--that of the Son of Man walking in the midst of the seven golden Lampstands. He practically says, "I was in the spirit on the Lord's day" and saw this vision. We have never, until very recently, learned of any one applying the fulfilment of this vision of Christ walking in the midst of the Candlestands to any other period than the Gospel Age. So far as the point under discussion is

concerned, it will make no difference whether we apply it altogether, as some do, to Christ's relationship to the seven local Churches which *at that time* existed in Asia Minor, or that in addition to this they also represent the Church in seven different periods of her history throughout the whole Gospel Age. In other words, the vision of Christ walking in the midst of the seven golden Candlestands, can have no reference to the "day of Jehovah," for the reason that the "day of Jehovah" is not the Gospel Age, either in its beginning or during its progress. It is therefore very evident that the expression, "the Lord's day," cannot mean either Jehovah's day or the Gospel Age.

VISIONS SEEN ON FIRST DAY OF WEEK

If this conclusion is correct (and we are unable to view it otherwise), then the expression, "Lord's day," must have reference to the particular day of the week on which St. John saw the vision described in chapter one. Some teachers have understood the expression to refer to the Jewish Sabbath day. It would seem, however, that if the Sabbath of the Jewish dispensation were meant, the word "Sabbath" would have been used, as is always the case where it is referred to. It is a most significant fact, and one that greatly assists in determining the meaning of the expression, that the Greek word translated "Lord" in this passage is found only in one other place in the New Testament. This is in 1 Cor. 11: 20, and reads: "this is not to eat the Lord's supper." There can be no doubt that the word "Lord" in this verse has reference to the Lord Jesus and not to Jehovah. It means here a supper that particularly pertains to the Lord Jesus evidently the Memorial' Supper. Then, so far as the *word* "Lord" itself is concerned as used in this passage in Revelation, it would mean a day pertaining in some sense to the Lord Jesus. It seems quite clear that it refers to the *first* day of the week, a day that was observed by the early Church to keep in remembrance the Lord Jesus' resurrection. It was on this day, the weekly anniversary of His resurrection, that our Lord appeared to His disciples several times. The term was used generally by the early Christians to denote the *first* day of the week.

"It occurs twice in the Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians (about 101 A. D.), who calls the Lord's day, 'the queen and prince of all days.' Chrysostom (on Psa. 119) says, 'It was called the Lord's day because the Lord rose from the dead on that day.' Later Fathers made a marked distinction between the *Sabbath* and the Lord's day; meaning by the former, the Jewish Sabbath, or the seventh day of the week, and by the latter, the first day of the week, kept holy by Christians. So Theodoret . . . speaking of the Ebionites, says, 'They keep the *Sabbath* according to, the Jewish law, and sanctify the *Lord's day* in like, manner as we do.'"

The conclusion therefore is that the mere mention of it by St. John would be sufficient for his hearers to understand that it was on the first day of the week that he had this vision. A very noted Futurist writer admits this, and thus comments on this expression, "the Lord's day":

"'On the Lord's day,' does not mean, as some suppose, the prophetic 'day of the Lord,' for which there is a different expression, and *which would not really apply at all to this first vision and what follows*. It is the Lord's day, the day of Christian privilege, in which, in the joy of His resurrection, we look back upon His death. Yet this does not surely shut out the looking forward to His coming: 'Ye do show the Lord's death till He come.' This is the only right attitude for the Christian to be in, as one who expects the Lord. And this is indeed why, as it would seem, the voice that John hears speaks *behind* him, and he has to turn to see the One who speaks to him. His attention is to be directed to the *present* state of the Church; turned back, therefore, from the contemplation of the coming glory, to what to one so engrossed is a thing behind.

"He turns, and sees seven golden candlesticks, or lampstands, as the word is . . . They represent, as we are told, the seven assemblies (1:20), and plainly, as responsible to exhibit the light of the Spirit, *during the night of the Lord's absence* [the Gospel Age]."--Grant.

PROVED FROM HISTORY

The greatest, the most convincing of all evidences that the Apocalypse applies to the history of Christianity in the Gospel Age, is that when its main, its most striking symbolic visions are translated into literal language, they so fully portray all the great facts of that history. "It is not a question of minor details, but of events of stupendous magnitude, affecting a vast extent of the earth, and reacting through centuries of time. It is not a question of remote antiquity, nor of half explored, dimly known regions; no such difficulties encumber the problem. The things that have transpired in the Roman earth, since the days of Domitian, when the Apocalypse was written, especially those concerning the Christian Church, both true and false, and those transpiring in our day, are not things done in a corner, concerning which there may exist a great variety of opinions and of questions that can never be decided. On the contrary, we have records abundant, and varied enough of the whole period to enable us to live it over again in our imagination; and we have remains and monuments, and present facts, which are so linked with all the eventful past, that no ingenuity can distort or deny any of its main features."

A most significant thing connected with this is that all historians are most, fully agreed in their records of these facts. Furthermore, the historian, who more than any other is considered the most learned, the most unbiased, the most comprehensive and reliable of all, is one not at all friendly to Christianity, namely, the unbeliever Gibbon. One of the most noted expositors of the whole Bible thus speaks of his experiences in connection with using Gibbon's history when beginning a study of the Apocalypse, about 1850 A. D.:

"Up to the time of commencing the exposition of this book [the Apocalypse], I had no theory in my own mind as to its meaning. I may add, that I had a prevailing belief that it could not be explained, and that all attempts to explain it must be visionary and futile. With the exception of the work of the Rev. George Croly, which I read more than twenty years ago [about 1830], and which I never desired to read again, I had perused no commentary on this book until that of Professor Stuart was published in 1845. In my regular reading of the Bible in the family and in private, I had perused the book often. I read it, as I suppose most others do, from a sense of duty, yet admiring the beauty of its imagery, and sublimity of its descriptions, and its highly poetic character; and though to me wholly unintelligible in the main, finding so many striking detached passages that were intelligible and practical in their nature, as to make it on the whole attractive and profitable, but with no definitely-formed idea as to its meaning as a whole, and with a vague general feeling that all the interpretations which had been proposed were wild, fanciful and visionary.

VISIONS UNFOLDED ON PAGES OF HISTORY

"In this state of things, the utmost that I contemplated when I began to write on it, was to explain, as well as I could, the meaning of the language and the symbols, without attempting, to apply the explanation to the events of past history, or to inquire what is to occur hereafter. I supposed that I might venture to do this without

encountering the danger of adding another vain attempt to explain a book so full of mysteries, or of propounding a theory of interpretation to be set aside, perhaps, by the next person that should prepare a commentary on the book.*

"Beginning with this aim, I found myself soon in sensibly inquiring, whether, in the events which succeeded the time when the book was written, there were not historical facts of which the emblems employed would be natural and proper symbols on the supposition that it was the Divine intention in disclosing these visions to refer to them, and whether, therefore, there might not be a natural and proper application of the symbols to these events. To my surprise, I found, chiefly in Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, a series of events recorded such as seemed to me to correspond to a great extent with the series of symbols found in the Apocalypse. The symbols were such as it might be supposed *would be used*, on the supposition that they were intended to refer to these events, and the language of Mr. Gibbon was often such as *he would have used*, on the supposition that he had designed to prepare a commentary on the symbols employed by John. It was such, in fact, that, if it had been found in a Christian writer, professedly writing a commentary on the book of Revelation, it would have been, regarded by infidels as a designed attempt to force history to utter a language that should conform to a predetermined theory in expounding a book full of symbols. So remarkable have these coincidences appeared to me in the course of this exposition, that it has almost seemed as if he had designed to write a commentary on some portion of this book, and I have found it difficult to doubt that that distinguished historian was raised up by an overruling Providence to make a record of those events which would ever afterwards be regarded as an

*It should be noted that MR. BARNES, the writer we are quoting, at this time of his beginning a study of the Apocalypse, had not read any of the most eminent Historical writers of the book. If he had, he would have learned what most opposers of the Historical interpreters do not seem to have learned, that in the main visions of the book there is a very general agreement in explaining and applying them.

impartial and unprejudiced statement of the evidences of the fulfilment of prophecy. The Historian of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' had no belief in the Divine origin of Christianity, but he brought to the performance of his work learning and talent such as few Christian scholars have possessed. He is always patient in his investigations; learned and scholarlike in his references; comprehensive in his groupings, and sufficiently minute in his details; unbiased in his statements of facts, and usually cool and candid in his estimates of the causes of the events which he records; and, excepting his philosophical speculations, and his sneers at every thing, he has probably written the most candid and impartial history of the times that succeeded the introduction of Christianity, that the world possesses, and even after all that has been written since his time, his work contains the best ecclesiastical history that is to be found. Whatever use of it can be made in explaining and confirming the prophecies, will be regarded by the world as impartial and fair; for it was a result which he least of all contemplated, that he would ever be regarded as an expounder of the prophecies in the Bible, or be referred to as vindicating their truth. . . .

"Whatever may be the value or the correctness of the views expressed in this volume [*Barnes Notes*], the work is the result of no previously-formed theory."

UNANIMITY AMONGST HISTORICAL WRITERS ON ESSENTIAL FEATURES

One of the significant facts to be noted in connection with MR. BARNES' exposition--the result, as he himself says, of independent study--is that in the application of the main visions of the book, concerning the Christian apostasy, his interpretations are in accord with those generally given by Historical writers.

Another eminent writer has said:

"The reason that the resemblance is not more uniformly perceived, between the predictions of Revelation and the facts of history since the Christian era, must then, be either in a want of thorough acquaintance with one or the other, or else in a want of a careful and unprejudiced attention to the correspondence between them. . . .

"Nor are the claims of this principle of Historical interpretation in the least invalidated by the fact that interpreters differ among themselves as to the precise application of some of the visions. Nearly all the writers of the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era entertained the view that the Apocalypse was a comprehensive prophecy, reaching from the date of its publication to the end of all things, and endeavoured consequently to find its historical solution. It can be no wonder that, as the page of history has unrolled itself, greater accuracy should have been attained, than it was possible for early students to possess. At the time of the Reformation, and subsequently, the great body of commentators still interpreted the Apocalypse on the same principle, but naturally with a far closer approximation to the truth, though they were by no means unanimous in their exposition of detail; and many are the points of controversy which still exist. But the essential agreement more than counterbalances the minor differences, and it would be strange indeed if such differences did not exist."

To show how general was the agreement amongst Historical expositors from the Reformation down to the middle of the nineteenth century, we quote an eminent writer:

"The following list of Presentist [Historical] expositors of the Apocalypse includes, so far as I have been able to ascertain, all of any note from the era of the Reformation to the publication of the 'Horae' of Mr. Elliott: Luther, Bullinger [not the modern Bullinger, Hale, Chytraeus, Marlorat, Foxe, Brightman, Pareus, Mede, Vitringa, Daubuz, Sir Isaac Newton, Whiston, Bengel, Bishop Newton, Bicheno, Faber, Frere, Irving, Cunningham; Habershon, Bickersteth, Birks, Woodhouse, Keith, Elliott, twenty-six in all. Out of these there are agreed as follows:

- "1. That Seals I to IV are the decline of the Pagan empire ... 10
- "2. That Seal VI is the fall of Paganism under Constantine 11
- "3. That Trumpets I to IV are the Gothic invasions 15
- "4. That Trumpet V is the Saracens 17
- "5. That Trumpet VI is the Turks 21
- "6. That the little opened book refers to the

Reformation 12

"7. That chapter XI is the papal persecution of saints as heretics 22

"8. That chapter XII is the depression and recession from view of the true Church during the papal ages.....18

"9. That the beasts are aspects of the Papacy.....25

"10. That the Vials are the great French Revolution and its results 8

"11. That chapter XVII is Rome 26

"12. That chapter XVIII is Papacy 26

"13. That a day is a symbol of a year 19"

FULFILMENT OF SYMBOLS PROPERLY APPLIES TO RELIGIOUS WORLD

Nearly three-quarters of a century has elapsed since the works of the last of these writers' were published. Much, very much, has occurred since, in the history of the Church and world, and it is quite in harmony with God's method of revealing prophecy, that is, as history unfolds its meaning, that clearer views would be had of its visions. DAVID N. LORD, who wrote about the middle of the nineteenth century, gave a much clearer interpretation of the Seals. The reason of this was because he conformed to one of the most important Scriptural laws of symbolic interpretation. This was in applying the four horsemen and their actions of the first four Seals--drawn from the military and civil life of the Roman empire--to the religious world, the first Seal to the first successes of Christianity, the next three to its gradual decline and apostasy; whereas the other expositors make the visions apply to the same phase of life from which the symbols are drawn. The events that have occurred in the last half century--one significant one of which is that of a most remarkable unfolding (if the Divine Plan of human redemption as it has to do with, not only the Church, but all humanity has served not so much to change other of these interpretations, but to more fully develop them in the light of these wonderful occurrences.

Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that "Prophetic interpretation is not milk for babes, but rather strong meat for those that are of full age, and have their senses exercised by reason of use. But which of the very simplest doctrines of Scripture excludes controversy? Is it an argument against the true view of the atonement, that numerous erroneous and defective views exist? Is there no revealed truth on the subject of Church government, because such widely differing creeds on the point prevail? If we cannot see eye to eye on such subjects as these, shall we marvel that differences, appear in the application of the symbolic visions of Revelation to history? The multitude of the events predicted, their range and variety, the peculiar language in which they are foretold, the fact that they bear a strong testimony against existing corruptions in the Church, and consequently enlist the antagonism of all who uphold these corruptions, these things are quite sufficient to account for the measure of disagreement which is found among interpreters, and which decreases in proportion as *an acquaintance with the subject increases, and as every fresh phase of contemporary history adds its testimony to the previously existing ones.*"

It will be noticed concerning the series of Visions that we understand, apply to the great anti-Christian apostasy, which occupy several chapters and are referred to in nearly every chapter in the book, that there is a *unanimous* agreement amongst the Historical school of expositors.

Continued in next issue.

STORY OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

--DECEMBER 10--LUKE 10:25-37--

Golden Text.--"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."--Lev. 19:18.

THE seventy, whose ordination or commission we considered a week ago, were sent across Jordan into the district known as Perea. And Jesus Himself went thither shortly afterward. The purpose of His ministry was to thoroughly awaken all the Jews to a knowledge of the fact that the time of their visitation had come. We are informed by the Apostle Paul that at the time of the Lord's death there were about five hundred that could be called brethren. But besides these, the witnesses above mentioned subsequently bore other fruit--after Pentecost.

Later, the seventy returned expressing joy and confidence, and remarking that even the demons were subject to them in the Father's name. The Master took occasion to tell them that they were overlooking their chief cause of joy, saying, "Rejoice, rather, that your names are written in heaven"--than that demons are subject to your command. So it is with all of us. Salvation is a personal matter with us, and works and preaching are merely incidentals connected with that work of personal salvation. The great time for works will be future. Then, if faithful, we shall be privileged to be associated with the Redeemer in His work of regenerating the world of mankind, breaking the shackles of Sin and Death, granting deliverance to the captives, even as the Prophets foretold.

No matter how praiseworthy are the social uplifts of the present time, they are as nothing compared with the great social and moral uplift which God has planned and which Messiah will institute with His Kingdom. Hence the first work of all of God's consecrated people is a personal one--the preparation of their own hearts and characters for Divine approval, that they may have a share in the sufferings of the present time and in the glorious work of the future.

THE PRIEST, LEVITE, AND SAMARITAN

At this point our Study for today opens. A lawyer thought to entrap the Master by asking the question: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" In those days, when the only law of Israel was God's Law, a lawyer was one well versed in the teaching of the books of Moses. Jesus therefore said to this theological doctor: How do you understand the matter? You know what is written in the Law. The lawyer replied: We shall love the Lord with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus approved this, saying that it was true. Do this--keep the Law--and you shall live. You will never die.

The lawyer was caught before he knew it. He knew that the people of Israel had been dying for centuries, notwithstanding the Law; yet himself and others were outwardly claiming that they were keeping the Law. Jesus showed him out of his own testimony that he was not keeping the Law, as he pretended to do and as the Pharisees in general pretended to do. The fact is that no imperfect, fallen human being can keep the perfect Law of God; for it is so comprehensive that only a perfect man could keep it thoroughly.

The lawyer sought to make the best of a bad argument and, instead of acknowledging his defeat, turned the question to Jesus again: "Who is my neighbor" whom I am to love as myself? This was one of the points which Jesus had particularly made against the Pharisees--that outwardly they were pious, religious, they prayed, fasted, etc.: yet in their hearts they were unjust and would take unjust advantage of widows and orphans--not loving them as themselves. The lawyer sought to imply that God's Law did not include everybody as his neighbor, but only certain special ones.

Jesus, however, again out-generaled him, saying, I will give you a parable. A certain man went down to Jericho; and on that lonely mountain road he was beset by thieves, who stripped him, wounded him and left him half dead. There happened that way a priest, one of the highest representatives of the Law; and, when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. Likewise there passed by a Levite, next in relationship to the services of the Law, the service of God. He went a little nearer and looked at the poor man, but did nothing. Then came along a Samaritan, an outsider, not a Jew at all; and he was filled with compassion. He bound up the wounds, put the man on his beast, brought him to an inn and took care of him, sacrificing his own time and strength in the wounded man's interest. He did more than this. He paid for the man's keep until he should return from Jerusalem.

Now, said Jesus to the lawyer, I put the question to you, which of these men acted the part of the neighbor to this man who fell among the thieves? Which one of these treatments of the case would fulfil the requirements of the Law, according to your judgment? The lawyer answered that the one who showed mercy on the man was the one who had surely done the neighborly act. Jesus replied that this should be an example to the lawyer, that he should do likewise--that he should be kind, thoughtful, generous, toward any human being who was in affliction--in need of help.

THE GREAT LESSON OF LIFE

The lesson the Master would impress on the hearts of His hearers and on all who would be taught of Him is the great lesson of Love--that heart quality that overflows in acts of kindness and benevolence toward all with whom we come in contact; that delights in doing good and in bringing comfort and blessing to others, even at the sacrifice of self. The words of another on this great theme of Love seem especially appropriate in this connection, and worthy of our consideration:

"Every one has asked himself the great question of antiquity as of the modern world: What is the supreme good? You have life before you. Once only you can live it. What is the noblest object of desire, the supreme gift to covet?"

"We have been accustomed to be told that the greatest thing in the religious world is Faith. That great word has been the key-note for centuries of the popular religion; and we have easily learned to look upon it as the greatest thing in the world. Well, we are wrong. St. Paul says, 'And now abideth faith, hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of these is Love.' Why is Love greater than faith? Because the end is greater than the means. What is the use of having faith? It is to connect the soul with God. And what is the object of connecting man with God? That he may become like God. But God is Love. Hence Faith, the means, is in order to Love, the end. Love, therefore, obviously is greater than faith.

"Take into your new sphere of labor, where you also mean to lay down your life, that simple charm of love, and your lifework must succeed. You can take nothing greater, you need take nothing less. It is not worth while going if you take anything less. You may take every accomplishment; you may be braced for every sacrifice; but if you give your body to be burned, and have not Love, it will profit you and the cause of Christ *nothing*.

"Patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity--these make up the supreme gift. (1 Cor. 13.) You will observe that all are in relation to men, in relation to life, in relation to the known today and the near tomorrow. We hear much of love of God; Christ spoke much of love to men. We make a great deal of peace with heaven; Christ made much of peace on earth.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF LOVE

"Love is *Patience*. This is the normal attitude of Love; Love passive, Love waiting to begin; not in a hurry; calm; ready to do its work when the summons comes, but meantime wearing the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Love suffers long; beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth all things.

"*Kindness*. Love active. Have you ever noticed how much of Christ's life was spent in doing kind things in merely doing kind things? Run over it with that in view, and you will find that He spent a great proportion of His time simply in making people happy, in doing good turns to people. 'The greatest thing,' says some one, 'a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.' I wonder why it is that we are not all kinder than we are? How much the world needs it. How easily it is done. How instantaneously it acts. How infallibly it is remembered. How super-abundantly it pays itself back--for there is no debtor in the world so honorable, so superbly honorable, as Love. God is Love. Therefore *love*. Without distinction, without calculation, without procrastination, love. Lavish it upon the poor, where it is very easy; especially upon the rich, who often need it most; most of all upon our equals, where it is very difficult, and for whom perhaps we each do least of all.

"We know but little now about the conditions of the life that is to come. But what is certain is that Love must last. God, the Eternal God, is Love. Covet therefore that everlasting gift, that one thing which it is certain is going to stand, that one coinage which will be current in the Universe when all the other coinages of all the nations of the world shall be useless and unhonored. Let at least the first great object of our lives be to achieve the character of Christ--which is built around Love.

"'Love suffereth long and is kind, love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself.' Get these ingredients into your life. It is worth giving time to. No man can become a saint in his sleep; and to fulfil the condition required demands

a certain amount of prayer and meditation and time, just as improvement in any direction, bodily or mental, requires preparation and care. Address yourselves to that one thing; at any cost have this transcendent character exchanged for yours. You will find as you look back upon your life that the moments that stand out, the moments when you have really lived, are the moments when you have done things in a spirit of love. These seem to be the things which alone of all one's life abide. Everything else in all our lives is transitory.

"In the Book of Matthew, where, the judgment Day is depicted for us in the imagery of One seated upon a throne and dividing the sheep from the goats, the test of a man then is not, 'How have I believed?' but 'How have I loved?' The test of religion is Love, not what I have done, not what I have believed, not what I have achieved, but how, I have discharged the common charities of life. Sins of commission in that awful indictment are not even referred to. By what we have not done, by *sins of omission*, we are judged. It could not be otherwise. For the withholding of love is the negation of the spirit of Christ, the proof that we never knew Him, that, for us He lived in vain. It means that He suggested nothing in all our thoughts, that He inspired nothing in all our lives that we were not once near enough to Him to be seized with the spell of His compassion for the world. Who is Christ? He who fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the sick."

LOVE FULFILS THE LAW

We do well to remember God's real object in giving laws, commandments, etc. He is not taking pleasure especially in the number of times that we bow the knee or bow the head, nor in the number of times that we attend Divine worship, nor in anything that we can do along the lines of worship. The Lord especially delights to see us cultivate His own spirit of love and kindness and generosity. "God is Love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." (1 John 4:16.) As the Apostle says, He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he claim to love God whom he hath not seen? How could he know that he would love God? (1 John 4:20.) Well does the Apostle Paul tell us that love is the fulfilling of the Law.--Rom. 13:10.

We are not to understand the Apostle to mean that simply to have love would fulfil God's Law and give us everlasting life. No! It is only for those who have accepted Christ that love fulfils the Law. For all those who become disciples of Jesus, God has made a special arrangement, that the merit of Jesus' sacrifice shall cover their blemishes, so that if they cultivate and possess the heart quality of love (God-likeness) it will be acceptable--because Jesus' sacrifice makes good all deficiency. We are "accepted in the Beloved." "The righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us who are walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

St. Paul remarks that love is the principle thing in our character in the Divine estimation. He tells us that if we should give all of our goods to feed the poor or even if we should give our bodies to be burned in some worthy cause, and yet not have love--not do these things from the spirit or prompting of love--it would all count for nothing in God's sight. (1 Cor. 13.) Evidently the great lesson for Christian people to learn is to put away all these--anger, malice, envy, hatred, strife, and to put on all these--meekness, gentleness, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love. St. Peter declares that if we do these things we shall never fall, but that an entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be granted to us.--2 Peter 1:10, 11.

O Love, our refuge in earth's wildest storm!

O Service, life-breath of a heart that's warm!

A dual-unity, of heaven born;
For love is service in its highest form.
Flame-tints that shimmer on the desert air!
Love-lights that make Life's sands a garden fair,
Where joy and pain sing softly to the soul,
That God in man is Love in human care.

JESUS AMONG FRIENDS AND FOES

--DECEMBER 17 - *LUKE 10:38-42, 11:42-54*--

Golden Text.--"Ye are My friends, if ye do the things which I -command you."--John 15 614.

NOWHERE, in all probability, did Jesus pass more restful and happy hours than in the quiet house of that little family at Bethany, which, as we are told by St. John, "He loved." The family, so far as we know, consisted only of Martha, Mary, and their brother Lazarus. That Martha was a widow--that her husband was, or had been, Simon the Leper--that Lazarus is identical with the rich young ruler--are conjectures that may or may not be true; but we see from the Gospels that they were a family in easy circumstances, and of sufficient dignity and position to excite considerable attention not only in their own little village of Bethany, but even in Jerusalem. The lonely little hamlet, lying among its peaceful uplands, near Jerusalem, must always have had for the soul of Jesus an especial charm; and the more so because of the friends whose love and reverence always placed at His disposal their holy and happy home. It is there that we find Him on the eve of the Feast of the Dedication, which marked the close of that public journey designed for the full and final proclamation of His coming Kingdom.

It was natural that there should be some stir in the little household at the coming of such a Guest, and Martha, the busy hostess, "on hospitable thoughts intent," hurried to and fro with excited energy to prepare for His proper entertainment. Her sister Mary, too, was anxious to receive Him fittingly, but her notions of the reverence due to Him were of a different kind. Both loved the Savior, but they manifested their love differently. Jesus did not disapprove of Martha and her carefulness as a cook in providing for His comfort; but He especially appreciated the spirit of Mary, which drew her to His feet to hear the wonderful words of life. Hers was the better part, Jesus said. So, then, in our service for the Master let us have this in mind, that He is especially pleased when we give earnest attention to His words and seek to be filled with and guided by His Holy Spirit.

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful, and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her."--Luke 10:41, 42.

Every day and every hour we are confronted with conflicting interests and propositions. We are continually making choice between these, either actively choosing or passively taking what we know will come if we refrain from action. The value of proper choice on these various propositions is but imperfectly understood and appreciated by the young. More and more as the years advance and we learn lessons of experience, we form what is called judgment; that is to say, we learn the importance of choosing rightly--that our future lives will

depend much upon ourselves, upon the shape we will give them by accepting or rejecting good or bad impulses and opportunities.

This has always been true to a considerable extent, but it is more true in our day than it ever was before, because we live in a time of larger opportunities than were at the disposal of our forefathers. Invention, machinery, the mail, the telegraph, the telephone, the printing press, multiply many fold our opportunities both for good and for evil, so that really our experiences and opportunities may be said to be at least sevenfold those of our forefathers. What a responsibility this places upon us--upon all men, and especially upon those who have been enlightened by Divine Truth and adopted into the family of God and commissioned to be ambassadors for God and to let their light so shine before men as to glorify the Father in heaven.

ARE WE CHOOSING THAT GOOD PART?

Throughout the Gospel Age those who have heard the Gospel Message with more or less distinctiveness have opportunities for choosing between the service and rewards of God and Mammon. How are we choosing on this question? If as the Apostle implies, this opportunity for choice was a great favor toward our Lord Jesus, if a great reward came to Him through obedience, how much more would it be wise for us who are "by nature children of wrath," overwhelmed in sin and its troubles, to accept the Divine favor with the great glory, honor and immortality attached and the privilege of joint-heirship in the Kingdom? What do we choose, dear brethren? Let us decide and never change that decision--that we will follow the Lord "through evil report and through good report," and be faithful to Him and His Cause and to His Word and to His brethren even unto death. This surely is a superlatively grand choice. We thus choose "that good part."

Our consecration to walk the Narrow Way in our Lord's footsteps implied a good degree of knowledge, and our acceptance by the Lord, our adoption into His family of sons implied a further increase of knowledge in the school of Christ. Such favors and such knowledge, the Apostle points out, bring responsibility and make the result momentous for life or death everlasting. His arguments are presented cogently in Hebrews 6:4-8 and 10:26-31. However, we are to remember that temptations and weaknesses cannot sweep such into Second Death, but only wilful, deliberate sin against light and knowledge. Straying ones will receive "stripes" for their correction and recovery, and only the wilfully evil will be counted among the "wicked" whom the Lord declares shall be "destroyed" in the Second Death.

GOOD, BETTER, AND BEST CHOICES

Our text refers to a choice between two good things, and intimates that those who are truly the Lord's may choose good or better. The thought of our text, therefore, seems to apply with special force to all those who have become sincerely the Lord's people. Martha chose a good part, she was indeed "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," and in all this her course, so far from being subject to reproof was, we are sure, highly appreciated by the Lord. Our Lord's contrast as between the two sisters, and His giving of special approval to the course of Mary, would probably not have been brought out, had not Martha murmured against her sister, thinking her indifferent to the proper hospitality of the home. Our Lord, who appreciated both of the sisters, took the opportunity to show to Martha that while her course was certainly estimable, and certainly appreciated, nevertheless the course of Mary was still more appreciated. Martha loved the Lord so that

she wanted to do for Him; Mary loved the Lord and the things which the Lord loved and delighted to talk about, to such an extent that she could not forego the pleasure of His company and fellowship. Much as

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GOD'S WILL CONCERNING THE CHURCH

"This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification."--1 Thess. 4:3,

IN our text the expression, "This is the will of God," is in the nature of advice rather than command. Considering the class to whom this advice is given, we find them to be those who desire to draw near to God and to have Him draw near to them. God has promised a great reward for submission to His will in every particular; and the Apostle Paul is stating what the will of God is concerning those who desire to live in nearness to Him. He tells them that it is God's will that they be fully set apart to His service; that they lay down their lives in His work; that in all the affairs of life their hearts should be set to know and to do His will.

In words of loving entreaty the Apostle elsewhere addresses this class, saying, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable, service." (Rom. 12:1.) The phrase, "Present your bodies," includes not only the primary presentation, but the continuation of the living sacrifice to the completion of the work. In other words, the Gospel Age is *the* acceptable time when God is willing to receive those who come unto Him through Christ. It is the time for His drawing, calling, those who are to become members of the Elect Church.

God's will for His believing people, justified by faith in the ransom and consecrated to His service, has always been the same as the Apostle stated, namely, "This is the will of God [concerning you], even your sanctification." To produce this sanctification in believers God has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises," and declares that the truth of His Word will produce the sanctification of character acceptable to Him--conformity to the image of His dear Son, our Redeemer.

Sanctification does not mean human perfection. It is the consecration, or devotion of the will, which through Christ is accepted of the Father as perfect; it is a consecration of the *body* to sacrifice--even unto death. As we have seen, that body is not made actually perfect through justification by faith, but merely reckonedly perfect, according to our will, our heart, our intention. The new will should seek to bring, every power, every talent, every endowment of its body, into full accord with the Lord, and should seek to exercise an influence in the same direction upon all with whom it comes in contact.

This does not mean, however, that in the few short years of the present life it will be able to bring its poor imperfect body to perfection. On the contrary, the Apostle assures us in connection with the Church, that in death it is sown in corruption, sown in weakness, sown in dishonor, sown a (an imperfect) natural body (1 Cor. 15:42-44); and that not until in the resurrection we are given new bodies, strong, perfect, glorious, immortal,

shall we have attained the perfection which we seek and which the Lord promises shall be ours eventually, if in the present time of weakness and imperfection we manifest to Him the loyalty of our hearts.

Our text, as well as many other portions of the Scriptures, teaches us that the great work which God asks of us is not for others, but is a work in ourselves, subduing, conquering, ruling *self*. Everything else, therefore, our doing service to the household of faith, our doing good unto all men, by home or foreign missions, etc., is subservient to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle by inspiration declares, though we should preach the Gospel eloquently to others, and though we should give all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for a good cause, we should be nothing from the Divine viewpoint, without love the spirit of Christ and of the Father--developed in us as the ruling principle of life. (1 Cor. 13:3.) But before we can "put on love--the bond of perfectness" and have its rule established, we have many enemies to *put out*.

OUR THREE GREAT FOES

The heart is the battleground on which the Holy Spirit helps us to wage warfare against the enemies which since the Adamic fall have taken possession of the human mind. Our battle is to be against sin, the great taskmaster, which captured our race more than six thousand years ago. Satan, the great master or general of sin, is our enemy, and has largely to do with the various influences against which we must contend. We are not, however, to battle directly with Satan, though we are to "resist" him; that is, we are to resist his influence, his deceptions, and his endeavors to lead us into error and into sin. We should be powerless against this great enemy. Were it not that our Lord Jesus has conquered sin, and that He is on our part, so that we can confidently say, Greater is He that is on our part than all they that be against us.

Again, our battle is with the world. By this we do not mean that our battle is with our fellow-creatures; for blinded by the Adversary, they are little, if at all, accountable for their course. We are to do battle against "the spirit of the world" and its influences. The disposition of the world, the mind of the world, the motives which actuate the World, the ambitions of the world, the pride of life, and the deceitfulness of riches--the wrong views of matters as seen from the worldly standpoint--we are to resist, to fight against. And it is a *daily* battle.

Finally, our battle is with the flesh--our own flesh. Ever since sin captured our race, its slavery has been conducive to mental, moral, and physical degradation. Its every tendency has been toward evil, and that continually; and although our Lord Jesus had compassion on us and redeemed us from slavery to sin, with His own precious blood, yet we have in our bodies the motions, the tendencies toward sin.

So, although we are now free, and are with the mind serving the Law of Christ, and although we have covenanted to battle for righteousness, truth, goodness, and purity we find our new selves harassed by the old perverted tastes and inclinations of our flesh toward the service of the old taskmaster. Not the least of our battles, therefore, is against these perverted tendencies of our flesh; and the battle with these is also a daily battle. With the great Apostle Paul we should be able to say, "*I keep my body [my flesh and its desires] under*"--in subjection to my new will, the New Creature.

From, the moment we make a full consecration of ourselves unto death in the service of the Lord, He reckons our flesh as dead, and begets us as New Creatures. Our new minds are alive toward God with a newness of life.

Hence those motions of sin which we are seeking to bring into absolute subjection to the will of God in Christ are not recognized by the Lord as the will or the motions of the New Creature enlisted in His service, but merely as a part of the general enemy, sin, pursuing after and battling with us. These we are pledged to resist, and to war against; and to overcome these He promises sufficient grace and help.

OUR DAILY BATTLE WITH SELF

These enemies in our own flesh cause us the greatest difficulties. To these Satan appeals; these he seeks to encourage in the warfare against the new spirit of our minds; through these the spirit of the world gains closest approach to us, and seeks to capture us and lead us back as captives to sin. So to speak, the "New Creature in Christ" is beset, surrounded on every hand with enemies seeking its disaster and re-enslavement. We must battle for ourselves, for our own liberty, for victory over our own weaknesses; we must battle against the spirit of the world, against delusions and snares of the Adversary by which he would make evil things appear good, and right to appear undesirable. No wonder that the child of God is urged to be continually watchful; that he is urged to "put on the whole armor of God;" that he is cautioned in respect to his various wily foes and especially against those of his own flesh; that he is urged to faithfulness and loyalty of heart!

Heart-loyalty to the Lord means continual effort to bring all the conduct of our lives, yea, the very thoughts and intents of our hearts, into subjection to the Divine will. (2 Cor. 10:4, 5.) This is our first duty, our continual duty, and will be the end of our duty; for "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Be ye holy; for I [the Lord] am holy."--1 Peter 1:116.

Absolute holiness is to be the *standard* which our *minds* can gladly and fully endorse and *live up to*, but to which we can never attain actually and physically so long as we are subject to the frailties of our fallen natures and the besetments of the world and the Adversary. But day by day we are taught of God; and as we come to a fuller knowledge of His glorious character, and as the appreciation of it more and more fills our hearts, the new mind will more and more gain influence, strength, power, over the weaknesses of the flesh, whatever they may be--and these weaknesses vary with the different members of the Body.

If we be sanctified to God by the Truth, if our wills be dead and the Lord's will be fully accepted as ours, in thought, word, and deed, then we have attained the will of God, and shall win the prize as "overcomers," even if we have never had opportunity to preach, to give to the poor, or to suffer as martyrs for the Truth's sake. Let us all note well this point: "This is the Lord's will [concerning you], even *your* sanctification." Let *nothing* becloud or obscure this truth; but, let it *dominate our course in life*. Then if *God's will is really our will*, we have a clearly marked pathway before us.

But without doubt, before all such God will open opportunities to serve the Truth to others, to let their light shine to the glory of the Father and the blessing of fellow-creatures; for this is His command to us, and we may be sure He gives us no commands impossible to be obeyed. If you have been seeking opportunities of service and have found none, there must be something wrong; you may have been seeking some *special* service of your own preference (your old will meddling with your newly adopted will--the Lord's).

Possibly the great Teacher sees in you pride, which you would have been prompt to crush had you recognized it, but which hid itself from you under the cloak of "self-respect." Possibly the great Teacher by His providence and His Word is saying to you, "Whatsoever thy hand *findeth to do*, do it with thy might." (Eccl. 9:10.) Possibly He sees that you would be spoiled were He to give you a more important service for others, before you have learned the lesson of humility--all-important in God's sight.

"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God [to do whatever service His providence has made possible to you], that He may exalt you in due time."--1 Peter 5:6.

SANCTIFICATION THE RESULT OF LOVE OF GOD

True sanctification of the heart to the Lord means diligence in His service; a declaration of the Good Tidings to others; the building up of one another in the most holy faith. It also means that we do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially unto the household of faith; that in these various ways our lives, consecrated to the Lord, shall be laid down for the brethren day by day, opportunity by opportunity, as they shall come to us; that our love for the Lord, for the brethren, for our families and sympathetically for the world of mankind, will increasingly fill our hearts as we grow in grace, knowledge, and obedience to the Divine Word and example.--Gal. 6:10; 1 John 3:16.

Nevertheless, all this exercising of our energies for others, is merely one of the many ways in which by the Lord's providence our *own sanctification* may be accomplished. As iron sharpeneth iron, so our energies in behalf of others bring blessings to ourselves. Additionally, while we should more and more come to the condition of loving our neighbors as ourselves--especially the household of faith--yet the mainspring back of all this should be our supreme love for our Creator and Redeemer, and our desire to be and to do what would please Him. Our sanctification, therefore, must be primarily toward God and first affect our own hearts and wills and, as a result of such devotion to God, find its exercise in the interest of the brethren and of all men.

IS THE APOCALYPSE A JEWISH OR CHRISTIAN PROPHECY? - PART IV

HISTORY OF APOCALYPTIC INTERPRETATION

"Blessed, is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy."--Rev. 1: 3.

WE have in these words the voice of inspiration encouraging the Lord's true followers to study the Apocalypse. Two most interesting questions are suggested: First, To what extent have the Lord's people heeded this exhortation? Second, What conclusions have they come to regarding the scope and application of its sublime visions? A brief, general reply to these questions would be that they have been read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested by the, Church increasingly from the time they were given until the present time; and furthermore, while in the period previous to the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the followers of Christ who heeded the exhortation had no correct idea as to the length of time that would elapse before their complete fulfilment, they held that the visions portrayed the Church's history throughout the Age, and not merely a closing fragment of that history or that they referred to a Jewish remnant after the Church was glorified.

From Irenaeus (145 A. D.), a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, to Chrysostom and Jerome (345 A.D.), there was a very general agreement on the following matters which may truthfully be said to constitute the key to Apocalyptic interpretation.

1. That the "little horn" of Daniel 7, the 'man of sin" of 2 Thes. 2, and the "Beast" of Rev. 13, was to rule from Rome, and that these prophecies referred to one and the same power--the Antichrist.

2. That the hindrance to Antichrist's full development and rule, mentioned by St. Paul (2 Thes. 2), was the Roman emperors reigning in the city of Rome.

3. That the ten-horned Dragon and the ten-horned Beast of Rev. 12, 13, and 17, were the same as the fourth beast seen by Daniel (Dan. 7), and that they describe different aspects of the Roman empire.

4. That the "ten horns" on the Beast seen by St. John and on the fourth beast of Daniel referred to a division, future from St. John's day, of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms.

5. That when this breaking up of the Empire would take place, the predicted Antichrist would then begin to rule.

It is a most remarkable fact that all the noted expositors throughout the entire Age until now are agreed in these matters. It is true that the writers who lived during the first two and a half centuries supposed that when Antichrist became seated at Rome, his career would be a brief one. However, this is what we would suppose would be the case in view of the Divine rule of progressive interpretation of prophecy.

In proving the above statements we quote first Irenaeus. In his book "Against Heresies," chapter 26, he says, "John in the Apocalypse . . . teaches us what the ten horns shall be, [that is, the same] which were seen by Daniel?"

We thus see that this Christian writer, who lived only about half a century after St. John had the visions, linked together the vision of Daniel 7 with those visions that make up the much larger part of the Apocalypse.

Another quotation from Irenaeus (Book V, chap. 30) shows that he believed that the manifestation of Anti-christ would require first the overthrow of the Empire of Rome then existing. The quotation reads:

"Let them await, in the first place, the division of the kingdom into ten; then in the next place, when these kings are reigning, and beginning to set their affairs in order, and advance their kingdoms, let them learn to acknowledge, that he who shall come claiming the kingdom [dominion] for himself . . . and containing the aforesaid number (666), is truly the abomination of desolation."

What can be clearer than that this writer, who in all probability saw and conversed with St. John, believed that the Apocalypse was already beginning to have its fulfilment in his day (145 A. D.). His forecast, although he was ignorant of it, covered nearly four centuries, for it is an indisputable fact of history that in 476 A. D. the Roman Empire fell, and shortly after, in about 539 A. D., the Bishop of Rome was occupying the seat of the Roman emperors in the city of Rome, and was claiming supremacy in religious matters over all peoples of the Roman earth; and at this time the territory of the Empire was occupied by ten kingdoms.

Hippolytus, a Christian bishop, said to be a disciple of Irenaeus, in his work, "Christ and Antichrist" (pages 19 and 20) although referring especially to the "little horn" of Daniel 7, thus writes: "Rejoice blessed Daniel, thou hast not been in error, all things have come to pass . . . Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces; already it brings all the unwilling into subjection; already we see these things ourselves. Now we glorify God, being instructed by thee."

There is in existence a short treatise on Antichrist, ascribed to this same writer. In it there is a passage that is interesting from the fact that it plainly states that Antichrist would profess to be a representative of Christ. The passage reads: "The seducer will seek to appear in all things like the Son of God. As Christ a Lion, so he a lion; as Christ a King, so he a king,--as Christ a Savior, so he a savior; As Christ a Lamb, so he a lamb, though inwardly a wolf; as Christ sent out apostles to all nations, so will he similarly send out false apostles."

ROME, THE WESTERN BABYLON

Hippolytus held that the Babylon of the Apocalypse meant Rome. Referring to this he says: "Tell me, blessed John, apostle and disciple of the Lord, what didst thou see and hear concerning Babylon? Arise and speak for it sent thee also into banishment."

Indeed, all the early Christian writers held to this view. Tertullian, who lived contemporary with Irenaeus and Hippolytus, thus writes: "Babylon in our own John, [that is, the Apocalypse], is a figure of the city of Rome, as being equally proud of her sway over the saints."

Augustine, who was born 354 A. D., in his book, "City of God," says: "Rome, the second Babylon, and the daughter of the first, to which it pleased God to subject the whole world, and bring it all into one sovereignty is now founded." In another place in his book he calls Rome, "the western Babylon." In still another he says: "It has not been in vain that this city has received the mysterious name of Babylon; for Babylon is interpreted confusion, as we have said elsewhere."

How plain it is from these quotations that the early Church Fathers understood that the Babylon of the Apocalypse meant Rome. And this had always been the interpretation of the Historic school, although for the past eight centuries events have proved that Papal and not Pagan Rome was meant. It would not be possible for those Christians living under Pagan Rome to conceive that Rome Christian could ever become such a terrible persecutor of the saints as was seen later on. It required a further unfolding of Christian (?) history to reveal this to the saints of God.

It was very generally believed as far back as the middle of the second century that the fall of Rome was imminent and that therefore the advent of Antichrist was close at hand. Justin Martyr, who suffered death as a confessor of the Christian faith and who became a Christian only about twenty or thirty years after St. John's death, in his "Dialogue with Trypho," (chap. 33) says: "He whom Daniel foretells would have dominion for a 'time, times and a half' is already even at the door about to speak blasphemous and daring things against the Most High."

Cyprian, whose conversion to Christianity took place in 241 A. D., in his work, "Exhortation to Martyrdom," wrote: "Since the hateful time of Antichrist is already beginning to draw near, I would collect from the sacred Scriptures some exhortations for preparing and strengthening the minds of the brethren, whereby I might animate the soldiers of Christ, for the heavenly and spiritual contest."

Irenaeus and Hippolytus thus interpret the mysterious number of 666 of Rev. 13. They give as the interpretation the word *Lateinos*. Irenaeus says, "*Lateinos* is the number 666, and it is a very probable [solution], this being the name of the last kingdom, for the Latins are they who at present bear rule."

Victorinus wrote an exposition of the Apocalypse about the close of the third century. This is the earliest commentary in existence on the whole book. He interprets the going forth of the rider on the white horse, under the first seal, to have reference to the victories of the Gospel in the first century. It will be seen that this view involves the Historical interpretation of the entire book of the Revelation.

MAN OF SIN HINDERED FOR A TIME

Chrysostom, at the close of the fourth century in his commentary on 2 Thessalonians, makes a very interesting and indeed valuable statement concerning what St. Paul referred to as the "let" or hindrance to the revelation of the "man of sin." He thus refers to this matter: "One may naturally inquire, what is that which withholdeth--and after that why Paul expresses himself so obscurely . . . 'he who, now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.' That is, when the Roman empire is taken out of the way, then he shall come; and naturally, for as long as the fear of this empire lasts, no one will readily exalt himself; but when that is dissolved, he will attack the anarchy, and endeavor to seize upon the government, both of men and of God. For as the kingdoms before this were destroyed, that of the Medes by the Babylonians, that of the Babylonians by the Persians, that of the Persians by the Macedonians, that of the Macedonians by the Romans, so will this be by Antichrist, and be by Christ."

Chrysostom then gives a reason why St. Paul was so reserved in mentioning in his letter what the hindrance was, although he said he knew what it was and reminded the Thessalonian Christians in 'his epistle that he told them what it was when he was with them. Chrysostom, giving the Apostle's reason for his reserve, says: "Because he [St. Paul] says this of the Roman empire, he naturally only glanced at it and spoke covertly, for he did not wish to bring upon himself superfluous enmities and useless dangers, for if he had said that after a little while the Roman empire would be dissolved, they would now immediately overwhelm him as a pestilent person, and [also] all the faithful as living and warring to this end [that is, for the overthrow of the empire]."

Tertullian who flourished the latter part of the second century informs us that the Christian Church--not himself mark, but the Christian Church--prayed for the emperors of Rome, and for the stability of the empire, because they knew "that a mighty shock impending over the whole earth . . . was only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman empire."

Finally, in concluding these quotations which prove the character of Apocalyptic interpretation up to the beginning of the fourth century, we quote from Origen, (born 185 A. D.), in his famous book against the Pagan writer Celsus, who was an opposer of Christianity: "Paul speaks of him who is called Antichrist, describing, though with a certain reserve, both the manner and time and cause of his coming . . . The prophecy also regarding Antichrist is stated, in the book of Daniel, and is fitted to make an intelligent and candid reader admire the words as truly Divine, and prophetic, for in them are mentioned the things relating to the coming Kingdom, beginning with the time of Daniel to the destruction of the world."

FULFILMENT SEEN MORE CLEARLY IN MODERN TIMES

We close this brief summary of Apocalyptic interpretation for the first three centuries after the visions were given, in the language of a late eminent writer. He says, "It should be noted that none of the Fathers held the futurist gap theory, the theory that the book of Revelation overleaps nearly eighteen centuries of Christian history, plunging at once into the distant future, and devoting itself entirely to predicting the events of the last few years of this dispensation. As to the subject of Antichrist, there was a universal agreement among them concerning the general idea of the prophecy, while there were differences as to details, these differences arising chiefly from the notion that the Antichrist would be in some way, Jewish as well as Roman. It is true they thought that, the Anti-christ would be an individual man. Their early position sufficiently accounts for this. They had no conception, and could have no conception of the true nature and length of the tremendous apostasy, which was to set in upon the Christian Church. They were not prophets and could not foresee that the Church was to remain nineteen centuries in the wilderness, and to pass through prolonged and bitter persecution under a succession of nominally, Christian but apostate rulers, filling the place of the ancient Caesars, and emulating their Anti-christian deeds. Had they known these things, we may well believe their views would have completely harmonized with those of Historic interpreters of later times. The Fathers went as far as they could go in the direction in which Historical interpreters of these last days have traveled. Further, much that was dark to them in prophecy has become clear to their successors in the light of its accomplishment. Divine providence has thrown light, as it could not fail to do, on Divine predictions."

It was only about thirty years before the days of this last writer--Chrysostom,--that the last great persecution of the Church by the Pagan government ended. It was at this point in history that the Roman government was changed from Pagan to Christian(?). The persecutions of Pagan Rome had, to a large extent, the effect of holding all Christians together. It is true that many errors in doctrine had crept into the Church, but on the whole the Church was loyal to Christ. In Constantine's day the Church and State became united, and worldliness and error, like a flood soon engulfed the simple, pure religion of Christ.

It was at this time that many true Christians began to separate from this great formal profession. These separations continued to go on until, the overthrow of the Imperial government and the official recognition of the Roman bishop (about 539 A. D.) as the religious ruler of Christendom. The true, loyal followers of Christ from this latter event, and even earlier, until the Reformation in the sixteenth century were quite generally

looked upon by the great nominal Church as heretics. These, as the records of history show, all interpreted the visions of the Apocalypse that we have above cited, as having their fulfilment in the great apostate Church system--the Papacy. Roman Catholic writers, however, during this period, generally applied these visions as having had their fulfilment in Pagan Rome, although there were some writers who remained in the nominal system, who continued to look for the Antichrist, and applied the Apocalyptic visions as covering the history of the Gospel Age to the consummation. Among these were Primiasius, who lived in the middle of the sixth century; the Venerable Bede, who lived in England at the close of the seventh century; Ambrose Anspert, who lived in the middle of the eighth century; Andreas, at the same time, who was a bishop of the Church in Caesarea. All of these interpreted the Apocalypse as covering the whole period of the Gospel Age, and were, therefore of the Historic school.

The period in which these expositors wrote was marked by the Papacy's gradual attainment of temporal dominion over the kingdoms of Western Rome. At the beginning of the eleventh century all the kingdoms of Europe were submitting to its control, and indeed giving a voluntary support to it, and were being employed by Papacy to persecute the saints of God even, unto death. In the beginning of the tenth and eleventh centuries, some writers began to clearly recognize in Papacy the long predicted Antichrist. There were at this time numbers of true Christians connected with the great professing Church. Referring to these an eminent expositor has said: "Two notions contributed powerfully to prevent their recognizing in the imperfectly developed Papacy the predicted 'Man of Sin'. They imagined that as the Eastern Empire of Rome, seated at Constantinople, still continued, the 'let,' or hindrance to the manifestation of the Antichrist remained, completely overlooking the fact that the Anti-christian power foretold in prophecy is definitely linked with the seven hills of Rome, and thus with the fall of the Western Empire, and the apostasy of the Latin or Western Church. Then they spiritualized and explained away a great deal of prophecy, and supposed that they were living in the Millennium, and that Antichrist would not be manifested till the brief outbreak of evil at its close. This false notion had fatal consequences. While these interpreters, in common with the generality of Christians at that period, were looking for the advent of the 'man of sin,' in the distant future, he stole unperceived into their midst and usurped the place of Christ over his unwatchful flock."

Just before 1000 A. D. Gherbert of Rheims said of the pope that he was "Antichrist sitting in the temple of God." In the eleventh century Berenger affirmed the Roman See to be "not the Apostolic seat, but the seat of Satan."

THE FAITHFUL CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS

During this whole period, however, there were little companies of believers, separated from civilization, as it were, who saw clearly in the succession of Roman bishops, the Antichrist of the Apocalypse. The Waldensian Christians claimed that their forefathers left the nominal Church in the days of Constantine in the fourth century. However, we do not begin to have mention of them by that name in history until about the twelfth century. They have been generally called the "Israel of the Alps." They lived in what is called the Waldensian valleys. They were true Protestants long before the Reformation. They were lovers and students of prophecy from the oldest times. There is in existence a faithful history of this people written two hundred and fifty years ago by one of their pastors, Leger by name. It will be foreign to the purpose of this article to relate the terrible persecutions that these Christian confessors suffered at the hands of Rome. These matters are well authenticated events of history. The question before us is, How did these suffering saints interpret the Apocalypse? A noted writer of the nine-teenth century, referring to Leger's history of the Waldenses, thus writes: "Leger tells with

simple clearness the story of the Waldenses from the earliest times, quoting from ancient and authentic documents. He gives in full their confession of faith, and narrates the history of their martyrdoms . . . Here in this book of Leger's is their *Treatise on Antichrist*, written in the year 1120, or nearly 800 years ago. It is written in a language now extinct; Leger gives a French translation in parallel columns. In simple, telling terms that treatise brands the Romish Church as the harlot Babylon, and the Papacy as the "man of sin," and Antichrist. That was the faith and confession of the Waldenses.."

Another body of Christian confessors commonly called the Albigenses, lived in the south of France, in Provence and Catalonia. History informs us that they were a civilized and highly educated people. In the year 1208, we have mention of them as undergoing terrible persecution at the instigation of the Papacy. "Among these people there sprang up an extensive revival of true religion, and one of the natural effects was a bold testimony against the abominations of apostate Rome." Sismondi, the great Italian historian of whom it is said that "his mind was to the last open to truth; neither fettered by prejudice nor blinded by self conceit and whose feelings on religious questions were especially intense," having on one occasion heard a sermon in an English church on eternal punishment, he vowed never again to enter another church holding the same creed; and, to quote his own words, "never to contribute to spread what the English call their reformation; for by its side Romanism is a religion of mercy and peace." (International Encyclopedia.) This man surely was an unprejudiced historian. In his history of the Albigenses, on page 7, he relates how these Christian confessors as well as the Waldensian confessors, interpreted the vision of Babylon of the Apocalypse. He says: "All agreed in regarding the Church of Rome, as having absolutely perverted Christianity, and in maintaining that it was she who was designated in the Apocalypse by the name of the whore of Babylon."

DANTE WRITES OF THE PAPACY

It will not seem strange to any one that Rome could not endure such a testimony, and it was at this particular period that Rome began that terrible war of exterminating heretics. The prophecies concerning this are mentioned in both Daniel and the Apocalypse. (Dan. 7:21; Rev. 13:7.) It was in these times that Dante, the great Italian poet lived. A noted writer has said concerning Dante that "He described his age with extraordinary power. Writing in the thirteenth century, and in Italy, he painted the Papacy as the world beheld it then. And what did the world see then? It saw in the Papacy, the usurping 'man of sin,' and in the Church of Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse. Mark, even the world saw it. Hear a few lines from Dante's immortal poem on Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise:

'Woe to thee, Simon Magus! woe to you
His wretched followers, who the things of God
Which should be wedded unto goodness, them,
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute
For gold and silver!
'Your avarice

O'ercasts the world with mourning; under foot
Treading the good, and raising bad men up,

Of shepherds like to you; the Evangelist
Was aware, when her, who sits upon the waves,
With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld
She who with seven heads towered at her birth,
And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.
Of gold and silver ye have made your god,
Differing wherein from the idolator,
But that he worships one, a hundred ye?
Ah, Constantine to how much ill gave birth
Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
Which the first wealthy Father gained from thee!"

"In his poem on Paradise, he says:

My place he who usurps on earth hath made
A common sewer of puddle and of blood
No purpose was of ours that the keys
Which were vouchsafed me should for ensigns serve
Under the banners that do levy war --
On the baptized; nor I for sigil mark
Set upon sold and lying privileges,
Which makes me oft to bicker and turn red.
In shepherds clothing greedy wolves below
Range wide o'er all the pastures.
Arm of God Why longer sleepest thou?"

"In the end of his poem on Paradise, he refers to the Apostle John as

. . The seer
That ere he died saw all the grievous times
Of the fair bride, who with the lance and nails
Was won."

OTHER DEFENDERS OF THE TRUTH

The name John Huss is well known to every student of Christian history. He was martyred--martyred by Rome as a Christian confessor. He lived in the early part of the fifteenth century--over a hundred years before the Protestant Reformation. How did he interpret the Apocalypse? His exact words are preserved on this matter. We quote from "Acts and Monuments," Vol. III, pages 497, 498, an epistle addressed by him to the people of Prague: "The more circumspect ye ought to be, for that Antichrist laboureth the more to trouble you. The last judgment draweth near but to the elect children of God, the kingdom of God draweth near . . . Know ye well beloved, that Antichrist being stirred up against you deviseth divers persecutions."

From the same authority we have a letter addressed by Huss to the Lord John de Chum having special reference to the Apocalyptic harlot of Rev. 17. It reads: "By your letter which I received yesterday I understand first, how the malignant strumpet, that is of the malignant congregation, whereof mention is made in the Apocalypse, is detected, and shall be more detected; with which strumpet the kings of the earth do commit fornication, fornicating spiritually with Christ; and as is there said sliding back from the truth, and consenting to the lies of Antichrist, through his seduction, and through fear, or through hope of confederacy for getting worldly honor."

We quote from another letter addressed to his friends to comfort them, and exhorting them not to be troubled because of the burning of his books. His letter reads, "Master John Huss, in hope, the servant of God, to all the faithful, who love Him and His statutes, wisheth the truth and grace of God . . .

"Surely even at this day is the malice, the abomination, and filthiness of Antichrist revealed in the pope and others of this council . . .

"Oh how acceptable a thing should it be, if time would suffer me to disclose their wicked acts, which are now apparent; that the faithful servants of God might know them! I trust in God that He will send after me those that shall be more valiant; and there are alive at this day that shall make more manifest the malice of Antichrist, and shall give their lives to the death for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall give both to you and me the joys of life everlasting.

"This epistle was written upon St. John Baptist's day, in prison and in cold irons; I having this meditation with myself, that John was beheaded in prison and bonds for the Word of God."

We call attention also to John Wycliffe, whose learning as well as simple faith and manly courage have never been questioned. He lived in the fourteenth century, and translated the Scriptures into English. He testified fearlessly against the abominations and errors of the Church of Rome. He interpreted the Apocalypse just as the Waldenses did. He wrote a special treatise called "The Mirror of Antichrist." From Wycliffe sprang the English Lollards, whose interpretations of the Apocalypse were the same as their leader. Lord Cobham, one of the Lollards, when brought before King Henry V and "admonished to submit himself to the pope as an obedient child gave this answer: "As touching the pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, for as much as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great Antichrist, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and an abomination standing in the holy place." This faithful confessor was condemned to death as a heretic.

(Continued in next issue)

YOUR "GOOD HOPES"--1923 YOUR "GOOD HOPES"--1923

[The plan here proposed we designate "GOOD HOPES," because nothing is actually promised--only your generous hopes expressed, based upon your future prospects as they now appear to you. The plan has proved not only so beneficial to the cause of truth, but also so blessed to the hoppers, in the past, that we again commend it to all as Scriptural and good. Those who desire to make use of this plan can fill out both of these memoranda. One should be kept for the refreshment of your memory; the other mail to us.]

To the

"PASTORAL BIBLE INSTITUTE."

Dear Friends:--I have read with interest of the privilege and opportunities that are opening up for the spread of the truth. I need not tell you that I am deeply interested in the spread of the Glad Tidings of the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of redeeming love expressed for us in God's great Plan of the Ages.

I am anxious to use myself--every power, every talent, voice, time, money, influence, all--to give to others this knowledge, which has so greatly blessed, cheered and comforted my own heart and placed my feet firmly upon the Rock of Ages.

I have been considering carefully, and praying to be instructed, how to use my various talents more to my Redeemer's glory and for the service of His people--those blinded by human tradition who are, nevertheless, hungering for "the good Word of God," and those also who are naked, not having on the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, the unjustified, who stand at best in the filthy rags of their own righteousness. I have decided that so far as my "*money talent*" goes, I will follow the rule so clearly laid down for us by the great Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 16:2), and will lay aside on the first day of each week, according to my thankful appreciation of the Lord's blessings during the preceding week. Out of this fund I wish to contribute to the several parts of the Lord's work. Of course, I cannot in advance judge or state particularly what the Lord's bounty may *enable me* to set apart weekly, and hence you will understand the sum indicated to be merely my conjecture or hope, based upon present prospects. I will endeavor to contribute more than I here specify; and should I not succeed in doing as well, the Lord will know my heart, and you, also, will know of my endeavors.

My only object in specifying in advance what I *hope* to be able to do in this cause is to enable those in charge of the work of publishing and circulating the truth, etc., to form estimates, lay plans, make contracts, etc., with some idea of what I will at least *try* to do in the exercise of this my highly appreciated privilege.

My present judgment is that during the coming year, by self-denial and cross-bearing, I shall be able to lay aside on the first day of each week for Home and Foreign Mission Work (to assist in the general circulation of the

truth, and in publishing free literature in various languages, and in supplying these gratuitously to Brethren who have the heart and opportunity to circulate them widely, and in meeting the expenses of Brethren sent out as "Pilgrims" to preach the Divine Plan of Salvation, and in general to be expended as the officers of the Institute, may deem best), the amount of

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To comply with United States Postal Laws, all or any portion of my donation may be applied as subscription price for The Herald or free literature sent to the Lord's Poor or others, as the Institute's officers may deem advisable.

That the work be not hindered, I will endeavor to send you what I shall have laid aside for this cause at the close of each quarter. I will secure a Bank Draft, Express Order or Postal Money Order as I may find most convenient, and will address the letter to the

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HERALD SUBSCRIPTIONS

--ON GOOD HOPES ACCOUNT--

The friends who contribute to the "Good Hopes" (described on the reverse of this sheet) at times desire to send *The Herald* to friends who are not yet interested enough to subscribe, for themselves; or to deeply interested friends who are too poor to subscribe and backward about accepting our, *Lord's Poor* offer they are invited to give us such addresses below--the expense to be deducted from their donations. Give full addresses, and write very plainly please, mentioning the length of the subscriptions.

BEREAN STUDIES IN THE REVELATION

STUDY CLVIII--JANUARY 7

WIPING AWAY OF ALL TEARS--Rev. 21: 3

(841) In what sense will God dwell with humanity when His Tabernacle is with men? and how will they become His people? H '21-72.

(842) Explain the meaning of St. Paul's words found in 1 Cor. 15:24-29, in this connection. H '21-72.

(843) Of what is the wiping away of tear's symbolical? and when can it be said, "there shall be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying, nor any more pain"? H '21-72.

(844) What has been God's attitude toward humanity during the long ages while He has been waiting the time of blessing to come? H '21-72.

(845) What will be required of mankind in order to have all tears wiped away, and to have death swallowed up in victory? H '21-72, 73.

STUDY CLIX--JANUARY 14 -

THESE WORDS TRUE AND FAITHFUL--Rev. 21: 5, 6

(846) What is signified by the statement, "Behold I make all things new"? H '21-73.

(847) What is the import of the expression, "Write, for these words are true and faithful"? Why have these words appeared untrue? H '21-73.

(848) What Special premium is, placed upon the faith of those who can see, and believe, and act upon these things prior to the time of their fulfilment? H '21-73.

(849) Who utters the expression "they have been done"? and what does it signify? H '21-74.

(850) What is the Father's good pleasure concerning His only begotten Son during the Millennial Age and subsequently? H '21-74.

STUDY CLX--JANUARY 21

THE DESTINY OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

Rev. 21:6, 7, 8.

(851) What is comprehended in the statement, "To the thirsty one I will freely give water from the fountain of life"? and what will be the nature of that life provided? H '21-74.

(852) Of whom are the words addressed, "The conqueror shall, inherit these things"? Explain the difference between the promise to the overcomers of this Age and those of the Millennial Age. H '21-74.

(853) Who are those referred to as cowards, unbelievers, abominable, etc.? H '21-74.

1 (854) Why will no further effort be made to reclaim and save these unto eternal life? H '21-74.

(855) What is the meaning of the Lake of Fire and Sulphur, or the Second Death, to which this class is assigned? Explain the difference between the First and Second Death. H '21-74.

MAN'S GREAT DELIVERER--REVIEW

--DECEMBER 31 --

Golden Text.--"The spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor."--Luke 4:18.

THE closing lesson of the year is a review of the quarter's study of the blessed Redeemer. The words of the Prophet Isaiah (9:6): "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace," serve well to congregate and crystallize all of our previous studies of the

wonderful character and work of the Prince of Life, the world's Redeemer, the Church's Advocate, and soon to be the world's Mediator.

Many are the names of the Son of man--the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. The first name given in the list of the Prophet is Wonderful and is surely appropriate. His is the most wonderful career and the most wonderful character of which we have any knowledge. Who else than He left the glories of the heavenly state for human conditions? As He Himself said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven save He which came down from heaven." (John 3:13.) He alone left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was; He alone exercised that wonderful faith in the Father which permitted Him to sacrifice everything with joy, delighting to do the Father's will, with confidence that in due time the rewards of the Father's favor and love would more than compensate for every sacrifice.

Wonderful, too, was His life amongst men, the Light shining in the darkness, the darkness comprehending it not. More and more as we come into the light ourselves we are able to comprehend this Wonderful One. As the Apostle suggests, the eyes of our understanding being opened we are able to comprehend with all saints the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God which passes all understanding, such love being manifested, exhibited, illustrated in this Wonderful One. Wonderful also was His resurrection, the "first that should rise from the dead . . . the first-born amongst many brethren . . . highly exalted, given a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."--Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18; Phil. 2:9, 10.

The second name on the list, "Counsellor," is also appropriate. Who else is such a Counsellor? Who else is able to be touched with the feeling of our infirmities? Who else is able always to guide us with his eye? Who else has assured us that all things shall work together for our good? Happy are they who have made the acquaintance of this Counsellor, whom God hath set forth to be the satisfaction for our sins and to be the Counsellor, the Leader, the Guide, the Instructor of His people, and to bring them out of darkness into His marvelous light, out of the chains of sin and bondage of death back to full liberty of the sons of God. Let us more and more heed the voice that speaketh from heaven, our Counsellor.

LET US EXULT IN THIS MIGHTY ONE

"The Mighty God," another of His names, is also appropriate. If the angels were called Elohim, gods, and if the angels appearing to men in the past were called Elohim, gods, because they were the representatives of Divine power, surely much more appropriate is the name to Him whom the Father especially sent as His special messenger to men. If Elohim signifies a mighty one, surely He is above the other mighty ones, next to the Father Himself, and may therefore most properly be termed the mighty Elohim--the Mighty God--the one mighty amongst the mighty. "Mighty to save" we sometimes sing; yea, says the Word of the Lord, "He is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto the Father through Him. (Heb. 7:25.) Such a mighty Savior we need, one not only able to sympathize with us and to instruct us, but able also to deliver us from the Evil One and from our own weaknesses as well as from the Divine sentence against our race as sinners. Let us exult in this "Mighty One," whom the heavenly Father, Jehovah, has sent forth as the Arm of Jehovah for deliverance from sin and death.

The title "Everlasting Father" will in due time be appropriately His--but not yet. These words are a prophecy; some of them have been already fulfilled and others are yet to be fulfilled. When they were written Jesus had not yet left the heavenly glory. Jesus is not the everlasting Father to the Church. No, the Scriptures reveal Him as our elder Brother, and again as our Bridegroom. The Apostle most explicitly tells us that Jehovah is our Father, saying, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us"--we are His children. The dear Redeemer Himself taught us to pray, "Our Father which art in heaven"; and again after His resurrection He sent the message to Peter and others of His followers, "I ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God."--John 20:17.

In due time He will be the everlasting Father to the world--to those of the world who, during the Millennial Age, will hearken to His voice and receive of His life--restitution blessings. Jesus purchased Adam and all of his children by the sacrifice of Himself: they are His, to make out of them everything possible and to bring as many as possible back into harmony with the Father and to eternal life. They died under Divine condemnation; what they now need is life, and the Father has arranged that Jesus may be their Life-Giver, and to this end He has already given His life, purchased them, that in due time, during His Millennial Kingdom, He may offer them the return of all that was lost in Adam, for it is, written, "He came to seek and to save that which was lost."

PRINCE OF PEACE AND KING OF GLORY

Since that life which Jesus will give to the world during the Millennial Age is the fruitage of His own sacrifice, therefore He is said to be the Father, the Life-Giver, to the world. And since the life that He will give will not be merely a temporary one, but by obedience to Him all those who receive of His life may be brought to perfection, and maintain that life eternally, therefore He is the Everlasting Father. He will give the everlasting life in contra-distinction to Adam, who attempted to be the Father to the race, but through his disobedience brought forth his children to a dying condition. Not so the everlasting life: the life which Jesus will give to His children during the period of the Millennium, and which will accomplish the regeneration of the world, or of so many of the world as will accept His favor, will be unto life eternal.

Not yet is He the Prince of Peace and King of Glory, but very soon He will take unto Himself His great power and reign. Far from peaceful will be its beginning. The Scriptural description is that the nations will be angry and Divine wrath will come upon them, and that they shall be broken in pieces as a potter's vessel: that the Lord will speak to them in His sore displeasure, and, that there will be a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.--Psa. 2:5; Dan. 12: 1.

But the Lord wounds to heal, He chastises to correct, and will not "keep His anger forever," but will ultimately prove that He is "plenteous in mercy." The result of His righteous indignation against sin and all unrighteousness and iniquity will be the establishment of justice upon a firm footing throughout the world. Then as a consequence peace will reign and the King of Glory will be known as the Prince of Peace, whose blessings will fill the earth for the refreshment of every creature and the bringing of so many as will into full harmony with God through the processes of restitution.

As we long for the glorious day, let us prepare our hearts that we may be approved of the King--that we may be accepted even as His Bride through His mercy and grace. Let us not forget that there are conditions expressed

by the Apostle in the words, "If we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him," "If we be dead with Him we shall also live with Him"--"heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified together." A little while and the trials shall be over; a little while and if faithful we shall have the crown and hear the blessed words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joys of thy Lord. Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."--Matt. 25:21, 23.

JESUS HEALING ON THE SABBATH

--JANUARY 7--LUKE 13:10-17--

Golden Text.--"It is lawful to do good on the sabbath day."--Matthew 12:12.

THERE was no Sabbath day before the Jewish Law, given by Moses, except in the sense that the word Sabbath signifies rest, and that we are informed that God rested on the seventh great Day, or Epoch, of the Creative Week. Enoch, who walked with God, Abraham, the friend of God, and others pleasing to the Lord, knew nothing about the Sabbath, even as they knew nothing about the Atonement Day and its sacrifices, or other matters appertaining to Israel's Law Covenant.

Much confusion prevails amongst Christian people respecting the Sabbath day. One fruitful source of this confusion is that few realize that God's arrangements with the followers of Jesus are totally different from those which He made with natural Israel under the Law Covenant. Everything under that Covenant was a type and contained a valuable lesson for Christians, but to mistake the type for the antitype is to confuse our minds and to miss the beauty and force of the antitype.

The Apostle Paul explains that the Israelites were a house of servants, under Moses, but that the Church is a house of sons, under Christ. (Heb. 3: 1-6.) God's method of dealing with the house of servants would very properly be different from His method of dealing with the house of sons. Commands are given to the servants without explanation why or wherefore. But the Apostle explains that God deals with us as with sons. To the true Christian the Heavenly Father makes known His plans, His purposes, His arrangements, in order that His sons, who have His spirit, may sympathetically enter into those plans, by obedience to the extent of self-sacrifice, not because of command, but because of joy to do the Father's will.

Jesus and the Apostles were Jews, and were under obligation to the Law Covenant up to the time that! Jesus by His death became the "end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Since that time the followers of Jesus are in no sense of the word bound by the Jewish Law. They are interested in the Ten Commandments, because those commandments in an outward way indicate the will of God; and all the sons of God are anxious to know the Father's will, that they may voluntarily do it. But God does not address the house of sons, "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal;" for so surely as they have been begotten of the Holy Spirit at all, they will not wish to kill, nor wish to steal.

In dealing with the house of sons of God, through the Head of the House, has set up a new law, which is all-comprehensive and means much more than the Law of Moses was previously understood to signify. It is the Law of Love. As the Apostle declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." The Law is comprehended in the one

word Love--love supreme for God, and love for our fellow men. Finally, Jesus declared, "A new command I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." This He said to us who are laying down our lives one for the other.

SEVENTH DAY--FIRST DAY

Early in the Gospel Dispensation the followers of Jesus began to meet on the first day of the week. Apparently the custom had its start in the fact that Jesus rose from the dead on that day, and appeared several times on that day to His followers; and on the following first day of the week He appeared again. It became a custom amongst the disciples to have their fellowship on that day, not that it was commanded of the Lord, but because of their desire to remember the Master and to have fellowship with each other. Quite probably they kept the Sabbath day and the first day as well, for a time. They evidently had difficulty in realizing how completely they had passed from the domination of Moses and his Law to be under the headship of Jesus and His guidance--"the liberty wherewith Christ makes free" indeed.

Although Christians have now abandoned the observance of the seventh day in favor of the first day of the week, many erroneously think that God authorized the change. But not so, the Christian is not under law, but under grace. It was from privilege that the early disciples met together on the first day, and not by instruction of God. So it should be still, and so it is yet with some. True Christians cannot have too much opportunity for fellowship together for the study of the Heavenly Father's Word, and for offering Him the Worship and homage of their hearts.

True Christians undoubtedly are glad that there is a special day of the week set apart, in which they can more particularly give themselves to prayer, worship, praise, and Bible study, and good works--even though the enforcement of such a Sunday be by human law and through a misconception. Glad would many of the Lord's people be if their earthly affairs were so arranged as to permit of two Sundays in each week, or more. But in order to enjoy Sunday properly, the Lord's consecrated people should be freed from the misconceptions which so generally prevail.

THE SABBATH OF REST

Israel's Law provided two Sabbaths. One, every seventh year, found its multiple and fulfilment in the fiftieth year, the year of jubilee and of full release. The other was every seventh day, and found its fulfilment through its multiple, in the fiftieth day--the day of Pentecost--the day which foreshadowed the rest into which the people of God may enter even now.

The Apostle refers to both of these in Hebrews 4: 11. The Sabbath day has its fulfilment in the rest and peace of heart enjoyed by the antitypical Israelites. It is a perpetual Sabbath with them. They enter into rest. They have reached that place where they have the peace of God ruling in their hearts. They rest from their own works--from all hope that they could commend themselves to God by works of any kind, Sabbath keeping or otherwise. They enter into rest because they see that God has provided in Jesus the help necessary for all, that they are

"complete in Him." This rest or peace no man taketh from them. It is theirs so long as they abide by faith in Christ, in God.

The Apostle points out (Heb. 4: 1-11), "there remaineth a rest for the people of God"--a future rest. The Church will enter into that rest when they experience their resurrection change, when they are made like the Savior and enter into the joys of their Lord. That will be the complete rest. So far as the world is concerned the great Messiah's reign of a thousand years will be the Sabbath of the world in general, in which they will have the privilege of attaining perfection in every sense of the word and thus will enter into rest by coming into harmony with God.

Jesus did many of His miracles on the Sabbath days, partly, no doubt to emphasize the fact that the great Sabbath, the thousand-year Day, the seventh thousand year Day of earth's history, will be the time of His Kingdom, in which all mankind will be privileged to be healed from sin and sickness, sorrow and pain, and to be brought to the full perfection of human nature, to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary.

THE WOMAN WITH THE SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY

In the lesson before us we have an instance of healing on the Sabbath. A woman had an infirmity which had bowed her down for eighteen years. Jesus released her from her bondage on a Sabbath day. He laid His hands upon her and said, "Thou art loosed from thine infirmity;" and she was made straight and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue was indignant and said unto the people, There are six days in which you can come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.

This was intended as a special rebuke to Jesus, intimating that He was not so holy and so careful of the Sabbath as He should be, but was a violator of the Law. But Jesus replied: "Ye hypocrites! doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to water? and ought not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bondage on the Sabbath day?" and His adversaries were put to shame.

The comment of Canon Farrar on this incident well deserves a place in this connection:

"On this day there sat among the worshipers a poor woman who, for eighteen long years, had been bent double by "a spirit of infirmity," and could not lift herself up. The compassionate heart of Jesus could not brook the mute appeal of her presence. He called her to Him, and saying to her, 'Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity,' laid His hands on her. Instantly she experienced the miraculous strengthening which enabled her to lift up the long bowed and crooked frame, and instantly she broke into utterances of gratitude to God. But her strain of thanksgiving was interrupted by the narrow and ignorant indignation of the ruler of the synagogue. Here, under his very *eyes*, and without any reference to the 'little brief authority' which gave him a sense of dignity on each recurring Sabbath, a woman--a member of his congregation had actually had the presumption to be healed. Armed with his favorite 'texts,' and in all the fussiness of official hypocrisy, he gets up and rebukes the perfectly innocent multitude, telling them it was a gross instance of Sabbath--breaking for them to be healed on that sacred day, when they might just as well be healed on any of the other six days of the week. That the offence consisted solely in the being healed is clear, for he certainly could not mean that if they had any

sickness, it was a crime for them to come to the synagogue at all on the Sabbath day. Now, as the poor woman does not seem to have spoken one word of entreaty to Jesus, or even to have called His attention to her case, the utterly senseless address of this man could only by any possibility mean either 'You sick people must not come to the synagogue at all on the Sabbath under present circumstances, for fear you should be led into Sabbath breaking by having a miraculous cure performed upon you;' or 'If any one wants to heal you on a Sabbath, you must decline.' And these remarks he has neither the courage to address to Jesus Himself, nor the candor to address to the poor healed woman, but preaches *at* them both by rebuking the multitude, who had no concern in the action at all, beyond the fact that they had been passive spectators of it!

JESUS REBUKES THE PHARISEE

"The whole range of the Gospels does not supply any other instance of an interference so illogical, or a stupidity so hopeless; and the indirect, underhand way in which he gave vent to his outraged ignorance brought on him that expression of our Lord's indignation which he had not dared openly to brave. 'Hypocrite!' was the one crushing word with which Jesus addressed him. This silly official had been censorious with Him because He had spoken a few words to the woman, and laid upon her a healing hand; and with the woman because, having been bent double, she lifted herself up and glorified God! It would be difficult to imagine such a paralysis of the moral sense, if we did not daily see the stultifying effect produced upon the intellect by the 'deep slumber of a decided opinion,' especially when the opinion itself rests upon nothing better than a meaningless tradition. Now Jesus constantly varied the arguments and appeals by which He endeavored to show the Pharisees of His nation that their views about the Sabbath only degraded it from a Divine benefit into a revolting bondage. To the Rabbis of Jerusalem He justified Himself by an appeal to His own character and authority, as supported by the triple testimony of John the Baptist, of the Scriptures, and of the Father Himself, who bore witness to Him by the authority which He had given Him. To the Pharisees of Galilee He had quoted the direct precedents of Scripture, or had addressed an appeal, founded on their own common sense and power of insight into the eternal principles of things. But the duller and less practiced intellect of these Pereans might not have understood either the essential love and liberty implied by the institution of the Sabbath, or the paramount authority of Jesus as Lord of the Sabbath. It could not rise above the cogency of the *argumentum ad hominen*. It was only capable of a conviction based on their own common practices and received limitations. There was not one of them who did not consider himself justified in un-loosing and leading to the water his ox or his ass on the Sabbath, although that involved far more labor than either laying the hand on a sick woman, or even being healed by a miraculous word! If their Sabbath rules gave way to the needs of ox or ass, ought they not to give way to the cruel necessities of a daughter of Abraham? If *they* might do much more labor on the Sabbath to abbreviate a few hours' thirst, might not He do much less to terminate a Satanically cruel bondage which had lasted, lo! these eighteen years? At reasonings so unanswerable, no wonder that His adversaries were ashamed, and that the simpler, more unsophisticated people rejoiced at all the glorious acts of mercy which He wrought on their behalf.

"Again and again was our Lord thus obliged to redeem this great primeval institution of God's love from these narrow, formal, pernicious restrictions of an otiose and unintelligent tradition. But it is evident that He attached as much importance to the noble and loving freedom of the day of rest as they did to the stupefying inaction to which they had reduced the normal character of its observance. Their absorbing attachment to it, the frenzy which filled them when He set at naught their Sabbatarian uncharities, rose from many circumstances. They were wedded to the religious system which had long prevailed among them, because it is easy to be a slave to the letter, and difficult to enter into the spirit; easy to obey a number of outward rules, difficult to enter intelligently and self-sacrificingly into the will of God; easy to entangle the soul in a network of petty

observances, difficult to yield the obedience of an enlightened heart; easy to be haughtily exclusive, difficult to be humbly spiritual; easy to be an ascetic or a formalist, difficult to be pure, and loving, and wise, and free; easy to be a pharisee, difficult to be a disciple; very easy to embrace a selfsatisfying and sanctimonious system of rabbinical observances, very difficult to love God with all the heart, and all the might, and all the soul, and all the strength. In laying His axe at the root of their proud and ignorant Sabbatarianism, He was laying His axe at the root of all that 'miserable micrology' which they had been accustomed to take for their religious life. Is the spirit of the sects so free in these days from Pharisaic taints as not to need such lessons? Will not these very words which I have written--although they are but an expansion of the lessons which Jesus incessantly taught yet give offence to some who read them?"

There is still another case of Jesus' healing on the Sabbath day. It was that of a man troubled with dropsy. Jesus, knowing the attitude of mind of his adversaries, discussed the subject in advance on this occasion, asking the Doctors of the Law and the Pharisees, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day or not?" They made no answer. Then He took the sick man and healed him, and inquired of the critics, "Which of you having an ass, or an ox fall into a pit would not straightway draw him out on a Sabbath day?" But they could not answer.

TO DO GOOD ON THE SABBATH

Since Jesus according to the flesh was a Jew, and therefore bound by all the commandments of the Jewish Law, it follows that He could do nothing contrary to that Law. He could not set it aside, nor was it proper that He should explain to the Jews the real meaning of the Sabbath. All that would come later, under the Holy Spirit's instruction, after Pentecost, after the begetting of the Spirit; for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they 'are spiritually discerned.'" But Jesus could, and did, correct certain of the misapprehensions of the Law which had crept in through the teachings of their rabbis, the Doctors of the Law and the Pharisees.

These for show exaggerated the letter of the Law in some respects, while they entirely ignored its spirit. Thus when the disciples of Jesus, passing through a wheat field, rubbed some of the grains in their hands to hull them before eating, the Pharisees complained that they were breaking the Sabbath--they were threshing and winnowing. Jesus showed that this was not the purport of the Law. It was not made to hinder any good or necessary work, but to benefit the people. According to the Doctors of the Law, to search for a biting flea would be sin on the Sabbath day, because it would be "hunting." Thus in various ways they made the reasonable Law of God to appear unreasonable to the people; and while thus particular in trifles, they ignored the weightier matters of the Law, which appertained to justice, love and mercy.

A proper understanding of the Sabbath, the rest which God has provided for His people, is a great blessing. "We who believe do enter into rest"--an abiding rest, a perpetual Sabbath. And all such are glad to have special opportunities, as these may present themselves, for gathering together in the name of the Lord, for worship praise, study and fellowship. Without regard to which day, the Apostle suggests to us, Let us forsake not the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is; and so much the more, as we see the Day drawing on--the glorious Day of Messiah's Kingdom approaching, and the shadows of night and darkness, of ignorance and superstition passing away. --Heb. 10: 25.

JESUS TEACHING HUMILITY

--JANUARY 14--LUKE 14:7-14--

Golden Text.--"God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."--1 Peter 5:5.

IT was probably in answer to some question that our Lord propounded the parable of the guests bidden to a marriage feast, warning against the custom of seeking prominent positions, and the danger incurred that a more honorable person might come in later, and thus they might get the least honorable seat in the company. Our Lord noted this mark of selfishness in those who were gathered with Him at the table of His host, but we must suppose that He did not rudely intrude the matter as a reproof at such a time without having a question or some reasonable cause for bringing the matter forward.

The entire lesson of the parable seems to be an illustration of the proper course amongst men as viewed from the Divine standpoint, and hence an illustration to all of the way in which God will deal with those whom He invites to the antitypical Marriage Feast. The chief places will not be given to those most bold, most inclined to usurp, authority; but, on the contrary, the Lord will not forget the man or woman of humble mind who, thinking little of himself or herself, would thankfully and gratefully seek for and appreciate the very humblest place in the Divine presence.

Ambition is a very necessary faculty of the human mind, without which the world would make comparatively little progress; but it is a very dangerous element as respects the formation of Christian character. We may be sure, from all the Scriptures set forth, that God's principle of dealing with us in the distribution of the glories and honors of the Kingdom will be along the lines laid down by the Master: he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, he that exalteth himself shall be abased.

LOVE OF POWER TO DO GOOD

We are frequently charged by those who, from blindness or other reasons, would disparage the glorious Gospel of the Kingdom, that those "of this way" are seeking selfishly for the glory and honor and immortality of the Kingdom as something superior to what others will receive at the Lord's hand. This as a whole is an unfair and unjust charge, for as far as we know the majority of those who are interested in "Present Truth" are not so much ambitious for the dignities of the Kingdom as they are for any place in that great Marriage Feast, any membership in the glorious Bride company, any opportunity to share with the Heavenly Bridegroom in the great and wonderful work of blessing all the families of the earth. It would not occur to any of us to think of ourselves in connection. With such high honors and dignities, glory and immortality, except as we find it plainly stated in the Divine Word, but finding it there, it is the duty of faith to accept whatever we may be deemed worthy of, and to allow it to work in us to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure, as He intended.

The chief difficulty, so far as our experience goes, is not a mere ambition as respects glory, honor and rank in the Kingdom, but rather an ambition as respects the present life--a seeking who shall be greatest on this side the veil. Our observation is that some of the most talented, most able, most conscientious of the Lord's followers are in danger along this line, and it is a part of our duty to call this matter to the general attention, that each of the Lord's dear people may do all in his power to help any who are in such a position to see that an ambitious

striving for glory and honor and dignity and position in the present time would surely mean a loss of the Lord's favor and the ultimate attainment in the Kingdom of a much humbler position, if indeed pride did not hinder him entirely from being accepted as a member of the "little flock." Let us remember the Apostle's exhortation, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."--1 Pet. 5: 6.

REMEMBER THE POOR AND THE FRIENDLESS

Perhaps it was in answer to some other question that our Lord gave His dissertation respecting the making of a feast and who should be invited to it, the conclusion of our lesson. He set forth a new proposition: The custom was to invite to a feast those whom you would expect and desire to ask you in return to a feast at their home. The thought of recompense was thus associated, a selfish thought. But our Lord's suggestion would not necessarily, we think, mean that it would be wrong to invite a person to a feast at our homes if we thought it at all probable he would ask us to his home. His thought rather is that, while this would be a pleasant and profitable interchange, there would be no merit in so doing in the Lord's sight each would get his reward in such a reciprocity.

Perhaps the Lord wished to show His host that in inviting Himself and His disciples, who were not so situated as to be able to invite the others of the company in turn to their homes, he had really done a gracious act, provided he had the gracious motive back of it. In making a feast for the poor, the helpless, the maimed, and the blind, a work of charity and mercy would be done, and, no recompense coming in the present life, they might be sure of a blessing in the future life. In other words, our Lord intimates that every good deed willingly, intelligently done from the right motive, may be sure to have a blessing, as surely as will every evil deed, every injurious matter done with a wrong thought and evil sentiment, be sure to have some kind of punishment either in the present or in the future life.

Our Lord declared that such a good deed will be recompensed in the resurrection of the just, but since He was not addressing His disciples, not addressing justified ones, we feel that His words should not be understood to mean that such a feast to the poor, etc., would secure the highest place in the First Resurrection among the blessed and holy who shall be kings and priests unto God and reign as the kingly class, the Bride class, with the Bridegroom. This would not be a reasonable view to put upon the words, because other Scriptures intimate that not only faith in Jesus as our Advocate is necessary, but also a traveling faithfully in the Narrow Way in order to attain a share in the First Resurrection.

BLEST AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST

What then did our Lord mean? We answer that the First Resurrection, which will include only the "blessed and, holy," the saints, the Bride, of Christ, the Bride with the glorious Head and Bridegroom, will mark the beginning of the Kingdom which our Lord preached and which He taught us to pray for, saying, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." Those who will have part in the First Resurrection are to be the kings and priests and judges of the world. (1 Cor. 6: 2; Rev. 20: 6.) Surely after that First Resurrection the blessing of the world, the times of restitution of all things, will begin! Then the whole world will stand before these judges during the thousand years to be helped up, if they will, to the full of human perfection, or, failing to respond to their glorious opportunities, they will be destroyed in the Second Death.

In that day of their judgment every deed of kindness to the poor will be found to have wrought some blessing in the character of the individual which will have to do with his station, with his starting-point on the Highway of Holiness. The most degraded, those who have accomplished nothing in the present time in the way of character development, must begin at the very start of the road and have the longer journey to its farther end of perfection; while those who in the present time have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and have sought to comfort and benefit their fellows, especially those who would give even a cup of cold water to a disciple of the Lord because he was His disciple--all such would be found to be benefited proportionately in that day of glorious possibilities. Thus the Lord's words would signify that any who would give a cup of cold water or who would bless the maimed and the blind and the poor would experience a reward and blessing in that future time which would follow the resurrection of the just--in the Millennial Age.