

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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THE REVELATION EXPOSITION

COMFORT AND STRENGTH FOR THE SAINTS

WE are gratified indeed to hear from a good number of the brethren from various parts of the country expressing much delight in and appreciation of the first volume of the Revelation series. Our petitions to the Lord have been truly to this end. And too, it is in keeping with the Divine promise, "Blessed is he that readeth," etc. This portion, of God's Word was evidently intended to be of special encouragement to the Church of Christ during the dark hours of her sojourn while waiting for the consummation of her glorious Hope.

Briefly stating in other terms what we have heretofore said on this, subject, the book of Revelation being a Divine symbolic prophecy portraying the progress of the Divine Plan from the First Advent of Christ to the consummation of all things at the close of His glorious reign, it has been the privilege of truth-seekers to walk in the light of this prophecy as the history of the Church and of the world presents the fulfillment of the symbols and pictures employed. It is our privilege now to look back over the Age and see that much of this remarkable prophecy is in the past -- "has come to pass." And faithful watchers all along the stream of time, keeping their lamps trimmed and burning, have been greatly comforted and strengthened for the Christian warfare by the careful study of the book of Revelation, as they have discerned therein the great Master-mind revealing centuries in advance the times in which they lived--the forces of evil in contact with the forces of righteousness; and have observed how the providences of God have so operated, and protected and sustained the faithful in the midst of surrounding evil and darkness, even as Jesus said, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe." -- John 14:29.

From time to time throughout the Age God has made use of various devout and suitable leaders amongst His people to point out the truth and expound the Revelation visions as far as they were permitted to understand them. Surely it is our privilege today to continue advancing in the path of light; and while deriving much assistance from a number who have written on the Revelation, yet in the light of the Divine Plan of the Ages as it now shines, and in the light 'of the present times and circumstances it is our privilege to see far more of the significance of those visions than was possible to see earlier in the Age.

It is our firm conviction that there is a special blessing at this time for all those who humbly and reverently take up the study of Revelation -- that it will refresh the hearts of the Lord's people and greatly strengthen their faith and better fit them for the endurance of further trials and tests. By the favor of the Lord we commend to the brethren the exposition which we are sending forth, not as a perfect work, nor as containing all the light that will ever come from the Revelation, nor as the last word upon the subject, nevertheless as a work that

represents a faithful and we believe a successful effort to bring together such helpful suggestions and lines of thoughts as will enable the devout student to realize to a considerable extent the promised blessing to him that reads and hears the prophecy of this book. May the Lord by His spirit grant such illumination as will bring this much desired blessing!

Some of the brethren are specially desirous of putting out this exposition of the Revelation extensively and are inquiring how they can co-operate in its circulation so as to get it in the hands of earnest Christians and Bible students of all denominations. We desire to say in this connection that this matter is upon our hearts and has been having our earnest consideration. It seems to us that the spread of this volume is largely in the hands of the friends themselves-those who have already realized its blessing and who accordingly would be glad to give to others the same comfort and assistance. We cannot think of any better ministry or any service that could be any more pleasing to the Lord than that of helping and comforting fellow-travelers in the Narrow Way. Our appreciation of what the Lord has done for us and our love and zeal toward Him should logically impel us to make opportunities for bearing, His name and message to others.

Some have written us of how they have attended, the services of other bodies of Christian people, such as class meetings, Bible studies, etc., and have found occasion to bring the Lord's Message to the attention of some. Again we all know that opportunities may be found as we meet friends, acquaintances, relatives, etc., for selling or loaning copies of the Revelation volume. Then there is the method that has proved so effective-in the past-that of seeking out Christian people by calling from door to door. We see no reasons why this cannot now be done with splendid results with the Revelation volume. Some have already expressed their purpose to do this. Perhaps not many could go forth, giving all their time, but many we are sure could arrange to spend a few hours each week colporteur for the volume.

With this thought in mind we are arranging a special price on the book for those who desire to take, up this work: in lots of 5 Copies or more the price will be \$1.00 per copy, carriage charges prepaid. Should we have another edition printed it is possible that the price of the volume can be made still lower. Our suggestion is that those distributing the book should sell it for \$1.50, which is a very reasonable figure considering the fact that other books of that style, binding, etc., retail for \$2 and upwards. We believe that the book is one that should appeal to sincere Christians no matter of what denomination- and with a few suitable words of explanation would be readily received. As we are approaching the holiday season it is a most appropriate time to recommend the Revelation volume as a suitable Christmas gift.

We submit the foregoing suggestions to the prayerful consideration of the brethren, and shall be glad to hear from any who have additional thoughts to present. May the Lord grant His guidance and blessing.

ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The new tract, "Why Does God permit Evil?" has been well received by the friends, and is considered by them to contain a most seasonable message. The orders for the leaflet have considerably exceeded our expectation and several Classes have ordered them in lots of three, four, and five thousand, and are zealously putting them out. This is very encouraging. The zeal and activity of the brethren in spreading the Truth in this form will surely react favorably upon their own hearts. Let none fail to avail themselves of the privilege of sharing in this ministry. The following message has just been received from the friends at Toledo:

"The friends here were greatly pleased to learn that we are soon to have a tract for general distribution.. It seems like the good old days when Brother Russell was still with us and tracts were plenty and free as water. How often we have wished for just such opportunities as used to be ours.

"Full seven years have elapsed since Brother Russell passed away. During this time there has been considerable sifting among the friends, and comparatively little witnessing of the Harvest Message in its purity. Can it be that the sifting has resulted in more room for others and that the Lord is about to send out another call as it were? It seems worthy of note that the Manna texts for the mid-week prayer and testimony meetings during the past four weeks all seem peculiarly appropriate and preparatory for further Harvest work.

"The possibility of multiplying our opportunities for service in connection with the proposed volunteer work was suggested at our testimony meeting last week. Instead of dropping the tracts into the mail boxes, as we used to do, it was proposed, so far as practicable, to hand each tract in person to the one who answers the door, with a word in season. The possibility of exhausting your supply of the Earthquake tract under, the old rapid fire method of distribution was also considered and the advisability of working along more economical and effective lines."

We very heartily commend the plan suggested above, that instead of throwing the tracts about everywhere, as far as possible they be placed in the hands of the person, with a word in season, that may impress the mind and lead to a careful reading of the message.

FELLOWSHIP BECOMES MORE PRECIOUS

Many of the readers of this journal seem always eager to read the reports of our convention gatherings from time to time; hence it is a pleasure to relate at least the principal features, even though there is of necessity more or less of similarity about these reports.

The One-day Convention just held in Brooklyn was surely one that will be long remembered by those in attendance. About sixty of the friends from various parts around New York assembled for the day. And best of all the presence of the Lord, His spirit of peace, love, and harmony were very much in evidence, and stirred the hearts of the brethren, indeed moved them to tears of joy and gladness. Truly, progress in the Christian life brings an increase of joy and happiness in the fellowship of those of kindred mind. As we come to know our Master better and

come to comprehend more fully what He has done for us and appreciate what His love means to us, it cannot signify otherwise than that we are drawn closer to Him and to one another,

"And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear."

Again at the conference in Brooklyn brethren took special delight in testifying to one another of what the grace of God has done for them, in having wrought for them already such a great deliverance from sin and many of its effects and of how they were endeavoring to let the sanctifying influence of the Truth accomplish its work in them, being fully persuaded that only those thoroughly tested and proved and who have attained the likeness of God's Dear Son will be finally approved as worthy to be entrusted with the weighty responsibilities of the world to come. Indeed these were the lines of thought that were discoursed upon by the brethren who served from the platform, thus endeavoring to stir up the minds of their hearers by way of remembrance.

The solemn instructions of the Divine Word were again brought to our attention -- that holiness, separateness unto the Lord, and full devotion to His will, are most surely the requirements of all those who shall attain unto the exceeding great and precious promises. "Who shall abide the day of His coming?" says the Prophet, "and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap." Thus the Prophet presents the solemn question that should have the most sober consideration of all those who would successfully pass through all the tests of this evil day. Surely the day's fellowship in Brooklyn was an occasion fortifying, and strengthening the brethren to press on in the good way.

THE GREAT PENTECOSTAL BLESSING

(Continued from last issue.)

THE MORE EXCELLENT WAY

The fact that the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles was accompanied by miraculous manifestations or gifts, tongues, etc., does not imply any greater favor of God toward the primitive Church, which had those gifts, than toward the Lord's people of a later day, after those gifts had ceased for, as the Apostle points out, it was possible for some to have those gifts Without having much of the real spirit of the Lord. He says, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing." (1 Cor. 13: 1, 2.) We are, therefore, to esteem love for the Lord and for the brethren and for the neighbor -- active love, which does as well as wishes and says -- to be the best evidence of an acceptable condition with the Lord, the best evidence of a filling with His Holy Spirit -- a far better evidence than the possession of the "gifts" described. Far greater, far more precious gifts of the spirit, then, are the gifts which the spirit develops in us--the fruits of the spirit -- joy, peace, faith, love, etc. The news respecting the miraculous manifestation of

Divine power spread rapidly through the city of Jerusalem, which, in addition to its general population, had at this season of the year visitors from all the neighboring countries, speaking various languages and dialects. And this furnished the opportunity for the Lord's humble disciples, "unlearned men," to begin their great work for which now they were fully commissioned and empowered. Quite possibly by this gift of tongues the Lord made up to His disciples the lack of larger education and fitted them for the work; at all events, not only on this occasion do we find that they were able to discourse in all the various languages, but subsequently, when traveling in various quarters, we have no mention of any difficulty encountered in respect to the languages or dialects, though these were many amongst the different classes and nationalities.

The concourse of the people at Jerusalem attending this feast was of a religious kind -- the most religious Jews from all the surrounding countries and nations (where more Jews than resided in Palestine), gathered on such occasions to do homage to the Lord, to render thanks and to pray for the promised blessings and Kingdom. In addition to this it was the custom for many of the most religious to permanently remove to Jerusalem in their old age, that they might die there; and thus we see that the Lord's arrangements, and the human arrangements which His providence had favored, all co-operated at this time for the favorable presentation of the good tidings that Messiah had come,

OUR COMMISSION TO TELL OF THE WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD

We are given but a meager account of the preaching, namely an extract from Peter's discourse; but from the number of converts it is evident that all of the Apostles engaged in the service. A summary of their preaching is given in 'verse 11, where the hearers are represented as saying, "We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. These wonderful works we have already referred to as relating to our Lord's death and resurrection, and His commission to His Apostles, which they were now carrying out. True, it is said that the Apostles used other words', amongst them, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation" -- thus intimating the condemnation of the Jewish Church and polity, and the fire of Divine wrath, the trouble shortly to come upon them.

But the main part of their discourses was not a tirade against the Jews, but rather a showing forth of the wonderful features of the Divine Plan; and even in the charge against the rulers and the people for the great crime they had committed in crucifying Jesus, the Apostle puts the matter as kindly as possible, saying, "I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." Herein we have a valuable lesson for all the followers of Christ who preach in His name and who would win souls from the darkness of error to harmony with God. The proper, the effective preaching, today and then, is that which tells of the wonderful works of God in man's redemption, and not that which tirades against the nominal church--even though it be necessary occasionally to point out the errors of Babylon, as the Apostles pointed out the errors of Judaism. Our course, like theirs, should be one of great moderation and kindness, as well as plainness of speech, "speaking the truth in love."

The ministry of these last days reminds us much of the gathering of the harvest in Israel. Now, as then, those who are addressed by the Holy Spirit are the Israelites

indeed--"devout men out of every nation under heaven." And so prominently is this the direction in which the Holy Spirit has, been guiding in these latter days that one of the charges against the work is, that we are not going after the drunkards and harlots and gamblers and thieves and vagabonds, but are seeking to feed the Lord's sheep and lambs--seeking to present truth, meat 'in due season, to the devout of every nation. And such, we believe, is the will of God concerning us; and so we advise, that all of the Lord's people, as they seek to proclaim the grace of God, remember the words of the Lord, that we are to feed His sheep and His lambs, and not spend unnecessary time with the goats and the wolves, as soon as we recognize their kind, except it be to drive them off or to expose their true character to the sheep.

Our commission is to "preach the Gospel to the meek," not to the froward and the vile; to bind up the brokenhearted, not to seek to break the hard hearts. The Lord has His own plan for dealing with the stony hearts in the time of trouble which is near, and during the Millennial Age, in which the necessary force will be used to, restrain the evil and to open their eyes and ears of understanding. Now our commission is to go to those who have an ear. "He that hath an ear let him hear." Those who have not the ears to hear the Message, and who have not the hearts to appreciate its beauty, should not be argued with or wrangled with, but wisely left as quietly as possible in their ignorance and blindness until the Lord's due time for scattering the pall of darkness, the gross darkness which Satan has brought upon the people. We had rather leave in ignorance and under the bonds of superstition those who manifest no appreciation of the grace of God; for doubtless, if their superstitions were loosed in the present time, it would be nothing to their advantage; perhaps to the-, disadvantage of others. Let us remember that the Gospel Message is to gather out the Lord's peculiar people, a little flock, and that so far as the world is concerned the Gospel is only a "witness" now.

THE APOSTOLIC PERIOD OF CHRISTIANITY

"Ye shall be my witnesses both. in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost Part of the earth." Acts 1:8; 8:4-8, 14-17, 25.

THE prosperity and rapid progress of the Church and the phenomenal success of the Gospel movement in the beginning of the Age was most surely a part of the Divine program and as God intended it should be. It was in order that the great invitation of this Age -- the call to joint heirship with Christ, to membership in the Bride of Christ -- should receive a special impetus, and that the Church should be thoroughly established, that special miraculous gifts of physical' healing, etc., accompanied the message in the Apostolic period.

This early period of prosperity has been very | forcefully pictured in the book of Revelation where, in connection with the throne scene, St. John announces the opening of the first seal: "And I saw, and behold a white horse, and he who sat on him having a bow; and a crown was given to him; and he came out conquering, and that he might conquer." (Rev. 6: 1, 2.) The symbol of the white horse, the crowned conqueror, etc., furnishes a most fitting picture of the empowered forces of primitive Christianity before the defiling influence of the Apostasy had done its work. This picture evidently is intended to portray the faithful disciples of the

Lord going forth as a conquering band, bearing the Gospel Message in the face of many enemies, both Jewish and Pagan. While of course it was never intended that Christianity should conquer or convert the world and bring all in subjection to Christ in this Age, yet as history clearly shows, under the Lord's providence the Gospel truth made rapid inroads in all quarters of the then civilized world and became the power. that finally caused the overthrow of Paganism throughout the Roman Empire.*,

**The Revelation of Jesus Christ, p. 305.*

Those specially chosen by Providence to be the lights of the Church through the entire Age -- the twelve Apostles, were men possessing a large measure of the Holy Spirit. They were most surely men of prayer, and under the leading of the Spirit's illumination they were guided in their ministrations of the' truths connected with the new dispensation to the praying Jews, "devout" people, rather than to the godless. And so it is with the true Gospel ever since. There is a message or a call to repentance which is applicable to every member of the human family; but the special message of the Gospel is not to the unregenerate, but to the repentant, to the forgiven, to the reconciled., The Jews who assembled to worship the Lord at the temple were of course not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore were not justified by faith in His blood, but, under their Jewish covenant, the Law covenant, and by means of its typical sacrifices, they were up to this time typically justified as a people, and the grace of God was offered to them from that standpoint: they were not treated as strangers, aliens, foreigners, but as heirs of all the Divine promises and blessings. And as a people the Jews continued to occupy this position for three and one-half years after our Lord's crucifixion and their national rejection. The Lord's favor according to promise continued with them individually. until the full end of their "seventy weeks."

While-the devout worshipers in the days of the Apostles received the preaching of Christ gladly and repentantly, the religious leaders were disturbed. It seemed monstrous to them that any but themselves should undertake to teach. the people, and that the people were giving more interested attention to these "laymen" than they gave to them, the chief priests, religious rulers and doctors of the law. In this they but manifested the usual-worldly spirit, which in every religious system except the true one manifests special opposition to any light or teaching which does not emanate from those recognized as "ordained" teachers. True, these Apostles were ordained by the very highest authority in the universe-the Spirit and power of God, communicated by Christ; but such ordination, such authority to teach, wag not recognized by those doctors of divinity who, like their successors to this day, failed to recognize the ordinations of God and merely recognize human authorizations to preach.

THE DARKNESS HATETH THE LIGHT

Not only were they envious that others than themselves should have the ear of the people for religious instruction, but they had listened sufficiently to the discourse themselves to ascertain that the Apostles, were really imparting to the people some knowledge of spiritual- things. The people were actually being taught, and that upon subjects concerning which they, the recognized doctors of divinity and theology, knew nothing and could teach nothing. If, therefore, such teachings were permitted, the worshipers would very soon know more than their religious rulers, which would never do. They were unable to teach the people themselves, and were not humble enough of heart to receive instruction, and hence were quite ready to be overcome by the spirit of envy, hatred, and malice, against those whom the Lord had appointed and was using, while passing them by. They had power, to stop the preaching and to imprison the Apostles, and they made haste to use it.

This same spirit was equally manifested, and even more unrighteously, by professing Christians during the Dark Ages; they not only imprisoned but tortured and put to death those who ventured to instruct the people in spiritual things without their permission, ordination, etc. This same spirit was manifested to a considerable extent by the Reformers also, we are sorry to say: Calvin, Luther, and numbers in authority in the Episcopal Church from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries were similarly grieved with efforts to instruct the people outside their own channels. and the same spirit to a considerable extent followed some who fled from persecutions, in the Mayflower, to this free land. We need not accuse any of these of intentional wrong; they lived in a time when religion and politics were blended, and they verily thought they did God service in opposing as they did that which they considered to be "heresy." Had they opposed the heresy with force of logic and Scripture merely, and sought thus to vanquish what they believed to be errors, with what they believed to be truth, they would not only have been worthy of approval, but also of admiration, and they might have been led into the Truth; but their zeal misled them into the use of unjust means, and they more or less fought against God. And still we have the spirit of religious intolerance in our own day; there is still the disposition to hinder progress into further light and truth concerning the Divine Plan and purpose. But be it noted, all these improper efforts have been unavailing to suppress the Truth, and have merely served to purify and refine the saints, as "gold tried in the furnace."

One cannot but be impressed with the fact that there is no ambiguity in preaching done under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; it was direct, to the point. As for instance in his preaching, the Apostle Peter did not say that Jesus of Nazareth was *one* of the great teachers of the world, and as worthy to be heard as Moses or Confucius or others; neither did he say, it makes no difference whether you ever hear of the historic Christ or not, as some false teachers now declare. Peter's spirit-inspired teachings were evidently not at all in harmony with what is known as the "new theology," nor with what is known as the "Higher Criticism," nor with what is known as the "broad theology," espoused by the Chicago Parliament of Religions, and advocated by many of the "great theologians" of our day. St. Peter gave the message direct and with force -- "There is *none other name* given, under

heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved." In these words he told his-learned hearers that there was no hope of salvation in Moses and in the Law, any more than in the heathen systems of theology-that knowledge of, and faith in, and obedience to Christ was the only God appointed way of salvation.

RESURRECTION -- THE GREAT THEME OF EARLY CHURCH

Evidently, then, the chief subject of discourse with the Apostles was the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead and the proof which this afforded of several things: first, that He was approved of God, that He was what He claimed to be, the Messiah, and not an imposter; second, that His death was the great ransom price for the whole world; third, that in His name was forgiveness of sins and all power for reconciliation with the Father; and fourth, that a New Dispensation of grace, mercy, forgiveness of sins had displaced the Law Dispensation of justice, and that, now, not only could there be acceptance with God through Christ, but a high calling to joint-heirship with the Messiah in His Kingdom soon to be established, in which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The Apostles hung the entire weight of their testimony upon this one matter -- the resurrection of our Lord. And the Apostle Paul's preaching, later, is no less emphatic upon this than the Apostle Peter's at the time of this lesson, for he declares,. If Christ be not risen your faith is vain, our preaching is vain, ye are yet in your sins, and we (Apostles) are false witnesses, because we have testified that God raised up Christ from the dead, whom He raised not up, if so be that the resurrection of the dead is an impossibility.--1 Cor. 5:15-18.

We do not wonder, in view of the grandeur and sublimely of the Gospel theme as proclaimed by the Apostles and in view of the special manifestations of the Holy Spirit at that time, that the tendency of the early believers, as we have seen, was, to gather together -- to swarm. This was evidently in harmony with the Divine program, to foster and establish the Church in the religious capital of the world. Those first few years were evidently designed of the Lord to permit the Church to put on the armor of God, to grow from babes in Christ, by the use of the sincere milk of the Word, and afterward by its strong meat, up to the stature of Christian manhood -- thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. This gathering at Jerusalem was in harmony with our Lord's direction before His ascension, when, after instructing them to preach the Gospel, He added "beginning at Jerusalem." But now Jerusalem, having had its full period of favor, the Church having been rooted and established, the Divine Plan led on to a wider work; and the persecution which arose at the time of Stephen's martyrdom became very general in the city of Jerusalem, and very grievous, and led to the flight of many of the faithful who, we are told, went everywhere -- especially throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. The Apostles no doubt considered it a part of duty that they should remain at Jerusalem as a kind of center of influence; partly because they had not yet fully learned the lesson that the Gospel they preached, although to the Jew first, is also to the Greek and to the whole world.

All of the early Church were preachers, and if persecuted they went everywhere preaching the Word. An in stance is given respecting this preaching. One, Philip not the Apostle-did successful work in a city of Samaria and was used of the Lord in casting out devils and healing the sick, the means then in use for drawing attention to the Gospel. The results of his preaching were marvelous -- even

Simon the sorcerer became a believer, though subsequently it was manifested that he did not maintain the faith in love.

Sorcery, witchcraft and enchantments of olden times were manifestations of Satan and demons for the delusion of mankind, and were strictly forbidden under the Mosaic law. The same evil spirits in more recent years have slightly altered the character of the demonstrations, and so-called Spiritualists are their "mediums." The change is merely made in conformity to the changed conditions, and both are to be reckoned amongst "the works of the flesh and the devil." There can be no fellowship between the power of the Adversary working in his agents for witchcraft and Spiritism and the power of Christ working in His agents and representatives and through the Word of Truth. The two are in opposition, however much at times the evil may claim relationship to the good. So it was in Samaria, as related in this lesson: the Gospel opposed the doctrines of devils propagated through witchcraft and sorcery, the effect was to make the people *free*, and even Simon the medium was convicted and professed outwardly a conversion and was baptized.

Philip's discourse is but briefly outlined, but it was along the same lines as the discourses of the Apostles noticed in the previous lessons. He preached the "things concerning the Kingdom of God." We cannot know how fully he explained these things—that the Kingdom would be a spiritual Kingdom, that flesh and blood could not enter it or even see it, and that not the Jewish nation would be heirs of that Kingdom with Messiah, but only such as become believers in 'Jesus, devoted to Him and suffer with Him, thus attesting their loyalty to the Divine Plan. We cannot doubt, however, that Philip preached the Second Coming of Messiah to establish and exalt with Himself the Kingdom heirs now being sought out, and subsequently through that Kingdom to bless the world of mankind. We cannot doubt that he urged them to believe in Christ, and by a consecration to Him to become joint-heirs with Him in the Kingdom, if so be that they suffered with Him, that they might also reign with Him. Nor did his preaching omit the things pertaining to "the name of Jesus Christ," and connecting His name as Messiah with all the Kingdom hopes which were before the Jewish mind. We doubt not that he pointed out to them that the names of Moses and of Abraham and of the Prophets, although great, were insufficient for salvation—that there is none other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH

SERIES V

THE PROPHET'S FAITH FAILS HIM

"I sat solitary because you filled me with indignation.... Why are you like failing unstable waters? Then the Lord replied, If you will return, then I will restore you to stand before Me."--Jer. 15:17, 19--Fenton's Translation.

CHAPTERS 14 and 15, which close with the words quoted above, picture a most terrible drought that came upon the land of Judah. The chapters are more fully occupied, however, with a description of the effect produced upon the Prophet as

he beheld the distress and suffering of the people because of the drought. This calamity came as a judgment, to manifest God's displeasure because of the wickedness and sins of the chosen people. The nation had entered into a solemn covenant with Him to observe and keep His commandments. In fulfilling its part of this covenant the nation had placed itself under His care, with the understanding that they would be specially dealt with as His own chosen people, not only in blessing and prospering them in all their ways, but in disciplining and correcting them when necessary, for their good. This judgment of the drought came in the early years of Jehoiakim's reign, just prior to the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar. It was at this latter time that Jehoiakim became Nebuchadnezzar's servant or vassal, and the nation lost its independence.

It would seem that the drought which is described in chapter 14 proved to be the most terrible judgment-visitation of its kind that the chosen nation had ever experienced. judgments of this character had long prior to this been foretold. When the nation entered into A voluntary agreement with God to observe His laws and statutes, they were promised earthly blessings without measure if they would seek diligently to obey Him. At this same time Moses, God's representative, was given instructions to warn them of what would befall them if they departed from His precepts. One of these warnings is recorded in Dent. 11:16, 17, and reads, "Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and then the Lord's wrath be kindled against you, and He shut up the heaven that there be no rain, and that the land yield not her fruit; and lest ye perish quickly from off the good land which the Lord giveth you."

THE VISITATION OF THE TERRIBLE JUDGMENT

The description of the drought and its terrible effects upon the dwellers, in the land, which produced such an effect upon Jeremiah, who was ad eye-witness of it, are described in verses 2-6, chapter 14. We quote these words: "Judah faints, and her gates languish: they mourn in the country, and wailings go up from Jerusalem! They send their little children to the wafers; they go to the wells; they find no water! They all return empty, ashamed, depressed, with veiled heads. Fire sweeps over the ground, for there are no showers on the earth; the meadows are ashamed; they cover their heads, for even the deer in the field bears young, and deserts it, for there is no herbage! The wild asses stand on the hill-tops snuffing the wind; their eyes are all like serpents, for they have no grass!"

The description given by the Prophet is that of want and suffering amongst all classes. The children of the nobles are sent to the places where water in plentifulness was usually found, and they return with their vessels empty. Accustomed to rely on the latter rains to prepare the ground for seed sowing, the plowmen make no effort to turn over the chapt soil (Ver. 4, Common Version), but sit with grave, downcast, hopeless countenances, waiting for the showers which never come. Fires sweep over the dry and parched herbage, and in vain they look for the rain to come to extinguish them. Even the hind (deer), whose love for her offspring is proverbial, deserts its young to seek water and grass for itself. The wild asses stand on the hills when the blazing sun has sunk in the west, snuffing whatever little puffs of air may pass over the land, in a vain endeavor to

relieve the agony of their thirst for water. The heavens above are as brass, and the pastures are yellow and scorched as by fire.

The Prophet was an eye-witness of all that was taking place -- He himself was compelled to hear the complaints, and view day after day, and week after week, the terrible sufferings that the drought produced. He beheld the desolation and was continually hearing the cries of the suffering, afflicted ones. Is it anything to be wondered at that his great sympathetic heart was stirred through and through? Evidently it began to seem to him that the punishment was too heavy-that Jehovah ought to stay His hand. As the days, weeks, and months passed, and the already terrible conditions grew worse and worse, with no prospect of relief in sight, the severity of the judgment and the awful suffering it caused was more than the Prophet could bear. And although he had been told not to do so, he lifted up his voice in prayer and earnest pleadings for Jehovah to stay the judgment, and cause the suffering to end. But his prayers were not answered, his pleadings brought no response.

THE DISCOURAGED PROPHET

It seems evident from the words of Jehovah addressed to Jeremiah, "If thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before Me," that the Prophet had become so affected by the sufferings and distress around him, that he was completely discouraged, and had become altogether unfitted to continue in the work that he had been divinely called to do. There seems to be no other possible construction that can be placed upon Jehovah's words. The rendering of these words as given at the head of this article makes it more emphatic that this is their meaning. On another occasion later on in the Prophet's history he came to a like crisis in his ministry; and in that as well as in this instance we have an illustration and an example of the overcoming power of the Divine Word operating in the soul. His words on that occasion are as follows: "O Lord, Thou hast persuaded* me and I was persuaded. Thou art stronger than I and hast prevailed; . . . the word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me daily. Then I said [to myself] I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name., But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay." -- Chapter 20:7-9.

*The word "deceived" in the Common Version is evidently wrong. It is rendered "enticed" in the margin,

How faithfully does the Prophet record his own experiences. He holds nothing back. He does not seek to hide his weaknesses, his failures. By this we do not mean that his exhibition of sympathy and compassion for the suffering and distressed, was a weakness; rather his giving way to his feelings to the extent of swerving from the performance of his painful and difficult, yet divinely appointed tasks, was what constituted his weakness and temporary failure. The feeling of sympathy and compassion for suffering, erring ones has its origin in God; and the measure possessed demonstrates how much of the Divine image originally implanted, in this particular, is left in man. It is no easy matter for God's people, even in these days of greater knowledge, to look upon and bear suffering aright.

Trials and tribulations are ,very important, indeed are absolutely essential to develop a strong character, which must be possessed to become an inheritor of the Kingdom of God, either of its heavenly or earthly plane.

GOD'S WAYS HIGHER THAN MAN'S

It is only when the scaffolding is taken down, and the beautiful building is exposed to full view, that we appreciate the remarkable ability and genius of the architect and designer. The great beauty of the building cannot be seen when its various parts are being, prepared. The architect himself can see its beauty; and those to whom he will show the finished drawing may in a measure do the same. And so it is with God's great building, His eternal purpose. He sees how it will look. when completed -- He has ever in mind His great eternal purpose. He has been pleased to reveal in a measure at least this great purpose to some -- not to the wise of this world, however, but to those to whom He has given His Spirit, as the Apostle has said: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." And as the Savior expressed also in His prayer, "I thank Thee Father, Lord of heaven and earth that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes." These have come to see that God's building has its various parts. Each part in turn is prepared, completed, and laid one side until the time comes for erecting the building, or completing His eternal purpose and exposing to the view of all, His finished work. It will be only when all the various parts have been completed and put in their appointed places, that the beauty of God's eternal purpose can be seen--and the infinite wisdom and boundless love of the Divine architect appreciated. However, as. the poet has expressed it,

"The plan is wise and just and good,
By faith we see it *now*."

Jeremiah and the comparatively few faithful ones of those far off days were being prepared for a. particular place in the great superstructure of God. Even those disobedient ones of Israel were undergoing experiences which eventually will be of benefit to them in fitting them for a place also. Yea, and even the entire groaning creation, the world of sinful, suffering humanity, are represented in Divine revelation as waiting to be placed under the disciplinary, corrective rod of the Kingdom of Christ and the saints, the sons of God. These sons of God, these joint-heirs, are now, in this Age, being prepared, and are also represented in Scripture as waiting for their own deliverance.

THE BRIGHTER BETTER DAY

Death did not end all with Jeremiah and those worthy ones who suffered and who, long since finished their trial; neither did death end all with the erring,-disobedient ones of Israel; neither does it end all for the millions of humanity. There is to be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. In the carrying out of the Divine purpose, the infinite God is not restricted to time. All the faithful ones of those past ages -- and Jeremiah is not the least -- long ago finished their trials, their sufferings, and their sufferings and trials formed no small part in their perfecting,. These are not forgotten by Jehovah. They are

resting in peace, sleeping in death, and waiting for the time soon *now* to come, when they shall "stand in their lot," in other words, take the place for which their schooling in the present life fitted them. They are only waiting for the heavenly class, that is now being fitted and prepared, like they were, *in* the school of trial and suffering-only waiting for this class to be completed and enter into their glory. When these take their divinely appointed places, then will the erring, disobedient Israelites be awakened from the sleep of death; then will the great multitudes of the rest of mankind come forth from the tomb, and for a thousand years under the disciplinary, corrective rod of Christ's Kingdom, they that erred shall learn God's way of righteousness,. and "the tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell with them and be their God." And the bitter experiences with sin and suffering in the present life will be remembered by them and will be a great factor in assisting them to finish successfully their schooling.

God's infinite wisdom, as the great Architect, will then be seen by all, and something of the depth of the riches, both Of the wisdom and knowledge of God will then be understood -- by all. Then will the mysteries of earth's judgment calamities be no longer mysteries, as redeemed man views from the eternal heights the completion of the great Architect's work-the great building of God -- finished at last.

THE PROPHET ASKS MERCY FOR ISRAEL

Jeremiah, the naturally timid, sensitive one; Jeremiah the weak, frail earthen vessel, divinely chosen to proclaim these judgments on an apostate nation--a disobedient and stiff-necked people--was also compelled to witness the suffering and distress the judgment entailed. Even had he been given the knowledge that is the privilege of Christ's Church today, and had he thereby been privileged to look down the ages and see the eternal purpose of God completed, the sad sights and scenes he was compelled to witness day after day could but have unnerved him, and. produced *temptations* to discouragement. As it was, the Prophet's sensitive, sympathetic nature caused him to give way for a time, and instead of proclaiming the more severe judgments yet to come, which his Divine commission required, his voice began to be lifted up in pleading to Jehovah for this lesser judgment to be stayed. With his own pen he records his prayer. And as the drought, as also the effects produced on Jeremiah, are recorded for our instruction, let us endeavor to discover if there may not be some lessons for spiritual Israelites to learn from these incidents. The prayer reads:

"O Lord, though our iniquities testify against us, do Thou it (intervene) for Thy Name's sake; for our backslidings are many;. we have sinned against Thee. O the hope of Israel, the Savior thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest Thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet Thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy name; leave us not." -- Chapter 14:7-9.

SOLEMN LESSONS FOR TODAY CAUSES OF SPIRITUAL DROUGHT AND FAMINE

In our search to discover these lessons, let us notice first that the drought itself may very properly be employed, to picture most vividly a very marked absence of

God's presence and power in the assemblies of His people in these days; in other words, a dearth in spiritual gifts, favors, and blessings. There are times when, for good and sufficient reasons, the Lord withholds His favors, and it may even seem at times as though His Spirit has, departed from the midst. 'this may be because of duties neglected; or perhaps because His people, particularly those chosen to fill responsible positions, become negligent or careless or forgetful of the obligations to God assumed by them when selected and set apart to perform these duties. It may be that such a dearth of spiritual manifestations is caused by the Lord's people giving too much attention to temporal matters; business, home affairs, etc. Disputes and contentions concerning who shall be given the most honor in the Church, invariably cause the eyes and the affections to be taken off the One who should receive all the honor. Sometimes because of differences on matters of minor doctrines or methods and agencies made use of by the Lord to serve His people, wrong feelings are harbored or roots of bitterness are allowed to become planted in the heart, and like a disease in the body, this condition becomes contagious and thereby many become defiled. It may be because of some sin that is indulged in, and allowed to continue -- a sin that brings reproach on the Lord's Cause -- something of this nature may cause a dearth of spiritual favors. All these conditions develop gradually, and if the remedy is not applied they will grow worse and worse. God withholds His favor, His blessing because of things of this character.

The effects of such conditions cannot be otherwise than, felt in the meetings for prayer, praise, and testimony. Prayer in the Church becomes a mere form, or even if sincere in the sense of petitions for God's blessings to come, there is a feeling, a conviction that the prayers are not heard. The hymns which are designed to give expression to heart desires, do not proceed from real living experiences. The testimonies instead of being expressions of a real life of trust and confidence, of communion with God, or exhortations to godliness, or perhaps of sincere heart-'felt confessions,' are more in the manner of lengthy discussions of Scripture doctrines, which may be, doubtless are, all right in their proper time and place, but seem eventually not the right thing in meetings for testimony and prayer. Conditions like these should not be allowed to come, but sad to say, as in the history of ancient Israel, they do come. Happy is the church that has not known of such times; and sad is the condition of a church that has gone so far away from the right path as to have its heavenly light extinguished, or the candlestick removed.

In. such times it is only the few that are spiritual enough to sense the sad conditions, or at least to feel very keenly the need of the Spirit's presence and power. It is always true that if there is to be a genuine revival of earnest zeal and true piety, it must begin with these spiritual ones. It is to these the Savior's words, "Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die," are addressed.

THE PROPHET'S JEALOUSY FOR THE LORD'S NAME

While Jeremiah's petition, because of Israel's unrepentant condition, could not be granted, yet there are valuable lessons to be learned from his prayer, as also the Lord's reply to it. It will be seen as we carefully analyze the Prophet's prayer, that the great burden of it was not so much for the removal of the judgment, but for the

Lord not to forsake them for their sins, and to manifest His presence amongst them again. "Why shouldest Thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry but a night. . . . we are called by Thy Name; leave us not," are his words.

One lesson is the Prophet's jealousy for the Lord's name. "We are called by Thy Name." What will the nations around us say? They know that we are Thy people, and are called by Thy Name. How will it appear to them if Thou forsake us. They do not know, as we do, that Thou art the one Almighty God, the God of all flesh. Will they not think that Thou wast not able to help us if Thou leave us now? How unselfishly does the Prophet identify himself with the nation, not only in their trouble and affliction, but in their transgression. It cannot be supposed that Jeremiah was in any measure responsible for Israel's sad condition, and yet he realized his own imperfection. He must himself have been deeply conscious of omissions of duty to his God. Mr. Meyer endeavors to express the Prophet's inmost feelings at this time, and his words, which we quote, do not seem in the least exaggerated:

"My God, I come into Thy presence to acknowledge my own sin, and especially the sins of Thy people. I stand before Thee as a priest to confess the sins which have separated between Thee and them, incurring Thy Divine displeasure, and closing the avenues of communion. Our iniquities testify against us, and our backslidings are many. Once Thou seemedst to abide in our midst . . . But of late Thy visits have been few and far between. Thou hast tarried for a night, and been away again at dawn, and we sorely miss Thee. Once Thou wert as a mighty man, our Samson, whose arm sufficed to keep our enemies at bay; for long Thou hast seemed overcome, by an unnatural stupor, by a paralysis that holds Thee like a vise. And yet Thou hast not really changed. Thou art our Savior, Thou art in the midst of us. We bear Thy Name. Thine honor is implicated in our lot. What Thou couldst not do for any merit of ours, do for the credit of Thy Name; . . . do for the maintenance of Thy Cause upon earth. Leave us not; nor let that foreboding prediction of Ezekiel be realized, when he saw the glory of the Lord recede by stages from the holy place, until it stood outside' the city walls."

"YE WHICH ARE SPIRITUAL RESTORE"

How like Jeremiah's prayer was that of Daniel's when he prayed that God's favor might come again to his beloved country. "And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession, and said, . . . We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from Thy precepts, and from Thy judgments." In Daniel's case, however, God's due time had come to pray for God's judgment hand to be lifted, and for His people to be restored again to His favor. In Jeremiah's case it had not. However, both alike show that they had a deep undying love for God's cause, for His honor, and for His people.

Let us imitate Jeremiah and Daniel. Though how often, to the contrary, it is the case when things occur to bring reproach upon the Lord's Cause that a disposition prevails to wholly blame the ones who may perhaps be the direct cause of the reproach. How often are the Apostle's words forgotten in such cases: "If a brother, be overtaken in fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." There comes a time,

however, when it would be wrong to attempt to lift God's chastening hand of judgment. There are times when the sin must be punished. But when called to act with God in such cases, it should be in love, with deep sorrow and regret that it becomes necessary. We are never capable of dealing in such cases when there exists feelings which if expressed in words would be, "You deserve it. It is wholly your fault. You have brought it on yourself. I have no sympathy for you. You must bear the consequences alone." In the case of Judah in connection with the drought, it would seem as though God had not left the nation altogether; there were a few faithful ones left. These needed encouragement; and there were occasions when they were visited with blessings. Jeremiah seems to make reference to these times when he speaks of the Lord "as like a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry but a night." And so it is with the Lord's assemblies today under similar circumstances. These times are like oases in the desert, encouraging the few faithful ones to hold fast.

"THEIR HEARTS ARE FAR FROM ME"

It is a matter of deep and intense interest to know how the Lord replied to the Prophet's earnest pleadings. Jeremiah has faithfully recorded His answer:

"Thus saith Jehovah unto [about] this people. Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the Lord does not accept [approve] them; He will now remember their iniquity and punish their sins. . . . Then said the Lord unto me, Pray not for this people for their good [that is, their temporal good]. When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offerings and oblations, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence."

In reading these words we are not to obtain the impression that the Lord was not desirous of pouring out His blessing upon His people. It was as if the Lord had said, It is of no use for you, Jeremiah, to pray. My love is boundless; My grace is infinite; My mercy endureth forever; gladly would I extend mercy to them, and remove the judgment; gladly would I pour but My blessing upon them until there would not be room to contain it. I do not take pleasure in seeing the desolations, the parched ground, the dry water courses. I look with sorrow on the distress, the misery, and the sufferings of My people. But My people cling to their sinful practices. They claim to worship Me, but their worship is an abomination; their hearts are far from Me. It would be a curse to My people for Me to answer your prayers. Cease your pleadings to this end. The service you are to render to Me now is not that of a priest, an intercessor. It is to show My people their transgressions; to tell them that more severe judgments await them unless they turn away from their sins and seek Me with their whole heart. Things must be made right before I can impart to them blessings that will be for their good.

GOD'S REMEDY THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

Similar conditions often are found amongst the Lord's people today. God's blessings to these, however, are not so much in the nature of temporal, earthly blessings, and therefore in their case, neither prosperity or adversity would indicate either a manifestation of God's favor or a withdrawal of the same. The evidences to spiritual Israelites that He has withdrawn His favors, as also the causes, we have already noticed. The ministry to be performed by such as are

spiritual and who are sensitive to wrong conditions, is not that of pleading with God to pour out His blessings, but is rather that of a reformer, using the "Sword of the Spirit," which is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, making use of, it in such a way as to uncover, to expose the wrong conditions, that hinder the Lord's blessings from being manifest.

It was such a ministry that Jeremiah was called to perform. In almost every characteristic, from the human standpoint, he was utterly unfitted. However, he possessed the characteristics, that God could make use of. He was honest in his dealings with God, and realizing his own utter weakness, he always poured out his complaints to God, and turned to Him for the strength he needed. In this way he eventually became an overcomer. On this occasion it would seem that Jeremiah had lost sight of what was the character of his ministry. He was temporarily overcome by the distress, the suffering, the mournful sights all around him. There was an excuse for this, at least he thought so. He thought of the false prophets, who had by their smooth teaching deceived the people. He had forgotten the Lord's words concerning this -- "My people love to have it so"--and he reasons that they, and not the people, were to blame for all the calamities that had befallen the nation' and again he lifts up his voice in intercession: "Then said I, Ali, Lord God! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place." Mr. Meyer in his *Old Testament Heroes*, has thus endeavored to express the Prophet's feelings as he made this plea:

"Ah, Lord God! True, too true, sadly too true, are Thy words. Thy people deserve all that Thou hast said. Their' iniquities are alone accountable for their sorrows. But remember how falsely they have been taught. The land is full of those who hide Thy truth under a cloud of words. They say that the outward ritual sufficeth, howsoever far the heart is from Thee. There is a grievous fault; but surely it lieth at the door of those who mislead the fickle, changeful crowd. Their mouths are lined with wool; they cry, 'Peace, Peace!' when there is none. The very remonstrances of conscience are drowned by their delusive assurances. Spare Thy people! They are scattered because the shepherds have failed in their commission."--Ver. 13.

PREACHERS NOT SENT OF THE LORD

The answer of the Lord to the Prophet's plea in substance is that the prophets will be punished, but that the punishment must fall on the people also-that it is the only way to deal with them now. The Lord's words are:

"Those preachers preach lies in My name. I never sent them. 'They preach to you a false vision -- a pagan lie-and the invention of their own hearts: Therefore . . . to the preachers who preach in My name, and whom I have not sent, and who say, 'Sword and famine shall not come to this country,' those preachers themselves shall be killed by sword and famine. And the people they preach to shall be refuse in the-streets of Jerusalem, before the sword and the famine," *etc.* -- *Fenton's Translation*.

What a solemn truth is suggested by these words of Jehovah. The Scriptures are everywhere clear. in* their teaching concerning the severity of the judgments that will come upon those who cause God's children to err or His little ones to

stumble, or to be led astray. (See Jer. 25:34-36; Matt. 18:6; 23:23-39; Rev. 18:4-8.) It has been well said: "Better be dumb and not able to speak than say words that may destroy the faith of childhood or start questionings that may shatter by one fell blow the construction of years. The doom of the false prophet will be' terrible. Their fate will be the more awful because they have run without being sent. There has, been no Divine impulse energizing their words. Position, bread, power, have been the incentives of their office; but the people have loved to have it so. Their corrupt morals have produced a corrupt priesthood and a crop of false prophets. The men of whom you complain are the product of their times. My people enervated with sloth, luxury, and conceit, would not endure the simple truth of the Divine Word; and this evil band have been bred and nurtured in the stifling corruption of the age. Until, therefore, the people themselves have put away their sin, and returned to Me in penitence and consecration, they must be held guilty before My sight, and suffer the out working of their sin. I will pour their wickedness upon them.?" --Ver. I&

"CAST THEM OUT OF MY SIGHT"

We are made to wonder with astonishment and amazement that the Prophet did not leave off his pleading, indeed his expostulation, and consider that these words of Jehovah ended the matter. But no, the Prophet does not cease his pleading. He fails to understand the situation; he does not seem to see that these judgments were for correction. His reply to Jehovah expresses his bitter disappointment. "Hast Thou utterly rejected Judah?" are his words. "Hath Thy soul loathed Zion?" he inquires. "Why hast Thou smitten us, and there is no healing for us? we looked for peace and there is no good; and for the time of healing and behold trouble. We acknowledge, O Lord, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers; for we have sinned against Thee. Do not abhor us, for Thy Name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of Thy glory: remember, break not Thy covenant with us. Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain ? or can the heavens give showers?" The next words are thus rendered: "Is it not you alone our Ever-living God? And we hope in You, for You produce all *these*." -- *Fenton's Translation*.

The answer of the Lord to this last plea seems to have almost broken the heart of the Prophet. The words are: "Though Moses and Samuel stood before Me, yet My mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth," etc. At this the Prophet's pleadings cease; the floods of sorrow, discouragement, despondency, and despair rush in and overwhelm him. Or it may be, as one has said, "the Prophet falls into a muse, and as he foresees the misrepresentations of his motives, and the certain hate which his unfaltering prediction of coming doom must excite, he wishes that he had never been born. So does the heart of the man of God fail, and if, like Jeremiah's, it is highly strung and keenly sensitive, it becomes the prey of the deepest anguish."

"IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THY REMNANT"

The judgments- to fall upon his beloved country are terrible; and as the Prophet at last begins to see that there is no possible way of their being held back, and that he must live not only to declare them, but to witness them also, his thoughts turn inward upon himself, and, he cries out in despair: "Woe is me, my mother that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! 1

have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me."

It was in this great crisis of the Prophet's life that he seemed to realize more keenly than ever before how naturally, unfit he was for the difficult and trying ministry that he was divinely commissioned to perform. May it not be that the word's of the writer quoted above express the feelings, the deep emotions, that stirred the sensitive heart of Jeremiah at this time: "Why, O God, didst Thou make me so gentle and, sympathetic, so naturally weak and yielding, so incapable of looking calmly on pain? Would not some stronger or rougher nature, have done Thy bidding better? Even now hast. Thou not some man of ruder make to whom Thou canst intrust this mission? There are skins more impervious to the scorching heat than mine; may they not go into these flames? Why this stammering lip, this faltering heart, this thorn in my flesh?"

Jeremiah seems also now to begin to fear what may come to himself, as also to the few faithful ones who doubtless like himself were filled with distress and forebodings of the coming *terrible judgment* that must soon fall upon his beloved country. The Lord reassures him with words of comfort: "Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy [the invaders under Nebuchadnezzar] to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction." (Chapter 15: 11-) But as the Prophet listens to the fuller description of the .woes coming, and feeling, seemingly, how useless was any further work he might engage in, his thoughts again turn to himself and he cries out, "O Lord, Thou knowest; remember me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in Thy longsuffering: know that for Thy sake I have suffered rebuke. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart; for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts."

Oh what a weight of meaning may be hidden in the tried, discouraged Prophet's words: "O Lord Thou knowest." As one has said, Thou knowest, "things that my dearest (friend) cannot guess, which I cannot utter, which I am slow to admit even to myself; the hope that trembles like the first flush of dawn, and the fear that paralyzes; the conflict, the broken ideals, the unfinished sentences, the songs without words; Thou knowest. Thou art my all. Thy smile strengthens me against reproach. Thy words bring rifts of joy and rejoicing in my saddest hours. Thy presence banishes loneliness when I sit alone. And yet sometimes a dark foreboding comes that 'Thou wilt be to me as a deceitful brook, whose intermittent, waters fail which is dry when most its flow is needed. I know it cannot be, since Thou art faithful; and yet what could I do if, after having made me what I am, Thou shouldst leave me to myself."

HE WOULD HAVE US TRUST HIM IMPLICITLY

How tenderly, how patiently, how sympathetically did the Lord deal with His tried, discouraged servant, who evidently had decided that he was not fitted for such a work, and who was on the point of giving it up! How intimate, how close, was the relationship existing between the great Jehovah of all, and His much tried servant! Let us listen to the closing words of the discouraged Prophet in this hour of the greatest trial and testing he had experienced in connection with his carrying forward his divinely. appointed commission; and then let us hear the words of the

great Jehovah God to His friend (may We not reverently say),. Jeremiah. We give these in the free translation of Fenton:

"Ever-living God of Hosts! I have not sat in the company of the joyous but felt pleasure at Your side -- I sat solitary because You filled me with indignation. Why is my misery perpetual? and my wound incurable? refusing to be healed? Why are You like failing, unstable waters?" The words of the Prophet seem to show that his individual faith in Jehovah's promise to be with him, at times weakened and almost failed him. We must ever keep in mind that he walked by faith, and that he endured as seeing (by faith) Him who -is invisible.

The Lord recognizes the weakness of His faltering servant, and speaks to him in words, that recalls to the Prophet's mind the first interview he had with Him years before. "If you will return-then I will restore you to stand before Me. And if you sort out the worthless from the valuable, you shall be like My mouth -- they [the faithful remnant] will come to you, and you need not go to them. I will also make for you a wall of brass as a defense against this people; they may fight against you, but they shall not overpower you, for I will be there to save and deliver you. . . . I will also deliver you from the hand of the wicked and redeem [deliver] you from the hand of the terrible." (Ver. 19-21.) It is as if the Lord would say, Why are you so discouraged, so despondent? Come back to Me. I would have thee learn to trust Me implicitly. Do not think of thy frailty, but think of My promise to be with thee to give thee strength. I want to make use of thee to gather My faithful ones. They are but a few, and they need a leader, a shepherd. They will gather around you as they see that I am with you. You need not go to them, they will come to you.

Here the curtain is drawn. The Prophet takes heart; as is indicated from the record that follows. Again we have an illustration, an example set before us of the power of God working in a weak, fragile earthen vessel, overcoming all obstacles and enabling one of His own to conquer every foe.

O! near to the Rock let me keep,
Or blessings or sorrows prevail,
Or climbing the mountain-way steep,
Or walking the shadowy vale.
O then to the Rock let me fly,
To the Rock that is higher than I.

THE PRESENT WORK AND SERVICE OF THE CHURCH

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." -- Rom. 1:16; Acts 16:9-15; 28:30, 31; Rom. 15:18-21.

MANY in reading the New Testament especially those portions that record the ministry of the Apostles and the early Church have gained the impression that the mission assigned the Church in this Age is that of saving the world. But this impression we believe is not really found in the New Testament writings. It is due rather to the error and misconception of the Divine Plan that has come down to us

from the past. Progress in the path of light is sure to enable us to have a clearer vision in these days of the purpose of God than was possible to be had by our forefathers. The difficulty with many today is that they have not been walking in the light; and remaining under the influence of their early training, continue to read into the Bible what is not there.

There are those who attempt to apply the Golden Rule and say-that its observations must signify that we should turn our backs on society and worldly enjoyments, and devote what time we have at our disposal to the improvement of the fallen-to moral reforms, social reforms, financial reforms, the reforming of drunkards, etc. And still others, imbued with the same spirit, and with the same desire to fulfil this Golden Rule, say, We will leave home and friends, and go into far-off lands as missionaries, to preach Christ to the heathen.

We are bound to appreciate such noble sentiments, whether we can agree with the conclusions as to methods of work, etc., or not. We love the noble principle which, if not in every instance, at least in many cases, lies at the foundation of such sacrifices. of time, influence, convenience, etc.; it is an outworking of the Golden Rule in these dear friends, saying to themselves and to others, If we were in the slums or in heathen degradation, we should wish that some of God's children would come to us, to lift us up and enlighten us, and hence we should do so to others, even as we would, if our conditions were altered, that they should do to us.

This is sound reasoning and a proper application of the Golden Rule, and yet also, we believe, a mistaken or wrong one. One of the first lessons, that the Christian is called upon to learn in the School 'of Christ is that his judgment is defective; that not only our physical powers have degenerated through the fall, but that likewise our mental powers have suffered; so that the whole world today is not only unsound of body, but also unsound of mind, unsound of judgment. The primary lessons of God's children in the school of Christ are to the effect that we all lack wisdom, and that for this very reason He has provided His Book, the Bible -- "That the man. of God may be thoroughly furnished." -- 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

GOD HAS NOT ABANDONED HIS PLAN TO MAN

We are taught in the Book that the work of salvation is one too great for humanity itself, and that therefore God has undertaken the work; we are taught that He has not left the matter to operate itself at random, neither has He left it to our imperfect judgments and puny efforts. We are taught that the great Savior of the world planned His work "from the foundation of the world," and yet that it was four thousand years and more before He took the first great step for its accomplishment, namely the giving of His Son to be the redemption price of Adam and his race (1 Pet. 1:20) ; we are taught that having begun this work of salvation God has not abandoned it, and does not intend to abandon it, but that eventually "He shall bring forth judgment [trial] unto victory"; and that eventually our Lord Jesus shall see the fruit of the travail of His soul on man's behalf, and shall be satisfied-that eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, and all shall know Him from the least to the greatest; that eventually He shall bring in everlasting righteousness, so that the time shall ultimately come when all the families of the earth shall be blessed with the knowledge of God's

goodness and grace, and with an opportunity to -benefit thereby; that eventually whosoever will not obey the great Prophet-King, shall be cut off from amongst the people in the Second Death; that eventually there shall be no more dying, no more sighing, no more crying, no more pain there, because the former things of Adamic sin and its penalty and blight shall have been done away. -- Isa. 14:24, 27; 55:11; Matt. 12:20; Isa. 53:11; 11:9; Jer. 31:34; Acts 3:19-23; Rev. 21:3, 4.

But many of God's dear people overlook these gracious provisions and promises of His Word, and partaking to a considerable extent of the spirit of love they forget that God's love is still greater than their own, even as God's wisdom is greater than theirs; hence they lose sight of the fact that the entire Plan of salvation is of God, and that He has not abandoned it to others, but will carry it out Himself in His own due time. It is because they forget this that they become burdened with the weight of responsibility, and feel as though the salvation of the world rested upon themselves, and, impressed with this feeling of self-importance and forgetfulness of God's Word, they go into the mission work, slum work, and to the heathen. They forget, and are greatly disadvantaged by so doing, that God has already declared, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My plans higher than your plans, and My ways higher than your ways." -- Isa. 55:8, 9.

As a consequence of this oversight and misdirection of effort, these dear friends are doing works now which God intends shall be done in a future Age, and which can and will be done then to very much better advantage every way. God has appointed the Millennial Age for this work of lifting up the weak, opening the blind eyes of the barbarians, and unstopping their dull ears to hear the message of Divine grace. God has appointed that when His time for this great work, in which He is more interested than any of His creatures possibly could be, will come, the conditions will be favorable to the success of His Plan, Which He guarantees us will succeed, and will bring blessing to all the families of the earth, and will enlighten every man born into the world. -- Gal. 3:16, 29; John 1:9; Acts. 3:19-21.

ALL EVIL TO BE SUBDUED -- EVEN DEATH CONQUERED

God's Word informs those who seek His counsel that at that time Satan shall be bound so that he may deceive the nations no more, as he is now doing (Rev. 20:1-3), that during that period of Satan's restraint those whom he now blinds (2 Cor.4:4) with various false doctrines, sophistries, superstitions, etc., will be freed from these, and have the eyes and ears of their understanding opened. It informs us also that at that time He will establish as the King over all -the earth His honored Agent, Who gave His life as a ransom for mankind; and that our Lord Jesus will establish the Kingdom of God amongst men, a Kingdom not merely in name, but, also in power and in fact; one which shall rule the world, forcibly putting down sin, oppression, ignorance, superstition, darkness; and raising up righteousness, truth, and every good principle and influence for the blessing and uplifting of those whom He purchased with His precious blood. It informs us that under His beneficent reign all evil shall be subdued, that even death shall be conquered; and that all mankind, freed from the Adamic sentence of death, may, if they will, then attain unto eternal life and full human perfection, and that only the willful sinners against light and opportunity will be utterly destroyed in the Second Death.--1 Cor. 15:24-28; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; Acts 3:23.

The same Word instructs us that the Lord's Plan for the present Age does not purpose the conversion of the world; nor its salvation in any Sense of the word; nor its uplifting; but that His Plan, on the contrary, is simply the development of the Church, the fore-ordained and predestinated number, a "little flock," who must all be selected from amongst men, and every one of them be copies of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29.) It also informs us that this work of God in this Age is the work in which we are invited to be co-workers together with God. It points out to us that this is the work of the Bride-to make, *herself* ready for, the marriage (Rev. 19:7) ; that the special work in this present time consists not only in the "calling" of the Church, but also in the building up of one another, among the called ones, in the most holy. faith-helping one another to perfect holiness in the reverence of the Lord, showing us that a large part of our work is in our own hearts, cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, helping one another to make our calling and our election sure, by perfecting in our hearts the Golden Rule. -- 2 Cor. 7:1; Jude 20.

WHERE THE GOLDEN RULE CALLS US

But overlooking the particular service marked out for those who would be co-workers with God in this Age, our dear friends misuse their Golden Rule by applying it outside of the class for which the Lord intended it in this Age. It will be applicable to all the heathen world and the substratum of society in the Millennial Age, but now it is applicable chiefly to the household of faith. True, if we could accomplish all that the Lord would have us accomplish for the household of faith, it would then be very proper for us to extend our efforts to the heathen and lower strata of society, rather than to sit down in idleness; but so far from finding that we have not enough to engage our time in the household of faith, we find that we are in the harvest-time of the Age, and that the harvest is still going on and, the laborers are few, and that there is much more than enough to engage all our time and energies among the "brethren" whom the Lord our God has called. Hence the Golden Rule calls us to be, exercised chiefly amongst these, and not amongst those whom the Lord our God has not yet called, but who are left, in the Divine Plan, for a calling and blessing of another kind in the next Age -- the Millennial Age.

Pursuing this policy of searching for those who had ears to hear, the Apostle Paul, sent by the Lord to be the great messenger of grace to the Gentiles, did not say within himself (as some of our dear missionary friends seem to say within themselves), I will seek out the most illiterate and degraded people in the world, that I may lift them up. Had this been the Apostle's sentiment he doubtless would have hastened, with his coadjutors, southward from Jerusalem into darkest Africa, or eastward from Jerusalem into India, with its hundreds of millions, and still further eastward into China, with its hundreds of millions, in utter ignorance of God anti steeped in superstition. But the Apostle had made a better study of the Divine Plan, and knew that the times of restitution, the Millennial Age, was set apart by God for this general uplift of mankind; and that it would be a waste of effort to undertake to do that work in advance of God's cooperation; in advance of His time and in advance of His arrangements, which His wisdom foresaw would be necessary to the accomplishment of that work.

The Apostle reasoned, on the contrary, "God hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31), and that appointed day is a future day, the Millennial Day; and if God has appointed that day to be the time for the world's judgment, it would be folly on my part to attempt to bring in a judgment of the world sooner -than God intends it, even if I were able to do so. He reasoned, further, that if God has appointed a future day for judging the world in general, then the world in general is not on trial or under judgment in the present Gospel day, and hence might just as well be left in their heathen darkness a little longer, as God already had left them in heathen darkness for more than four thousand years; and he reasoned wisely, logically. He was instructed of the Lord, and hence he had the, spirit of a sound mind, and did not attempt to do an utterly impossible and hence a foolish thing. He did not attempt to be either wiser or more loving than the Heavenly Father, but trusting to the Heavenly Father's wisdom and love he sought to know the will of God now, in this present Age, that he might thus be an ambassador for God and a co-worker together with Him.

SENT NOT TO BARBARIANS BUT TO THE ENLIGHTENED

The declaration of the Scriptures is that St. Paul and his company purposed to(go into Asia, but that under Divine providence he seemed to be hindered from going there, and that then God specially directed him in a dream, and sent him into Europe with the message-sending him, not to barbarians, but to the most enlightened and most cultured people of the then civilized world, the people of Greece. (Acts 16:7-10-) And we remember that later on the Lord sent the Apostle to Rome, telling him in advance that this was his purpose, and seemingly in order to keep the Apostle in Rome he was sent there a prisoner, yet for three years was permitted to have full liberty to preach Christ to as many as had ears to hear. And let us not forget a circumstance which occurred in connection with the journey to Rome, when the Apostle was shipwrecked on the Island of Melita. (Acts 28:1-10.) He found there a people -who, so far as we are able to judge, were on the average better prepared for the truth than the Chinese, Malays, etc., and of these the record says, "The barbarians showed us no little kindness." We might suppose that barbarians who were disposed to be kind and generous to people who were shipwrecked on their coast, would be a rather more favorable class to .approach with the Gospel of Christ than cannibals, to 'Whom missionaries of today frequently go. And yet what do we find as the result of the Apostle's stay' in the midst of that people, all that winter? Do we read that he left several flourishing little missions? Do we read that he preached day and night unto the barbarians? Not a word of it; no mention is made of the slightest effort to reach them. The Apostle seemingly knew that they were too degraded to have any ear to hear the Christian. Message, or to be called with the High Calling which God during this Age is sending forth, to gather the Bride for His Son. We have every reason to believe that the Apostle made no effort whatever to make known the Gospel of Christ to those heathen people. Quite possibly while he was there, forcibly detained in their midst, and unable to reach 'those who would have an ear to hear the Good Tidings, he may have attempted to suggest to them certain moral *reforms, or how to live more comfortably, or something else that would come within the range of their measure of intelligence. But apparently he had no thought whatever that the Gospel "High Calling" was for such, and hence the Golden Rule, operating in his life and governing his conduct, was limited

accordingly -- limited to act in harmony with the Divine revelation and the Divine Plan.

SAINTS NOW BEING TRIED, TESTED, DEVELOPED

Thus we see that the Apostle Paul was not left in darkness. He was instructed of the Lord, and he in turn instructs us, that the work of the present Age is the work of preparing the *judges* of the world, who, when the great day of the World's judgment or trial shall have dawned, will be prepared to execute judgment and justice in the world, and to bless with a righteous rule all the families of the earth. He informs us that the saints now being tried (judged), tested, and developed in character are undergoing this severe process, and are required to walk in the "narrow way," to the intent that they may be fit to be instruments of God for *judging the world in* righteousness when the 'due time for that judgment shall have come. (I Cor. 6:2, 3.) Consequently, we find that the Apostle's energies, so far from being directed to the substratum of society, the heathen and the barbarians, were directed to the very opposite class. He sought the best people in the world; the most moral people and the most intelligent; the people most advanced in every sense of the word-believing, and rightly, that the reasonable and gracious Plan of God would commend itself better to such than to the sodden and benighted and stupefied, and degraded minds of the barbarian heathen. Conservatively, the Apostle first sought the intelligent classes of Asia Minor, and after having gone through various cities (not attempting nor expecting to convert the people en masse, but merely hoping, in harmony with the Divine Program, to find a few, a little flock, and to establish these in principles of righteousness and in the School of Christ, to learn of Him and to develop character, and to be prepared for the future work of judgeship and joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom) -- the Apostle pressed on to find still others who had "ears to hear."

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the name of our dear Redeemer and King!

We want to express our appreciation of the recent visit of Brother Blackburn and assure you that his discourses were timely and genuinely appreciated. The class voted last Sunday to send you this message of appreciation and also our Christian love and greetings.

All of us enjoy the regular visits of the HERALD, as the articles are helpful to us, and we also take note of the Master's spirit shown in these articles.

Reverting to the visit of Brother Blackburn, I wish to state that we miss very keenly the visits of the Pilgrims, and if it is the Father's will, we surely would be glad to see them more frequently. However, we are not complaining, as we know the matter is in His hands; but we are also alive to the fact that it costs quite a little for these brethren to travel from place to place, and feeling that we may be able to assist in making these visits possible, the class decided last Sunday to send a contribution to you as often as conditions will warrant, and you will hear from us quite frequently, we hope. I am now enclosing check for \$----- . . .

Please remember our little Class in your prayers, and be assured that you have our Christian love and esteem, and that it is our desire to co-operate with you in sending forth the Gospel and ministering to the brethren, as we believe you are pursuing a course that has His approval.

Your brother by His grace,

P.A.G.--Tenn.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Greetings

Find enclosed \$7.50, for which please send me six, volumes of *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, and by so doing you will oblige your brother in Christ. I intend, if the Lord wills that I do so, to engage in the distribution of *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* the "rest of my tabernacling here upon earth, and to this end I ask your prayers.

Your brother by His grace,

J.P.J.--La.

Dear Sir:

What I have to say herein you may think strange. Perhaps you receive many letters similar in thought to this. Perhaps you do not I will speak of things in this to you which I would hesitate to mention in conversing with my best friends.

I am hungering and thirsting for a better understanding of the Bible, and of holy things. I am a young man nearly twenty-three years of age. In my home the Bible is seldom seen and is never spoken of, yet I have a good home and a wonderful father and mother. When a child, I would not attend Sunday School or Church because the lessons were seemingly dry and uninteresting. I have had a fair education, yet I do not understand the Bible. It seems as though I cannot interpret its many beautifully worded passages. . . .

With much spare time at hand I would like to learn to, interpret the meaning seemingly hidden from me of the teachings of Christ. I am ashamed to admit my ignorance in such matters, and I ask your help.

If you can aid me in gaining a better understanding of Christ's teachings, you will have done more for me than all my friends, yes, even my immediate family. Mere words cannot express strongly enough my desire to understand these things. If you can give me any assistance, I will endeavor, in some manner to repay you for your kindness.

Is there any one in this city whom you could recommend that I talk to and, explain this yearning, this gnawing hunger of mine for knowledge and understanding of holy things. I would gladly go see such person. . . .

I write this, not because of idle curiosity, but because of an earnest desire for a broader understanding of the Bible and its teachings.

Please excuse this lengthy appeal for aid which I fear will take up too much of your valuable time. Your advice and assistance will, I promise, be heartily appreciated.,

Sincerely,

Dear Brethren:

Greetings in the Lord. Please renew my subscription for the HERALD which expires this month. Money is herewith enclosed.,

I beg to say that I have received my first volume on Revelation, and Oh, the blessing it has brought.. Even those that at first opposed the INSTITUTE are confessing to the blessing received.

May the Lord keep you humble and thus the work be blessed.

Your brother in Christ,

J.W.--N.Y.

Dear Brethren:

It is some time since I have had the privilege of writing to you, but a busy and hot summer has been my excuse for not doing so. You have been much in our thoughts however.

I had expected ere this to send in a contribution but money has been rather scarce for several months. We are spending some money locally, which we trust will have the Lord's approval. I determined that there should be one place in R----- where the truth could be found, so I rented a room in a central building, bought a few chairs, and advertised The Reasonable Gospel. Needless to say I have not met with any rousing success, but I am not discouraged. The battle is the Lord's. The sisters at S----- are loyal and have backed me up by their presence, although at a great personal sacrifice. At least one intelligent person is hearing the Truth for the first time, and that pays, for the effort. We hope that others may become interested.

Sister H. joins me in sending Christian love to all the co-workers at Brooklyn.

Your brother by His grace,

G.W.H. -- Cal.

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CHRISTIAN LIFE

"The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up, for me." -- Gal. 2: 20, Moffatts Translation.

ONE has truthfully said that "the commencement of Christian life is *life*: life imparted from God through Jesus Christ." This is in perfect harmony With the Word of God, which is the only source of information on this, the most important subject that can possibly engage the attention of human beings. St. John, who was specially commissioned by Christ Himself to make known what Christian life is, thus speaks of its commencement: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which

were born [begotten], not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12, 13.) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I John 5:11, 12.) Furthermore, we are not left in ignorance concerning what this life is; and by knowing what it is we are enabled thus to know whether we possess it or not. The great Bestower of this life has thus defined it: "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou has sent." -- John 17:3.

FAILURES TO LIVE THAT LIFE

To look for the flower or the fruit unless we have planted the seed that contains the germ and it has taken root would be very foolish. Likewise it is in vain that we look for anything but crab-apples from a crab-apple tree, if no better fruit has been grafted in upon its stock. For the very same reason, to look for Christian life or piety in a person who has not had imparted this life would be foolish. An unregenerate man cannot possibly cultivate a life that he does not possess. Many there are around us who doubtless are very sincere in their desire to live a Christian life, and are very earnest in their endeavors, but are obliged over and over again to acknowledge they fail to live this life. The reason for this is that they have not started right, and therefore have not had this life begotten in them. Thousands and thousands live in our world today who believe in God, believe in Christ, and believe in the Bible, and who are very zealous in their performance of religious duties, and yet they are waiting for some kind of an evidence, which never comes to them, that they are true Christians. Many when asked the question, "Are you a Christian?" reply, "I hope I am a Christian; I am trying to live the 'Christian life.'" There is something manifestly wrong here, and the most natural conclusion is that these are not Christians.

There are others who think they are Christians, and are not. Their lives are very truly described in the experience of one of old who, for a portion of his life was under the Jewish law. He gives us his experience in his efforts to keep that perfect law in the words: "For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate that do I." (Rom. 7:14, 15.) In the summing up of this law experience St. Paul continues: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Ver. :24.) We inquire, Did he ever find a deliverance from this kind of an experience? He informs us that he did, but only when he ceased from his own efforts, and exercised faith in the Deliverer, Christ. His words, "I thank God through Jesus Christ my Lord. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." The law of God had accomplished its end.

In another epistle he informs us of the end or object of the law: He says, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster [pedagogue, one who led the child to school] to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" -- in other words have become Christians.

It is not only the will of God that we shall have life, that is, come to know God and Jesus Christ, but it is also- His will that we shall know that we possess it, as is plainly taught in the words: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye *may know* that ye have eternal life." (1 John 5:13.), It should. be plain, therefore, that I must know myself to *be* a child of God, in order to *live* like a child of God.

KING SAUL AN EXAMPLE OF UNBELIEF AND DISOBEDIENCE

Giving one. instructions how to *live* like a child of God will not make one such. It would result only in one's trying to imitate the Christian, imitate the Christian's Master or Teacher, and could only end in failure. Even in the Law Dispensation in which the spirit of sonship could not be known, we find there were two classes -- a small class who walked by faith, and a very large class who did not. And in that dispensation we have very many illustrations of the failure of those who sought to imitate the life of faith. As one has said: "Saul the son of Kish, Israel's first king, forms a notable example. He was continually blundering in trying to *act* like a man of faith, but without possessing real faith. He evidently knew the Bible of his day; and had been instructed from it by Samuel of God's dealings with Israel under Moses, Joshua, and the judges. (I Sam. 12.) So in his difficulties he tries to do what men of God had done before him, but never in the same spirit, or with the same results. In I Sam. 13:12, the Philistines are [represented as] surrounding him. He evidently remembers Samuel's offering sacrifice and making prayer to God in a similar situation, as recorded in the seventh chapter; and although commanded by God in such circumstances to wait for the Prophet, who would reveal unto him God's will -- he imitated Samuel, and offered sacrifice and made prayer. It was mere outward form, an act of disobedience; of which, if he had been a man of faith, he could not have been. guilty; and disaster attended it. In I Sam. 14:18, remembering what the presence of the ark had been with Joshua at Jericho, he hastily commands the Priest to bring the ark; in the 19th verse, he as hastily leaves Ark, Priest, and, all, and goes out to the battle without *any* message from God; and in the 24th verse blunders into another imitation of Joshua at Gibeon, by forbidding the people to eat food that day. He was disobeyed by his son, and caused the people to sin by their eating blood. In the 35th verse, in imitation of Gideon, he makes an altar, but no answer from God comes to this altar. In the 39th verse, in imitation of Jephthah, he vows that Jonathan his son shall die; but the people will not allow Jonathan to be put to death, and the vow is broken. In the 41st verse, without command from God, he again imitates Joshua-who, by command of God, detected Achan by the lot-in ordering the lot between himself and Jonathan. So he blundered along-at times showing much courage and sincerity of purpose. His life of many failures closes with the creeping through the hut of the Witch of Endor, to a self-inflicted death upon the battle field of Gilboa. 'Without faith it is impossible to please God; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.' -- Heb. I 1: 6.

"Saul was anointed and instructed by a prophet of God, and was specially loved and prayed for by that Prophet. He prayed, and prophesied, and engaged in the service of God; and at times with enthusiasm and courage. Yet, he was a man without faith, and did not please God. Saul's lack of faith was *a failure to trust* in

the living God. It is not *faith* that saves; it is God that saves; God manifested to us in Jesus Christ. 'He that believeth on Him hath life.'

"Saul's lack of faith in God, was shown by his disobedience to God. The sinners [or even the Christian's] lack of faith is shown by disobeying God. The Gospel is preached among all nations, 'for the obedience of faith.' (Rom. 16:26.) 'This is His commandment that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ.' (1 John 3:23.) The notion that *faith* in and of itself has any saving power or merit apart from the object upon which faith is placed, is a delusion. Yet many seem to think that if they can force themselves to believe the Bible, and never admit any doubt of its contents, that a state of mind is produced that constitutes *faith*, and that this state of mind is pleasing to God, and that God on account -f this state of mind forgives and saves. And yet with this state of mind they are without personal trust in a personal Savior, and really put what they call faith in the *place* of their Savior."

KNOWING GOD AND JESUS CHRIST

The Savior and the Apostles all teach that a condition called a state of death, precedes the Christian life: "And you hath He quickened [made alive] who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." -- Eph. 2:1-3.

The Savior expresses this matter in the same way, as we read: "He that heareth, My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; *but is passed from death unto life.*" (John 5:24.) These words are plain, easily understood by the Christian. He realizes that his former condition was not only a condition of condemnation to death; but that it was without any experimental knowledge of God and Jesus Christ. The Apostle describes it as being "without Christ . . . having no hope, and without God in the world." -- Eph. 2:12.

It will be admitted by all that it would be impossible to conceive a greater contrast than that existing between a living and a dead person. And yet this is the way the Scriptures portray the difference between a true Christian and one who is not. The true Christian realizes in a measure, even when real Christian life begins, that this comparison is not an exaggerated one; and as he goes on to know, to experience more and more of this life of "knowing God and Jesus Christ," the more does he realize in his own inner life, how wide is the gulf that separates him from the man of the world. The Savior's definition of this life -- "And this is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" -- when experienced, is seen to be a root statement of the very many things that go to make up the Christian life, both now and in the future. It is a life that can be understood only by those who have come to possess it. It is described in many Scriptures as being "in Christ."

The Apostle makes reference to this life in the words: "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things have

become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) The expression "new creature" is doubtless a figurative one, but like all figures, the reality is greater than the figure. In another place the same Apostle calls the one who has come into Christ, a "new man," in contrast with the "old man." His words are : "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. 4:22-24.) Some, taking the Apostle's expressions "new creature," "new man," too literally, have supposed that in some way, they cannot tell how, some kind of a miracle is wrought in the reception of this life. However, a "new creature" or a "new man," does not mean new physical organs to think with, but rather new things to think about; not new organs to love with, but new things to love.; not new organs to rejoice with, but new things. to rejoice in; not new organs to delight in new pleasures, but new pleasures for the old organs to delight in. It is, therefore, a *renewing* so far as the organs are concerned, but entirely new things so far as the objects for the old organs to operate upon are concerned. The identity of the "new creature" or "new man" is described as being possessed of a new will, new desires, new aspirations, new ambitions, new aims in life, and new hopes.

"BE YE TRANSFORMED"

Some make the matter more mysterious and confusing by saying that one who has entered upon the life "in Christ," is not actually a new creature, but is only reckoned as one. While it is certainly true that in the full sense one is not a "new creature" in this present life-will not be until this mortal puts on immortality, it is true that those in Christ are described as "new creatures" now. The process of creation begins with the impartation of this new life. There are many ways employed in the Scriptures to describe the origin and beginning of this life. One inspired writer describes it as coming from God above, and speaks of it as a "begetting." "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth." (Jas. 1:18.) Another describes its origin as proceeding from the same source: "Being born [begotten] again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (I Pet. 1:22.) Still another describes it as receiving the Spirit: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith." (Gal. 3:2.) "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." -- Gal. 3:14.

The Apostle further shows, the moral regeneration produced by the impartation and renewing process of this new life. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:25-32.) The

great end,' however, to be accomplished in the impartation of this life, is not only that of a transformation of *character* but that of a transformation of *nature*, from the human to the Divine. "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:1, 2.) Another Apostle informs us that all things that pertain to life and godliness—all things necessary to accomplish this end are given to us. (2 Pet. 1: 3.) He informs us also what the all things are—that they are *exceeding great and precious* promises: that by these we might be partakers of the *Divine nature*," etc. -- Ver. 4.

HOLY AND ACCEPTABLE TO GOD

It will be seen by all careful students of the Word that the words, "Present your bodies a living sacrifice" cannot possibly be addressed to the world, for the simple reason that the world has nothing to present or offer for sacrifice. Complying with this exhortation implies an acceptance of the heavenly call to joint-heirship with the Redeemer, and a consecration to obedience to its requirements. While there is involved of course the *act of* consecration, which may be in a moment, yet there is included also the "bringing of every thought into harmony with the mind of God," which is a gradual work. The words are addressed to "brethren," that is, members of the "household of faith," those who have already experienced "the mercies of God." The "mercies of God" are discussed in the preceding chapters. The most important features of the mercies of God are those that relate to the believer's justification before God. These are summed up in the expression: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:24.) This brings "remission of sins that are past" through faith in the precious blood, (Ver. 25.) As even this much requires the exercise of faith on the part of the sinner, it will be seen that he becomes by such exercise, a member of the "household of faith." It will also be seen that before a member of the household of faith can present his body as a living sacrifice, he must in some way be looked upon as "holy," in order to be acceptable as a sacrifice.

It is in connection with this expression, "holy and acceptable to God," that the significance of the frequent expression of the Apostle, "righteousness [justification] of God," is to be understood. It was concerning this that the Jews of the Apostle's day stumbled: "being, ignorant of God's righteousness . . . have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." The Apostle says that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:3, 4.) This righteousness or justification of God, he informs us, is "revealed from faith to faith" (Rom. 1:16, 17), that is, faith in Christ as our Savior or Sin-bearer, which brings remission of sins that are past, making us members of the household of faith; and faith in Christ as our Lord, which involves the complete yielding of the will in consecration. To those who do this the Lord applies the merit of His sacrifice in their behalf, and God counts or reckons them as righteous, just, as "new creatures," "new men" in Christ Jesus.

PROVING THE WILL OF GOD

We thus see that it is God Himself who makes it possible for the Christian believer to have something to offer or present to Him a living sacrifice. On the believer's part it "means that we should consecrate to God's service every power and talent we possess, that henceforth we may live not for friends, nor for family, nor for the world, nor for anything else but -for and in obedient service of Him who bought us with His own precious blood." We thus become priests of God, for it is while performing the priestly ministry, in proclaiming "the word of reconciliation" "to which the spirit of anointing impels, that each priest finds the-necessity for offering himself a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, and his reasonable service. (Rom. 12:1.)" It should be kept in mind that "God does not demand that we shall *sacrifice* our lives in His service, nor for any other cause. Sacrifice, therefore, is set forth in the Scriptures as a voluntary act -- not demanded by the law, even though it be, as the Apostle declares, 'a reasonable service.'"

The expression, "*Be ye transformed,*" has a special significance, for the reason that "we do not either conform or transform ourselves; but we do either submit ourselves to be conformed to the world, by the worldly influences, the spirit of the world around us, or submit ourselves to the will of God, the holy will or Spirit, to be transformed by heavenly influences exercised through the Word of God. . . . The transforming influences lead to present sacrificing and suffering, but the end is glorious. If you are developing under these transforming influences, you are proving what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.."

The renewing of the mind, mentioned in this Scripture by the Apostle, means that we will endeavor to think as Christ thought, and do as He did under the same circumstances; particularly will this be so in matters involving benevolence, veneration, and spirituality.

All the time, however long or short, that we are fulfilling our vow of sacrifice, and the renewal process is progressing, we are dealt with as His sons. Our acceptance by God, our standing in God is by faith-faith that we are accepted as runners for the great prize, through His merit. "Being justified by faith we have peace *with* God." Possessing full assurance of faith in this particular, and yielding our will to Him, we know that all things are working together for our good to the end of accomplishing our being conformed to the image of His Son. (Rom. 8:28, 29.) Possessing the full assurance of faith in this latter sense will cause us to be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplications, with thanksgiving we will make our requests to God, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding shall keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." -- Phil. 4:6, 7.

PROVING OUR FAITH BY OUR WORKS

We need always to have in mind that there are different viewpoints from which to look at our justification. We are justified by faith *judicatively* by God. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:33); that is, it is God Himself that pronounces the believer just. We are justified by faith *meritoriously* by Christ--by the shedding of His precious blood. This means that we are accepted of, God, not because of any merit of our own, for we have none, but solely through the merit of Christ's sacrifice made for us, and presented

before God. We are justified *evidentially*, before the world by our works; that is, we show that we have the real true faith by living before the world in a way consistent with our Christian profession. The Apostle James discusses very particularly this aspect of justification. He says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? . . . Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect [complete] ? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." -- James 2:14-26.

MAINTAINING COMMUNION WITH GOD

Concerning what kind of a life is expected of us, we read that we are called unto holiness-called to live holy lives. "For God hath-not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." (1 Thess. 4:7.) "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death., But now being made free from sin, and become the servants to God, ye have your *fruit unto holiness*, and the end everlasting life." The holiness required is nothing more, nothing less than such a performance of those duties and requirements as proceed from an inner state of purity, expressed by the Savior in the words, "Blessed are the pure in heart." However, it should be kept in mind that this life, as exhibited before one another and before the world, is such a walk as a kind, gracious, merciful Father will be pleased and delighted with, who knows better than we know ourselves our state of' imperfection, and 'such a life as will at last have realized absolute holiness, when we reach the heavenly state. One has thus truthfully expressed this much discussed and often misunderstood matter

"The best day that the best man that ever lived in this world would be closed (if the soul was in communion with God) with such a consciousness of much that might have been done to make it better, and much in motive or. in manner of doing what was done that was *imperfect*, that there would be more occasion for humble confession and seeking forgiveness. through the Great High Priest, than for boastful elation." Our communion is maintained only by conforming to God's arrangement. To keep ourselves in communion and fellowship with God, it is necessary to have ever in mind that we are imperfect by nature. and always will be in our present earthly state. We are being dealt with by our Heavenly Father as those whose imperfection is covered by the precious, blood. Our imperfection by nature does not stand against us; we are -counted as perfect "in Christ." But if we commit sin, it must be confessed to God and forsaken, and if it has affected others, restitution, so far as possible, must be made, or we will lose our communion with the Holy One. *Unconfessed* sins -are not covered by the blood. In dealing with these the rod of correction is required. -- 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 2.

Let us then exercise ourselves, as St. Paul did, "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men"; "to hold the mystery Of the faith in a pure conscience"; to "commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."--Acts 24:16; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Cor. 4:2.

A SAVIOR AND A GREAT ONE

HIS UNIVERSAL REIGN

"Ask of Me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the earth for thy possession."--Psa. 2:8; Isa. 9:6, 7; 11:1-10.

ALTHOUGH we do not concur in the understanding that December 25 is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that' it was about October first, nevertheless since He did not intimate His desire that we should celebrate His birthday it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior.

Our confidence in Jesus that He was the sent of God, the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Deliverer of His people, rests not merely upon the testimony of the Apostles in the New Testament records, wonderful and convincing as these testimonies are: they gain nine-tenths of their weight and importance from the fact that they evidence the fulfillment of promises, types, and prophecies given by the Lord with more or less explicitness from time to time throughout the preceding 4,000 years. He who does not discern something, at least, of the Divine Plan of the Ages in connection with our Savior, His birth, His three and one-half years' ministry, His sacrificial death, His resurrection, His ascension, etc., fails to get the real strength of the Divine revelation, designed by the Lord to be the firm foundation for His people's confidence in Him and in all the glorious things which He has promised He would yet accomplish through this great Savior.

Note the original. promise of the Savior shortly after sin had wounded our first parents and brought them under Divine sentence. (Gen. 3:15.) Note the promise made to Abraham respecting Messiah that He should be of his posterity. (Gen. 22:18.) Notice the same to Jacob (Gen. 28:14); to David. (2 Sam. 7:12-16.) Through Isaiah the Prophet, His coming and His greatness are foretold. (9:6, 7; 11:1-9.) Daniel, the Prophet, also refers to the importance of His work of making an end of sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness, and thus sealing the visions and prophecies which the Lord had just given respecting him and the favor to come through him. (Dan. 9:24.) We recall also how He was typified in Isaac, who was not only the heir of the promises made to Abraham, but who was also in a figure put to death and received again from the dead. We, remember also the types and figures of the Mosaic arrangement, and how Moses himself was declared to be like unto the greater One to come after him.

"GALILEE OF THE GENTILES"

It was centuries after the Old Testament types and prophecies were given that our dear Redeemer appeared among men and spent most of His time, did most of His mighty works, and performed most of His mighty miracles in these lands of Zabulon and Naphtali, called Galilee, which in the time of Isaiah had been denuded of its Jewish population and had been settled by Gentile emigrants, "Galilee of the Gentiles." Subsequently these Gentiles gathered more particularly

in the vicinity of the city of Samaria, and became known as Samaritans, and, noting the hopes of the Israelites, were' inclined to claim a certain share in the blessings belonging to the people into whose lands they had been introduced. The Jews, however, disowned them and considered them as being still Gentiles, and would have no dealings with the Samaritans, as the Apostle pointed out.

Our Lord Himself instructed the Apostles to go not in the way of the Gentiles nor into any city of the Samaritans to announce Him, declaring that He was not sent to any but the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He again declared to one of these Samaritans, "Ye worship ye know not what: we [the Jews] know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews." (John 4:22.) Outside of the Samaritan districts all of Galilee became repopulated with Jews, though they represented generally the less noble class, so that it was rather as a mark of, disrespect that our Lord and the Apostles were called Galileans, Nazareth of Galilee being our Lord's home in His youth -- a disesteemed city, as in the expression, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Our Lord indeed was born in Bethlehem, a more honorable city. Under Divine providence He was taken to Nazareth, to the intent that a certain amount of odium might attach to Him and to His cause. Thus often the Lord permits some unsavory influence to attach to the Truth, to the intent that none may receive His message except from the love of the Truth -- that none should be influenced to receive it from any earthly consideration.

Had the hopes of Israel been merely concoctions to deceive the people, we may be sure that the deceiver would have been careful to have marked out some remarkable line of parentage for the 'Coming Messiah; free from blights, scandals, etc.; but this was not done; instead, the weaknesses of the flesh amongst our Lord's progenitors are fearlessly noted. Judah, the son of Jacob, and head of the tribe from which our' Lord sprang, was not above reproach and his general character was faithfully portrayed; his son, Phares, through whom our Lord's lineage runs, was born of an unlawful union. Rahab, the harlot of -Jericho, a foreigner who became an Israelite indeed, was amongst our Lord's progenitors; so was Ruth, the Moabitess, another foreigner adopted as an Israelite. The line even through David is compromised by coming through Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah, the Hittite. The New Testament writers are similarly candid and make no hesitation in recording the genealogy. All of this is in full accord with the Scriptural presentation .of the matter, namely that our Lord's virtue, His sinlessness, His separateness from sinners, was not through the flesh, not through His mother, but through His Father, God.

THE LIGHT SHINED IN THE DARK VALLEY

How significant the Prophet's words, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light." As our Lord declared, "The light shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." He was the light of the world and was in the world and the world knew Him not. But there is a higher and deeper and broader sense in which these words are to be understood-they apply to all peoples who have been favored with the opening of the eyes of their understanding during this Gospel Age.

The people of Galilee in the day of our Lord's personal ministry, and other parts of the earth since with a similar humble class of people, have more or less had

amongst them representatives of the true light, and in every case the light has shined in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not, as our Lord declared to be the case. Only a few appreciate this shining now, because, as the Apostle declared, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" -- the eyes of their understanding are so darkened by false doctrines, misunderstanding, and superstition that they cannot see those glorious things which can now be seen only by the eye of faith, the eyes of their understanding being opened.

That the prophecy was not confined to the people of Galilee is evident from the words, "They that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." The land of the shadow of death is the whole world, for the shadow of death has been on the whole world ever since the first transgression in Eden, ever since the curse or sentence of death was pronounced against our race. As the Prophet David describes it, the Lord's true people are blessed even while in the present valley and under the shadow of death: he says, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for Thou art with me." It is to this class who walk with the Lord, who trust Him, that the true light now shines -- not a., the glorious Sun of Righteousness, as lit will shine by and by when the Millennial Kingdom is established, but merely as the little lamp, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, a lantern to my footsteps."

This lamp shines not for the world but for those who are the Lord's special people, to whom the light of His revelation, the lamp of enlightenment is granted. All these thus walking in this valley, under the guidance and care of the great Captain of our Salvation, have indeed seen a great light in Him, have seen a light which the world sees not. But, thank God, the world's time to see the great light is shortly coming, drawing nigh. As soon as the present work of selecting the Church, the Bride, the Body members is complete, these -- changed, glorified -- shall constitute the great Sun of Righteousness to shine forth upon the world, the light of Divine Truth; the message of Divine love and mercy and instruction in righteousness. These-Christ the Head and the Church His body -- shall be the great Teacher of the world, who shall instruct all, and shall bring as many as are willing into full fellowship and perfection -- destroying the unwilling and unworthy in the Second Death.

JACOB'S RESCUE NEAR

But evidently the Prophet's vision, while it glanced upon the preaching of our Lord and the Apostles in Galilee, and glanced down through the Gospel Age and noted how this light glinted here and there as a wonderful "lamp," nevertheless rested not until it reached the very end of this Age. There in prophetic vision Isaiah seems to see the end of Jacob's trouble-Israel's deliverance from the blindness that has been upon her, her acceptance of the Lord as the Messiah at the time mentioned by another Prophet, when the Lord would pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication and they should look upon Him whom they had pierced and mourn for Him-at the time mentioned by the Apostle Paul, when the fulness of the Gentiles having come in (the full number of the Gentiles to complete the elect number of the Church), Divine mercy shall go forth from the Church to bless the world and shall rest first of all upon Israel according to the flesh, "They shall obtain mercy through your mercy."--Rom. 11:31.

According to the flesh, Jesus Christ took hold of the seed of Abraham, as the Apostle explains; but as we have already seen, through various circumstances He was indirectly related also to the outside world. All of this is interesting to us, but nothing to be compared to our still greater interest in the fact that our Lord Jesus, although born a Jew under the Law, and redeeming those who were under the Law, did more than this, in that His death as 'planned by the Father and accepted by Himself was a propitiation "for the sins of the whole world." He died as the ransom, price for Adam and his' sin, and thus purchased from condemnation not only Adam, but his entire posterity involved through his transgression; hence, as the Apostle points out, "He is able to save [deliver] unto the uttermost all who come -unto God through Him." (Heb. 7:25.) Not. only so, but our Lord's circumstances of birth -and early experience in comparative poverty as a working man, impress us with the thought that He is indeed able to sympathize with mankind in every station of life; having passed from the glory of the Father to the lowest condition of humanity and back again, He is surely able to appreciate and to sympathize with all conditions and classes.

"FEAR NOT"

The narrative setting forth the Advent of the Savior is so simple as to require few comments; our chief interest centers in the message which our Heavenly Father sent us through the angels at the time they announced the birth of Jesus: "Fear not" -- the angel understood well that through sin and degradation a fearful apprehension comes over man when he finds himself in contact with spirit beings; he is apprehensive of certain further condemnation or punishment; his acquaintance with man in influence, authority and power, leads him to dread the still greater authority and power of the Almighty, lest it should be injurious to him. Only the true Christian, having the eyes of his understanding opened to appreciate the length and breadth and height and depth of the love of God, can have that perfect love toward the Heavenly Father which is built upon an intimate knowledge of His Word, and which casteth out all fear. We are reminded of the Prophet's words respecting those who profess to be the Lord's people of today, "Their fear toward Me is taught by the precept of men." (Isa. 29:13.) The Lord would have His people free from this fear, though not free from a proper reverence toward Him.

The message continues, "I bring you good tidings of great joy which, shall be to all people." How slow the Lord's people have been to believe this message and to accept the Savior at His full worth! How prone they seem to be to suppose first of all that He was to be a Savior merely for the Jews; or secondly, a Savior merely for a special elect class; or thirdly, a Savior only. for those who under present darkness; ignorance, prejudice, superstition and devilish influences, manifest a special love for righteousness! But how broad is the statementg -- great joy for all people! Our faith is. not broader than the positive declaration of the Scriptures, when we hold firmly that our God graciously has arranged that every member of our poor fallen race shall yet be blessed with a clear understanding not only of his own weaknesses and imperfections through the fall, but also by a clear understanding of the great redemption price paid by the Savior, and a share in the glorious opportunities thus secured to return, if he will, back to full harmony with God and to full blessings and everlasting life.

The angels did not declare that our Lord came to bring universal and everlasting salvation to all people; but they do declare that the good message of joy, of privilege, love, hope, shall extend to all people. The explanation, of this is that a Savior. had been born -- a deliverer of the weak, the helpless, the dying, able to succor to the utmost all who would come to the Father through Him; able to open the blind eyes and to unstop the deaf ears that all may come to an appreciation of the goodness of. God shining toward them in the face of the Lord Jesus.

THE MYSTERY WILL BE COMPLETED

The word Savior, otherwise rendered Deliverer, signifies in the Syriac language, literally Life-giver. What a wonderful thought is conveyed by that word! What is it that our poor, dying race needs? It needs deliverance from the sentence of death, and then it needs deliverance from death itself, into life complete and abundant and everlasting. Our Lord has already become our deliverer in the sense that He has bought us with His precious blood, that He has settled our account with Justice. As a result of this work already done, since the Church which is the Body of Christ has followed in the footsteps of our Lord and has about "filled up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ" (Col. 1:24), very shortly now, under the sounding of the Seventh Trumpet, the mystery of God will be finished, completed, and atonement for the sins of the world shall be proclaimed with a full emancipation proclamation to. all people. Good tidings of great joy it will surely be! full of gracious opportunities for enlightenment, restitution, and obedience, and for a full return to all that was lost by father Adam, including life in perfect degree -- lasting life!

PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

No wonder after this message had been delivered, the Lord permitted an angel. host to serenade the proclamation, and incidentally to prophesy also of the grand results yet to flow from the great work of redemption, which was -then -only beginning in the birth of the Redeemer! Properly the anthem begins with praise to Him that sitteth upon the throne, to Him who devised the great and wonderful Plan of redemption and who sent His Son, our willing Redeemer; glory to Him in the highest -- in the highest strain of heart and voice, with fullest appreciation of Him as a Savior Next came-the consequences on earth, namely peace; not such a *peace* as. men might patch up between themselves and between nations and parties, and that under present conditions would be sure very soon to be scattered to the winds; but a peace with God, a peace which comes from a restoration to the race of the Divine good will. It was because Divine justice could not spare the guilty, that the sentence of death, the "curse," has borne down upon our race for now six thousand years. Under that Divine sentence of death the dying race has become impoverished, not only physically but mentally and morally, and selfishness has become the rule, and in its wake have come all our selfish ambitions and pride and strife and vain-glory and money love which have caused so much of the trouble that mankind has experienced.

But now, glory to God in the highest 1 because peace has been established upon a firm foundation-the lifting of the curse through the payment of our penalty by the Lord's own arrangement! As soon as the Body of Christ has. suffered with the Head, the great antitypical Day of Atonement will be complete, and, peace

between God and man will be established, will be renewed, and as a consequence the Redeemer shall take to Himself His great power and reign for the purpose of blessing and uplifting those whom He purchased with His own precious blood. In their interest it will be necessary that the great peace shall be introduced by the breaking in pieces of present institutions with the iron rod of the new Kingdom, as the vessel of a potter they shall be crushed as henceforth useless; that in their stead may come the grander and perfect institutions of the Lord's Kingdom. He will wound to heal, to bless, to bring in peace on the basis of everlasting righteousness; for ultimately He will destroy all those who, after being brought to a knowledge of the truth, will still love unrighteousness and tend to the corruption of the earth. He will destroy them, not in anger, but in justice, in love, that an everlasting peace in full accord with that which is in heaven may prevail upon earth.

THE FATHER PRUNES THE VINE

In the prophecy of Isaiah our Lord is not spoken of as the root out of David, but as the root out of Jesse, David's father; because David himself is a type of Christ, his name signifying *beloved*. Hence also the fact that in many prophecies our Lord's Millennial reign is spoken of as the reign of David, the reign of the Beloved.

It is worthy of note that the Scriptures, in speaking of the Gentile governments, symbolize them as trees, and their destruction as the cutting down of those trees. Many trees do not sprout again from their roots when once cut down, as for instance, the cedars of Lebanon to which great Babylon was likened. On the contrary, the Lord speaks of Israel as a Vine of His own planting; and one peculiarity of the vine is that it seems to thrive the better in proportion as it is pruned. Thus our Lord also speaks of spiritual Israel, as branches of Himself, the true Vine, and declares that the Father prunes the vine to the intent that it may bring forth more fruit. It is said that amongst the vine-growers of Palestine it is customary to cut back the vine clear to the roots yearly, in order to get fresh sprouts therefrom. And so we find that the Lord, with fleshly Israel, frequently pruned them by disciplines, captivities, etc., cutting off many of the branches, and preserving only a remnant. This process was followed at the First Advent in the cutting off of Israel from all further share in the spiritual features of the Abrahamic promise, except the remnant which received the Lord, and on this account were granted privileges to become members of the house of sons. (John 1:12.) During this Gospel Age the Lord deals With His people not collectively, not as a nation, but individually: each branch is pruned, and each branch is expected to bring forth fruit, or else it will be entirely lopped off.

Here, then, we have the thought of the Lord expressed through the Prophet respecting Christ Jesus, our Lord, that He from the time of His baptism and anointing with the Holy Spirit, became the new *spiritual* shoot out of the Abrahamic promise, and out of the roots of Jesse. But they greatly err who see in this study our Lord Jesus only, and who fail to recognize the fact that He is the Head of the Church, which is His Body. The true vine is therefore the entire Body of Christ, as our Lord explains. (John 15.) This stem or new Vine had its start in our Lord Jesus, and has grown and prospered and had branches which have borne their fruit under the great Husbandman's care in all these centuries of the Gospel Age.

NOTHING TO HURT NOR DESTROY

The reference by the Prophet to the change of disposition in the animal kingdom, so that the wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the calf and the lion, will dwell in harmony, is in full accord with the general Scriptural outlines of the "times of restitution of all things." Not only is mankind to be restored, or brought back to his primeval condition of human perfection, and harmony with God, like Adam before the fall (though with increased knowledge and experience), but the lower animals also, which have shared in the ruin and disorder resulting from the fall, will also share in the blessing and restoration of order to be accomplished by Messiah.

Wherever the story of God's redeeming love has gone, even though confused by various falsities, it has carried more or less of blessing with it; even to neglectful hearers and not doers of the Word, it has brought blessing; and still more blessing to others who hear partly and obey partly; but its greatest blessing has been to the Little Flock, the Royal Priesthood who, entering into the spirit of the Divine arrangement, have realized themselves justified through faith in the precious blood, and in harmony with the invitation of the Lord have gone forward, presenting themselves living sacrifices that they might have fellowship with Christ in the sufferings of this present time, and also, by and by, in the Kingdom glories that shall follow. It is this class chiefly that is now rejoicing in a still fuller opening up of the Divine Word so long beclouded by the falsities coming down from the Dark Ages; it is this class that is chiefly now rejoicing in the discernment of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Divine love and of the Divine Plan which has purchased the whole world and will eventually recover from present degradation all who under the favorable conditions of the Millennial Kingdom will develop the character which God demands of all who shall have eternal life -- a love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity.

DANIEL THE BELOVED OF JEHOVAH

SERIES XIV

THE VISION OF WORLD GOVERNMENTS

(Continued)

"Then I would know the truth of the fourth beast, which was diverse from all the others, exceeding dreadful, whose teeth were of iron, and his nails of brass; which devoured, brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with his feet; and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn-made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."--Dan. 7:19-21.

THE FOURTH BEAST OF DANIEL 7

IT was this fourth beast that attracted most the attention of the Prophet. Especially was he anxious to understand concerning its career, and end; and it is to this that

the very much larger portion of the, description and explanation of the angel is devoted.

We have previously seen that both sacred and secular history, agree that the fourth great world empire, reckoning from the rule of Babylon under Nebuchadnezzar, was that of Rome. That this power does not come to view in this prophecy until Egypt, the last head of the third or leopard beast, was conquered by the Romans, in 31 B. C., is important to understand. This will be seen by keeping in mind that the third beast not only refers to the Grecian' or Macedonian Empire which lasted but a brief period, but that it also refers to the territorial division of the Grecian Empire under four dynasties of kings or rulers, symbolized by the four heads, the last one being the Egyptian kingdom under Cleopatra. While Egypt became a Roman province about 31 B. C., Rome continued as a republic until 27 B. C. The naval battle fought between Octavius (Augustus) Caesar, and Cleopatra and Mark Anthony, practically decided the fate of Egypt. The historian, after giving an account of this naval battle and the death of both Cleopatra' and Mark Anthony, thus describes the gradual merging of the Roman Republic, into the Empire:

"There was now no one. left to withstand Octavius Caesar, who thus remained sole master of the great dominion which the mighty Julius had prepared for him. The senate [of the Republic], in fact, was ready to concede to him the entire authority. He indeed went through the farce, soon after his return to Rome, of resigning the imperatorship; but he was prevailed on to resume it for ten years, and every ten years after to re-resume it. Gradually all the great offices were united in his person, and he became in fact Emperor of the Roman world. *We may count the Roman Empire as beginning with the year B. C. 27, when Octavius was saluted with the new and peculiar title of Augustus.*" -- Swinton, *Outlines of the World's History*.

THE IRON MONARCHY OF ROME

It is at this time that the brass of the metallic image of the king's dream, which symbolized the Grecian Empire and its divisions, melts into the, iron, the great Roman Empire, as the ancient heathen historian Ptolemy, and all modern historians, without realizing that they are recording the fulfilment of prophecy, show. Most marvelous indeed is this wonderful prophecy concerning the Roman power. In the days when this vision that describes it was given to the Hebrew Prophet, Italy was the home of only a few feeble, and constantly warring tribes. Even two hundred years, later, in 330 B. C., Rome was so little known that the historian, Herodotus, in giving a description of the earth with all its towns and cities, does not even mention it. "Even when the empire of Alexander was falling into decay, Rome was nearly brought to destruction by the Punic wars; and not until just before the end of the Macedonian monarchy, were the Romans sufficiently free from domestic enemies to enter on a career of conquest." Swinton, the historian, says, "The Macedonian kingdom [one of the heads of the leopard] was overthrown at the battle of Pydna, 168 B. C., and Perseus, the last of the Macedonian kings, adorned as a captive the triumph of a Roman general." Thus did the third division of the Grecian Empire fall. It was not long after the birth of Christ that all nations had become mere vassals to the Roman government. Gibbon, referring to the vast extent of the Roman dominion of this time said:

"The empire was above two thousand miles in breadth, from the wall of Antoninus and the northern limits. of Dacia, to Mount Atlas and the tropic of Cancer. It extended, in length, more than three thousand miles from the Western Ocean to the Euphrates. It was supposed to contain about sixteen hundred thousand square miles, for the most part of fertile and well cultivated land. The arms of the Republic, sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine, and the ocean; and the images of gold, or silver, or brass, that might serve to represent the nations and their kings, were Successively broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." Beyond the frontiers Gibbon states there lay "nothing except the ocean, inhospitable deserts, and hostile tribes of barbarians of fierce manners and unknown language, or dependent kings, who would gladly purchase the Emperor's favor by the sacrifice of an obnoxious fugitive."

We have already noted that the iron and clay of the great metallic image of empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, as well as the fourth beast of Daniel's vision, pictures the Roman power in *some form*, as continuing in existence up to the time of the Second Advent, when it is represented as meeting its destruction by Divine power. These Divine predictions also represent the fourth or Roman power as coming to view on the fall of Egypt, the fourth *division* of the Grecian. It occupies in the prophecies *the whole interval* between the overthrow- of Cleopatra, 31 B. C., and the very close of Gentile dominion. It was, however, to exist in two distinct forms: first, as a universal empire; and second, in a divided form or state. Both predictions, those of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and those of the vision of Daniel, present, *five* separate conditions-four empires and a ten-fold commonwealth. It is a fact that is apparent to even the youth of our public schools that four of these conditions (that is the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman) long since ceased. The fourth or old empire of Rome ended in the fifth century, 476 A. D..

WHEN DID THE TEN KINGDOMS APPEAR?

A most important question which has a very significant bearing on the understanding of not only the remaining portion of this vision of Daniel, but also on the understanding of the visions of the Revelation, most naturally comes to mind, namely Was the Roman world divided into ten kingdoms on the fall of the Empire? Before this question can be answered correctly, it will be necessary that we determine first where, or in what part of -the world we are to look for these ten kingdoms. Shall we seek for them in the territory occupied by Rome when it had reached the widest extent of its dominion? or "in that part of its territory which was properly Roman as distinguished from the countries belonging to previous empires subjugated by Rome?" The importance of this matter will be seen when it is known that it is really here, at this point, that the correctness or incorrectness of the Historical or Futurist interpretation of the most noted prophecies of God's Word are determined. The Futurist position is that the ten kingdoms have not yet appeared; and of course if this were true, the "little horn," which comes up among the ten, and which is universally understood by Historical expositors to describe the political aspect of the Antichrist, lids not yet made its appearance. It' is generally understood by the Futurist that the' ten kingdoms must be looked for on the territory which was covered by the Roman Empire at the time of its widest

dominion. We believe that this is not the correct thought. As one has truthfully said:

"A very little consideration will show that prophecy regards the four empires as being as distinct in *territory* as in *time*; as distinct in geographical boundaries, as in chronological limits. They rise in a definite sequence; the supreme dominion of one does not in point of *time* overlap the supreme dominion of the following one, nor is the *territory* of a former 'beast' or empire ever regarded as belonging to a later one, though it may have been actually conquered. Each has its own proper theatre or body, and the bodies continue to exist after the dominion is taken away. This is distinctly stated, both in connection with the fourfold image and with the four beasts. In the first case the stone falls upon the clay and iron feet only, but the iron legs, the brazen body, the silver breast, and the golden head, are all by it 'broken to pieces *together*.' Now the *empires* represented by these have long since passed away. They [as universal empires] cannot, therefore, be 'broken to pieces' by the Second Advent. But the *territory* once occupied by them is still existing and still populous, and exposed to the judgments of the day of Christ just as much as Rome itself.

"Similarly we read that the three earlier beasts did not cease to *exist* when the fourth arose. 'Their *dominion* was taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time'. (Dan. 7:12.) That is to say, the first three empires are regarded as co-existing *with the fourth*, after their *dominion* has ended. This proves that they are regarded as distinct in place as well as in time. They continue to be recognized as territorial divisions of the earth after the disappearance of their political supremacy. Now the eastern empire of Rome which it acquired 'by conquest occupied precisely the same territory. as the Grecian Empire had done, and *its* conquests in Asia occupied the territories which originally formed the Baby Ionian and Medo-Persian empires. None of this territory belongs to 'the legs of iron.' It constitutes the golden, silver, and brazen portions of the image. It cannot be regarded as forming any part of the empire proper and peculiar to *Rome*.

"The ten horns or kingdoms of the fourth empire must, none of them be sought in the realms of the third, second, or first, but conclusively *in the realm of the fourth*, or in the territory *peculiar to Rome*, and which never had formed part either of the Grecian, Medo-Persian, or Babylonian empires." -- H. G. Guinness.

WESTERN ROME BROKEN UP INTO TEN KINGDOMS

This was long ago seen by Sir Isaac Newton. In his *Dissertations on Daniel*, we read: "Seeing the body of the third beast [Grecian Empire] is confined to the nations on this side the Euphrates, and the body of the fourth beast [Roman Empire] is confined to the nations on this side of Greece, we are to look for all the four heads of the third beast among the nations on this side of the Euphrates, and for all the eleven horns of the fourth beast among the nations on this side of Greece. Therefore we do not reckon the Greek Empire seated at Constantinople among the horns of the fourth beast, because it belonged to the body of the third."

It will then be seen that the question resolves itself into this, Was the territory that was peculiarly the Roman -- commonly called in history *the Western Empire*, and of which Rome was the capital -- divided into ten kingdoms when the Roman

government fell? There can be no doubt that this was the case. A noted Futurist writer has said that "it cannot be clearly shown that just so many divisions of the Roman dominion have occurred, either contemporaneously or successively in the past." Our reply to this will simply be an appeal to the historian. Before quoting, however, we will endeavor to show that the prophecy does not require this, but distinctly states that the number would not be constantly and invariably ten. The prophecy represents that when the ten are all formed on the head of the beast, the Prophet sees another, a little horn, springing up among the ten. Surely then when the little horn appeared there must have been eleven. Furthermore, it is stated that three of the first horns were "plucked up by the roots" by this "little horn." Now if it were true that these were all removed out of the way at one and the same time by the "little horn," which was not the case, then of course there would be for a time only eight. Or if they were removed one at a time there would be even a greater variation. It is a fact apparent to even the child of history that since its fall as an empire, Western Rome "has been broken up into many independent sovereignties which were bound together for many centuries into one family of Latin Christendom by a voluntary submission to the popes of Rome. The number of distinct kingdoms has always been about ten -- at times exactly ten, sometimes sinking at intervals to eight or nine, rising sometimes to twelve or thirteen, but averaging on the whole, ten."

It is a fact that in 476 A. D., the Roman Empire fell, Romulus Augustulus being the last of the emperors. The variations on the part of scholars in naming these ten kingdoms is because of their lists being made up at different periods in history. The lists would of necessity have to be changed from time to time, because of the short periods in which some of the kingdoms had their existence. The Roman Catholic historian, Machiaveli, gives a list of, the kingdoms which occupied the territory of Western Rome at the time Romulus Augustulus was dethroned. It is worthy of note that this writer did not at all have in his mind this prophecy of Daniel. The list of kingdoms given by him is as follows: The Lombards, the Franks, the Burgundians, the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Vandals, the Heruli, the Sueves, the Huns, and the Saxons; ten in all. The changes that occurred prior and following this were incessant. As the years rolled on horde after horde of the Barbarians pressed into the Roman territory for spoils.

THE TEN BROKEN FRAGMENTS NEVER TO BE REUNITED

We learn from Mr. Guinness that in a work by Rev. T. R. Birks, entitled. *The Four Prophetic Empires*, written full 75 years ago, is contained a list of kingdoms made by this writer for each century from the ninth to the nineteenth. Mr. Birks introduces his enumeration with the remark that "it is sometimes doubtful whether a kingdom can claim an independent sovereignty on account of the complex and varying nature of its political relations." Those kingdoms in the various lists, where an interrogation is inserted by Mr. Birks, are the ones he thinks contain some elements of doubt as to whether they should be inserted. This list is as follows:

"A. D. 860. Italy, Provence, Lorraine, East France, West France, Exarchate, Venice, Navarre, England, Scotland. Total, 10.

"A. D. 950. Germany, Burgundy, Lombardy, Exarchate Venice, France, England, Scotland, Navarre, Leon. Total, 10.

"A. D. 1050. Germany, Exarchate, Venice, Norman Italy) France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Normandy (?), Hungary (?). Total, 9 to 11.

"A. D. 1150. Germany, Naples, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Lombardy (?). Total, 10, or perhaps 11.

"A. D. 1250. Germany and Naples, Venice, Lombardy, France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 10.

"A. D. 1350. Germany, Naples, Venice, Switzerland Milan (?), Tuscany (?), France, England and Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary. Total, 9 to 12.

"A. D. 1453. Austria, Naples, Venice, *France, England, Scotland, Arragon, Castile, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland Savoy Milan Tuscany. Total, 11 to 14.

"A. D. 1552. Austria, Venice, France, England, Scotland, Spain, Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland Lombardy (?). Total, 9 to 11.

"A. D. 1648. Austria, Venice, France, Britain Spain and Naples, Portugal, Hungary, Switzerland Savoy, Tuscany, Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

"A. D. 1750. Austria and Hungary, France, Savoy and Sardinia, Venice, Tuscany, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland Naples Britain Holland. Total, 8 to 11.

"A. D. 1816. Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemberg (?), Naples, Tuscany, Sardinia, Lombardy (?), France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Britain (?), Switzerland Total, 9 to 13."

The language of Mr. Guinness concerning this enumeration appeals to us with great force:

"An examination of this list reveals the surprising fact, which would only become more apparent were the list lengthened ten times, so as to present a census of each decade instead of each century, that, amidst unceasing and almost countless fluctuations, the kingdoms of modern Europe have from their birth to the present day *averaged* ten in number. They have never since the break-up of old Rome been united into one single empire; they have never formed one whole even like the United States. No scheme of proud ambition seeking to re-unite the broken fragments. has ever succeeded; when such have arisen, they have been invariably dashed to pieces. Witness the' legions of Napoleon buried beneath the snows of Russia, the armadas of Spain wrecked by Atlantic storms, and all the futile royal marriage arrangements by which monarchs vainly sought to create a revived empire. In spite of all human effort, in defiance of every attempt at reunion, the European commonwealth for thirteen or fourteen centuries *has* numbered on an average *ten kingdoms*. [We might say in addition to this that in the beginning of the ninth century, Charlemagne, assisted by the Pope of Rome, succeeded in a measure in uniting these kingdoms, this union being designated as the Holy Roman Empire; but after Charlemagne's death, this union broke in pieces, although a certain portion left, continued to be called the Holy Roman Empire until 1806 A. D. The Historian Myers in referring to this matter says: "Like the kingdom of Alexander, the mighty empire of Charlemagne fell to pieces after his

death. 'His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses which could not be drawn by any weaker hand.'"

"And the division [at the present time] is as apparent now as ever! Plainly and palpably inscribed on the map of Europe this day .[1870], it confronts the skeptic, with its silent but conclusive testimony to the fulfilment of this great prophecy. Who can alter or add to this tenfold list of the kingdoms now occupying the sphere of old Rome?"

"Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France, Germany, England, Holland, Belgium, Spain, and Portugal.

"Ten, and no more; ten, and no less. The FrancoPrussian war and the unification, of Italy have once more developed distinctly the normal number of the kingdoms of Europe." -- H. G. Guinness.

THE RISE OF THE LITTLE HORN

Glancing at a map of Europe recently issued by the Literary Digest, we discover that the great World-War left the kingdoms on this territory existing as they were before. While in Germany at the present writing divisions are threatening, the situation remains as the Franco-German war left it. It should be remembered that Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, are among the places from which the Northern tribes came when they invaded the old Roman Empire, and of course constituted no part of the territory of the fourth beast or Roman Empire.

The persistent reappearances of the number ten, in connection with the many wars and revolutions on this fateful territory, has attracted the special notice of both Protestant and Roman Catholic expositors and historians. Even the unbelieving historian. Gibbon denominated ten as the "Fatal Number."

While it is of vast importance to establish as a fact of history the fulfillment of the ten-fold division of the Roman 'earth, this is not by any means the great and important matter portrayed in this vision of empires. The most marked, the most noted feature of the great prophecy is the rise of the "little horn" with eyes and mouth, that is represented as coming up among them. This little horn, representing certainly a most singular and supremely influential dynasty that for a long period of its career is associated with these kingdoms -- a power that wickedly blasphemed God, and persecuted and wore out the saints of the Most High-is the great and remarkable feature of the whole prophetic vision of Daniel.

Concerning when the little horn was to appear the angel who interprets the whole vision, informs the Prophet that this "little horn" power would come up among the ten after they had all formed, and that it would pluck up by the roots three of the first horns that stood in its way. It is most worthy of notice that the Scriptures present still another way to discover the exact time in history to look for this little horn. It is very generally agreed by all expositors, Protestant and Catholic alike, that the "man of sin" of 2 Thess., 2, refers to the same power of evil as the "little horn." St. Paul, who. gave the prediction of the coming of the "man of sin," mentions a hindrance to his manifestation. That hindrance is evidently the reign of the emperors -in the city of Rome. Therefore it is very apparent that we are not to look for the "little horn" power to appear until the dethronement of the last emperor. This emperor was Romulus Augustulus who was dethroned in 476 A. D.

The end of the empire in the West, and the stupendous significance of this event in the history of the world, is thus described:

"At last the Roman senate voted that one emperor was enough, and that the Eastern emperor, Zeno, should reign over the whole empire; but at the same time Zeno was made to trust the government of Italy to Odoacer, chief of the German Herulians, who took the title of Patrician of Italy. The last of the Western Roman emperors was Romulus Augustulus, a handsome but feeble youth. Him they pensioned off in A. D. 476. . . . Modern history, in a comprehensive sense, begins with the downfall -of the Western Roman Empire; for with that event the volume of ancient history was closed." -- Swinton, *Outlines of the World's History*.

EASTERN AND WESTERN ROME

It seems quite necessary at this point to call attention to a mistaken idea that is held concerning the expressions Eastern and Western Roman Empires. We mention it because it leads to a wrong interpretation of one feature of this prophecy of Daniel. The error that this mistake leads to is the making of the Empire in the West one of the horns. At present, it will be sufficient to notice the mistake. It is generally the custom even by many historians to use the terms, Eastern Roman Empire and Western Roman Empire as applying to the period beginning with the removal by Constantine of the seat of government to Constantinople, early in the fourth century, or as some others, after the death of Honorius. The impression obtained by some is that the empire was divided at this time in the sense that thereafter there were two empires. The fact of the matter is, however, that there was only one empire existing down to the dethronement of Romulus Augustulus in 476 A. D. It should be kept in mind that it is simply the administrative division of the one, single empire that is referred to by the expressions Eastern and Western Roman Empires. It, was not until the ninth century that it can be said that there were two distinct empires. Mr. Myers, the historian, thus explains this matter: "From this time [ninth century] on, it will be proper for us to use the terms *Western Empire* and *Eastern Empire*. These names should not, however, be employed before this time, for the two parts of the old Roman Empire were simply administrative divisions of a single empire; . we may, though, properly enough speak of the Roman Empire in the West, and the Roman Empire in the East, or of the Western and Eastern Emperors. The importance of this matter will be seen when we come to consider that part of the prophecy which speaks of the "little horn" power, I as "plucking up by the roots," three of the "ten horns."

It would seem that the exact place in history to locate a crisis epoch in the rise of Papacy--which is very generally understood by Historical expositors to fulfil the prediction regarding the appearance of the "little horn"--is when, by an official decree of Justinian, whose seat of government was, at Constantinople, the bishop of Rome was made head of all the churches in Christendom. This was in, 533 A. D., although the decree was not enforced until about 539 A. D. The consideration of this "little horn" power of this vision will be the subject matter of a separate article.

GOD'S CHOICE OF A FAITHFUL LEADER

"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed."--Gen. 12:1-7; 18:17-19.

THE promises of God made to Abraham constitute the foundation for all the theology of the New Testament, as expressed by the Lord Jesus, by St. Paul, by St. Stephen, St. Peter, and others.

Abraham's birthplace was Ur of the Chaldees, one hundred and twenty miles to the north of the Persian Gulf, and was known as the richest portion of Asia. His father, Terah, was a heathen. Polytheism prevailed-the worshipping of many gods. Jewish legends respecting Abraham tell that as a boy he loathed the vices with which he was surrounded. When only fourteen years old, he refused to join with the family in idol-worship, and on one occasion destroyed seventy-two costly idols.

From Ur the family migrated to Haran, about five hundred miles northwest and in the direction of Palestine. There Abraham remained, until his father Terah's death. Then he removed to the land of Canaan. God's dealing with Abraham, according to St. Stephen's account (Acts 7:2, 3), began while he was still in Ur. God called him out of the midst of the evil surroundings to be the founder of ' a new nation that would be holy and obedient to God. The words of the call are not fully given, nor are we informed. of the manner in which it was conveyed. It is sufficient for us that Abraham recognized the message as from the Lord, and that he obeyed Him.

Evidently the Lord fixed no earlier date than the death of Terah for. Abraham's going to Canaan. Otherwise Abraham would not have been justified in delaying the matter. Doubtless Abraham had something to do with the migration from Ur to Haran. It took them away from the idolatrous scenes of the metropolis to the quieter conditions of pastoral life, and would be recognized by Abraham as a step in the right direction-toward Canaan, so that ' on the death of his father, he could be prepared to quickly enter upon the Divine arrangement.

ILLUSTRIOUS FAITH

"Father of the Faithful" is one of Abraham's titles in the Bible. He is one of the greatest characters in history. The most enlightened peoples of the earth look back to him as the divinely-appointed channel through whom all their religious hopes and prospects have been received -- Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans. God's promises made to Abraham constitute the foundation of faith for all these peoples, although many of them are not aware of the fact.

A portion of the call to Abraham is stated thus: "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth (injureth) thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:1-3.) It was in harmony with this Divine call that Abraham, seventy-five years old, at the death of his father Terah, took up his journey to the land of Canaan.

The record is that Abraham believed on the Lord-his faith in God triumphed over every obstacle and rested securely, confidently; his doubts, and fears fleeing away. The faith of Abraham is the particular point of his, character prominently set before us in the Scriptures for the encouragement of our faith, for our example. Abraham was not perfect, even as others of our race are not perfect-"There is none righteous, no, not one." (Rom.. 3:10.) But we are told that God so highly esteemed Abraham's faith that He counted it as making up for his natural blemishes and imperfections. "It was counted [reckoned] to Him for righteousness. (Rom. 4:3.) He had faith in what God had told him, and, as James . (2:22) points out, he manifested his faith by his general conduct. We of the Gospel Age are also justified by. Faith -- righteousness is reckoned to us through the exercise of faith-but not faith in the same promises.

God does not promise, us earthly children nor an earthly inheritance in the land of Palestine as He did promise to Abraham; hence we are not to have faith in the same things. As the Apostle says, God has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises" -- promises much greater than those given to Abraham: heavenly, instead of earthly promises. We are to believe the promises given to us and to act upon them as implicitly as Abraham believed the promises given to him and acted upon them. The promises made to Abraham were attested by the Lord's word and by His oath, and similarly, though on a still higher plane, the Lord has made known to us, has attested to us, His love and power, and His willingness to perform for us all the good things promised.

SAW THE RESURRECTION HOPE

In answer to Abraham's request the Lord attested His promise in connection with sacrifices, after a manner that was probably customary at that time, as described in chapter 15. The sacrificed animals, part over against part, were separated by a narrow path along which between the parts passed a small furnace enveloped in smoke, out of which shot a flame of fire.

As God's favor and faithfulness toward Abraham were^e attested by the sacrifices and revelations of the Divine Plan, so do they testify to His faithfulness in this Gospel Age, that we also may have strong consolation, and full assurance of faith. He testifies to' us the fulness of His favor and love by showing us the better sacrifices for sins, through which the New Covenant is sealed, ratified, made operative. He has shown us through His Word that darkness must prevail for a time, and that the Christ (Head and Body) must be brought in contact with the fiery furnace of trial and affliction, the smoke of which might well represent the incidental confusion, and darkness that necessitates our walk by faith and not by sight, while the flame, of light would represent our guidance by the Holy Spirit. Being thus assured by the Lord of His love for us, and of the bountiful provision made for our welfare, and of the necessity for trials, persecutions, and. difficulties during the time of the great darkness, we are strengthened in our faith and enabled to endure as seeing Him who is invisible, and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

It was at this time that the Lord revealed to Abraham that the great blessings already promised him were to have a far distant fulfillment -- for it was here indicated that he should die and his children not inherit the land for some four hundred years; and that he would not see the fulfillment of the promises, although a part of the promise was that he, as well as his seed, should inherit that land, and join in the work of universal blessing and uplifting of humanity. Abraham was thus indirectly taught to hope in the resurrection, for this last, revelation clearly implied that he could have neither, part nor lot in it except God would raise him from the dead. And this was in full accord with the subsequent words of Stephen. (Acts 7:5.) It was no doubt for Abraham's good that the Lord did not tell him that it would be about four thousand years before the full blessing would begin; did not reveal to him that the natural seed could not inherit all of the great promises; that the likeness of his seed to the stars of heaven and to the sands of the sea were two different figures; the first representing the spiritual and heavenly seed, and the other an earthly or human seed. It was to his advantage not to know that so long a time would elapse before the completion of the spiritual seed, of which Christ is the Head and the Gospel Church the Body; and that through this Seed, glorified, must come the blessings upon the earthly seed, and through the latter to all the families of the earth during the Millennial Age.

But God has revealed these things to us, and we may well feel that we have more advantage every way in connection with the Divine promises and Plan than even faithful Abraham, whose trustfulness under very adverse conditions is a, stimulus to all of God's children. We have not only his example, but many other noble examples, including that of our Lord and His Apostles; and we can see, under the guidance of the Word, as revealed by the Spirit, that all things have been and are yet working together harmoniously for the development of the Lord's great Plan

for man's salvation, briefly summarized in His promise to Abraham, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

Nothing is more evident than that God's promises to Abraham have not yet been fulfilled. Abraham reasoned that they would not be fulfilled -in his day; Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets reasoned that they had not been fulfilled during the Jewish Age; and the Apostle declares that the whole twelve tribes of Israel were still waiting for the fulfillment of those promises in his day. (Acts 26:6, 7.) Those promises have surely not been fulfilled during this Gospel Age, as we all are witnesses -- the natural seed of Abraham has been outcast, persecuted, and without Divine favor, while the true ones of spiritual Israel, though possessed of Divine favor and rejoicing therein, have been persecuted and caused to suffer for righteousness' sake, and thereby to learn lessons of patience and experience to prepare them for the great work they are *yet* to do in fulfillment of the Divine promises, to Abraham.

The only steps thus far taken in the fulfillment of the original and comprehensive statement of the Divine Plan, the "Covenant with Abraham" (which, as the Apostle declares, was an advance declaration of the whole Gospel -the good tidings in an epitomized form -- Gal. 3:8), are:

1. The manifestation of God's only begotten Son as' "the man Christ Jesus," and His approval as perfect under the Law.
2. By the same act of obedience and faithfulness He secured the right to purchase Adam and his race; and by meeting the terms of their sentence, according to the Divine Plan, He has made it possible for God to be *just* and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; and made it possible for Himself, as the divinely proposed and foreordained "Seed of Abraham," to make the blessing upon the willing and obedient an *everlasting* blessing.
3. According to the original Divine Plan a multitudinous "Seed" was contemplated from the beginning (Gal. 3:29; Eph. 1:4) -- the fullness, power, and authority of which should always reside in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer. The next step in the Divine Plan has been the *selection* from among men of this special class, called the Church of Christ-of which Jesus is the Lord and Head (Eph. 1:22, 23); called the Bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir (Rev. 19:7) ; called also "members of His Body," controlled by Him as the Head (1 Cor. 12:27); called also His "brethren" (Heb. 2:11); called also, the "royal priesthood," under Him as the High Priest or Chief .Priest, and sharers of His glory, honor, and immortality, and joint-heirs. in His Kingdom and in His inheritance in the Abrahamic Covenant as the "Seed"! to whom belongs the promise.-See Rev. 20:4; Gal. 3:29.

STILL PRIVILEGED TO BE HEIRS

This selection of the Church is along lines of severe testing; for God has predestinated that all who will constitute members of the multitudinous Seed must "be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among *many brethren*." (Rom. 8:29.) And since none are "called" to this high honor except the "justified," and none justified except through faith, under the divinely appointed terms, it follows that, since the vast majority thus far are blinded by the prince of this world so that they cannot believe (2 Cor. 4:4), and since even after

believing and being called many fail to make their "calling and election *sure*"; therefore this elect Church, when completed and perfected and glorified at the end of the "narrow way" which few find (Matt. 7 : 14), will be a "little flock," containing "not many great," rich or wise, according to the estimate of this world.-
-1 Cor. 1:26-28; Jas. 2:5.

Thank God that we are still -privileged to be *heirs of* that wonderful promise, "heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." Let our faith be strong, trusting in the promise and in Him who made it, who is able to do. for us, and for all who trust in Him, exceeding abundantly more and better things than we know how to ask or expect. Let us through patient perseverance, based upon an undimmed faith, complete our sojourning here; and by the Lord's grace make our calling and election sure to a share in the promised glory, honor, and immortality, and in the opportunity to -bless, which the Lord purposes to give to the faithful in Christ Jesus.