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GOD'S ESTIMATION OF OBEDIENCE

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice." -- 1 Sam. 15 :13-23.

THE keynote of the Bible is obedience to the great Creator. Disobedience is responsible for all human ills, suffering, and death. The Divine Plan provides that the present life shall furnish mankind with abundant opportunity to learn deeply the lesson of disobedience -- that disobedience; sin, is undesirable, and that the course of wisdom is to render implicit obedience to God and thus secure His favor and everlasting life.

Many are the lessons of obedience and disobedience recorded in Holy Writ, and none are more striking, impressive, and forceful than that which we observe in the history of Saul, Israel's first king. Surely his is amongst the outstanding characters which furnish the most solemn examples of disobedience. The lesson of his testing, of his failure to stand the test, and of the consequent rejection of his family and himself from the kingdom, we do well to consider.

An able commentator has observed that "Saul's is a long history of self-will gradually asserting itself, bursting out at times into passionate outbreak of the nature of demoniacal possession, until when self had broken with God and hedged around man with jealous suspicion, it settled at last into habitual gloom, and Saul in the loneliness of his own heart seeks in witchcraft for a voice from the other world; he who once was among the prophets, with a soul stirred by the breath of God. It is a sad picture of a misused vocation, of a man called to work together with God, who worked outside Him and without Him."

Another has said, "Saul was an unspoiled, valiant, and devout man, a born leader, the very man, and the only man who could hold the forming nation in his hand. If Saul failed, if he made shipwreck of his life, charge it not to Samuel, charge it not to God. His was the failure of a strong but wilful man, who started right, but went astray."

Mr. Spurgeon remarks to good effect in this connection that "there are some men who seem to have India-rubber hearts. If you do but touch them, there is an impression made at once; but then it is of no use, it soon restores itself to its original character. You may press them whichever way you wish; they are so elastic you can always effect your purpose; but then they are riot fixed in their character, and soon return to be what they were before."

Saul's history. may be divided into four parts: (1) The favorable opportunities of his youth -- energetic, fine looking, modest, his choice as the king of Israel was generally conceded to be an excellent one. (2) In the earlier years of his reign he was a successful general and amble organizer of his kingdom. (3) In his testing time he failed and was rejected, partially at first, more thoroughly subsequently. (4) The decline of his manhood, his almost loss of reason, and finally the tragic death of himself and his sons. In the present discussion. we are dealing specially with the third of these epochs -- his testing.

IMPORTANCE OF WAITING UPON THE LORD

The Philistines exercised a kind of overlordship in Palestine, presumably collecting taxes as the consideration for permitting the people to have a measure of peace and possession of the country. Apparently they had fortified cities in various parts of Israel's territory, and from their representatives in these the word came that the Israelites had anointed Saul to be their king, a circumstance which was understood to imply the throwing off of the Philistine yoke, a declaration of independence. At once the Philistines assembled an army wherewith to overthrow the new kingdom. The record that they had thirty thousand chariots is supposed to have been a copyist's error, for three thousand; for the number of horsemen, two to each chariot, is given as six thousand. This considerable army marched into Palestine; and a battle, ensued between them and the Israelites: King Saul evidently desired to be in harmony with the Lord, and realized still that without Divine interposition he would be powerless to repel an invader of such strength. The. Prophet Samuel was communicated with, and he promised to come within seven days to offer sacrifice to God on Israel's behalf, that the Lord's blessing might attend His people and bring them the victory, in harmony with the Divine covenant.

King Saul waited for six days, and meantime saw his army melting from desertion, for the Israelites were poorly armed and greatly in fear. They had practically no weapons, merely their agricultural implements for weapons of war. Apparently the Philistines had previously deprived them of fighting weapons, and in some manner had hindered the Kenites, who were the smiths of the time, from serving them in the manufacture of swords and spears. When the seventh day had come, King Saul, wearied of waiting for Samuel; offered the sacrifice himself, contrary to the Divine order. Immediately Samuel appeared, and, pointing out to Saul his failure, stated that obedience to God would have been more Appreciated by the Almighty than were the sacrifices. Samuel also pointed out that the sacrifice under the circumstances was a sin, and that the result of this disobedience was that God would not permit Saul and his kingdom to, be perpetuated, though he promised that the battle immediately before them would be successful for Israel's sake and for the furtherance of God's own cause.

The difficulty was Saul's failure to respect the Divine arrangement, his presumption in undertaking to do what had-riot been committed to his care, but was under the charge of another. The Lord's cause was not hindered; but King Saul's own prosperity was interfered with by his neglect of, the Divine arrangement.

THE LESSON FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAELITES

What lesson may we draw from this incident? If for the moment we think of Saul as representing those who have been favored of God, and called to joint-heirship with Jesus in His Kingdom and anointed with the Holy Spirit, we may see in his early victories a picture of our good beginning, when we trusted God implicitly, and sought to do merely as He directed, and to wait patiently and trustfully for Him to guide in all of our affairs. As Saul should have made progress and become stronger in his faith and patience and obedience, so should our earliest experiences as the Lord's servants bring to us increasing patience, perseverance, faith, confidence, implicit obedience. But as this was not the case with King Saul, so it is not the case with many of those who have been anointed for joint-heirship with the Lord in His Kingdom. Many of these have similar experiences to that of Saul. Instead of their growing more dependent upon the Lord, the favors received at His hand make them less particular to know and to do His will. They still reverence the Lord; they still recognize that without Him they could do nothing; but they are not sufficiently careful to note just what He would have them to do. . Sometimes they undertake to do the work of others, and to that extent are "busybodies in other men's matters," as King Saul busybodied and sinned in attempting to do the work that belonged to the Prophet.

We should see that in the Divine mind obedience is one of the most important elements of character. The Lord has us in training in the School of Christ for a great work in the future; and the first prerequisite for future honors and opportunities very properly must be our obedience to the opportunities and directions of the Lord in the present time. This our Lord explained, clearly in His parables, saying that to some of His servants He had entrusted more talents than to others; that each would be called upon to give an account for the proper exercise of the talents, responsibilities and commands that had been put upon him. and that each would be rewarded in proportion as he used the talents given to him. Our Lord's expression on the subject is, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." -- Luke 16:10.

Here, then, is our lesson, "Obedience is better than sacrifice" in God's sight. He will not either approve or reward carelessness on our part in this matter. On the contrary, inattention to His direct will would mark us as proportionately unfit for His direct service, either, here hereafter.

This implies on our part such a loyalty to the Lord, a carefulness in respect to His service, such a recognition of other in respect to the Lord, and His service, that we would about very carefully in our endeavors to serve His cause. So Apostle exhorts, "Let us walk circumspectly," carefully, scrutinizingly.--Eph. 5:15.

THE PRESUMPTUOUS SIN

As the mariner guides the course of his ship by certain charts which show hidden rocks and shoals, and by the stars in their courses, so the Christian is furnished with a chart which shows him the course which he should pursue, and the things which would be displeasing to God and injurious to himself. That chart is the Bible, and whoever would be in harmony with God must not only hearken for His message but keep track also of hidden dangers which beset his course. Each one of us is on trial. This Gospel Age is our Day of judgment, of testing. The Lord Himself is scrutinizing the course we are taking. It is sufficient to Him that we shall have zeal. The zeal which He approves is that which operates from love and along the lines His instruction. The zeal which disregards the Divine instruction is not approved; it leads to shipwreck.

The Apostle gives some suggestions along this line, saying every member of the Body of Christ is necessary (1 Cor. 12:12); none is to be despised or hindered from having his part in general work of building up the Body in the most holy faith. Apostle illustrates that the eye cannot say to the hand or the "I have no need of you," and contrariwise the hand or the foot cannot say that it has no need of the eye nor of the ear. member is necessary; and above all, every member of the Body to move only in accord with the will of the Head. And that will to be sought for in every incident of life, great or small. We not to think of the Lord's cause as being wholly dependent on us. We are to remember the mistake which Uzzah made -- when he saw the ark of the Lord jostled in the road, he put forth his hand to steady it, and died because of his disobedience. It was not in his province to steady the ark. The Lord had that matter under His own supervision, and, only the priest might even touch it. Let all then be zealous, not only to serve the Lord, but also to the way in which He would have us render that service. Let us be sure that service rendered in any other way than as divinely directed will not be acceptable and will not bring blessing on us, but on the contrary bring us the Lord's proportionate disfavor. Obedience is better than sacrifice.

KING SAUL'S SECOND TEST

That a good many years had passed, and that King Saul had made good use of his opportunities as an organizer of the kingdom is evidenced by the fact that a large army was assembled in harmony

with the Lord's command to the Prophet: "Two hundred thousand footmen and ten thousand men of Judah." This army was evidently so disposed of as to intercept any of the Amalekites who might flee. Meantime word was sent to the Kenites, who dwelt amongst the Amalekites, advising them' to leave, that they might not suffer in the punishment of the Amalekites; and the explanation made was that as the Kenites had favored the Lord's people, they were spared in recognition of this fact; for the destruction of the Amalekites was in harmony with the Divine decree, because of their opposition to Israel.

The people were all slaughtered except the king, whom King Saul spared, keeping him as a kind of trophy. The animals also were all destroyed, except the choicest of the flocks and herds, which additionally was contrary to the Divine command.

When the Prophet Samuel came to the king, the latter saluted him as God's representative and reported that he had done according to the Divine command. Then came the inquiry, "If so, what means the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle?" Saul's answer was probably a prevarication; that these were kept in order to be offered to the Lord in sacrifice. Then Samuel reprov'd him, pointing out that he had violated the command of the Lord in preserving any of them. The king, however, protested that the people had kept them; that Israel had desired them; and we can readily suppose that there would have been amongst the Israelites quite an opposition to the waste of the good things of the Amalekites, so accustomed were people of that time, as well as of today; to desire valuables. Saul might have indeed complied with the Divine decree by rendering obedience to the Lord and thus put himself in disfavor with the people; but he would have maintained the Divine approval thereby. As it was, the Prophet expressed the Divine disapproval, saying, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken (better) than the fat of rams."

TESTS OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

Let us see if there are not corresponding tests upon the royal priesthood. Frequently tests come to this class after they have been a long while in the School of Christ. Speaking to some such, the Apostle says, "For when for the time ye ought to, be teachers ye have need that one teach you again what be the first principles of the oracles of God," the doctrines (teachings) of Christ. (Heb. 5:12.) We are sometimes surprised at others, sometimes at ourselves, that we have been so slow in making progress; that we have apparently gained so little victory in character building and appreciation of the principles which should govern amongst those who are the Lord's anointed and in preparation for the throne. Saul's difficulty and tests may represent some of ours.

1. A selfish spirit, a desire for some of the best of the things which the Lord has condemned; a willingness to spare these because they appeal to us from a selfish viewpoint, the fleshly viewpoint.

2. A man-fearing spirit. As Saul feared to bring upon himself the reproaches of the people, fearing to-be thought too narrow on the one hand and too wasteful on the other, so a temptation comes to the Lord's people to guide their course not entirely by the Word of the Lord, but with a deference to the sentiments of others. This is the fear of man that brings a snare. (Prov. 29:25.) We are ensnared by the spirit of the world. Of such the Lord says, "How can ye believe [continue in proper discipleship] which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that cometh from God only?"-John 5 :44.

3. Saul's third difficulty was that he had too slack an appreciation of the Lord's Word; and this is the difficulty which specially besets nearly every one of the Lord's followers who stray away into error of doctrine or of conduct. With what care ought we to guard ourselves, lest having become partakers of so great a blessing as our anointing implies, any of us should seem to come short of its glorious realization in the Kingdom. Let us see to it that we put away all love of sin in its every form, and that we esteem the Lord's favor so highly that the consideration of human friendships would not have a particle of weight or influence with us, except as the same should be in full accord with the Divine Program ;and in order to the maintenance of these proper relationships, let us take heed to His Word.

Let us remember the Apostle's words that we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in high positions. (Eph. 6:12.) Let us remember that these wicked spirits have the power in some degree to favor in us wrong sentiments; that in proportion as we would give our minds into any selfish, sinful or ignoble channel, in that same proportion these unseen adversaries of the saints would have power over them. Let us remember, on the contrary, that in proportion as our hearts are loyal to the Lord and His Word and to the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, in that same proportion we are surrounded by a halo of influence which would protect us, so that of such it may be written, "The wicked one toucheth him not." -I John 5:18.

THE TEST OF PERFECT LOVE

The Scriptures clearly indicate a great trial and testing for the Church in the last days. It will determine with very many what Saul's testing determined for him, whether or not God's favor will continue, with its Kingdom privileges and opportunities. To the faithful the Lord says, "Fear not, little flock; it is, your Father's good pleasure to give' you the Kingdom." The others will be answered as was Saul: "Obedience is better than sacrifice"; thou art rejected. Through the Revelator the Lord tells us how the Philadelphian stage of the Church would be

saved from the great "hour of trial that is come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." (Rev. 3 :10.) There are trials now upon the Laodicean Church, living at the time of the presence of the Son of Man, when He stands at the door and knocks. (Rev. 3:20.) In that trial, we are told, that a thousand shall fall at the side and ten thousand at the right hand of the one Body, the true Church, of which Jesus is the Head. The Apostle Peter, in figurative language, describes the heavens as being on fire (2 Pet. 3:12), symbolically picturing the ecclesiastical influence of our day; and St. Paul tells of the "fire that shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (1 Cor. 3 :13.) We are assured that only the gold, silver, and precious stones of the Divine character and doctrine will abide the fiery ordeal. Surely none of the Lord's people can afford to ignore such testings as these: particularly none of those-who with us believe that we are now in that trial period; and that the next few years will be pre-eminently a testing time.

If the test of character approved of God, is love-perfect love for God, for the brethren, yea, also for our enemies -- then let that thought be continually before all of our minds to the intent that we be not overtaken, that we be not deceived by the great Adversary, who still would fain put darkness for light and light for darkness,' on this as upon every other subject. Our understanding is that the great conflict, which will ultimately reach the world, and eventuate in the anarchy that will overthrow all law and order, has begun with the Church, the consecrated, the sanctified, the enlightened. Does not the Lord forewarn us that in all things judgment must begin 'at the house of God. (1 Pet. 4:17. Necessarily it must begin, with those who are highest up in that house as respects light, knowledge, and privileges.

Are we prepared for these tests, of which we read that they would deceive, if it were possible, the very elect? We still believe that these tests will be along the lines of perfect love. Love and selfishness are the two great powers that are moving the world and each individual therein. We have already seen that the selfishness, which will overwhelm the world shortly, will mean lovelessness to the extent that the Scriptures declare, "Every man's hand shall be against his neighbor, and no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in." (Zech. 8:10; 11:6.) Is that same condition of things to be expected in the Church-every man's hand against his neighbor, the tongue of every brother against every other brother in the Lord?. Are anger, malice, hatred, envy, and strife to be permitted to overwhelm the Church of Christ? Could such things have any place or power of influence against those who have knowledge of the Truth? We are of the opinion that this is just what we are to expect.

We are in the habit of supposing that our Lord's words, "Brother shall deliver up brother to death," applies merely to our Lord's time and during the Dark Ages. Do we forget that similar conditions may be

expected in the end of this Age? The delivering up may not be physical, however; the crucifying, the scourging, and the roasting may not be literal; but we believe that very much the same things may be expected with only such limits as our civilization will compel. Apparently it is not enough of a test to us to be "hated of all men for My Names's sake." We must be tested by the hatred, the malice, the evil speaking and evil surmising of those who dipped with us in the dish, of those who partook with us of the present things of Divine bounty at the table of the Lord, the spiritual food. Ah! If this be so, then we may indeed expect for the closing days of the Church, the Body of Christ, experiences not dissimilar to those which came to the Master in Gethsemane, one of the most trying of which must have been the Judas kiss.

BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

When some of those who heard the Apostles on Pentecost day came to an understanding of what was the real situation of affairs, and that they and their rulers had crucified the Prince of Life -- some of them actually and some of them by failing to protest--those who were right-minded were cut to the heart and cried out, "What must we do?" The Apostle assured them of forgiveness because they did it ignorantly. And so with us. If any of us find that under any snare, or delusion of the Adversary, we have been entrapped into wrongdoing toward a brother, we should immediately, feel cut to the heart, and should go to the Lord for Divine forgiveness and to those whom we have wronged, for their part of it, that thus we might turn defeat in the hands of the Adversary into victory.

Undoubtedly just such a storm is upon the Lord's people; and as the Prophet expresses it, the question is not, Who shall fall, but "Who shall be able to stand?" (Mal. 3 :2.) A thousand shall fall to one who will stand. The very Elect will not be deceived, but the question is, Are we of the very Elect? and our answer must be that the Lord will decide this matter according to the manner in which we decide when under the test. It is impossible for us to surmise what may be the various apparent grounds for unbrotherliness, for the loss of a brother's love. If we give heed to the Adversary, he will make us think it proper, to break away from the regular rule of procedure, and, if we are willing, make us to feel that we are fully justified in violating all the various directions which the Lord our God has given us. It will require of all of us loving faithfulness to the Lord and to the brethren to enable us to withstand the trials of this day.

Let us remember, also, that the loveless condition of the heart, the hypercritical spirit, does not come in suddenly; it develops gradually. Hence every day each of the Lord's people should have a searching of his heart to see whether or not he can find there toward anybody, saint

or sinner, any of the spirit of malice which the Lord figuratively represented as leaven, contaminating in its influence. -- "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5 :6.) A little envy, a little malice, a little anger, a little hatred, and a little strife, may leaven our hearts completely, and in a comparatively short time turn the sweets of our new nature, the spirit of love, into acid bitterness. Moreover, the leaven is not likely to be confined to one, but spreads to others; and thus many may be defiled. The poet has said:

"We are not worst at once; The course of evil, begins so slowly, and from such slight sources, An infant's hand might stem its breach with clay; But let the stream get deeper, and philosophy, Ah! and religion, too, shall strive in vain To turn the headlong current."

STRIVE, WAIT, AND PRAY

Strive; yet I do not promise
The prize you dream of today
Will not fade when you think to grasp it,
And melt in your hand away;
But another and holier treasure,
You would now perchance disdain
Will come when your toil is over,
And pay you for all your pain.

Wait; yet I do not tell you
The hour you long for now
Will not come with its radiance vanished
And a shadow upon its brow;
Yet far through the misty future,
With a crown of starry light,
An hour of joy you know not
Is winging her silent flight.

Pray; though the gift you ask for
May never comfort your fears,
May never repay your pleading,
Yet pray, and with hopeful tears;
An answer, not that you long for,
But diviner, will come one day;
Your eyes are too dim to see it,
Yet strive, and wait, and pray.

THE PRIVILEGE AND POWER OF PRAYER

"And Jesus spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."-- Luke 78:1-8.

O the thoughtful, appreciative mind, one, of the greatest privileges which the Word of God offers is that of personal audience and communion with the King of kings and Lord of Lords. When we consider how great is our God, and how exalted His station, how wonderful is the condescension that thus regards our low estate! He it is whose glory covereth the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over the whole universe. He it is who is without beginning of days or end of years: "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God." He is the immortal, the self, existing One, "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen nor can see." The heavens declare His glory and the firmament showeth His handiwork. In all His vast universal domain there is nothing hidden from Him, nor can He be wearied by its care. His wisdom, who can fathom? and His ways, who can find them out? or who hath been His counselor? His mighty intellect grasps with ease all the interests of His wide dominion, from immensity to minutia. His eye never slumbers nor sleeps, nor can the smallest thing escape His notice-n4 even a -sparrow's fall; and the very hairs of our heads are all numbered. It is His skill which clothes with life and beauty the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven. And are not we, the creatures of His hand, "fearfully and wonderfully made," and the subjects, too,, of His love and care? "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising; Thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways; for there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether. . Thou bast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me.

"Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold Thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost part of, the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, . . . even the' night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from Thee, but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee." -- Psa. 139: 1-12.

Fallen creatures though we be, from the noble estate in which we were created, God so loved our race, even while we were yet sinners, as to make provision at great cost for our redemption and restitution and subsequent eternal glory. And therefore it is, because He loves us, that through Christ He extends to us the gracious favor of coming to Him as children to a father. Wonderful is the condescension, wonderful the love and favor of our God!

AS JESUS TAUGHT US TO PRAY

Yet our God is a God to be revered; He is not one like ourselves, our equal, into whose presence we may come without that ceremony and decorum due to His glorious person and office. (Job 9 :1-35.) The court of heaven has regulations and ceremonies of respect and due deference which must be complied with by every man who would gain an audience with the King of kings; and it behooves us to inquire what those regulations are before we presume to address Him. Here the Word of God gives explicit directions. Our Lord Jesus, the appointed "days-man" for which Job so earnestly longed (Job 9:32, 33), said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me. I am the way." (John 14:6.) Then He gave us an illustration of the manner in which we should address Him, in what is known as the Lord's prayer. (Matt. 6:9-73.) The illustration teaches (1) that we (believers in Christ) may consider ourselves as in God's estimation reinstated (through faith in Christ) to the original position of sons of God, and that we may therefore confidently address Him "Our Father." (2) It indicates on our part worshipful adoration of the high and holy One, and profound reverence for the glorious character and attributes of our God. -- "Hallowed be Thy name." (3) It expresses full sympathy with His revealed Plan for a coming Kingdom of righteousness, which will be according to His will -- "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This shows the attitude of heart to be toward righteousness, and fully submitted to the Divine will and purpose, that God may work in it to will and to do His good pleasure. (4) It expresses in plain and simple, language its dependence on God for daily needs, and the confidence of a child in the Father for the supply of those needs out of His abundant fullness -- "Give us this day our daily bread." (5) It seeks forgiveness for trespasses, and recognizes also the obligation thus incurred to render the same to those trespassing against us -- "And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"; and (6) it seeks to be guarded against temptations and to be fortified by God's abounding grace against all the wiles of the Adversary -- "And abandon us not to trial, but preserve us from evil."

Such are the principles which must ever, characterize our attitude of mind and heart when we would avail ourselves of the privilege of addressing the throne of heavenly grace. In brief; our prayers, to be acceptable to God, must express confident faith, loving esteem and reverence, full sympathy with the Divine Plan and submission to the Divine will, childlike dependence upon God, acknowledgment of sins and shortcomings, and desire for forgiveness, with a forgiving disposition on our part toward others, and a humble craving for the Divine guidance and protection, These may not always all be expressed in words, but such must at least be the attitude of the soul.

MAY COME BOLDLY

Those who thus come to God are privileged always to have their interests considered at the throne of grace; and the welcome, we shall always find there may be judged of by the cordial invitations to come often and tarry long. Well might we hesitate to avail ourselves of such privileges were we not thus assured, but having this assurance we may come with confidence to the throne of grace. -- Heb. 4:16; 13:6.

The Lord knew how necessary to our spiritual life would be this communion with Himself. Tempest-tossed and tried, how much we need our Father's care and the comfort and consolation which His presence and sympathy realized imparts. And have not all the meek and contrite in heart the promise not only of the occasional attentive hearing, but of the abiding presence of both the Father and the Son, our Lord Jesus? Jesus said, "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him. Judas -- not Iscariot -- saith unto Him, Lord, how is it that Thou wilt manifest Thyself unto us and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words; and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." -- John 14:21-23.

The thought which this promise of the abiding presence of the Father and Son conveys to our minds is that their thought and care and interest will be constantly upon us, and that at any instant we may engage the special attention of either or both. The same idea is also conveyed by the words of the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 3:12) "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers." And we are urged to be "instant in prayer," to "pray always, and not to faint," to "pray without ceasing"; for "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust." "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him," and "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Yea, "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children, to such as keep His covenant and to those that remember His commandments to do them." - Rom. 12 :12 ; Luke 18 : 1 ; 1 Thess. 5:17; Psa. 103:13, 14, 11, 12, 17, 18.

IF ANY MAN SIN

We cannot come too often, then, to the throne of the heavenly grace, if we are of those who can claim the abiding presence of the Father and the Son-if we are of them that love Him and keep His, commandments and who recognize the Lord Jesus as the only way of access to the Father. And even "if any man sin" -- be overtaken in a fault-so that from his outward conduct he might be judged as not loving the Lord, yet, if he repent, let him remember that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," who "is the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins," "who also maketh intercession for us." "Who," then, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is He that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." -- 1 John 2:1, 2; Rom. 8:33, 34.

Wherefore, the Apostle urges, "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." -- Heb. 4:14-16.

With such urgent and loving invitations let no child of God hesitate to come to Him often or to tarry long in communion and fellowship with Him. It is our privilege to enter into our closets and shut the doors and pray to our Father which seeth in secret, who will reward us openly. (Matt. 6 :6.) And not only so, but He will go with us through all the business and hurry and commotion of the day; and at any instant in the midst of cares and, perplexities we -- may turn our prayerful, thoughts to Him for wisdom, for strength and Christian fortitude, or for comfort and consolation for ourselves or others. And though we hear no responding voice, if we are attentive to the course of His providence, we will shortly see the shaping of events and circumstances for our good and the good of others in answer to such prayers. Beloved, have we not many a time proved this true? in perplexities, in tribulations, in afflictions, in persecutions, in bereavements, in temptations and trials?

In coming to God we need have no fear that He is too busy with other matters of greater importance, or that He is weary of our coming to Him repeatedly with things of small importance. It was to assure us against this very thing that our Lord spoke the parable of the importunate widow, who was heard and answered on account of her importunity. In so doing we evince both the earnestness of our desires and, our faith-that our prayers will be answered, if we faint not from lack of faith or zeal when the answer is delayed, as often it must necessarily be, since time is an important element in all God's work.

"EVERYTHING TO HIM IN PRAYER"

All night, until the break of day, Jacob wrestled in prayer, saying, "I will not let thee go, unless thou bless me." Paul *thrice* besought the Lord until he was assured His grace would be sufficient for him. The Lord Himself frequently spent *whole nights* in prayer, and He prayed earnestly and with many tears. (Luke 6 :12 ; Matt. 14:23 ; Mark 6:46; 1:35; Luke 5:16; Heb. 5:7.) And the Apostle Paul says, "In everything, by prayer and supplication [earnest pleading] with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." -- Phil. 4:6.

The Apostle himself acted on this principle when he urged, in his letter to the Romans, that the saints "strive together [Greek, *agonize*] with me in prayers. to God for me," that he might safely accomplish a certain work which seemed to be of the Spirit's leading. -- Rom. 15:28-32.

"In everything" -- that signifies that our Heavenly Father is deeply interested in everything that relates to us and ours. What thing is too small for His notice who numbers even the very hairs of our heads? In today's household or business cares, then, we may have His loving sympathy and helpfulness. Do a mother's counsel and a father's wisdom seem inadequate to restrain and guide aright the wayward course of impetuous and overconfident youth, they may bring their cares and fears to the Lord; and, as the children cross the threshold to meet the world's temptations, His wisdom and providence may be invoked to ,so shape their circumstances and surroundings as to show them eventually the sure safe way and the folly of pursuing any other.

Do business cares perplex and annoy? remember the Lord's caution, "Be not overcharged with the cares of this life," and the Apostle's warning, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and utter ruin; for the love of . money is the root of all evil, which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." And, remembering these things, come to the throne of the heavenly grace for wisdom and direction as to how you may so adjust your temporal affairs as not to be *overcharged* with the cares of this life. It is right to be charged with them to the extent of diligence (Rom. 12:11) and the utilization of such diligence. in the Lord's service; but it is the overplus, the corroding care, that interferes with peace of mind and communion with God, that is to be avoided.

IT WILL SWEETEN OUR DAYS

Does poverty pinch and cause anxious thought? take that also to the Lord in prayer; and then, while diligently using the means at hand, to provide things decent and honest; patiently and confidently wait and watch the indications of providence, assured that He who feeds the fowl of the air, which neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and who clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, is both able and willing to clothe and feed you and yours.

And so through all the list of earth's trials and cares, its wants and its woes, its bereavements and disappointments and calamities and distresses, its failures and shortcomings and sins and mistakes, we may take them all to the Lord in prayer and receive that strength and sympathy and consolation and help we so much need. Let us live in the presence of the Father and the Son who have promised to abide with us. It will sweeten our days and comfort our nights and ease our burdens and brighten our hopes and, in a word, it will lift us up above the world into a higher and purer atmosphere. Such is the will of heaven concerning us: let us appreciate and avail ourselves of the privilege.

By all the encouragements of precept and example, the Lord assures us that the fervent prayer of a righteous man (a justified and consecrated child of God) availeth much (Jas. 5:16). We are urged then also to come in faith. Jesus said, "If ye have faith and doubt not . . . all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). As He was addressing His consecrated disciples, it must of course be understood that all their petitions would be subjected to Divine wisdom, and therefore the answers to their prayers, though always sure, might not always be in the way expected, but they would always be considered and answered in some way for their highest good.

What a blessed privilege, dear fellow-disciples of the Lord, is ours to be instant in prayer, to pray always -- to lift up our hearts and minds to God at any time and in any place and to realize that thus daily and hourly that the Father and our dear Lord Jesus abide continually with us, and then, when the active duties of the day have been performed under His eye and supervision, or at any time when the soul realizes its necessity, how precious is the privilege of entering into our closets and there alone with God unburdening our hearts.

While secret prayer is the blessed privilege of every child of God,, and one without which His spiritual life cannot be sustained, it is also the privilege of Christians to unite their petitions at the throne of grace. This united prayer is specially commended by the Lord. (Matt. 18: 19.) "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touch-

ing anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father; for where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

IF WE FAINT NOT

With such promises as these, together with an experience of their fulfillment, who can doubt the love and favor of our God and of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? Therefore let us be encouraged to pray always and not to faint when the answers seem to tarry long, for time is often required to work out the deep designs of an all-wise and loving Providence. Remember the words of the angel to Daniel. Daniel said, "While I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God, for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer," the answer came by the hand of an, angel who said; "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At *the beginning of thy supplications* the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved." -- Dan. 9 :20-23.

On another occasion, when Daniel had mourned three weeks, fasting and praying, because of his inability to understand, the angel of the Lord came and said, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst *set throe heart* to understand, and *to chaste. thyself before thy God*, thy words were heard, and I am come *for thy words.*" -- Dan. 10:2, 3, 10-12.

Even so shall it ever be with all the beloved of the Lord: at the beginning of our supplications God begins to set in operation the influences and to shape the circumstances which are designed to work out the intended blessing for us-if we faint not, but continue instant in prayer, thereby evincing our continued earnestness of desire, and if we confess our sins, and set our hearts to understand, and chasten ourselves before Him. How many prayers are not heard or are hindered because the one who asks does not first purify himself of evil in his own heart? "Ye ask, and receive not because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts"; that is, you ask selfishly and without regard to the will of God. (Jas. 4:3.) But to the chastened and sanctified comes the promise -- "Before they call [reading the desire of the heart .even before it finds expression in words] I will answer [will begin so to shape events as to bring the answer soon or later]; and while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isa. 65: 23, 24) While this is in connection with a prophecy relating to the Lord's people in the Millennial Age, it nevertheless is true of all His faithful ones of this Age. Praise the Lord for all His loving kindness to even the least of His lowly children!

DANIEL THE BELOVED OF JEHOVAH

SERIES XVII

THE VISION OF THE LITTLE HORN (Continued)

"I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them:" -- Daniel 7:21.

THE next feature in the vision of the "little horn" is described in the words: "And behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man." Eyes here would denote intelligence; and considered in connection with the other descriptions of the power symbolized by the little horn; cunning and foresight would, also be denoted. The thought would be that the "little horn" power would be looking out and watching for all opportunities to promote its own interests. The policy of the Papacy in this particular is proverbial. The pope is an overlooker or overseer.

The Greek word translated "See," which is commonly applied to the pope, has the same thought as is contained in the word "episcopacy," which literally means oversight, watchfulness, or careful inspection. "This would denote that the power here referred to, would be remarkably sagacious. We would naturally look for the fulfillment of this in a power that laid its plans wisely and intelligently; that had large and clear views of policy; that was shrewd and far-seeing in its counsels and purposes; that was skilled in diplomacy; or that was eminent for statesmanlike plans. This part of the symbol, if it stood alone, would find its fulfillment in any wise and shrewd administration; as it stands here, surrounded by others, it would seem that this [little horn, as contrasted with them [the other horns], was characteristically shrewd and farseeing in its policy." -- Albert Barnes.

That which in a very special way attracted the attention of the Prophet was that the "little horn had' a mouth speaking great things." This is explained in verse 25, in the expression, "He shall speak great words against the Most High." The Prophet speaks of this peculiar feature again, when he beheld in the same vision a throne upon which sat the Ancient of Days, and before whom was brought One like the Son of Man, to whom was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all nations and languages should serve and obey Him. The Prophet says, "I beheld *then*, because of the great words which the horn spake." -- See verses 9-14.

The explanation of this throne vision seems to show that it was a judgment assize; the judgment being one especially of the "little horn." The angel's explanation reads, "But the judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion to consume' and destroy it unto the end." (Ver. 26.) This explanation seems clearly to teach that the result of this judgment assize is not to destroy this "little horn" power in an instant,

but rather by a gradual process, first to "take away its *dominion*" and second, to "consume and destroy it unto the end."

Strange and startling as it may seem to some, it is nevertheless a fact that this great judgment assize, and the decision, "They shall take away his dominion," rendered by it, met its fulfillment in 1870, when the Papacy lost every vestige of temporal dominion. The world has witnessed this event, but it is only revealed to the eye of faith in the sure word of prophecy that the loss of temporal dominion in 1870 was the fulfillment of this prediction. That feature of the prophecy which describes its consumption and destruction is all that awaits fulfillment.

BLASPHEMY AGAINST THE MOST HIGH

It is very evident that the mind of the Prophet was greatly agitated by the words of the little horn, because its words were against the Most High. The word "*tsad*," translated "against," signifies *concerning*. These words against the Most High, have their fulfillment in the decrees, bulls, and canons issued by the popes. In 2 Thess. 2, where the same power is portrayed, it is said that he "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped." In Rev. 13:5, similar words to that of Daniel's vision are employed. It is there represented as having "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies." "Blasphemy in Scripture means not so much a speaking against God, as it does the assumption of Divine attributes and Divine Power where no rightful claim exists. Thus in Matthew 9, the scribes said of Jesus, 'this man blasphemeth,' because He said to the sick of the palsy, 'thy sins be forgiven thee.'" As Jesus possessed this power, their charge against Him was untrue. The Papacy; through its priesthood, cannot truthfully say that it has Divine power, therefore the charge that it blasphemes God's name is true.

When we read of the blasphemous, self-exalting utterances made by the popes at different times, in the past, and even up to the present time, it seems almost incredible that a human being could ever make such claims; indeed were it not so serious a matter, it could in these enlightened times have only the effect of producing in the intelligent mind a sense of the ridiculous. We cite some of these claims -- which are set forth in Roman bulls and decretals, and quoted by the author of *Romanism and The Reformation* "It is claimed by them, that 'no laws made contrary to the canons and decrees of the Roman prelates have any force,' that 'no man may act against the discipline of the Roman Church;' that 'the Papal decrees or decretal epistles are to be numbered among the canonical Scriptures, and not only so, but that the Scriptures themselves are to be received only 'because a judgment of holy Pope Innocent was published for receiving them.' "It is claimed that emperors ought to *obey*, and not rule over pontiffs; that even an awfully wicked pope may not be rebuked by mortal man, because 'he

is himself to judge all men, and be judged of none,' and 'since he was styled God by, the pious prince Constantine, *it is manifest that God cannot be judged of man!*' They claim that no laws, not even their canon laws can bind the pope; but that just as Christ, being maker of all laws and ordinances, could violate the law of the Sabbath, because He was Lord also of the Sabbath, so popes can dispense with any *law* to show they are above all law!

It is claimed that the chair of St. Peter, the See of Rome, is made the head of the world; that it is not to be subject to any man, 'since by the Divine mouth it is exalted above all.' In the canon laws the Roman pontiff is described as 'our Lord God the pope,' and said to be 'neither God nor man, but both.' But the climax of assumption, the keystone of the arch of Papal pretension, is probably to be found in the 'extravagant' of Boniface VIII; the *Unam Sanctum*, which runs thus: 'All the faithful of Christ by necessity of salvation are subject to the Roman pontiff, who judges all men, but is judged of no one.' 'This authority is not human, but rather Divine Therefore we declare, assert, define, and pronounce, that to be subject to the Roman pontiff is, to every human creature altogether necessary for salvation.'"

"HE SHALL THINK TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS"

Another has said: "This power has also invaded the courts of heaven and filled them with a host of imaginary mediators. It is by the act of the Pope that deceased persons are in a formal and solemn manner declared to be saints, and in the Catholic Church they become objects of, worship and to be invoked in order to obtain their intercessions with God in our behalf. The Canonization is one of the most gorgeous, ostentatious and costly of the entire ceremonials of that Church. The decorations of St. Peter's Church and other expenditures on such occasions have been estimated at not less than, twenty thousand pounds sterling."

"All these claims were incessantly and universally urged all down the centuries by the popes of Rome, and, are still advanced as boldly as ever, in official decretals, bulls, extravagants, decisions of canonists, sentences of judges, books, catechisms, sermons, and treatises of, all kinds."

"As we read all this," one has said, "let it be with bowed heads and with weeping eyes, while we ponder the lesson once more of the terrible consequences of pride, and ambition, and worldliness, when permitted to run their course in the Church of God."

Another remarkable feature of the doings of this little horn that identifies it with the Papal power is stated in the words, "And 'he shall think to change times and laws.'" The times and laws here mentioned do not have reference to secular or human times and laws. It would not

be strange or uncommon for any power to do this; for the powers symbolized by the other horns were continually changing and making new secular laws. The times and laws referred to are Divine times and Divine laws -- those that were given at different periods in history by God for the benefit of mankind, and enjoined especially upon His own people to observe.

It is well known to all that Papacy has appointed fasts and feasts, granted pardons and indulgences for sins, instituted new rules for the worship of God, imposed new doctrines to be believed, canonized saints, and changed at its own pleasure the laws of God. The times and laws referred to; therefore, have reference to the laws and institutions of religion. The meaning of the expression evidently is that its purpose would be to control, or claim the right to control, human beings in religious matters. It would, as far as it lay in its power, abolish laws that existed, and substitute new ones in their place; and this it would do in order to further its own interests or ends.

ASSUMES PREROGATIVES OF GOD

We are indebted to Mr. Guinness for a quotation on this point from a work of Mr. Birks, an eminent writer on prophecy:

"The pope has also annulled the only surviving law of paradise, confirmed by the words of Christ. The Lord ordained, 'What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.' The pope ordains, 'We decide also that, according to the sacred canons, the marriages contracted by priests and deacons be dissolved, and the parties brought to do penance.' The Papacy has further annulled the second commandment, given on the mount by the lips of God-in theory, by the childish and false distinction between heathen idols and Christian images; and in practice, by hiding it from the people, and blotting it out from the catechisms of general instruction. The pope has further annulled the main laws of the Gospel. He forbids the cup to the laity, although the Lord Himself has commanded, 'Drink ye all of it.' He forbids the people of Christ, in general, to use the Word of God in their own tongue; though Christ Himself has charged them, 'Search the Scriptures.' He forbids the laity to reason or converse on the doctrines of the Gospel; St. Peter has commanded them, 'Be ye ready to give a reason of the hope that is in you.' The pope, finally, sanctions the invocation of saints and angels; though St. Paul has warned us, 'Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels'; though St. John has renewed the charge to the disciples of Christ, 'Little children keep yourselves from idols'; and an angel from heaven renews the caution in his words to the same Apostle, 'See thou do it not, for I am thy fellow servant; worship God.'"

It is taught by some that Papacy changed the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. The fact of the matter is, however, that Constantine, nearly two hundred years prior to Papacy's existence, legalized the first day of the week as a Sabbath. The teaching of the Scripture on this matter is that the Christian is not obligated to keep any day of the week as a Sabbath. The first Christians were from the Jews, and realized only gradually their freedom from the Jewish Law Covenant. They continued for a time to observe the seventh day, and also met in the morning of the first day, in remembrance of Christ's resurrection,' which took place on that day. The first day also became sacred to them, because it was on that day that He appeared to His disciples during the forty days after His resurrection. ,Gradually they ceased to observe the seventh day under the teachings of St. Paul, but continued to meet on the first day, early in the morning, but not to observe it as a Sabbath day. As the Church gradually fell away from primitive, doctrines and practices, the. first day began to be erroneously, looked upon as a Sabbath day: "Whatever may have been the opinion and practice of those early Christians in regard to cessation from labor on the Sunday, unquestionably the first law, either ecclesiastical or civil, by which the sabbatical observance of that day is known to have been ordained, is the edict of Constantine, 321 A. D., of which the following is a translation: 'Let all judges,-inhabitants of the cities, and artificers rest on the venerable Sunday. But-in the country, husbandmen may freely and lawfully apply to the business of agriculture; since it often happens that the sowing of corn and planting of vines cannot be so advantageously performed on any other day; lest by neglecting the opportunity, they would lose the benefits which the Divine bounty bestows on us.'" -*International Encyclopedia*.

WEAR OUT SAINTS OF MOST HIGH.

One of the most marked features of this little horn is described in the words, "And he shall wear out the saints of the Most High." The significance of these words is plain and clear. They, teach that by wars and massacres and inquisitions this power would persecute and destroy the saints of God, that the true worshipers who would protest against' Papacy's innovations, and refuse to comply with its idolatrous rites and practices would be persecuted unto death. This feature has an awful fulfillment in Papacy. Concerning this a noted writer has said -:

"Rome's contention is, not that she does not persecute, but only that she does not persecute saints. She punishes heretics -- a very different thing. The first would be wicked, the last she esteems laudable. In the Rhemish New Testament there is a note on the words 'drunken with the blood of the saints' [Rev. I7], which runs as follows: 'Protestants foolishly expound this of Rome, because heretics are there put to death. But their blood is not called the blood of saints, any more than the blood of thieves or man-killers, or other malefactors; and for the

shedding of it no commonwealth shall give account.' This is clear. Rome approves the murder of 'heretics,' and fully admits that she practices her principles.

"The question therefore becomes this, Are those whom Rome calls 'heretics' the same as those Daniel calls 'saints'? If so, the identification of the Papacy is as complete in this respect as in all the previous points. The following statements are from authorized documents, laws, and decrees of the Papacy, dating from the time of Pope Pelagius in the sixth century, twelve hundred years ago: 'Schism is an evil. Whoever is separated from the Apostolic See is doubtless in schism. Do then what we often exhort. Take pains that they who presume to commit this sin be brought into custody. . . . Do not hesitate to compress men of this kind, and if he despise this, let him be crushed by the public powers.' Pope Damasus . . . authorizes persecution of those who speak against any of the holy canons, and adds, 'It is permitted neither to think nor to speak differently from the Roman Church.' Every evangelical Christian in the world is, therefore, according to Romanist canons, a . heretic, and as such liable to punishment The Papacy teaches all her adherents that it is a sacred duty to exterminate heresy. From age to age it has sought to crush out all opposition to its own dogmas and corruptions, and Papal edicts for persecution are innumerable. The fourth Lateran Council issued a canon on the subject which subsequently became an awful instrument of cruelty.

"For long ages it was held and taught universally that whoever fell fighting against heretics had merited heaven. Urban II issued a decree 'We do not count them murderers who, burning with the zeal of their Catholic mother against the excommunicants, may happen to have slain some of them.' If not absolutely murdered, heretics might be ill treated *ad libitum*, according to an ordinance of Gregory IX, who writes to the Archbishop of Milan: 'Let those understand themselves to be absolved from the debt of fidelity, homage, and all manner of service, who were bound by any compact, however firmly ratified, to those who have fallen into heresy.'

"Bellarmine [a most noted Roman Catholic theologian, of the sixteenth century] argues for the necessity of burning heretics, a practice which Luther had asserted to be contrary to the Spirit of God. He [Bellarmine] says 'Experience teaches that there is no other remedy; for the Church has proceeded by slow steps, and tried all remedies. First, she only excommunicated. Then she added a fine of money, and afterwards exile. 'Lastly she was compelled to come to the punishment of death. For heretics despise excommunication, and say that those lightnings are cold. If you threaten a fine of money, they neither fear God nor regard men, knowing that fools will not be wanting to believe in them, and by whom they may be sustained. If you shut them in

prison, or send them into exile, they corrupt those near to them with their words; and those at a distance with their books. Therefore the only remedy is, to send them betimes into their own place.'

"Sismondi, the historian, writes: 'To maintain unity of belief the Church had recourse to the expedient of burning all those who separated themselves from her; but although for two hundred years the fires were never quenched, still every day saw Romanists abjuring their faith and embracing the religion which often guided them to the stake. In vain Gregory IX, in A. D. 1231, put to death every heretic whom he found concealed in Rome. His own letters show that the heretics only increased in numbers.'" -- H. G. Guinness.

DRUNKEN WITH BLOOD OF MARTYRS

Another symbolic vision seen by St. John and recorded in the Apocalypse referring to the horrible persecutions of this same power reads: "I saw, the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." In concluding the consideration of this feature of the vision we quote the words of the late A. J. Gordon:

"It has been estimated that the Papacy has directly or indirectly slain fifty millions of martyrs on account of their faith, the vast majority of these being sincere Christians, whose only crime was that they would not own allegiance to Antichrist. Let charity discount the-number by one half, if it were possible, and let her suggest every conceivable palliation for the murder of the rest, and we still have the most ghastly chapter which the volume of history contains. Would that we might mingle our weeping with floods of repentant tears from the .eyes of this cruel mother, if forsooth we could thereby mitigate the wrath treasured up against the day of wrath which her crimes have earned: But, alas! we find '*Te Deums*' sung over Huguenot slaughters, but not one *papal Miserere* can we discover. Commemorative medals are still extant signaling the massacre of St. Bartholomew, but not one *monumentum lacrimarum* over that event is to be found in all the archives of the seven-hilled city. 'And when I saw her I wondered with great wonder,' writes the Seer; and now that history has filled in every detail of the crimson outline of prophecy, we wonder with even profounder amazement that such a demoniacal tragedy could ever have been enacted in the name of Christianity. But we remember that the woman who did these things was 'drunken.' And there is no intoxication so profound as that induced by pagan superstition tintured with Christian blood. Even Martin Luther, while yet in the delirium tremens of popery, raged with this blood-thirst. 'So intoxicated was I, and drenched in papal dogmas,' are his words, 'that I would have been most ready to murder or assist others in murdering, any person who should have uttered a syllable against the duty of obedience to the Pope.' Nay, even those who have been sobered by

generations of Protestant abstinence from persecution, if they once return to the cups of the Harlot, speedily exhibit symptoms of the old appetite, as witnessed for example in the oft-quoted saying of Dr. Manning, now [1889] cardinal, when urging Romish aggression in England: 'It is yours, right reverend fathers, to subjugate and subdue, to bend and to break the will of an imperial race.'

RULE OVER SAINTS LIMITED

One of the most remarkable features of this wonderful prophecy of the little horn is that its rule over the saints is assigned definite limits. Like the other features of the vision this one is expressed in hidden, symbolic language: "And they [the saints] shall be given into his, hand until a time, and times, and the dividing of time." (Ver. 25.) A time in the Scriptures represents 360 days; times [two], 720 days; a dividing [half] of time, 180 days; the sum of which is 1260 days. Other Scriptures give us the scale to use in determining the symbol's enlargement. That scale is "a day for a year." The time, therefore, is 1260 years. It is now a well known fact of history that the French revolution that occurred at the close of the eighteenth century, the great climax of which was the Reign of Terror in 1793, marked the beginning of the end of Papal influence and power over the saints. We are indebted to Mr. Guinness for the following quotation from *The Papal Drama*, by Thomas H. Gill, concerning how the French Revolution affected the Roman Catholic power

"The more deeply and earnestly the French Revolution is considered, the more manifest is its pre-eminence above all the strange and terrible things that have come to pass on this earth Never has the world witnessed so exact and sublime a ,piece of retribution In no work of the French Revolution is this, its retributive character, more strikingly and solemnly apparent than in its dealings with the Roman Catholic Church and Papal power. It especially became France, which after so fierce a struggle had rejected the Reformation, and perpetrated such enormous crimes in the process of rejection, to turn its fury against that very Roman Church on whose behalf it had been so wrathful . . . to abolish Roman Catholic worship, as she had abolished Protestant worship; to massacre multitudes of priests in the streets of her great towns; to hunt them down through her length and breadth; and to cast them by thousands upon a foreign shore, just as she had slaughtered, hunted down, and driven into exile hundreds of thousands of Protestants. . . The property of the [Roman] Church was made over to the state; the French clergy sank from a proprietary to a salaried body; monks and nuns were restored to the world, the property of their orders being likewise gone; Protestants were raised to full religious freedom and political equality The Roman Catholic religion was soon afterwards abolished.

" 'Bonaparte unsheathed the sword of France against the helpless Pius VI The pontiff sank into a dependent Berthier marched upon Rome, set up a Roman Republic, and laid hands upon the pope. The sovereign pontiff was borne away to the camp of the infidels, . . . from prison to prison, and finally carried captive into France. Here . . . he breathed his last at Valence Multitudes imagined that the Papacy was at the point of death, and asked, would Pius VI be the last pontiff, and if the close of the eighteenth century would be signalized by the fall of the Papal dynasty. But the French Revolution was the beginning and not the end of the judgment; France had but begun to execute the doom, a doom sure and inevitable, but long and lingering, to be diversified by many strange incidents, and now and then by a semblance of escape, a doom to be protracted through much pain and much ignominy.'"

WHEN THE SAINTS WERE DELIVERED INTO HIS HAND

The famous decretal letter of the Emperor Justinian constituting 'the bishop of Rome "head of all the holy churches and all the holy priests of God," was issued in March 533 A. D. just 1260 years prior to the Reign of Terror. Referring to this decretal letter;. Mr. Elliott says "The famous decretal letter of Justinian to the Pope dated March 533. . . became thenceforth, part and parcel of the Civil Law." Mr. Guinness, referring to the same, says this Was "the point at which the saints were delivered into the hand of the Roman pontiff by the famous decretal letter of the Emperor Justinian, in March, A. D. 533, constituting the bishop of Rome, 'head of all the holy churches and of all the holy priests of God.'" A part of the text of this letter to the bishop of Rome, as also another to the patriarch of Constantinople is given by Pastor Russell. From this we quote: "'The victorious Justinian. . . to [Pope] John the most holy archbishop of the fostering city of Rome: . . . We do not permit that any question be raised as to anything which concerns the state of the churches, however plain and certain it may be, that be not also made known to your Holiness, who is the Head of all the holy churches.'"

To the patriarch of Constantinople Justinian wrote these words: "'In no manner whatever have we changed, or shall we change, or have we (as your Holiness also knows) passed beyond that position of the Church which, by the favor of God, has as yet been preserved; but in all respects the unity of the most holy churches with his Supreme Holiness, The Pope of Ancient Rome, (to whom we have written in like manner), has been maintained. For we do not suffer that any of those matters which relate to the state of the Church be not also referred to His Blessedness, since he is the head of all the most holy churches.' " The same writer thus refers to these decretal letters "The letters from which we have given the foregoing extracts may be found complete, together with the Edict of Justinian referred to, in the

Volume of the Civil Law.Codicis lib. I tit. i." This decree was not enforced, according to Pastor Russell, until 539 A. D. Twelve hundred and sixty years from this date brings us up to the time of the humiliation and dethronement of Pope Pius VI, by Napoleon in 1.799.

The prophecy of Daniel goes on to state that even after this terrible judgment, the Papal power would recover and continue for an indefinite period of time. The revealing angel's words are: "The judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion to consume and destroy it unto the end." -- Ver. 26.

It was in the year 1870, July 18, at an Ecumenical Council, which was attended by 803 prelates of the Roman, Catholic Church, that the Pope, by an official decree, reached the most dizzy height of his blasphemous claims. This decree was that the occupant of the Papal chair is in all his decisions with regard to faith and morals, *infallible*. In two months from this time Papacy suffered the loss of all that remained of its temporal possessions and authority. It was to this time, it would seem, that, the Prophet had reference in the words, "I beheld *then*, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake." -- Ver. 11.

CONFESSION OF SIN, FORGIVENESS, VICTORY

Continued from last issue

A LESSON FOR SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

"And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh." That is to say, as a judge, a counselor; he gave advice, gave decision in respect to their affairs, disputes; proper course of conduct, right and wrong on any subject, etc. Thus the nation of Israel was making a new start; and as a people they were more drawn together than at any time in their history from the days of Joshua onward. But, as though it were a trial of their faith, at this very time, while they were resolving on the course of righteousness, their enemies, the Philistines, having heard of the gathering, sought to nip the rebellion in the bud, and came against them with an army of considerable size.

The Israelites had not come together for battle, but for prayer; nevertheless they were probably more or less armed. But they felt themselves quite unprepared to meet the Philistine hosts. And they said unto Samuel, "Cease not to cry unto Jehovah our God for us, that He save us out of the hand of the Philistines." They were learning to look for help in the right direction. This cry coming to the Lord after they had abandoned their idols and had vowed to be loyal to Jehovah,

put them in a very different attitude toward Him from that of twenty years previous, when they called for the Ark of God to lead them in battling against the Philistines without any reformation of character, without repentance for sins.

Is there not a lesson here for all God's people? Is it not as true today as it ever was that it is vain for the Lord's people to call upon the Lord for assistance and blessing while they are living in sin, in violation of their Covenant and its obligations? The first lesson of all, then, for those who realize their being in sin, is repentance, and definite vows to the Lord respecting faithfulness in petition to Him for His mercy unto them. Those who thus come to the Lord now, as Christians, under the Headship of our Lord Jesus Christ, are sure to have Divine mercy and "grace to help in every time of need."

Our Philistines that come upon us and' enslave us are our passions and weaknesses, and the oppositions of the world and the Adversary. These are our foes, and against these only Divine Power can enable us to fight a good fight and come off victorious.

In response to the cry of the people, Samuel the Prophet offered to the Lord a sacrifice -- a lamb of the first year. He knew it not, but it was a type of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Beside this typical sacrifice, Samuel cried to the Lord on behalf of his people, and the Lord heard him. So with all that stand beside the great Antitypical Sacrifice, and in the name and merit of that Sacrifice, as people of God in covenant relationship with Him -- having put away sins and weaknesses to the best of our ability, we may be sure of Divine help, deliverance.

SIGNAL MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE FAVOR

While yet the offering was upon the altar, the noise of the approaching hosts of the Philistines was heard. How would God assist His people? How could they hope for deliverance against the Philistine hosts? Would they in fear scatter or would God's power to help be manifest? The deliverance came in the shape of a great, violent, sudden storm. Going hastily, it swept down the hill Mizpeh, in the faces of the approaching hosts. They turned their backs against the violent storm; and the Israelites perceiving the opportunity rushed onward with the storm, pursuing the Philistines and driving them before them, and thus gaining a great victory. The place of the victory was the very spot where, twenty years before, the Ark of the Lord had been captured by the Philistines. Samuel there set a stone as a pillar and monument; and called it Ebenezer, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." -- Ver. 12.

So with Christians in their victories under the Lord's assistance; when by the Lord's grace they gain victories they should setup memorials or

monuments in their minds, in their hearts, and not pass these blessings. by or forget that the victories were gained by help from on High. Every Christian, therefore, should have his Ebenezers, his monuments of victory, as it were, of Divine assistance over his foes, the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, and lie should rejoice in these. This sentiment has come down to us in the words of a beautiful hymn, familiar to nearly all who read the English language

"Here I'll raise my Ebenezer,
Higher by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope by Thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at Home."

PROPER AND IMPROPER JUDGMENTS

The record is that Samuel continued to be a judge, an interpreter of the Divine Law, a counselor to his people, "all the days of his life." The Israelites had accepted God's Law, and had agreed to abide by its decisions. Whoever, therefore, they would have confidence in as an interpreter of the Divine Law, they in proper condition of heart, would be ready to obey his rulings, his judgments. Spiritual Israelites similarly have come into covenant relationship with God, and have bound themselves to seek to know and to do the will of God and not their own wills. Hence whoever may be the person of opportunity who can show "an Israelite indeed" the mind of the Lord in any manner, lie becomes his counselor.

This office is not left to ministers, to priests, but is open to all the Lord's people; for St. Peter declares all the Lord's people are priests -- "Ye are a Royal Priesthood." True, these priests have not entered into their royalty, nor yet have they entered fully upon their priestly office. These glorious offices belong especially to the future, when by virtue of the resurrection change, these priests, who are now sacrificing, will be Priests in glory, reigning with Christ and judging the world -- assisting the world, counseling the world, instructing the world regarding God's will and helping them to know and to do that will.

The Royal Priesthood are to remember that their judging in the present time is not a judging of the hearts, but merely a judging of the conduct. As respects the hearts, they are informed of the Lord that they are not competent to, judge; and hence the words of the Apostle Paul, "Judge nothing before the time." The time for the judging of the, hearts, when this work will be committed to the Church, will be after that which is perfect shall have come, after the resurrection change shall have made us like our Redeemer and qualified, therefore, to read the hearts of mankind and to judge a righteous judgment, a merciful judgment, a sympathetic judgment, a helpful judgment.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF A SHEPHERD BOY

*"I delight to do Thy will, O my God." --
Psa. 40:8; 2 Sam. 7:18-26; 8:14, 15.*

IT has been truly said that "the history of the life of David is the record of his education by the hand of God. Separated by disparity of years from his seven brothers, whilst they lived in the world, he kept his father's sheep upon the hill pastures near to Bethlehem. Little did he dream of the future for which he was preparing. God had set him there to keep those sheep in the wilderness. For God he kept them; with God he communed as he changed their pasture, beat off the lion and the bear; and led them to the water's side. The solitariness of his shepherd's life braced up his spirit, and its dangers formed within him the habit of ready action based on simple trust in his God. When the lion and the bear came forth -against his wilderness flock, and took a lamb for which he was accountable out of the fold, he went out after him and caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him: He knew that he did it not in his own might, but in the strength of the Lord. So was his faith nurtured."

"ANOINT HIM, FOR THIS IS HE"

God's choice of a man to succeed Saul was that of David, the son of Jesse. And we read "he was ruddy and was all of beautiful countenance and goodly to look upon." The description is thought to indicate that David was fair complexioned and of auburn hair. It is supposed that he was in his eighteenth year.

The Lord said to Samuel, "Arise and anoint him, for this is he." "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren." "And the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward." We are not to understand from this that David was begotten of the Holy Spirit, as are the members of the Body of Christ, the Church, during this Gospel Age. No; ours, is a special and peculiar blessing from the Lord, the like of which never came before Pentecost, except in the one case of our Lord's baptism of the Spirit at Jordan, when He received the Holy Spirit without measure. The spirit, influence, power of God upon David was similar in its operation and effect to what it had been upon Samuel and the Prophets. Undoubtedly it gave him wisdom, strength, and courage, and enabled him wisely to appropriate to himself the various opportunities for learning the lessons in connection with his daily experiences, all of which were a schooling or preparation for his future work as king.

Similarly, only in a higher and fuller sense and degree, the Lord's people of this Gospel Age, from the time they come under the influence of the Holy Spirit of begetting, which was poured upon the Church at Pentecost -- from that time onward they should be exercised

by this Spirit of the Lord, and, as the Apostle expresses it, should be filled with the Spirit, "filled with all the fullness of God," filled more and more with a knowledge of God's will and with the spirit of obedience thereto. This feeling increases as we receive of the Holy Spirit, and as it abounds and is shed forth in our hearts we are enlightened; our appreciation of God, our appreciation of our own privileges, our appreciation of His calling us to the high position of joint-heirship with Jesus and our appreciation of the necessity for learning the lessons which would fit us for that glorious position, is increased.

DAVID AS A FUGITIVE

Among the outstanding epochs in David's life is that of the seven years as a fugitive from the envy and hatred of King Saul. The latter, though still the nominal representative of the Lord upon the throne of Israel, had lost the Divine blessing and power which, in considerable measure, had been transferred to David after his anointing to be Saul's successor. The lesson brings before our minds in sharp contrast the king, whose better judgment was overcome by evil impulses, and David, the "man after God's own heart," who, although far from perfect, strove successfully for mastery over himself, and overcame promptings of evil under the guidance of principles of righteousness. We are not to think of David as perfect. Neither are we to be blind to his faults and sins, nor to excuse them, nor to copy them. David was not one of the "saints" in the New Testament sense. He lived at too early a date to share in the High Calling; nor could he follow in the footsteps of Jesus, since the Captain of our salvation and our forerunner in the Narrow Way had not yet come. David was a man after God's own heart, in the sense that he was full of faith in God and aimed aright. At heart he desired to do the Lord's will, and wherever he failed of this it caused him grief, and led him to repentance. He lived before the time of God's revelation of His own character and Plan and perfect will concerning His people. All things considered, David's attainments in faith and obedience were quite remarkable, so that although as a whole he was not to be considered as a model or pattern by the Church of the Gospel Age, nevertheless many beautiful illustrations of proper faith and obedience may be drawn from his life, and some are noted in the lesson before us.

The seven years from the time David fled from the wrath of Saul until Saul died must have seemed to David a peculiarly long period of trial of faith and patience. His own course had been a noble and true one. He had served his king and his nation most loyally, yet he suffered as a reward. He was for a time an exile in a foreign land, and his father's family was obliged to remove to Moab for protection. It must have seemed peculiar to David that the Lord should permit him, anointed to succeed King Saul, to be thus delayed from coming into his kingdom,

and. instead to be hunted and persecuted as an outlaw. This, however, was a valuable test of his faith, and doubtless helped to strengthen its roots, and thus to make his character stronger and his trust in the Lord firmer. But besides this; we may readily see that those seven years were valuable to David as a preparation for his kingly office. They made him intimately acquainted with the people and their usual manner of life and general sentiments -acquainted also with the neighboring peoples. Above all, he became intimately acquainted with the Lord, and, we may be sure, learned to trust His providences even where he could not trace them. Several of the Psalms were either written during this period and describe David's experiences on the spot, or written subsequently describing the lessons learned from those experiences. Amongst these Psalms may be mentioned numbers 34, 52, 56, 57, 63.

THE CHRISTIAN'S ADVERSARY AND CONFLICT

What lesson can the "New Creation" of the present time draw from this story of olden time? David, whose name signifies beloved, in many respects typified the Christ, Head and Body. His experiences with Goliath illustrate well first of all our Lord's conflict with the Adversary during the forty-days' temptation in the wilderness. Our Lord's victory over Satan on that occasion, His loyalty to the Father and. the work entrusted to Him, His own self-sacrifice, meant the victory for all the world of mankind desirous of being in harmony with God and His arrangement. Did He not declare to us, "Fear not, I have overcome the world?" In overcoming Satan, the prince of this world, He was gaining at the same time a victory over all the hosts of evil and servants of sin He stood faithful to God and to His covenant relationship and responsibility and hurled at the Adversary the pebble of truth.

"It is written." As Goliath fell before David, so Satan was vanquished by our Lord, who declares, "I beheld Satan fall from heaven," and declared also as a result of His victory; "All power is given Me in heaven and in earth," and sent forth His disciples in His name to similarly battle in His strength and to come off conquerors and to ultimately share with Him in His Kingdom, which is to "bless all the families of the earth:" It is written of the Lord's faithful disciples, who shall constitute the Church of glory, that they must walk in His steps as He set the example. This means to them as to Him a warfare against sin, its great representative and leader Satan, and all the hosts of deceived humanity who are on his side.- Does not the Apostle intimate this when he says, We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with wicked spirits in influential positions? (Eph. 6:12.) Our enemy is a giant in whose presence we are feeble indeed. The Apostle calls him a wily foe and our Lord taught us to pray the Father, "Abandon us not in

temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Very evidently, then,, we need Divine assistance in our unequal contest, as did David in his.

"NOT BY MIGHT, NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT"

All these whom the Lord accepts to probationary membership in the Body of Christ, have been previously anointed and come 'under the Divine power and guidance. They have had their experiences, too, in struggling against evil in general, even as David had his experience with the lion and the bear, and those experiences in the Lord's providence were merely, preparations for the great testing the great conflict with the Adversary and his various devices for our injury. The natural thought in connection with such a contest is to put -on armor similar to that of our opponent, as Saul offered his armor to David. It is for each of the Lord's people, however, to learn that victory cannot be won along worldly lines. We cannot fight evil with evil, wrong with wrong, boasting with boasting, and slander with slander, hatred with hatred, etc. If we undertake so to do we shall surely lose in the battle. Our course, like that of David, must be full reliance upon the Lord and the use of the sling and pebble of truth. If we cannot conquer along these lines we cannot conquer at all. Who is sufficient for these things? for such an unequal contest with the prince of darkness and all the hosts of sin? Surely the one who would have confidence in himself would be unwise; hence, as the Apostle says, we place our confidence in God; if we are loyal to Him- victory wilt. be ours, if we are careless or unfaithful we' shall not be of the David class-not be members of the glorious Body of Christ, in which event we shall never reign with Him, even as David, who received the anointing, would never have reached the throne, if he had fought the giant with Saul's armor.

"WORKS OF THE FLESH AND OF THE DEVIL"

The imperfections of the flesh with which we all must contend are indeed part of the works of the devil, for did he not in Eden accomplish the fall of our first parents, and thus the fall of our entire race into the sin and death condition against which we struggle in vain, except as we are rescued by Him who loved us and bought us with His precious blood? But in addition-to these inherited weaknesses of the flesh we must contend against the active works of the Adversary -not only his temptations to ourselves but his intrigues through mankind in general, for he is indeed the "one who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," and they are much more numerous than the children of obedience. Hence our assailants are manifold, and in many of their assaults upon us they have at least the sympathy of our fallen flesh, however antagonistic our hearts, our minds as New Creatures in Christ.

The Apostle helps us to get a view of the great enemy and the influence he is bringing to bear against us on every hand and every day. He sums them up as follows "Now the works *of* the flesh are manifest which are these -- adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, [he that hateth his brother is a murderer], drunkenness [intoxication literally or symbolically with, the spirit of the world, Babylon], revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." -Gal. 5:19-21.

David's experiences in waiting for the kingdom and the lessons learned and the character developed and the preparation which made him wise and moderate, all serve to illustrate a great lesson to the Gospel Church. We also are called to sit upon the throne of the Lord -- to rule in His name. We also have, been 'anointed to the office by the Holy Spirit, which the Apostle declares is a foretaste of the glory and -- joys into which we shall enter when the crowning days shall have come. If discipline, self-control, faith, moderation, and hope were all requisite to make David a king over the Lord's people and to properly represent him in government, how much more severe lessons should be for us, who are called to so much higher a station -to the throne of earth as God's representatives and to the Royal Priesthood, ruling, judging; and trying mankind, to the intent that as many as possible of them may be rescued from their degraded condition and be brought into full harmony with God! Surely we may say as David did that our trials and testings are much less than we expected them to be.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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OUTLOOK AMONGST THE WATCHERS

INFIDELITY AND THE FAITHFUL

SO RAPIDLY has faith in the Bible as a Divine revelation been on the wane during the past two decades, and particularly the last, that the fact is being commonly noted and the attention of the public called to it. Thus writes Mr. Arthur Brisbane in the *New York American*:

"Fashions change even in religion. Things that Robert Ingersoll said while the pious held their breath and waited for the lightning to strike are now said in the pulpit.

"The Rev. William Montgomery Brown, of Ohio, Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, is to be tried for heresy. His book classes

Buddha, Allah, Jehovah and Jesus in the same class. All, says he, are 'versions of the sun myth.'

"The founder of Christianity this Christian Bishop classes with 'Santa Claus and Uncle Sam,' not real personalities, but convenient symbols. He says of Jesus, 'I doubt that He ever lived.' And he still preaches in a Christian pulpit.

"Soon they will have .cut out of the Christian religion everything except, perhaps, one commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill,' but real Christianity is not disturbed by these 'modern improvements.' On the contrary, the faithful delight in proving that their faith is stronger than anybody's reason or 'higher criticism.'"

Very true, we answer. -- "Real Christianity is not disturbed," nor can the teachings of its great Founder, the Apostles and Prophets be overthrown or even weakened to any extent by attacks of modern unbelief, infidelity, etc., which pass under the guise of Modern Thought, New Thought, Higher Criticism, Evolution, etc. The security of the writings of the Bible lies in the fact that their real Author is God, in the sense of a Divine supervision; and He has caused one line of thought to permeate them all; and a golden thread of prophecy to pass through them all, binding them together as one message. The reverent student of these writings plainly observes the most remarkable fact that though penned by different writers who spoke and wrote many centuries apart, they have the one theme and the one harmonious story to tell. It is first, the story of creation; then of the trial and fall in Eden, the coming in of the curse, and the ravages and ruin down through the Ages wrought by death, the great enemy; then the story of love and redemption, first in prophecy, then in fact, when in fulfillment of prophecy and in the "fullness of time," the well-beloved Son of God was heralded by, angelic hosts as the long looked for Redeemer and bringer of Salvation.

Then, this sweetest of all stories, taking again the form of prophecy, continues on, announcing that He who tasted death for every man as the Ransomer, has won high distinction and honor in the presence of Jehovah, that now being seated at the right hand of His Majesty He is to be accorded the rule, the kingdom or empire of this earth; that following the selection of His Bride, the true Church, made up of faithful bearers of the cross and doers of His holy will, and following their exaltation and union with Him, there is to be fulfilled the prayer He taught His followers, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is done in heaven"; which will mean the retraining and subduing of evil and sin in every form, and the removal of the curse of disease and death from the earth, and the giving to every member, of the human race a full, fair trial for everlasting life in paradise restored.

The story concludes by assuring us that the reign of God's Kingdom in the hands of Christ and the saints will be attended with marvelous success, "such as earth has never known"-that "the desire of all nations shall come"; that there shall be no more curse; that sorrow, weeping, pain, and dying shall depart from the earth; that mankind, whose family circle has become terribly shattered and broken by sin and death, will then as one grand restored, united family pass into the ages of perfection and bliss to follow.

The above writer states that "on the contrary, the faithful delight in proving that their faith is stronger than anybody's reason or, higher criticism." We would add that the faithful delight in proving that their faith is stronger than fallible, human reasoning, "science, falsely so-called." The faithful are not called upon to believe anything unreasonable although they do believe many things that they cannot reason out or understand, just as our reason compels us to accept many facts in life that are beyond our power to reason out: We see animal and vegetable life growing all around us, but we cannot reason out or understand the process of how it grows. It is then according to this same line of thought that the faithful believe in the miraculous display of Divine power in the past in the form of our Lord's supernatural birth and in the performances of other miracles, without their having been personal witnesses of these miracles. The faithful believe in them because the testimony has come from those whose characters for truth and veracity are unimpeachable and therefore it is reasonable to accept them as truth.

Consequently it is not a matter of the faithful trying to prove that their faith is stronger than anybody's reason, but stronger than the human guesses and speculation of modern times, that would discredit the Bible and give it a place amongst writings of fiction, fables, and tradition. The faithful delight in proving that their faith has a good and sufficient foundation to endure all the tests and all the storms of the present dark time, and to "endure as seeing Him that is invisible"; being fully persuaded that soon the glorious power of the new dispensation will thoroughly scatter all the present darkness of ignorance, superstition, infidelity, unbelief, etc., and cause the knowledge of the true God and His purpose to go abroad throughout the earth for the healing of mankind.

INFIDELITY SHAKES MODERN CHURCH

Don O. Shelton, president of the National Bible Institute goes on record in defense of the Bible:

"Infidelity and rationalism like a whirlwind shake the modern church. The stiff breeze of modernism which has been felt has developed into a hurricane. But there is no need for astonishment or alarm. Christianity has never been congenial to the human mind. It rebukes man's selfishness and sinfulness. It demands repentance and belief. It requires self-surrender and a close walk with God. The Bible is God's winnowing fan. It distinguishes the chaff from the wheat, the false from the true.

"From the beginning Christianity has been misrepresented. False prophets are still going out into the world. The devil is an expert dust-thrower. He is skilled in the art of befogging truth. Now in New York he is trying to make it appear that Christianity is something that every teacher can reconstruct to suit himself."

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BIBLE URGED

In striking contrast with the spirit of irreverence toward the Bible and in contrast with the spirit of unbelief and agnosticism, there comes to our attention a large display advertisement of the Bible in the *Boston Post*, which we understand to be a regular feature of that paper, consisting of an earnest and eloquent appeal to all its readers to cooperate with them in the distribution of the Bible. The appeal reads:

"Following the most distressing period of unrest the world has ever known, comes a world-wide revival of Bible reading, which must tend to ameliorate the, unrestful conditions of mankind. To encourage such an end, publicity is being used in leading newspapers throughout this country to promote the distribution of the great Book of Books, on an extensive plan that should readily place the Bible in the hands of every reader. Two exclusive editions have been chosen for this purpose-first, the famous large print Red Letter -Bible, illustrated herein, and a beautiful plain print, medium large type edition that will be distributed for a nominal sum. May be had either in Protestant or Catholic version.

"The Question of the Universe"

THIS BIBLE-THIS MIRACULOUS BIBLE-THIS BOOK OF ALL BOOKS-
LUMINOUS WITH THE LIGHT THAT DWELLETH NOT ON LAND OR SEA-
THIS NOBLEST AND MOST BEAUTIFUL THING IN ALL THE WORLD-
WHAT IS IT-WHENCE COMETH IT-WHAT MEANS IT?

"It has made and unmade Nations. It has uprooted Kingdoms and Empires. It has diverted the mighty tides of History. It has crumpled ancient Faiths and Superstitions. Because of it fell Pagan Rome. The

antique Systems of India and the Far East have bowed their heads to its enlightened sway.

"China and the Orient now first awaken from their sleep of thrice a thousand years; and follow their sister nations of 'the Occident-whose feet are guided by one sole lamp -the sacred flame of which was kindled by the inspired-Hebrew Prophets, and fed for all time by the Lord and Master of the Golden Rule.

"Only ignorance scoffs at the Bible! The greatest rulers -- the greatest statesmen --the greatest scholars -- writers -- orators -- scientists -- soldiers -- and the untold millions of the, Common People, whose collective genius outweighs them all -- have thrilled to its Divine' Wisdom. "Its lyrics of unfathomable tenderness-its orations of compelling potency -- its contemplative prose of preternatural grandeur-have never been equalled. Its emotional depths and its intellectual heights make it tile one and only Book of Books, vouchsafed for the guidance of mankind throughout the ages."

In reading the foregoing, one cannot but be impressed with the thought that those who are moved to thus urge the distribution of the Bible are evidently realizing increasingly the instability of the present order of things; that we are living in the time when all things are being "shaken"; that all peoples of the earth today are feeling a sense of, unrest and insecurity as never before, knowing not that this is "the day of His preparation," that "the Hour of His judgment is come." It is indeed' to the credit of the Bible that its pages are thought, even by the worldly-wise, to contain benign influences; peaceful influences that would tend to counteract the spirit of unrest, the spirit of fear and of - anarchy.

FORETOLD AND FULFILLED

"We are living in an age of modern miracles. What has happened is nothing compared with what is coming. Great discoveries are within reach-almost here. You may expect to hear of marvelous developments any, moment. We are at the threshold of a new world-a radio controlled universe. Television is not far off. Motion pictures will be transmitted by radio -- along with the voice or music of the speaker or musicians to whom you are listening.

"You may look forward to transmission of power -- electrical energy for operating factories, even cities -- without the use of wires. Already aircraft and ships can be controlled by radio, and. in the development of that one field alone the possibilities are limitless: We may all soon be flying by radio." -- Major J. Andrew White, in *New York American*.

"RICH AND INCREASED IN GOODS"

"World's Richest Church"

"The richest church in the world is Trinity, New York. Its annual statement shows that its income for 1922 was \$1,250,000, of which \$230 came from pew rent. The salaries of the pastor and his assistants amount to \$80,000. The church pays \$300,000 taxes each year on its business holdings. Its assets are \$15,000,000. There are upwards of 10,000 communicants in the parish. There are five services each Sabbath." -- *Boston Post*.

THE LAST SUPPER -- CHRIST OUR PASSOVER

*"For Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us,
therefore let us keep the feast." - 1 Cor. 5:7.*

EVER increasingly precious and sacred is the memory of the death of our blessed Lord and Redeemer to those who have been given to know the value of that death as it concerns the entire human family,

No wonder our Lord chose as His memorial that which represented what was, in His and in God's estimation, His mightiest work—His sin-offering on our behalf; and that which His real followers, and they alone, would appreciate more than any other feature of His mission. True, His followers would have appreciated something commemorative of His wonderful words or works, but the worldly also could have appreciated those things. But not so the value of His death as our *ransom-sacrifice*, the basis of our reconciliation and atonement, which has never yet been fully apprehended by any but the consecrated Little Flock -- the Elect. It was for these that the remembrancer was arranged and instituted; and though a Judas was present, he was given a sop and went out from the others before the supper was ended; thus possibly representing that in the close of this Age, before the Little Flock will have finished their part of having fellowship with their Lord in His suffering, the sop of Truth will have become so strong as to drive forth from the company and communion of the faithful all who do not rightly appreciate and value the *ransom* accomplished by the Lamb of God for the taking away of the sins of the world.—I John 2:19.

At such a time as this, when the Truth so positively stated in the Bible regarding the advent and death of our Savior nineteen centuries ago, is being so generally denied by those who still use the name Christian, it is of double importance that those who remain steadfast in the faith should declare their convictions and openly show forth His death -- "till He come."

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST SUPPER

We have already indicated in previous issues of this journal that the evening of April 17 this year, marks the beginning of Nisan 14, the appropriate time to observe the Memorial -- the anniversary of the time that our Lord, and His disciples gathered in the upper room and partook of the Last Supper. In reaching the conclusion that this is the proper date for the Memorial we have followed the reckoning of the Jewish Calendar, as has been our custom to do in other years, and just as we believe Brother Russell invariably did in the closing years of his life. The method followed by the Jews this year in fixing the Passover season; is the one that was in vogue in the days of ancient Israel, and at the time of our Lord's First Advent, namely that . the new moon which comes closest to the spring equinox marks the beginning of their ecclesiastical year, the first day of the month Nisan. Beginning with the first of Nisan the Hebrews counted, and on the tenth day the paschal lamb was chosen or selected from the flock; on the fourteenth day (the full of the moon or approximately so), "between evenings" (at any times between 6 P. M. of the 13th and 6 P. M. of the 14th of Nisan), the lamb was to be killed and eaten on the-fifteenth day their Passover feast began, lasting seven days, the first of the seven, days being observed as specially holy, as Sabbath days or "High" days. (Exod. 12:16.) On the sixteenth day the omer of the first fruits of the barley harvest was offered to the Lord and fifty days after (Pentecost) they offered before the Lord two wave loaves. -- Lev. 23:17.

NISAN 14 AND THE FULL MOON

Some in noting that the Passover date indicated in the Jewish Calendar this year does not fall exactly on the full of the moon, have raised the question if there is not some mistake in the reckoning. Our reply is that there is no error in this case, as we view the matter. The facts are that the 14th of Nisan does not always fall on *exactly* the full of the moon, though it approximately does. The reason for this discrepancy is that in some instances there is a period of more than fifteen days between the two lunations -- the new and the full moon. Astronomers have their method of explaining such variations, the details of which are not necessary for us to consider here. One authority states that "by reason of the great eccentricity of the moon's orbit it not infrequently occurs that the time between the two lunations [the new and the full moon] exceeds fifteen days."

Thus there have been several years when we have celebrated the Memorial Supper more than one day in advance of the full moon. For instance, last year, 1923, we in common with thousands of other Bible students over the world, followed the Jewish method of reckoning and celebrated the Memorial on the evening of March 30, whereas the moon did not become full till the morning of April 1, more than forty

hours after the Memorial service. The same was true in the Memorial we observed in 1919.

It is true we attach a certain importance to the matter of the full 'moon at the time of the Memorial service it is supposed that the moon was at its full at the time of Christ's crucifixion; there it immediately began to wane and to wane for as long as it had previously increased. So Christ's death was the turning point in Israel's history. However, as noted above, Nisan 14 does not always fall exactly on the full of the moon inasmuch as Nisan 1 commences with the new moon arid, it not infrequently happens that it is more than fifteen days before the full moon. The thought then is that while Nisan 14 does not always fall exactly on the moon's full it approximately comes at that time.

As bearing upon this point, it is significant that in 1916, Brother Russell's s last year, he followed the reckoning of the Jewish Calendar. In that year the moon became new in the morning of April 2 and did not reach the phase of full moon until the early morning of April 18, nearly sixteen days. Brother Russell, accepting the Jewish Calendar, observed the Memorial on the evening of the 16th which was about thirty hours prior to the time the moon became full. This is the strongest possible evidence that he was not holding unequivocally to the thought of observing the Supper, exactly on the full of the moon, but recognized that while the Memorial date frequently came on the full of the moon, there were exceptions when it did not, and the last year of his life was one of these exceptions, just as the present year is.

We make the above explanation, riot wishing, however, to the impression that the exact date is the all-important thing. are not under the Law but under grace. Our observation of Memorial Supper is a privilege and opportunity rather than obligatory command. The .principle thing would seem to be we have a uniform time for its celebration and that we. celebrate with the right thought in mind.

THE PASSOVER IN HEBREW

The Israelites were commanded to celebrate the Passover ,the first feature of the Law and as one of their greatest memorials as a nation. Therefore we find that in some degree the Passover celebrated by Jews in all parts of the world; even by those claim to be agnostics. They still have a measure of respect for Passover as an ancient custom. But is it not strange that with bright minds which many of our Jewish friends possess, they never thought it worth while to inquire as to the *meaning* of celebration?

Why was the Passover lamb slain and eaten? Why was blood sprinkled upon the doorposts and lintels? Of course, God commanded; but what was the reason, the motive,, behind Divine command-what lesson, what object? Truly a reasonable God gives reasonable cum-_ mands;

and in due time Jehovah cause His faithful people to understand the significance of every requirement. If the Jew can realize that his Sabbath day is a of a coming Epoch of rest and blessing, of release from sorrow and death, why cannot he see that similarly all the features of the Mosaic institution were designed of the Lord to foreshadowings of various blessings, to be bestowed "in *due time*"?

Going back to the picture in the early history of the Hebrews note that the Passover time indicated that it was God's purpose save all Israelites; and that as a nation they represented all mankind that will ever come into harmony with God and granted everlasting life in the Land of Promise. Let us note that there were two Passovers -the one in which only the first horns were passed over; and another greater one at the Red Sea, when by Divine power the whole nation of Israel was miraculously delivered and led across the channel of the Sea especially prepared for them by the accentuation of winds and tides. These passed over dry-shod and were saved; while the host of Pharaoh, representing all who eventually will go into the Second Death, were overwhelmed in the Sea. The Passover at the Red Sea pictures ultimate deliverance from the power of sin and death of every creature of Adam's race who desires to come into accord with the Lord and to render Him worship, all who will ever become a part of Israel; for not one Israelite was left behind in Egyptian bondage .

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FIRST-BORNS

But this Passover is not the one which we are about to celebrate. We are to celebrate the antitype of the passing over of the first-borns of Israel by the angel, in the land of Egypt. Only the first-born ones of Israel were endangered on that night in Egypt, though the deliverance of the, entire nation depended upon the salvation, the passing over,. of those first-horns. So only the First-horns of the sons of God from the human plane, the Church of Christ, are now being passed over during this night of the Gospel Age; only these are in danger of the destroying angel. These are all under the sprinkled blood.

We see, in harmony with all the Scriptures, that the "Little Flock," "the First-fruits unto God of His creatures," "the Church of the First-borns," alone is being spared, passed over, during the present Age. We see that the remainder of mankind who may desire to follow the great antitypical Moses, when in the Age to follow this He shall lead the people forth from the bondage of Sin and Death, are not now in danger of, eternal destruction -- only the First-horns. With these it is a matter of life or death whether or not they remain in the Household of Faith -- behind the blood of sprinkling.

By and by the night of sin and death will have passed away, the glorious Morn of deliverance will have come, and The Christ, the antitypical Moses, will lead forth, will deliver, all the people of God-

all who, when they shall come to know, will be glad to reverence, honor and 'obey the will of God. That Day of Deliverance will be the entire Millennial Age, at the close of which all evil and evil-doers; symbolized by the hosts of Egypt, will be utterly cut off in the Second Death-destruction.

JESUS OUR PASSOVER

The Apostle Paul clearly -- and positively identifies the Passover lamb with our Lord Jesus, saying, "Christ our Passover sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." He informs us than we all need the blood of sprinkling, not upon our houses, but upon our hearts. We are to partake of the Lamb; we must appropriate to ourselves the merit of Christ, the value of His sacrifice; we must also eat of the unleavened bread of Truth, if we would be strong and prepared for the deliverance in the Morning of the New Dispensation. Thus we put on Christ, not merely by faith; but more and more we put on His character and are transformed into His glorious image in our hearts and lives.

We recall the circumstances of the first Memorial -- the blessing the Bread and of the Cup, the fruit of the vine; and our Lord's declaration that these represented His broken body and shed blood, and that all His followers should participate, not only feeding upon Him, but being broken with Him; not only partaking the merit of His blood, His sacrifice, but also laying down their lives in His service, in co-operating with Him in every and any manner, that they might -later share all His honor and glory in the Kingdom. How precious are these thoughts to those who are rightly in tune with our Lord!

The partaking of the unleavened bread at the Memorial season, then, means to us primarily the appropriation to ourselves, by faith of *justification to human life-right -- a right to human life -- with all its privileges*, which our Lord at His own cost procured for us. Likewise the fruit of the vine symbolizes primarily our Savior's life given for us, His human life, His being, soul, poured out unto death on our behalf; and the appropriation of this by us also signifies, primarily, our acceptance of restitution rights and privileges secured by our sacrifice of these.

SHARERS IN THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

Let it be observed that God's object in *justifying* the Church by during this Gospel Age, in advance of the justification of the *world* by *works* of obedience in the Millennial Age, is for the very purpose of permitting this class who now see and hear, who now appreciate the great sacrifice which Love has made on man's behalf, to present their bodies a living sacrifice, and thus to have part with the Lord Jesus, in His sufferings -- as members of His Body: This deeper meaning of the Memorial He did not refer to directly. It was doubtless one of the

things to which He referred when He said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit, when it, the Spirit of Truth, shall come, it will guide you into all Truth, and will show you things to come." -- John 16:12,13.

This Spirit of Truth, the power and influence of the Father bestowed through Christ, speaking through the Apostle Paul, clearly explains the very high import of the Memorial; for St. Paul says, writing to the consecrated Church, "The Cup of blessing for which we give thanks, is it not the *participation* of the blood of Christ? The Loaf which we break, is it not the *participation* of the Body of Christ?" -- the sharing with Christ as joint-sacrificers with Him even unto death, that thereby we might be counted in with Him as sharers of the glory which He has received as the reward of His faithfulness?-"For we, being many, are *one Loaf* and *one Body*." -- 1 Cor. 10:16, 17, *Diaglott*.

Both views of this impressive ordinance are very important. It is essential, first of all, that we should see our justification through our Lord's sacrifice. It is proper then that we should realize that the entire Christ, the entire anointed company is, from the Divine standpoint, a composite Body of many members, of which Jesus is the Head (1 Cor. 12:12-14.), and that this Body, this Church, as a whole must be broken-that each member of it must become a copy of the Lord Jesus and must walk in the footsteps of His sacrifice. We do this by laying down our lives for the brethren, as Jesus laid down His life -- directly for His Jewish brethren, but really for the whole world, according to the Father's purpose.

NO OTHER WAY OF LIFE

Speaking on the import of the emblems, Mr. Barnes has very ably noted: "Is it not the emblem by which the blood of Christ is exhibited, and the means by which our union through that blood is exhibited? Is it not the means by which we express our attachment to Him as Christians; showing our union to Him and to each other; and showing that we partake in common of the benefits of His blood? The main idea is, that by partaking of this Cup they showed that they were united to Him and to each other; and 'that they should regard themselves as set apart to Him.

"'Are one bread.' One loaf; one cake. That is, we are united, or are one. There is evident allusion here to the fact that the loaf or cake was composed of many separate, grains of wheat, or portions of flour united in one; or, that as one loaf was broken and partaken by all, it was implied that they were all one. We are all one society; united as one, and for the same object. Our partaking of the same bread is an emblem of the fact that we are one. In almost all nations the act of eating together has been regarded as a symbol of unity or friendship."

Our Lord distinctly declares that the Cup, the fruit of the vine, represents blood; that is, life -- not life *retained*, but life *shed*, given, yielded up -sacrificed life. He tells us that this life poured out was. for the remission of sins; and that all who would be His must drink of it, must accept His sacrifice, and appropriate it by faith. They must receive life from this source. It will not do for any to claim an immortality outside of Christ. It will not do to, declare that life is the result of obedience to the Law. It will. not do to claim that faith in some great teacher and obedience to his .instructions will amount to the same thing and bring eternal life. There is no way to attain eternal life other than through the blood once shed as, the ransom-price. for the whole world. "There is none other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12.) Likewise there is no other way by which we can attain to the new nature than by accepting the Lord's invitation to - drink of His Cup, and to be broken with Him as members of the one Loaf, to be buried with Him in baptism into His death, and thus to be with Him in His resurrection' to glory, honor, and immortality.-Rom. 6:3-5; 2:7.

SELF-EXAMINATION AT THE LORD'S TABLE

The beloved Apostle admonishes "let a man examine himself." Thus to impress upon the one who comes to the Lord's ,table the solemnity that properly attaches to such an act. The occasion therefore is to be made one of the most careful self-examination in the light of the searching admonitions of the Lord's Word. Here again Mr. Barnes presents a beautiful line of thought:

"Let him examine himself, and see whether he have the right feelings of a communicant, and can approach the table in a proper manner. In regard to this we may observe, (1) That this examination should include the great question about his personal piety, and about his particular and 'special fitness for this observance. It should go back into the great inquiry whether he has ever been born [begotten] again; and it should also have special reference to his immediate and direct preparation for the ordinance. He should not only be able to say in general that he is a Christian, but he should be able to say that he has then a particular preparation for it. He should be in a suitable frame of mind for it: He should have personal evidence that he is a penitent; that he has true faith in the Lord Jesus; that he is depending on him, and is desirous of being saved by him. (2) This examination should be minute and particular. It should extend to the words, the thoughts, the feelings, the conduct. We should inquire whether in our family and, in our business; whether among Christians, and with the world, we have lived the life of a Christian. We should examine our private thoughts, our habits of secret prayer, and of searching the Scriptures. Our examination should be directed to the inquiry whether we are gaining the victory over our easily besetting sins, and becoming more and

more conformed to the Savior. It should, in short, extend to all our Christian character; and every thing which goes to make up or to mar that character should be the subject of faithful and honest examination. (3) It should be done because, (a) It is well to pause occasionally in life, and take an account of our standing in the sight of God. Men make advances in business and in property only when they often examine their accounts, and know just how they stand. (b) Because the observance of the Lord's Supper is a solemn act (c) Because self-examination supposes seriousness and calmness, and prevents precipitation and rashness -- states of mind entirely unfavorable to a proper observance of the Lord's Supper. (d) Because by self-examination one may search out and remove those things that are offensive to God, and the sins which so easily beset us may be known and abandoned. (e) Because the approach to the table of the Lord is a solemn approach to the Lord Himself; is a solemn profession of attachment to Him; is an act of consecration to His service in the presence of angels and of men; and this should be done in a calm, deliberate and sincere manner--such a manner as may be the result of a prayerful and honest self-examination."

TO GETHSEMANE AND TO CALVARY'S BROW

In considering the events of those solemn Hours associated with the Memorial Supper, let us follow the Redeemer to Gethsemane, and behold Him "with strong cryings and tears" praying "unto Him who was able to save Him out of death" -- expressive of our Master's fear of death lest in some particular He might have failed to follow out the Father's Plan, and therefore be thought unworthy of a resurrection. We note that our Lord was in some way comforted with the assurance that He had faithfully kept His consecration vow, and that He would surely have a resurrection as promised.

We behold how calm He was thereafter, when before the high priest and Pilate, and Herod and Pilate again. "As a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" in self-defense. We see Him faithful, courageous to the very last; and we have His assurance that He could have asked of the Father and could have had more than twelve legions of angels for His protection. But instead of petitioning for aid to escape His sacrifice, He petitioned for help to endure it faithfully. What a lesson is here for all His footstep followers!

We recommend that the dear friends in various parts of the world neglect not this blessed Memorial. We do not advise the leaving of the smaller groups to meet with larger companies, but rather that each little company, or band, meet together as is its usual custom; for this seems to have been the course of the early Church. Even the ones and twos may observe the Memorial if the circumstances do not permit them to meet with a regular class. Let us "keep the Feast," with joy of

heart, but with due appreciation of its solemnity, not only as relates to our Lord's sacrifice for us, but also as relates to our own covenant to be dead with Him. We recommend that the leaders of each company make arrangements to obtain unleavened bread, and either unfermented grape juice, or raisin juice, or other fruit of the vine, though provision might be made for any, if there be such, who conscientiously believe that fermented wine was meant to be used.

We recommend that these little gatherings be without ostentation. Decently, orderly, quietly; let us come together, full of precious thoughts respecting the great transaction we celebrate. Let us not have our attention too much taken up with forms and ceremonies. Let us in this, as in all things, seek to do that which would be pleasing to our Lord; and then we shall be sure that the service will be profitable to all who participate.

Brethren in Brooklyn will this year assemble to observe the Lord's Supper at 8 o'clock on the evening of April 17, at their regular place of worship -- the parlors of the INSTITUTE, 177 Prospect Place. All who are trusting in the precious blood will be made warmly welcome at this service.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JEREMIAH

SERIES VIII

THE PROPHET'S TRIAL AND CONFLICT

"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy: it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn front their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." -- Jer. 18 :7-10.

AFTER the incident in the potter's house, Jeremiah was given instructions by the Lord, the substance of which embodies a principle that animates Jehovah in His dealings with the nations of earth and especially with His own chosen nation. This principle is noted in the words at the head of this article.

While these words have reference to temporal matters only, that is, matters pertaining to this present life, yet they contain or suggest an attribute of God, which is applicable to everlasting or redemptive blessings also. This attribute is that of mercy. Mercy is a distin-

guishing attribute of the Supreme Being. "The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression [yet] by no means clearing the guilty." Mercy is defined as "that benevolence, mildness or tenderness of heart which disposes a person to overlook injuries, or to treat an offender better than he deserves. It is the disposition that tempers justice, and induces an injured person to forgive trespasses and injuries, and to forbear punishment, or inflict less than the law or justice will warrant. In this sense there is perhaps no word in our language precisely synonymous with mercy. That which comes the nearest to it is grace. It implies benevolence, tenderness, mildness, pity or compassion and clemency, but exercised only to offenders."

In the plan that provides redemptive, everlasting blessings, God's love is shown in the exercise of both justice and mercy. The whole human family is under the condemnation of death. "Dying thou shalt die" was the sentence imposed. Not only is it true that, "all have sinned and . come short of the glory of God," but it is also true that all were condemned in the one man, Adam. "Having no hope, [of a future life], and without God in the world" describes each individual's condition. -- Eph. 2:12.

The exhibition of God's love and mercy was manifested in what is expressed in Scripture as the gift of His only begotten Son. This is explained in the Scriptures to mean that His Son, who existed with Him in the morning of creation, voluntarily yielded Himself to the Divine will and purpose, in order to release all men from the sentence of death. This required that God's Son experience or, undergo a change of nature, and become a flesh, human being. The object of this was that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man; or as expressed in another Scripture, give "Himself a ransom for all." This is stated to have been done in order that "God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3:26.) Therefore "if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." -- 1 John 1:9.

AGAIN WARNINGS OF IMPENDING JUDGMENT

To make known God's willingness and desire even at that late day, to show mercy to Israel and hold back the judgments, Jeremiah was commissioned of the Lord to go again and repeat the message of judgment, and earnestly exhort the nation and people to return unto Jehovah. (Chap. 18 :11.) A translation of verse 12 by Fenton makes it to teach that Jehovah informed the Prophet beforehand what the people would say. It reads, "But they will reply, There is no hope of that, for we will follow our own plans. And each will practice the suggestions of his own heart." It was a fact, that the people rejected .disdainfully the Prophet's words. The thought evidently is that the people did not

believe Jeremiah's words. They were led away by the evil of their own hearts to believe the words of the false prophets, who opposed Jeremiah's teachings and predictions of coming woe. The words that follow are addressed to Israel, and are designed to show the people that such obduracy was unheard of among the other nations. They read: "Therefore the Ever-Living answers thus, Enquire, I .pray of the nations, Who has heard such horrors as that virgin, Israel, has done? Will the snow of Lebanon supply to the fields of Mitzer, as cold waters [as] are poured from a spring? Yet My people have abandoned Me for delusions -- they offer incense, and stumble from their ancient pathways, to follow unpaved by-paths; to turn their country to a waste, to a continuous jungle! All who pass will hiss!* and shake their heads! I will scatter them like an east wind before their enemies, I will repulse and not advance them. I will terrify in the day of distress." -Ver. 13-17.

* "The word hiss does not here denote the hissing -- hissing down or against one, by way of contempt, but the sound midway between hissing and whistling, which escapes one when one looks on something appalling."

The lessons taught here are the foolishness and stubbornness of the natural, evil heart, and the cruel strength of the shackles that bind those who live in sin. The only deliverance is to turn away from the promptings of the foolish natural heart, and yield to God, to His Son. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin, and the servant abideth not in the house forever; but the Son abideth ever. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." -- John 8:34-36.

HISTORY RELATED

It is very apparent from the words of verses 18-23 that Jeremiah's faithfulness and courage in proclaiming Jehovah's messages, pointing out the sins of the nation, and declaring the judgments impending, had aroused intense hatred and opposition toward him. It seems evident that he sat, as it were, almost alone, cast out by the false prophets, priests, court party, and the people. It was evidently the case that only a little band, Jeremiah himself being the foremost, and upon whom came the brunt of all the persecution and afflictions, remained faithful to the covenant of Jehovah.

"Come," his enemies say, "and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." The solemn words of the Prophet were not heeded in the least measure or degree by the blinded, sinful people. Instead of examining themselves and

reforming their lives they resolved to put the troublesome preacher of repentance out of the way. They purposed to do this by the means of false charges, or by devising devices against him. They had, as they thought, priests to give them instruction out of the law, wise men to give counsel, and prophets to prophesy. That is to say, they believed these rather than Jeremiah who spoke only of repentance and coming judgment.

History has frequently repeated itself. In critical times only the few teachers are found loyal to God, by declaring the unpleasant things; and the masses generally follow the false or mistaken leaders -- blind, leaders of the blind -- and both together will eventually fall into the ditch. The great test at all times is to meet God's approval in all that we do; and this is especially true in these days. The test cannot be avoided; it will come at some time to all. Concerning how we meet it, will determine whether or not we will have the Master say unto us "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Against these schemes and plottings to defame him and take his life, the words of the Prophet in the next verses are a record of his cries unto God for protection. While his enemies are calling upon the people to give no heed to his prophesying, Jeremiah prays to the Lord to listen to his plea, and to hear what his enemies are saying. To justify his prayer the Prophet says: "Shall evil be recompensed [paid], for good?" He asks that Jehovah will remember that he stood before Him only to do the people good, and in support of this he reminds Jehovah of the prayers he had so often presented to Him, that He would turn His anger away from them. This good, the people are now going to requite with evil.-Ver. 20.

JUST RETRIBUTION PRONOUNCED

The Prophet next prays that the Lord will repay the people for this evil; by bringing upon them all the calamities that Jeremiah had sought to avert, namely destroying them with famine, disease, and sword. His words are, "Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and their young men to the hand of the sword, and let their wives be childless and widows, and let their men come to a murderous death; their brave men slain by the sword in battle! Let shriek be heard from their homes, when the plunderers come suddenly upon them, for they dug a ditch to catch me, and laid a trap for my feet." -- Ver. 21,22.

Concerning this prayer of the Prophet to God to exterminate his enemies, one of the early commentators, Hitzig, remarks: "The various curses which in his bitter indignation he directs against his enemies are at bottom but the expression of the thought: Now may all that befall them which I sought to avert from them." What is called the *Hirschberg Bible* presents a different thought, and in a comment says:

"It is no prayer. of carnal vengeance against those that hated him; but as God had commanded him to desist (chap. 14:11;12) from the prayers he had frequently made for them; and as they themselves could not endure these prayers, he leaves them to God's judgments, which he had been already compelled to predict to them (chap. 11:22; 14:12,16), without any longer resisting with His entreaties." -- See 2 Tim. 4:14.

Kiel, a noted commentator, has thus referred to the foregoing comment: "In this observation that clause only is wrong which says Jeremiah merely leaves them to God's judgments, since he on the other . hand gives them up thereto, prays to God to carry out judgment upon them with the utmost severity. In this respect the present passage resembles the so-called cursing [imprecatory] Psalms (Psa. 35:4-10; 109:6-20; 59:14-16; 69:26-29) ; . . . for the Prophet's prayer is not inspired, but [rather] the wish and utterance of his heart, for the fulfillment of which he cries to God; just as in the Psalms cited:" As opponents of the Bible always refer to these, imprecatory Psalms and the words of Jeremiah in endeavors to undermine the faith of some in the Bible as a Divine revelation, our readers will be interested to hear what some of the early commentators have said on these Scriptures,

Kiel has thus commented on these imprecatory Scriptures: "All these curses are not the outcome and effusions of personal vengeance against enemies, but flow from the pure spring of a zeal, not self-regarding at all, but for the glory of God. The enemies are God's enemies, despisers of His salvation. Their hostility against David and against Jeremiah was rooted in their hostility against God and the Kingdom of God. The advancement of the Kingdom of God, the fulfillment of the Divine scheme of salvation, required the fall of the ungodly who seek the lives of God's servants. In this way we would seek to defend such words of cursing by appealing to the legal spirit of the Old Testament, and would not oppose them to the words of Christ. (Luke 9:55.) For Christ tells us why He blamed the Elias -- like zeal of His disciples in the words: 'The Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.' In keeping with this, the peculiar end of Christ's coming on earth, we find no curse's from Him against His enemies and the Kingdom of God. But just as the word 'I am come,' etc. (Luke 9:56), does not exclude the truth that the Father hath given all judgment to Him, so as Kurtz [another eminent writer] very justly remarks: 'from our hearing no word of cursing from the mouth of Christ during His life on earth we cannot infer the absolute inadmissibleness of such; , still less can we infer that Christ's Apostles and disciples could not at all be justified in using any words of cursing.' And the Apostles have indeed uttered curses against obdurate enemies; so Peter against Simon the Magian (Acts 8:20) ; Paul against the High Priest Ananias (Acts 23:3), against the Jewish false teachers (Gal. 1:9 and 5:12), and Alexander the coppersmith. (2 Tim. 4:14.) But these cases do not annihilate the distinction between the Old and the

New Testaments. Since grace and truth have been revealed in Christ, the Old Testament standpoint of retribution according to the rigor of the law cannot be for us as the standard of our bearing even towards the enemies of Christ and His Kingdom."

BECAUSE OF SHEDDING INNOCENT BLOOD

Jeremiah is next instructed by Jehovah to go and purchase an earthenware bottle, and after gathering together some of the elders of the people and of the priests, have them accompany him to the valley of the son of Hinnom, which is by the entrance of the gate Harsith, and there proclaim a message that would be given to him. (Chap. 19:1, 2.) The words were similar to others before spoken by him -- a prophecy, against the kings of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. This judgment message is contained in verses 3-9; the threatening is briefly set forth in verses 3-5. Terrible calamities was the Lord to bring upon Jerusalem. So terrible, so utterly stunning, were these calamities to be, that it would cause the ears of all who heard of them to tingle. By their dreadful sins in forsaking Jehovah, they had estranged Jerusalem and brought upon themselves these calamities -- that is, they had not treated Jerusalem as the holy city, the place of the sanctuary of their God; but instead had offered up worship to Baal, and "filled the place with the blood of innocents." Some have supposed this last expression to refer to the blood of children slain in the offerings, to Moloch. Another, and seemingly a more reasonable explanation is given by Kiel in the words:

"We, therefore, understand the filling of Jerusalem with the blood of innocents, according to chapter 7:6; 2:34; and 22:3,17, of judicial murder or of bloody persecutions of the godly; and on two grounds: first, because alongside of idolatry we always find mentioned as the chief sin, the perversion of justice to the shedding of innocent blood, so that this sin would not likely be omitted here, as one cause of the dreadful judgment about to pass on Jerusalem; second, because this passage recalls the very wording of 2 Kings 21:16, where after mentioning his idolatry, it is said of Manasseh: 'Also innocent blood hath he shed until he made Jerusalem full to the brink.'"

The summary of Jerusalem's sins then are: "(1) The disowning of the holiness of Jerusalem as the abode of the Lord by the public practice of idolatry. (2) The shedding of innocent blood as the extremity of injustice and godless judicial practises. (3) As worst of all abominations, the building of altars for burning their own children to Moloch." The burnt-offerings to Moloch are mentioned last, in verse 5.

After Jeremiah had declared this message to those who had accompanied him to the place, he broke the earthen bottle into fragments in their presence, and explained to them that the Lord's meaning of this act was that as the earthen bottle was shattered to

pieces, so would Jerusalem -- people and city -- be broken up. He states further that the Lord would make the city the houses of the kings and the inhabitants, like Tophet, that is defiled, unclean; and because of the great numbers who would die in connection with the siege of the city, they would be compelled to bury them in Tophet, there being no room in Jerusalem.

BECAUSE THEY HARDENED THEIR NECKS

When Jeremiah had performed this Divine command he returned from Tophet to the city, and stationed himself in the court of the house of the Lord, and spoke to the people who were assembled there, thus addressing them: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring, upon this city and upon all her towns all the evil that I have pronounced against it, because they have hardened their necks, that they might not hear [obey] My words." -- Ver. 15.

It seems very evident that a large concourse of people were gathered at this place to engage in some sacred rite, and when Jeremiah's voice was heard they gathered around to hear his words. The words of the Prophet must have aroused the ire and passion of the people to the highest pitch. The endurance of Pashur, the chief governor of the temple, had reached its limit, and approaching the Prophet he smote him, and it would seem with the assistance of the temple servants laid hold of him and thrust him into the stocks, and left him in this position all night, exposed to the ridicule and anger of the people, and the dews of the night, and perhaps to the prowling dogs. When the morning dawned Pashur seems to have repented of what he had done, and released Jeremiah. The Prophet, on his release reiterated the prophecy of the day previous, and in addition foretold what would happen to Pashur himself, in the words: "*For* thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and to all thy friends and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it: and I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them captive into Babylon and shall slay them with the sword. Moreover I will deliver all the strength of this city, and all the labors thereof, and all the precious things thereof, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah will I give into the hand of their enemies, which shall spoil them, and take them, and carry them to Babylon. And thou, Pashur, and all that dwell in thine house shall go into captivity; and thou shalt come to Babylon, and there thou shalt, die, and shalt be buried there, thou, and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied lies." -- Chap. 20:4-6.

It is at this time and place in the book of Jeremiah that the name of Babylon is first mentioned. This would suggest the thought that this incident occurred in the early years of Jehoiakim's reign.

STILL IN A WORLD OF TRIAL AND SUFFERINGS

There are several very valuable lessons that may be learned by, the Lord's consecrated today-from this incident in the Prophet's life: Among them are the following The Lord's people must not expect that everything in their service for Him is going to be pleasant. There may be times when to stand with the Lord, we will find ourselves almost if not quite alone with Him; even times when some of our former friends will turn against us, and walk no more with us. However; we will need to be very sure that at such times we find the Lord walking by our side. The Lord permits His servants sometimes to suffer affliction or persecution at the hand of their enemies. However, it is most frequently the case that these trials and persecutions come from those who profess to be the Lord's people, who may be led astray by false or mistaken guides. We may be assured, however, that no trial or persecution that may come will in any measure hinder the progress of the Lord's appointed work, or prevent the accomplishment of His purpose in those who will be submissive to His will and providence. While. the Lord's people may often be hurt, no harm can possibly come to them, if they walk by His side. Let us be sure, then, that as in the case. of Jeremiah our. trials and persecutions come, not because of any indiscretion on our part, but for the Lord and for conscience' sake, and in His service. On the other hand, false and misguided teachers will suffer shame in the end.

It would seem that when Jeremiah was set free, he went to his home at Anathoth, a little place outside of Jerusalem; and it was there that he "poured forth that marvelous combination of heroic faith and wailing grief which is recorded for us that we may .know the weakness of his nature; and learn how earthen was the vessel in which God had placed His heavenly treasure. These words are found in verses 7-18.*

* See for consideration of verses 7-14, H '23, pp. 331 and 300.

The words of verses 14-18 which describe the Prophet as cursing the day in which he was born, etc., simply express his .utter collapse into a condition of discouragement and despair. The greatest difficulty in explaining these words is in supposing that the two parts of the lamentation followed each other in as rapid succession. as would seem in the text: The words seem rather to portray most terrible spiritual struggles separated by an interval of time. The preceding verses clearly show that Jeremiah experienced a recovery from the discouragement that followed his ignominious .and cruel treatment at the hand of Pashur. The words of verses 14-18, reveal the fact that the temptation to . give up his divinely called work, was not fully overcome: The renewal of his confidence as expressed in verse II, that the "Lord

would be with him as a mighty terrible one," does not indicate a complete recovery. The seeming unsuccess of his mission, as he came to dwell upon, or perhaps to brood over it, completely unmanned him again, and he seems to have lost control of himself altogether, and began to curse the day of his birth, etc. -- Ver. 14.

In verse 18, the reason for his imprecatory words is given. It was in the fact that his birth had brought him only a life of hardship and sorrow. His days seemed to him to be passing away in shame, that is, shame at the discomfiture of his hopes; for his life-calling seemed to him to have produced no fruit; his prophetic work seemed in vain, since it had not saved his people from destruction.

It is of course understood that this cursing the day of his birth, etc., was not written for our imitation. It should be *tous*, however, a source of instruction and comfort, From it we should learn the full weight and power of temptation, so that we may arm ourselves with prayer and faith as weapons against the power of the tempter. On the other hand, we should be encouraged as we see the greatness of God's grace, which raises again those who are stumbling -- that grace that does not let the Lord's true servants succumb entirely under powerful temptation. This we gather from the fact that God did not cast off His tried and discouraged servant, but lifted him up and gave him needed strength for carrying to a completion the heavy labors of his prophetic office. That Jeremiah did indeed at last struggle against and obtain the victory over temptation, we learn from the fact that when later one during the siege of Jerusalem under Zedekiah, he had still sorer afflictions to endure. Under these troubles he no longer bewailed the sufferings connected with his calling. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him." -- Jas. 1:12.

A LIFE OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

*"The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge." --
Prov. 1:7; 2 Chron. 1:7-12; 1 Kings 11:6-11.*

SOLOMON'S name signifies peaceful. Nathan, the Prophet, who was his tutor, called him Jedidiah, which signifies, "beloved of Jehovah." Apparently he inherited certain natural traits which were much to his advantage, and under special Divine blessing gave him properly the title, "the wise man." A writer says of him:

"His parental inheritance was remarkably strong in several directions. His father David was in the maturity of his age; his mother was the grand-daughter of the Prince Ahithophel, whose advice 'was, as if a man had inquired at the oracle of God.' He thus inherited from his mother sagacity, quickness of judgment, judicial insight and perhaps

some sensual weakness; from his father, thoughtfulness, literary taste, the skill of ruling and an interest in religion. His bodily form and countenance must have borne the graceful characteristics of all David's children; and, if we may, follow the description given in the , a canticles, he was fair, with bushy locks, dark as the raven's wing; yet not without, a "golden glow, tall and imposing."

THE DREAM OF GOD'S PRESENCE

It was doubtless due to David's increasing reverence for the Lord, and his realization of the mistakes made in the training of his other children, and his desire that his successor to the throne should honor the Lord and carry forward the interests of religion-these things doubtless led the king to put his son Solomon under the special care of the Prophet Nathan, with the view to his preparation to serve the Lord and His kingdom righteously, and to build the temple of the Lord, which David had purposed to build but was not allowed. The Prophet Nathan knew of the temple project and of God's promise that it should be built by David's heir, and that Solomon was the chosen of the Lord and of the king. We can) imagine the Prophet's faithfulness in the training of Prince Solomon for the duties of the position he. was intended to fill.

Possessed of reverence for the Lord and acknowledging Him before all the people as the real Ruler of Israel, and by sacrifice confessing Him as Israel's Ruler, the young king was in just the right attitude of heart to receive a blessing. He slept -- he dreamed. Whether the dream was the outworking of his own devotion of heart and the Lord's response to it or whether the Lord, noticing his teachable attitude of mind, gave the dream as a lesson respecting Solomon's proper course, none can say, because the matter is not revealed; but, at all events, the young king had a most beautiful dream, which, in view of later developments, can be considered only as a true reflection of Solomon's attitude of heart.

He dreamed that he was in the presence of the Almighty, who graciously inquired what were his desires. Solomon's answer was a most humble one. It intimates that he realized that it was not of any worthiness or merit of his own that God's favor was thus indicated, that it was merely the continuation of the Divine mercy which for years had blessed his father, King David, "according as he walked before Thee in truth and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with Thee; and Thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that Thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day." (1 Kings 3:6.) How beautiful an adornment is humility! The fact that few possess it should make it all the more estimable to us. It is like salt to our food. It adds a blessing to every other grace and talent we may possess.

"I AM BUT A LITTLE CHILD"

We have nothing to indicate that Solomon ever became very haughty, proud, though he certainly would have been man had his great wisdom and honor and wealth not affected in some degree the childlike simplicity which he expressed to the Lord in this dream, saying, "O Lord my God, Thou hast made Thy servant king instead of David my father; and am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in [how to conduct myself, in public or in private before the people]. And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give Thy servant, therefore, an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this Thy great people." -- Ver. 7-9.

We do not wonder that the record shows that the Lord was pleased with His choice -- because Solomon asked neither long life, nor riches, nor the lives of his enemies, but something far better-wisdom. Then, just as we might expect, with our present knowledge of the Lord's bounty and mercy and generosity, Jehovah declared to Solomon that his request for wisdom was granted, but that with it He would add riches and honor above those of any other human being of his day; and He promised also that if Solomon would continue in this way He would lengthen his days, give him an increase beyond the limitations of his natural powers.

When Solomon awoke and found that it was but a dream; doubtless there was a measure of disappointment in connection with it, but it brought before his mind, clearly and distinctly just the condition of heart and mind most pleasing to the Lord. And be remembered that for a considerable number of years Solomon maintained his humble attitude of heart and faithfulness to God. He returned to Jerusalem and there, through the agency of the priest, made various additional offerings and sacrifices to the Lord, the flesh of the peace-offering constituting a feast for his servants, including many of the royal citizens. Thus was his reign reverently and wisely inaugurated and the foundation laid for his personal prosperity and that of the nation, which, as God's representative, he both ruled and served.

LESSONS FROM THIS STORY FOR OUR DAY

The word opportunity signifies "standing at the door." We have seen how great opportunities stood at Solomon's door and how he embraced them. Similarly opportunities stood at the door of his two brothers and they embraced them for sin and treason.. Let us note that opportunities for good and for evil come to all of us at some time and it is for us to decide which we will grasp. But before the opportunity, comes the desire: If the desires be impure, an evil opportunity in harmony therewith will be found. If the desires be good, noble, true, loyal,

opportunities in harmony with these will come to us. The thought to be, impressed upon our minds, therefore, is that the desires of our hearts should be noble in every respect, and that all ignoble desires, be studiously and promptly set aside, to the intent that only the good opportunities may come to us. But desire and opportunity are not enough. Many a man has had both and gotten nothing. When the good desires have been cultivated and developed and by and by a noble, opportunity stands before us, then comes the responsibility of seizing it -- decision., Probably more people make failure of life at this juncture than at any other.

Our counsel to the worldly would be along these lines That first they should have noble ambitions; that they should resist all others; that they should be on the lookout for opportunities in harmony with their noblest sentiments and should seize them with all the energy of their being, when they, come within their reach, and should. never let them go. It is worthy of note, too, that very few are so meanly born or unfavorably environed that they are utterly devoid of noble principles or incompetent of discernment as between these and ignoble ones. True, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and surrounded by others in similar conditions, none can help it if ignoble suggestions come to his mind. But it is within his power to exercise his will to resist the evil suggestion and bid it be gone and to entertain only noble, pure, true sentiments. This is illustrated by the adage which declares that "We cannot help crows flying over our heads, but we can prevent them from building nests in our hair."

The difficulty is that where an affinity exists between the evil suggestions and the fallen nature, the will may not be prompt enough to rid itself of the, intrusion. The battle of the will, therefore, is not merely with the crow thoughts that desire to nest with us, but Additionally the wrong disposition which desires the crow company. A child's hand was stuck in the narrow mouth of a vase. He called for aid and the father suggested, "Open your hand loosely." "I know," replied the child, "that if I do that, I'll drop my penny." The thought is that to release ourselves from the power of sin requires such an exercise of the will as would enable us to drop the cost of our release, "the pleasures of sin for a season."

Very interesting is the story of the great temple of God purposed and largely prepared for by King David and built by King Solomon the wise. It was commenced in the fifth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the twelfth. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated at from \$1,000,000,000 to \$2,500,000,000.

IN THE DIVINE LIGHT

There might be room for dispute amongst the Lord's people on the subject of costly church edifices, until we get to see the subject in the Divine light of God's Word. Thereafter there should be no room for discussion. That Divine light shows us the temple at Jerusalem as more than a house of worship for its time, as a type of a greater Temple to be built by a greater than Solomon. That greater Temple, the New Testament assures us, is the Church, the Body of Christ, of which He is the Head. This is the Temple of which St. Peter declares that himself and all of the Lord's thoroughly consecrated followers are antitypical, the living stones or members. This is the Temple of which our Lord declares, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of My God." This is the Temple of which our Lord again said, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will rear it up"; He shake of the Temple of His Body, not of His own flesh, for that was but a tabernacle and was not reared up by our Lord. The Father raised Him from the dead, but in -a new body, a spiritual one.

Of the Temple, the Body of Christ, the Church, He declares, "I will raise Him up at the last day." The last day, the seventh day, the Great Millennium, is the third day referred to by our Lord: He was living , in the fifth thousand-year day, there following the sixth, and the seventh has just begun, and with it; we believe, the raising up, the "change" to glory of the "Church, which is His Body." .

Of, this Temple St. Paul writes, "The Temple of God is holy, which Temple ye, are." (1 Cor. 3 :17.) He here referred to the Church in its present condition, on probation, as though it were a finished Temple, because by faith may be realized the Lord's presence and protecting care amongst these members in their temporary organization as the Church of Christ. But the same Apostle shows that this Temple, is not quite' complete, saying, "Ye are built upon the foundation of the Apostles, and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy Temple in the Lord." (Eph. 2:20, 21.) In a word, as St. Peter suggests, the Lord's consecrated ones, as living stones for the glorious spiritual Temple of the future beyond the veil, are now being shaped, chiseled, polished, fitted for their places.

THE ANTITYPICAL TEMPLE

That glorious Temple The Christ, in the power of the First Resurrection will share in the. glory, honor, and immortality of the Divine nature; and through it during the Millennium, the Heavenly Father will communicate His blessings to the world of mankind for their uplifting out of sin and death. Thus, as the High Priest in His robes of glory and beauty represented The Christ, the Messiah, Jesus the Head and the Church His Body, so the temple in which He served likewise symbolizes the same Redeemer and the same Church. The

one illustration discloses one relationship or communication between God and men. The other represents another feature of the same ministry of reconciliation, as it will ultimately reach the world of mankind.

From this standpoint we can readily see that God's temple, built by Solomon, represented so glorious a class and such rich blessings of God to men that it was very appropriate that the type of these riches of grace should be costly, ornate, beautiful in the highest degree.

But now in the strict sense of the word these living stones are undergoing the process of chiseling and polishing, and the stone-yard and surroundings are not gorgeous and beautiful. Rather, as the Apostle declares, the Church in its present condition is a body of humiliation, or, as improperly translated, "our vile body." The Church in the present life, like her Lord, is disesteemed in the world, despised, persecuted, "counted as fools' all the day long," and "the filth and offscouring of the earth." It is in full harmony with these actual conditions pointed out in the Scriptures and known to us by experience that we see it to be the will of God that our present religious conditions should be very humble ones, unostentatious, inexpensive, to the intent that our energies may be the more efficaciously used in the forwarding of the work at the present time, rather than in attempting to make further types of the, "glory that is to follow" our resurrection "change."

This is further shown in the type. God's association with His people now is represented in the tabernacle and its court and its tent, all of which were temporary. Thus the Apostle speaks of us who are in this tabernacle as groaning, waiting for our house from heaven, waiting for our "change" to the Temple condition through the power of the First Resurrection.

"THE GLORY OF THE LORD FILLED THE TEMPLE"

The record tells us that the stones and timbers of the temple were brought to the spot all prepared; shaped and marked for their several positions, so that the actual construction was a quiet one. We read that, "The parts came together without the sound of a hammer." The antitype of this is that the chiseling and polishing and preparing of God's saints in the present life and the marking of them for their several places, by which God sets the various members in the Body as it hath pleased Him, will leave the work of the First Resurrection a very quiet one, so quiet that the world is not aware that it is now in progress. Thank God it is not yet finished, and there is yet hope and opportunity for some of the consecrated now living to "make our calling and election sure," and by the final "change from glory to glory" to be placed in the great spiritual Temple, in the particular niche or position for which under Divine providence we shall have been

prepared. This resurrection "change" will make us all glorious and like unto our Lord and Redeemer, who is the express image of the Father's person.

The downfall of the kingdom of Solomon the wise, the rich, the great, surely manifested the necessity for the greater Kingdom than his, which Divine wisdom and love have' designed, and which Divine power is to inaugurate in due time. In Solomon's experiences we have a most remarkable lesson of a most remarkable man; illustrating the tendencies of wisdom and riches to lead the imperfect children of men away from God, the Source of 'wisdom and riches, and away from all the highest ideals.

The accounts of Solomon's prosperity are set forth in the books of Kings and Chronicles, and indicate that, under his wise administration, numerous public works were carried on, royal palaces built, great roads engineered, and water works and store-houses and armories constructed, etc. The nation of Israel, under Solomon's regime reached its highest position of power and influence in the world and dominated its largest amount of territory. But as Solomon prospered, he grew less pious. He became what the world would call *broader-minded*. The royal families of surrounding nations were pleased to have their daughters become Solomon's wives, and he generously accepted them from every quarter. The effect, however, was injurious to the King and to his entire people, because each of these prominent wives felt that she must represent the dignity of her own home land at the Jewish capital, and specially must represent its religious sentiment. Thus the heathen religionists all felt a great jealousy for the great temple of Jehovah and its elaborate services; and these wives, as representatives of the religions of their fathers, urged upon King Solomon, insistently; that they must have the opportunity of serving their gods, and that proper breadth of mind on his part would lead him to accede to their 'demands and to erect altars to . their heathen divinities.

The king, rolling in wealth, yielded to these importunities of his wives and established for them and their foreign ambassadors and visitors shrines, altars, holy places, dedicated to the various false gods of surrounding nations -- not that the King believed in these or worshiped them himself, but, through a mistaken view of broad-mindedness and a mistaken form of generosity to *his* wives and their sentiments, he violated his highest. sense, of responsibility to his own Lord, Jehovah. Gradually that devotion which had been his at first, and which the - Lord had blessed by two special manifestations, yielded, and the King became less and less a man after God's own heart; possessed of less and less of his father David's loyalty of heart and zeal for the Divine will and worship, resulting ultimately in the forfeiture of the conditional promise of long life and of the continuance of the entire kingdom in his family.

It is only when we remember that the kingdom of God under Solomon was a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of Christ that we get the proper view of the situation. It was God's typical kingdom and Solomon sat upon its throne as God's representative. So a greater than Solomon is eventually to sit upon the throne of earth and extend the Kingdom to the uttermost bounds and bring to the Kingdom riches, honor, wisdom, and power greater than we can now properly appreciate, and but feebly foreshadowed in Solomon's experiences. Solomon's blemishes are not to be considered as typical blemishes in the Kingdom of Christ, however. They teach another lesson, namely that all power and wisdom in the present time are hindered by the unfavorable conditions surrounding, so that they become traps and snares, even to the wisest and best intentioned of men. Meantime the Lord's promise through Moses and the Prophets was for a greater than Solomon, and wiser than he, and richer and more powerful than Solomon; able and willing to execute the Divine will amongst men, and to bring in a Kingdom of everlasting righteousness. That Kingdom has not yet appeared amongst men, and hence we still pray, "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

THE CRISIS AND THE ERROR

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fail."-
Prov. 16:18; 1 Kings 12 :12-20.

ALTHOUGH the nation of Israel was a monarchy, it had connected with it elements of a democracy. That is to say, each of the tribes, except the Levites, maintained a political organization and a measure of independence. Thus King David reigned for seven years over Judah and Benjamin before he was accepted as king by the other ten tribes. Although the nation was a theocracy in the sense that God was their King, and the earthly monarch merely His representative, it can readily be seen that the religious faith of the nation had much to do with the regulation of the king.

King Solomon, the wise, although reverent toward God, was evidently much less zealous, much less religious than his father David. His heathen wives, the riches of the kingdom, and his political intercourse with the surrounding nations made him what might be termed a bright-minded man rather than a religious one. This was reflected upon his son and successor and also upon the people he governed.

KING REHOBOAM'S UNWISDOM

When the great king, Solomon, died he left the kingdom to his son Rehoboam -- a kingdom extending from the wilderness on the South to the Euphrates on the North, in all nearly as large as England and

Wales: It was God's Kingdom; as we read, "Solomon sat upon the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord." Rehoboam was about twenty-one years of age when he came to the throne at the death of his father, Solomon. He was inexperienced. His mother was a princess from a nearby heathen kingdom and apparently she never renounced her heathen religion. Evidently she was very beautiful and the favorite of Solomon's household. The son probably inherited personal beauty from both of his parents. The riches of the kingdom had been chiefly gathered to its capital, Jerusalem, and King Solomon's annuity is supposed to have been more than ten million dollars. No young man probably ever stepped suddenly into greater opportunities than Rehoboam, and few ever dissipated good fortune more rapidly; but while few have so great opportunities financially and politically to lose, yet each has character possibilities and a kingdom of his own will, valuable beyond all monetary calculations. Let us all learn lessons from the successes and failures of others. Let us all set before us proper ideals that their attainment may be a blessing and not a curse.

Besides this, Solomon's great enterprises, palatial buildings, etc., brought the revenue and glory to his capital city, Jerusalem, and did not evenly distribute it throughout the nation. Indeed, following the custom of other kings, wealth was gathered largely from the enforced labor of his subjects, who were compelled to labor at his capital for the common weal without pay. They were drafted and put under task-masters. In Solomon's day this was borne, though sometimes resentfully.

JEROBOAM'S FIRST MISTAKE

Evidently Jeroboam, a servant of King Solomon, was one of these who had criticized the policy of the kingdom during Solomon's time. He as a young man attracted the attention of King Solomon, who perceived that he possessed great executive talent and that he was a natural master and director of men. King Solomon put Jeroboam at the head of one of his corps of drafted workmen who were engaged after the manner of that time in building palaces and fortresses for the king-without pay other than very plain food and clothing. These labor armies were obliged to work for a number of months and then were replaced by others similarly conscripted.

Of the tribe of Ephraim, the largest of the ten tribes which separated from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, naturally Jeroboam may have felt something of the spirit of discontent as he perceived that the wealth of the nation was being principally gathered at Jerusalem-that all of the tribes were being taxed, and that most of the benefit went to the' tribe of which the royal family were members. Jeroboam became the leader of a party of discontents, and an incipient rebellion was the result. This was quickly suppressed by King Solomon and thereupon Jeroboam fled to Egypt, from whence he returned at the death of 'Solomon anti became leader and spokesman of the ten tribes when they demanded of Rehoboam . the reform of the government's policy.

It should be remarked that one of God's prophets had specially foretold to Jeroboam that he was to be the king of the ten tribes. It was doubtless this that led him to head the insurrection. How much better it would have been had he followed the example of King David, who was anointed king of Israel several years before the death of King Saul. Young David was content to wait God's time for bringing him to the throne. "The fact that God had indicated that this would lie so did not indicate that the time had come, hence David waited on the Lord and meanwhile learned valuable lessons of self-control and trust in Divine Providence., Not so Jeroboam, who was evidently a very different type of man, no doubt possessed of more confidence in himself than of trust in God; possessed of. more impatience to be a long than of loyalty and patriotic zeal to serve God and His people. The first mistake should be noted by all. "Wait ye upon Me., saith the Lord!" The man who ignores God is not wise; the man who opposes God is a fool.

Through Jeroboam the ten tribes had a general conference of tribe leaders and informed Rehoboam that they were not satisfied with the way they had been treated by King Solomon. They inquired what he would promise them in the way of a reform government. Rehoboam, who had already been recognized king by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, was at the conference and properly enough asked for three

days in which to consider the question. He and all realized that a crisis in the affairs of the kingdom had come. The matter was too weighty to be decided hastily. He called for the secretaries of the kingdom, his father's counselors, elderly men, to know their advice. Their recommendations were good. They recommended that he be a servant of the people; that instead of accumulating wealth at the capital and being personally great, he should serve the entire nation, looking out for all of its interests and forwarding the same -- exactly what the ten tribes desired.

Next, Rehoboam called the young men, his friends and acquaintances, his schoolmates, whom he was disposed more and more to bring into power with himself: Their advice was that the one way for a monarch to be successful is to intimidate his subjects and rule them with a heavy hand. The young king had not been rightly taught the principles of justice in human affairs. Wise as his father was, he had neglected to prepare his son for a proper decision in the crisis upon him. Pride and inexperience said, Hold to your power. If you yield an inch they will consider you weak and inefficient and will ask for more and more until shortly you will be a king in name only. Pride and ambition are dangerous counselors.

THE GRIEVOUS DECISION

The king followed the advice of the young men, and in figurative language, said, "You claim that my father made your load heavy, and you ask me to make it light. Instead, I will add to your load; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions"-a whip with metal pricks at the ends of the thongs. The unwise decision lost the king the greater part of the kingdom. The ten tribes revolted, and the adjacent kingdom; which had been under Solomon's sovereignty also; deflected, and left the king but a small minority of his empire, although it was the richest, most influential portion. The ten tribes answered, "What interest have we in David and his family? He belongs merely to the tribe of Judah." Thus they separated.

There is a lesson in this study for all, namely the importance of wisdom in our decisions, especially at the start of life and at various partings of the way, as we come to them in life's journey. To all there is a lesson worth learning in the matter of pride and ambition, threats and attempted coercions and the unwisdom of such courses, as well as their injustice. Wealth, power, influence, gained through oppression and injustice, are unworthy of noble minds, and this principle can be applied on the smaller scale as well as on the larger. In homes the principle operates between parents, and children, between husbands and wives. Alas! too often in the home control is held by force rather than by love and esteem and the appreciation of justice and the general

welfare. Such a headship or rulership in the family is an unworthy one and should be remodeled forthwith.

Another lesson is that in every enterprise of life we should seek counsel. In this connection let us remember the words of the Apostle that we seek the wisdom that cometh from above, that is "first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment and full of mercy and good fruits." -- Jas. 3 :17.

"We shape ourselves the joy or fear
Of which the coming life is made,
And fill our future atmosphere
With sunshine or with shade.

"The tissue of the life to be
We weave in colors all our own,
And in the field of destiny
We reap what we have sown."

THE KINGDOM RENT ASUNDER

As a result of Rehoboam's unwise and rash policy the ten tribes promptly accepted Jeroboam as their king, in harmony with the Prophet's declaration of years before. Finally the boy of humble birth had reached a high station of influence -- a grand opportunity for service for his God and his people. Whoever occupies a position of prominence -- political, social, literary -- should recognize that thereby he has come under special responsibility and obligations toward all with whom he has to do. Such opportunities, whether in business life, in politics or in literature, should be used humbly, faithfully, as responsible service.

But Jeroboam, king of the ten tribes, styled Israel, took the course, alas, too commonly taken -- the selfish course. He looked not to the Lord to serve Him, nor to the people, to serve their best interests. He looked selfishly to his own interests: He reasoned thus: If I would establish my family in the kingdom of these ten tribes, I must separate them effectually from the influence of the kingdom of Judah. And since, in God's providence, the temple is in the land of Judah, and all the religious rites and interests of the people center there, I must as unobtrusively as possible turn the attention of the nation I rule away from sympathy with their fellows of the kingdom of Judah; and away from the regulations which God has established there.

Every worldly politician would declare Jeroboam a master spirit as a ruler, as a politician. He was worldly wise. God through the Prophet had assured him, "If thou wilt hearken to all that I will command thee, and wilt walk in My ways, and do right in My sight to keep My statutes and commandments, as David My servant did, thy kingdom will be prolonged." (1 Kings 11:38.) God explained that the reason for

giving Jeroboam rulership of the ten tribes was that Solomon's course of dealing with the nations round about was gradually breaking down the true religion and leading the people toward idolatry. Jeroboam should have had all this in mind, and should have applied his heart with special fervor to the banishment of idolatry.

Instead, however, for policy's sake, he led the nation, of which he was king, directly into idolatry. He did not come out plainly and say to them, I wish to separate you and, alienate you from God and the religious institutions of your nation by attracting your attention away from Jerusalem, its religion, its worship, its temple. Under the pretext that it was too far for the people to go to Jerusalem, he erected a golden bull near the northern extremity of his kingdom, and another near the southern line, and the people went from one to the other. Additionally, he established near each of these golden bullocks (wood overlaid with gold) a house of high places. In these buildings lustful practices were carried on in the name of religion- and in, the manner of heathen peoples, this form of religion. pandering to the fallen appetites and commending itself, to the people who were not at heart religious.

Thus a man of great opportunities and of great natural ability for serving his God and his people dishonored the One and led the other astray. The lesson to each of us should be, See that, thou do differently. Make not Jeroboam's mistake.

Lest we should suppose that the affairs of Israel's Kingdom, under Divine supervision, were neglected and allowed to go astray, we are particularly informed that the "thing was of the Lord." From this standpoint of faith and from no other the history of Israel should be studied.