

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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THE COMING MEMORIAL SUPPER

"Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." "This do in remembrance of Me." -- Matt. 26:26-28; Luke 22:19.

ANOTHER anniversary of our Lord's death draws near, which by common consent is termed the Passover season. As God's people grow in grace and in the appreciation of the great and sublime truths of His Plan, the celebration of the Savior's death should be increasingly impressive and significant. The fact that the date changes and must be reckoned after the Jewish method of calculation adds to the impressiveness and brings afresh to our minds the various details of the Passover type, the Paschal Supper in which the Jews ate a lamb commemorative of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and of the sparing of their first-born at that time. The Apostle suggests that this Passover type finds its fulfillment in the death of the Lamb of God -- "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." (1 Cor. 5:7.) The Supper which our Master instituted as a remembrancer of His great sacrifice for sin is striking in its appropriateness and simplicity; entirely unlike the children of this world or the great ones of this world in their methods of perpetuating their memories

Difficulties in Determining Passover Date

As previously announced, according to the Jewish calendar Nisan 14 this year falls on March 29, and as the Jewish day commences the evening before, after sundown, Sunday evening of March 28 would be the appropriate time to observe the memorial of our Lord's death.

Again that all may have the facts fresh in mind, we repeat in more or less the same terms, what we have presented in previous years on the subject of reckoning the Memorial date. The Jewish ecclesiastical year is calculated according to lunar time -- based upon the lunations of the moon. Instead of dividing the months as we do, they allowed the new moon to mark the beginning of a new month; and the difference between the sun time (solar time) and moon time (lunar time) was equalized every year by always beginning the new year with the appearing of the new moon nearest the spring equinox. In celebrating their religious festivals the Jews still maintain this method of reckoning. And since our Lord, the Apostles, and the early Church followed this same rule for determining the date for the annual celebration of our Lord's Last Supper, we also follow it.

It is manifest that the beginning of the Jewish ecclesiastical year varied each year according to the moon's lunations. For this reason the exact date with which the first month, Nisan, commences may be frequently subject to question, as no definite and explicit directions are given by which one may always without equivocation determine the exact time for the commencement of Nisan one. There is room for a variety of opinions amongst brethren in various parts of the world as they come to this question of the exact date of the Passover. Various viewpoints may be taken. For example here are two considerations: One is that the first of Nisan be reckoned at exactly the appearance of the new moon. And another is that the fourteenth of Nisan be reckoned to synchronize with the full of the moon. But it not infrequently happens that there are even more than fifteen days between these two lunations -- the new and the full of the moon. This year is one such instance ; there being fifteen days, six hours, and forty minutes or about fifteen days and a quarter, so that it is one of those years where it is impossible to observe both of the above considerations. If one is to insist on commencing the first of Nisan exactly at the new moon's appearance, the fourteenth of Nisan would fall one day before the moon fulls. Or if another is to insist that the fourteenth of Nisan must fall on the day when the moon fulls, it would come one day later than the other. Again one may reckon that the first of Nisan must start with the appearance of the new moon in a certain section of the earth, such as Palestine ; and another may consider that it should be reckoned from the appearance of the new moon in another quarter. Thus various minds of the brethren to day grappling f with this question of the exact date of Nisan 14 are very likely to arrive at different conclusions and if each insists that is view be adopted as the correct one it would mean that three or four dates would be chosen and observed by different brethren throughout the world, each one being able to present forcibly from his particular viewpoint, the **technicality** on which he bases his conclusions.

Unanimity of Observance Desired

But such lack of unanimity as to the time of the celebration of the Supper is sure to interfere materially with the oneness, sympathy, and harmony of the occasion as a whole for the entire Church, and rob it of the greater blessing that comes from a oneness and unanimity of thought and observance of this blessed celebration. In line with the above, it is remembered that as in his earlier years Brother Russell attempted to personally determine the Passover date, he encountered these difficulties referred to above and recognized frequently there was a choice of several dates. He was according led in his later years to overcome this entire difficulty by not attempting himself personally to fix the date at all, but to accept without equivocation or question the Passover date determine upon by the Jewish authorities and set forth in the Jewish calendar each year. We believe his decision was a wise one,

for, as he exclaimed, the matter of the exact day was not of such importance as that the brethren should divide over it, some choosing one night, and some another. By accepting the Passover date of the Jewish calendar, this settled the matter for all, so that there was full harmony and oneness in the celebration of this precious and blessed occasion. For this reason we have in these recent years recommended to the brethren throughout the world that we likewise adopt the Hebrew reckoning for the sake of general harmony and unanimity and that the blessing may be all the greater, as upon the same night all are partaking of the Supper and remembering other individuals and Classes of brethren who they realize are also partaking of the emblems that evening.

The Picture and Its Fulfillment

Beginning with the first of Nisan the Hebrews counted; on the tenth day the Pascal lamb was chosen or selected from the flock. On the fourteenth day (approximately the full of the moon*) "between evenings" the lamb was to be killed. On the fifteenth day their Passover Feast began, lasting seven days, the first and the seventh 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, typical of the resurrection of Christ our Lord, as "the first-fruits of them that slept." (1 Cor. 15:20.) Fifty days after (Pentecost Day) they offered before the Lord two wave loaves (Lev. 23:17), representing the presenting of the Church before God and its acceptance through the merit of the Great High Priest, indicated by the appointing of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

* As the sun is a symbol of Christ's Kingdom, so the moon symbolized Israel as a nation. (Rev. 12:1.) The 12 and sometimes 13 lunations may be symbolic of the tribes of that nation. The moon was approximately at its full at the time of Christ's crucifixion. There it immediately began to wane and waned for as long as it had previously increased. So Christ's death was the turning point between the two parts of Israel's history.

These things done by the Jews every year were, as we have already seen, types of greater and grander occurrences. The choosing of the lamb on the tenth day typified how, if Israel would be blessed and recognized as the First-born in, the antitypical Passover, they must accept Jesus **then**, five days before that Passover Feast, and four days before His crucifixion. And it evidently was on that very date that our Lord offered Himself finally to that nation -- when, as their King, He rode into the city on the colt. (Compare John 12:1, 12.) They, however, neglected to receive the Lamb of God, at once were rejected, and ceased from being the typical first-born.

The Memorial Supper of bread and wine, representative of the body and blood of the antitypical Lamb, is the Passover remembrancer of the New Creation. This thereafter, as often as the occasion returned

(yearly), was to be observed by His followers instead of the eating of the literal lamb -- as the commemoration of the antitypical Lamb and the greater passing over of the antitypical Firstborn, which His blood affects.

How We Shew Forth the Lord's Death

"For I received from the Lord, what I also delivered to you -- That the Lord, on the night in which He was delivered up, took a loaf, and having given thanks, broke it and said, 'This is that body of Mine, which is broken an your behalf; this do you for My remembrance.' In like manner also, the cup, after the supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; this do you, as often as you may drink, for My, remembrance.' For as often as you may eat this bread or drink this cup, you declare the death of the Lord, till He come." -- 1 Cor. 11:24-26.

The Apostles declare that in the lesson He gave in the Passover, Jesus spoke of the death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. This one and only death of our Redeemer is what is symbolized by this Remembrancer -- His body, His **flesh** broken for us, and of its merits and life all who would have .life everlasting must partake. Let none be deceived by any means, on. this important question.

According to our Lord's explanation of the matter, it was His flesh which He sacrificed for us. It was the fact that our Lord Jesus, was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners -- without any contamination from Father Adam, and hence free from sin -- that enabled Him to become the Redeemer of Adam and his race, that permitted Him to give His life "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." -- 1 Tim. 2:3-6.

The very thing that He .laid down for us we are to "eat," appropriate to ourselves by faith; that is to say, His perfect **human** life was given to redeem all the race of man from condemnation to death, to enable them to return to human perfection and everlasting life, if they would; and we are to realize this and accept Him as our Savior from death. The Scriptures show us, however, that if God would consider all past sins canceled, and should recognize us as having a right to human perfection, this still would not make us perfect; nor give us the right to eternal life.

Prefigured Justification

In order that any of the race of Adam might profit by the sacrifice of Jesus, it was necessary that He should **rise from the tomb** on the Divine plane of life, that He should ascend to the Father and deposit the sacrificial merit of His death in the hands of Justice, and receive from the Father "all power in heaven and in earth." As relates to the world, it was necessary also that in the Father's due time He should come again to earth, a glorious Divine Being, then to be to the whole world a Mediator, Prophet, Priest, and King, to assist back to perfec-

tion and to harmony with God all who will avail themselves of the wonderful privileges then to be offered.

It is this same blessing that the Gospel Church of this Age receive by faith in their Redeemer, namely justification by faith -- not justification to a **spirit** nature, which we never **had** and never **lost**, and which Christ did not **redeem**; but justification to **human** nature, which Father Adam **possessed** and **lost**, and which Christ **redeemed** by giving His own sinless **flesh**, His perfect **human life**, as our ransom sacrifice. 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-rights -- rights 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, His 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 Lord's sacrifice of these.

The Deeper Things Portrayed

God's object in justifying the Church by faith 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 sacrifice -- 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.

The Apostle Paul clearly explains the very high import of the Memorial. Writing to the consecrated Church, he says, "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.

"Till He Come"

"Till He come." What is the full significance of this expression?

Since our Lord who instituted the Memorial Supper placed no limit upon its observance, this expression by the Apostle is not to be understood as limiting the length of time in which it will be appropriate to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, our ransom sacrifice, and our consecration with Him to sacrifice. Rather, He is showing that it was not to be considered a limited arrangement, for a few years, but was to be continually observed until the Lord's Second Coming. Looking down to and speaking of the Second Coming of our Lord, the Apostle includes in His expression the gathering and exaltation with Christ of His Church or Kingdom to rule and bless the world. This is even yet a common and proper way of speaking of matters so closely identified and so dependent one upon the other. The Christ, Head and Body, is **coming** to rule the world in power and great glory. The presence of the Lord or Head is necessary first; then commences the change of the sleeping members of His Body, the sifting of the living members, and their gradual gathering together unto Him.

Even though the Kingdom may be considered as drawing very nigh, it will not be **"set up,"** in the full sense of the word, until the last member of the Kingdom has been changed or glorified -- until the breaking of the "loaf," the Church, Head and Body, is completed. While one member suffers the Body suffers; while one member is unglorified the Kingdom is not fully come into power and dominion.

It is the coming of Christ as **including the full exaltation of His Church or Kingdom** that the Apostle evidently meant when he said, "As often as you may eat this [Passover] bread and drink this cup, you -declare the death of the Lord [as your hope and confidence] till He come." The same thought of the Kingdom glory being the end of the symbol may be gathered from our Lord's own words on the occasion of the institution -of the Memorial-"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom." -- Matt. 26.:29.

Just what our Lord meant by this statement might be difficult to determine positively, but it seems not inconsistent to understand Him to mean that as a result of the trials and sufferings symbolized in His cup, there will be jubilation in the Kingdom. "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." He will look back over the trials and difficulties endured in faithful obedience to the Father's will, and will rejoice in these as He sees the grand outcome-the blessings which will come to all mankind. This jubilation will be shared by all

His disciples who have drunk of this cup, first in justification, then in consecration and sacrifice with Him. These have His promise that they shall reign with Him; and when the reign shall have begun, when the Kingdom shall have been established, looking back they shall praise the way that God has led them day by day, evens unto the end of their earthly course, and even though it has been a "narrow way," a way of self-sacrifice, a way of self-denial.

Drank the Cup the Father Poured

Our dear Master's faith stood the test of all these trying hours which He knew to be so near the time of His apprehension and death. The fact that He rendered thanks to the Father for the bread and the cup is indicative of a joyful acquiescence in all the sufferings which the breaking of the bread and the crushing of the grapes implied. Already He was satisfied with the Father's arrangement. In line with this spirit was the singing of a hymn as they parted, a hymn of praise no doubt, thanksgiving to the Father that His course on earth was so nearly finished, and that He had found thus far grace sufficient for His need.

We should meet with few or many, as circumstances will permit, but better far with a few who can, enter with us into the spirit of the Memorial, than with a throng **devoid of that spirit of fellowship and union in Christ.**

Those who celebrate the Memorial with guileless, earnest hearts receive a great and refreshing blessing, and for this it is well to have seasons of quiet in the midst of the service, when no one will be speaking audibly and when the hearts of all can come very close to the Master in communion-in realization of His love, past and present, in renewing the pledge, made to be His faithful followers even unto death, in considering how that pledge has been kept or violated during the year preceding, and in resolving afresh to run with patience the race for the prize of joint-heirship with our Lord, to which we are invited.

"On Calvary's Brow"

Of the first Supper it is written: "They sang a hymn and went out." Let us do the same. Let each go to his home with his heart full. We suggest the omission on this occasion of the usual, general and proper after-meeting greetings, and all commonplace remarks and thoughts; thus we may prolong our communion and fellowship with the Master. Keep within sight of Him throughout the next day. Hear the clamor of the people against the guileless One; see them incited by the clergy of Jerusalem; see Him before Herod and his soldiers; see Him arrayed in robes of mock-royalty and crowned with thorns, then buffeted and spat upon. See Him crucified as a criminal, and taunted with the very gracious deeds which He had performed -- "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." Remember that He could have saved Himself; that He could have asked for, and would have received,, "more than twelve legions, of angels" to deliver and protect Him; that He could have

destroyed His enemies and villifiers, instead of dying for them; and that our hope of a **resurrection** and everlasting life depended upon His willing offering of Himself as our ransom price. Considering His love for us and for all, it will surely strengthen us as His followers to endure more and more hardness as good soldiers of the cross. Aye, let us consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we become weary and faint in our minds under the light afflictions now permitted for our trial and discipline, which, if faithfully endured, will work out for each a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

All who are living in the vicinity of New York City, or any who can find it convenient to come from nearby places, will be warmly welcomed at the Memorial service which will be held this year on the evening of March 28, at 8 o'clock, at the regular meeting place of the brethren in Brooklyn, in the parlors of the Institute, 177 Prospect Place.

"BEHOLD YOUR KING!"

"Behold your King! Though the moonlight steals
Through the silvery shade of the olive-tree,
No star-gemmed scepter or crown it reveals
In the solemn shades of Gethsemane;
Only a form of prostrate grief,
Fallen, crushed, like a broken-leaf.
Oh, think of this sorrow, that we may know
The depth of love in the depth of woe!

"Behold your King! Is it nothing to you,
That the crimson tokens of agony
From the kingly brow must fall like dew,
Through the shuddering shades of Gethsemane?
Jesus Himself, the Prince of life,
Bows in mysterious mortal strife.
Oh, think of this sorrow, that we may know
The unknown love in the unknown woe!

"Behold your King, with 'His sorrow crowned!
Alone, alone in the valley is He!
The shadows of death are gathering round,
And the Cross must follow Gethsemane.
Darker and darker the gloom must fall,
Filled is the cup-He must drink it all!
Oh, think of His sorrow, that we may know
His wondrous love in His wondrous woe!"

JESUS AND THE PRAYER LIFE

"A devout man, and one that prayed to God always." --Acts 10:2 10:2.

(Contributed from outside the Editorial Staff)

PRAYER is not exactly defined in the Bible in so many words, though it is everywhere alluded to as a most essential and worthy practice to cultivate; and countless illustrations are given to show how we should pray, and for what. When God created man, He endowed him with the faculty of spirituality and veneration, and thus prayer was a natural expression of man's recognition of his Creator, of his worship and adoration. The idolatry amongst heathen nations came as a result of the perversion of this faculty, and the transferring to the idol of stone, wood, etc., of the worship and homage due to the unseen God, whom it was intended to visualize. The same is true of some of the so-called Christian forms of worship which claim the adoration of the creature for the various images, patron saints, etc., all of which detracts from the proper honor of God, and produces a form of godliness in the creature, but with a denial of the power.

Communion of the Soul With God

In our contact with the Christian life we hear many of God's children say they find so little joy in prayer, and that even when they seek God's presence and express themselves in the full dress of sound words, they leave the secret chamber having no evidence that the Heavenly Father was present, having found no joy while before Him. Such find their thoughts expressed in the well known words,

"Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I found the Lord?"

Well would it be if the children of God could always remember that the uniform absence of joy in prayer is one of the threatening signs in our religious experience, intimating more or less estrangement from God.

It is generally true that not many can distinguish between real prayer and the theory of prayer. In the Bible sense, prayer is the communion of the soul with God, a real fellowship in spirit in which the believer draws back the parting veil of time and sense, and catches glimpses of the future glorious condition. Such a view of God's glory counteracts the effects of present evils, and the soul learns the secret of certain disciplinary experiences. It has well been said that "far away fields are greener," and sometimes it is true that prime objects of prayer enchant us only in the distance. When they come near to us, and are made life-like in our conceptions, they very sensibly abate the pulse of our longing to possess them, because we cannot but discover that to realize them in our lives, certain other precious objects must be sacrificed with which we are not yet willing to part.

We have the paradox that a Christian may even fear an answer to his prayers, as for example an anxious Christian may approach God in the spirit of worship, desiring to receive from Him that generous loving

spirit and a conscience void of offense toward all. As he kneels in the Divine presence, the beauty of such a character becomes very real, and in lowliness he earnestly requests that it may be his. By anti by, conscience reminds him of those of his equals who are passing him in the Christian way, and their spiritual prosperity stirs Lip within him the old spirit of envy. His thought now is to turn from this aspect of prayer to some other one, in which conscience will not be so likely to rise in rebuke. Is it any wonder that such a hidden sin should result in dampening his ardor, and in making his Christian life a miserable existence indeed.

How Some Pray

Another example is that of an ambitious Christian who beseeches God to give him a humble spirit, and to free him from pride and self-seeking. He voluntarily takes the lower place because of his unworthiness, repeats the prayer of the publican, and reminds God of the benediction bestowed on the poor in spirit. As his mind goes over one by one of the graces mentioned by the Apostle in addition to humility, he is charmed with them all, and he expresses himself very fully indeed. Then his conscience rises up and exposes the strong current of selfishness more or less hidden by the fluency of his emotions. If such a Christian is not properly exercised by seeing his real self, is it any wonder that he finds no real joy or satisfaction in prayer.

Consider the revengeful Christian who seeks for the spirit of meekness in order that he may be as harmless as a dove. He desires the corresponding graces of forbearance, longsuffering and patience to be manifest in his life, and is anxious to fulfil the Apostle's admonition: put off "all bitterness, and wrath, and clamor, and evil-speaking, with all malice," and to possess instead the disposition of Christ. His theoretic love for the great ideal becomes very strong, and he actually feels his desires real, when he concludes by saying -- "Forgive me as I forgive others trespassing against me." If such a conclusion to his prayer does not reveal his hypocrisy, then how can his devotions bring down from Heaven the rich blessings desired and actually ready to be bestowed?

Such, but by the grace of God, are we all. It is very generally true that there is no warrant, in reason or revelation, for ascribing joylessness in prayer to any other cause than some wrong in the soul itself. In other words, the want of unction in prayer is not due to an arbitrary, or even inexplicable, withdrawal of God from the soul. In Isa. 59:1, 2 we read: "Behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear: but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." And then verses 9 and 10 tell us: "Therefore we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes."

Sin in the Heart

Thus does the Lord explain to us what is meant by the "hiding of God's countenance" and indicates that even a doubtful principle harbored in the heart, may through time destroy the inmost peace of the Christian. And so it would seem that there is much suspense of conscience amongst many of the Lord's people upon subjects of practical life, on which there is no suspense of action. The exhortation comes to all to examine their own hearts before God, and seek for everything that would in any way be a means of hindrance in the answer to our prayers.

Sin, to be such, does not require some flagrant breaking of one of God's commands, but rather, as Jesus so clearly stated in His Sermon on the Mount, sin is the longing desire after something forbidden, though such desire may never have been put into action. Therefore, sin begins in the mind, and necessitates the daily application of the cleansing blood to every impure thought in order that the individual may gain the victory over the Evil One. Sin actually means "missing the mark," and reminds one of shooting at a target. To miss the mark by a fraction might as well have been by a mile. The thought of missing the mark is illustrated in many ways in the Scriptures. For example the case of Lot, as recorded in Gen. 13:12, in which, after separating from his uncle, Abram, he selected the well-watered plain of Jordan "and pitched his tent **toward** Sodom." Now his sin lay not in pitching his tent, but it lay in the **direction** in which his tent was pitched. Later, we are told, he dwelt twenty years in Sodom itself and became an important man there; and so wicked were the people that before its destruction God could not find one righteous man therein. How forceful the lesson! As God's true Israel, are we daily scrutinizing our own lives in order to see if the direction of the same is toward the world or earthly ambitions? Realizing the peculiar perils of these days, are we ostensibly pressing onward, yet drifting listlessly with the current of human thought and opinion

Prayed With Windows Open Toward Jerusalem

Another example illustrative of the other side of the matter, is provided for us in Daniel 6:10, where we read that Daniel had his windows "open toward Jerusalem." Ah yes! he knew the secret of real success in his life of devotion to God, and while refusing to be coerced into the worshiping of other gods, still he prayed to his God daily in his chamber. Thus the direction of his prayers surely brought the desired answer and blessing. Let us more and more imitate Daniel, a man beloved of God and richly blessed through prayer.

Underlying Principles in Prayer

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, set forth the principles underlying the Christian religion, adding the blessing to those who mastered and applied them daily, and pointing out the loss to all who knew but did

not do His commands. Let us examine these statements of the Lord in order that we may see our privilege and responsibility in prayer.

In Matthew 5:44-48 Jesus states the things for which we should pray, putting them under four heads. First, the heart filled to overflowing with the love of God toward our enemies. Here we have the great ideal set before us in our gracious Heavenly Father, of whom St. Paul writes, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." In Him we have the rounded-out character, and so to be perfect in heart we require to look out over life from God's standpoint. In John 3:16 God's great love and great Gift are stated; and then in 1 John 3:16 the same Apostle urges that the brethren lay down their lives for one another.

Second, this love must not be negative, but positive, finding an outlet in the blessing of our enemies. It is easy to bless those that bless us, but the real Christian is one who has been so richly blessed by God, that his own life overflows with the milk of human-kindness to all. This is the love "that beareth all things," and is constantly seeking ways and means of bringing blessings to those who curse.

Third, love acting the disposition of doing good to all who hate us, trusting thereby that the returning of good for evil would result in a corresponding winning of the erring individual toward the right. Love "hoping all things," even though the act is ever so clear, yet still giving the benefit of any doubt there may be. Surely we have a very high ideal indeed set before us.

Fourth, love entreating for the persecutors. As one has remarked, it is comparatively easy for the Christian to come to the Throne of Grace at the close of the day and pray to God on behalf of all who have treated him kindly during the day, for those who are his special friends, or for those who have invited him to their homes. It is a pleasure to recall all these good friends in prayer, and to earnestly plead the Divine blessing upon such. On the other hand, it is a very difficult matter to invoke the Divine blessing upon our enemies of the day, the general tendency being to try to forget such unpleasant incidents. Yet Jesus shows here that we must reach the stage where all who trespass against us have a loving remembrance in our prayers, that thus we may be like our Heavenly Father by having perfect heart intentions. Is it any wonder that prayer is a real, vital necessity, and that it implies far more than merely "saying" our prayers. Real prayer should be leading us daily nearer our great Ideal, Christ, and giving us the victory over temptations.

Why Should One Pray?

In Matt. 6:6-8 Jesus points out that our prayers ought to be simple, sincere, and to the point, for the important reason that our Heavenly Father knows our need even before we ask Him. How true it is in Christian experience that many use vain repetitions and think they are bound to receive the answer thereto because of their much speaking. On the contrary, says Jesus, my earnest follower will recognize the importance of being slow to speak but swift to hear My Father's counsel, and instead of telling Him the details connected with the Divine plans and purposes, he will be more concerned with the bringing of every thought into subjection to the Divine will. The Chinaman illustrates vain repetition by writing out his prayer and then placing it on his prayer-wheel, the efficacy of the prayer being in the number of revolutions, and not in the prayer itself. The Polish peasant, on the other hand, writes out his prayer and attaches it to one of the arms of his windmill, thus the stronger the wind the more often and intense are his prayers.

How comforting is the Lord's reminder of our gracious Heavenly Father's love and interest in us! How it takes the sting out of all earth's sad experiences to realize that He knows and loves and cares!

The question may well arise, however, as to the need for any one praying to God, if He is already aware of the suppliant's need. Why should one pray at all in view of this wonderful assurance? The answer is that expression deepens impression, and we show our belief in our Heavenly Father's oversight of our life, and our earnest desire to possess the promised blessings, by making a stated request. Just as in the natural world: suppose a child requests a certain thing from its father, and immediately thereafter runs off to play with other companions without receiving an answer, and then in a few days' time comes and says, Father, didn't I ask you sometime ago for this thing? Well, you did not give it to me. In such a case the request was only the result of a passing thought in the mind of the child, and its gratification was evidently little desired. So it is in some Christian lives. In the daily life the Christian may see some good quality very desirable, and request the Heavenly Father for its bestowal, and straightway forget about watching for its reception. These are the kind of Christians who will fail in the great testing now being conducted by the Lord, because He is seeking for positive characters to complete the "little flock."

Vain Repetitions in Prayer

On the other hand there are those who pass through the deep waters of affliction and who do not go about parading their sufferings, but who try to smile before others, while at the same time hiding a sorely tried heart. To such the precious words of Jesus come with ineffable sweetness as they remember that God knows their need, and although words fail to express the deep longing of the soul, nevertheless the Holy Spirit makes known to the Father the heart cries of His child. Thus

have we brought to our attention simplicity in prayer, and it should be our daily endeavor to bring all our petitions to the Throne of Grace clothed in simple and direct language.

One more point might be mentioned, and that is that, some of the Lord's people in public prayer have a habit of using words or phrases very frequently in the course of a petition, such as -- "Our Heavenly Father," "Dear Father," "Dear Lord," etc., these being often used evidently to supply a pause in the speaker's thoughts, and then after the expression is used, a new train of thought is followed. To one who lives in close communion with God such oft quoted expressions seem entirely out of place. Our Father is high and holy, and ought to be approached with holy fear and His holy name repeated only where necessary, and if our flow of language depends on the frequent repetition of name, then the briefer our prayers are, the better, and the more sure they will be of fulfillment. An elderly Christian once remarked that at one time, when praying in public, he prayed to the audience, when in private he prayed to himself, but experience had finally taught him to pray to God.

(Continued in next issue)

MID-WINTER CONVENTION IN FLORIDA

In these days of peculiar trial and difficulty many of the Lord's true sheep feel the need of fellowship together; but as the majority are scattered over the country, it is not always possible to gratify this desire. However, a special season of blessing always accompanies the effort put forth to assemble ourselves for the purpose of worshipping our Heavenly Father in spirit and in truth. Such was the experience of the brethren in Jacksonville, Fla., the last week-end of January.

The majority of the brethren who thus assembled have recently discerned the extent of the bondage prevalent in the place of their former communion, and now rejoice in the liberty purchased for them by Christ. The special meetings were indeed arranged by a loving Providence, and were to all as an oasis in a thirsty land.

Brother Muir, now making a pilgrim tour through the South and West, was appointed for Jacksonville that week-end, and was joined by Brother Margeson, of Boston. No special meetings were arranged until the close of Friday evening, when by a unanimous vote, the brethren decided to hold a one-day convention on the following Sunday. Although rain had fallen for several days, Sunday was clear, dry, and sunny. Altogether thirty-five brethren were present.

An interesting program was arranged, in all nine meetings, including two testimony meetings. Four local brothers took part in short addresses -- Brothers McIlvaine, Webb, Boyett, and Muhlbacher. In addition, Brother Oleszynski of Chicago, Ill., spoke. Many will recall that this brother was in charge of the Polish work at Brooklyn under

Brother Russell. The keynote of the convention might be placed under three heads: reformation in the life; co-operation for mutual upbuilding; moderation in thought, word, and deed.

The testimonies expressed the deep gratitude of the brethren for the Lord's loving provision for their spiritual needs, and all seemed to be energized with fresh zeal to make their calling and election sure to the Heavenly Kingdom. This is the right outlook, and we are sure the dear Lord has abundantly blessed all who were gathered to talk about His Word, and call upon His name.

RECENT GENERAL AWAKENING OF INTEREST

MANY of our readers will be encouraged to learn that during the past six months there has been a special awakening amongst the friends of the Truth, particularly throughout America. Many letters have been received telling of the results of recent investigations that are being made, associated more or less with doubts and fears, and earnestly inquiring for assistance in the direction of some encouraging message. Generally these letters are most gratifying and indicate honesty of heart and a deep, desire to understand more fully the meaning of the general conditions that have prevailed amongst the people of the Truth during the past ten years.

The cause of this awakening of interest in the direction of this ministry is doubtless due considerably to the fact that the year 1925 had been set by many Bible Students as a year that was to witness the culmination and fulfillment of all those prophecies that portray the complete passing of the present order, including the overthrow of Satan's empire and the downfall of the governments of this world. In addition to this it was believed by many that the year 1925 would witness the ushering in of the Kingdom of God and the great antitypical jubilee or the times of restitution of all things. Included in this also was the claim that in the year 1925 the Ancient Prophets and holy ones of Israel would be resurrected and the reign of life begin at once, so that none need go into the tomb after that time. The utter and complete collapse of all of these prognostications, and the failure of all such expectations bringing sore disappointment, has led many to appeal more directly to the Lord and His Word that they might hear His voice and be in a position to exercise that faith enabling them to still trust in the Lord and await His due time. Surely the lesson of the experiences of many at this time is the same that has been oft repeated in the past, namely to prove all things, and to trust in no uncertain conclusions, theories, or speculations of men, but to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have learned, and to see to it that what we accept as truth is well established and built upon the foundation of the unfailing Word of God. The letters We are receiving

clearly show that many are now appreciating the voice of wisdom from this standpoint.

The facts also make very manifest that the special issue of our journal of August 1st and 15th, 1925, dealing exhaustively with the subject of the Times and Seasons and Chronological data and reviewing the entire subject afresh, has brought untold blessings to many, assisting them to discover the meaning of the failures of their hopes at the time that had been set. This has meant that here and there throughout the country there are friends writing and assuring us of how greatly they have been recently blessed and encouraged, not only in the matter of understanding why many things have not transpired, but that the investigations of these days have led them to understand wherein their confidence has been misplaced. Deep thankfulness and praise are expressed that they are now enabled more abundantly to see the Master alone as their head and teacher, and that only by keeping their eyes upon Him and not upon human leaders, channels, or headships can they be assured of safety in this hour of special temptation and trial that has come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth. Is it not manifest that the Lord in fulfillment of His promise is thus helping His people in the dawning of the morning -- is giving the needful assistance in this time of urgent need!

Many of the friends in various parts have cooperated well in the circulation of the chronological issue of last year. In view of the results thus far, and what appears to have been greatly blessed of the Lord, we cannot but earnestly recommend that the practice of sending us names and addresses of other friends in the Truth be continued. We now have reference particularly to names and addresses of friends of the Truth from whom we have been separated in these recent years; and who, at the present time, for the reasons named above, are more or less in a maze of bewilderment, not knowing whither to turn. The demand for the special chronological issue has exhausted the extra supply of several thousands that was ordered at the time that issue came out, so that we are now about to place an order for another edition of the same issue: Let us all, dear brethren, in these days realize our responsibility toward fellow members and seek to give them the word of encouragement that is needed, and that may be the means under the Lord's providence of confirming and encouraging the faith of fellow members of the same Body. Those who are in a position to send us lists of names direct, may do so and the papers will be mailed. If any are in a position to pass the paper directly to others, we shall be glad to send them a supply to use in this way.

In this connection also it may be said that the response to the suggestion about giving the Evolution Herald a wide circulation has been most excellent. Many thousands of names have been received and the papers have been mailed with encouraging results. We recommend that all who so desire, continue to share this privilege.

Additionally we are getting printed an extra supply of each issue of the "Herald" and as special articles dealing with one topic or another appear from time to time that are thought to be especially seasonable for some, additional copies of any issue may be ordered to be given out; or we will mail copies to addresses which may be sent us.

"SO OUGHT YE TO WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET"

"The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" -- Matt. 20:28.

THE great lessons imparted by the Master to His followers are best understood by taking note of the circumstances and surroundings. The careful reader is impressed by the way Jesus made use of opportune seasons for conveying His masterful and solemn lessons. Such was the time when he would teach a lesson in humility that was to remain with His followers throughout the entire Age.

It was the last week in the life of Jesus preceding His crucifixion. The week opened with the triumphal entry on Sunday, the cleansing of the temple followed on Monday, a great day of teaching on Tuesday, Jesus rested in a home at Bethany on Wednesday, preparation for the Passover came on Thursday, and on Thursday evening was celebrated the Passover meal with the institution of the symbolical Supper, at which time Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

Another has very forcibly described the occasion: "Upon that table fell the shadow of the cross and Jesus knew its terrible meaning. He was not laboring under any illusion or delusion and walking blindly through the world, but He clearly saw His path running straight to crucifixion. Yet beyond the outstretched arms of the cross He saw the outstretched arms of the Father. He knew that He was going out of the world, but He also knew whither He was going."

Some of the Apostles had, by the Lord's instruction, made ready beforehand; and now, as they assembled without a host to appoint them their places at the Supper, a discussion as to their prominence and their rights to the most honorable places, nearest to the Master, is not surprising. Our Lord twice before had rebuked them on this very line, assuring them that unless they cultivated and attained a spirit of meekness like little children they could have no part in the Kingdom. And only a week before, while en route to Jerusalem, James and John had made the request that in the Kingdom, when established, they might sit the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the Master, in closest proximity to His person. It was this spirit that controlled on, this occasion, and led up to our Lord's washing of the disciples' feet as a lesson of humility and willingness to serve one another even in the humblest capacity.

Selfishness Even in Love

Nor are we to think of the Apostles as each striving for the highest position merely from a selfish standpoint. Rather we should suppose that Peter, James, and John, Whom the Lord had in various ways specially favored in times past and who seemed to be specially close to Him, loved the positions nearest His person, not merely because of the honor thus implied, but largely because of their love and esteem for the Master Himself, and perhaps with the feeling that they appreciated this privilege more than some others could appreciate the same. Indeed we may suppose that a considerable number of the other Apostles strove on their behalf, insisting that they should have the most honorable position. But however we view the matter, it is evident that a wrong spirit had been engendered, one very inappropriate to the occasion, especially inappropriate to the Memorial Supper, which our Lord intended to institute after the Passover Supper.

It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the Apostles been inquired of respecting the matter they would have denied any elements of selfishness in their motives and conduct, and would have thought and spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and desire to be near Him. This illustrates to us what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful-that it needs scrutinizing carefully lest, under the cloak of something good, it might harbor qualities which without that cloak we would despise or spurn.

As further illustrating this subject, and as helping us each and all to apply the lesson personally, we relate a dream told by a Scotch minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly before his death. He dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds -- all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyze it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realized that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie beyond our words and thoughts and doings -- especially beyond our service for the Lord and for the brethren.

He Hath Set Us An Example

Truly remarkable it is that the gathering shadows of His own death could not deflect Jesus' thought and love from His chosen disciples. He was about to go, but they were to remain, and He thought 'not of Himself, but of them. As the Evangelist declared "having loved His own He loved them unto the end." Because of His love He laid aside His glory and became a man; because of His love He devoted Himself as the man Christ Jesus; because of His love He was now anxious to help His dear disciples over a difficulty which, if not conquered, would hinder their usefulness as His followers both in the present and future. This love not only led our Lord to administer the reproof necessary, but led Him to do it in the wisest and best and kindest manner. His example in this respect should be observed and copied by all His followers, especially those who in any public capacity or service are his representatives in the Church.

Had our Lord and His disciples been the guests of some host on this occasion, it would have been considered the duty of the host to have sent some menial to wash their feet. This was the custom of the country, and very necessary to comfort. The open sandals or imperfectly sewed shoes allowed the dust of the highway to soil the feet, and really made washing a necessity after every journey, but particularly on a festal occasion of this kind. As the Lord's company were not guests, but merely had the use of the room, no servant appeared to wash their feet, and it would have been properly the duty and custom for one of the number to have performed the menial service for the others. As we have just seen, however, the spirit of rivalry was warm in their hearts, and no one volunteered to render the service, nor had any one the right to demand it in a company in which the Lord had made no special rank and appointed none as menials. This, however, rightly understood and appreciated, would have left the greater opportunity for some of them to have volunteered this service to the others. What an opportunity they all lost!

Also My Hands and My Head

Our Lord apparently let the matter go to the full limit to see whether or not any of them would improve the opportunity and make himself servant of all; He waited until the supper was being served (not ended, as in our Common Version) ; then arising from the table He laid aside His outer garment or mantle and took a towel and girded Himself -- that is to say, tightened the girdle worn around the waist, which would hold up the flowing undergarments and keep them out of the way of His activity. We can well imagine the consternation of the Apostles as they watched this procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one and another as they protruded from the couches on which they reclined. The method of washing feet was different from ours: the basin was merely a receptacle for holding the soiled water, the water

being poured from the pitcher in a small stream while the foot was being washed, rubbed, rinsed.

Apparently the Apostles were so astonished at our Lord's procedure, and so felt the condemnation which His course implied, that they knew not what to say, and so silence reigned until it came Peter's turn. Peter had a peculiar combination of character, part of which was extremely good. He objected to having his feet washed by the Lord, saying, "Dost thou wash my feet? -- It is not appropriate, Lord, that one so great as you should serve a person of my standing, a poor fisherman." But our Lord answered that although Peter did not discern the full meaning of the matter, He would explain to him later when He had finished the washing of all. Peter's second remark was less praiseworthy than his first. He said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

It was hard for Peter to realize that he was the disciple and the Lord was the Teacher-that it was for him to obey and not to dictate; but Jesus' answer, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," at once brought out the better side of Peter's impulsive nature. If his washing had anything to do with his nearness to the Master and his relationship to Him, then he wanted it. Going even to the other extreme again, fearing to leave matters in the Lord's care, he cried, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." There is a lesson for us in this matter: We are not to dictate to the Lord, not to attempt to be wise or good or obedient in ways that He has not directed. This is a hard lesson for some dispositions to learn; continually they want to do more than is written in the Scriptures. Such a course indicates either a lack of reverence for the Lord and His Word and the wisdom thereof, or else a too great self-confidence, too much self-esteem. A humble and trustful heart should learn to say, Thy will, O Lord, Thy way and in Thy time -- "Thy will, not mine be done."

Washing the Feet of the Bathed

Our Lord's answer in our Common Version is somewhat obscure; the Revised Version is better -- "he that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet to be clean every whit." Properly they had all bathed in accordance with the Jewish requirement of the putting away of all filth at the beginning of the Passover season. Our Lord's intimation, then, signified that having bathed they merely now needed the rinsing of their feet, the cleansing of the members that had come in contact with the earth. Our Lord added, referring to Judas, "Ye are clean, but not all." This expression shows us clearly that He had in mind a higher cleansing, of which this washing of their feet and their previous bath were but figures.

The Lord knew that the hearts of His disciples were loyal. He had accepted them as His disciples and had reckonedly imputed to them the merit of His sacrifice as a covering of their blemishes, the full testimony of which would be given them by and by at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit testifying that the Father had accepted the Lord's sacrifice

on their behalf. But there was one in the number whose heart was not clean. Our Lord did not pass him by, but washed the feet of Judas with the rest, knowing the while of his perfidy, and that he had already bargained with the chief priests, and was merely awaiting the opportune moment for the carrying out of his malevolent scheme.

Our Lord's words, although not understood by the rest, must have been appreciated by Judas, as were also His subsequent words recorded in verses 18, 26, 27, 28. Our Lord went so far as to quote the very prophecy which marked Judas and his disloyalty, his violation of even the common hospitality. None of these things moved Judas; none of these things appealed to his heart in such a manner as to change his course. We have thus strong evidence of the willful intention which marked his crime and enforced the meaning of our Lord's words when he called him the "son of perdition," and declared that it would have been better for him had he never been born. The quotation from the Psalm was, "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

Patience to its Limit

We may be sure that our Lord's conduct in dealing with Judas is not only a proper outline of what our conduct should be to any of a similar class, but additionally we should note the lesson that the Lord is longsuffering toward all who become His disciples, not willing that any should perish, but disposed to do, for them until the very last, and to bring to their attention the error of their ways repeatedly, in hope that thus they maybe turned therefrom. The latter lesson: has associated with it the thought that those who have received the Truth, and who in spite of all the favors connected therewith encourage and develop in themselves the spirit of selfishness, are apt to become so hardened, so calloused, that not even the Master's reproofs and the words of the Scriptures will influence them. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance" --- to a proper course -- if once the Spirit of the Lord has been fully subjected to the spirit of selfishness in their hearts.

In harmony with what He told Peter-that he should know later on the significance of the washing -- our Lord explained the matter, after he had gone the rounds of all the Apostles. He said, "Know [understand] ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet."

The Meaning of the Lord's Action

Here we have the entire lesson explained. In their fear to be the least, all the disciples had shunned the opportunity of service for the Master and for each other. Our Lord, their acknowledged Head and Master, the Messiah, had humbled Himself to serve them all, and had thus rebuked their inhumility, and at the same time set them an example that would apply to every affair of life, namely that they should be

glad to serve one another on every proper occasion, in the high things or in the common affairs of life. On account of the changed conditions of our time, the literal washing of feet in the manner of the ancients would not be a comfort or service-quite the reverse would be true; but the lesson and spirit of the service remains the same. This washing of one another's feet we may readily see applies to any and every humble, service of life, any and every kindness, though specially to those services and kindnesses which would be along the lines of spiritual assistances and comfort.

How many blessed opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling one another and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of life, or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences, or trials of life. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, we may be sure has the Divine approval and blessing. Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example; let us, like our Master, not merely assume humility or pretend it, but actually have that humility which will permit us to do kindness and service to all with whom we come in contact, and proportionately enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Lord's Body -- the Church.

As our Lord said to the disciples, "He that is bathed need not save to wash his feet," even so we may realize that all who are justified and consecrated members of His Body have already had the bath, the washing of regeneration, and are already clean through the Word spoken unto them. (John 15:3.) Nevertheless, although thus cleansed and sanctified, so long as we are in contact with the world we are liable to a certain degree of earthly defilement, and it especially behooves each one not only to look out for himself but to help one another to get rid of earthly defilements, thus serving his brethren, helping them in the weaknesses, trials, and imperfections of the flesh, assisting them to become overcomers. In these respects he is co-operating in the great work of washing the saints' feet, cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord.-2 Cor. 7:1.

SALVATION, ITS EXTENT AND SCOPE

PART IV

ETERNAL LIFE ON CONDITION OF OBEDIENCE -- "THE DOCTRINE OF THE AGES"

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." -- John 3:16; 1 John 5:12.

IT CANNOT have escaped the notice of any Bible student, that a fact made most prominent in Holy Writ is that endless life is offered and promised only on certain conditions, namely that of obedience to God; that the one to whom perpetual life is to be given shall be found in fullest accord with his Maker. Nor is the fact less explicit in Scripture that the one failing to obey, failing to be found in harmony with God after a full fair trial, shall not see life, shall not continue to live. Thus Jesus said that the obedient believer should not perish but have everlasting life.

There are many statements in the Bible carrying this thought. The very fact that conditions are stated, of itself implies the possibility of failure to comply therewith, especially when the factor of the human will, and power to choose is considered. In our Lord's words (John 3:16) the Greek word for perish is "apollumi," and signifies "to loose away, to destroy." It bears no idea whatever of temporary cessation of life, nor of the hope of living again. Whatever takes place to change the state of one having perished must be the result of a separate and distinct plan of redemption to lift such an one out of that state. Thus it is in the case of Adam and the entire human family, coming under the original sentence of perishing. The sentence as passed on all men originally meant that all perished, but the "grace of God that bringeth salvation" operated to grant release from that sentence, bringing redemption, final deliverance to as many as will receive it on God's terms -- "whosoever will."

"Doctrine of the Ages" Product of Human Manufacture

It is at this point that the advocates of Universalism insist that if we admit that God has planned to bring all men once out of the state of those having perished, He is quite able to do it again. and even a third time, and in fact as many times as necessary to accomplish a reconciliation of sinners; the claim being that if sinners are given a sufficient number of chances through several ages, all are bound to come under the constraining influence of His grace and be reconciled to God. The theory and scheme are woven together with certain Scriptures which refer to the ages of the future, beyond the reign of evil, and beyond the thousand-year reign of Christ. And this phase of human philosophy is termed by its advocates "The doctrine of the ages"; the sum of the theory being that during the various future ages before the grand ocean of eternity commences, rebel sinners will be redeemed again and again many times; and this is what is termed by some advocates of the theory as "death being a process spread out over the period of the Eons"; the thought being that through the processes of grace working through these ages the rebellious and wicked will finally be reclaimed to sin no more.

On the surface the scheme appears most benevolent and longsuffering; however it must be weighed in the light of the Divine philosophy which soon reveals that such a conclusion is presumptuous and wiser than God; for His Word gives no support to the idea of such a

consummation. Again we acknowledge that God, if He so chose, could provide such numberless opportunities for the rebellious wicked of the future to come forth from the state of destruction, death. It is not a question of what He has the power to do; it is a question of what He will do, and what He has declared His purpose to be. That the Scriptures do clearly imply that there will be time periods or ages succeeding the thousand years of restitution and reign of Christ and the Church, no Bible student will question. Thus in the Authorized Version we have the following expression several times: "To whom be glory for ever and ever." -- Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 13:21; 1 Pet. 4:11; Rev. 5:13.

Have We Any Light Concerning the "Ages of the Ages"

In all the above references the word "ever" is translated from the Greek word "aion," which merely signifies a time or an age. The term then "for ever and ever" literally means "for the ages of the ages," without regard to what takes place in those ages. What then is the so-called doctrine of the ages? and what Scriptural support is there for believing that the aionian times, or ages subsequent to the reign of Christ, will be devoted to the spreading out of death and the reclaiming of those who will still be the rebellious wicked at the close of the thousand-year period of Christ's reign? We reply that the word doctrine has the significance of teaching, or a system of instruction in which certain truths are set forth and expounded. We ask, What doctrine or system of teaching does the Bible give with regard to the "ages of the ages" beyond Christ's reign? What unfoldment or instruction is there relating to the ages, times, or Eons, beyond the age of restitution? Surely none whatever; no reference of any kind is there that gives us a clue to any of the Divine dealings or operations; no information that could be construed to be a doctrine relating to those future times.

Why then speak of "The doctrine of the ages" with reference to those future times concerning which we have **no** doctrine, **no** teaching, **no** instruction, and of which we **know absolutely nothing**? Not only is there no information given us in the Old Testament prophecies bearing on those ages of the distant future, but neither our Lord nor the Apostles related even one detail concerning them. If it be true that death is a process to be "spread out over the Eons" of the future, and that the plan of redemption pertaining to man reaches out far into those times in the remote hereafter, why do we not have some light upon the matter in God's Word? Why not some details clearly setting before us redemption's story, as it is alleged it will continue to be told throughout those ages when, it is claimed, all the wicked will be reconciled to God?

When the Great Curtain of God's Drama Falls

Not only so, but the last book of the Bible bears us down to the close of the Millennial Judgment Day Age, or Eon, and we are given every

inference that the grand consummation of the Divine Plan is there reached; the closing visions of the Revelation portray that consummation, in the coming down to earth of the New Jerusalem government or Kingdom of God, represented in Christ and the Church. This Divine government, this mediatorial throne, is seen to prevail throughout the thousand-year period (Rev. 20:3, 4, 7; 21:1-5), that all the children of Adam purchased by our Lord's ransom sacrifice (1 Cor. 15:22), the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18, 19; 1 John 2:2), may be given each his individual share in the benefits of the Atonement -- these benefits, as we have heretofore seen, to consist of the awakening from the tomb and the advantage of a clear understanding of the Divine will and coming to a knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim. 2:4; Jer. 31 :34; Isa. 11 :9), in which condition each person will be fully ,responsible and on trial for life. In other words, the times of restitution or restoration will return to **whosoever will of mankind**, all those blessings of life and paradise originally possessed and lost because of sin. The conclusion of the thousand-year judgment Eon presents a purified earth; a "little season" set apart at the conclusion of the reign of Christ is sufficient to test the human family once more (Rev. 20:1-3, 7), as our first parents were tested at their creation. The results of that future test are seen to be that some, we know not the number, will prove to be disloyal and will be rejected of God -- "fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." -- Rev. 20:7-9.

With that last account the great curtain of God's Drama falls; all the scenery of the vast beyond is hidden, from view and all is silent so far as' any further information is concerned, except that Scripture references might be multiplied, clearly conveying the thought that all those ages thereafter will be seasons of blessedness, of unspeakable happiness and of life. Are we then justified in assuming that those who are said to perish in the Second Death during or at the end of the Millennial Age (Rev. 20:13-15; 21:8) will be redeemed a second, third, or fourth time in those ages that follow? Surely such reasoning could not be short of presumption, being without any Bible testimony whatever in support of such a conclusion.

Our Information Limited to Plan of Redemption

The fact that other ages or Eons are specified to follow the thousand-year age or period, by no means proves that the work of redemption and recovery of sinful man continues on. Just what the work of those ages is, none can know because it is not revealed. And whether or not there are several or many of those ages, times, or Eons, to pass before the great eternity itself commences, we cannot know; or whether or not the designation "ages of the ages" is merely another way of designating eternity, or merely another term for expressing the idea of continued time, we cannot certainly know.

In consideration of the foregoing, it should be evident to every candid reader that the only plan or "doctrine of the ages" of which we know anything, is that specified by the Apostle Paul when addressing the

brethren at Ephesus and unfolding for them the secret of the ages or plan for man's redemption, he designated it "a plan of the ages which He [God] formed for the anointed Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3:11, Diaglott.) This plan of the ages discussed by the Apostle can refer to no other plan than that of the purpose which has been working out through those ages commencing with man's creation, including the various epochs or time periods under the reign of evil, and reaching over unto the close of Messiah's glorious reign. These alone are evidently the only ages that St. Paul had in mind, for he does not attempt to enlighten the Church concerning any time periods beyond the close of Christ's reign, and he tells the Church he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Therefore, if there were other ages during which the Divine economy or Divine Plan was to be consummated, St. Paul knew nothing of them, for he does not attempt to expound any truths or to convey any light bearing- upon any later times than those which reach to the conclusion of the one-thousand-year epoch.

(To be Continued)

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren:

The Lord is crowding the blessings so fast that I cannot contain them all, so I shall proceed to unload some of them on you. This is my excuse for writing you again so soon (Manna, March 23).

First I must tell you of the joy those August Heralds have brought. I have heard from three out on the Pacific Coast to whom, I sent them, and each letter included several others who are vitally interested. Sister ___ of Vancouver sent for more at once, she tells me, to distribute to other hungry souls out there, and got the Revelation books for herself. There are two sisters besides herself in close harmony in Vancouver -- all of them Ex-"Standfasts," and earnestly trimming away error as fast as it is manifest to them.

Another one is Brother ___ of Victoria. He wrote at midnight of the day the "Herald" reached him-just a line to thank me for sending it. He had been reading it all evening he said, and found it had "the right ring." I'm waiting to hear more. There are seven or eight truth-seekers there.

The third one is Sister late of Victoria but now in Seattle. I'm going to enclose her letter, and let you see for yourself what are the fruits of your labor of love in feeding the Lord's starving and bruised, pitiful sheep. She is just out of fearful bondage and error. Ezekiel thirty-four wars never truer.

I am interested in watching the Lord's hand in all this. It seems that there is a decided movement toward His table (Luke 12:37) as you are

servicing it. Many are but now learning of your ministry and instantly recognizing the Master's voice. My own heart is fairly breaking with joy in being permitted a tiny part in the work.

Now I turn from this joyous matter to another marvelous phase of the Lord's bounty; . . . I mean my own spiritual development. (1 Thess. 5:12.) I was lean and hungry when He directed me to your ministry, but now --"Out -of my distress I called upon Jehovah: Jehovah answered me and set me in a large place,." First you showed me some wrong views I was holding. When I had corrected my doctrines, you started me to studying the subject of the Holy Spirit. With the assistance of the "Herald" I seem able to grasp a depth of meaning in the Scriptures that heretofore were closed to me; and also to digest them and incorporate them in daily living. I am so glad you have called my attention to the labor of brethren long since gone from earthly scenes. I find the Truth richer and broader and deeper. Even the cross-references in my Bible are now a special occasion of praise and gratitude, as I find how much they help me in tracing the Comforter through Holy Writ. It would take a long letter to tell you in detail of the help your ministry is to me, every hour of every day. I have been wakened, refreshed, strengthened, rebuked, and encouraged. I was on a fair way to becoming lukewarm and overcome with the cares of this life. You have stimulated me to study, intelligently and to some purpose.

I shall never cease to benefit by Brother Streeter's warning in connection with the Message to Ephesus. Sometimes I think that is really at the bottom of my new joy, peace, zeal, and understanding . . . I recognize the Holy Spirit in your writings; hence the weight, vitality, and pertinence of it all. I am amazed and almost, overwhelmed as I see the living issues dealt with. Evidently the Lord knows what we need and when we need it. We acknowledge together that the glory is all His; but it is my privilege to recognize the broken and emptied vessels whom He is pleased to use.

Now that I have again "located myself on the stream of time," have awakened to a keener realization of what consecration means, to a deeper and fuller sense of what my relationship to the Lord means, I can rejoice in patience and hope as never before. And instead of endeavoring to grow the fruits of the Spirit from the outside by my own well-meant but misguided efforts, I have learned the secret -- to quench not the Spirit, but to give it room and opportunity to show its mighty power. This means balancing of faith and works, of confidence and humility. I am actually learning how to fight.

May the Lord pour out His richest blessings upon you all, as you continue to lay down your lives. My son joins me in fervent Christian love to all the dear Israel of God.

Your sister by His abounding favor, R. A. -- III.

[Following is the letter referred to in the above as having been received from the Sister "late from Victoria but now in Seattle."]

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Greetings in Jesus' name. I am writing to you tonight, dear sister, acknowledging receipt of "The Herald of Christ's Kingdom." I thank you so much for sending it to me. Its wonderful chronological data has so strengthened and established my faith -- all Scriptural proof, and harmonizing so beautifully with Brother Russell's teachings. I must say it came in answer to prayer. Surely the Lord sent it, and I can do nothing else than accept it to be the Truth.

I have been undergoing some strange experiences since I last wrote you After getting away from the environment which has hampered my spiritual progress for the last year, the Lord has given me a firm footing on the true foundation again. He has gradually been leading me to see that the priceless hope which has been my life since I consecrated was truly my right. But my mind being befogged with the errors of the past two or three years . . . I had completely lost myself on the stream of trine; even though I had settled it in my mind that "1933 was the date which we could expect to see fulfilled that which we expected to see in 1914." Do you know that Brother Russell said in one of his sermons ("Pastor Russell's Sermons," page 480) that some claimed that Zedekiah's dethronement dated 588 B. C.. and if so it would make a difference of 18 years and make the Gentile Times end in 1932 instead of 1914. But he favored the latter date. Now that point was called to my attention by a sister out here and has been one of special interest to me since. Isn't it wonderful to think the Lord did not let Brother Russell see these little points.. It has really been for the testing of the Church.

Now dear, while I acknowledge this to be an answer to prayer, there are others who say the same thing. Brother ____, who has been an elder in the I. B. S. A. for years, received one of these Heralds and says the same thing.

Sister ____ is rejoicing over this as I am and says it is just what we have longed to know. Strange this never came to us before. She has some old "Heralds" about 1918, but laid them away and never read them. We got them out Sunday and were impressed by the lovely spirit shown. Can I get some extra copies of the one you sent. me? I know several who have been perplexed like myself who would be glad to read them: This just confirms: my hope and I am. rejoicing as never before. -- Psa. 18:21.

The former chronological date, 1925, did much to confuse the scattered sheep. Alas how many have been "beating the air." Brother Russell said chronology was not given to alarm the world, it was not given to the world at all, but to comfort and guide the Church, and how true it is. How the Lord has blessed those dear brethren who have so diligently searched out the Scriptures to find the discrepancy in our former chronology: Tell me, who are these people? and how long have you been associated with them? I have been searching, searching

I would like to get the book I see advertised in the "Herald," "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." . . .

Oh it is so glorious, dear sister, to feel my feet on the firm foundation again. I want to begin in dead earnest to trim away old errors as fast as I recognize them. My heart is filled with joy these days because after all the bitterness and sorrow, I am now reaping the after-fruits of blessing. I never forget to thank Him each day for the joys of the Truth- that it is still the one absorbing theme of life I have time to meditate; to read and study. The dear Lord saw I needed the rest and the time for study and communion with Him. Oh the hours spent with Him are sweet; and precious indeed! . . .

Now once again I want to thank you for the joy I have received through, the "Herald." May God bless ,you richly. . .

Ever your sister by His grace, F. P. -- Wash.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Greetings! Again we unitedly express our appreciation of your labor of love to us for this year fast drawing to a close. We are thankful to God for the bountiful table He continues to spread before us in this valley of :conflicts. He who knows all our needs has been pleased to supply us .according to His good pleasure far more abundantly than we could ask or think. The passing of Brother Streeter (that tower of strength) from you left a sting of sorrow on our minds for you who felt the loss so much. It reminded us of another great man of God from whom we have received very great blessings, and though bereft of these able ministers of God, our gracious Heavenly Father's wonderful care for us sees that we lack nothing; and like one of old, with uplifted hands and hearts, we can say, "There has not failed one word of all His good promises."

The perplexing conditions of the time present, not only in the world, but in the house of God, obviously adds. double weight of care to your sacred charge. We praise God that it has seemed good in His sight to bear you up, and so counsel you to the end that your ministry is indeed the bread of life broken to us. Your ardent labor in holy things proves to us like "A cry at midnight" arousing, us to awake from sleep and put on the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

The ministry of the "Herald" has the same sanctifying touch of the Watch Tower of bygone days of most blessed memories. Dear brethren, God is with you. Be strong and very courageous. Let nothing beat down your courage.. Remember in far away Australia a little flock of brethren are holding your hands up by prayer, being bound to you in the bonds of Christian 1øvä. May the grace of. our Lord Jesus be continually with you all.

The Perth Bible Class -- Aus.

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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OFFERERS OF STRANGE FIRE

"And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." -- Lev. 10:1, 2.

THE OFFERING of strange, fire by two members of the Levitical priesthood is recorded amongst the incidents of Israel's history, from which no doubt those of this dispensation of the spirit can draw most valuable lessons. The Bible throughout presents in striking contrast, reverence and irreverence, obedience and disobedience, loyalty to God and disloyalty to God.

Inasmuch as the Aaronic priesthood was a typical order or arrangement, the course of disobedience on the part of Nadab and Abihu may also be regarded as of a typical character. But this should give even greater emphasis to the solemn lesson to be drawn from the occurrence. In the preceding chapter (Leviticus 9), where we have the account of the various offerings which related to the consecration of the priesthood, we read that **"all was done as the Lord commanded"** with the result of manifested glory. What a solemn contrast is here noted as in chapter 10 we read of the two priests who **"offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded not,"** and the result was judgment. No sooner had the sound of the shout of victory died away until we behold the manifestation of a false worship; no sooner had these priests assumed the Divine position ere it was deliberately polluted by disregard of the solemn commandment; and no sooner were these priests installed than they sadly failed in the prosecution of their holy offices.

The Sin of Presumption

An expositor who has written lucidly on this incident makes the following interesting comments

"The page of human history has ever been a sadly blotted one. It is a record of failure from first to last. Amid all the delights of Eden, man hearkened to the tempter's lie (Gen. 3) ; when preserved from judgment by the hand of electing love, and introduced into a restored earth, he was guilty of the sin of intemperance (Gen. 9) ; when conducted, by Jehovah's outstretched arm, into the land of Canaan, he 'forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth' (Judges 2:13) ; when placed at the very summit of earthly power and glory, with untold wealth at his feet, and all the resources of the world at his

command, he gave his heart to the uncircumcised stranger. (1 Kings 11.) No sooner had the blessings of the Gospel been promulgated than it became needful for the Holy Spirit to prophesy concerning 'grievous wolves,' 'apostasy,' and all manner of failure. (Acts 20 :29 ; 1 Tim. 4:13 ; 2 Tim. 3 1-5 ; 2 Pet. 2; Jude.) And, to crown all, we have the prophetic record of human apostasy from amidst all the splendors of Millennial glory. -- Rev. 20:7-10.

"Thus, man spoils everything. Place him in a position of highest dignity, and he will degrade himself ; endow him with the most ample privileges, and he will abuse them; scatter blessings around him in richest profusion, and he will prove ungrateful; place him in the midst of the most impressive institutions, and he will corrupt them. Such is man! Such is nature in its fairest forms end under the most favorable circumstances!"

Departed From the Word of Jehovah

Various questions logically arise: What was the sum of the failure of these priests? Were they genuine priests, or were they usurpers of the office and mere professors? Not so, we answer. As sons of Aaron they were in every way genuine and duly acknowledged members of the holy family -- properly appointed priests. Their ministry, their priestly vesture-everything pertaining to them, seems in every way to have been proper. In what then, was their sin? Had they stained any of the articles of the tabernacle with human blood, or defiled the 'sacred apartments with some vile sin which shocks the moral sense? There is no evidence that such was the case. The simple record is "they offered strange fire before the Lord, which He commanded them not." The sacred recorder thus places his finger directly upon their sin, and as the above writer goes on to say, "They departed in their worship from the plain word of Jehovah, who had fully and plainly instructed them as to the mode of their worship. We have already alluded to the Divine fullness and sufficiency of the Word of the Lord, in reference to every branch of priestly service. There was no room left for man to introduce what he might deem desirable , or expedient. 'This is the thing which the Lord has commanded' was quite sufficient. It made all very plain

and very simple. Nothing was needed on man's part save a spirit of implicit obedience to the Divine command. But herein they failed, Man. has always proved himself ill-disposed to walk in the narrow path of strict adherence to the plain Word of God. The by-path has ever seemed to present resistless charms to the poor human heart. 'Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.' (Prov. 9:17.) Such is the enemy's language; but the lowly, obedient heart knows full well that the path of subjection to the Word of God is the only one that leads to 'waters' that are really 'sweet,' or to 'bread' that can rightly be called 'pleasant.' Nadab and Abihu might have deemed one kind of 'fire' as good as another, but it was not their province to decide as to that. They should have acted according to the Word of the Lord; but instead of this, they took their own way and reaped the awful fruits thereof.

Fruit of Man's Corrupt Will

"'And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.' How deeply solemn! Jehovah was dwelling in the midst of His people, to govern, to judge, and to act, according to the claims of His nature. At the close of chapter 9, we read, 'and there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat.' This was Jehovah's acceptance of a true sacrifice; but in chapter 10, it is His judgment upon erring priests. It is a double action of the same fire. The burnt offering went up as a sweet odor: the 'strange fire' was rejected as an abomination. The Lord was glorified in the former; but it would have been a dishonor to accept the latter. Divine grace accepted and delighted in that which was a type of Christ's most precious sacrifice: Divine holiness rejected that which was the fruit of man's corrupt will -- a will never more hideous and abominable than when active in the things of God.

"'Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' The dignity and glory of the entire economy depended upon the strict maintenance of Jehovah's righteous claims. If these were to be trifled with, all was forfeited. If man were permitted to defile the sanctuary of the Divine presence by 'strange fire,' there was an end to everything. Nothing could be permitted to ascend from the priestly censer but the pure fire, kindled from off the altar of God, and fed by the 'pure incense beaten small.' Beauteous type of true saintly worship, of which the Father is the object, Christ the material, and the Holy Spirit the power. Man must not be allowed to introduce his devices into the worship of God. All his efforts can only issue in the presentation of 'strange fire'-unhallowed incense-false worship. His very best attempts, are an absolute abomination in the sight of God."

The above expositor is evidently not referring to the sincere struggles of "earnest spirits searching after peace with God"; nor to the earnest efforts of the loyal though unenlightened consciences to acquire an understanding with regard to the 'forgiveness of sin "by works of law

or the ordinances of systematic religion; all such will doubtless issue through the exceeding goodness of God, in the clear light of a known and an enjoyed salvation. They prove very clearly that peace is earnestly sought; though, at the same time, they prove just as clearly that peace has not yet been found. There never was one who honestly followed the faintest glimmerings of light which fell upon his understanding who did not, in due time, receive more. 'To him that hath shall more be given.' And again,. 'The path of the just is as a shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.'

God's Holiness Rejects Strange Fire

"All this is as plain as it is encouraging; but it leaves wholly untouched the question of the human will, and its impious workings in connection with the service and worship of God. All such workings must inevitably call down, sooner or later, the solemn judgment of a righteous God, who cannot suffer His righteous claims to be trifled with. 'I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me, and before all the people I will be glorified.' Men will be dealt with according to their profession. If men are honestly seeking, they will assuredly find; but when men approach as worshipers, they are no longer to be regarded as seekers, but as those who profess to have found; and then, if their priestly censer smokes with unhallowed fire -- if they offer unto God the element of a spurious worship-if they profess to tread His courts, unwashed, unsanctified, unsubdued -- if they place on His altar the workings of their own corrupt will, what must be the result? Judgment! Yes, sooner or later, judgment must come. It may linger, but it will come. It could not be otherwise. And not only must judgment come at last, but **there is, in every case, the immediate rejection on the part of Heaven of all worship which has not the Father for its object, Christ for its material, and the Holy Spirit for its power.** God's holiness is as quick to reject all 'strange fire' as His grace is ready to accept the faintest, feeblest breathings of a true heart. He must pour out His righteous judgment upon all false worship, though He will never 'quench the smoking flax nor break the bruised reed.' The thought of this is most solemnizing, when one calls to mind the thousands of censers smoking with strange fire throughout the wide domain of Christendom. May the Lord, in His rich grace, add to the number of true worshipers, who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. It is infinitely happier to think of the true worship ascending from honest hearts to the throne of God, than to contemplate, even for a moment, the spurious worship on which the Divine judgments must ere long be poured out. Every one who knows, through grace, the pardon of his sins through the atoning blood of Jesus, can worship the Father in spirit and in truth. He knows the proper ground, the proper object, the proper title, the proper capacity of worship. These things can only be known in a Divine way. They do not belong to nature or to earth. They are spiritual and heavenly. Very much of that which passes among men for the worship of God is but 'strange fire' after all."

Strange Fire Misuse of Sacred Offices

We believe the writer of the foregoing has dealt most forcefully and pointedly with the essential items of the lesson involved in the sin of Nadab and Abihu and its consequences. We are to look for the fulfillment of the picture and lesson amongst the antitypical priestly order, amongst those who by having taken the proper steps of faith and consecration are rightfully members of the antitypical, sacrificing Aaronic priesthood. The sin that corresponds to that 'of the two sons of Aaron relates to the misuse on the part of the priesthood of their sacred offices, the misappropriation of the elements of service and ministry; the disregard of the holy command as to what should be offered to the Lord, as to what should be administered in behalf of the people. What is Truth? What shall be offered or declared as the Divine will? What is the present work and mission of the saints? What are the functions of their present office?-all of these involved in the priestly office are the solemn questions of the hour.

Modern Offerers of Strange Fire

It is the sin of presumption that we observe defiling the sanctuary of the Church all along through the Age. Apostasy after apostasy. departure after departure marks the course of the antitypical Priesthood. **"Offering strange fire before the Lord which He commanded not"** has defiled the sacred precincts of the Priesthood throughout this Age, as it did in the days of ancient Israel. In the substituting of forms and methods of service contrary to Divine command, the proclaiming of a mixed message, the teaching of that which is not sustained in the Word of the Lord, and "which the Lord commanded them not," proves only too conclusively how we have unto this day many who are desecrating their holy offices in the "offering of strange fire." And from this account of what took place in the priesthood of Israel in the days of old we have that which enables us to understand the meaning. of much that is going on in these days. Do we wonder how brethren who have been long years in the Christian way, professing consecration and professing to be occupying the office of the priesthood, can take part and mix in that "which the **Lord commanded them not**"? Do we marvel that there are those who serve to the household of faith mixed and impure doctrines, presuming to give instruction in things for which they have no authority, turning aside more or less from the course of true piety, reverence and godliness, to doctrines, schemes and works of their own device and void of the counsel of God? We need not wonder at this which is but another repetition of history, and which is in fulfillment of the prophetic page, that in the latter times many shall "depart from the faith" and "after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and **shall be turned unto fables** [guesses, theories, speculations]." -- 2 Tim. 4:3, 4.

Perhaps at no time in the history of the Age has it been more manifest than at the present that there are many such brethren, lacking reverence for the Word and will of the Lord, and after the manner of Nadab and Abibhu offering strange fire; misusing their holy office in the propagation of a ministry, service and teaching in utter disregard of the Word of the Lord and "which He commanded them not."

In Due Time Judgment of God Manifest

Nor can we suppose the consequences will be ultimately any the less fatal today than they were with those typical characters in Israel: "And there went out fire from the Lord and devoured them." The fire of Jehovah's displeasure is manifested differently in this dispensation. Now it is a matter of faith, of viewing all things from the standpoint of the great consummation; His judgment or displeasure may be determined now, while to outward appearances the evil doers may go on in much the same strain, as though the Lord were taking no note of them. But alas, in due time all the secret hidden things shall come to light; and the Master Himself declared that it will be "in that day" that He will profess unto them, "I recognize you not." Beloved in the Lord, with what solemnity we should look upon the days and the circumstances in which we live, realizing "that the end of all things is at hand," and that "judgment begins at the House of God." The same writer continues:

"May we learn to walk softly in the Divine presence-to tread Jehovah's courts with unshod foot and reverent spirit. May our priestly censer ever bear upon it the one material-the beaten incense of, Christ's manifold perfections, and may the power of the Spirit kindle up the holy flame. All else is not only worthless, but vile. Everything that springs from nature's energy, everything produced by the actings of the human will -- the most fragrant incense of man's devising -- the most intense ardor of natural devotion, will all issue in 'strange fire' and evoke the solemn judgment of the Lord God Almighty. Oh for a thoroughly truthful heart and worshiping spirit, in the presence of our God and Father, continually!

"But let not any upright, though timid, heart be discouraged or alarmed. It is too often the case that those who -really ought to be alarmed take no heed, while those for whom the Spirit of grace would only design a word of comfort and encouragement apply to themselves in a wrong way the startling warnings of holy Scripture."

"HE IS RISEN, EVEN AS HE SAID"

"Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." -- John 20:24-29.

THE TEACHING concerning the resurrection of the dead is peculiar to the Jewish and Christian religions. Other theologies of the world

contain no provision for a resurrection, the reason being due largely to their philosophy which claims that those who die are .really not dead but have merely changed their form of existence and are more alive than they were before death. The writers of the New Testament to the contrary admit that all their hope rested in the fact that Christ did rise from the dead. St. Paul affirms, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we and found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." -- 1 Cor. 15:14-18.

It is most important that the proofs of our Lord's resurrection from the dead be kept in mind by those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit. As this information was indispensable to our attainment of justified faith in Jesus, so it is also necessary for others. Indeed none could reach the higher development of faith and Christian experience without this foundation well established. As it was necessary for us to know that Christ died for our sins, before we, could believe in Him as the Redeemer, as the one who had secured the right to be the Life-giver to Adam and his race, so it was necessary for us to believe more than this, namely that He who died for our sins rose again, so that He might be our justifier, our Lord, our guide, our helper, our advocate with the Father, and by and by the Mediator between God and the world. From this standpoint, therefore, our lesson is important as providing us with the necessary reasonable proofs to lay before those who are approaching the subject our friends, the members of our families, etc., who have not yet accepted Christ.

The Witnesses Most Reliable

The resurrection of Christ is vouched for by many most, honorable witnesses, of whom it cannot be said that they were shrewd and learned and took advantage of opportunity to hoax the public. On the contrary, they had nothing to gain by their course-everything to jeopardize. The witnesses were not only poor but unlearned, and write themselves down, as "ignorant." It would have been to their advantage to drop Jesus and the malodorous reputation associated with His name. They testified to His resurrection, and preached in His name and through His power as the risen one the forgiveness of sins-and did this at their own expense, with sufferings, stripes, imprisonment, and cruel death as the reward. Their testimony fully concurs with the Master's own words before He died -- words which His own intimate followers could not appreciate, could not comprehend-that on the third day He would rise from the dead.

It is not reasonable to, suppose that honest men would misrepresent such a matter as the resurrection of our Lord, and it would be foolish for them to lay such stress upon a matter of which they were not morally convinced themselves. Why dwell so earnestly upon the

resurrection of the dead if they had the least doubt on the subject? Why declare that all faith and all hope in Christ, all hope of forgiveness of sins, all hope of a future life by a resurrection was at an end if Christ had not risen, unless they were satisfied beyond peradventure? Especially so when the learned of that time were teaching Plato's philosophy, that the dead are not dead but more alive, and hence need no resurrection.

Our Lord announced in advance that He would rise from the dead on the third day. In any view of the matter our Lord could not have been exactly three days and three nights in the tomb according to the record-it would have been either more or less, because He died in the afternoon and rose from the dead in the morning, hence no exact statement of even days and nights would fit the case. We recognize the custom of the times of reckoning a portion of a day or a year as though it were a complete one. For instance, throughout all the records of the chronicles of the kings we find that a portion of a year is counted for a year; than if a long reigned three years and three months it would be counted a .reign of four years, or ii he. reigned two years and three months it would be counted three years; since he did reign a portion of the third year. So do the statement of our Lord's period in the tomb, it is properly enough spoken of as three days and three nights, and shown thus:

Jewish Reckoning

4 to 6 p. m. Friday -- 2 hours.

6 p. m. Friday to 6 p. m. Saturday -- 24 hours.

6 p. m. Saturday to 4 or 5 a. m. Sunday -- 10 or 11 hours.

By Modern Reckoning

4 p. m. to 12 midnight, Friday -- 8 hours.

From midnight Friday to midnight Saturday -- 24 hours.

From midnight Saturday to 5 a. m. Sunday -- 5 hours.

The narrative is simple, unvarnished, natural. The different Gospels tell of the matter in different language, narrating sometimes the same item in different form and, sometimes different items connected with the manifestations of the forty days of our Lord's presence after He arose from the dead and before He ascended on high. Although these accounts differ they in nowise contradict each other; each told what he himself saw and knew; whereas had the account been a spurious one, gotten up to deceive, undoubtedly great care would have been exercised to have every witness tell the same taping. Here, then, is a sure proof of the truthfulness of the records.

The Same Jesus Risen

The earthquake had already rolled away the stone, the sentries hard fled in terror from the manifestation of the angel's presence -- they fled to the high priest, who probably had engaged to be their paymaster --

having them detailed for a special police duty by Pilate. But the angel, so terrible to those out of harmony with the Lord, spoke graciously to those who were his friends, assuring them that Jesus was risen, and directing them to go quickly and tell His disciples, also assuring them that Jesus would go into Galilee, and intimating a general meeting of His friends there, which later took place. En route they met Jesus, who sent the same message to His disciples. Seemingly the Lord recognized that woman can exercise faith more readily than can man,, and here He used them as His servants and mouthpieces to bear His message-to prepare His disciples, to assist them more readily to accept the truth of His resurrection.

For forty days our Lord was with His disciples before His ascension, yet He revealed Himself to them, according to the records, not more than eleven times in all -- and some of these instances are, probably duplications. His interviews with the disciples lasted but for a few moments each, and were surrounded by circumstances and conditions which spoke to them most eloquently that a great change had occurred to Him-that He was no longer the same being, although He evidently has the same loving interest in them as before. He was still their Lord and Master, this same Jesus, although no longer in the flesh. He was "the Lord, that spirit," a "quickening spirit."

Though Clothed in Flesh No Longer Fleshly Being

A view entertained by many Christian people is that our Lord arose from the dead to the same conditions exactly that He had during His life on earth-a man subject to the same limitations that He had before His death; and that the various fleshly bodies in which He appeared to His disciples were His glorious spirit body. This view we think is not sustained by the Scriptures when all the facts are considered. The view which we believe is the Scriptural one is that our Lord arose from the dead a spirit being, but since human beings cannot see a spirit being without injury, our Lord-really a spirit being -- clothed Himself as it were with flesh and clothing in order to appear to His followers -- in order to give them a demonstration that He was no longer dead; and -- secondarily by appearing to them in various forms, as a gardener, as a stranger, as a man on the shores of Galilee, and as the one who was pierced-that by all these changes He might demonstrate to His followers that, although risen from the dead, He was no longer the same being as before nor subject to the same limitations as before; but now as a New Creature, a spirit being, even as He explained to Nicodemus, He had power to come and go as the wind, and none could tell from whence He came or whither He went -- so is every one born of the Spirit, every one who experiences a resurrection to the spirit nature -- John 3:6-8.

Our Lord had indeed appeared subsequently to Saul of Tarsus, and manifested to him a certain measure of the glory of His resurrection condition, but the effect upon Saul was to blind him so that it required a miracle for his belief. To have so appeared to the eleven Apostles

and the others of the five hundred brethren who believed on Him would not have been a satisfactory proof of our Lord's resurrection. They would merely have known that they had seen a great light, experienced a shock, and that they had heard certain wonderful words, but where would have been the proof to them or others of mankind that the -one who was buried in Joseph's tomb had arisen from the dead and was now a spirit being? Our Lord, therefore, evidently chose by all means the better plan for making known the great fact of His resurrection. He appeared as a man, but under varying conditions, showing that He was not bound by the limitations of the human nature, but that He appeared and disappeared in bodily forms as the angels had in previous times, as, for instance the three who appeared as men to Abraham for the purpose of communion with him, who ate dinner with him and whom he afterwards came to know as the Lord and two angels. For' a similar purpose the Lord had appeared to His disciples after His resurrection: He veiled His glory and they saw it not when He appeared in various forms.

"Lovest Thou Me More?"

On the shore of Lake Galilee where some of the Apostles were fishing, we find one of the most interesting and impressive scenes in which our risen Lord appeared to His Apostles. On this occasion occurred the searching interview of ,the Master with the Apostle Peter, following the miracle of the enormous draught of fishes.

The stranger had not the clothing by which they had known their Lord, neither did He have the marks of the nails in His hands and feet, that they might thus identify Him. This was a different manifestation. They knew Him as did those with whom He walked to Emmaus, who recognized Him in the blessing of the bread, and not by His features or clothing or wounds. They recognized that none other than He could have performed such a miracle. They did not ask who He was; they felt a restraint; as we read, "None of them durst ask who He was," but all knew that He was the Lord.

The stranger addressed St. Peter particularly, saying, "Lovest thou Me more than these?" -- these boats and nets, etc., pertaining to the fishing business. St. Peter answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love Thee." He used a word expressing fondness of love. Jesus replied, "Feed My lambs."

Then came the question a second time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" A great pressure was felt by St. Peter. Why did the Master so particularly question his love? Why should He put this question more to him than to the others? Was it because he had been the first of the disciples to suggest the resumption of the fishing business? Was he to blame for this? But he answered, "Lord, Thou knowest that I affectionately love Thee." Jesus this time replied, "Tend My sheep." For the third time Jesus said to St. Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, **dost thou** affectionately love Me?" Here Jesus used the same word that St.

Peter had used, as though He questioned the affection and depth of St. Peter's love. Ah! the third time must have sent the memory of St. Peter back to the scene in Caiaphas' Judgment Hall, when he denied his Master the third time, even with cursing. And now Jesus for the third time had asked him respecting his love and whether it was really a love of affection! St. Peter's choking reply was, "Lord, Thou knowest all things! Thou **knowest** that I affectionately love Thee!" The Lord's reply was, "Feed My sheep."

St. Peter's Heart Loyal

How deeply important and instructive the example of the Master in the way He reproved the Apostle. So far as the record shows, the three inquiries which our Lord made of St. Peter respecting his love for Him were the only rebukes ever given him as an offset, or punishment for his shameful denial of the Master on the night in which He was betrayed.

Had many of us been in the Master's place we would have felt that it was necessary to make St. Peter very humbly apologize before we would have anything further to do with him. We would have been inclined to speak of his weakness, of his ingratitude, of how he knew better, etc., etc. Our sense of justice would, in many instances, have entirely overshadowed our sense of mercy and sympathy. But not so with the Master. He knew the loyalty of St. Peter's heart. He knew that he had already gone out and wept bitterly over the matter. He knew what a sense of shame would be upon him and how much courage it would mean for him to think at all of meeting the Master whom he had denied.

Surely it was on account of this sympathy for St. Peter and this appreciation of the tendency he would have to become entirely discouraged that led our Lord to mention St. Peter first amongst the Apostles on the morning of His resurrection, saying to Mary, to whom He first appeared, "Go and tell my disciples, and Peter" -- don't let Peter think he is an outcast. Let him know that I think of him and love him and sympathize with him and have forgiven him, because I know he did it under stress.

We Should Copy the Master's Methods

And if our Lord and Master has set such an example of benevolence and forgiveness without request, how are we learning this lesson? To what extent do we forgive others their trespasses and to what extent do we go more than half way to let them know that we have no resentful feelings toward them? To what extent do we send them word that we think of them kindly, generously? And when the appropriate time comes and it is proper for something to be said, can we not take a lesson from the Redeemer's loving forbearance and gentleness in His merely asking the erring one if he had a proper kind of love, and when he confesses special love, then to ask him if he is sure that he has the special love?

No doubt our success as the Master's servants in feeding the brethren, the flock, and helping instead of hindering them, will be in proportion as we remember and copy His style and methods. So then, while feeding His flock, let us have continually before us the great Shepherd's example of how the flock should be dealt with.

We Shall See Him

The last appearance of the Lord was at the end of the forty days, and at the time of His ascension we read that He led them out as far as to Bethany and He lifted up His hands and blessed them, and it came to pass while He blessed them He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. -- Luke 24:50, 51.

It was years after this that St. Paul wrote, "Last of all He was seen by me also, as of one born before the time." He was seen of the other Apostles as the gardener, as a stranger, as the Crucified One, etc., etc., but when Saul of Tarsus, the last of the Apostles, saw Him, it was not so, but as we shall see Him by and by when we are changed to His likeness -- he saw Him as one of premature birth. The Church of the First-born are at the resurrection changed to be like their Lord and see Him as He is. Any special revelation of the Lord might have been withheld from the Apostle Paul until the same time except that it was necessary that the Apostles should be "witnesses," testifiers to the fact that Christ had not only died but had also risen from the dead; and in order that Paul as an Apostle might thus testify, he was granted the vision of the glorified One. He saw Him as we shall see Him in that he saw Him in the brightness of His excellent glory and not as the others, veiled in the flesh.

How thankful we should be that the time is not far distant when all the faithful, including those "who are alive and remain," shall all have been changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be made like Him and to see Him as He is, to share His glory. Not all in the same moment, but each in his own moment, changed instantly until gradually thus being changed from death unto life the full number of the very Elect shall be completed and the reign of glory shall begin.

JESUS AND THE PRAYER LIFE

(Continued from last issue)

"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet . . . and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." -- Matt. 6:6.

[Contributed from outside the Editorial Staff]

ASSURANCE in prayer is brought to our attention by Jesus in Matthew 7:7, 8, under three heads, ask, seek, and knock. These words have been referred to frequently as embodying a beautiful poetic fancy, though they seem instead to picture three distinct phases of prayer, which are essential for us to understand in order to receive the answers to our petitions.

Asking According to His Will

The first, "Ask and it shall be given to you," presents to our mind the thought of petition. While we may recognize that God knows our need, and while we may believe that He will fulfil that need, nevertheless our blessings become more appreciated when we can see that they come in answer to our petitions. Elsewhere the Apostle James admonishes, "Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss," while Jesus explains that what we ask in harmony with God's will, we shall undoubtedly receive. So then, in order to ask and receive we must first learn to know the will of God concerning us. Many and curious have been the petitions presented at the Heavenly Throne in the name of Jesus, a goodly number of which must have found no ear. If God's people could only realize the efficacy of real prayer as assisting in the sanctifying of the life, individually and collectively, they would be more energetic in gaining a knowledge of the Father's will, and then forming their petitions accordingly, relying on the promise of the Savior that such would be answered. We believe a great blessing comes to the individual who "asks," because his thoughts, instead of being of the "wandering" variety, become precise and definite, and hence prayer becomes intelligent.

Our Heavenly Father waits, to bestow upon us the fullness of His blessing, and the wonder is that we are sometimes so reluctant to present our petitions, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse where are treasured the boundless stores of Omnipotence. There is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing to prevent us lifting our hearts to God in prayer in the crowds on the street, in the workshop, or during home duties, pleading for Divine guidance.

Must Learn to Know God

The second, "seek and ye shall find," reminds us of the need of our co-operation in obtaining the answer to our prayers. The seeking

emphasizes the fact that we are so examining our life daily as to understand in a measure our needs, and hence our scrutiny of the Lord's Providences to read His answer to our earnest petitions.

God meant us to know Himself even as Jesus knew Him when here upon earth. How often the Savior said, "I know Him," and how He exhorts us to stand on Calvary that we may behold the heart of the Father: He revealed God to us in His own life, so that to know Him is to know God. And yet how little do we know of the Father! Take the Bible for example. The large majority of professing Christians are content' with a few familiar and well-trodden sections, never going further into less explored parts of the Divine testimony. The saddest part is that such have no deeper perception of the words which have become so familiar to them than at first. And so we have the rebuke and the exhortation to seek a fuller and clearer understanding of the Word of God, in order that we might grasp the portent of our answers to prayer. The Bible is not a (book of haphazard statements, ancient history, or literary achievement, but contains the principles of Divine Truth, which, if we had in mind daily, would enable us to walk worthy of our vocation. God has given us all things in Christ which pertain unto life and godliness, and it is for us to claim the whole of our inheritance by a living faith, so that we might enjoy the fullness of such blessings.

Striving to Live As We Pray

Thus we are reminded that our seeking to find, plays a very important part in our Christian experience, for it is only the one whose life is lived wholly under the eye of God who will really experience the thrill connected with answered prayer. As we review our life, how wonderful have been many answers to earnest petitions, and the blessing has been greatly increased where we .have sought to prepare our hearts for its reception. We recall the case of Samuel when Israel rejected him and chose Saul to be their king and leader. He said "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you." (1 Sam. 12:23.) There is no good obtained when one prays earnestly to the Lord for greater blessings in Christian character development, and yet does not bring his own heart into line in order to receive the answer. As it was with Job, so it is with us, "The Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends." (Job 42:10.) In the days of his prosperity Job was a man of prayer, and doubtless prayed long and fervently. It seems probable his prayers were more or less, self-centered. Finally, adversity came upon him. Every one turned against him; he lost all his possessions, and was covered with boils. His so-called friends came to argue with him, bust the whole debate brought no answer to all the facts before him. Only when he ceased to argue and prayed for those who had been despitefully using him, did he find the answer-God turning his captivity and bringing instead blessing.

It has been said that an overwhelming disaster or grief either confirms one's faith in God, or breaks it entirely. Is it not true from human

experience that those whose faith is fully confirmed, and whose lives thenceforth go on from glory to glory, are those who turn from their own misery and seek opportunities of assisting others, especially those of the household of faith. And who is there who has learned this "seeking" habit but has found the Savior's words true, "he shall find."

Often Knock at Gate of Heaven

And now the third point -- "knock and it shall be opened unto you," suggests the thought of fellowship, communion. When we visit the home of a friend, we find on the door a knocker, that by its use we may advise the inmates of our arrival and our desire for admittance. Once inside the home, we have fellowship. So does the Lord call our attention to the fact that we should often knock at the gate of heaven, seeking admittance to the Heavenly Father in the worthy name of Jesus Christ, in order that we might enjoy the blessed fellowship of the Most High.

The aged St. John exhorted all to grow in the quality of Love, and love must have its ultimate source, fountain, and origin in the heart of God. This is the reason, therefore, that those who would love purely, unselfishly, strongly, must converse deeply with God. We must get, if we would give; obtain, if we would scatter; and when we are united with Christ and God by living faith, we begin to experience the full tide of Divine love as it comes from God. Then we begin to experience what St. Paul meant when he cried, "The love of Christ constraineth us"

There are days so extraordinary for the combination of difficult circumstances, human opposition, and spiritual conflict, that they stand out clear and distinct from the rest of our lives. Looking back on them, we may almost adopt the words of the sacred writer, "There was no day like that before it or after it." But if we are living in daily fellowship with God, intent on doing His will, these days will also bring His sweet, "fear them not; for I have delivered them into thine hands." Our only anxiety should be that nothing divert us from His path, or intercept the communication of His grace. The greatness of our difficulties is permitted in order to emphasize the greatness of His grace. At these times it is very necessary not merely to ask God to help us, because the word "help" may imply considerable reliance on self, but rather our prayer should be that God would "keep" us, thus leaving the whole matter in His hands.

In all such days we may have light which cannot be accounted for by any natural reason; for our sun shall not go down, neither our moon withdraw itself; because the Lord shall be to us an everlasting light. Let us seek the grace of God in daily fellowship with Him, that we may be kept in such an attitude of soul that we shall miss nothing of God's gracious, and timely help; abiding in Him, that we may ask with the certainty that God is hearkening to us, and fighting for us.

Power of Discrimination Through Prayer

How blessed is the experience of the one who thus maintains a fellowship with the Most High, and how hallowed his life becomes, so that as He communes with God, he receives in himself the reflection, of the Divine likeness. And the glory thus viewed tinges with a Divine halo the clouds that meantime may enshroud him, and in the midst of all earthly experiences he rejoices in the same, having consideration for the beautiful Christian character to be developed as a result.

Earth's somber tints and cross-lights are very perplexing; and it is often extremely hard to detect the Truth. The foolish virgins are so much like the wise; the tares so resemble the wheat; the devil's mimicry of an angel of light is so exact. But as Jesus here points out, the power of discrimination will follow naturally on the careful cultivation of the habit of asking counsel at the' mouth of the Lord. Though we may be sure our daily course is right, it is best 'to make assurance doubly sure by lifting the heart to God for His approval, or otherwise. If there is any doubt or hesitation left after such reference, be sure that as yet the time has not come to understand all God's will. Under such circumstances-wait. If we trust God absolutely, it is for Him to give clear, directions as to what we should do; and when the time for action arrives, His instructions will be so clear and unmistak-able that we will not mistake them, or err therein.

Thus does the Lord, in. these three phases of prayer, show how we can live the victorious Christian life, and always maintain the victory over our circumstances through a daily fellowship with the Father, and complete submerging of our will in His. Let us practice these things daily and watch the result.

Choosing the Rock of Ages

Now the conclusion of the matter is stated in Matthew 7:24-29 where Jesus divides His followers into two general classes-these who hear and do His commandments, and those who hear but do not these same commandments. He likens both classes to men building a house of character, one upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and the other on the shifting sands of time. In the time of testing and proving which comes upon both, one emerges victorious, while the other is destroyed. Why so? Obviously, because some select a good site first of all; they choose the Rock of Ages, and upon that Rock build a superstructure of character, mentioned by St. Paul as being of gold, silver, and precious stones. This building is completed by hearing and doing the words of Jesus, and one portion, as we have pointed out, deals with the inner life of the individual and his prayers and supplications. As a result such build the house so securely that in the time of testing they come off victorious, through Christ Jesus. No honor is due them personally, other than that they have accepted, believed, and acted upon the exhortations of the Lord, and have proved all He said to be true.

All others, on the contrary, have not selected the proper foundation, and in their building have used such stones as self-love, pride,

worldly-prudence, self-indulgence, worldly ambition, knowledge, ethics, self-derived religion, vainglory, etc., and when all things are shaken in order that the things which cannot be shaken may remain, their house of character falls, and great is the fall of it.

How searching are these concluding words of the Lord! How we should each and all examine our own hearts before Him, and ask to be cleansed from every secret fault in order that we might finally pass the great test successfully. Our only hope is to be strong in our choice of God. The negative destruction of self is unsatisfactory. We must deliberately set ourselves towards God, our will crowning Him, and our soul making Him first. "If it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were beyond the river, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

A WORD FURTHER CONCERNING THE MEMORIAL DATE

AS STATED in a recent article, 1926 is especially one of those years when there may be a divergency of view respecting Nisan 14. We have already called attention to the information that all may acquire from the Jewish calendar, that Nisan 14 falls on March 29th (beginning in the evening, at sundown of the day before, March 28th, Jewish method of counting the day); and that Sunday evening of March 28th is the appropriate hour for the observance of the Lord's Supper. By having Nisan 14 fall on March 29th this year, it means that the Hebrews in their calculation delay nearly 44 hours after the first appearance of the new moon nearest the spring equinox before beginning to count Nisan 1. The question is, Why the delay of this amount of time before commencing the count of the first of Nisan? We reply again that there are no specific directions or rules laid down in the Bible as to an exact time when Nisan 1 is to commence. The most that can be said is that the date is governed by the phases of the moon associated with the spring equinox; and to be in harmony with certain Jewish ordinances that a "sheaf of barley should be offered before the Lord as the first-fruits of the harvest on the 16th day of the month of Nisan," the time of the spring harvest had a bearing upon the matter of when this month should begin to count. It therefore became the custom of the Jews to fix the beginning of the month of Nisan approximately with the appearance of the new moon nearest the spring equinox. But as the length of time between the phases of the moon vary, **this provides also for the varying of the time when Nisan 1 begins to count.** Ordinarily there are about 14 days between the moon's phases, that is, between the new and the full of the moon, but, as we have explained, this year there are 15 1/4 days between the new moon and the full of the moon. The Jews are entirely within proper order so long as Nisan

14 does not fall on a date after the moon full. Here, then, this year there is a measure of latitude-15 1/4 days in which to locate the first 14 days of Nisan. The Jews this year have chosen to delay the commencing of Nisan nearly 44 hours after the new moon, and this causes the 14th day to fall on the 29th, or the day the moon fulls, and also causes Nisan 16 to fall as nearly as possible to **the time when the fruits of the spring harvest would be ripe -- in the forepart of April.**

It is interesting to observe that there was: a parallel situation to this in the year 1906 at which time Brother Russell went considerably into an explanation dealing with this situation.* In that year the new moon appeared March 24th, 6:52 p. m., and reached full April 9th, 1:12 a. m. a period of 15 1/4 days, practically the same as it is this year; again a period of 15 1/4 days in which to locate the first 14 days of Nisan. The Jews, that year, waited 47 hours after the new moon before they began to count Nisan 1; and Nisan 14 fell on Monday, April 9th, commencing Sunday evening at sundown. The entire circumstances **that year** are thus seen to be **in every way parallel to that of this year.** Brother Russell after making a full explanation and considering all the points bearing upon the matter, recommended to the friends throughout the world the acceptance of the date fixed by the Hebrews, and he celebrated the Lord's Supper on Sunday evening, though it was 15 days. after the appearance of the new moon.

* See Watch Tower 1906, pp. 20, 21, 101, 102.

In consideration of all these circumstances and the exhaustive explanation given by Brother Russell that year, there is no valid reason why we should reject the Jewish calendar and method of reckoning Nisan 14 this year, when we have **exactly** the same circumstances as those which governed in the year 1906; and no reason whatever why we should not accept Sunday evening, March 28th, as the appropriate time to observe the Lord's Supper, especially as it falls exactly on the full of the moon. It is the date that Brother Russell would choose according to his own logic if he were with us today.

Another question is, Did our Lord and the Apostles themselves attempt to determine the Passover date? We believe not. There is nothing in the record to that effect. The matter of fixing the Passover date was entirely with the rulers, Scribes, etc. Jesus instructed the Apostles concerning those who sit in Moses' seat, admonishing that they do whatsoever these commanded. There is no doubt that our Lord and the Apostles accepted without equivocation the Passover date indicated by the Jewish rulers in their day; nor is there any reason why we should not accept of the Passover date fixed by Jewish authorities today, especially as the Passover feature is purely Hebraic. It does not require any of the spiritual qualifications of the New Creation to determine the date of the Passover. The Hebrews should be equally, if not better

qualified to determine that matter than Christians. as a rule, and we accordingly recommend to the brethren the adherence to the Jewish calendar, especially for the sake of harmony and unanimity on the subject of the Memorial date.

THE CHRISTIAN'S SECRET OF THE TRUE REST

"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for Thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." -- Psa. 4:8.

FULL assurance of faith -- what is it? Is there such a thing as full assurance of faith as a present heritage of the people of God? Surely His Word clearly defines this matter and gives abundant testimony as to the Divine protection and care, and supplies the best foundation for that trust and confidence that alone can bring full assurance of faith. It is born of belief that all the Divine promises shall be fulfilled. Many are the exhortations in our Father's Word to trust Him, assuring that none who put their trust in Him shall ever be confounded (Psa. 22 :5) ; that "blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust." And yet with all these assurances, so dull and wavering in faith are these poor hearts of ours that very often we do not trust God, our Heavenly Father, even in circumstances in which we would have trusted an earthly parent; and as the professing children of the Lord, we often. find ourselves in unbelief. At one moment we are leaning on some human instrumentality; at another, we are perplexed, almost in despair; again, we find ourselves afraid of an immediate prospect of danger. As a result our peace is gone; we lose our rest in God. For He has promised to "keep" only those "in perfect peace," whose mind is stayed on Him, because they trust in Him. -- Isa. 26:3.

Simple Trust Dispels Fears

This condition of fear and unrest proceeds from the want of simple faith, of childlike trust. If there is continual trust, there will be continual peace. He who trusts the most, sorrows the least. And God loves us to trust; it honors Him. He has given us assurance in His Word of His care, and if we believe Him and take Him at His Word, we will trust. St. John says, "He that believeth not God hath made Him á liar." Surely none of us would be charged with this, and yet our lack of trust is the result of "unbelief." Simple trust will dispel all fears and forebodings and enable us to cheerfully live the present, and courageously step forward into the future. God is in the unknown, be that enough for us. Whatever may come to us, God is in it, and in that trusting thought we shall find rest.

But there are times and circumstances when from the human viewpoint all is against us, when ruin seems to stare us in the face; wherever we look an enemy is seen. What then should be our attitude? Ah, says the

Psalmist, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about." "Thou, O Lord, art a shield for me." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me." To trust only when appearances are favorable is to sail only with the wind and tide, to believe only when we can see.

Let us remember that our trust is in the Almighty One and let us make God the great object of our faith and confidence, even though human instrumentalities for our assistance may be at hand. The Psalmist, after expressing confidence that great things were about to be accomplished, says: "I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me." (Psa. 44:6.) Human means and instrumentalities are not to be thrown away as useless or despised, but our trust is not to be in them. The sword and the bow were most fitting instruments with which to meet the enemy, but they were of no value as objects of trust. We may be prone to lean upon the instrument, to expect much from it, as though it had powers of its own; and though it may be provided of the Lord, yet only as its power comes from Him, will there be deliverance from the enemy.

Prone to Trust in Things Visible

Satan sometimes hides a snare in the midst of God's blessings. When God prospers an instrument, Satan is on the alert to magnify it, that we may lose sight of God and His power. Let us be careful to ever put God above all the agencies; to keep our reliance upon Him, and on no account lose sight of Him in the instrument.

Again, our unbelief is manifest when we feel at peace because we have certain means at hand, and not because God Himself is near. Under these circumstances we go in Soul's armor; the sword and bow are our comfort. We are prone to trust in the things we can see, to trust in the machinery without recognizing its motive power. From the human standpoint the things visible have more power than the invisible. But the bow will be effectual only as God directs the arrow. And it is only as we recognize the God of means, that the instrumentalities are used for our deliverance. God will not honor anything that detracts from His honor.

All human means have in them only the virtue that God has bestowed. He can take away that virtue or increase it at any moment. No matter how much they are calculated to produce certain results, a thousand influences or circumstances may arise to hinder their efficacy. Using them inefficiently or unwisely may cause failure in producing the desired results. God will be sure to blast the means if we put them above Him or make them independent of Him. Therefore unless God be above the means we have no assurance of victory. On the other hand, though all means fail, God is able to work as when they abound.

Blessed indeed would it be for us, could we continually exercise the trust expressed by the Psalmist: "As for me, I will call upon God; and

the Lord shall save me. Evening and morning, and at noon, will I pray and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice." ,How often do we call, not as though we **knew** God would act on our behalf, but rather as though **perhaps** "the Lord will save me." We should realize that effects must follow a real calling upon God. O that we may have a larger measure of trust when we pray! O for a fuller assurance that no prayer offered in faith can come to naught. If our trust is such as to give us firm belief in the power of prayer, many things which might seem impossible will be made easy. We should pray with the assurance of an answer -- only in the Lord's **way** and **time**. The very character of God, the many promises in the Scriptures, the many recorded instances, and our own experience-all give us assurance of this effect of prayer.

He Appears According to Our Need

Surely then we can say with the Psalmist, "I will trust and not be afraid" -- I will trust the Lord despite appearances; I will trust Him though all be unknown; I will trust **Him**, and not **means**, though means be at hand; I will be sure that if I call, He will hear -- there will be an answer for every prayer, so long as I abide in Him and His words abide in me.

Does not the blessed relationship existing between Jehovah and His people warrant this trust -- that of father and child. It is a personal, an individual relationship. He is my Father. And since I have been accepted of Him as His child I have the privilege of looking up to Him confidently and claiming from Him all that blessed relationship vouchsafes.

And who is this great object of our trust! Ah, God Himself -- the **Almighty** One. He who "formed the earth and made it." He who holds the seas in, the hollow of His hand! He appears to us in various aspects according to our needs. Sometimes it is as our Father, our Great Provider; then as our Refuge and Fortress; sometimes as a Shadow for the weary and afflicted; and sometimes as our Great Heavenly Shepherd leading in green pastures and beside still waters. As is our need, so is God's development of Himself toward us. If we could but realize the supremacy of God, that He is more than all that be against us, all our fear would be removed. Enemies may appear, perhaps from unexpected quarters; it may be we find our foes even among those of our own household; and perhaps those we had hoped would be with us, prove to be the most bitter against us. Sometimes we become victims of isolated attacks, and sometimes the enemy comes in like a flood. It is surely most comforting at such times to be able to trust God as the "Ruler of the people."

Why should I fear, if God can sway and turn the hearts and plans of people exactly as He will? Why should I compromise principle either to gain their favor or to avert their wrath? The way to be at rest, no matter what our enemies may say or do, no matter how they may plot

or scheme, is to trust God as **Ruler**, to know that He is above all, that His power is unlimited, His wisdom infinite.

Ever Continuous Rest

This rest will not only be ours in times of strife and open hostilities, but in times of peace, and stillness -- "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep; for Thou Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." (Psa. 4:8.) God is revealed here to us as exercising personal care in the still chamber. There is something in this that should be very sweet to us, for it shows the minuteness of God's care, the individuality of His love -- that God's love and care are with us and operative not only in the great but also in the little spheres of life. How blessed it would be if we could recognize more fully God's care over us in the quiet hours of life, in the still chamber, if we could feel His presence in hours of illness, weariness, and pain, and be assured that His care is with us there, as when in the wider battlefield of the strife of tongues.

The Psalmist in thus lying down, voluntarily gave up any guardianship of himself. He resigned himself into the hands of another, and he did so completely, for in the absence of all care, he slept. There was a perfect trust. Sometimes we may lie down, but it is not to sleep. Perhaps we feel safe enough so far as the body is concerned, but cares and anxieties disturb. They are permitted to try our faith and trust. Perhaps it is the experience of all, that although having been equal to an emergency or a continual pressure, sometimes a reaction comes, and when relieved from the strain and we find ourselves alone, our spirits sink and we do not realize that strength from God, or feel that confidence in Him that we experienced when under the pressure.

There is a test in stillness, and oft times the quietness calls for a larger demand on loving trust than does the battlefield. O that we could trust God more with personal things; that we could bring Him more into the little things of daily life. If we could do this, we could have rest, we could "lie down and sleep," and leave tomorrow with God.

Are We Trusting God?

But this condition of trust and rest comes only by the complete surrender of ourselves into the holy and personal care of the Lord. It was because of loving trust on the part of the Psalmist that he could lie down and rest in God. If our trust is small, we can seldom rest and refresh ourselves in God. We can not enjoy the pleasure of quiet in Him and with Him. We may be able to walk, run, fight, speak, sing-anything or everything but **rest**. How is it with us? Are we trusting God? Are we realizing His personal, vigilant care? Are we enjoying that rest and peace that comes from perfect trust? God is honored by such trust; He delights in it; and we ourselves are benefited. As he who is well rested comes forth refreshed for the trials and labors of the day, prepared to bear its burdens, so we also, having come apart for awhile from the world and its turmoil and enjoyed the security and conscious peace which comes from the sanctuary, from

the presence of God, from being alone with Him, may go forth refreshed, strengthened, able to do and to endure. "Come ye yourselves apart and rest awhile," the Lord still bids His disciples as of old.

Again, the Psalmist pictures to us the care, and protection of Jehovah: "Be merciful unto me; O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in Thee: yea in the shadow of Thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast"; and, "I will trust in the covert of Thy wings." There is something sweet and precious in this picture -- one of the Lord's children in the presence of calamity, endangered, and seeking the shadow of His wing as a sweet refuge; and we see also the interference of love on the part of Jehovah in behalf of His child in danger.

We find ourselves sometimes in the presence of enemies, and the Lord may permit them to be active. To live at such times in a consciousness of safety and shelter "under His wings" calls for a high degree of faith and trust. We, the children of the Lord, do not pray to be delivered from calamities, but we do pray that we may live amid them as long as they last, in the consciousness that we are kept and sheltered by God. He can sustain our cause. Calamities cannot harm, as long as we are "under His wing." Our enemy's activity need not be hindered in order to keep us in safety.

Power of Nearness to God

To be under the shadow of God's wings means closeness to Him; it implies the immediate presence of God. As we realize this, it brings great peace to our hearts, even when danger is near. God is close to His children, and He wants them to know and feel it. The stronger our faith, the closer will we be drawn to God; and the assurance that God is near us and we are near Him, gives us peace.

In this picture of the overshadowing wings of Jehovah we have also the thought of warmth -- the warmth of God's love. As we abide there and this warmth is infused into and permeates our being, the love of God becomes our own possession. The child of God might be saved much suffering from the chilling atmosphere about him if he habitually sought the sheltering wing. Nearness to God will infuse that which no nervousness, no fear, can chill. When close to Him, hidden under His wing, our one thought is the immediate nearness and presence of God. Let us ever seek the sheltering wing of Jehovah; Satan then has to deal with God, rather than with us, and so we are sure of safety.

The Psalmist uses another figure to express the protecting power of Jehovah: "I will say of the Lord, He is my **refuge** and my **fortress**." (Psa. 91 :2.) There is a strong contrast between the "shadow of the wing" and a fortress. This picture of a fortress is a representation of God Himself in all His might. The fortress shields one who takes refuge in it. Satan may survey our Fortress, he may assail it, but he finds every contingency guarded against. We are surrounded by the arrangement of God. All His strength is put forth for us.

When God represents Himself as a fortress for His children, He shows Himself fulfilling His promises and designs to love, to protect, and to save them from the strong assaults of the Adversary. As stone cemented to stone presents to the enemy a front which he cannot successfully assail, so all that makes up the glorious character of God, connected and knit together, presents an obstacle to Satan against which his utmost efforts cannot prevail.

His Cause is Our Cause

Let us, dear brethren, try to realize the strength of this fortress, this refuge which is ours. Let us trust it as it is our privilege to do. The more we seek for the grace of faith and enlarged trust, the more plainly will the outlines of this mighty fortress be visible; until we can say of the Lord, "He is my Refuge and my Fortress: my God; in Him will I trust."

It is a source of comfort to the child of God to reflect that the object in which he puts his trust is established and immovable. Changes take place above and around the fortress, but it still stands unmoved. In observing the changes all around us, we must not forget that our God changes not. He is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." We need to have impressed upon our minds a deep conviction of the firmness, the abiding nature of the character of our God. Let us look at our Fortress and not at what is going on around it, or at the number about to come against it, and let us seek for grace to trust.

"The Lord is on my side," says the Psalmist, "I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" In worldly conflicts there is always great anxiety on the part of the participants to secure the aid of a powerful ally. They reason that if such an one be on their side, all must go well. But who is so well prepared to meet the enemy as we who can say, "The Lord is on my side." The great God Himself, makes common cause with His children. His cause is our cause. Because of our relationship and because we have a common interest, His aid will come to us -- an overflowing of His goodness. The realization that the cause of God and that of His children are one will enable us to seek His help, in hours of trial and to be confident of His overruling providence in connection with the same. He will help us not only for our own individual sake, but for His own name's sake, since the cause is His.

Do we fully realize that God has been pleased to bind Himself to us by our acceptance of the Savior as our own, and a full consecration of ourselves to follow in His steps, to do God's will? If so, then we can indeed say with the Psalmist, "I will not fear. What can man do unto me?" Sometimes we are called to stand alone, so far as earthly companionship is concerned. Sometimes human help is taken away, and we are left to get along as best we can. In such experiences our hearts are liable to fail us and we are inclined to discouragement. What comfort then to turn to our God and realize that He is on our side. We can then "endure as seeing Him who is invisible." We discern a Helper

where others see none. Once let this conviction have full power upon our hearts and minds, we become strong indeed and independent of outward circumstances.

SALVATION, ITS EXTENT AND SCOPE

PART V

ETERNAL LIFE AND ETERNAL DEATH

"For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." -- 1 Cor. 15:25, 26; Rev. 20:14.

ATTENTION has already been called to the volume of Scripture testimony which teaches that the willfully wicked after having enjoyed their full share in the great atonement and redemptive work of Christ during His Millennial Kingdom shall come under the sentence of death, destruction, and that this will be the end of such. Not only is there no hope of further existence held out for these, but such language is used as to convey the idea that the end, the destruction, is permanent and lasting, a complete cutting off. As for instance, the Lord through the Apostle says, "If any man draw back My soul shall have no pleasure in him," and in that same connection the Apostle affirms that for such willful opposers to God there would be "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." But the Apostle goes on to say, "We are not of them that draw back unto perdition clearly implying that the case of such a person is a hopeless one; the word perdition having the meaning of loss, destruction, with no thought of recovery from that state. (Heb. 10:26-31, 38, 39.) In the record in Acts 3:19-23, where the Apostle is recounting the prophecy of Moses concerning the judgment work of Christ as the great Prophet of the future, he repeats Moses' words that "it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Here the Greek term signifies "to destroy utterly." Again, the Apostle speaks of those "who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." -- 2 Thess. 1 :9.

Is the Reward of the Righteous Eternal?

Vigorous effort is made by some Universalists to maintain that the state or punishment of the willfully wicked is not of perpetual duration, for the reason that as in some instances the words everlasting and eternal as used with reference to future punishment are not derived from Greek terms that signify eternity, but have the significance of lasting for a time, age-lasting, etc. We freely acknowledge that certain Hebrew and Greek terms are used which, in the English, do not necessarily mean eternal, but this fact lends no support to the idea that

the death or destruction that is to overtake the wicked of the future is merely of a temporary character. We find that the Scriptures in discussing the state and reward of the righteous of the future use exactly the same terms to indicate the duration of the life and reward; as for instance, Jesus declared that the obedient believer should have everlasting life. (John 3:15, 16.) Here the word everlasting does not mean eternity but age-lasting. Other instances of similar character are as follows:

"And I will give unto them eternal life." -- John 10:28 ; 17:2.

"A house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." -- 2 Cor. 5:1.

"Lay hold on eternal life." -- 1 Tim. 6:12.

"According to the hope of eternal life." -- Titus 3 :7.

"He hath promised us, even eternal life." -- 1 John 2 :25.

"That ye may know that ye have eternal life." -- 1 John 5:13.

In all the above instances the word eternal is translated from the Greek word "aionios" and signifies age-lasting. Now, if we are to take the position that the duration of the punishment of the wicked is only temporary, and that they are to come back to life again merely because the strongest terms signifying without end and eternity are not used with reference to the duration, then we must likewise conclude that the happy state and reward of the righteous is not to be eternal, without end, since the same Greek and Hebrew terms are used in both cases. But such reasoning can be little short of mere folly. While the Greek word "aionios" does not have in itself the idea of duration without end; yet that is evidently the conclusion to be drawn from the use of the terra as it is applied to the state of ,both the righteous and the wicked of the future., We do know from certain positive Scripture statements that it is God's will for the righteous to live for ever. Jesus says, "He that believeth shall not perish." If he does not perish he must live.

"Aionian" Applies to State of Righteous and Wicked Alike

The idea then in using the term "aionian" or age-lasting with regard to the future is by way of expressing the contrast between the future and the present life. Now, the period of each individual existence is merely of a few days or years, and so far as time is concerned counts for nothing. But looking over into the great beyond when the righteous shall enter into life, it shall be age-lasting, or continuous ; there being no reason to draw the inference that at the end of an age, or of certain future ages, that life will end; nor is there any reason to draw the inference that the state of the wicked in being cut off would last merely for an age, or for several ages and then cease, and they be returned to life again. Most. evidently the idea of duration or continuity of condition or state applies with equal force to the wicked in their state as it does to the righteous in their inheritance of life.

The Last Enemy Destroyed

In dealing with the subject of the resurrection and the future judgment of the world, the Apostle declares that Christ "must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." (1 Cor. 15:25, 26.) Those who defend the teaching that all souls are ultimately to be reconciled and saved claim that the destruction of death means that all must be eternally saved out of death; or, that as long as there is one individual in death, then death is not destroyed. We acknowledge the force of this reasoning and that this is one viewpoint that can properly be taken of the Apostle's language. We maintain, however, that the Apostle is here discussing the subject of the Adamic death, that death which is known to humanity in this life as the great enemy. Summing up the work of the reign of Christ, the Apostle declares that all enemies are to be conquered, even the great enemy death, this which has robbed humanity of the blessing of life, of existence. Thus, from this viewpoint as all humanity come out of the tomb in the future it will mean the process of destroying death; that is, the undoing of death; and when all shall have been awakened and presented with the opportunity of life by the close of the Millennial Reign, Adamic death will have been destroyed.

Another viewpoint of the Apostle's language with regard to the destruction of the last enemy, is that death is here personified as a great monster going up and down the earth slaying his multitudes, with no one able to offer permanent resistance. He conquers all sooner or later; but in consideration of the power of the reign of Christ, it is recognized that this terrible enemy now so forceful and not to be resisted by any, is to be destroyed, that is, he shall not be permitted to exercise the power and to bring humanity within his grasp beyond the reign of Christ. Death itself shall be destroyed, which means there shall be no more dying when the work of Christ is completed.

Difference Between First and Second Deaths

It is definitely stated in the last book of the Bible that the willful opposers of God under the full light of the Kingdom and judgment work of Christ shall be consigned to the Second Death. (Rev. 20:10, 14, 15 ; 21:8.) Thus death in a new and second sense is introduced to our attention, which in some important respects differs immensely from the first death sentence, since the first by redemption was turned into a temporary cessation of life. We are aware that those who defend the universalistic theory endeavor to maintain that the first and second deaths are the same, and that the Apostle in declaring that death shall be destroyed as the last enemy includes the Second Death, or death in any and every sense. We would not be able to concur in this, inasmuch as the Scriptures do make a very definite and positive difference between the first death and the second death. Everywhere the Bible testimony affirms that all humanity are to come out of the first death because of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus: "As in Adam all die, even so in [through], Christ shall all be made alive;" that is, all

shall come out of the tomb, because the penalty for sin has been met in the one great sacrifice made once for all. (1 Cor. 15:22.) "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift of life came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. 5:18.) The import of the Apostle's language plainly is that as all went into death because of the offense of one, so all are to come out of the death state, and be given the privilege of life as a result of the righteousness of One, and the acceptableness of His sacrifice.

Destroyed in the Second Death

However, nothing in the Apostle's language teaches that any will be forced into eternal life, nor that all must necessarily be reconciled and saved to life eternal, because they were redeemed by Christ. For, as other Bible testimony shows, those who will not hear that great Prophet shall be destroyed, and this destruction is the same that is referred to in Revelation as the Second Death, or a second pronouncement of the sentence of death. There is not the slightest intimation that any will come out of the Second Death, nor is there any statement that the Second Death will be destroyed in the sense that those overtaken by it shall be returned to life. We read that "death [the processes of the first or Adamic death] and hell [the tomb, the death state of the human family which has been made temporary by reason of the redemption] were cast into the lake of fire [symbolic of complete destruction]. This is the second death." (Rev. 20:14.) How obvious it is that there is a difference between the two deaths in that one is said to be **cast into, or destroyed in the other**, but nothing is said about the removing or destruction of the Second Death. This does not mean that there will be people going into the Second Death indefinitely throughout the future ages, but that those who are consigned to the Second Death during the Millennial Judgment Day will remain no redemption being provided, there is no hope of recovery. And the inference most strongly is that there will be none others pass into the Second Death after the reign of Christ has fulfilled its mission by the close of the thousand-year period.

Another Difficulty Universalists Encounter

Another important consideration bearing upon the claims of those who advocate universal reconciliation, deserves attention in this connection. Those who contend for the teaching that through various ages of the future there will be numerous recoveries from the dead, are evidently overlooking the great principle annunciated all through the Bible—that of the necessity for atonement. For instance, in the fall of Adam and the condemnation of all his children in him, only one redeemer, one life was required to atone for that one man's sin which included all in him, as the Apostle says, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men." (Rom. 5:12.) We behold the great economy of Jehovah in redeeming all

mankind with one life. But if we are to take the position that all the sinners of the Millennial Age are to have a further chance, a second, third, fourth or many chances in those future ages; we must admit the only logical conclusion, and that is that a personal sacrifice for sin; a personal savior and redeemer would need to be provided for each individual sinner, inasmuch as each individual would be apart and independent of the other in his offense, in that each one would stand individually before God and be personally responsible for his own sin. There could be no such thing in that event of a vast multitude being redeemed, by one life such as is the case in Father Adam and all the race in him, in connection with the first sin. Thus reasoning, if so many of mankind are found willful sinners in the Millennial Age and come under the sentence of death, a sacrifice for each one of them would be required, and if, as the advocates of universal reconciliation admit, there will be sinners in the successive ages who pass into death again and again, the principle of atonement which requires "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life," would require that there be an individual sacrifice to atone and make way for each individual to come back to life again for another trial.

Only One Sacrifice, One Atonement

But to conclude thus that God will operate in the future, seems mere folly. His Plan and Word know of but one sacrifice, one redeemer, "Christ dieth no more"; nor is there the slightest inference that another or many redeemers would be supplied for any future emergencies. Not only so, but the question would be, What could be accomplished by redeeming a man who, after having had the advantage of all the lessons of the present life, including many experiences of evil and its consequences and then the advantages of the future full, fair, and complete trial under the Mediatorial Kingdom of Christ and the saints, with full light and opportunity, would then choose unrighteousness and remain in a state of rebellion against God? Would not such a character continue in rebellion even though he were given innumerable chances in the ages beyond? Our conviction is that what a man would choose to do in one trial in which he would have full knowledge and opportunity, -he would do under a thousand such trials and opportunities, and that is why the Bible is absolutely silent on the subject of any plan of God to redeem those who choose sin and disobedience when they are placed on trial during the Millennial Age.

Perfect Beings May Choose Evil

Again we observe how fallen human reasoning attempts to establish the evidence of the truthfulness of the Universal doctrine by measuring others according to their own tendencies and emotions. It will not do to judge others by ourselves, in all respects. The fact that God's saints do not feel opposition to God's will, and cannot understand how others can entertain such sentiments, sometimes leads to the false conclusion that if all others enjoyed a similar knowledge of God they too would delight in His service. That such a conclusion is false is evident from the fact that Satan, who knew God thoroughly, "abode not in the truth," but became "the father of lies" and "a murderer." And, after six thousand years' witness of sin and its results, he is still the adversary of righteousness. After nearly two thousand years' knowledge of the love and mercy of God manifested in Christ's sacrifice for sin, he is still as unmoved by that love as lie is unmoved by pity for human woe. And more than this : God, who knows the future as well as the past, shows us, unquestionably; that after being restrained (bound) for a thousand years by the power of Christ's Kingdom, and during that time witnessing the blessings of righteousness, he will, when granted liberty at the close of the Millennium, still manifest a preference for the way of sin and opposition to God's arrangements. Surely this proves that intelligent beings, and- perfect beings, too, can know God and yet choose a way of disobedience-whether or not our minds can grasp the philosophy, of their course.

Character Must Be Engraved

But the philosophy of the matter is this : a perfect being, angel or man, is a blank page upon which character must be engraved. Knowledge and a free will are the engravers. Pride, selfishness, and ambition may be engraved, or love, humility and meekness. The latter is the blessed or Godlike character, the former is the sinful or devilish character. According to which are engraved will be the character. If the will decide for sin and cultivate the wicked character, the result will be a wicked being. If the will decide for righteousness and God-likeness, the result will be a holy being.

The same principles in a general way apply also to fallen men. No matter how fallen and weak they may be, they have free-wills. They can will aright, even when they cannot do, aright. And under the arrangement of grace, God accepts, through Christ, the imperfect deeds where a the wills are perfect.

For many who are now evil doers and lovers of sin, our hope is, that they are such because of blinding of the Devil (2 Cor. 4:4), which leads them to make a choice they would not make if they had a full, clear knowledge. God's guarantee to all, through Christ, is that all shall -come to an accurate knowledge of the Truth, and thus :to a full opportunity to **choose** between righteousness and sin. We are given no hope for any who, after coming to a clear knowledge, choose sin,

willfully; neither in this Age nor in any future age is there hope for such; according to God's Word.