

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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REVIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

RESULTS OF THE LAUSANNE CONFERENCE

THE CONFERENCE at Lausanne on "Faith and Order" just recently closed, has elicited general comment throughout the "Christian world." In keeping with the stated purposes of the conference, the Chairman, Bishop Brent, told the assembly that "The call to unity is from God to man; through unity alone can the Kingdom of God be set up among men." He urged Christendom to set its house in order "before it further infects the Eastern world with sectarianism that robs the Gospel of its corporate power and gives the people a stone instead of bread. The hundred missionary societies in China today are as suicidal for Christianity as civil divisions are to her national peace and prosperity," the Bishop said. "We are living in a world that has lost its way. Religion, as summed up in Jesus Christ, can alone hope to rescue it"

Concerning the results of the conference "The Boston Herald" remarks that "The very fact that such a meeting is held at all is noteworthy. It signifies that church leaders are not willing to accept much longer existing disunity as a necessary and unalterable thing. It means that the churches realize that splits and rivalries and denominational dissensions dilute enormously the influence of the Protestant faith in a world that is only casually aware of the importance of the points at issue and that is indifferent to such controversies. It signifies also that, distant as the consummation of the ideal of unity may be, church leaders everywhere appreciate that they never will reach unity unless they begin to tread the path thereto.

"Now the news from Lausanne is surprisingly encouraging. There has been long and vigorous debate. There have been simple and direct statements about points of difference, as well as euphemisms. Many friendly observers in Europe had no idea that anything of value would be accomplished, except that the meeting of such a body in friendly intercourse and discussion in itself is a thing of worth. Platitudes were looked for rather than actual grappling with problems. The delegates might recognize what were the decisive questions that divide the churches, but it was not to be supposed that they would be able to formulate a platform on which they could all stand after their centuries of divergence over, some things of vast importance and many things of minor consequence. The dispatches tell us, however, that a committee of thirteen has been named to draft a report on faith and order in quest of unity as to the subjects which have been debated. There are four Americans on this committee, five British delegates, a Swedish archbishop, a Lutheran, a French Protestant, and a representative of the

Eastern Orthodox church. It will be instructive to watch the outcome of the work of this committee."

As was expected, amongst the leading issues more or less discussed at the conference was that of ordination, church government, the authority of the church, etc. This issue was recognized as obviously an important one, since in order to a united Christendom such as this conference contemplated, there must be a general recognition of some common center of authority and government of such a united church.

In keeping with the spirit of compromise on the part of Protestantism in modern times toward Catholicism, a warm hand was held out to the Church of Rome by some of the delegates at the conference. Thus Dr. Manning is reported to have said:

"We all deeply regret that the Roman Catholic Church did not feel able to accept the invitation to send representatives to the world conference. Nevertheless, we want her to know that our feeling toward her is one of love and fellowship.

"While the Christian communions, Catholic and Protestant, which are represented here can, and we pray that they may, make true progress toward reunion, we recognize that Christian unity cannot be attained until it includes our brethren of the Roman Catholic Church.

"What we who are gathered here seek is not unity of Protestants alone or of Catholics alone. This might only accentuate the differences and perpetuate the divisions. We seek a unity which shall include all the Christian communions of the world, both Catholic and Protestant."

Bishop Manning, just returned from the conference, is again reported as making the following statement regarding results:

"Holds Much Was Accomplished"

"Some have expressed disappointment that more definite action was not taken toward reunion. My own judgment is that more was accomplished than could reasonably have been hoped for. It should be kept in mind that it was not the purpose of the conference to formulate terms of reunion. Only the different churches themselves could do this.

"Two outstanding things were accomplished at the conference.

"1. The differences of belief which now separate the churches were frankly faced and considered not in the spirit of controversy but of conference. A discussion of differences in this spirit would have been impossible twenty years ago and itself marks a great advance on the way to unity.

"2. On some of the greatest and most difficult subjects relating to reunion a surprising measure of agreement was reached, as will be seen from the official reports soon to be published on 'The Gospel of the Church of Christ,' 'The Nature of the Church,' 'The Common Confession of Faith,' 'The Ministry,' and 'The Sacraments.'

"Reports Commended to Churches"

"These reports, all of which were received without a dissenting vote, are to be commended to the churches for their consideration.

"While some of these reports are far from registering full agreement, they show encouraging advance toward it.

"I shall hope shortly to speak of the results of the conference more fully and will only say now that if the conference had done no more than agree upon the report on 'the common confession of faith' its work would have been justified.

"Few, I think, would have believed it possible that such a gathering representing so many different views and traditions could agree that the common confession of faith of the reunited church must be the Apostles and Nicene Creeds. And yet after most earnest and full discussion this was the conclusion reached and assented to without a dissenting vote.

"There is much yet to be done before reunion can be achieved, but the World Conference at Lausanne has marked an important advance and will give new impetus to the movement toward unity."

"FORTUNES IN THE DEAD SEA"

An interesting article in a recent issue of "The Literary Digest," makes the remarkable statement that "Twelve hundred million dollars is the modest estimate of recoverable salts contained in the waters of the Dead Sea." This statement is based on the investigations presented by Dr. Thomas H. Norton, technical editor of "Chemicals" (New York). "In this he gives the story of the efforts toward securing an operating concession for exploiting these riches and throwing on the market vast quantities of valuable industrial and agricultural material at prices far lower than those now obtaining. The bulk of the profits, we are told, will go to the Government of Palestine and be employed for its rehabilitation. Writes Dr. Norton:

"There are few opportunities for expansion in the field of chemical industry which can rival that now being opened in Palestine. That historic land, now a mandated territory under British rule, is entering upon a period of economic development totally impossible under Ottoman domination. The most fascinating domain is that within the province of the chemist.

"There is nothing to prevent this land from becoming at an early date a powerful factor in the production, on a large scale, of some of our most important chemicals, and, from being the seat of one chemical world monopoly. The Dead Sea, into which the River Jordan pours, is one of the most extensive and valuable storehouses of mineral wealth on the surface of our globe. Here are accumulated enormous quantities of a few staple chemicals, adequate in amount to meet the world's

needs for many centuries. They are in solution, in the form of a saturated brine. For their separation, solar evaporation is the chief factor employed. No spot on our planet is so favorably situated for the purpose. A combination of climatic and topographic conditions renders it possible to recover, in a state of high commercial purity, these few salts, at incredible cheapness, within a few miles of ocean transportation. These salts are magnesium chloride, potassium chloride, common salt (unusually pure) and magnesium bromide (serving for the production of bromine).

"Palestine will not be alone in profiting from this sudden entry of the Dead Sea among the chemical assets of the world. The farmers of Great Britain and of the Dominions, as well as those of all other countries, will appreciate a cut in the cost of potash, that indispensable plant food, to at least one-half of what they have hitherto paid..

"The question naturally arises: Why have these vast chemical treasures remained for so long practically unknown to the industrial world, while eager pioneers were developing the gold placers of the Yukon or Siberia, amid arctic hardships; or the tin of Bolivia, the copper of the Congo, and many other sources of mineral wealth, protected by equally serious climatic handicaps and transportation difficulties?

"The explanation is simple. The contents of the Dead Sea were the private property of the Sultans of Turkey. Abdul Hamid, strongly opposed to the entrance of foreign enterprise into the Ottoman Empire, except on a limited scale, refused to grant any concessions affecting the Dead Sea.

"Then came the war. In December, 1917, General Allenby captured Jerusalem. A canny Scotchman, a former officer in the Indian Army, alert to mineral possibilities, urged the Government to immediately make a technical survey of the Dead Sea. While the Turkish Army still occupied the northern half of Palestine, a competent geologist was sent to study the deepest depression on the globe. The report revealed wonderful possibilities.

"A year after his tour of exploration, another chemist perfected a very simple but exceedingly comprehensive project for the economic extraction of the contents of the Sea. Unaware of each other's work, both submitted applications for concession rights. As the political status of the country was still uncertain, no action could be taken.

"In 1922, the League of Nations confided the Mandate for Palestine to the British Government. The power to grant mineral concessions was entrusted to the Colonial Office, acting with the Palestinian Administration. Careful preliminary studies were carried on, the results were carefully compiled, and, the monograph was published by the Crown Agents for the Colonies, in May, 1925. At the same time, the Agents invited tenders for the recovery of the salts in the waters of

the Dead Sea. The date for presentation was the 31st of December, 1926.

"Since then, the applications, reduced in number, have been subjected to careful study, both in the Colonial Office, at London, and at Jerusalem, where the final decision is lodged.

"No one can blame the officials charged with the serious task of granting so important a franchise, as being unduly slow. The responsibility of dealing with the problems of creating a vast modern industry, in what is little more than a pastoral country, must of necessity be entrusted to men competent to handle them.

"Formal proposals include the transferal of the bulk of the surplus profits to the Government of Palestine, or the obligatory reinvestment of a portion in the Palestinian industrial, financial, commercial, transportation, and similar organizations, thus retaining, in the land itself, the chief amount of the tribute paid by the rest of the world, for the country's mineral treasure."

THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH

WHAT AND WHERE IS GOD'S ORGANIZATION?

"THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH IS THE PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS FOR THE FUTURE WORK OF SERVICE; TO DEVELOP IN HERSELF EVERY GRACE; TO BE GOD'S WITNESS TO THE WORLD; AND TO PREPARE TO BE KINGS AND PRIESTS IN THE NEXT AGE.

-- EPH. 4:12; MATT. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6."

THIS STATEMENT as to the present mission of the Church, taken from the second page of this journal, has been published editorially and, otherwise for the past thirty years and more. Its expressions are as true and abiding today as when first published. It is important that we consider well what the Lord would have us do in these latter days, as expressed in the above summary of the Church's mission, and then to observe what has been accomplished by those who have attempted other lines of service than that which the Scriptures outline.

Directing our attention to the mission of the Church at the present time, we find it clearly stated in the Scriptures that first, it is the "perfecting of the saints for the future work of service." This is the primary object of the Christian era -- the development of Christlikeness in the Lord's people. This is the will of God, "even your sanctification" ; and to sanctify means not only to set apart to Divine service, a dedication of one's life to the Lord's service, but also to make holy, to purify from sin and all the defilements of the flesh. The Lord's people are not merely to attain to standards of morality and maintain these, but additionally are to be developed as New Creatures, attaining to conditions of spirituality, and this can be reached only through the sacrifice of all fleshly, earthly desires and ambitions -- the transformation of the mind and heart from human considerations to

those which are heavenly, as expressed by the Apostle, "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2.) The knowledge of the gracious arrangements of the Creator has an ennobling influence, and those who have received the invitation to be joint-heirs with Christ, are sanctified and purified by the hope placed before them in the Gospel -- "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." (1 John 3:3.) This purity of heart and mind signifies the putting away of all malice, envy, hatred, bitterness, and strife, and the gradual development of the fruits of the Spirit--meekness, patience, humility, peace, kindness, longsuffering and love. It is the operation of the Holy Spirit of the Lord through the instruction of His Word which enables the consecrated followers of Christ in the daily experiences of life, fighting the good fight of faith against the world, the flesh, and the Adversary, to overcome, and to acquire the Christian virtues necessary to an entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. And not only is the soldier of the cross to engage in this warfare continually in his own behalf, but further, as he has opportunity, he is to encourage and assist others in overcoming, and is to do good unto all men, even to the extent of blessing his enemies, those who might be in opposition to himself.

No Compromise With Worldly Methods

Notwithstanding the clear Scriptural statement of the Church's mission foregoing, there are still those who ask if we have not now reached a time when the Lord's people should undertake lines of service differing from those outlined by our Lord and the Apostles -- in view of changed conditions among men, should we not now change our methods of appealing to men? Is it not now due time that we compromise with the worldly spirit and with worldly methods and in fact revise the message altogether, given by Jesus and the Apostles? Furthermore, are not the hosts of those who are of the "Present Truth" to consider themselves organized under a human leadership, a visible headship here on earth, and to think of themselves as "God's organization" or "Channel," already equipped and authorized to deal a death-blow to Satan and his organization, and thus make way for the reign of the glorified Kingdom beyond? In seeking the proper answer to these questions, let us see to it that our hearts are truly humble and consecrated before the Lord and that our desire is to know and do only His will and not the will of any man or system of men; and let us seek an understanding of the matter from the only reliable source of information, the infallible Word of God.

Going back to Jesus and the Apostles as the only inspired guides and instructors with regard to all these questions that concern the present status of the Church and her mission, we find no word teaching us or instructing any one to attempt to organize the Church in the present Age, in the sense of the formation of a human system or a humanly organized arrangement containing only the true Church and

eliminating all the tare or fictitious element. Neither Jesus nor the Apostles attempted to form any such organization. They merely gave out the Divine message broadcast and allowed it to fall on various kinds of ground, some favorable and some unfavorable, some producing much fruit and some producing little or no fruit. It is recalled further that Jesus gave the parable of the wheat and tares to illustrate the general conditions and circumstances in which the Church would be existing throughout this Age. The lesson is thus emphasized of the true and the false growing side by side throughout the Age. Jesus forbade any to separate the wheat from the tares by attempting to organize the Church above what He and the Apostles through the Holy Spirit had done. None were to erect denominational lines or fences by creating certain formulas of belief and courses of service (either written or unwritten) and to make these tests of membership in the Church.

But alas, the instructions of the great Teacher have been sadly neglected. The sectarian party spirit soon gained control, and soon men began to organize the Church, began to create barriers, and by their theories and creeds, sought to determine who were of God's Zion or "God's organization," and who were not. The story is a sad one from the beginning of these departures in the close of the Apostolic period unto this day. It is the history of the apostasies, the history of human organizations and systems, some greater and some smaller -- the history of man's attempt to order and regulate, contrary to the Divine instruction; and all because the Church became overrun with the unregenerate and unconsecrated. The voice of the Spirit of God has found little or no place.

Where Is God's Zion?

Where has the true Church, God's Zion or organization, been all this time? The answer is, it is impossible to locate the true Church in any one compact body, in any human system or under any one denominational association. Since they are those whose names are written in heaven, and since they are those only who are in heart relationship with God by faith and consecration, they have been known to Him alone. As for God's organization upon the earth, there is nothing in the Bible to show that the Church in the flesh would ever be assembled in one concrete association or organization and constitute exclusively God's specially chosen Church. Rather we find from prophecy, including the Book of Revelation, that the true Church would be a scattered people all through the Age; and no one was authorized to separate the wheat from the tares, or to try to organize the Church into one compact body. In fact, we have no picture of the Church, while here in the flesh, as a complete organization, where the wheat alone are assembled, separated from the tares, until we look beyond the veil into the glorified state. It is there and then that the Master's words apply, "Then shall the righteous shine form as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

Even now in the end of the Age, when the light is shining more brightly than ever before, none can assemble God's Zion or organization into any one denominational or institutional arrangement through any test whatsoever; none can claim with any degree of evidence or proof that such as might be thus assembled are alone the Church, and that all outside of such human organization are excluded from the true Church. All who proceed thus to organize the Church are doing so in violation of the example and instruction of the great Teacher, who said that only one was the Master and Teacher of the Church, and all were brethren under Him.

Some of the Evils of Human Organizations

One of the outstanding and deplorable conditions in connection with every attempt to organize God's Zion is that of the exaltation of human teachers as lords over the heritage. It is always to be observed that such human organizations become overrun by majorities of the unconsecrated.. Ambitious, scheming, and designing men get, themselves placed in the lead and control of the flock, whom they term "God's organization," and who make it their business to mislead the sheep into believing that they are God's appointees, special and Divine agents, to direct and instruct the sheep as to what they shall believe and as to what service they shall perform; immediately the poor sheep are shorn of their liberty to think or decide on issues or problems for themselves or to determine what is truth. Thus as God's exclusive, anointed channel, made up of ambitious leaders, it exercises authority over those composing the organization, who are given to understand that they must obey the behests of those in power, and failing to do so, they are threatened with excommunication from the Church, "God's organization," and turned in the direction of the Second Death. How long will God's people not learn that all this procedure and condition are not the proofs of true leadership in spiritual Israel, but are part and parcel of the spirit of apostasy, repeated in history time and again. Let him that readeth understand!

The Beast of Great and Wonderful Works

Another important consideration is that those who have attempted to organize God's Zion have ever displayed great outward activity; "increased in goods," and "great and wonderful works" for the Lord, are the boast of all those who have been set up as Divine agencies over the Church. Great ecclesiastical activity and "works" is offered as the seal or proof that they are God's organization; but such evidence is turned by the true Word of God into the occasion of their condemnation. Thus Jesus foretells how some will ultimately come to Him "in that day," claiming the right to entrance into the inheritance of the saints on the basis of great activity, "Have we not done wonderful works?" etc., etc. And Jesus declares that their wonderful works will receive no recognition. They will not be rewarded. -- Matt. 7:21-23.

Every apostate church system throughout the Age has cited its wonderful works as evidence of its Divine endorsement. Perhaps the greatest and most formidable of these human systems is the Papacy, whose record goes far back in this dispensation, the influences beginning in the Apostolic period (2 Thess. 2:7), that led to its growth, development, and triumph in the fifth and sixth centuries. As "God's organization" it has claimed the right to receive into the Church and excommunicate -- it has pronounced its anathemas upon all who have denied and rejected its claims. It is well known that the boast of this system for centuries, has been in its great outward show of works. Today its magnificent institutions of learning, schools, colleges, seminaries, its charitable institutions, its great and marvelous hospital establishments for the relief of suffering, are cited as proofs that they are God's organization. Nor can any one successfully dispute the claim that from one standpoint there is much of good in their works. There is much of education in their schools, and a great deal of charity work, and much is accomplished to relieve the suffering; but all of these wonderful works are contaminated. with the vilest of errors and misrepresentations of Jehovah, that at once stamp them with Divine disapproval, and place them in the classification of "works" that the Master will not recognize.

Announcing a Mixed Message

Similarly other attempts to organize God's Church have come along, of more or less smaller caliber, but yet evincing the same spirit and citing their works as proof of the Divine sanction. Each one in its turn has claimed to be God's Zion, God's organization for the accomplishment of His purpose. Each one has erected the denominational fence to keep out such as will not recognize its claim. Each has taught its adherents to keep their eyes **fixed upon the leaders** of "God's Zion" as the visible head of the Church on earth, while the real and only Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His teachings have been ignored and set aside. Each one has made its threats and branded those who have become enlightened sufficiently to get out of the organizational pen, as heretics and as "going out of the Truth" into the Second Death. Each has had its network and system of good works "great and wonderful works" but as in the case of the Papacy, so it has been with all of these who have followed in Papacy's footsteps, and have attempted to organize God's Church! Their works have been sadly contaminated, their ministry has been that of proclaiming and announcing a mixed message, a mixture of truth and error; wrongful interpretations of one portion or another of the Word of God, and misapplication of the Truth in such a way as to pervert its true meaning to a greater or less extent, dishonoring the Lord, have characterized each of these human organizations, even unto this day.

Why God's Children Should "Come Out of Her"

The true works of the individual life, the works of piety, godliness, spirituality and love, have been sadly lacking in the various great and wonderful works of these organizations, and this in fact is the reason for their condemnation. It is these conditions named foregoing that have always followed in the wake of every attempt to organize God's Zion. Briefly they are: the exaltation of self-styled leaders and channels to take the place of Christ, the Head; the taking away of the liberty of the flock; the introduction of error; the substituting of human energy and works for the influence and life of the Holy Spirit; the neglect of the real work of the Church, that of character-building, resulting in general apostasy. It is these conditions that have made it necessary for Christ's true followers, who have had their eyes fixed upon Him as the Head, and not upon any fellow mortal, to draw apart, to **"Come out of her, My people; that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."** These come out that they may exercise their liberty in Christ, that they may give Christ, who alone is the Head of the Church, His proper place in their hearts, in their lives, and in their service, and that they may grow spiritually. These come out that they may have liberty to enjoy the fellowship of all such of like precious faith, not to form a new organization of Zion after these various human models from which they have been driven forth, but to voluntarily associate together under the influence of the Holy Spirit, having no bondage to hold them together except, that bond which united and held in unison the early Church, the bond that has united all consecrated believers, and bound them together as one in Christ all through the Age -- the bond of Christian unity and love under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

In harmony with the foregoing as to the present state and mission of the Church, attention is called to the following Scriptural, forceful; and lucid statement by Brother Russell which is commended to the careful consideration of all:

"THE CHURCH'S DIVINELY APPOINTED MISSION"

*"Seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy,
we faint not."-- 2 Cor. 4:1.*

"What is the mission of the Church? What ministry or service has the Lord appointed to His consecrated people? This question is one that should be prominent and clear before the mind of every consecrated child of God. It is of the utmost importance that the servant know what is expected of him before proceeding far in rendering service; otherwise he will be more than likely to waste his energies **in wrong directions** -- leaving undone those things which ought to be done, and giving attention to matters which would better be attended to otherwise, according to the Plan and arrangement of the Great Supervisor of the Plan of Salvation -- the Lord.

"Although our sympathies are with every good work, we are at the same time to inquire of the Lord respecting **how, where, what**, we may do in His service, if we would be co-laborers together with Him: 'Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?' Our query should not be addressed to fellowmen, nor should we accept the burdens and duties and obligations which their judgments and consciences would lay upon us. Rather, we are to hearken to the voice of the Lord (the Scriptures), and are to follow His directions, regardless of our own and other people's conjectures as to what would be most expedient.

"Nowhere in the Scriptures are God's people directed to spend their time in efforts at morally reforming the world. Our Lord did not engage in this work, neither did the Apostles, nor did they offer any suggestion to the effect that the work of the Church should ever differ from the work which, they performed and directed us to continue. On the contrary, they declare that we have the Apostles for ensamples of how we ought to walk. They declare that our Lord's course was in full, perfect harmony with the Divine will and Plan, and that the Apostles faithfully followed His example: and we are exhorted to simply become coworkers with God in His work, already instituted not to alter or attempt to improve on it. There were moralists and moral reformers in our Lord's day; some along the line of total abstinence, some along the line of asceticism, inculcating rigid self-denials in food, clothing, etc., as essential to a moral uplift of the people. There were also political reformers, who sought the establishment of republican institutions, in His day; and social reformers, who sought to establish forms of communism. There were also dress reformers at that time, who advocated certain peculiar styles of clothing beneficial to health, morals, and religious sanctity. Do we find that our Lord or His Apostles ever associated with any of these, or that they ever in any word or act gave sanction or encouragement to any of these theories or reforms? No, not once.

No Authority For Any Change

'If, then, the teaching and example of our Lord and His Apostles are our criterion of the will of the Lord, the Church's commission is not to morally reform the world. But perhaps some one will say times are changed from what they were and the Church's work should change accordingly. We answer that the Apostle Paul declares, in so many words, 'I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.' (Acts 20:27.) Whatsoever, therefore, is additional to that which was stated by the Apostle is not the counsel of God. And any counsel from any other quarter is not to be received by Christians, and is sure to be misleading. Again, the Apostle says to Timothy, respecting the Word of God, 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' (2 Tim. 3:16, 17.) **If, therefore, it was God's design that the Church's mission should change at some**

future time, we should be able to find in the Scriptures some intimation of this kind, and some authority for the change. And if we find no authority for a change in her mission, we should make no change.

"The question then arises', If the Church is not to rule the world in this present Age, and if she is not to be the world's instructor, uplifter, by moral reforms, what is her mission -what other mission can she have?

"(a) Her chief mission is toward herself: She is to lift up the light in the world -- the True Light -- not with the expectation of enlightening the world, not with the thought that her feeble lamp shall scatter earth's night of sin and darkness of superstition, for that can be accomplished only by the coming of the Morning -- the Millennial Morning -- when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams. She holds up the light of the Truth, the light of the Gospel, during this night, to attract **some** -- a peculiar people -- not to attract and gather **all**, but 'even as many as the Lord our God shall **call**.' (Acts 2:39.) Her message respecting the love of God and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as it rings out into the world, is not expected to awaken the **world** and to lead the world to the Lord. No; she is merely bearing 'witness' -- a witness which will have to do also with a future knowledge and opportunity to be granted to the **world** during the Millennium.

Only the Few Blessed Now

"She is instructed by the Word of the Lord not to expect that any but a comparatively small number will appreciate her light or her message: as the Prophet foretold, so she has found it. 'Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?' (Isa. 53:1; John 12:38.) As the Scriptures declare, so she finds it, that the vast majority of mankind are blind, so that they cannot see the light; some are stone blind, so as to see nothing; while others are partially blind and can get a little glimmer of it by which they can discern some things indistinctly. In hearing, likewise, the world's ears are dull of hearing -- 'deaf,' say the Scriptures. Some hear nothing, others hear very imperfectly, few hear the message of Divine love and mercy clearly and distinctly. The Church is to realize that her mission is not to these, the blind and deaf, but to him 'that hath an ear [to hear], let him hear!' -- Rev, 2:7; 3:6, 13, 22.

"As our Lord did not expect many to respond to His preaching, and particularly implied that only a small number would be able to do so, saying, 'No man can come unto Me except the Father which sent Me draw him,' so His Church throughout this Age is to realize that when she lifts up the light and lifts up her voice, no man will come in response except as the Father draws him. And as the Father drew only a comparatively small remnant of the Jewish nation to our Lord, so the Church should not be surprised that He has drawn only a comparatively small proportion of Gentiles throughout this Age.

Church Now Bearing Fruit of Spirit

(b) It is another part of the mission of the Church to care for those who do see the light which she holds up, and who are attracted by that light, and who come unto the Lord. She is to teach and instruct such; and to introduce them to the full fellowship of the high calling by making clear to them, as the Lord's mouthpiece, 'what is the hope of our calling,' present and future -- now to suffer with Christ for righteousness' sake, to cultivate His Spirit, His disposition, to bear much fruit of the Spirit in our own hearts and lives, and thus, under Divine supervision, to be fitted, polished, and prepared for a place in the glorious Temple of the future, for a share in the glorious work of the incoming Age -- the blessing of the world.-1 Cor. 1:26; Eph. 1:18; 2 Thess. 1:11.

"The Church is supplied by her glorious Head, Jesus Christ, with certain gifts of the Spirit, amongst her members of the earth; and these co-working together in their various offices are to strengthen, establish, upbuild, develop, one another, growing in grace and in the knowledge and spirit of the Head, until the whole Church shall eventually, by the close of this Age, be brought to the stature of the fullness of perfection as the Body of Christ, under the Lord Jesus as the Head. (Eph. 4:13.) But she is not to expect that all, even of those who see her light, and who hear her proclamation, and who draw near in harmony with her message, will eventually come into full membership in this glorious Body of Christ. On the contrary, she is assured of the Lord in advance that, while only a few, comparatively, will hear her message, the call, a still smaller number will accept the call -- for many are called, proportionately, to the few who are chosen -- who make their calling and election sure by faithfulness to the conditions imposed. -- 2 Pet. 1:10.

Crucial Tests of Loyalty

"(c) The conditions imposed upon the Church are designed of the Lord to be crucial tests of her loyalty to Him, and to the law of the Covenant under which she was received by Him. Trials, difficulties, persecutions, are useful in proving whether or not her covenant of consecration is from the heart: those who have merely made a lip covenant will be sifted out, manifested, separated from the true ones whom the Lord designates His jewels, and His sons; and whom He purposes to make joint-heirs in the Kingdom with His well beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is for this reason that this call and election, or selection, of the Church takes place during this present Age, while evil is still permitted to reign in the world, and while the majority of mankind are under the blinding influences of the great Adversary, not yet bound." -- Rev. 20 :1-3.

"One of the particular trials with many of the Lord's people is that they are frequently upbraided by less consecrated, worldly-wise professors, with the suggestion that they are selfish, and neglectful of the true

work of the Church; because they do not join with others in the various political, social, financial and moral reforms of the world; or in 'revival' efforts to drive and scare the worldly, whom God has not 'called' by the truth along Scriptural lines. If we are obliged to endure something on this score for Christ's sake, it is only a part of 'the sufferings of Christ,' in which we should rejoice, realizing that the Lord knows our faithfulness to Him and to His Word. We may realize, also, that in due time others shall see the Divine Plan actually fulfilling, as we are now permitted to see it by the eye of faith; and they will then see that the 'wise virgins' were wise in that they hearkened to and obeyed the Lord's Word, and made themselves ready for the future work of service for the world. -- Rev. 19:7; Eph. 4:12.

Sympathy With All Good Works

"We can sympathize with those who see nothing; we can sympathize also with those who see a little, and who strive toward moral and other reforms, and in various ways for the sectarian prosperity rather than for the upbuilding of the saints, the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. We should have patience, particularly with those who give evidence that they are laboring in harmony with their convictions. If they are engaging in good works of any kind, they deserve our sympathy, and undoubtedly will obtain a blessing as a result. The true Church is laboring not merely for a blessing, but for the blessing -- the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:14.) Let all then who see the prize, and who see the light of God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, be faithful to the Father's terms, conditions, calling, service. Let all such give attention to this ministry (service) which we have received, and faint not; be not discouraged, whether men hear or, whether they forbear; whether they think ill of us or whether they speak ill of us; let us remember that our report at the end of the trial is to be rendered to the Lord Himself, when He is making up His jewels. Let us remember that the first condition of acceptance with Him is loyal obedience to His Word -- the evidence of love for Him and faith in Him. (2 Cor. 10:5, 6.) Let us remember, also, that the second qualification He will look for in us is love for the brethren, readiness to be, to do, and to suffer, to die on behalf of those who are really, truly, consecrated children of God, seeking to walk in His ways.

"All thus following in the ministry (the service) which we have received of God, find themselves today walking in the footsteps of Jesus and the Apostles, and find the various predictions made respecting the entire Church applicable to its living members also, as, for instance, following our text, the Apostle declares of this class who have this ministry

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants [the Church's servants, not the world's servants] for Jesus' sake. . . . We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast

down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus [always representing Christ and His sacrifice as dying members of His Body] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live [as new creatures in Christ Jesus] are always delivered onto death for Jesus' sake [our consecration at the beginning was a consecration to death; it changes not; it will always so continue, until we have finished our course and have actually died], that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.' -- Verses 5-11." -- Z. '99-6-11.

Satan Would Mislead the Church

As pointed out in the foregoing article, the Church's commission is a unique one -- she has but one theme, one message to give out, and that is the Gospel Message. This theme of all who properly represent the Lord, was well expressed by St. Paul: "I determined to make known nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1- Cor. 2:2, Diaglott.) As bearing upon this particular point, we quote again

"Similar [to those of our Lord] are the temptations which Satan presents to the consecrated followers of Jesus: **Make a great show** before the world and the nominal church; attract their attention by any means, and not simply by the preaching of the cross of Christ; use the spiritual powers and blessings that you have received for doing some great and striking [smiting] work, which will appeal to the natural man, and thus secure quick and great success; **do this instead of doing the quiet and less conspicuous work of presenting spiritual things to the spiritual class**, which work the vast majority can in no wise appreciate, but will only shun you, consider you peculiar, and which not only will lose you the sympathy of the mass, but will bring you specially the hatred of some of the principal professors of Christendom. .

"Satan, through his various mouthpieces, is continually saying to the saints, Here is a more successful way of accomplishing your object than that which you are pursuing, a more successful way than the Lord's way. Bend a little; **make compromise with the worldly spirit**; do not hew too close to the line of the Word of God and the example of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles; you must be more like the world, in order to, exert an influence -- mix a little into politics, and a good deal into secret societies; keep in touch with the fads and foibles of the day, and above all things keep any light of present truth under a bushel -- thus alone can you have influence and accomplish your good desires toward men. But our dear Master assures us that we are to be faithful to the Lord and to His Plan, **and let things work out as best they may along that line**; and that we may rest assured that in the end the Father's Plan not only is the best, but really the only .plan for accomplishing His great designs, and that if we would be associated therein with Him as co-laborers it must be by recognizing Him as our only Master, and with an eye single to His approval.

"Our Lord's utter refusal of every other way of carrying out His mission than the one which the Father had marked out, the way of self-sacrifice, the Narrow Way, was indeed a great victory." -- Z. '00 -- 30, 32.'

The Real Ministry of the Saints

Again the essence of our mission is summed up:

"To follow the Lord's instruction the Royal Priesthood should first, when discipling, inform those who have ears to hear that they are sinners through the fall --imperfect in thought, word, and in act, and consequently unacceptable to God and under sentence of death, extinction; but that God has made a provision for their rescue, and, their return to harmony with Him and to life everlasting; that Christ Jesus, in harmony with the, Father's Plan, paid the penalty of Adamic sin and condemnation, and thus purchased the whole race of Adam, and proposes to set at liberty all who obey Him; that now He is offering release by faith to as many as have the hearing ear -- even as many as the Lord your God shall call; and that such as hear and accept the call may reckon themselves as 'justified by faith,' as having their sins covered, and as being thus reconciled to the Father through faith in Christ; and that now, if they become followers or disciples of Christ they may become joint-sacrificers with Him and by and by be made. joint-heirs in His Kingdom and its great work of blessing the world.

"Let us as the Lord's people, seeking for the old paths, note well the Master's instruction in this connection; and let each one of us who seeks to serve His cause labor exactly along the lines here marked out -- not thinking that his own imperfect judgment or that of fellow-mortals is superior to the Lord, but to the contrary, that the Lord, the Head of the Church, alone was competent to give the proper commission which must be followed implicitly . . . Let us remember, too, while using all the wisdom we can in this service, that the Lord's object in giving us a share in His work is not so much what we can accomplish as in the blessing that the labor will bring upon us. This will be an encouraging thought to the dear ones who are engaged in the 'Volunteer' work; and if they find many discouragements and but small results, the reflection that the Master knoweth them that are His, and that He appreciates every sincere effort made to serve His cause and to lay down our lives on behalf of the brethren, will give courage and strength to those who otherwise might faint by the way." -- Z. '01-154, 155, 156.

The Great Work Beyond the Veil

In the light of the foregoing why cannot all see that pre-eminently the members of the Church in the flesh are to be witnesses for the Truth, the Glad Tidings of peace and comfort, heralding the coming Kingdom of Heaven, and that in so doing they are thus acting as peacemakers, "pursuing peace with all, and. that holiness without which no roan shall see the Lord." Hence we are riot to suppose that it is a part of the

mission of the Church to convert the world to the principles of Christianity under the present conditions of evil. Nor are we to get the thought that it is the duty of the Lord's people to reform or change in any way the present social, political, or ecclesiastical systems: Nor is it our mission to undertake to smite them either physically or symbolically. It is not our mission to intermeddle with the kingdoms or governments of this world, for to do so would be busy-bodily in affairs of which the Lord never authorized His people to be engaged. If the Church were to oppose and smite the present institutions, social or ecclesiastical, then all persecutions or sufferings resulting therefrom would be deserved, as they would have the inalienable right to defend themselves and to oppose those who were seeking to injure or to destroy them. Those thus suffering would do so not on account of righteousness, but because of mistaken zeal directed along improper channels.

In this connection we are impressed to submit an interesting statement by another on the subject of working for God:

"We are most thoroughly convinced that we are fit for God's work just so far as nature is brought under the power of the cross, and the sharp razor of self-judgment. Self-will can never be made available in the service of God; nay, it must be set aside, if we would know what true service is. There is, alas! a large amount of that which passes for service, which, if judged in the light of the Divine presence, would be seen to be but the fruit of a restless will. This is most solemn, and demands our most earnest attention. We cannot exercise too severe a censorship over ourselves, in this very thing. The heart is so deceitful that we may be led to imagine that we are doing the Lord's work, when, in reality, we are only pleasing ourselves. But, if we would tread the path of true service, we must seek to be, more and more, apart from nature. The self-willed Levi must pass through the typical process of washing and shaving, ere he can be employed in that elevated service assigned him by the direct appointment of the God of Israel.

Who Is On the Lord's Side?

"But, ere proceeding to examine particularly the work and service of the Levites, we must look for a moment at a scene in Exodus 32, in which they act a very prominent and a very remarkable part. We allude, as the reader will at once perceive, to the golden calf. During the absence of Moses, the people so completely lost sight of God and His claims as to set up a molten calf and bow down n thereto. This terrible act called for a summary judgment. 'And when Moses saw that the people were naked; (for Aaron had made them naked to their shame among their enemies) then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and, go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and

slay every man his brother and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that He may bestow upon you a blessing this day.' -- Exod. 32:25-29.

"This was a testing moment. It could not be otherwise, when this great question was pressed home upon the heart and conscience, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' Nothing could be more searching. The question was not, 'Who is willing to work?' No; it was a far deeper and more searching question: It was not who will go here or there, do this or that? There might be a vast amount of doing and going, and; all the while, it might be but the impulse of an unbroken will which, acting upon religious nature, gave an appearance of devotedness and piety eminently calculated to deceive oneself and others.

"But to be 'on the Lord's side' implies the surrender of one's own will, yea, the surrender of oneself, and this is essential to the true servant, the real workman. Saul of Tarsus was on this ground when he exclaimed, 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' What words, from the self-willed, fierce, and cruel persecutor of the Church of God!

"'Who is on the Lord's side?' Reader, art thou? Search and see. Examine thyself closely. Remember, the question is not at all, 'What art thou doing?' No; it is far deeper. If thou art on the Lord's side, thou art ready for any thing and every thing. Thou art ready to stand still, or ready to go forward; ready to go to the right or to the left; ready to be active, and ready to be quiet; ready to stand on thy feet, and ready to lie on thy back. The grand point is this, namely, the surrender of thyself to the claims of another; and that other the Lord Christ.

"This is an immense point. Indeed we know nothing more important, at the present moment than this searching question, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' We live in days of immense self-will. Man exults in his liberty. And this comes out, very prominently, in religious matters. Just as it was in the camp of Israel, in the days of the thirty-second of Exodus, the days of the golden calf. Moses was out of sight, and the human will was at work; the graven tool was called into operation. And what was the result? The molten calf; and when Moses returned, he found the people in idolatry and nakedness. Then came forth the solemn and testing question, 'Who is on the Lord's side?' This brought things to an issue, or rather it put people to the test. Nor it is otherwise now. Man's will is rampant, and that, too, in matters of religion. Man boasts of his rights, of the freedom of his will, the freedom of his judgment. There is the denial of the Lordship of Christ; and therefore it behooves, us to look well to it, and see that we really are taking sides with the Lord against ourselves; that we are in the attitude of simple subjection to His authority. Then we shall not be occupied with the amount or character of our service; it will be our one object to do the will of our Lord."

But some one may say, Does not the Apostle clearly indicate that the Church is to engage in the work of demolishing the present systems of error, the religious denominations promulgating false doctrines, when he says, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2 Cor. 10:4.)

We answer, not so, but that the Apostle was referring to an individual work in the mind of the consecrated believer. The overthrowing and destruction of the strongly-entrenched errors, or firmly-established structures of systematic theology contrary to the Truth, is the work represented in the expression, "pulling down of strongholds."

It is very evident that this was the Apostle's thought when we examine the context, for continuing, he says, "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ "

Contending In Meekness

We may be assured that those who proceed, contrary to the Divine commission, to engage in a work of injuring and smiting present institutions, are sure to involve themselves in serious difficulties, and generate a condition of mind and heart in which they are easily misled and deceived by the great Adversary. It is but a slight step from this stage of smiting to that of smiting the brethren in Christ and devouring one another. The light of recent events, aside from that of the Scriptures, has demonstrated the truthfulness of this statement.

When the Lord's people are exhorted to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), it does not necessarily mean to fight and oppose all who do not accept the Truth, but that they are to oppose the error in defense of the faith, and in the spirit of meekness and love, for "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all . . . in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." -- 2 Tim. 2 :24, 25.

Let all the saints of God then, labor on in the work the Lord has assigned them -- the work of perfecting the saints for the future work of the ministry, looking forward to the time when it shall be said of His glorious Bride: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready." -- Rev. 19:7.

WHEN DID THE LORD COME TO HIS TEMPLE?

"And the Lord, whom ye seek shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in: behold He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of His coming: and who shall stand when He appeareth?" -- Mal. 3:1, 2.

IN THE light of history unveiling prophecy, those who are now living far down the stream of time beyond Malachi's day are permitted to take a broad view -- a grand sweep of the centuries; the great vision of the ages is before them. Such are enabled to recognize not only the import of the two Advents of Jesus, but are given a grand, comprehensive view of all those blessed offices that center in Him as the great Prophet, Priest, and King appointed of God to deliver the world from sin and death.

While Malachi the Prophet spoke for and represented Jehovah to the returned Israelites, his prophecy was evidently intended to be of much more signal importance in its application all the way down through the more than twenty centuries since. Various of the Prophets had in one way or another referred to the coming of Jehovah's special Messenger, the Messiah. The Jewish nation had been waiting for His coming for more than fifteen centuries, and now Malachi, the last of the Prophets, gives his testimony clear and strong in harmony with the rest, declaring that Messiah would surely come. He would come to His temple and carry out the Divine program respecting it. He would ultimately make it the meeting place between God and man, bringing untold blessings to both Israel and all humanity.

The word "Lord" in this text is not in the Hebrew "Jehovah," but signifies master, supervisor, teacher. Jehovah is represented as the speaker, who evidently refers to the Lord Jesus, assuring those who have the ear to hear and understand, that the Messiah, whom they seek, shall suddenly come to His temple. The Messenger of the Covenant is primarily the Lord Jesus; He is indeed the great Messenger through whom the Covenant will have its fulfillment, the great Abrahamic Covenant, the Oath-abound Covenant. It is the hope of natural Israel and the hope of spiritual Israel "which hope we have as an anchor to our souls, . . . and which entereth into that within the veil." The Messenger or Servant of that Covenant is the one through whom its provisions will be accomplished, namely the Seed of Abraham, "which seed is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) The Messenger whom Jehovah would send is the Christ, not alone the man Christ Jesus, who was pre-eminently the Divine Messenger, but inclusively the whole Christ, the Church, the Body, the under-associates, with Jesus the Head.

Suffering Now-Reigning Hereafter

As we have already seen in our study, this Messenger appears in the two-fold capacity: First as the suffering One, the sacrificing One, and secondly as the anointed, glorified One, the King, the Restorer. The work of suffering belongs to this Gospel Age, the reign of glory belongs to the Millennial Age. The suffering began with the consecration of our Lord and Master at the time of His baptism into death. The three and one-half years of His ministry were so much of His delivering Himself into death or baptism into death, and that personal sacrifice was finished at Calvary. During this Gospel Age, in harmony with the Divine Plan, our Redeemer has accepted a little flock from the world upon their renouncement of sin, their acceptance of Him as their justification, and their consecration of their little all to His service, "to be dead with Him that they might also live with Him, to suffer with Him that they might also reign with Him."

"Throughout this Gospel Age, this overcoming Class, the Church, has been faithfully laying down, sacrificing, life and earthly prospects and interests because of their love for the Lord and for the principles of righteousness which He represents. Thus this entire Gospel Age has been one of suffering. As stated by the Apostle, the Prophets foretold the "sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. 1:11.) The glory of this great Christ, Head and Body, cannot be ushered in until all of its sufferings are at an end. Hence, as the Apostle urges, it is for us to appreciate the situation and understand our privilege to "suffer with Him," or "to be dead with Him," to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, to "present our bodies living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, our reasonable service." -- 2 Tim. 2:11, 12 ; Col. 1:24; Rom. 12:1.

Coming to His Temple

Understanding this portion of Malachi's prophecy then to be a portrayal of the Lord's dealing with the temple class, we must make the application, not specially in connection with some particular trial upon the Church now, nor at any one particular date in connection with His Second Advent, but rather we must see the, prophecy as having reference to the entire period of time covering the whole Gospel Age, during which Messiah is calling and developing those who would be of His temple. The text then having reference to the entire appearance of Messiah, beginning at Jordan, His appearance culminates in His glorious revelation at His Second Advent. The Jews, at His First Advent, had been expecting the greater Mediator than Moses, who was the mediator of the old Law Covenant. Moses said to them, "A Prophet [a great Messiah] shall the Lord your God raise up unto you from amongst your brethren; like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." (Acts 3:22, 23.) So they were expecting this

great Messiah, the greater Mediator of the New Covenant. Jehovah had said, "I will send My Messenger, . . . even the Messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in." You are expecting a greater than Moses; but it will mean a severer trial and testing when the greater shall come.

Thus Jesus came to His temple nineteen centuries ago, in the sense that He began dealing with the temple or Levite class. To His own He came, first, but as we have seen, only a remnant of these accepted Jesus as the antitypical Mediator of the New Covenant. The call went to the Gentiles and to them were proclaimed the hopes and promises that had been first offered to the Jewish nation, that the Gentiles should be made "fellow-heirs with the remnant of believing Jews. Addressing some of these, St. Paul said, "Ye are the temple of the living God." (1 Cor 3:16.) All through this Age the Messenger of the Covenant has appeared, that is, has been with His temple, has been conducting the work of purifying and refining.

"Who Shall Stand When He Appeareth"

And so asks the Prophet, "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi." It is not literal silver and gold that is to be refined, but God's people. They will be relieved of the dross that they may offer unto the Lord an acceptable sacrifice in righteousness. These sons of Levi in the antitypical sense are the household of faith in this Age, and they have proposed that they will offer themselves to the Lord -- will "present their bodies living sacrifices." Such as do thus fully present themselves will be the priests, and the great Messiah will be the High Priest. They will offer unto the Lord an acceptable sacrifice in righteousness.

The question, "Who shall stand when He appeareth?" should be understood to mean, who shall stand the **tests** during the time of His appearing, when He is causing His prospective joint-heirs to pass through the refiner's fire. At the First Advent, we recall that John the Baptist said with reference to the Jews, "He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather His wheat into His garner." (Matt. 3:12.) Similarly, throughout the Age since, there has been a testing, a trying, and proving of the Lord's people. Who will stand the test to prove who are the people of God? The Lord has been determining who are really the consecrated ones.

Ministers of the New Covenant

As elsewhere presented in the Scriptures, this Gospel Age is for the purpose of finding the priests out of the Levitical class, to make them ready as ministers of the New Covenant, which is to be for all the people through them. (2 Cor. 3:6.) While the New Covenant has not yet been inaugurated, and has not been in operation toward any (the Church class coming under the "faith Covenant" or "Covenant of

Sacrifice" along with Jesus as members of the "Seed" class), yet it is proper to recognize that the New Covenant has been in process of inauguration all through this Gospel Age in the sense that the Lord has been providing those who shall be the agencies of its complete establishment in the future; meantime the New Covenant does not benefit either Israel or the world until the Kingdom is established and the Covenant put into operation early in the Millennial Age. As there was to be a Mediator to make atonement and to establish a covenant between God and man, this Mediator began with the Lord Jesus Christ, the High Priest. Then in God's arrangement, He was to add an under priesthood, all these to be the antitypical Levites, ministers, and servants of the New Covenant. All the lines of prophecy focusing upon the present time compel the belief that the work of this Age is about accomplished; and because we are now in the end of the Age, tests more crucial are being applied and will continue to be applied until the Lord shall have completed the development of this spiritual house of Levi, the antitypical Priesthood.

The Apostle, in addressing the Hebrews, clearly describes what is to be expected to follow the completion of the Church, and their general assembling in the First Resurrection. He portrays the ushering in of the new order of things, the establishing of the Kingdom, and the introduction of the New Covenant, midst a great shaking time of trouble, being the antitype of the inauguration of the Law Covenant by Moses at Mount Sinai. -- Heb. 12:18-27.

Thus before the blessings can come, the day of wrath, the "fire of God's jealousy" must pass upon the world. It is not to be a fire merely to destroy, but especially to purify; and will not, therefore, be a literal fire, but a symbolical fire, following which the Lord will turn. to the people a pure language, a pure message, and, a clear declaration of the Divine will and plan of salvation.

Purging in the Daily Experiences

It maybe asked, What is the "offering in righteousness" here mentioned? The offering now being made to God is the offering of the Church -- "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1.) The High Priest purifies these members of His Body by giving them the necessary experiences day by day, that they may more and more learn the will of God -- may more fully lay down earthly things and attain to the character-likeness of our Lord Jesus. This purging does not come all at once and complete the offering; but, in our daily experiences the chastisements of the Lord are to the end that His will may be accomplished in us more perfectly. He is giving us these experiences day by day, so that, as we receive them, we may learn what is His will, that we may complete the offering in, righteousness which we have begun.

If it be asked how we could be members of the great Refiner and, at the same time be of this Levite company whom He is refining, we

answer that this is the picture uniformly set before us in the Scriptures -- that Christ is the Head of the Body, in the official sense; and we are counted in as members of His Body; even before we have been fully and completely and finally accepted as such in the "First Resurrection." The Head has passed into glory and we are to be with Him. From the time of our acceptance and begetting of the Holy Spirit we are counted in as members of His Body in a prospective manner, on the supposition that we shall make our calling and election sure. Then, again, in another sense of the word, the Lord uses these very ones whom He is refining as co-laborers with Him and gives to them a part of the ministry of reconciliation, some of the refining work amongst them being some who are instructors of the brethren -- until, as the Apostle says, they all come to the full stature of a man in Christ. (Eph. 4:13.) So now the refining work, the increasing of the Body of Christ, goes on the use of the different members of the Body proceeds, all by reason of the fact that our Lord is the Head of the Body.

Our Redemption Draweth Nigh

Those who are following the lamp of the Lord's Word and who recognize the meaning of the present times and circumstances and tests amongst God's people, should not be expecting the trials to grow lighter and easier, but to the contrary, we should look for greater and severer tests upon the true Israel of God. What God's people have been passing through in these very recent years is in full harmony with just what we should expect, and, instead of the brethren in their scattered, bewildered and tempest-tossed condition being discouraged concerning their blessed hopes, they should interpret all of these circumstances as the voice of the Lord declaring that their redemption draweth nigh, and should accordingly lift up their heads, renewing their confidence and their courage day by day, for the Lord will surely perfect that which concerneth His people. He will gather to Himself in heavenly glory all the faithful of the temple class, all the faithful of the Levitical, priestly class who successfully endure the refining and purifying processes of the present time, who thus "abide [remain loyal] the day of His coming," and "who stand [the test] when He appeareth."

"UNTO HIM BELONGETH ALL"

"Just why I suffer loss
I can not know;
I only know my Father Wills it so.
He leads in paths I cannot understand;
Put all the way I know is wisely planned.

"My life is only mine
That I may use The gifts He lendeth me
As He may choose:

And if in love some boon He doth recall,
I know that unto Him belongeth all.

"I am His child, and I
Can safely trust;
He loves me, and I know
That He is just;
Within His love I can securely rest,
Assured that what He does for me is best."

IN HIS STEPS

*"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also
suffered for us, leaving us an example,
that ye should follow His steps." -- 1 Pet. 2:21.*

IN HIS steps," must be the motto of every consistent follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whether we think of the figure of a race-course or of a difficult, narrow, and winding pathway over dangerous roads leading to a happy goal, the thought and lesson before us are the same. It is ever and always the Christ-life -- the manner of thinking, speaking and acting according to the great and sublime example of Jesus, of whom God said, "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The basis for this high commendation from above is to be found in the fact that Jesus did always those things that pleased the Father, as He declared, "I delight to do Thy will." The will of God was our Lord's theme always, which signified that He was ready always to observe and obey the great principles of the Divine government.

The steps of Jesus were then steps of obedience, steps of loyalty to God, steps of faithfulness to duty and to every requirement of the Divine Law. We are assured in the Scriptures that it was through the course of His earthly pilgrimage, taking these steps one after another day after day, that our Savior attained a state and richness of character that qualified Him to be the Redeemer of mankind and the dispenser of all those marvelous blessings that the human race is to receive in that blessed dispensation of the fullness of times. (Heb. 2:10.) Those who are to share Christ's reward, who are to see Him as He is and be like Him in heavenly glory, are instructed of the Spirit that His example is before them and that they should follow in His steps.

"He Reviled Not Again"

It is the great Apostle Paul who likewise earnestly admonishes the Christian to "Consider Him," ponder over, take note of, observe and think upon Christ and His life. One of the evidences of the Master's greatness and strength was, as the Apostle indicates, His enduring of such contradiction of sinners against Himself. We well know that our Lord endured physical opposition; but our English word contradiction properly translates the original, implying verbal contradiction of His

words. We observe as we consider our Lord's case that the people opposed Him, not so much physically, but in His words, doctrines, and teaching. It was left for the High Priest and Sanhedrin and soldiers to do Him physical violence and put Him to death; and He could have resisted them if He had so chosen.

That the Apostle refers more to the contradiction of His words seems to be implied by St. Peter's statement which says, "When He was reviled, He reviled not again." During the period of our Lord's ministry we find that His doctrines were disputed and that He was repeatedly slandered. It was said of Him that He was possessed of a demon; that He performed His miracles by the prince of demons; that He was a blasphemer. These contradictions and oppositions on their part might have called out from Him some very just, truthful statements respecting them. He might have told them that Satan was working with them, etc. His perfect command of language would have given Him ability to abundantly cope with them. When they sought to entrap Him in His words, He entrapped them in their own words. But He reviled not. He did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. This the Apostle shows is the proper course.

Few Are Advanced in Discipleship

The great lesson in all of this course of Jesus should be obvious to every earnest follower of the Master, who from time to time realizes himself the object of evil words, unkind words, and general mistreatment from those who misunderstand or are evilly minded. It is natural, especially for the fallen flesh, to think of something evil to say in return. And such circumstances become tests upon the Christian. If we yield to such a spirit of malice and retaliation, we are following the course of the enemy and not of the Lord. The important consideration therefore is to have a large measure of the Spirit of God, to be filled with the Spirit. If we are not thus well fortified we will very probably become wearied and faint in our minds when attacked by the Adversary, whoever may be his agents and whatever may be their missiles. He cannot do any real injury, and it will only increase our reputation and worth in the Lord's sight if we endure faithfully he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the good of His cause -- though that good may mean "sifting" of "chaff" and "tares" from the "wheat." Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are strictly forbidden to God's people as wholly contrary to His spirit of love even if the evil thing be true. Jesus gave as a preventive of anything in the nature of slander some special instructions that mark out the only way of redress of grievances. (Matt. 18:15-17.) Many among even advanced Christians have seemed to be much in ignorance of this Divine ruling, and professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandal-mongers. Yet this is one of the few special specific commandments given by the Savior; and considered with the statement, "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command." the

constant violation of this, our Lord's command, proves that many are not far advanced in sonship -- discipleship.

Again, we observe in the steps of Jesus, great simplicity and purity. What inspiration we find to be pure ourselves and maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men! We must begin with the heart; we must not harbor thoughts or contemplate that which would in any sense of the word be evil. To make sure of this, let us have Christ Jesus as our pattern well and much before our minds. As soon as evil is intruded upon us, either from without or from within, let us lift up our hearts in prayer to Him for the grace promised in every time of need. Let us keep constantly before us the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer."

Sympathy With Divine Principles

As an aid to us in following the various specific commands of Scripture it is important that we seek more and more to understand and to come in sympathy with the principles which underlie the Divine Law and ruling. These will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Surely as we come to understand and sympathize with the principles of the Divine Law to that extent we are getting the spirit of the Divine Word. Note the testimony of the Psalmist on this point, "O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through Thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy Word. I have not departed from Thy judgments, for Thou hast taught me. How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Thy precepts I get understanding ; therefore I hate every false way. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." -- Psa. 119:97-105.

Every child of God will want to shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit or disposition of Christ -- contrary to love. A combative courage is necessary in overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil and their various snares. This fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and to the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed against sin, first in ourselves and secondly in others -- if used for the Lord and His people and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This, in the Scriptures, is called fighting the good fight, and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for Right and Truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and His people's liberties,

The Powers of Evil Would Make Combativeness a Chief Virtue

But such a good, use of combativeness is not pleasing to the Prince of this world, who will seek to pervert what he cannot directly use. Consequently, he attempts with some to make combativeness a chief virtue. He encourages them to fight everything and everybody; the brethren, more than the powers of darkness; nominal churchmen, more than the errors of ignorance which blind them and make them such. Indeed, his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

All should be on their guard on this point. Those who are walking in His steps will first of all, judge themselves, lest they cast a stumbling-block before others; let us fight down in our own hearts the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over non-essentials. Let us be very tolerant, recognizing that we are not yet judges of any. Greater is "he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the Truth be, not from motives of self-glorification, but from love for the Truth, love for the Lord, for His people, the brethren. If love be the impelling spirit, or motive, it will show itself accordingly in a loving, gentle, patient, humble course toward all the fellow-servants. Let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," which is, quick and powerful; do all the cutting.

Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions of heart directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, hatred; strife: These should have no place in our hearts, even for a moment; for they will surely do us great injury, aside from leading to the injury of other's. Our hearts, our wills, our intentions and desires should be kept full of love toward God and all His creatures -- the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have His spirit and walk in the way of His direction.

Do Not Trust to Conscience Alone

If conscience were a sufficient guide we would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to guide conscience; and still worse off than these are those mentioned in 1 Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and walking circumspectly according to its light.

We are not to faint in our minds nor become discouraged, feeling that so much has been said against us that we must give up the race. On the contrary, we are to feel assured, as did our Lord, that nothing can befall us except with the knowledge of the Father, who is working all things for our good. It was thus our Lord was prepared for His exaltation. So we, if we are rightly exercised by our various experiences, and if we follow as closely as possible the commands laid down for our guidance as we seek to walk in His steps, will find that

even revilings, slanders, oppositions to righteousness, will work out blessings for us, as they did for our Lord.

But how many become weary and are in danger of losing the prize because they fail to consider what the Lord faithfully endured of opposition! If such would consider that the Lord, who was perfect, suffered in every sense unjustly for righteousness' sake, and that their own conduct is imperfect, they would not be weary in well doing, but would learn to fight and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ"; they would continue to "fight the good fight of faith."

"We have not an High Priest which cannot lie touched with a feeling of our infirmities ; but was in all points tempted like as we [the Church] are, yet without sin."

The Herald of Christ's Kingdom

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"BEHOLD THE BRIDEGROOM"

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh go ye out to meet him."-- Matt. 25:6.

AMONGST the parables of our Lord there is none that inspires more to watchfulness and faithfulness than that of the ten virgins. Indeed we may well suppose that the object of the parable is to impress more indelibly the lesson of sober and godly vigilance and to warn yet more emphatically against the peril of lukewarmness, the drowsy life, and the smoldering lamp. It is recalled that the parable of the virgins is given as really a part of our Lord's answer to the question concerning the destruction of Jerusalem: "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy presence and of the end of the Age?" Jesus, answering the question in His great prophecy of Matthew 24, had explained these matters, indicating to them that His Second Coming would be .in strenuous times, when, if it were possible, the "very elect" would be deceived -- in which as it was in the days of Noah, so it would be in the days of the Son of Man -- the multitudes of the world would be eating and drinking, planting and building, marrying and giving in marriage, and would be unaware of the storm impending and of the consummation of the Age preparatory to the beginning of the new Age, the beginning of His Kingdom.

It was then to impress the matter upon the minds of His disciples that Jesus gave the parable of the ten virgins-five wise and five foolish. The scene of the parable is undoubtedly laid near to the close of the Gospel Age, as is indicated by its opening statement, "**Then** [at the time of these events that are associated with My Second Coming] shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." The parable could not be applicable all along through the Age and long in advance of the

Master's return; but to our understanding is applicable now, because we are living in the end of the Age, at the time when the signs mentioned by Jesus are in evidence, the signs that mark the, presence of the Bridegroom-and therefore the time when the wise virgins will go in, to the wedding and the foolish be excluded. There should then be strong indications today that the parable is in process of fulfillment.

The Heavenly Bridegroom and Bride

Throughout the Scriptures the Church is represented as a Bride in preparation for her marriage. The Bridegroom uniformly is the Lord Jesus, to whom belongs the entire inheritance, and the opportunity granted to the Lord's followers in the present time is that of becoming His Bride and Joint-heir. They have no status or relationship, to the King Eternal except as they obtain it by union with the King's Son. The type of this in the Old Testament is a very beautiful one: Abraham typified the Heavenly Father, very rich; Isaac typified our Lord Jesus, the seed of promise, the heir of all; Abraham's servant, sent to call a wife for Isaac, beautifully typified the Holy Spirit, which, during this Gospel Age, has been selecting the Church, of which, the Apostle says, I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto one husband; which is Christ. -- 2 Cor. 11:2.

Throughout the Gospel Age this Church, under the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit, has been approaching the Father's house of many mansions, the heavenly Kingdom, the glorious conditions promised in joint-heirship with the Bridegroom. If, we rightly understand the matter we are now at the end of the journey, and the Bride class, typified by Rebecca, is putting on the veil and alighting from the camel and being received by the heavenly Bridegroom. As the entire matter has occupied a long period of nearly nineteen centuries, so the coming features are occupying several years for their accomplishment. Soon the Bride will be with the Bridegroom and in the Sarah tent -- joint-heir with Him in the Abrahamic Covenant. It is in harmony with this that the Apostle assures us that "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." -- Gal. 3 :29.

Several, of the Lord's parables relate to this marriage of the King's Son, and His last message to the Church tells us of how ultimately the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall shine forth resplendent in the Kingdom. She is also symbolized by the New Jerusalem. The announcement is there made, too, of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb after the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall have made herself ready. (Rev. 19:7-9.) John the Baptist as a prophet referred to this relationship between Christ and the Church, saying, "He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom; but the friend of the Bridegroom when he heareth his voice rejoiceth greatly. This my joy is fulfilled." John realized that he was neither a member of the Bride class nor was he the Bridegroom. He recognized Jesus as the Bridegroom, and was glad to be honored of God as the servant of the Bridegroom and Bride to give the introduction. The high position

John will occupy in the future, as one of the faithful prophets of whom our Lord said there was none greater, is assured; but we have the Lord's further significant statement that the least one, the humblest one in the Bride class of this Gospel Age, the least one in this Kingdom, class, will be greater than John the Baptist, because these are to be joint-heirs in the Kingdom, partakers of the glory, honor, immortality, while John and the faithful of the past will be upon the earthly plane as representatives and princes of the Kingdom amongst men. -- Matt. 11:11; Heb. 11:39, 40; Psa. 45:16.

Two Classes of Virgins

Having the parable then located before our minds as belonging somewhere about the present time, we note the fact that it refers only to virgins -- pure ones. The parable therefore cannot refer to the world at all nor to even ordinary Church people. Both the wise and foolish virgins represent Christians, the Kingdom of Heaven class, consecrated believers, believers who have heard the Gospel of the Kingdom, who are expecting a change at His Second Advent, who have lamps, and who get from their lamps light, spiritual information and instruction, and inspiration to piety and, godly living.

These two classes of pure ones, separate from the world, informed respecting the Bridegroom's coming and Kingdom and waiting for it, represent two general classes of consecrated Christian's; the one measuring fully up to the Lord's requirements in the matter of zeal, faithfulness, and fullness of consecration, will prove themselves to be of the fully overcoming class and will occupy places with our Lord in His throne; the other, a more numerous class, who in some important respects are a second grade class of Christians, less faithful to the Lord, less fervent in spirit, and more or less subjects of lukewarmness and indifference, consequently foolish virgins, will not be admitted into the special blessings and rewards of the wise virgin class.

It would seem reasonable to think that these are the same two classes that are represented in the Tabernacle type by the two goats, one of which became the Lord's goat for sacrifice and the other the scape-goat, only that in the Tabernacle type the goats represented the two classes all the way down through the Gospel Age as well as particularly at its close, while the two classes in the parable under consideration represent the Church only in the present time in the end of this Age.

Necessity for Watching and Praying

Evidently the Lord's object in giving the parable was twofold: first, to give a salutary lesson to the Apostles and the entire Church of this Gospel Age on the necessity for alertness, watching and praying, anticipating and preparing for the coming King and His Kingdom that they might be constantly ready for a share therein. Second, the parable was specially intended for the saints living in this time, to let them see that it would not be sufficient to be hoping and praying for the

Kingdom and in a general way expecting the Bridegroom, but that they must be so alert and so full of enthusiasm for the event that it would lead them to make the wisest possible preparation for it, that they might not be disappointed at the final moment.

True to the picture in the parable, there has been within the past century a general stir, a worldwide movement amongst the Lord's people of all denominations which culminated in what is commonly known as the Second Advent Movement. While it is true that throughout the Age the faithful watching class have kept before their minds the great theme of their Master's return, and while at various intervals through the centuries it was thought that the Lord's Second Presence was at hand, yet, none of these occasions have had the earmarks of the fulfillment of the parable -- in fact could not have been the fulfillment since it is quite distinctly implied that it is a portrayal of certain events and circumstances in the time when the Age would actually end. But within the past century the virgins, the pure ones, the spiritually minded of Christians all over the world, have been aroused with the thought that the return of the Bridegroom was near, with the result that there has been a general lamp trimming, a general investigation; a general study and examination of the prophecies of the Bible, especially on the subjects of the close of the Age, the Second Presence of the Lord, and the establishment of His Kingdom.

Many Prophecies Pass into History

It is remembered in this connection that the great Reformation movement and the developments which followed had much to do with preparing for this awakening concerning the coming of the Bridegroom that took place in the nineteenth century. In our study of the Revelation visions we have observed how this feature relative to the previous developments was portrayed particularly in the tenth and eleventh chapters of the Apocalypse. First, there was the vision of the mighty angel from heaven "clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book; . . . and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth." Here, and in the context, as has been noted do the Revelation exposition, there appears to be a clear forecast of what took place in the sixteenth century, in the way of the exercise of the power of Christ in defense of His people at a time of sore need; a portrayal of the deadly blow that was dealt the great apostate system, etc. These events, as noted by many able expositors, were of such magnitude and importance as to "affect in a most remarkable manner the general conditions of mankind, and the Lord's consecrated in particular. Historians have filled many large volumes in describing these occurrences. The effects of these great transactions are seen today in not only the professed Christian world, but in the nations and peoples of earth as well."

The little book in the hand of the mighty angel, and later given to St. John to eat is significant of the special message of comfort and truth

that was given to the truth-hungry and famishing children of God following the Reformation. The giving of the little book to the Lord's people has its fulfillment we believe in the life-work and ministry of one after another of the Reformers", as under the direction of the Lord they were enabled to remove the rubbish of error and uncover the precious truths that had so long been perverted and hidden. This is further pictured in Chapter 11, verses 1 and 2, Where St. John was told to measure the temple of God, suggestive of the examination, the proving and setting in proper order of the truths of the Divine Plan relative to the temple class, the Church, as well as the world. Further on in the same chapter (verses 3-12) there came the vision of the two witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth and ashes, their death and then their resurrection and ascension to heaven, emphasizing still further the foregoing point well known to the historian relative to the cruel persecuton unto death of the true Church and the Truth itself for a time; the coming to life of these subsequently as a result of the influences of providence in connection with and following the Reformation; the still further liberating of the Truth set forth in the Scriptures and its representatives, their lifting up and exaltation to favor with the civil powers, to a place of dignity and influence never before known -- all of this we have witnessed as substantially taking place up to the close of the eighteenth century, about 1799, when the Papal powers to persecute were completely broken at the end of the 1260 prophetic years.

It must be conceded by all that with the opening of the nineteenth century the true Church composed of consecrated believers occupied in some respects a position of decided advantage over the Church of all previous periods of the Age. Many of the Bible prophecies hitherto dark and obscure began to open up and to be understood. Many of the Apocalyptic visions as well as much of the prophecy of Daniel could now be comprehended inasmuch as they had largely passed into history. Hence the faithful watchers, as they gave heed to the light of their lamps recognized that they were approaching the end of the Age, and that the Second Coming of the Lord could not be far away.

Going Forth to Meet the Bridegroom

As a result of all this arousing of the virgin class and the investigation that followed, there was developed the Second Advent movement which took definite shape during the first half of the last century. But still much confusion prevailed on account of the incorrect views and impressions concerning both the object and manner of the Lord's Second Advent. The general conception being that Christ was to come again as a man in a body of flesh; that He would immediately gather, His saints to Himself and literally destroy the earth with fire and all its unsaved inhabitants. In keeping with these crude opinions, heroic efforts were made to determine the exact date of the Lord's return. The first of these Second Advent movements of any moment was that

headed by William Miller. Brother Russell, reviewing this subject and writing concerning the part played by this leader said:

"Areligious movement culminated in 1844, the participants in which were then., and since, generally known as 'Second Adventists' and 'Millerites,' because they expected the Second Advent of the Lord to occur at that date, and because a Mr. William Miller was the leader and prime mover. The movement, which began about 1829, had before 1844 (when they expected the Lord's return) attracted the attention of all classes of Christian people, especially in the Eastern and Middle States where it amounted to an excitement A long while before this, Prof. Bengel, in Tubingen, Germany; began to call attention to the prophecies and the coming Kingdom of Messiah, while the celebrated missionary Wolff did the same in Asia. The center of the work, however, was America, Where social, political, and religious conditions have favored, more than elsewhere, independence in Bible study as well as in other matters; just as the First Advent movement was confined to Judea, though all the devout Israelites, everywhere, heard more or less of it. -- Acts 2:5..

"All know something of the failure of Brother Miller's expectations. The Lord did not come in 1844, and the world was not burned up with fire, as he had expected and taught others to expect; and this was a great disappointment to those 'holy people' who had so confidently looked for Christ ('Michael') then to appear and to exalt them with Him in power and glory. But, notwithstanding the disappointment, the movement had its designed effects -- of awakening an interest in the subject of the Lord's coming, and of casting reproach upon the subject by reason of mistaken expectations. . . . That 'Miller movement,' as it is slightly called, brought also an individual blessing to the 'holy people' who participated in it; it led to a careful searching of the Scriptures, and to confidence in God's Word above the traditions of men; and it warmed and fed and united the hearts of God's children in unsectarian fellowship; those interested were of all denominations; though principally Baptists. It is since that movement ended, that some of these have organized and bound themselves as new sects, thus blinding themselves to some of the blessings due in the 'harvest.'

"While, as the reader will have observed, we disagree with Mr. Miller's interpretations and deductions, on almost every point -- viewing the **object**, as well as the **manner** and the **time**, of our Lord's coming, in a very different light -- yet we recognize that movement, as being in God's order, and as doing a very important work in separating, purifying, refining, and thus making ready, of a waiting people prepared for the Lord. And not only did it do a purifying and testing work in its own day, but, by casting reproach upon the study of prophecy and upon the doctrine of the Lord's Second Advent, it has ever since served to test and prove the consecrated, regardless of any association with Mr. Miller's views and expectations."

The Bridegroom Tarried

In addition to the disappointment of 1844, other dates have been set for the Lord's return and other disappointments have followed, though perhaps none of equal moment to that of the Miller Movement. Thus it appears that true to one of the lessons in the parable of the virgins, the Bridegroom has tarried ; that is, He has **seemed** to tarry. Really, from the Lord's standpoint, there has been no tarrying, for He needs not to delay anything when His time comes. It has been only from the standpoint of the watchers that He has seemed to tarry. His advent having been anticipated at certain set times, the failure of those expectations has, meant humanly speaking, that the Bridegroom Bridegroom tarried. Further, as the parable indicates, during the time when the Bridegroom has seemed to delay His return, the virgin class all slumbered and slept. Figuratively speaking, after the failure of various predictions and expectations as to the Bridegroom's presence, as a class, the virgins became drowsy and fell asleep on the subject of, the Lord's return, and the study of prophecy;. a wave of lethargy and indifference came over them: for a time regarding these matters, The lamps were measurably neglected and a general stupor fell upon them. Indeed, as another has said, "Many of the virgins not only slept, but dreamed peculiar; fantastic, and unreasonable things." How much diversified teaching, how many conflicting and confusing theories and philosophies have been developed and propagated by those who have professed to be interested in the fulfillment of prophecy and tile return of the Lord !

At Last the Announcement of His Presence

But finally, at last there has come the midnight announcement, "Behold the, Bridegroom." This, as the parable goes on to show, represents a movement, a proclamation of the Lord's presence, based upon sound conclusions. This time it is no false alarm, for the announcement marks really the time for the Bridegroom's presence. The same general class is referred to, though not necessarily the same individuals, As the earlier awakenings of the virgins were the result of the light upon prophecy, regarding the time for Messiah's Second Advent as the Bridegroom of the Church, so with the final movement when His presence actually becomes a fact, as we believe it has.* It has been revealed in what the Master Himself termed, "The sign of [the presence of] the Son of Man in heaven," in the ecclesiastical heavens. This sign has consisted of certain comparatively sudden world-wide developments .and changes, movements, and activities taking place in the, affairs of men, indicating that a new force, a, new power and influence not hitherto active, is in operation, looking in the direction of the complete dissolution of this world order, and preparing for the establishment of the Kingdom. All of this manifestation taken together with several chronological predictions, as to the conclusion of this Age, has, during the past fifty years or so become the foundation for the belief in and proclamation amongst the virgin class of the announcement, "Behold the Bridegroom."**

* See issues of this journal of Oct. 1 to Dec. 15, 1926, discussing the subject of our Lord's Second Presence.

** The oldest Greek MSS., the Sinaitic and Vatican, omit cometh, and read: "Behold the Bridegroom."

Let the point be clearly seen that the force of the announcement is that the Bridegroom, is present, for it does not say, Behold the coming of the Bridegroom is not far off, nor Behold, He is coming soon, but Behold Him, that He is present, etc. The word "behold" signifies to see, look upon, etc.. The Bridegroom would necessarily have to be present in order for any to look upon or behold Him.. It is His presence then that is announced. Nor is it of first importance that we determine the exact day or even year when the Bridegroom became present. Even the most faithful effort in this direction, we believe, leaves us still in doubt as to the precise moment when His presence was a fact; even as at our Lord's First Advent the exact date of our Lord's birth or the exact date of the commencement of His ministry was of little importance as compared with the matter of recognizing from the signs of the times and from what was then going on, the fact that Messiah was really present in their midst. 'So now, that which is of primary interest to the virgins are the signs and tokens' of the Bridegroom's presence, so that as members of this class we shall be able to "behold," recognize the times in which we are living and the meaning of present events in the earth.

"Go Ye Out to Meet Him"

The announcement continues, "Go ye out to meet Him."* The announcement being made amongst the virgins, it would of course mean that in approaching the Bridegroom, they would necessarily "go" and not "come" out to meet Him. The invitation to go out and meet Him is an appeal to make ready for glorification with Him. Inasmuch as the coming of the Lord is to claim His Bride and to unite her with Himself, the admonition to "go out to meet Him," would surely carry the idea that since He is present, the gathering of the saints unto Him would soon take place; therefore, the urgent need for making haste, to be ready to go in with Him to the nuptial feast.

* The most trustworthy translations render this passage "go" and not "come" ye out to meet Him.

However, there is nothing about the announcement and nothing in any part of the parable to indicate that the virgins would know **in advance** just when all of their number will have been united with the Lord. There is merely the bare statement, "At midnight a cry was made" ; but this contains no chronological prediction. The time when the "cry" was raised merely marks the point when the virgins discovered that the Bridegroom **was present**, and suggests no information whatever as to when the last of the wise virgin class would pass beyond the veil. The term "midnight" in the parable is merely another way of saying, late in the night, or at a late hour. The Bridegroom was expected earlier as we have seen and as the parable indicates, when the virgins took their lamps and went forth to meet Him. Then He tarried, as it seemed to the virgins, till it grew to be a late hour -- midnight ("middle of the night" word for word rendering in Diaglott), when the announcement of His presence (not that of the completion of the Church's glorification) was made. In other words, the statement that it was midnight merely denotes that the Bridegroom's coming was á considerable time after He was expected.

All Had Lamps but Not All Had Oil

Let the fact be further seen that the virgins of the parable are shown as all having lamps trimmed and giving them light. This was true from the first, when they became concerned about the Bridegroom's coming, for they all took their lamps and went forth to meet Him. These lamps represent, we believe, the Scriptures -- "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet." When the presence of the Bridegroom was announced after the disappointment and period of sleeping, all the virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. The fulfillment of this has been observed by many during the past half century or more and is represented in the general searching of the Scriptures by all classes of earnest Christians, probably to an extent never before known. The oil, we believe, represents the Spirit, the power, the inward blessing of the Truth. It was manifest in the lamps 'of all, that is, in the Scriptures, but not all, had the "oil," the spirit and power of the Truth, its, real meaning, **in themselves** -- in their "vessels." And herein is the distinction between the two classes of virgins. The wise had the oil in their vessels, the spirit, power and essence of the Truth in themselves; the foolish while having the lamps did not have the oil, the power and spirit of the in themselves.

Let us not hastily conclude, therefore, that, all who profess to believe that the Lord is now present may be said to have oil in their vessels; for it is most evident that there are many who have a certain amount of intellectual appreciation of the thought of the Lord's presence, but whose general conduct and attitude give 'ample 'evidence that while they may have in their possession the Scriptures, they have little or none of the oil, the power and blessing of the Truth in their own hearts, by which alone they will be enabled to appreciate the presence of the Lord in its proper light.

How evident it is that it is most essential to have the spirit of consecration, the spirit of fervent love and devotion to the Lord in order to heed the admonition, "Go ye out to meet Him"; that is, to fulfil the terms and obligations of the great engagement or covenant with the Lord in such a way as to be ready to go in with Him to the nuptial feast! It is the oil of the Holy Spirit that enables the wise virgin class to pursue a safe and steady course of holy living, of separateness from the world and from all the things of self.

The All-Important Question of the Holy Spirit in the Heart

To illustrate this Holy Spirit, this spirit of consecration, which all the wise virgins must have in full measure in order to maintain their light and their place in the Bridegroom's favor and to gain an entrance into the marriage, the Lord in the parable represents the foolish virgins as asking the wise for some of their oil, and then shows the impossibility of its 'being thus' obtained from one another. The fruits and graces of the *Holy Spirit* can not be had for the asking; they must be bought in the market of experience—they are of gradual growth and cost painstaking care of words and thoughts and deeds. It is because these fruits of the Spirit are so difficult of attainment and cost such a price of self-sacrifice and sacrifice of worldly interests that they are valuable in the Lord's sight.

We are now dealing with the most serious feature of the parable. It is the all-important question of the oil, of the possession of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Many appear to have lost sight of this matter. Our lamps (the Scriptures) will give us no light unless there is the power of the Spirit in our hearts, illuminating the sacred pages and giving zeal and energy in the direction of the transformation of character. For years past the announcement has been going forth, "Behold the Bridegroom" -- the time is at hand for the official presence of Christ to commence; many (all the virgins) are awakened and aroused, and go forth with lamps to meet the Bridegroom. Many profess to believe in His presence; but comparatively few give evidence that they have the oil in their vessels. Consequently they have not the spiritual power and light in their hearts to enable them to, "go out to meet" Him." They lack the power to live the life of holiness and separation from all contamination -- to make the necessary preparation of character for the final union with Christ in His Kingdom.

As evidence that the lights of many have gone out or are going out; is the fact that they have lost and are losing "their" discernment, their appreciation of the great principles and issues so vitally important to the Church. Many today have lost their appreciation of the great truth that Christ only is the Head of the Church and that He and the twelve Apostles are the only infallibly inspired guides in regard to all matters of faith, doctrine, and proper living. Many have lost their appreciation of the Master's words, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Many fail to see that God has not placed any lords over His heritage, the Church, and that no brother or brethren have a right to the

claim that they are the sole custodians of the faith and keepers of the Church. A proper appreciation of these vital truths would enable many to recognize that each disciple is individually related to the Lord and responsible to Him alone, and has full liberty to study the Word and to decide for himself all matters pertaining to the faith, ministry, and holy living.

It is furthermore evidenced that many are confused and bewildered at the present time and have lost sight of the terms of discipleship, of the conditions on which membership in the Kingdom may be secured. Many do not see that it is the development of Christian character, of the graces and fruits of the Holy Spirit that constitute the great essentials of preparation for the meeting of the Bridegroom. It is in their confusion, bewilderment and perplexity including their conduct and actions that many are practically acknowledging that their lamps have gone out, and so it is indicated in the parable that it is as if they said, "Give us of your oil."

Elements That Constitute Spirituality

The great question of the hour now is, who has a sufficiency of oil, of light, of the Holy Spirit, from which this illumination proceeds, to be able to stand in the procession of the virgins who will enter in with the Bridegroom before the door closes? It is an important question and one which appeals to every one who has his lamp burning. How necessary that we see to it that we have a good supply of the spirit of the Lord in our hearts -- the spirit of meekness, patience, gentleness, longsuffering, brotherly kindness, love! We may be sure that unless we have a good supply of these elements that constitute spirituality, our lamps will go out; the Scriptures will cease to give us that spiritual light, that impetus and desire in sufficient measure to enable us to successfully carry out our consecration vows and "go out to meet the Bridegroom."

None can get too much of this Holy Spirit, none can secure an oversupply for his own use, so that he can supply others from his abundance. Therefore, the foolish virgins are told to go to the market and purchase the oil, which signifies that the only way whereby any can secure the power, influence, and graces of the Spirit, is by earnest, diligent, and painstaking effort in the school of experience; in a word, the proper fulfilling of the terms of discipleship and full consecration to God.

The Bridegroom has made abundant provision in advance that all those who are invited to go in with Him to the marriage may be properly equipped, not only with robes and lamps, but also with the oil; and if any are careless in the procurement of the oil they thus indicate their unfitness to be of the class who are to enter with the Bridegroom before the door is shut. This is the essence of the Lord's instruction by the parable -- that those who hope to enter into the Kingdom and share His glory with Him must expect to make preparation in advance. If

they wait until the moment for the door to close, however willing they may be, however anxious, they will not be prepared -- the preparation requires time, patience, care.

Going to the Market for Oil

The foolish virgins we learn go and buy the precious oil and have their lamps trimmed and burning, but too late for the marriage, too late to be of those who will be the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. And thus in the parable it is represented: that when they knock the Bridegroom will say, "I do not recognize you as being members of the Bride class; you must not come in." Instead of entering into the joys of the Lord with the others, they will be permitted for a time at least to have their portion in the great distress and trouble which will then prevail throughout the world; this was referred to by Jesus as the weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Sorrow, disappointment, chagrin will be the portion not only of the foolish virgins but in a general way of all people of the earth in that time. Sweet indeed is the consolation in knowing that that great day of fiery purification will prepare the world of mankind for the glorious condition of the Millennial Kingdom, which will then shortly be ushered in! The Sun of Righteousness will arise with healing in His beams and many people shall go and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house; He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths. For the law shall go forth from Mount Zion [the glorified Kingdom, the heavenly Kingdom] and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem [from the earthly representatives of the heavenly Kingdom]." -- Mal. 4:2; Isa. 2:3.

This parable does not give us any clue as to the destiny of the foolish virgins, but we cannot fail to recognize the inconsistency of the thought that the folly of these should not only exclude them from the Kingdom blessings, but that even after they get the oil of the Holy Spirit later on they should be consigned to an eternity of torture or lost! How unreasonable such a thought! On the contrary, how much in harmony with the general Divine character and program is this parable as we have here pictured its fulfillment. From other Scriptures we gather the thought that as the Great Company of Revelation 7, the foolish virgins; having been permitted to wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, will be ushered into the presence of the Lord and the Bride and become as represented in Psalm 45, the virgins, the Bride's companions and co-laborers in the Kingdom work -- serving **before** the throne while they might have been, by proper love and zeal and knowledge in the present time, members of the Bride class in the throne.

Wise Virgins Entering In

We thank God therefore that the closing of the door does not mean the closing of the door of hope and that all outside, the foolish virgins as well as the world, will go down to hopeless despair in the Second Death. It does mean, however, the close of the great and grand opportunity which will never open again-it signifies the completion of the Kingdom class, the Bride class, the close of the Narrow Way to glory, honor, immortality, and joint-heirship with Christ.

Our Lord concludes the parable with the words, "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." The Revised Version omits from verse 13 the words, "Wherein the Son of Man cometh," because these are not found in any of the old Greek MSS. The thought, however, is practically the same -- Watch, because ye know neither the day nor the hour in which this parable will be fulfilled. The watching no doubt has been beneficial to the Lord's people all through the Gospel Age and is still more profitable to the wise virgin class of the present day because it explains to these the present circumstances and conditions. All the wise virgin class should be in the attitude commanded in the parable. They should have a knowledge of the fact that the Bridegroom was to come; they should have lamps and a full supply of the oil in their vessels, their hearts. Those living in this ready condition will not only not be alarmed, but will welcome with fervent joy, the message that the time is at hand for the Bridegroom to be present. Believing that we are living in the time of His presence, we should indeed expect to see what seems to be in evidence today, namely that the wise virgins are already falling into line, in the procession, and entering in to the marriage; apparently the full number will soon be found and the door will be shut.

Again we observe that the parable does not indicate that the virgins knew in advance, just the moment when all of them would "go in with Him to the marriage"; the absolute silence in the parable on this point is most evident; the uncertainty on the part of all the virgins as to just when they would meet the Bridegroom is indicated by the fact that the "wise" told the "foolish" virgins to go and buy oil, under the impression that they would have time to return and enter in. But while they were gone all the wise, virgins entered in and the door was shut.

Present Work of the Saints

In view of the considerations which this parable and other Scriptures present, it, is evident that our work in the present time is not only to proclaim the various dispensational truths relating to the end of this Age and the introduction of the new, but to assist those who do have the oil in their vessels to trim their lamps. If it is not already too late to go to buy the oil, it soon may be, and hence special care should be exercised with respect to those whose lights seem to be burning but dimly and appear to be going out; those who appear to be growing careless and indifferent and are inclined to be overcharged with the

things of time and sense. These need to be aroused, encouraged, assisted, to enter into the full privileges of the wise virgin class as those who are marching on bravely, "going out to meet the Bridegroom."

Let the spirit of praise and true devotion to God fill the hearts of all the faithful virgin class for the blessings and mercies already theirs; and let such go on, faithfully rejoicing in the light of their lamps and in the anticipation of the glorious nuptial feast and the later glorious work with the Bridegroom of blessing all humanity of the earth. Surely he that hath this knowledge will by it be separated more and more from the world and its spirit and be gradually more and more transformed from glory to glory, in the likeness of the Bridegroom. However much others may be neglectful of their privileges and lacking in the precious oil, the Holy Spirit of humility and loving devotion to the Lord, and overcharged with the things of this world, let all the wise virgins go forward in their personal preparation and in their hastening to hold up their lights in their salutation of the Bridegroom and expressions of joy in connection with His presence and the anticipated, entrance with Him to the marriage.

"ASCEND BELOVED"

"Ascend, beloved, to His joy;
Thy festal day has come;
Tonight the Lamb doth feast His own,
Tonight He with His Bride sits down,
Tonight puts on the spousal crown,
In the great upper room.

"Long, long deferred now comes at last,
The Lamb's glad wedding day;
The guests are gathering at the feast,
The seats in heavenly order placed,
The royal throne above the rest
How bright the whole array!

"Ascend, beloved, share His life
Our days of death are o'er;
Mortality has done its worst,
The fetters of the tomb are burst,
The last has now become the first,
Forever, evermore.

"Ascend, beloved, to the feast,
Make haste, the day has come;
Thrice blest are they the Lamb doth call
To share the heavenly festival
In the new Salem's palace hall,
Our everlasting home."

RECENT CONVENTIONS

AT SPRINGFIELD AND ULSTER PARK

IT IS truly a pleasure now to report the several conventions recently announced in these columns. The assembly of the brethren at Springfield, Mass., September 3, 4, and 5, and Ulster Park, 16, 17, and 18 were both richly blessed of the Lord to the upbuilding of a goodly number of the friends; and we believe those in attendance felt well repaid for the efforts put forth and time spent in thus coming "apart to rest awhile" and to "speak often one to another" of their glorious Master and of their blessed joys and prospects. "The love of Christ, love for the brethren, was the prevailing theme at both of these gatherings.

Many are the assemblages -- conferences, conventions, councils amongst, men for the purpose of exchanging thought and of facilitating their earthly interests -- those that pertain merely to the present life, getting on through this world, etc. But of all peoples of the earth the children of God have the most worthy cause to assemble that they may take counsel and converse together. Having been called and having entered the school of their Divine Master, they realize that they are charged with the most solemn duties and responsibilities; many lessons are to be learned; there are many difficulties and problems to face; there are sore trials and reverses to pass through. Successfully enduring all of these experiences signifies for them the winning of a heavenly crown -- the crown of life and joint-heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord in all the glory of His Kingdom.

How laudable, how exalted are the purposes therefore of these! And how sublime and worthy the cause of these who assemble in their Master's name, that they may take counsel together, that they may engage in holy converse, that they may exhort and encourage one another in walking in the footsteps of their Lord and so help one another to Secure the heavenly inheritance. Such we believe were the sentiments and purposes that moved the friends to come together at Springfield and at Ulster Park, even as these sentiments and purposes have so often brought the Lord's people together throughout the centuries of the Church's experience. And the consolation remains of realizing: that a Book of Remembrance is written for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name.

We have no desire to boast of numbers; nor is there any reason why we should want to do so. The largest of the sessions at Springfield was probably about one hundred; while the number at Ulster Park consisted of about sixty-five; both of these conventions being made up largely of friend's coming from quite a wide range of territory. Truly the Lord's people are still a scattered people and few in numbers. Yet this is in accordance with the testimony of God's Word, especially with regard

to the last days of the Age in which we are now living. And indeed as was stated by John the Baptist, concerning Jesus' leadership and that of his own, "He must increase but I must decrease," so we may reasonably consider the present situation a similar one; consequently as the Church is finishing her earthly course, we would logically expect the numbers here to be fewer, with correspondingly severe trials and testings.

The kindness of the Springfield brethren in warmly receiving the friends and in extending brotherly love was deeply appreciated by all. Likewise at Ulster Park the same spirit of love was again much in evidence. In addition to the beautiful and attractive surroundings at Ulster Park the kindness and loving hospitality of Brother and Sister Greiner in caring for the temporal needs of the friends in the Golden Rule Inn added much; to the season of encouragement and rich fellowship in the Lord.

AT BELLEVILLE, ONT.

One of the brethren present at the Convention at Belleville, Ont., Can., held September 3, 4, and 5, has written us concerning it as follows:

"The little gathering of brethren at Belleville, Ont., over September 3, 4, and 5, proved to be another precious evidence of the Lord's presence with His people, that He still waits to be gracious to all who call upon Him in sincerity and truth, fulfilling to all such His promise to be one of their number as they fellowship together in that oneness of spirit and purpose pleasing in His sight.

"The attendance, though small, represented Classes scattered over quite an extensive area, bearing the solemn testimony that His people are not found generally in large numbers even yet, but rather as a good brother of happy memory wrote some years ago:

""Tis not the numbers that He seeks,
But just one here and there;
He seeks not souls, but jewels fair,
For those who .will His suffering share,
And for His sake reproaches bear;
They're few -- one here, one there!"

"The spirit of the local Class displayed in their untiring efforts to arrange for the comfort and profit of the visiting friends was in itself no small feature of the convention blessings -- a three-days' sermon in moving, living pictures of practical brotherly love, illustrative of the Master's test of our consecration, the laying down of our lives in unselfish service for those who are His. Perhaps this feature of the little gathering at the Master's feet will linger in the memory longer than the spoken messages.

"The themes selected by the speakers for the occasion were along the lines uppermost in the minds of those whose chief desire is closeness of fellowship with the Lord, and the completion of the good work He

has begun in us. The full assurance of faith enjoyed by those who can join with the Apostle John in his oft repeated 'we know'; the downward steps resulting from disobedience as illustrated in Jonah, and the upward progress of the obedient servant of God as revealed in the life of St. Paul; the love of Jesus for His Church and her cleansing -- through the washing of water by the Word; the temple of the living God, His delight and dwelling place -- were amongst the subjects discussed -- affirmations of the old, yet ever new, story, that has not lost any of its freshness and sweetness, nor its power to energize, to those in spiritual union with its beneficent Author and Finisher. All present realized by personal experience the fulfillment of the Spirit's inspired words, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity: "

THE STILL SMALL VOICE

"And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars, and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And He said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." -- 1 Kings 19:10-12.

Contributed from outside the Editorial Committee

THESE things are recorded of Elijah, the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, who was one of the grandest and most romantic characters produced by the nation of Israel in all its history. Little is known of his family or personal life, but the few facts spoken of him give us an idea of his character and peculiarities. He was strikingly Bedouin, as indicated by his sudden appearances, first before the king to denounce his wickedness and to predict punishment, or to demonstrate the power of God in some startling manner -- probably a wanderer, familiar with the deserts and with the mountain passes, which enabled him to elude his pursuers when they desired to take his life. He was simple of habit in food and raiment, with long, thick, black hair hanging down his back, with a skin for a garment around which he wore a leather belt, which he was in the habit of tightening when about to make some movement of importance; occasionally wearing the sheepskin mantle, which has given us one of our most familiar figures of speech. It was this which fell from his shoulders when separated from Elisha by the chariot of fire in that last spectacular occurrence of his life, as given by the historian.

The Prophet of Fire

Elijah's function in the life of Israel seems to have been of this spectacular kind. His name as well as the events of his life, as given in the Book of Kings, speaks of his high ideals and aims. Eli, the Israelitish form of God, or mighty one, and Jah, the Hebrew word for Jehovah, indicate, My God is Jehovah or Jehovah my God. We find our Savior using the word when He cried upon the cross, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Well may this man have been chosen to represent the Christian Church of this Age. As he was buffeted, pursued, and persecuted by his enemies in power, so has the true Church of Christ had the same experiences as recorded in secular history and prophesied by these ancient Prophets of God of the Hebrew nation. and by "the Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass."

Elijah, "the Prophet of fire," as he has been called, was an emotional man, and like all such was at times highly elated, as evidenced by his experiences upon Mount Carmel, and equally depressed, as we find him in the sacred record quoted above. Jealous for the Lord God of hosts, and knowing how Israel, gone after Baal, had rejected God, he constantly expected by some wonderful manifestation that they would again turn to the God who had led them out of Egypt, so miraculously provided for them during their sojourn in the wilderness, given them wise judges for a period of four and a half centuries, and permitted kings to rule over them up to this time.

Horeb the Place of God's Presence

Being greatly disappointed at their failure to repent after witnessing God's power on the priest's of Baal, and threatened by Jezebel, he fled to Horeb in despair, to the place where God had shown His power on those former occasions, when He had called Moses up into the Mount, given him the Law, and before which he had gathered the nation to receive this Law. It was here that Moses gathered the two millions of his people to meet with God; and they stood "at the nether part of the Mount." And Mount Sinai was, altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it with fire and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. It was here too that Moses saw the burning bush, and heard the voice of God as He called him to his mission of delivering his people.

A fitting place this was for Elijah in his hour of discouragement, for he also was to see the manifestation of God's power in the disturbance of the elements of nature. "No other spot on earth was more closely associated with the manifested presence of God," and by nature better fitted for this purpose. Majestic peaks, surrounding a barren desert valley, made a vast natural amphitheatre upon which Elijah might look -- a picture of desolation and loneliness in keeping with his own heart at this time. Travelers tell us "it is one of the most silent places in the world and as hidden as it is silent." It is into the silent places we must go at times of commune with God, to appreciate His greatness, to

regain our assurance that God in His own, way and in His due time will bring to pass the things He has determined concerning man. It was this Lesson that Elijah was now to learn.

Out of Weakness Made Strong

There is something about this experience of this man of God that strikes a sympathetic cord in the heart of most of us. We, like him, have at times suffered defeat. We have had perhaps our Carmel experience, when we have boldly stood for the Truth against wrong, when we have beaten the enemy in the field of our own heart, overcome some temptation, or done some other thing which we knew pleased God. As a result we felt the joy of triumph, when we could truly say, God has been with us.

Peter's weakness and Paul's wretchedness indicate that they too held this treasure in earthen vessels. And Elijah's discouragements, with his subsequent triumphs, teach us that God can use us for His high purpose, but we must humble ourselves under His hand and conform to His will -- consecrate ourselves, make a covenant by sacrifice with Him. Had these and other men of God passed their lives without such defeats, they would have been no inspiration to us; they would have seemed to have no kinship with the sons of grief. Each seems to have emerged from his defeat stronger and better fitted for the work which God had for him to do. Out of David's fall came the 51st Psalm -- that beautiful prayer which has been the consolation of many of God's people. Out of Peter's weakness and Paul's wretchedness came a new and strong determination to serve God more faithfully and zealously, which faith and zeal led them to a martyr's death.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and. renew a right spirit within me. Restore. unto me the joy of Thy salvation." "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." These and similar pleas have restored to us that peace of mind and strength of character which has evidenced our growth in grace: Only in our weakness can we be strong-strong in the strength of Christ, strong only so far as the mind of God; His Holy Spirit, rules our lives. We are too prone to exaggerate our own importance in the portion of the work God permits us to do. And sometimes like Elijah we look too much upon external's, too much upon the outer edge of things, too little upon the center. We have lost our way. We have in fact lost God, and this is the condition in which we now find the Prophet.

How God Spoke to Elijah

Now let us consider how God revealed Himself to Elijah, how He brought him back to a true perspective, how He lifted him up from this slough of despond and placed him again upon the solid foundation of faith in His ability to accomplish His work in His own way and permit him a share in that work. The narrative tells us first what God was not in -- "A great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after

the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire."

Here were three powerful forces of nature operating before Elijah, for the Lord had said unto him, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by." But Elijah did not find him in any of the three. As he stood, a fierce storm broke over the mountain, a tempestuous outburst rolled up from the sea, "a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord." We can picture Elijah standing probably at the entrance to the cave as this tropical, storm broke with all its horrors and fury, rending rocks into fragments and casting them down into the plain below -- a scene of disorder which can be caused only by one of these sudden furious outbreaks of the tropics coming often with little warning and destroying everything in its pathway. As we look, we can imagine that all this wild turbulence and confusion appealed to him. It was kindred to his own mind, particularly at this time of discouragement. There are times when such scenes appeal to us, when we may liken this manifestation of God to our own wild thoughts and fancies, when we may see in them a kinship to ourselves. Possibly some such thought came to the Prophet as he watched the progress of the winds in their destruction. Was the spirit of God akin to his own? "But the Lord was not in the wind." He was not speaking to Elijah in the winds. It was only a manifestation of His power. -

Not in the Great Wind, Earthquake or the Fire

"And after the wind an earthquake." Again we can imagine the mighty upheaval as it appeared to the Prophet -- mountains rent asunder; great chasms and fissures where before there had been solid rock; the whole mountain rocking and shaking with violence, for "Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel." As the Prophet looked, he asked: Will God show Himself in this mighty convulsion of nature? Will He cast down the temples of Baal and destroy its priesthood? Will He thus show to the people of Israel His displeasure at their conduct? Will He thus turn them again to Himself? This is what Elijah would have done, but he finds again only a reflection of his own turbulent mind. For "the Lord was not in the earthquake."

"And, after the earthquake a fire." We see those towering granite peaks suddenly lit up by the lightning of the rapidly advancing storm. As they reflected the light, so continuous was its play and so fierce that the heavens and the earth seemed literally ablaze with the fire of God's fury, of His glory. Surely now God was going to manifest Himself, to speak some approval of the Prophet's conduct. His turbulent mind pictured some such agency as this -- a fitting one to destroy the enemies of Israel, her seducers, the priesthood of Baal., "But the Lord was not in the fire."

How strikingly God could have used His fire to rid His people of the influence of Jezebel, and the wicked court of the weak and cowardly

Ahab. God lids used the spectacular to speak with men, and He might have spoken to Elijah as He spoke to Job out of the tempest, and as He spoke to Moses and the people of Israel on this very spot some centuries before, when He displayed His presence, fire and smoke as of a furnace, and when the whole mount quaked greatly. God evidently desired to show the Prophet and His people of a later Age that the greatest revelations are to be received in the quiet and peaceful atmosphere, by the more common and familiar way. It was the simple things about Him which inspired all of our Master's parables and illustrations.

Our Feeling of Safety With God

We must take God with us under any circumstances, should we seek for help or benefit from the manifestations of nature. David drew his strength from the hills because in them he saw God. We must divest ourselves of all materialism, if we would be helped by communion with nature. It makes a difference whether we take God with us when we look upon the hills or the sea, into the stars of the heavens, or into the microscopic world, etc. These without God are incomprehensible; with God we have a feeling of safety and security another means of establishing our faith.

When we can look into the works of God and consider their might and remember we are taught to call Him Father, remember we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, then have we the unspeakable privilege of rejoicing in that relationship. Then can we say with the Psalmist, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy; and gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south." -- Psa. 107:1-3.

The poet has recognized that nature without God is not satisfying:

"With kindlier mien, one said, 'Go forth unto the fields,
For there, and in the woods, are balms that Nature freely yields:
Let Nature take thee to her heart! She hath a bounteous breast,
That yearns o'er all her sorrowing sons, and she will give thee rest'

"But nature on the spirit-sick as on the spirit-free
Smiled, 'like a fair unloving face, too bright for sympathy;
Sweet, ever sweet, are whispering leaves, are waters in their flow,
But never on them (breathed a tone to comfort human woe!

"Small solace for the deer that hath the arrow in its side,
And only seeks the- woods to die, that o'er his dappled hide
Spread purple blooms of bedded heath and ferny branchings tall,
A deadly hurt must have strong cure, or it hath none at all.

"And the old warfare from within that had gone on so long,
The wasting of the inner strife, the sting of outward wrong,
Went with me o'er the breezy hill, went with me up the glade,
I found riot God among the trees, and yet I was afraid!

"I mused and fire that smouldered long within my breast brake free;
I said, 'O God, Thy works are good, and yet they are not Thee;
Still greater to the sense is that which breathes through every part,
Still sweeter to the heart than all is He who made the heart!

"I will seek Thee, not Thine, O Lord! for (now I mind me) still
Thou sendest us for soothing not to fountain, nor to hill;
Yet is there comfort in the fields if we walk in them with Thee,
Who saidest, "Come, ye burdened ones, ye weary, unto Me."

"Yet is there comfort, not in pride that spends its strength in vain,
But in casting all our care on Thee, on Thee who wilt sustain;
Not in dull patience, saying, "This I bear, for it must be,"
But in knowing that howe'er grief comes, it comes to us from Thee!

"Thou, Lord! who teachest how to pray, oh, teach us how to grieve!
For Thou hast learned the task we find so hard, yet may not leave;
For Thou hast grown acquaint with grief -- Thou knowest what we feel,
Thou smitest and Thou bindest up, we look to Thee to heal!"

The Restlessness of Man and the Calmness of God

Elijah was born of Gilead and retained his Bedouin characteristics throughout his life, as seen in his restlessness, his enjoyment of the turbulent and fiery. We can imagine his enjoyment of the scene at Carmel and hear his ironic remarks to the Priests of Baal, "Cry aloud: for he is a god, either he is talking, or he is, Pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awakened." Impetuous and headstrong, intense and earnest, he could confront the whole college of idolatrous Priests of Baal, put them to rout, and enjoy it. Then in confident faith he could turn with the same earnestness to the rebuilding of the altar of the Lord which had been broken down, never doubting God's ability and desire to manifest Himself in a miraculous way at this time. In the unusual and spectacular he was happy. He saw here a counterpart of his own fiery nature. He could quickly see the working of God in a national catastrophe, but he was slow to see God in the humbler, quieter things.

This seems to be the lesson the Prophet was to learn this day on Sinai. His counterpart, John the Baptist, was much the same type of man from the recorded events of his life. Languishing in prison, he thought the Savior slow to manifest Himself, and he became impatient and even doubtful if it really were He who should redeem Israel. So he sent his disciples to ask if he really were the Christ. These two Prophets well typify the Church of this Age, constantly expecting God's Plan to develop more rapidly, and willing to hasten the coming of the Kingdom by plans of their own. These men both served their mission of warning their nation of the needed reforms.

Savonarola was of this type and preached that only through a storm of vengeance would the Church and clergy of the fifteenth century be rescued from licentiousness and abuse to a higher spirituality. When the Reformation came, it came in God's way and without such demonstration. Luther's tempestuous nature needed the slower and saner mind of a Melancthon. St. Peter's impetuosity was tempered by the quieter nature of John. To all of these God's way seemed slow. So it has been within our own midst. Some have not been content with the way of God. Not content With the assurance that if it seem to tarry, it will not tarry, they rush about with doctrines, explanations and the wild application of types which serve only to confuse many others who may not have reached the stature of a man in Jesus Christ. Much ado is made about nothing, in many cases forgetting that where the Spirit of Christ is, there is liberty and there alone.

In Silent Spiritual Fellowship

Let us remember then that God does not manifest Himself to us finally and most fully in the forces of nature. Among the savages in ages gone we find the worship of the forces of nature, and more recently we find the scientists falsely claiming that the forces of nature are the ultimate source of all things.. Both are similarly wrong, for the Lord is not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire. These are merely the fringe of His mantle, the shadow of His glory. God is a spirit and communes with His people only in the spirit; in silent, spiritual fellowship, through the Holy Spirit only, do we find strength.

Men look upon the wonders of nature, the hills, the sea, the falls, the rapids, the heavens, and turn and forget God in the pursuit of some earthly bubble. It is doubtful if any ever heard the call to God through the voice of nature. Else would we find the most godly in proximity to His greatest wonders. Men live their lives and die in such close ness to nature and never come to know Him, for He is not in, these things, but is in the still small voice.

Earthly passions may be fanned by the wind of religious zeal, but the results are not always satisfying. Some are inspired by a form of godliness without the substance thereof, and no matter how close a tare may resemble a grain of wheat, it is only a tare and as such must be destroyed. Trouble may sweep down upon the soul of man and rend him as the rocks of Sinai were rent, but whether it speaks to him depends upon his relationship with God before it came. As a rule man does not come to God through the voice of the earthquake, though he may profit by it if he has already come into fellowship with Him. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, not the fear of other things.

God was in the burning bush and in the tongues of fire at Pentecost, but He was not in the fire that flashed around the Prophet at Horeb. The fire of religious passion, when misdirected, has caused more heartaches, enmities, and even wars, than any other one thing in all the

world. The intolerance and prejudice existing in the religious world, and especially in the so-called Christian world today, is doing much to perpetuate the restlessness and confusion, the doubt and despair, the uncertainty, amid which men live, and because of these the love of many grows cold, and men's hearts are failing them because of fear for the things which are coming to pass. Surely the Lord is not in the fire of prejudice.

Men Go Their Ways and Forget

In the modern religious movements men are too prone to be moved by excitement and emotions, and without duly considering the will of the Lord rush into some dramatic or spectacular movement which does not glorify Him or, meet with His approval. Many think their standing depends upon their zeal for work, so we find them engaged in building up organizations and thus surrendering their liberties and restricting their opportunities for growth, but happy in the false idea that they are doing the Lord's work. Not that the Christian should not bear witness whenever and wherever possible -- instant in season and out of season, but development as new creatures should have first place in our hearts.

Human organization in the Church during all the ages has fostered prejudice, hatred, and intolerance. The much more at this period in the history of Christianity should the Church see that these organizations have been rejected and cast off by God, thus indicating the nearness of the close of the present Age and the ushering in of the next -- the Millennial Age. Nominal Christianity is making a great stir, using the winds, the earthquake; and the fire, abut deaf to the still small voice of God. The presence of the great enemy is constantly with us, but men go their ways and forget. A great catastrophe comes upon the nation, or the world, and many think in their worldly wisdom, surely men will hear the voice of God in the wind or the earthquake or the fire. But we find that the Lord is not in them. These, violent disturbances in nature or in the souls of men may however soften the soil, harrow the ground, and prepare man for the reception of the voice of God. We should not despise these agencies, for they, may open. the way. The most, powerful sermon, the most sublime scenery the contemplation of the power of God in the heavens or through the microscope can never regenerate a man, but it may bring him to see his own insignificance and humble him that he may hear the still small voice.

How God Has Spoken to Some In the Past

This was the case in Israel at the time of which the historian writes. God had shown His mighty power in the consumption of the sacrifices placed upon His altars under the most trying of tests, after the failure of the god Baal to vindicate himself. This and other demonstrations might have softened the hearts of Israel and prepared them to hear the voice of God and turn aside from their whoredoms and idolatries, but the man of the hour had fled discouraged and utterly routed because the miraculous, the stupendous, had failed to turn their minds. He had

overlooked and failed to grasp the great opportunity to go forth among the people in the might and power of the Lord and persuade them through the still small voice.

It was thus that God dealt with the people of Israel in the early days of their wandering in this very mountain to which Elijah had fled. He first aroused their feelings of awe, as He manifested Himself in the elements of nature, and then He gave them the Law. In this favorable frame of mind thus created, they promised that all that He commanded them they would do. That they failed to keep the Law is another question.

It was thus that God spoke of Job. Provoked by the advice of his false comforters, he spoke with his lips and was ready to justify himself, when suddenly amid the lightning and thundering of the tempest which came upon them, he heard Jehovah speaking to him out of the whirlwind, reproving him, "Then job answered the Lord, and said, behold, I am vile; What shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." And he heard the still small voice and was comforted. So he dealt with Isaiah; and so he dealt with Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, when the glory of the Lord shone around him and he heard the voice of the Lord, the still small voice, speaking after he had been awed and humbled by the glory of the Lord.

Thus God had prepared the land of Israel -- the prophets of Baal had been confounded and then destroyed, and the land had been grievously afflicted and then delivered. Surely their minds were ready to hear the still small voice, but the agent for the purpose had fled in a spirit of despair and defeat.

Times When We Need the Rebuke of the Winds

We experience these things in our own lives. There are times when we need the rebuke of the winds, the terror of the earthquake, the refining influence of the fire; that our minds may be cleansed of the errors and delusions of the day. False doctrines may so easily gain a hold on our lives unless we are kept steadfastly in touch with the Master, and through the Holy Spirit in harmony with God. There is much today circulating in our midst, setting forth the doctrines and ideas of men, that we may be more or less easily misled -- strong delusions which would deceive if possible the very elect. Our sheet-anchor is the Word of God and the line is earnest communication with Him by prayer -- sincere, deep, honest prayer, seeking His leading by the study of His Word and by developing the fruits of the Spirit.

"Blessed is the Christian who when the fury of the storm is past, recognizes the voice of God in its wake and bares his head and bows his knee as Elijah did." It seems necessary in the discipline of some of the Lord's people that He show Himself in the desolation of the storm to recall to them that they are wandering a little away. We all need the disciplining, the polishing, the chiseling, the pruning. How painful it

sometimes seems, but how it does show the love of God for us, and in looking back we can praise the way in which He has led us day by day.

How much more pleasing to Him we may be by so living that the chastenings. may be few and of a less violent form. Again this can be done only by putting aside the things of the flesh, and following after the things of the Spirit. Only are we God's, if we are led by the Spirit of God. And only can we be led by His Spirit, if we live close to Him, striving by His help to be filled with His mind. This requires 'determination and strength of character. And thus we grow in stature, one victory with Him helping on to others.

"Tis not the whirlwind, o're our fair fields sweeping
That speaks God's present wrath,
This is but nature's course, for call men keeping
One indiscriminate path.

"Nor yet the earthquake, firm foundations shaking
Of houses long since built;
This is but fortune's chance, its havoc making
Without affixing guilt.

"Nor yet the fire, whate'er, is near confounding
In blind remorseless flame;
This is but man's fierce ire, which all surrounding
Treats! good or bad the same.

"It is the. still small voice within which speaketh;
When guilt's fierce gust is done;
That tells the doom God's righteous anger wreaketh
Yet tells that he may shun.

"O gentle Lord, who like a friend reprovest,
Tender, not loss than true,
Thou our hard hearts by whispered warnings movest,
Their err erring ways to, rue.

"Thou whose pure eye like lightning might consume him
On man with pity lookest;
Thou who to fire, storm, earthquake well mightst doom him
With still small voice rebukeest"

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

Dear Brethren in Christ:

Love and greetings to you all in our dear Redeemer's name! Enclosed you will find Money Order for \$_____; one year's subscription to the "Herald" to be sent to _____ and also one year's subscription to _____. The above are brethren who seem open-minded and anxious to hold fast to true liberty, so I thought the regular supply of "Heralds" would prove helpful to them If you have already received "Herald" subscriptions from the above, please use the money for other work.

There are other brethren in this town whom you might hear from in the near future.

Please send to me a number Lord's Return and all about Hell," for distribution, also a copy of "The Divine Plan of the Ages," and also a few more tracts. The last lot were splendid, so helpful to people who are interested. I should be pleased if you can spare as many as last time. Please allow what balance in money there may be to go into the funds.

I am mailing under separate cover the little paper, "Light After Darkness," which proved of great help to quite a number of us to understand the truth of things. It is indeed a very grievous thing to think that a movement started on such humble, loving and unsectarian lines by our dear Brother Russell, should have in so short a time since his death grown into what appears quite plainly to show many of the characteristics of the Papacy. Still there it is, and it behooves us all as true followers of the Master -- to touch not, and to keep quite clear from anything that savors of a sectarian spirit of bondage. I feel that everything must be measured up by God's Word and be in harmony with it before we can accept it as truth -- to prove all things and hold fast that which is good as the Apostle says in 1 Thess. 5:21.

Well, dear brethren, since I last wrote to you I have had similar experiences to many others of the Lord's people at this time. As you may know, I have in the past attended regularly the I. B. S. A. Class in _____, but owing to the fact that I have loaned Heralds, etc., to some of the Class members, and have spoken in class as well as outside on these matters, and of the sectarian spirit, etc., which we can see manifested by the Society (I truly have acted toward all in love and without any spirit of bitterness to my utmost), I was requested by the Elders to discontinue my fellowship with them as a Class member unless I remained quiet on these matters. Seeing I could not do that conscientiously and observing the wrong tests of fellowship that were made (faith in the Society as the Channel instead of faith in Christ and, consecration only), I explained to the brethren and left the Class. Quite a number of brethren did likewise, so we now have a nice little Class, and Study together quite free from all bondage, relying on the Lord, only. Our Father's leadings and judgment through His Son are quite safe to follow. May we and all. likewise have. strength to continue in the right way '

I feel very thankful for all His gracious leadings, for I have since felt a greater freedom, and deep down is that perfect peace. May the Lord continue to guide you all, dear brethren, in the work of the ministry, for great will be the blessing. I think it would be splendid to publish in book form the writings on Daniel, and we will take two volumes or more. The Heralds continue to prove very helpful, especially at this time. I like the spirit of the writings, so free from sect, so loving. and sound, so strengthening to us all. I will close now with fond Christian love to you all in Christ our Lord . and Savior.

Yours in the Master's service,

A. C. T.-New Zealand.

Dear. Friends:

I would like to get a copy of the Revelation books, but don't know what the cost is, so am enclosing \$1.00 now and will remit balance as soon as I know how much they are. Will you please send me copies. I would also like to speak for one of the books on Daniel that you are expecting to publish.

I also wish to add a few words of brotherly love and encouragement to help you in the splendid work you are doing in the "Herald." I came into the Truth only about three years ago with the I. B. S. A. and thought how wonderful it all was at first, but after awhile I found I was not being satisfied. I finally broke away from the I. B. S. A. about four months ago, together with a few friends. We discovered we had been feeding; on husks instead of food. We have a small Class and all feel that the Lord has very richly blessed us since we have become free.

The articles in the "Herald" have been a wonderful help, as they have made many points clear. to me that were not before. I thank God for having led me as He has during the past few months and I rejoice to think one of the means by which He has done so has been the truth dispensed in the "Herald." How wonderfully clear you have explained what "Service" really means; and I like the way you emphasize the necessity for developing the fruits of the Spirit.

May the Lord richly bless you, and if it be His will, continue to use you as a means of giving spiritual food to the hungry.

Your brother in Hope,

G. J. -- Cal.

Dear Brethren:

I enclose Post Office Money Order for \$1.50 as subscription to the "Herald" for the year August 1927 to July 1928.

I still continue to appreciate them as I find they contain much that is edifying and comforting, more especially as I am much isolated in my views. It really makes one hopeful and joyous as we watch the signs of the times, and note more and more clearly the evidences that our dear Lord Jesus is gradually assuming His right as King of this earth. How happy we feel in the knowledge that all of the oppression, injustices, and wickedness of this present evil world will soon have to give place to Messiah's rule of righteousness! How full of hope, forbearance, and humility, we should be as we reflect on the work which the Heavenly Father desires we should engage in as joint-heirs with His dear Son. I heartily endorse the article on character development in one of the recent "Heralds."

As far as this colony is concerned we are in a trying condition. Sugar prices have fallen so low that the majority of estates have been abandoned. Rice is struggling to obtain a footing, but that does not give employment like sugar; so that people have little money and trade is at a low ebb. Roman Catholicism is rather strong here, as there are a fair number of Portuguese among us and many colored folk and East Indians seem to be attracted to that form of worship. Lately the Pope sent an Encyclical letter forbidding any discrimination between races. Of course this has caused a few influential colored persons to go that way. Our population is chiefly colored:

May those who are responsible for the articles in the "Herald" continue to hold the beginning of their confidence steadfast to the end.

With Christian love to all the brethren in the Lord,

Yours truly,

C. A. M.-British Guiana.