

page 253

VOL. XVIII. SEPTEMBER 1, 1897. No. 17.

CONTENTS.

Special Items.....254
 Divine Secrets Revealed.....255
 "He Will Show Them His
 Covenant".....257
 "He is Faithful Who Hath
 Promised".....258
 The Book of the Covenant.....259
 Lending to the Lord.....260
 Poem: Scatter Seeds of Kindness.....263
 Living the New Life.....263
 Interesting Letters.....268

page 254

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

TOWER PUBLISHING CO., BIBLE HOUSE, 58 & 60 ARCH ST.,
 ALLEGHENY (NORTH PITTSBURG), PA., U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR, IN ADVANCE,
 INCLUDES A SUBSCRIPTION TO "THE OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS"--QUARTERLY.
 MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N.Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER,
 OR REGISTERED. FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN
 MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:

Those of the interested, who by reason of old age or accident, or
 other adversity are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE,
 if they will send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and
 requesting the paper.

ALL ABOUT HELL.

"What Say the Scriptures About Hell?" is the title of a pamphlet in
 which every text of Scripture containing the word hell is cited and examined
 in the light of Scripture and reason, together with other Scriptures
 and parables supposed to teach eternal torment. Price 10 cents;
 50 cents per doz.; \$4.00 per hundred.

=====

R2208 : page 255

DIVINE SECRETS REVEALED.

"The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him;
and he will show them his Covenant."--Psa. 25:14.

IS THERE any secret in connection with the divine plan? Are not all of God's arrangements so plain that "a wayfaring man, tho unlearned, need not err therein?" Are not all of the steps of the plan of salvation so simple that even a child may understand them?

Oh no! very evidently not; for everywhere we find the utmost diversity of opinion respecting the divine plan. Not only is there a great variety of heathen theories utterly false, but the various theories which obtain amongst Christian people are in violent antagonism the one to the other. Even amongst the worldly-wise of Christendom how various are the conceptions of God's intention and method respecting his creatures? These differences are represented in the various theologies of all the various sects. His plan is claimed to be one of "Free Grace" in which he gives an equal opportunity to all his creatures to share; yet, looking about us we see most evidently that all are not alike privileged, not alike informed and not alike circumstanced. On the other hand, there is the claim of an "Election" which denies that grace is free to all, and holds that it is restricted to the favored few. Besides these, we have various other conflicting theories in Christendom, and the most obtuse thinker must admit that where so many theologians, college professors and doctors of divinity are in dispute, the unlearned "wayfaring man" has many chances to err in his endeavor to grasp the divine plan.

Observation therefore sustains, as most literally true, the statement of our text that the Lord's plan is a secret: and it is in agreement with the statement of other Scriptures respecting the "mystery of God," "hidden from past ages and dispensations." In harmony with this is the fact that all the prophets have spoken more or less obscurely and in parables, not excepting the Great Prophet, our Lord Jesus, of whom it is written, that "he taught the people in parables and dark sayings"--"and without a parable spake he not unto the people." He promised, nevertheless, that in due time the holy spirit would be granted as a guide and instructor to his true disciples: "He will guide you into all truth" and "show you things to come." (Jno. 16:13.) Some of the mysteries of God were due to be understood at once, and some more gradually down through the age, but the great unfolding of the divine mystery we are expressly told was reserved until the close of the Gospel age, when "the mystery of God should be finished," which he hath kept secret from the foundation of the world.--Rev. 10:7.

Even so much of the divine plan as was due to be revealed by the spirit and to be understood step by step during this Gospel age, was intended only for a special class, and not for the world in general. The Apostle Paul emphasized this when he declared, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit; for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep [hidden, obscure] things of God."
--1 Cor. 2:14,10.

This same thought is before us in our text, "The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." As this has been true all the way down throughout this age, it is still true, and the finishing of "the mystery of God" in the close of this Gospel age must therefore

R2208 : page 256

be expected to be understood and appreciated only by this special class of the Lord's people,--those who fear or reverence him. We are to make a distinction between those who fear or reverence the Lord and those who fear or reverence man and the work of man, sectarian systems, creeds, etc. "The fear of man [and of man's churches] bringeth a snare," and hinders growth both in grace and in knowledge;--hinders an appreciation of the "Secret of the Lord." "But the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and this wisdom, if continued, leads to fuller knowledge of God, to greater confidence in him, and to that degree of intimate friendship and sonship which is the key to the understanding of the "Secret of the Lord."

Abraham was called the "friend of God;" because he had the divine confidence, so that God made known to him certain things that he did not make known to others: "The Secret of the Lord" was with Abraham, so far as that Secret could be communicated to any one at that time. For instance, in the matter of the destruction of Sodom, the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham [my friend] that thing which I do?" And it was because Abraham was the friend of God that he also made known to him something of the divine plan for human salvation: as the Apostle declares, God "preached beforehand the gospel to Abraham, saying: 'In thee shall all the nations be blessed.'"--Gal. 3:8.

While it was not possible for Abraham or any one else than God to fully comprehend this statement, or to understand therefrom the lengths and the breadths of the divine plan of salvation, yet it contained the whole gospel, in the same sense that an acorn contains a great oak tree. So likewise our Lord at the first advent spoke in parables to the nominal house of Israel, that "Seeing they might see and not believe, and hearing they might hear and not understand;" yet, a certain few, full of faith and obedience and consecration

to the Lord, were not thus treated; but, on the contrary, were treated as "friends" and had much explained to them. Thus our Lord said to the disciples when they inquired concerning the significance of a parable, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to them that are without, these things are spoken in parables." And again he said to the same devoted disciples, I have not called you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends, because whatsoever I hear of the Father I have made known unto you.--John 15:15.

This "mystery" of the divine plan, hidden in parables, in figures, and in symbols from the world, and from the nominal Christian,--hidden from all except the fully consecrated children of God--is most beautifully symbolized in the Book of Revelation. As therein recounted, John was shown in a vision a symbolic panorama, illustrative of the subject. The heavenly glories were symbolized and the Father shown seated upon the throne of his glory, holding in his right hand a scroll sealed with seven seals. This was the Mystery, the Secret of the Lord, unknown to any one but himself--his plan for the salvation of the world. John in the symbol hears the proclamation, "Who is worthy to open the Book and to loose the seals?"--who is worthy to have committed to his care, the execution of the great divine plan, wonderful for its wisdom and love, and its lengths and breadths and depths and heights past human comprehension--that he may open it and execute it? A silence followed; and John fearing that this signified that none would be found worthy, and that hence the divine plan would never be fully revealed, and therefore could not be fully executed, wept much. But in the symbol the angel again touched him and said, "Weep not! for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the 'Root of David,' hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereon."

Ah yes! this was one significance of the severe trials and sufferings of our dear Redeemer;--in humbling himself, leaving the glory with the Father, becoming a man and ultimately giving his life a ransom for all, he was doing two works: not only (1) redeeming us with his own precious blood, but (2) additionally by this obedience he was commending himself to the Father, and proving himself worthy to be the Father's agent and representative in carrying out all the great "mystery of God" hidden from previous ages and dispensations. --Eph. 3:3-5.

The interim of thirty odd years, in which our Lord's humiliation and subsequent exaltation took place, is all passed over in the vision, and the symbol merely shows in the midst of the throne "a lamb, as it had been slain:" how forceful the illustration to those whose eyes are anointed that they may discern its meaning. And now the symbolical panorama proceeds, and shows

us the Lamb approaching Jehovah and receiving from him "the mystery of his will," the great plan of the ages, as mapped out in the divine purpose from before the foundation of the world. As soon as the "mystery of God" was committed to "the Lamb of God;" who had already fulfilled an important part of that plan by redeeming the world with his own precious blood, he

R2209 : page 256

receives homage, as it is written: "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth," and "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father."

Then came the opening of the seals: the disclosing of one after another of the various features connected

R2209 : page 257

with the divine purpose. Each seal as it was loosed permitted the scroll as a whole to open a little wider, and a little wider, thus permitting "the mystery of God" to be a little more clearly discerned. And so God's people down through this Gospel age have been privileged to know something of the "Secret of the Lord;"--the divine plan. But not until the last seal was broken, did the scroll fly wide open, permitting the "Mystery of God" to be fully disclosed; as it is written: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the Mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."--Rev. 5:1; 10:7.

This same thought, that God's consecrated people will have intelligence respecting his plans far different from any the world will have, is everywhere kept prominently before us in the Scriptures, and must therefore be considered a very important indication with all who profess to be God's people;--distinguishing whether they are merely his "servants," or whether they are still more intimately connected and have received the spirit of adoption as serving "sons," and are being treated as sons;--made acquainted with the Heavenly Father's plan.

Our text speaks merely of the fear (reverence) of the Lord, but, as we have seen, this reverence continued leads into the very deepest work of grace obtainable; --to a fullness of consecration to the Father's will and service. It is of this class who fear (reverence) the Lord that we read,--"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared [reverenced] the Lord, and that thought upon his word [esteeming his Name, his Honor, his Will above any earthly, sectarian name

or work]. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them [they "shall be accounted worthy to escape" the severity of the great time of trouble with which this age shall end], as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." These who reverence the Lord, in this full and Scriptural sense, are surely the Lord's "elect," "the body of Christ," the "overcomers," the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," who shall reign with Christ, and with him bless all the families of the earth in due time.

The privilege of this "royal priesthood" to know "the Secret of the Lord," to comprehend "the deep things of God" hidden from others, was beautifully symbolized and typified in the privileges of the Jewish priesthood. When the Tabernacle was set up, with its beautiful golden furniture, lamp stand, table of shew bread, golden altar, etc., all symbolizing spiritual things, they were covered over, hidden, not only from the ordinary Israelite, but even from the Levitical "servants" of the Tabernacle, who were not even permitted to look therein. The privilege of seeing those typical secret things, reserved exclusively for the priests, thus typified "the royal priesthood" and their exclusive privilege of understanding the mysteries of God, his Secret.

"HE WILL SHOW THEM HIS COVENANT."

But our text adds, "He will show them his covenant." This is stated as tho it were a very important matter to see or clearly understand God's Covenant: and it is an important matter, for God's Covenant is really the key to the entire divine plan. What God promised to Abraham in the Covenant, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," included directly and indirectly all the riches of divine grace. Yet, how few see this. We do not say how few of the world see this, for we should not expect any appreciation of the divine Covenant on the part of "them that are without." But we say, How few of those who have named the name of Christ, and nominally stand related to spiritual Israel--how few of these know or care anything whatever about the divine Covenant.

Alas, that Satan should so grossly blind the eyes of so many, that they should have no interest in the divine Covenant and not even know that there is a divine Secret or Mystery! Satan has gotten them thoroughly imbued with the delusion that God's plan is, --that every poor human creature born in sin, shapen in iniquity and schooled more or less in vice and superstition, shall have a few years of very imperfect opportunity to hear one or the other of the many conflicting

creeds and theories of Christendom (or a jargon of them all), to thoroughly reform his life and become a copy of God's dear Son; and that if he does not succeed in doing these things, with the thousand chances to one against him, he shall be relegated to an eternity of torture. Alas! we say, that Christians should ever conclude that this is the plan of God. Truly, it was an enemy of God (Satan) who put before the people so monstrous, so God-dishonoring a doctrine as this: and persuaded them that this is the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of divine wisdom, and love, and provision for poor fallen humanity.

But with our eyes anointed, and our hearts fully consecrated to the Lord and fully desirous to know just what is his will and his way, we look at the Great Covenant, and behold, it opens gloriously before us into three parts: (1) All the families of the earth--every member of the human family is to receive a blessing. (2) The Seed of Abraham is to be the channel of these divine blessing to every creature. (3) This Seed in

R2209 : page 258

its primary sense we find meant our Lord Jesus Christ; but in its secondary sense it includes the "bride the lamb's wife," his jointheir in this Covenant and in all of the divine mercies. This is clearly set before us by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians.--3:16,29.

With this thought in view we realize at once that none of the spiritual blessings of this Covenant were possible until Christ Jesus, the Head of the Seed had finished his course and been glorified; and we see that the Lord's work since that time has been the gathering of the "elect" Church to be the "bride," the "body of Christ." We see also that the work of blessing cannot begin in its proper sense until this entire "Seed" is complete and glorified: and that with this glorification of the Church with her Lord, in the end or "harvest" of this Gospel age, will come the time mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:18,23), when the "groaning creation" shall be blessed by the "manifestation of the sons of God," in the glory of the Kingdom. This spiritual Seed of Abraham (Christ and the elect Church) has indeed been the salt of the earth, throughout the Gospel age, and has helped to preserve the world from utter deterioration; but this is but a small part of the great blessing which God designs to send through the Church to the world. The "light" of truth as it has been dimly shining during this night, is properly compared to a candle or lamp, but the "light" of the Church glorified in the Kingdom during the Millennium is properly represented as "the Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams."

The Covenant then shows us our privilege of the present time, of becoming "heirs of God and jointheirs

with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." And it shows us the object of this trial, the object of this election, the object of the glorification of the Church, to be a work of mercy, blessing, helpfulness, toward the remainder of mankind. The Covenant is broad: it does not promise, merely, that all the families of the earth who will be so fortunate as to be living at the time when the Seed is complete will receive a blessing; neither does it merely say that all the families proceeding from Abraham, dead and living, will receive a blessing; but comprehensively it promises a blessing to "all the families of the earth,"--those who have fallen asleep in death as well as those who will be alive at the time of the establishment of Christ's Kingdom.

To this end our Lord Jesus became Master or "Lord of the dead:" he bought all with his own precious blood: "He is the propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins] and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." And as we have received a blessing as the result of his ransom, so in God's due time "all the families of the earth" will also receive a blessing because of the ransom. It is from this standpoint that the Church is called the "first fruits unto God of his creatures,"--not the entire harvest. The first-fruits are to be used of the Lord as his instruments for blessing the remainder.

And in the coming blessing, to the families of the earth, the natural seed of Abraham are to be given a place or preference, a priority over others;--"To the Jew first." As the spiritual blessings were offered to them first, so the earthly favors are to be offered to them first. They shall obtain mercy "through your [the Church's] mercy." (Rom. 11:31.) And after Israel shall have obtained mercy, a blessing through the glorified Spiritual Israel, then in turn natural Israel shall let the light shine upon others--"all the families of the earth;" until in due time the promise shall be fulfilled that Christ as the true light shall enlighten "every man that cometh into the world." (Jno. 1:9.) Oh glorious covenant! luminous with divine Love and Wisdom.--Rom. 11:33.

R2210 : page 258

THE COVENANT SURE AND EVERLASTING.

And is this Covenant sure? It is sure; as the great Apostle points out, God took special care to so state this Covenant repeatedly to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to repeat it through the prophets; thus giving us most absolutely his word on this subject. But lest this should not be thought conclusive enough on a subject of so great importance, lest some should fear that there

might be a contingency involved, by which that covenant might be vitiated, the Apostle points out that God not only gave his word but also his oath, that its engagements should be strictly fulfilled and in no wise miscarry. He says,--

"God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor to the soul."--Heb. 6:13-19.

"HE IS FAITHFUL WHO HATH PROMISED."

Those who have the "Secret of the Lord," and to whom he has not shown the significance of his Covenant should forthwith examine themselves, to see whether or not the fault be unfaithfulness on God's part or failure on their part to come up to God's conditions. They should strictly inquire within whether or not they have been sufficiently and properly reverencing God, or whether their reverence and worship has to any degree been to man and to human institutions, churches, etc.--whether they ever became "servants"

R2210 : page 259

of God and, if so, whether they progressed and became servant sons.

And those to whom the Lord has disclosed his Secret, and the significance of his Covenant, should see to it that these divine favors lead their hearts to still greater reverence for the Lord. For we may be assured that if the reverence is lost the Secret will slip from us, and the Covenant become more and more dim. And here we perceive God has placed a great test: He has permitted the great adversary to malign his character, and to traduce his plan, and to misrepresent the teachings of his Word to such an extent that the majority of those who name the name of Christ are at first influenced to turn to the Lord chiefly from fear of eternal torment. Their activities in mission work and in their general Christian course are actuated chiefly by fear and sympathy--sympathy for those whom they esteem to be in danger of eternal torture at the hands of a loveless and unjust God, and fear for themselves, lest they should not be spared a similar fate. Love to God finds no room under such conditions. In fact, it would be impossible for any one to truly love a God of such merciless character. But, amongst those who outgrow their creeds and fears are some who, in opposition to their false instructions, learn to think better of their Creator, and by faith grasp sufficient from his Word to

beget a love for him which produces a fullness of consecration to his service; and thus they become sons of God: and then, by entering into divine fellowship through Christ, these have committed to them the "Secret of the Lord" and are shown something of his Covenant.

This fullness, however, does not come all at once; it is a gradual development, step by step. If the truth is rightly received it leads onward into more of the truth, and into more of its grace; but if wrongly received, it may lead outward, away from the Lord and his Word, away from his Secret, away from his grace, into utter darkness with the world. Nor is it infrequently the case that those who lose their abnormal fears lose practically all their reverence for the Lord, and become careless with reference to his Word, and with reference to their conduct. Such "receive the grace of God in vain;" in some respects, indeed, it does them injury, instead of bringing them blessings.

In our fallen condition we need some strong impellent motive, to enable us to live righteously, soberly, godly in this present evil world. And if the abnormal fear and superstitious dread be removed before a love for God, for righteousness and for truth has been implanted, the probabilities are that the knowledge of God's grace in such will fall upon stony ground. But where the spirit of the Lord has been implanted, where the spirit of the truth, the holy spirit of Love, has begotten to newness of life, where love to the Lord and appreciation of his goodness is the ruling and controlling element of life, there the increase of knowledge of the divine Secret and Covenant will bring increasing blessings of heart, of mind and of daily life. (Compare Isa. 29:13; 1 John 4:18.) It was for this that the Apostle prayed for the early Church, saying,--"That ye might be able to comprehend with all saints [the Secret of the Lord] the lengths and the breadths, the heights and depths of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."--Eph. 3:17-19.

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT.

As we have just seen, the divine blessings are all hidden in the Abrahamic Covenant,--to which were added because of sin the Mosaic (typical) Covenant and its antitype the Covenant in Christ, the New Covenant sealed with his blood.

The Bible is the great Book of these Covenants. And it like every other feature is considerably hidden, obscured, to the natural man; and its deeper and grander presentations can be seen only through the vail of types and shadows, parables and symbols. And the privilege to look beyond this vail, and to grasp the spirit of

the truth, is reserved in large degree for the class mentioned in our text foregoing:--"The Secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his Covenant."

To this class--them that fear the Lord and have his Secret and know his Covenant--the Bible becomes a Chart of the Ages, which shows not only the coast lines and rocks and sand bars of the six thousand years of evil, but also the blessed port then to be reached, and the glorious land of blessing and righteousness and divine favor--the thousand years of Christ's Millennial reign.

To this same class the Bible is a Compass also, which, in connection with the Chart, indicates to them the divinely directed route, by which they are to escape certain troubles coming upon the world, and by which they are to obtain certain trials and experiences which will be valuable to them in fitting and preparing them to be jointheirs with Christ in the Kingdom. Without this Compass they might indeed be able to judge in clear weather of some portions of the route, but never satisfactorily: and in times of storm and darkness, sun, moon and stars obscured, these, like the world, would be left to the mercy of their own imperfect judgments as to which way to steer, and would feel all the trepidation and uncertainty which so many others feel, were it not for their Compass. But the Compass can be seen, and its directions followed, however dark or obscure the natural light; and following its directions the

R2210 : page 260

Lord's people are to attain unto their high calling--make their calling and election sure.

The Lord's Word, in the hands of this same class, may be compared to a Telescope, whose properly adjusted lenses represent the bringing into harmony of the human will with the divine will, in Christ. Careful adjustment is required that we may get a proper focus; but when this condition is obtained, wonderful things through the Bible we see. The far off and indistinct promises are brought nigh, made clear and plain. Hitherto unseen features of the divine character and plan are made manifest; and by the aid of this Telescope the lengths and breadths, the heights and the depths of divine Wisdom and Love and Power may be much more closely approximated by our finite minds.

To this same class the Bible is also a Microscope. The proper adjustment of its lenses--the complete consecration of the human will to the divine--brings to bear upon all the little affairs of life a power which magnifies them, and shows us their importance as never seen by us before, and as cannot be seen by the world in general. Through the Bible as a Microscope, we can see that all the trifling affairs of the present life

are potentialities, which, under divine direction, are working together for good to "the called ones according to his purpose." It magnifies the Law of God, shows us how grand, how sublimely perfect and altogether reasonable, is every requirement of God. It shows us that the weaknesses and imperfections which hinder us from measuring up to the standard of that perfect Law are inherited from father Adam. It shows us that the blemish of sin has affected not only our physical systems, but also our mental and moral faculties; and thus it points out to us that our own reasoning on every subject requires to be re-adjusted and harmonized with the spirit of the divine Law; and thus it enables us by such mental and moral adjustment to obtain what the Apostle calls "the spirit of a sound mind." It not only shows us what we could not see before of our own shortcomings, but graciously it indicates also how after coming into Christ and being covered with his robe of righteousness by faith, we may to some extent make up for these deficiencies by adding to our faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness Love, which things, as they more and more abound, will incite us to cultivate fruitfulness, in the use of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
--2 Pet. 1:5-8.

In view of the blessings attached let us strive more and more to retain and to cultivate that true reverence for the Lord, which is not only the beginning of wisdom but also its end; that through it we may have the

R2211 : page 260

benefit and helpful assistance of all the gracious provisions which God has made for the progress of those who love him, in knowledge and in character; that in due time, if we faint not, we may inherit the promises and share the glories of our Father and our Lord.

=====

R2211 : page 260

LENDING TO THE LORD.

--SEPTEMBER 5.--2 COR. 9:1-11.--

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, tho he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."--2 Cor. 8:9.

OUR lesson inculcates Christian benevolence-- alms giving. It is addressed to the Corinthian Christians and is on behalf of Christians in and about Jerusalem. A question arises why collections

should be made for the Christians at Jerusalem more than for the Christians at Corinth. There were three reasons: (1) A severe famine had prevailed in the vicinity of Jerusalem. (2) Jerusalem was not a commercial city, and therefore money was less plentiful. (3) It would appear that the classes who received the gospel in and about Jerusalem were chiefly the poor, and we can readily judge from the open persecutions of the truth there that there was also a great deal of quiet opposition to all who sympathized with the gospel of Christ. As small shop people they were probably boycotted; and as laborers they probably were as far as possible rejected except as necessity might demand their services. On the contrary, the cities of Greece, Macedonia and Asia-Minor were prosperous; and as far as we may judge the class of society which accepted the gospel was in many cases the better element.

This was indicated in our last lesson by the statement that the "chiefs of Asia" dissuaded Paul from going before the people at the colosseum. These chiefs of Asia were generally quite wealthy and prominent men. We remember also in the same lesson the fact that the books of magic, which were burned after the owners had accepted Christ, represented a very large amount of money. Probably, therefore, their owners were correspondingly wealthy. We remember also the favorable decision of the town clerk at Ephesus; and the fact that Tyrannus was so in sympathy with the Apostle's teaching as to permit the use of his schoolroom. We recall the conversion of Serges Paulus, the deputy governor, at Paphos; also Dionysius, one of the professors in Mars Hill college at Athens; and Damaris

R2211 : page 261

of the same city; and Justus of Corinth; and Crispus, chief ruler of the synagogue in the same city.

The question naturally arises, Why should the same gospel attract the well-to-do and middle classes in Greece and Asia-Minor and Thessalonica, and attract few outside the poorer class at Jerusalem? The answer would seem to be (1) that among the Jews who had long been acquainted with the true God, the true religion and the gracious promises of the Messiah, a religious pride had developed, especially amongst the wealthy and the learned. And because their religious system was in advance of every other religious system in the world, the learned attributed a like superiority to themselves individually--they "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."

This was the secret of Israel's being "blinded" to the gospel. The leaders and theologians were so self-conscious, and relied so implicitly upon their interpretations of the divine promises as centering in themselves, that they could not regard the humble Nazarene and his unlearned followers except as impostors. And

when, later, the gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles their opposition was increased; for it was utterly contrary to every thought of their religious pride that God would accept either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to his favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of his cause and work.

But amongst the Gentiles the case was very different: while the illiterate masses were firmly bound in the superstition of their various religions, those who were of an honest mind among the better educated were quick to discern that many of the features of their own religions were superstitions merely. They had probably, previously, been somewhat attracted to the Jewish religion as being much more reasonable than their own, as we find that the Gentiles readily resorted to the Jewish synagogues; but the Jewish religion would necessarily be unsatisfactory to them since it would appear to be very narrow, limiting the divine blessings in a special manner to Israelites--a people whom they considered rather inferiors in the arts at that time. But, the gospel, throwing wide open the door to those who desired righteousness, truth and goodness, of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, would naturally commend itself to the class we describe as being the most reasonable explanation of the Jewish doctrines and their grand eventual outcome, and long hidden meaning.

At all events, the saints at Jerusalem were poorer than were the saints in Corinth. It was therefore appropriate that the Apostle should suggest to the latter the propriety of sending a gift to the former. Living at a time when the conveniences for transferring money were very inferior to the very poorest known to-day, the only possible method seemed to be that the various congregations should send their gifts at the hand of the Apostle when he would go to Jerusalem the following year. And Paul's words intimate that the suggestion made by him nearly a year before, to the Corinthian brethren, had been well received, and the collections zealously entered upon. For this reason it was "superfluous" for him to write in this connection particulars respecting the necessity for and propriety of this collection; but he hints to them that there was a bare possibility that the work zealously begun a year before might not have been patiently carried out, and that after he had boasted somewhat to others of their love and zeal for the Lord, he would regret if coming to them, enroute to Jerusalem, it should be found that after all they had failed to have their donation ready.

In his previous epistle to the Corinthians he had suggested methodical charity, saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given instructions to the Churches at Galatia, even so do ye. On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come."

It was the Apostle's experience, as it is the experience of all thoughtful people, that systematic charity is better than spasmodic charity: not only is the result generally larger, but the influence upon the giver is more beneficial: it keeps an object before the mind, a service to be rendered as unto the Lord. And with many the opportunity for serving the Lord's cause with money is almost the only opportunity for service. Of course, where a consecrated child of God can do so it is far better that he should give to the saints after the manner of Paul and his traveling associates--giving spiritual gifts and blessings, either by public preaching, or by house to house visiting: presenting the truth either by the printed page or by tongue or both.

But there are others so circumstanced in life through lack of talent, or strength, or opportunity (hindered by prior mortgages upon their time--family obligations) that practically their only chance for serving the Lord and manifesting their love for him is through their gifts to his cause and to his people. For such to be deprived of the opportunity of exercising themselves in the Lord's service in this manner either through a lack of a cause needing their assistance, or through lack of instruction respecting this method of divine service, would be to deprive them of an important opportunity of service, and correspondingly to deprive them of the blessings which always follow every service to the Lord, whatever its character.

We notice, therefore, that the Apostle felt very free to recommend to the Church the grace of giving and to even press upon them the fact that their liberality

R2211 : page 262

in proportion to their ability, would in a large degree be an index of their love for the Lord and the gospel. But, here we note in contrast, that the same Apostle did not ask alms of these believers when first they received the Lord's grace; lest they should in any manner get the impression that the gospel was being preached from mercenary motives--for lucre's sake. Accordingly, we find that rather than mention money the Apostle preached to these very same Corinthian brethren for more than a year without a suggestion as to remuneration; laboring with his own hands at his trade of tent-making, rather than be chargeable to any. He reminds them of this later on in this same epistle. --2 Cor. 11:7-9.

Let us note also the change which the full appreciation of the gospel wrought upon the believers at Corinth. At first they were so negligent of their privilege that seemingly they never thought of volunteering financial assistance to the Apostle while he was serving them by the labor of his own hands, and receiving some assistance from believers in other places. But, after the grace of God entered more fully into

their hearts and they began to appreciate the value of the truth which they had received,--that it had brought them priceless blessings of hope and joy and faith and

R2212 : page 262

character--they had a zeal, a "forwardness" to do something financially in the Lord's service. And now that the Apostle was absent from them, and after his course had proved to them that he sought not their money but themselves, to do them good; he felt free to draw their attention to the great blessing that would come from liberality in the Lord's cause in proportion to their ability and love.

Urging this matter he gave them a parable, saying, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And this reminds us of the proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is proper, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. 11:24,25.) The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see his people cultivate breadth of heart as well as breadth of mind;--generosity in proportion to their knowledge of him and his generosity.

The Scriptures nowhere declare that cases of absolute privation amongst the Lord's people are proofs that at some time in their past lives when possessed of means they failed to use a portion of it in charity, in the Lord's service; but the inspired words above quoted come very close to giving this lesson. At all events, it is profitable that we lay this testimony to heart and that each child of God henceforth shall be earnestly careful that out of the blessings of the Lord coming to us all from day to day some measure be carefully, prayerfully and lovingly laid aside as seed to be sown in the Lord's service according to the best wisdom and judgment which he will give us. How many have that carefulness for themselves either in using every penny as fast as it comes, or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans, that they feel they can spare nothing for charity. How many such can afterward see that they made a great mistake, when their accumulations suddenly vanished, either by reason of sickness or accident or bank failure or what not; and how then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle in the sixth verse of our lesson.

Our Lord showed us how he measures our gifts; that he esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift, when he drew attention to the poor widow who cast in two mites into the Lord's treasury. Our Lord declared that from the standpoint of his estimation the poor widow had cast in a larger sum than any

of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance, and not to such an extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually to-day, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say; the Lord only knows. But this lesson makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest.

Very seldom is it necessary to caution people against over-much giving; yet in some instances such caution is proper, and in some instances in Scripture giving has been restrained. No one should give to the extent of causing privation to those dependent upon him. Nor should any one give to such an extent as to bring upon him financial bankruptcy and cause losses to others. The apostolic rule for giving we have quoted above. The laying by should be in general, "according as the Lord hath prospered him." The degree of our prosperity should be the measure of our charities. "The spirit of a sound mind" is inculcated by the Scriptures, upon this as upon every subject.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." And gifts in any other spirit than a cheerful one might just as well not be given: they will bring no blessing. The Lord does not appreciate such giving: it has no "sweet odor" in his estimation. The gift, to be appreciated of the Lord, must be a thank-offering, prompted by a realization of a debt of everlasting gratitude, to him from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift. And to such, the Apostle assures us, "God is able to make all things abound." All who give anything in the divine service, time, talent, strength, money or influence

R2212 : page 263

--any or all of these--will find themselves proportionately abounding in the different graces; because such are in the right attitude of heart to grow in grace.

But, the Apostle seems to imply further that such will have "sufficiency in all things" as well as be able to "abound in every good work." In thinking of sufficiency in any direction the condition of the mind must be taken into account. Sufficiency may not mean luxury and every comfort, but "all sufficiency" is gained always where there is "godliness with contentment." In proof that he is inculcating no new theory respecting the divine care over those who are seeking to scatter to others a portion of the blessings that come to them, temporal or spiritual, the Apostle quotes from the Psalms.--112:9.

When in the last verse the Apostle speaks of "being enriched in everything," we are not to understand him to mean that the Lord's people will all be enriched financially. The Apostle himself was an example of how the Lord's people do not become wealthy.

He is speaking rather of the enrichment of the heart, as he says in another place, speaking of himself and co-laborers in the gospel work: We are "as poor, but making many rich;"--rich in hope, rich in faith, rich in love and all the various concomitant graces which these imply.

Our Golden Text reminds us of the grandest example of self-denial in the interest of others on record --the gift by our Lord Jesus of himself for the world. He was rich in the possession of the spiritual nature and its honors and glory, yet for our sakes he became poor, taking the human nature that he might redeem us; and to this end he surrendered even life itself at Calvary, that through his sacrifice we might become rich:--become possessed of divine favor, and the riches of divine grace in Christ; even jointheirship with him who is now our exalted Lord at the right hand of divine Majesty. But to attain this jointheirship with him, we must study to be like him, to have his spirit; and like him desirous of sharing whatever he may give us of either temporal or spiritual favors with others, particularly the "household of faith;"--either to feed or clothe it, spiritually or temporally, as circumstances may dictate. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."

R2215 : page 263

SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS.

"Loving words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted;
Never one was said in vain.

"When the cares of life are many,
And its burdens heavy grow
For the ones who walk beside you,
If you love them, tell them so.
What you count of little value
Has an almost magic power,
And beneath that cheering sunshine
Hearts will blossom like a flower.

"So as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;

If you love them, tell them so."

=====

R2212 : page 263

LIVING THE NEW LIFE.

--SEPT. 12.--ROM. 12:9-21.--

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."--Rom. 12:21.

WHILE the Apostle Paul was a wonderful logician, and in his writings has set forth the elements of Christian faith along doctrinal lines more than any other apostle, yet we notice that he is in pursuit of a certain object: he is not beating the air, not discussing theological points for the sake of making an argument or showing his own ability. His arguments along doctrinal lines lead the reader in every instance onward and upward, as a stairway, to a grand upper room of perfected Christian character: and nowhere is this more manifest than in his epistle to the Romans. Beginning with the distinctions between the Jew, informed respecting God, and to some extent respecting his will and his plan, and contrasting these with the general ignorance prevailing amongst all classes of Gentiles, "without God and having no hope in the world," he carries the mind forward, pointing out how the degradation had come, and how the knowledge of God had reached Israel first, not because Israelites were better, but because of the divine favor, "grace," "election."

He points out nevertheless that "the Law made nothing perfect," but was merely a pedagogue (a servant whose business it was to take children to school); thus the Law was to bring Israel to Christ, the great

R2212 : page 264

Teacher, that they might learn of him. He points out further that, while Israel was seeking divine favor, they failed to get the chief blessing because they were not thoroughly candid with themselves, and hence mistook the mission of Moses' Law. They hypocritically claimed that they kept that Law inviolate and were entitled to its blessings,--eternal life, etc.,--whereas they should have admitted that the Law was so grand and so perfect, and themselves so fallen from perfection, that they were unable to keep it; and they should have looked to the Lord for help. In this attitude of mind they would have been ready to receive eternal life as a gift, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and would have given up seeking it by the perfection of their own works. So the Apostle points out that Israel failed because they sought the blessing not by faith but by works. Thus "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for;

but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7.) He then points out that this fall of Israel into blindness and the calling of a peculiar people from among the Gentiles to complete the "elect" company was foreknown of God and declared by him through the prophets. (Rom. 9 and 10.) But he shows that Israel is not cast off forever, and that when the elect class is complete all Israel shall be saved from the

R2213 : page 264

blindness into which they stumbled in the rejection of Christ; and that their recovery then will be the signal for blessings upon the whole world.

--Rom. 11:15,25,32.

It is after eleven chapters of argumentative, logical, beautiful, instructive, blessed reasoning that the Apostle reaches the crown of his argument, saying (12:1), "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God [presented in the previous eleven chapters] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." He is addressing the "elect" body of Christ, of which a part was being gathered from among the Jews and the remainder being made up from those called from among the Gentiles. These should know what are the terms and conditions upon which God hath "called" them; viz., (1) to suffer with Christ in this present time, and (2) to be glorified and reign with him in the coming age, to bless the world. These should know the reason for their sufferings and the character which God would develop in them, and without which they would not be "fit for the Kingdom." It is concerning some of these characteristics, necessary to those who would make their "calling and election sure," that our present lesson treats.

"Let love be without dissimulation." He had already explained the necessity for love; but he now puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, a holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one: the love will be genuine, heartfelt as well as mouth expressed. This love is to be toward God, and toward all in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

"Abhor that which is evil." We are not merely to avoid doing that which is evil, not merely to have no love or affinity for evil; but more than these we are to hate, to abhor evil. And as the love for God and for all things true and pure and making for righteousness is to be cultivated, so the abhorrence of sin and impurity of every kind is to be cultivated, so that the stronger we become in Christian character the more intense will be our love for the good and pure and true, and the more intense will be our opposition to the untrue, the

impure, the sinful. The more we learn of the beautiful harmonies of this heavenly grace of love, and the more they become the melodies of our own hearts, the more distressing and repugnant and abhorrent will sin and selfishness, "the spirit of the world," be to us: just as discords in music grate upon our ears in proportion as our knowledge and appreciation of musical harmonies grows. As holiness and sin are opposites, so our feelings toward these must be represented by the sentiments of love and hatred. To grow cool in love for righteousness, is to lose some of the abhorrence for sin. Let us therefore cultivate in ourselves hatred for sin, selfishness impurity and every evil way, that we may find it the easier to cultivate in our hearts the beautiful graces of the holy spirit.

"Cleave to that which is good." The thought is, adhere to, be cemented to, that which is good. There is a constant tendency not only from our own fallen natures, but also from the world and the devil, to separate from that which is good and pure and noble. And we must resolutely determine, that at all hazards and for all time, by the Lord's grace, we will adhere to him,--the truth, the way, the life.

"Be kindly affectioned." The thought here seems to be: Cultivate among yourselves that kind of affection which properly belongs in a family, where the blessing or honor of one member signifies the blessing, honor and advancement of all. Perhaps the Apostle thus delicately suggests the impropriety of any manifestation of affection except such as would be proper between brethren: as we read in another place, "Love as brethren."--1 Pet. 3:8.

"In honor preferring one another." That is, rejoicing more if honor come to another than if it had come to self. Our hearts should be so unselfish that we would take pleasure in seeing honor and prosperity come to another, and rejoice in it: and so sympathetic that a brother's failure would cause us as much

R2213 : page 265

chagrin as if it were our own failure. This is the holy spirit which unfeignedly rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep.

"Not slothful in your affairs." The word here does not refer specially to mercantile business, but to affairs in general. The class addressed, who are seeking to make their calling and election sure, are to "do all things as unto the Lord;" and nothing done for the Lord should be done in a slovenly manner. We are in a world full of opportunities for good or evil: there are few on our side, the side of God and of righteousness; and whoever realizes this, and is fully consecrated to the Lord, will certainly be aroused from slothfulness which is natural to many in the fallen condition. If the battle of truth against error, of light against darkness,

does not awaken us to energy in the Lord's service, it marks an unfavorable condition of heart. And to the consecrated child of God, every affair of life--eating, drinking and all other business in this present life--is to help us to serve the interests of our Master's cause.

"Fervent in spirit." This is placed in contrast with sloth: if as stewards of divine mercy and truth we are slothful, it is because we are cool in our love to the Lord; hence the Apostle's instruction that we should be hot, fervent in spirit. The Greek word here translated "fervent" signifies to be hot, to boil. We are reminded of our Lord's words to the Church of Laodicea, boastful of its works but luke-warm in the spirit of its love. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Let all who have received the Lord's spirit take heed lest they get into a lukewarm condition and lose the Lord's favor: let them cultivate rather a growing appreciation of the mercies of God, which growing appreciation as fuel will add fervency to our love and zeal for his truth, and for purity in our own hearts, and for service to others.

"Rejoice in hope." We are not to expect to have much in the present life to rejoice in, if we are faithful to our "calling;" because, "through much tribulation shall ye enter the Kingdom." Our rejoicing is to be in hope--looking into the future. The eye of faith is to see what the natural eye cannot see, the crown of life and all the glorious things "which God hath in reservation for them that love him [fervently]." And here is the advantage of doctrinal knowledge: it inspires hope; it gives a foundation for hope. Knowledge cannot bring us to the Kingdom; but it may be a great help in building us up and preparing us for it, by constantly holding before us the hopes which God designs should stimulate and encourage us while running the race for the great prize.

"Patient in tribulation." Our word tribulation is derived from the Latin tribulum, the name of a roller or threshing machine used in olden times for cleaning wheat, removing from it the outer husk or chaff. How appropriate the thought when applied to the Lord's consecrated people, who in the Scriptures are symbolized by wheat. Our new natures are the kernel, the real grain: yet this treasure or valuable part is covered with the husk of earthly conditions. And in order that the wheat may be made properly ready for the "garner" and for usefulness, it is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to separate those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called of the Lord. In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we will be enabled to bear patiently,

and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master shall see best to let come upon us. "We glory in tribulations also."--Rom. 5:3.

"Instant in prayer." No advice that the Apostle could give to the class addressed could be more vitally important than this.

"Ah, whither could we flee for aid when tempted, desolate, dismayed? Or how the host of sin defeat had suffering saints no mercy-seat.

Prayer, communion with God, is indispensably necessary to our spiritual welfare; and the appreciation of the privilege of communion with the Most High and with our Redeemer, or the lack of such appreciation, as the case may be, indicates tolerably clearly our fervency or our coldness with reference to the things of the Lord. People may be fervent in serving schemes or plans of their own, or human systems and theories, and have little desire for prayer; but those who serve the Lord and his truth from a hot, fervent heart, will so realize their imperfection and their own inability in the divine service, that they will desire and will continually seek the Master's guidance and direction with reference to the service they are rendering to him.

If, therefore, we ever feel a growing indifference, either to private prayer or to public worship or to social prayer-meetings, we may be assured that it is a very dangerous sign of one of two things. (1) Either that our love is growing cold, or (2) that our love is misplaced, misdirected, placed upon some earthly scheme or ambition, and is not fervent toward the Lord. And whichever is found to be the difficulty should be corrected at once. The appreciation of prayer, like the growth of love, and like the increase of fervency of spirit, is a matter for development; and the best fuel, as above suggested, is the consideration of the divine

R2214 : page 265

mercies already enjoyed.

"Distributing to the distresses of saints." The Greek word here rendered "distributing" signifies to

R2214 : page 266

make common. The thought evidently is, that altho Communism is not encouraged in Scripture, nor is it the best method in this present time, while it is better that each should have the responsibility largely for his own affairs and be the steward of his own talents, nevertheless that feeling of brotherhood is to prevail amongst the saints, which would "make common" to others of the spiritual family, such things as are necessities to them. Love, not Selfishness, is to control.

"Given to hospitality." The Apostle's language here does not signify if requested we should not be inhospitable; but it means much more: literally, it signifies following after hospitality--going out after, or

seeking for opportunities for the exercise of hospitality. This principle is as applicable to the poor as to the rich. If what we have is plain or common, the hospitable use of it will just as truly show our heart-intentions as tho it were the best. Some, we fear, fail to cultivate this grace; and if they exercise hospitality are inclined to give better than they have, and perhaps would go into debt in order to entertain more lavishly than their circumstances would justify. This is wrong. It is not cultivating the grace which the Apostle here inculcates, but is cultivating a very evil weed,--pride. Let us learn not only to love without dissimulation, but also to follow after hospitality without dissimulation, without seeking to show off better conditions than are really ours.

"Bless them which persecute you." This is a quotation from the sermon on the mount. It addresses a mind enlightened by the divine Word, that has thus drawn against it the opposition of Satan, and of those whose understandings he has darkened. It means an opposition of persecution not for wrong-doing, or as busy-bodies in other men's matters, or for nonsensical peculiarities, but persecution for the truth's sake. It implies a heart full of love and sympathy and pity; for no other heart could really and truly bless its persecutors and wish them no evil, but good. This is the kind of a heart, overflowing with the holy spirit of the Lord, that is able to rejoice with those in prosperity, to weep with those who sorrow and even able to forget its own tribulations or adversities.

"Be of the same disposition toward each one." Be sympathetic toward the very humblest brother or sister as well as toward the most refined. "Mind not high things." Do not allow your affections and sentiments merely to go out along ecstatic lines, but bring your mind down so as to enter into sympathy with those of God's people who financially and intellectually are in a low estate.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." This is a further injunction to humility. Those who are always minding high things and overlooking the humbler ones of the Lord's people usually do so because of too high an opinion of their own wisdom and intelligence. Few things more blemish an otherwise developed Christian character than a conceit which separates him or her from the humblest of the Lord's flock. Moreover, there is no more dangerous thing than such an opinion of one's own wisdom. This condition is described as being "heady," "high minded." It naturally leads into error, and to a fall from both the letter and spirit of the truth. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Let all beware of this terrible disease. Nothing is a greater hindrance and stumbling-block to the ministers of the nominal churches to-day (hindering them from receiving the truth) than this kind of pride in their own wisdom, which

leads to and is distinguished by the unscriptural division of believers into "clergy" and "laity." And there is equal and even greater danger along this line for those who have received present truth, and who are seeking to minister it to others. Let all of the Lord's people, especially those who have a little more knowledge, and who attempt to make known the riches of divine grace, be specially on guard against attacks of the enemy from this quarter.

"Recompense no man evil for evil." Much of the previous instruction of this lesson relates to our dealings with the brotherhood; but here the Apostle points out a general line of conduct toward all men. There is a general tendency on the part of well-intentioned people to recognize a line of justice and a desire to vindicate justice and to punish evil doers. The Apostle points out that this is not the rule governing the Lord's family. It is not improper for the world to have laws and regulations for criminals, in the interest of society; and the Apostle is not discussing those, nor finding fault with them. He is treating rather of the minor affairs of life in which various evils may be inflicted and resented without coming directly under the control of civil laws. The policy of the Christian is to be not along the lines of slothfulness, animosities, revenges and perpetual conflicts, but to the contrary of all this; because of his greater knowledge of how sin came into the world, and how all mankind are fallen mentally, morally and physically, and how God has sympathy with the poor groaning creation and has provided a ransom for all, and that in due time a restitution for all shall be possible. And he is to have a heart so full of sympathy with this plan, that he will be generous, and God-like, toward the sin-blinded ones--anxious chiefly for the opening of the eyes of their understandings, and for an opportunity of blessing and helping them, rather than entertaining feelings of revenge.

"Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Realizing that part of the service which the Lord requires

R2214 : page 267

of him is an honest provision for the necessities of himself and family, the true Christian will seek to live up to this reasonable requirement. If he cannot obtain employment at that which he prefers, he will be bound in honesty to take some other employment, in order to meet his obligations. Few things are more likely to bring dishonor upon God's people in the sight of the world than dishonesty. Of course, none of the saints would steal; but there is another way of being dishonest, which seems to slip by many consciences under certain circumstances. This is the dishonesty of purchasing on credit by actually or impliedly promising a payment at no distant date when there are no assurances of ability to pay at that date, as the merchant

is led to presume. Some indeed seem to encourage themselves in such dishonest methods, persuading themselves that they are exercising "faith" in God, that he will provide means for the payment of their debts. This is a great mistake. God has never authorized any one to go into debt for him, and such a faith has no backing in God's Word. On the contrary, he instructs his people not to go into debt; but he says, "Owe no man anything." A good plan is to always live within our income and, if possible, to "lay by in store that we may have to give to him that needeth."

"Live as peaceably with all men as lieth within the range of your possibilities." With the various crooked natures of the world, and with our own imperfect dispositions (more and more coming under control of grace however) it will be a difficult matter to avoid all friction. But while in the interest of peace we are to submit to trifling wrongs and injustices with good grace, yet there is a place where we must draw the line; a place where our desire for peace must not control; that is, whenever a principle is involved. Here is a great difficulty: those who are naturally peaceable, will be tempted to pursue peace even at the expense of principle, and in conflict with the divine commands; on the other hand many of those who are firmest in defense of righteous principles are inclined to be combative, and have great need to guard themselves and to cultivate this disposition for peace, which is a part of the divine character which we are to copy. The rule should be, "First pure [truthful and loyal to righteousness] then peaceable."--James 3:17.

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves"; but preferably get out of the way of your opponents and their wrath, remembering that it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Hence we do not need to feel that justice needs to be vindicated at our hands. God will take care of the vindication of his own justice. If it were left in our hands to mete out justice to those who mistreat us and say all manner of evil against us falsely for Christ's sake, we would doubtless make many mistakes. We should therefore be glad that the matter is not in our hands at present, and that divine wisdom and justice will repay to evil doers with greater mercy than we would probably be able to exercise. Our feelings, therefore, should be largely those of sympathy and pity for wrong doers, remembering that surely either in the present life or in that which is to come a man shall reap according to his present sowing.

For these reasons and in order to cultivate in us more of the divine mind, we are instructed to be kind to our enemies and not to see them want for necessities of life. Such treatment will be more likely than any other to do them good, and to win them as friends. We are not, however, to treat them kindly in order to see how badly we can make them feel under it. We are

to treat them kindly because love is the principle of our nature, the "new commandment" of our Lord and Master, the holy spirit which is more and more actuating us. We are to treat them thus, regardless of whether we ever melt them by our kindness in the present life or not.

R2215 : page 267

"Be not overcome of evil." We are to remember that there is a constant conflict between good and evil, that each has its servants, or soldiers, and that we have enlisted on the side of good, under the Captain of our salvation, with the engagement that we will "fight a good fight." We are never, therefore, to take up or to use evil words or methods or manners. To do so is temporarily to join the enemy, or to admit that his implements and methods are better than those of the Captain to whom we belong. To answer anger with anger, evil report with evil report, bitter words with bitter words, slander with slander, persecution with persecution, blow with blow, or any of these, would be to endeavor to overcome evil with evil. This which is natural to our fallen natures is what we are commanded to avoid, that we may the more thoroughly cultivate the new nature. To be misled by the adversary to use his methods in any of these ways is to be overcome of evil.

"Overcome evil with good." The fact that the Lord so directs us is proof (1) that it is practicable and (2) that it is preferable. Faith accepts these declarations of divine wisdom on the subject; and experience endorses or ratifies them. Whoever has tried, has found that evil can be overcome with good, in many instances. Not infrequently, however, all the good that you can do in return for evil will work no change in the evil-doer; he goes on in his evil way, is more insistent, and more intolerant. Nevertheless, the course of the Lord's people cannot vary; they are authorized to do only good, and to keep on doing good whether it shall melt the opposition or not. In this, we are but following

R2215 : page 268

the divine example. God causes the rain to fall upon the crops of the good and of the evil; he causes the sunshine to come indiscriminately, upon the just and the unjust. "His tender mercies are over all his works." And even by and by, when his vengeance shall be exercised, it will still be in love and kindness; (1) that those who will may be benefited by the discipline of trouble, and (2) that those who will not benefit may be destroyed from among the people; to the end that their baneful influence may be removed forever. Let us all more and more seek to live the new life.

INTERESTING LETTERS.

MR. M. L. MCPHAIL, Illinois.

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:--It was through a recent letter received from Mr. C. T. Russell that I obtained your name and address. And I now take pleasure in penning you a few lines.

You do not know--O yes! I think you do,--but certainly only a few can know, what exceeding blessedness has come to me through my brief acquaintance with Mr. Russell and his works. And how I long for more!

I am a middle-aged man of 40. I was brought up a Christian from my mother's knee.

Eleven years ago (about), I lost my sweet wife, after a marriage of 2-1/2 years. She was a devoted Christian, so good, so beautiful, so true; for her sweet sake I could willingly have died. But God took her from me, leaving me with no children, no cares, but a crushed spirit, a broken heart and almost a rebellious inclination. But these extremities set me to thinking as I had never thought before.

I have long felt that Christian religion ought to be a great deal more or a great deal less than that usually presented either by pen or pulpit. I accordingly went into the ministry in the Methodist Church. And while I enjoyed working for my Master according to my limited knowledge and ability, I learned to feel more and more that the Methodist Church did not mean business: did not believe what it presented nor try to present what it did believe.

After working hard for 2-1/2 years I was obliged to stop from nervous prostration. And really, the teaching of this church is enough to prostrate the nerves of anybody who is honest enough to work consistently in harmony with such views. Thus I left the pulpit: but I could not leave off thinking. Last winter I advertised in the Chicago Record for truth, thus,--

PERSONAL NOTICE.

Correspondence wanted from any one who is a candidate for absolute and abstract truth. Address: Box 142, _____, Ill.

This ad was echoed and enlarged by the Tribune, and I received many answers: among them VOL. I. of MILLENNIAL DAWN, a copy of the WATCH TOWER and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" These were sent me by a brother Dixon, of Iowa, and this was the first that I ever heard of the good people at Allegheny. But I have feasted on it since that time.

Then it was, upon inquiry concerning who and how many accepted this interpretation of the Word, that I

learned of the little band so near as Chicago. Now it so happens that I expect to spend two or three days in Chicago some time in September (perhaps before the middle). I have a number of friends in and near the city, and I think I would like to meet some of you people and have a nice long talk with you personally, if it be agreeable to you.

I am Yours in Christ, R. W. LOVERING.

California.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Quite accidentally, the other day, I became acquainted with a miner, returned to these parts from Alaska. He has done fairly well there.

I found that he did not believe in "One word of the Bible, not one word from beginning to end of the book!" I told him there was a surprise in store for him, and gave him two TOWERS and lent him VOL. I. of MILLENNIAL DAWN. A few days after I saw him again before he had finished VOL. I., and he said: "I am going back to Alaska early in March, and want to take all those books with me!" I am sure he is now well on the road to grasp the truth.

Will these be the first of the DAWNS to go to the Arctic Circle? If so please let the TOWER readers know that Mr. Walker has the honor of God to bear the Light manifested at the close of the Gospel age into the Arctic regions.

Yours very truly, ALFRED R. PEARSON.

Tennessee.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I write you that you may know how the Lord's few are getting along at this place. We have had six meetings from place to place since I wrote you last, and had a soul refreshing time at each gathering. But as our homes are so scattered over the neighborhood that house to house meetings are very inconvenient, I have fitted up a good house on my place, at the edge of our little town, to be used as a meeting house for God's people. To-morrow will be our first gathering at our new meeting place. I pray the Lord may bless us in our effort.

Last Saturday the Baptist church, which is three miles from here, held a meeting in which they proposed to discuss among themselves what they call the Russell doctrine. The questions were asked through a question box. Three important questions,--"To what extent does the atonement reach?" "How far does the Redemption extend?" "Is there to be a restitution of all things?"--were assigned to one Burl. Henry, said to be the ablest minister in the Baptist Northern Association. Mr. Henry answered those three questions

in broad terms as taught in the MILLENNIAL DAWN. Then they all rose up and told Mr. Henry that he would have to stop advocating such doctrine, or they would turn him out of the church; but Mr. Henry frankly told them that he did not care if they did turn him out of their church, that they could not stop him from preaching this Gospel of the Kingdom, except they stopped his breath. Thus it is, one by one, they keep coming as the Lord's sheep to his bountiful provisions.

May the Lord bless you in your every effort to spread the truth. Yours in Love and Christian fellowship,
G. E. TOLIVER.

=====

page 269

VOL. XVIII. SEPTEMBER 15, 1897. No. 18.

CONTENTS.

Millennial Dawn, Vol. IV.....	270
Views from the Watch Tower.....	271
The Coal-Miner's Strike.....	271
"Zionism" Advocated.....	273
The Lambeth Conference.....	274
Poem: Hear Thou My Prayer.....	275
Falling Away from Steadfastness.....	275
Is Faith in Christ Necessary?.....	278
Paul's Heart Revealed.....	279
Paul's Last Journey to Jerusalem.....	281
Interesting Letters.....	283

page 270

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

TOWER PUBLISHING CO., BIBLE HOUSE, 58 & 60 ARCH ST.,
ALLEGHENY (NORTH PITTSBURG), PA., U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR, IN ADVANCE,
INCLUDES A SUBSCRIPTION TO "THE OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS"--QUARTERLY.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N.Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER,
OR REGISTERED. FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN
MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:

Those of the interested, who by reason of old age or accident, or other adversity are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they will send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper.

MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV.,

SPECIAL ISSUE,
WILL REPRESENT FOUR ISSUES OF THIS JOURNAL:
OCT. 1 AND 15, AND NOV. 1 AND 15.
WE EXPECT
TO BEGIN MAILING IT OCTOBER 1, 1897.
IT WILL BE SENT TO
ALL WATCH TOWER SUBSCRIBERS NOT THEN IN ARREARS
AS AND FOR THOSE NUMBERS,
WITHOUT EXTRA CHARGE.
REGULAR PRICE IN CLOTH BINDING \$1.25,
IN LEATHERETTE 50 CENTS, IN PAPER COVERS 35 CENTS
PER VOLUME--656 PAGES.

=====

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

WELL has the Prophet described our times, saying, "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice [sound] of the day of the Lord." (Zeph. 1:14.) He who cannot hear the "voice" to-day is deaf indeed: "He that hath an ear let him hear," saith the Lord. The "voice" of complaint for some time back has been from the farmers, "the reapers," who just now are temporarily pacified by large crops and good prices,--brought to them through the adversity of their fellow creatures in famine-stricken India, and a shortage elsewhere--a pacification which will probably not last more than another year or two, except as war or famine or other calamities may be permitted of the Lord to grant temporary respite.

But now the "voice" of woe comes from another quarter: from the miners of bituminous coal, who claim that they cannot possibly endure longer the strain of competition, which, through idleness and in other ways, reduces their wages sometimes as low as \$3.00 per week. They have "struck," demanding reform measures and better pay. To make their "strike" successful, they claim it is necessary to induce all, or nearly all, miners to join them; and to this end they have formed "marching bands" to endeavor peaceably to induce miners still at work to join in the strike.

The coal-mine owners have ordered the marchers off their property, as they of course have a right to do; but in addition, by going before the courts and swearing

that they believe these "marching bands" intend injury to their property and to the persons of their miners now employed they have induced the courts to issue Injunctions, commanding the "marching bands" to disperse and not to march on the roads within a certain radius of the mines. The strikers obeyed as respects "bands," but in groups of two or three and singly they walked along the highways and shouted to the miners at work to come out and join in the strike for living wages. But the law of injunction seems to have deprived the strikers from using even that liberty. It is not to be wondered at, that this feature of Injunction is criticized as contrary to the spirit of liberty and the Constitutional rights of the American people.

Nevertheless the majority of the well-to-do and wealthy seem to view the matter in the same light as do the courts, and to be willing to infringe the Constitutional rights of the laborer for the preservation of peace. But it will be found that such a peace is purchased at too high a cost. That the strikers have just cause for striking is generally admitted and even by some of the operators; and that generally they have conducted themselves with great moderation and patience is also conceded.

The groundwork for this moderation lay in the fact that they hoped to succeed by virtue of the justice of their cause: but now when they find that the Courts of Justice are prejudiced against them so as to deprive them, as criminals, of the liberty of their own highways, in anticipation that they may become criminals, can we wonder that their faith and hope for peaceable methods of redressing their grievances are blighted? No indeed. Do they not claim with justice that they have the right as freemen to assemble unarmed for the discussion of their welfare, as truly as the mine-owners may meet at hotels or other rendezvous for the discussion of their interests and to persuade each other pro or con?

Of course there are occasions when Court injunctions are both proper and necessary, and it may be difficult at times to decide where the line should be drawn; but surely the wealthy and the Courts, if not blind to

R2216 : page 272

the true situation and deaf to "the voice of the day of the Lord," would avoid utterly discouraging the lower classes by destroying their confidence in the administration of justice: nothing else so quickly breeds the spirit of anarchy.

Hearken to the "Voice of the Day of the Lord" from St. Louis, sounding into the ears of the civilized world through the daily Press:--

"St. Louis, Aug. 31.--The conference of labor leaders of the country, which has been in session here two days, finished its work this evening. The meeting was productive of several sensational speeches and

many resolutions. The platform as presented by the committee reads in part as follows:--

"The fear of the more watchful fathers of the republic has been justified. The judiciary has become supreme. We witness a political phenomenon absolutely new in the history of the world; a republic prostrate at the feet of judges appointed to administer its laws. They acknowledge no superior on earth, and their despotic deeds recall Milton's warning to his countrymen: 'Who bids a man rule over him above law, may bid as well a savage beast.'

"Under the cunning form of injunctions, courts have assumed to enact criminal laws, and, after thus drawing to themselves the power of legislation, have repealed the bill of rights, and for violation of those court made laws have denied the accused the right of trial by jury.

"The exercise of the commonest rights of freemen --the right of assembly, the right of free speech, the right of traveling the public highway--have by legislation, under the form of injunctions, been made a crime, and armed forces disperse as mobs people daring in company to exercise these rights.

Having drawn to themselves all the powers of the Federal Government until Congress and Presidents may act only by judicial permission, the Federal Judges have begun the subjugation of sovereign states, so that, unless a check is soon put upon the progress of usurpation, in a short time no government but the absolute despotism of federal judges will exist anywhere over any portion of American soil.

"Whereas, appeals to Congress and to the courts for relief are fruitless, since the legislative, as well as the executive and judicial powers are under the control of the capitalistic class, so that it has come to pass in this 'free country,' that while cattle and swine have a right to the public highways, Americans, so called freemen, have not.

"Whereas, our capitalistic class, as is again shown in the present strike, is armed, and has not only policemen, marshals, sheriffs and deputies, but also a regular army and militia, in order to enforce government by injunction, suppressing lawful assemblage, free speech and the right to the public highway; while, on the other hand, the laboring men of the country are unarmed and defenceless, contrary to the words and spirit of the Constitution of the United States; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we hereby set apart Friday, the third day of September, 1897, as a 'Good Friday' for the cause of suffering labor in America and contribute the earnings of that day to the support of our struggling brothers, the miners, and appeal to every union man and every friend of labor throughout the country;" etc., etc., etc.

"Mr. Debs was then called for and said:

"I believe the gravity of the industrial situation in this country is well understood. It is quite evident the delegates to this convention are cognizant of the fact that civil liberty is dead in America. I have said and say again,--For the last time, I have appealed to the courts for justice, and shall appeal to them no more. The American Railway Union expended \$45,000 to have the question of civil rights tested in the supreme courts of the United States, only to be told that we have no rights that capital is bound to respect. Shall we appeal to the supreme courts again? No. We appeal to this convention and to the country for an uprising of all the common people in every walk of life to beat back the courts and reenthroned the rights of the American people.

"From justice of the peace to justice of the supreme court of the United States, all the judicial powers of the United States are directed against labor. All the organized forces of society are against labor, and if labor expects to emancipate itself, labor itself must do it.

"The time has not quite come to incite the populace," said Mr. Debs, shaking his fist vehemently."

* * *

But will "the voice of the day of the Lord," as it comes from various quarters and swells into a mighty roar of the sea class (Luke 21:25) be heard, and will it be heeded, and will relief be granted, and will the threatened crash and the wreck of present institutions be avoided? No; God's Word shows us that it will not be averted;--so strong is the power of selfishness in the world that it blinds those who should see, if only in self-interest. But we leave this subject for MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV.--"THE DAY OF VENGEANCE," which we expect to commence mailing Oct. 1, next,--as and for the October and November issues of this journal.

INTERDENOMINATIONALISM VS. UNDENOMINATIONALISM.

We have pointed out from time to time that the Christian Endeavor movement is too liberal to be tolerated by sectarians; and that having no common basis of faith, and proposing to ignore doctrines, the Society would be at a loss as to any definite object and be apt to drift into Moralism, Christian-politics, etc. The following quotations show that three Presbyterian journals are waking up to the fact that Christian Endeavorers will soon reach the place where they cannot be

R2217 : page 272

depended upon as sectarians, whatever they may gain

or lose as Christians.

The Editor of the Michigan Presbyterian says:--

"For two weeks we have been hesitating to say just what we felt, because of love for the Christian Endeavor work and for our brethren: but we are ready now to confess what has been for years slowly taking shape in our mind, that we honestly believe that it would have been far better for the Presbyterian Church,

R2217 : page 273

and especially for our young people, if twelve years ago we had put the same amount of energy into organizing Westminster Leagues as we did into organizing the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. In short, we believe that our Westminster League brethren have been right during all these years of controversy. The reasons for this opinion are so many and so fundamental that it would take half a dozen articles even to state them, and half a dozen more to meet the arguments on the other side, many of them being arguments which we have honestly made ourselves, in synods and presbyteries. Nor is there any practical use in dwelling upon them, for it is now too late to make the radical change that could have been made successfully ten years ago."

The Editor of The Presbyterian, commenting on the foregoing, adds:--

"But whatever opinion one has upon the points raised, there is a fact brought out by our Michigan contemporary which is worthy of special consideration, and which shows the existence of elements of conflict and disintegration, which will sooner or later assert themselves. Dr. Clark has insisted upon its being interdenominational, and he has done his best to make it so. But look at the facts: What denominations come next in numbers to our own in Christian Endeavor work? The Congregationalist and the Campbellist. Congregationalism is more and more standing for union work, making its plea on that basis, and making its doors wide to all kinds of religious ideas, in a loosely confederated sort of way. Campbellism, through its leading organ, the Christian Standard, declares that as far as that body of believers is concerned, they reject utterly Dr. Clark's interdenominational ideas, and they are in the Christian Endeavor work to abolish denominationalism altogether. They make no secret of their mission to substitute for interdenominationalism undenominationalism."

The Presbyterian Banner prints a comment on the matter, saying:--

"We do not forget that Dr. Clark and Mr. Baer, editors of the Golden Rule, who hold the reins of control [over Christian Endeavorers], have made much show of denominational loyalty on the part of church societies, subordinate, however, to supreme loyalty to

the organization. This strategic movement was made by them after charges had been brought, that the whole tendency of Christian Endeavor was in the direction of church union, or more properly, independent churches."

The Editor of the Banner assents, saying:--

"That there has been a marked change in the views of many ministers and elders and a large number of members of the Presbyterian denomination since the last meeting of the General Assembly at Saratoga cannot be doubted by any one familiar with the trend of opinion in the church. What ought to be done, or what can be done in the circumstances, we do not pretend to know at present....We agree with the Michigan Presbyterian that 'there is a great deal that we can do. We can make continually more of our own history, doctrines and plan of work, and continually less of the undenominational character of this work.'"

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS.

At the unveiling of the equestrian statue of Emperor William I. at Coblenz, the present Emperor of Germany, in proposing a toast, made the following pointed statement of his conception of his office:--

"My grandfather went forth from Coblenz to mount the throne as the chosen instrument of the Lord, and as such he regarded himself. For all of us, more especially for us princes, he raised the throne once more on high, crowning it with the bright rays of the treasure which may we ever preserve in its sublimity and holiness. I mean the kingdom, by the grace of God, the kingdom with its heavy duties, its never ending, ever enduring toils and labors, with its awful responsibility to the Creator alone, from which no man, no minister, no house of parliament, no people can release the prince. For me it will be a sacred duty, following in the ways which the great ruler has shown us and in solicitude for my country to hold my protecting hand over this splendid jewel."

It is well that all persons in and out of public office should recognize every influence and opportunity as a stewardship from God; but it is very peculiar that the king of Prussia having acquired imperial authority over the other German states with and by their consent to be so governed, should now recognize his accountability as to the Creator alone. He, like all other men, owes fealty to God in all his acts: but his office came from the people and should be esteemed amenable to the people who gave it. His views are part of the leaven dispensed by Papacy, at the bottom of much of the world's superstition; which in this particular has done good as well as harm. By and by we shall have the true King and the reign of righteousness, whose only object will not be to fight for the maintenance of a throne,--

but to "bless all the families of the earth."

"ZIONISM" ADVOCATED AND DEFENDED.

The Jewish Conference respecting Zionism met at Basel, Switzerland, on August 30th as proposed;--to discuss the feasibility and advisability of Dr. Herzl's scheme for securing Palestine as a national home for the Jewish race, and assisting the poor and persecuted to return to the land of their fathers and to prosperity. The cable announces merely the fact that the Conference enthusiastically endorsed Dr. Herzl's suggestions, and sent to the Sultan of Turkey a telegram congratulating him upon the peace and prosperity of their race throughout his dominions. Hebrew was the language of the Convention: a very noteworthy indication.

Thus gradually, but surely, prophecy is fulfilling along this line also; keeping pace exactly with the developments along other lines--civil and religious--all rapidly approaching their foretold climaxes. Praise God!

R2217 : page 274

Mr. Max Nordau, a Hebrew and a noted writer, expressed himself recently with great freedom in favor of the Zionist program and in opposition to those Jews who are opposing it. He suggests that "rabbis and idiots" who now raise against the movement a "senseless outcry" may some day rejoice at the success of Zionism, because of the refuge it will afford "from the Antisemitic storm gathering over their heads." (Antisemitism signifies opposition to the descendents of Shem; it includes all the races of Southwestern Asia--Assyrians, Arabs, Abyssinians, Hebrews, etc., but it is here and most frequently used to signify opposition to Hebrews, the Jews.) Proceeding, Dr. Nordau said:--

"Zionism has been called into existence by the steady growth and encroachments of Antisemitism in its various forms--official Antisemitism in Russia, popular Antisemitism in Germany and Austria. Being a German myself I can only speak for my own country. There, I have no hesitation in saying, the Jew is not only not beloved, but he is positively hated and feared; and this aversion extends to all people having the faintest trace of Jewish blood in their veins.

"The Antisemitic propaganda has turned people mad in Germany and Austria, and there seems to be no prospect of a change for the better. Altho no one can accuse me certainly of being a parasite or a money-grabber --every penny I have earned has been the result of hard and conscientious labor--my mail is often weighed down with insulting anonymous letters from the other side of the Rhine....Seeing that this anti-Jewish feeling is pretty well universal, or rapidly becoming

so, why should the Jew himself, we ask, be satisfied to continue living in a hostile camp? Why should he be reduced to effacing his nationality?...

"The Jew, figuratively speaking, is constantly holding his hand in front of his nose to hide its peculiar aquilinity, which peculiarity, by the way, he shares with the all-conquering Romans of old. Why be ashamed of our natural and, above all, national characteristics? No, let us develop them on the contrary, form them in the right molds. Let us be true to ourselves, to our traditions, to the genius of our race. Then, indeed, will great things come out of this disordered mass. Israel will be herself again. This is the true essence of Zionism!...The gentle rabbis in Germany and the United States who have been pooh-poohing our efforts may not be aware that at this moment hundreds of thousands of their coreligionists are living in the most awful squalor and misery conceivable within the confines of the Jewish pale of Russia or among the wild Kurdish tribes of Asia Minor."

* * *

Thus, the Jews themselves being the witnesses, God is forcing them back to the Promised Land for which many of them had lost all hope and all love.

Whether Palestine will be opened to the Jew by money, as they now propose, or whether it will be opened by war, we cannot say; but far more than the Zionists hope for will be attained by A.D. 1915. To permit all that God has promised that is due before that time, would demand that they be admitted to Palestine under the domination of some other Power or Powers very shortly.

R2218 : page 274

Brother Kirkham tells us that when in Europe recently he was brought in contact with certain Jewish bankers to explain some inventions in tile making; and that incidentally he found an opportunity to explain God's plan of the ages, mentioning also that the due time had come for the restoration of divine favor to Israel. To his surprise his hearers manifested deep interest and said that what he had said was in many respects closely in harmony with their own views. They then voluntarily sent with him an escort and showed him at a private marble yard, kept secret from the general public, columns of very fine marble in preparation, they said, to form parts of a grand temple to be built at Jerusalem. The parts are being gotten ready according to draughted plans, and each stone is lettered and numbered to indicate the place for which it is intended.

THE DIVISION OF TURKEY ARRANGED.

It is now pretty generally agreed that Austria and Russia have reached an agreement respecting the division of Turkey when it shall be judged that the opportune moment has arrived. Austria is to have Salonica and all the territory west of it, while Russia is to have Constantinople and a good share of the territory surrounding it and northward. But it is not intended to force a war; merely the arrangement is made so that in the event of another war with Turkey each nation will know the portions to seize. It is said that Germany is very anxious to secure Syria, including Palestine, on the same terms; but that the other Powers would permit this is very doubtful, as they all covet Palestine.

Our chief interest in the Turkish question is the opening of Palestine to the returning Israelites: if it, or even liberty of settlement therein, be conveyed to the Jews for money, we shall feel comparatively little further interest in Turkey.

THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE.

The third Conference at Lambeth, near to London, has just been held, bishops of the Church of England being present "from divers parts of the earth." These Conferences have done much to instil and foster the idea of Protestant Federation, and meantime are endeavoring to hold together the Episcopal Church, doctrinally. To this end previous Conferences have advocated the appointment of a Primate, or Head Bishop, still higher than the Archbishop of Canterbury,--practically a pope, without claims for his infallibility.

A large conservative element has thus far hindered this proposal; and the friends of the measure, abandoning hope along that line, have at this Conference secured

R2218 : page 275

the appointment of a "Central Consultative Committee" to assist and give advice on all theological points in controversy, with a view to holding in some kind of harmony the various branches of the Episcopal Church in various climes, on doctrinal subjects, which the present day awakening of thought makes very difficult.

The Committee was agreed to, and is to be appointed by the chief minister of that church--the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, of whose installation in office we not long since gave an account, pointing out also that he is a Higher Criticism unbeliever and an avowed Evolutionist, which signifies that he denies the ransom, and is not in any sense a real Christian according to the New Testament standard. That he will appoint

upon this committee such as are disbelievers in the Scriptures and in the ransom, like himself, goes without saying; and we may accordingly judge of the lines of error along which they will seek to harmonize the theological differences in the Church of England.

HEAR THOU MY PRAYER.

O Lord that pitiest all, hear thou my prayer:--
For gold I ask not, nor for transient wealth,
Nor e'en for richer gifts, nor power, nor health,
But only this--to nestle in thy care,

To rest supreme in thee, and feel that there
No harm can come that thou hast not foreseen.
To trust alway, and on thy strength to lean,
To feel thy guiding hand mid every snare.

I ask that strength that comes alone from thee,
To falter not, nor any trials shun;
And eyes of faith mid deepening gloom to see
My duty's path, and thus my course to run.

Beyond these years I look to that bright home.
Help thou my wavering step, O Lord, I come.

--Paul R. Wright.

=====

R2218 : page 275

FALLING AWAY FROM STEADFASTNESS.

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."--2 Pet. 3:17.

THIS exhortation applies to the Lord's consecrated people living at the present time. The proof of this is found in the context: the Apostle has just been portraying some of the events connected with the day of the Lord in which we are living--the "Day of Vengeance." In verse ten he has pointed out that the present age will end with the dissolution of the symbolic "heavens" and the symbolic "earth," which, as we have elsewhere shown, signifies the utter disruption of the present social and ecclesiastical order. In verse thirteen he points out that we are looking for a new order of things, and not hoping either to patch up

the old order ourselves, or that others will succeed in patching what the Lord has declared "shall pass away." And now in our text he refers to "these things." In the eleventh verse he points out that those who have such expectations should be separate and distinct from all other people in the world, saying, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" And then in our text and in the verse preceding it, he points out that at this particular time the Adversary will get advantage of certain ones, will beguile them, get them to wrest the Scriptures, and thus to deceive themselves to their own destruction;-- to their loss of present light at least.

Finding thus that the Apostle is particularly addressing ourselves, let us indeed give earnest heed to his counsel; for we well know that we live in what the Apostle Paul calls that "evil day."--Eph. 6:13.

We notice further that the Apostle is not addressing the worldly, nor even the average nominal Christian; but he specifies that his warning is to the "beloved," who already had attained to "steadfastness." This implies that they had become rooted and grounded and built up, both in the knowledge and in the love of God; for only such ever become steadfast. Does it surprise us that the Apostle should address such a developed class of Christians and warn them of their own personal danger of falling into the "error of the wicked?" It does strike us as peculiar, and we are inclined to think that there must be some hidden meaning in the expression--"error of the wicked."

It would be past comprehension that such a class as the Apostle has just described should be in great danger of falling into such errors of the wicked as blasphemy, or murder, or arson, or theft. We must look the matter up more carefully, and see whether or not the translators have given us a faithful rendering of the Apostle's words. We find that they have not, and that the word wicked is too strong; the Greek word is *athemos*; according to Prof. Young's Analytical Concordance (undisputed authority) it signifies "unsettled,"

R2218 : page 276

or "lawless." Now, the passage seems more reasonable. There is danger, we can readily see, that those once established in the truth might be so led away as to become unsettled, and to wrest the Scriptures, "handle the word of God deceitfully," and thus become lawless in the sense that they would set aside the Word or Law of God, and take instead thereof a twisted interpretation which would the better suit some theory of their own. Such a wrong course the Apostle points out would surely unsettle them, and eventually mean the destruction of their spiritual interests; and that they would go into "outer darkness" in respect to "present truth." "Beware, lest ye also, being led

away with the error of the unsettled, fall from your own steadfastness."

The Apostle's language not only points to the present time, but seems to imply that there would be previous fallings away or siftings, which he calls "the error of the wicked"--literally, "the delusions of the unsettled or lawless." The implication seems to be, that the not settled ones would first be shaken out, and that subsequently there would come a still more insidious trial which would test even the "steadfast." We inquire therefore, have there been, during this "harvest" time (whilst we are waiting for the dissolution of the present order of things and for the establishment of the new order of things)--have there been such siftings or fallings away by delusions which have affected those not settled?

R2219 : page 276

We answer: Yes, there have been several: we might recount some of these. First of all came a shaking directly upon the subject of the ransom: Certain lawless ones, "heady," rejected the testimony of the Lord's Word, denying the Lord having "bought us" with his own precious blood. They would accept Christ as an example only, and claimed to be able to follow that example, and that they needed no sin-offering to compensate for their imperfections, inherited or personal. This the Adversary's first move was remarkably bold, yet it found adherents who were not rooted and grounded upon the testimony of the Lord's Word. Then came the "flat earth" theory, whose advocates strangely concluded that the shape of the earth is a part of the gospel; the result was that certain others of the unstable were "led away" in that delusion, by not settled leaders who wrested certain Scriptures to their own confusion and to the extinguishment of what light they had enjoyed.

Then came another delusion in effect teaching the old doctrine of Universalism,--that God would finally force eternal salvation upon all men and even upon Satan himself. This theory of course also denied the ransom; because to have admitted that the condemnation to death pronounced in Eden could not be set aside without a ransom, a corresponding price, would logically have implied that disobedience under the second trial, secured by the ransom, would similarly bring an everlasting punishment--everlasting death--from which there could be no resurrection. Hence, this theory boldly denied the ransom, wrested or twisted the Scriptures which speak of the Second death as "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," handling this and other Scriptures so deceitfully as to declare that the Second death would be a great blessing to all upon whom it would come. Of course none but unstable souls could be beguiled by such open and

arrogant perversions of the Word of God.

But, still another sifting came for the "unlearned" and unsettled, not thoroughly furnished with the whole armor of God; this was the teaching that God is the author and instigator of all the sin, crime and wickedness there is in the world; and that after he shall become weary of evil doing he will reform, change his course and incite all mankind to righteousness and holiness, as he now (this theory claims) incites the majority to sin, etc. Of all the theories which the Adversary has brought out in this "evil day," this one seems to be the most blasphemous. So-called "orthodoxy" is certainly quite blasphemous enough, in claiming that God, after permitting his creatures to be "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" (which he had nothing to do with bringing upon them), claims that, as a punishment for sins which they could not avoid, the vast majority of the human family will be imprisoned in a flaming hell of unspeakable torture, and divinely provided with everlasting life, so that they shall never be able to escape those sufferings by death, and that the devil will be similarly supplied with eternal life (but free from pain) for the purpose of torturing them; and that fuel for the torture will to all eternity be provided by divine power. We say that this is extremely blasphemous of the divine character, yet it is as nothing at all in comparison to the teaching which claims that God is the instigator, the first cause, of all the sin and crime and wickedness in the world. This theory also wrested some Scriptures to its support, just as Spiritism and Christian Science do. Of course, only those who had never become thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth could ever be "led away" by such a blasphemous delusion as this.

The Anglo-Israel question, and communistic and social questions, "led away" from the truth, and into more or less darkness and confusion, some others who were not well rooted and grounded in the knowledge of the fact that all present institutions will go down, and that the new order of things to be introduced will not be of human institution, but the work of God through the glorified Christ.

R2219 : page 277

But the Apostle comes in our text to a time after such delusions had "led away" those not established or settled; and his warning is given to the steadfast. The implication seems to be that the Adversary has more subtle delusions before us than any of those in the past; and that the fully consecrated of the Lord's people may need to be more than ever on guard against "the wiles of the devil."--"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things [that all of the affairs, reforms, etc., of the present time will avail nothing, and that all the present institutions will pass away, and

that God is about to establish his own Kingdom in his own way;--and knowing further, that just at this particular time there will be a special sifting and testing of those who are in the light], beware lest ye ALSO, being led away with the error of the wicked [the unsettled or lawless who do not bow implicitly to the Lord's Word, but wrest it to establish theories of their own], fall from your own steadfastness."

(While the "siftings" specially affect those who have been brought by the Lord into the light of present truth, yet in a more general way and along different lines slightly different siftings are in progress with the nominal church as a whole. Each denomination is being shaken, and the theories of Evolution, Spiritism, Christian Science, Theosophy and Moralism are making great inroads upon all who have named the name of Christ, even if they have not come into the light of the "harvest" truth. Unsettled, lacking the knowledge of the divine Word and plan, necessary in this evil day, the whole nominal church is gradually losing its faith in the Bible, under the lead of its most able ministers, who, blinded to present truth, and unable to rightly divide the Word of truth, are generally coming to hold the opinion, that their own ideas respecting truth ("higher criticism") are superior to the Scripture presentations.)

The Apostle in our text cautions that we beware against being "led away." The word here rendered "led away" occurs in only one other place in the Scriptures (Gal. 2:13), where the Apostle Paul says, "Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation." The words "carried away" give the same thought as "led away" but a little more strongly: they imply that the danger to the steadfast will be along some line which would sweep away or carry away their judgments from the fixed statements of the divine Word, through personal preference, or sympathy, or through the influence of some one held in respect or esteem. Let us all therefore be on guard, that whoever may, consciously or unconsciously, become the instrument of the Adversary, and seek to lead us away from the sure testimonies of the Lord's Word (whether congenial to our natural tastes or uncongenial), we may not be "carried away" but that we may be more determined than ever that--

"To our Lord we will be true
Who bought us with his blood.
Only Jesus will we know,
And Jesus crucified."

While we see that the danger to the majority of God's people will be through being "carried away" by sympathy, influence, etc., we must remember that this implies that there will be certain leaders of thought whose conduct will tend to carry away the others. It is not necessary for us to suppose that these leaders

into error will knowingly and intentionally get wrong themselves, and carry away numbers with them into their delusions and lawless disregard for the testimony of the Lord's Word, wresting its statements. We may rather assume that in a majority of instances these leaders will be themselves deceived; as the Apostle expresses it--"deceiving and being [themselves] deceived."

--2 Tim. 3:13.

All who seek to teach the divine plan to others are exposed to peculiar temptations, so that the honor of serving the Lord and his people demands a correspondingly larger measure of the graces of the holy spirit, as well as of knowledge. The tendency of knowledge, as the Apostle points out, is merely to puff up, make vain and conceited, and to become a temptation of the Adversary, to draw away followers after them. (Acts 20:30.) Whoever therefore would be an instructor of others, a mouth-piece of the Lord, should cultivate all the various graces of the holy spirit, including meekness; that these combined (Love) with knowledge, may build up himself as well as build up those to whom he ministers. "Knowledge [alone] puffeth up, but Love buildeth up."--1 Cor. 8:1.

Let us not forget that there is a way, and one way only, whereby we may insure ourselves against falling into any of these traps of the Adversary. This insurance is not secured wholly by knowledge, altho knowledge is a very important element in it: it is secured chiefly by obedience to the principles laid down in the Lord's Word, and illustrated in the life and character of our Lord and his apostles. The same Apostle who addresses us this caution against falling from our own steadfastness, tells us in the same epistle (1:5-12), "If ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

What things? Does he give us the particulars of this work of grace that will so insure us against falling that we shall receive the great prize? Yes.

He tells us that it is by continually adding to our stock of the heavenly graces,--"Add to your faith fortitude,

R2219 : page 278

and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience

R2220 : page 278

piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness Love; for these things being in you and abounding, they will not permit you to be inactive or unfruitful in the knowledge [personal intimacy, acquaintance] of our Lord Jesus Christ....Therefore, brethren, give the more earnest heed that you may

make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fall."

=====

R2220 : page 278

IS FAITH IN CHRIST NECESSARY?

REV. John H. Barrows, D.D., President of "The World's Parliament of Religions," held in Chicago in 1893, has returned from his visit to India. He recently wrote an account of his experiences there, in which he tells that he was asked by the Hindoos, whether or not he believed that "all men will finally be saved." He states the answer he made them, as follows, --"I replied, My Master does not encourage me to cherish such a hope. I do entertain a hope, however, for some who have never heard of the historic Christ. There are minds, like that of Socrates, naturally Christian. If I do not meet Socrates in heaven, I think it may be because I have not kept the right road myself."

Dr. Barrows' views are a fair sample of the views of a rapidly growing class of Christian people--all except those recognized as "old foggies;"--all the "learned" and "intelligent," both in pulpit and pew. What does it mean? It means that these people have repudiated the only gospel taught by our Lord and his inspired apostles and have made for themselves another gospel which omits all the prominent features of the New Testament good tidings.

(1) The center of the New Testament gospel is that, whereas Adam sinned and fell from the divine likeness, Christ Jesus died for man's sins, redeeming Adam and his posterity by the sacrifice of his own life as "a ransom [a corresponding price] for all." The new, false gospel denies this, declares that Adam never was in the divine image and could not fall from it; but that he was more nearly a monkey's image and has been constantly rising out of it for the past six thousand years: and from this basis it is forced to deny that our Lord's death was in any sense a ransom for man; for if man has been evolving grandly out of monkey conditions, the progress would not be a sin and would require no atonement. If original sin is denied, a sacrifice for that sin must be denied and is denied, logically, by all Evolutionists.

(2) The essence of the New Testament gospel is the offer of pardon and reconciliation to God, to all who will accept the blessings secured by the ransom. The new, false gospel, denying the ransom and all need of one, necessarily denies the offer of forgiveness and reconciliation, claiming that the race never was alienated from God, denying that we were born in sin, denying that father Adam ate the sour grape of sin, and that in

consequence the teeth of all his children are set on edge.
--Ezek. 18:2.

(3) The first requirement of the New Testament of all who would share its blessings is faith. God's grace provided the atonement, and Christ's death was the means or channel through which he provided it; but he most specifically declares that sinners may avail themselves of this grace only by the exercise of faith. As the Apostle declares, we are justified by faith, and by it also we enter into all other favors of the divine provision. (Rom. 5:1,2.) Nor is this required faith a general faith--a faith in anything we may please, or in nothing in particular: quite to the contrary, it is a faith in God and in Christ Jesus. It goes still farther and demands that the faith shall be in Jesus' death as the sin-offering and in his resurrection as the Savior from sin, and from death the wages of sin, through the Kingdom of God which he will establish at his second advent.

The new, false gospel plainly declares a union with Christ by living faith, or any other kind of faith, unnecessary. Mark the words of Dr. Barrows italicised above. Alas! we fear that, as the Doctor suggests, there is great danger that he has lost "the way, the truth and the life" now set before the overcoming Church. He certainly, and many in his company, "have not kept the right road" to the Kingdom, as marked out in the Scriptures.

But we are glad to hope that Dr. Barrows and some others, equally well intentioned and deluded, will by and by, after the Kingdom is set up, get the eyes of their understandings opened, and see and truly believe and be blessed. There, too, they will meet Socrates, for "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth;" and there, under the blessings of the Millennial Kingdom, "all the blind eyes shall be opened," and then "the god of this world [Satan]" who now blinds "the minds of them which believe not." shall be bound for a thousand years "that he should deceive the nations no more." (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:2,3.) But the favor then opened to believers will be the earthly paradise restored, not the heavenly Kingdom and the divine nature now held before the Gospel Church as the prize of her high calling, to which, by faith and obedience, she is to make her calling and election sure. (2 Pet. 1:10.) Hear the word of the Lord:--

R2220 : page 279

"The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came we were kept under the Law, shut up unto [waiting for] the faith which should afterwards be revealed."--Gal. 3:22,23.

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe....We preach Christ crucified, ...the power of God and the wisdom of God."--

1 Cor. 1:21,23,24.

"We believe that Jesus died and rose again."--

1 Thess. 4:14.

"These [testimonies of John's gospel] are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: that believing ye might have life through his name."--John 20:31.

"Neither pray I [Jesus] for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."--John 17:20.

"He whom God raised again saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things."--Acts 13:37-39.

"When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized."--Acts 8:12.

"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things,... but with the precious blood of Christ...manifest for you who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead and gave him glory."--1 Pet. 1:18-23.

"I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." "So we preach and so ye believe."--Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:11.

"That is the word of faith which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved....The Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed....For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"--Rom. 10:8-14.

=====

R2220 : page 279

PAUL'S HEART REVEALED.

--SEPT. 19.--ACTS 20:22-35.--

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."--Acts 20:35.

PERHAPS no other words give us a clearer insight into the heart of the Apostle Paul than his address to the elders of the Church at Ephesus. They show us what were the moving impulses of his active life. He sought not for ease or fame or worldly pleasure. He was thoroughly imbued with his Master's holy spirit which delighted in honoring God and doing good to all, regardless of earthly reward, persecutions, insults, slander and misrepresentations.

In our lesson for August 29th we saw how the Apostle "endured a great fight of affliction" at Ephesus, just as he was about to start for Macedonia. It is supposed that he spent about ten months in Macedonia and Greece, visiting the Churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Corinth, besides extending his labors into other cities further north, not previously reached, but where some interest had been awakened by others. Having gone the rounds, he was now on his way to Jerusalem with the collections of the Churches of Macedonia and Corinth. His time was limited, if he would reach Jerusalem in season for the Passover, and hence instead of going overland and visiting the Churches of Asia-Minor, he continued his course by sea and sent word from Miletus, the seaport, to Ephesus, inviting the Elders of the Church there to

R2221 : page 279

come to him: and this lesson is Luke's report of his discourse to them.

God made known to the Apostle the fact that something extraordinary was to befall him at Jerusalem, as a consequence of which he would never again have the privilege of meeting these dear brethren in the flesh. This made the present meeting with the elders or representatives of the Church a specially impressive one, and at the end of his talk his auditors were in tears.

Wishing to stimulate these dear brethren who, inasmuch as they were chosen as elders or special servants of the Church, may be regarded as amongst the most earnest and zealous of the Lord's people in Ephesus, the Apostle very briefly refreshes their minds on a subject already well known to them;--his own methods and course as a minister of Christ. He would impart to them some of his own spirit of consecration--the Master's spirit--that they might be the more faithful as servants of the Lord and of his people. He reminds them, but not boastfully, of his own humility of mind in serving the Church; how he kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but on the contrary sought to impart to all the same knowledge of the divine character and plan which he himself enjoyed, and how he had not affected a superior wisdom that made peculiar statements without submitting the proofs. The inference is left for his hearers that they would thenceforth have an increased responsibility and should seek to follow the same heaven directed course.

While telling them that his trials were not over, but that evidently worse things awaited him, he courageously declares, "But none of these things move me,

R2221 : page 280

neither do I count my life dear unto myself, so that I

may finish my course with joy and [fulfil] the ministry that I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel by the grace of God."

After calling their attention to his own faithfulness in keeping back nothing that would be profitable, and thus making sure that he was free from responsibility in respect to any that might fall away, he exhorts his hearers to take heed, to be careful (1) of themselves: that they might make their own calling and election sure; that they might so walk in the footsteps of the Master that they would be acceptable to him. And (2) they should remember that, having accepted special appointment as ministers, they had an added responsibility on behalf of the Lord's flock. Oh, that all the servants of the Lord's cause might take this exhortation to heart, and feel the responsibility that rests upon all who minister in holy things. (And this will apply in a still wider sense, for every brother and every sister is to some extent his brother's and sister's keeper, and is commissioned to help in watching over the Lord's flock.) The Apostle points out that their commission is not merely that of the Church which selected them to be its servants in holy things, but that they became representatives of the holy spirit, and are therefore not to think lightly of the responsibility which they have accepted. The whole Church of the consecrated are begotten of the spirit, and hence their conscientious action in selecting their Elders, according to divine direction, is to be considered the work and selection of the holy spirit.

The object of the appointment of these elders, as the Apostle points out, was to feed the Church of Christ; to bring to the attention of the flock the green pastures and still waters of divine truth. They are not commissioned to pen them up in human sects and thus hinder the sheep from pasturing upon the Lord's provision. Neither are they to consider the sheep as so much mutton whereoff they may feed themselves, and from whom they may shear the golden fleece for their own benefit: they are to remember that the Church is not theirs, but God's, which he purchased with the precious blood. They are therefore to conduct themselves as servants or ministers of the Lord's flock, and not as its lords and masters.

Speaking prophetically, the Apostle declares his knowledge of the fact that greedy wolves would get in amongst the flock, and full of selfishness would be reckless of the interests of the sheep, and careful only of their own interests. These are some of the "wolves" which deceptively present themselves "in sheep's clothing," for otherwise the sheep would be on guard against them. And still worse than this the Apostle prophesies, --there would arise amongst themselves certain "heady" ones who, desirous of name and fame, would preach errors in order to "draw away disciples after them." Alas, how true this prophecy has proved, applicable

not only to the Church at Ephesus but to the Church all the way down, from then until now! How few like the Apostle seem willing to preach not themselves, but Christ, and not human philosophies (their own or those of other men) but the cross of Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God to every one that believeth. And the Apostle points out that he had been guarding them and the whole Church along these lines for three years.

These, he says, will speak perverse things;--that is, they will distort the truth, to make it harmonize with some theory which they have accepted and which they wish to impress upon others, thereby exalting themselves as the discoverers of new light. No less than five of these false teachers who arose in the Church of Ephesus, some before and some after, are mentioned in the Apostle's epistles to Timothy,--Hymeneus, Alexander, Phygellus, Hermogenes and Philetus.--1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17.

Under the circumstances, realizing the trials that were coming upon them, and that he would be unable to share these with them, what commendation would the Apostle give to these representatives of the Church? He gave them grand advice in these words, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Ah yes, there can be no better recommendation to any than this--to keep close to the divine Word, and to take heed lest they twist or wrest the Scriptures, and thus blind themselves and make ready for the Adversary to lead them further into darkness. The Apostle thus points out to them that they are not yet ready for the heavenly inheritance; that they must first be built up in sanctification; and that the spirit of the Lord's Word permeating them will more and more produce this sanctification of heart and life.

What a noble testimony by the grace of God Paul was enabled to give: "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel." He not only had used his trade as a tent-maker for his own support, but also to help financially those who were associated with him in the gospel work. Praise God for so noble an example of devotion! For altho the Apostle could not and did not endure more, nor as much, as his Redeemer, and is not to be considered as a superior example, nevertheless the illustration of a full devotion which his life affords does us great good; for we remember that our Lord was perfect,--holy, harmless, separate from sinners; but the Apostle declares that he had "like passions" with ourselves;--he was imperfect, and obliged to keep

R2221 : page 281

his "body under," in subjection to his new mind, the will of God in Christ.

And now we come to the grandest expression of the whole discourse: "I have showed you [illustrated to you, in] all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Would that these words might be deeply graven upon all our memories. The world's rule, the general disposition of the fallen nature, is to give adherence or support to the strong, and expect weaker ones to rally around and support or uphold us. This is self-pleasing--the way of the fallen nature: but the method of the "new creatures" is to be the reverse of this--they are to be on the lookout for the welfare, interests and comforts of others, especially in their own families; and applying the Apostle's words to the Church they inculcate carefulness for the weaker members of the "household of faith." Each of the stronger should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less learned, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

And the Apostle here shows that the secret of his success as a servant of the Lord, and the reason why his life could be pointed to as a pattern, was that he was remembering and putting into practice the words of the Great Teacher. The art of giving himself is one of the secrets of a happy Christian life. He first gives his will to the Lord, then his time, his energy, his talents, to the service of the Lord and for the Lord's people. He has pleasure in the giving and a blessing, whether others know and appreciate it or not; and by and by his time for receiving will come,--the Lord's time for giving. The Lord will give unto such eternal life, eternal glory and association with himself in his Kingdom.

SEPTEMBER 26.--REVIEW.

=====

R2222 : page 281

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

--OCTOBER 3.--ACTS 21:1-15.--

"I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."--Acts 21:13.

THE date on which the Apostle Paul, after his interview with the elders of the Church at Ephesus at Miletus, resumed his journey toward Jerusalem, is calculated by those who have made a special study

of the subject, to have been Monday, April 24, A.D. 58. He wished to reach Jerusalem about the time of the Passover, but apparently was somewhat delayed enroute, and it is supposed he did not reach there until May 17--Pentecost day, that year.

The expression "after we had gotten from them," would seem to refer to the affectionate parting between Paul and those who accompanied him, and the Elders of Ephesus with whom evidently Timothy remained. As noticed in the previous lesson, "they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing:" so that they were finally obliged to break away from them, to get aboard their vessel. There is nothing very special in the account of the journey: it was in a sailing vessel, slow and tedious and rather uninteresting. Probably the master and crew of that small vessel had little idea how much the value of their ship's burden was enhanced by the addition of Paul and his company. Little did they know how honorable a servant and ambassador of the Most High was their guest and passenger, and how he and his associates carried with them the gospel of Divine grace, a pearl of great price. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." Paul's company seems to have consisted (1) of Luke, the writer of this account, who uses the pronoun we; (2) Trophimus (verse 29); (3) Aristarchus (Acts 27:2).

Paul's experience in the city of Tyre serves to show us the bond of sympathy and Christian love which prevailed in the early Church. Apparently Paul and his companions were unaware that there were believers at Tyre, but, no doubt providentially, they found some; and so close was the bond of Christian sympathy that the finding of them insured the finding of fast and loving friends. We may imagine the blessed experiences of the little group of believers during the seven days of the Apostle's stay with them. We are not told what was done, but from the character of the Apostle we may judge with considerable accuracy, for "a good fountain sends forth sweet waters" only. He surely did not waste time in telling them of his many travels and the various scenes in foreign lands. We may be sure also that, having the spirit of love shed abroad in his heart he did not indulge in "gossip" in respect to the Lord's people in the various places he had visited: he had come under "the royal law" of Love, which neither thinketh nor speaketh ill of his neighbor; and we may be sure he would be doubly careful of what he would say to or about the Lord's "brethren." Paul had a grander mission than this, and a mind too noble to permit him to be either a "busybody in other men's matters" or a gossip. He had more important business: As he elsewhere expressed himself, "This one thing I do," --the Father's business. Forgetting the things which

were behind, and pressing forward to those things which were before, he ran with patience the race set before him in the gospel, for the prize of the high calling; looking unto Jesus as both the Author and Finisher of his faith.

We may therefore know assuredly that those seven days were profitably employed by the Apostle in talking over with the Church at Tyre the gracious plan of God, his precepts and his promises to those who love and obey him. The impression made indicates that the Apostle had become a lifelong friend of the Tyre believers, so much so that they were all loth to part, and husbands, wives and children accompanied Paul and his associates clear outside the city limits, and they parted with prayer. Where such holiness of heart, singleness of purpose and devotion to the Lord are found, there cannot be found in the same individual a contrary spirit; and all who are in close company with such a Christian will be profitted and helped and kept thereby.

A briefer visit was made at Ptolemais, the next stop being with Philip, the evangelist, at Cesarea. We are not surprised to find a Church at Cesarea, for it was here that the gospel to the Gentiles first was preached; this being the residence of Cornelius the first Gentile convert. (Acts 10:1.) We may reasonably suppose that a man like Cornelius who, before receiving the gospel, "feared God with all his house" and "gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway," on receiving the good tidings of great joy would become ten fold more zealous than he had ever before been. That the Church at Cesarea was of considerable size is evident from the fact that Philip made it his head quarters, and that this was the third visit which Paul had made to this city during his travels. --See Acts 9:30; 18:22.

The statement of verse nine to the effect that Philip had four virgin daughters "which did prophesy" is worthy of notice. The word "prophesy" is used in many instances in the New Testament to describe public or semi public speaking and not always a foretelling of future events. It is somewhat difficult to know which view should be taken in the present case, because in the next verse Agabus is mentioned as a prophet--a foreteller of future events--possessing the gift of prophesying. But whichever view of the word prophesying we apply to the daughters of Philip, the intimation would be that women were recognized of the Lord in connection with the ministry of the gospel in the early Church. In attempting to reach safe and sound Scriptural conclusions on this subject, it is proper that we take into consideration all the statements and all the facts bearing upon it. While the Apostle writes most positively "I suffer not a woman to teach or to usurp authority over a man," he also says that if women

in the Church pray or prophesy, it should be with their heads covered; and thus we see that his other statement that "I suffer not a woman to teach" must be understood in a qualified sense and in connection with the latter part of that statement--not to usurp teaching functions over and above the men. We find, nevertheless, that the Apostle greatly appreciated the co-operation of female believers, and that he speaks of them in the highest terms of appreciation.

In all this Paul followed closely in the footsteps of the Master who, tho he appreciated very highly and specially "loved" Martha and the Marys and the several honorable women among his disciples, and altho he privileged one of them to be the first to know of his resurrection, and tho he sent the message of his resurrection by one of them to Peter and the other disciples, nevertheless he did not make use of women in connection with the public ministry of the gospel. He not only chose males for the twelve apostles, but also subsequently for the seventy evangelists sent forth to declare him and the Kingdom of God at hand. It behooves us to note the divine leadings on this and on all other subjects and to follow as closely as circumstances will permit in the same footsteps,--whether we see or do not see, positively, the philosophy of the inspired methods. It may be argued that women were more ignorant then and are more intelligent now, but this would not account for the matter satisfactorily, because we know that the masses of the men were correspondingly ignorant of literature and philosophy at that time: as for instance in our Lord's case, the people in general marveled that he could read, and very few men except amongst the Scribes had the necessary education to read, or any use for such an education, since books were very rare and costly.

Without offering any reason why this should be so, without attempting to give any explanation of the Divine course, we can very safely afford to wait for the few remaining years, until "that which is perfect is come," without attempting to change in any particular degree or even to greatly modify the methods instituted by our Lord, and generally practiced by the early Church. Especially so when we notice that Satan's method seems to be along diametrically opposite lines: he uses females chiefly--for Spiritualistic mediums, for Christian Science instructors and healers, and as apostles of Theosophy.

On the contrary, we have no sympathy with the sentiment apparently held by some brethren, that the sisters of the Church are to be entirely ignored, and that any suggestions which they may offer respecting the Word of the Lord should be despised. But, while recognizing certain facts and principles on this subject

laid down in the Scriptures, all should remember that it is a part of the Christian duty to be kind and courteous to all, overbearing and dogmatic toward none, male or female. And furthermore, let us remember that, while the outward proprieties acceptable to the Lord, may distinguish the more public ministers as for men, and the more private ministries for women, yet amongst those who are faithful to their appointed ministries, as the Lord has been pleased to arrange for them, there is no personal discrimination as between the sex in our Lord's love and estimation; "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male or female," but all are one in Christ Jesus.--Gal. 3:28.

Distinctions as to nationality, freedom or sex, while they may be properly enough recognized in their relationship with the affairs of this present time, have no bearing whatever upon our Lord's love for us, nor upon our love for each other, nor upon the conditions of the future, when all these distinctions will be removed; that which is perfect having then come, national distinctions and different degrees of freedom, as well as sexual differences will all be obliterated. So then, while under divine providence a bondman may not be granted the opportunity to render as great a service in

R2223 : page 283

the Lord's cause as if he were a free man, while a very poor man might not have the same opportunities for service as if he were made a steward of wealth, and while the sisters may not under divine commission take quite so prominent a place in the public ministry of the truth as the brethren, nevertheless each one who is faithful in the use of the opportunities which the Lord has given him will be blessed according to his faithfulness to the Lord's arrangement;--as greatly, we may suppose, as tho equally faithful in the use of larger opportunities. And each one should be zealous to render all the service possible to the Master, in harmony with the station and conditions under which he has been placed through divine providence. The bondman is not to feel that the only way in which he can serve the Lord acceptably would be by becoming a master instead of a servant: nor are the sisters to suppose that the only way in which to be acceptable and to show their zeal would be by usurping authority over the man, contrary to the Divine order in nature, and as set forth in the Scriptures. On the contrary, thankfulness and gratitude to God is to be the ruling sentiment of our lives; and our zeal is to be, to use every opportunity which the Lord shall bring to our hands, rather than to endeavor to alter his arrangements in the mistaken thought we might thus render him a greater or more acceptable service.

The Agabus mentioned in the tenth verse had already been manifested before the Church, as specially

used of the Lord in foretelling the famine which came upon not only Palestine, but a large part of the civilized world at that time. (Acts 11:27.) His prophecy therefore of bonds and imprisonment awaiting Paul at Jerusalem would have great weight with all the Church. He accompanied it with signs, as was common with the prophets of olden time. (Jer. 13:5; 19:10,11; Ezek. 4:1-3; 5:1-4, etc.) Believing implicitly that Agabus (as he declared) spoke as a mouthpiece of the holy spirit, the friends began to importune the Apostle to discontinue his journey to Jerusalem; even his companions joining in the request. But Paul was fully convinced that it was the Lord's will that he should go to Jerusalem and could not be hindered from so doing. As he had told the Elders of Ephesus that the holy spirit witnessed to him that bonds and imprisonments awaited him at Jerusalem, so now he was not surprised when through Agabus came another intimation to the same effect. His noble answer to the fears and entreaties of the brethren was in the sublimely courageous and yet beautifully sympathetic language of our Golden Text. O how important it is that we should all learn the lesson, not to be moved from faithfulness to the Lord and his commands; neither by the tears and entreaties of friends nor by the frowns and threats of our foes.

"Where duty calls or danger, be never lacking there."

Paul's firmness would no doubt be misunderstood by some, to be obstinacy and self-will: in reality however it was the very reverse of these. Self-will in him was completely subordinated to the divine will; and instead, therefore, of its being obstinacy it was faithfulness that he exhibited. His determination carried the day, and the others acquiesced, saying not, Paul's will be done; but, recognizing that Paul was faithfully carrying out the Divine plan they said, "The will of the Lord be done."

=====

R2223 : page 283

INTERESTING LETTERS.

page 283

Virginia.

MY DEAR BROTHER:--I wish to thank you for your kind letter. Before receiving it and knowing what you thought, I had concluded that Satan was the instigator of that Mormon report; and since you think so, too, I am all the more sure of it. The way I look at it is this:--You know I feel I ought to be baptized right here at home, and you know why I feel so.

Satan doubtless, in some way I do not understand, knew it also, and he determined to prevent it, if he could, from having the desired and desirable effect; and to make it work against the truth; but he has not

page 284

succeeded. He may have thought also that he would turn me aside from my purpose, but He who is with me is mightier far than Satan. The rite was performed at the appointed time, by Dr. Staley, in the presence of a large congregation, many of whom went for a frolic, but they, together with Satan, were disappointed. It was a solemn and impressive service, and the feeling pervading the congregation was such that those who went in a spirit of levity found no sympathy, and were constrained to behave themselves properly. I attach no undue importance to any ceremony, anything merely external, but I will say that God has been pleased to give me sweet rest since, more than ever before. Last night in my room, alone in the dead hours of the night, I had sweet, delightful communion with him. Nothing ecstatic, nothing emotional, but I was able to put myself wholly in his hands and rest there.

I am misrepresented, I am losing work; but none of these things move me, and I am fully persuaded that He is able and willing to keep that which I have committed unto him. Praise the Lord, O my soul!

It will be only a little while longer, and then, then, the eternal weight of glory! Who, that can see, understand and appreciate God's gracious plan would not give up all for Christ? I shall praise Him as long as eternity endures, because He has called me into this wonderful grace, and condescended to reveal His plan to me, who am indeed the least of all saints. My soul magnifies the Lord, and rejoices in the God of my salvation. The thought that so far as I know, I am the only one in this whole town who accepts fully his gracious plan, makes me wonder with astonishment at his kindness to me, and at the same time humbles me.

His richest benedictions be upon you and yours and all his faithful ones. Your brother in the faith,

R2223 : page 284

Connecticut.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--How hard are the barnacles over the understanding of the people. Indeed, "gross darkness has covered the people," but to us has been given a great light. Praise God!

We here in S. find no seeming interest in the truth. At one of the church prayer meetings a woman

rose and said it was her duty to warn people against us, that any one who believed as we did would surely go to hell, and in fire and torment repent when it was too late. One of our bitterest opponents, a man who stood and looked at us in a church prayer meeting, said, "There are some folks who are believing and preaching another chance after death, but I warn all against such doctrine, for the Bible says death ends all, and I have the Scriptures to prove it, and to back up what I say."

This was another public assault, and I, knowing the people had heard me say many times that I stood upon the Word, felt as if it was my duty to reply and define my position; so I said, "No doubt this brother has made his assertion after a careful study and comparison of the Scriptures, but as I have been studying too, and have reached an opposite conclusion, and as the brother has said he has the Scriptures for proof, I would call on the brother for some of his proofs, being able to give him many, many passages in support of mine. But he never peeped, and last week at a church prayer meeting I spoke on the 1st chapter of Ephesians and said, that predestination was of a class not to individual salvation; spoke of the dispensation of the fullness of times as I see it; of what our inheritance is to be; what the earnest of our inheritance is; what Christ really did redeem; what it means to emerge from blindness, superstition and ignorance of God's plan in the nominal church; and of the hope of my calling, giving my Scriptures for my belief. I had liberty.

He rose to his feet and said, "I thank God that Brother M. ever came to this meeting. I have never seen, before his explanation of this chapter, how many good things God had provided, and I have never understood the Bible so well as to-night. His explanation has opened many other things that were dark to me and I cannot tell how glad I am to know something of these, which to me have always been mysteries;" and he went home and told his wife how I had opened for his benefit the Scriptures, and that I had been much misrepresented to him.

We are as ever, Yours in him
F. U. and N. C. MELLEEN.

West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Greetings from this house--Mrs. Gillis and myself. Your presentation of 1 Cor. 13 exceeds expectation and will certainly prove an answer to the prayers of the faithful asking assistance to put on the character of our Lord. I am glad of the proposals you therein make; with the Lord's presence among us there is no doubt of the helpfulness. I have been assisted the past week since adopting your suggestions. Will endeavor to gratefully read and worship in unison with you and all to-morrow, reading

1 Cor. 13. May we all grow in grace and knowledge.
[We have many hearty responses to the suggestion,
and blessings are already reported.--EDITOR.]

I was led to search how it came that charity got into Paul's letter to the Corinthians from the word agape, and find the word Charity is coined from the pure Latin word caritas. The h being inserted to make it appear as if the Apostle had used the Greek charis. The translators having the disadvantage of "corrected" (?) MSS, it seems accepted charitas as Latin for Greek charis--charity. Caritas is from caras, dear, costly; and careo, to want (dear-th, scarce). The only sense in which there is even a remote equivalent in caritas for agape is the love we have for things dear, scarce, costly.

Two or three times out of four issues, the County paper, Journal, gives me privilege of a column or more on first page. It does not publish Talmage's sermons. Our town paper here does publish Mr. T.'s eloquence, but its Editor is in sympathy with the truth as far as he has learned. It was to him you sent a set of DAWNS in cloth some time ago,--he was then on the Journal.

May you be encouraged in every trial and come off more than conqueror through his grace who loved us and gave himself for us. Remember me at the times of prayer that I may develop the new nature--
Love. Yours in Christ, H. L. GILLIS.

P.S.--Love to Sister Russell. I connect you both in my mind.

=====