

page 285

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CONTENTS.

Special Terms on Dawns.....	286
"The Anointing Which You Have Received"	287
Teachers' Bibles.....	292
Poem: Some Day.....	295
"He That Humbleth Himself Shall Be Exalted"	295
Paul's Dying Words.....	298
Interesting Letters.....	300

page 286

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R2224 : page 286

"THE DAY OF VENGEANCE."--DAWN, VOL. IV.

As announced in our issue of Sept. 15, the fourth volume of
MILLENNIAL DAWN was sent to all paid up subscribers as representing
the October and November issues of ZION'S WATCH
TOWER. All who failed to receive a copy should notice the date
beside their names on the address tag. If the date is past it indicates
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Tower Pub. Co., explaining and inquiring. Those regularly
on the list as "the Lord's poor," who applied for the TOWER for
and during 1897, received a copy of DAWN, volume IV., the same
as cash subscribers.

The second edition of ten thousand of this volume will soon
be ready. This volume bids fair to be quite in demand by the

public. Many can grasp the subject from this standpoint who are not disposed to heed direct appeals to the Bible: to many we hope it will prove to be an entering wedge for the truths of the other volumes.

The first half of the volume is not as new to WATCH TOWER readers as to others; but it seemed necessary to a complete treatment of the topic and, as many letters already received indicate, even the review portion is fresh and interesting and strengthening to those who know it best.

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R2224 : page 287

"THE ANOINTING WHICH YOU HAVE RECEIVED."

--1 JOHN 2:21,27.--

EVERY BLESSING which God has given to us as his people, our adversary, Satan, would if possible take from us; and to this end he seeks to deceive us in respect to the real gifts and provisions of God;--to mislead us respecting the truth, and to substitute for it something which will prove an injury to us. This general truth is forcibly exemplified in connection with the Scriptural teaching respecting the holy spirit and Satan's misrepresentation of the same, by which multitudes of Christians are deceived, blinded and hindered from spiritual development. A few poor translations in our Common Version English Bible, indicate clearly that the translators were as much confused upon the subject of the holy spirit as are the majority of Christian people to-day.

In the passage above cited (1 John 2:27), the Apostle says, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him." How Satan has used this mistranslation to befog the minds of the Lord's people and to make them believe contrary to the testimony of their own senses! To illustrate the subject, we mention an incident in our own experience.

A lady who had been attending our preaching for about a year ceased to be in attendance for about a year, when the following conversation, in substance, took place.

We said, "It is some time, Sister, since we had the pleasure of meeting you."

She replied, "Yes; I have not attended your meetings for about a year. I have now taken the holy spirit to be my teacher;"--referring to the above Scripture.

We replied: "Well, Sister, you certainly have found an excellent teacher; and we trust that you are an attentive pupil, and that you are growing greatly in grace, in knowledge and in love."

She answered that she thought she had made considerable development.

We replied, "May we be excused for putting to you a very leading question along the line of your spiritual progress?"

Answer: "Yes, with pleasure."

We replied, "Our question then would be, How much and along what lines have you learned during the past year, in which you feel confident that the holy spirit has been your teacher? Will you please mention something that you have learned during this year's instruction that you did not know before?"

The Sister tried in vain to think of one solitary item of truth or grace acquired during the year, and we then said, "Dear Sister, if you are correct in supposing that you had the holy spirit as a special and personal teacher in the very way that you think, then evidently from your own testimony you have been a very poor pupil and have learned nothing. Now, may we inquire how it was the year previous when you met with us for the study of the Lord's counsel?"

Her answer was that during the year previous she certainly had learned a great deal respecting the divine Word and plan along many lines. Nevertheless, she was so pleased with the thought that she needed no human assistance in the study of the Lord's Word, and that God operated upon her mind and treated her as a private pupil, and not as one of the general class of scholars, that she was seemingly puffed up with the thought and preferred to continue it rather than to

R2224 : page 288

have the truth in the Lord's way,--Not forgetting the assembling together for the building up of one another and the use of all the means which God would grant for the understanding of his Word. How many others claim thus to be private pupils of the holy spirit without having anything creditable to show either in grace or knowledge, year after year.

This illustration is a representative of thousands of similar instances in which the Adversary misleads those not sufficiently meek to accept the Lord's counsel in the Lord's way. No fact could be more plainly taught in the Lord's Word than that it was his intention to make use of human instrumentality, teachers, in the development of his Church. Mark the Apostle's statement. (1 Cor. 12:28,29.) "God hath set [placed in position] some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" We admit that many of these early gifts to the Church passed away, but we hold that some of these were not

intended to pass away until the Church should be completed. In proof of this we refer to Eph. 4:8,11-16, in which he says, speaking of our Lord Jesus and the giving of the holy spirit to the Church, "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man,--unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

What then is the significance of this statement about there being "no need that any man teach you" but that "the same anointing teacheth you all things?" We answer, the Apostle has reference here to a particular matter described in a preceding verse. (1 John 2:18,19.) Some who had been believers in Christ had rejected him and had left the company of those who still believed. The Apostle is merely pointing out that those who had received the holy spirit of the Lord should in this fact have sufficient proof to offset any arguments of the Adversary to the effect that Christ was an impostor. Since they had received the holy spirit as a seal to their hearts and to their faith, it should be quite unnecessary for John or any one else to write to them an epistle, proving to them, or teaching them, that Jesus is the Son of God; for the anointing which they had received was proof positive of this fact, superior to any arguments that could be framed by any man. And to this all Christians will agree. But the passage has no reference whatever to general instruction in righteousness and in the Word of God and in the plan of salvation.

Another statement in the same connection (1 John 2:20) is similarly misread. It says, "Ye have an unction [an anointing or lubrication] from the Holy One and ye know all things." The passage thus rendered is very certain to be a stumbling block to many. If they do not "know all things," they are in doubt whether or not they have ever received the holy spirit. If they claim that they should know all things and that they do know all things, they are very apt to convince their friends by such claims that they are somewhat unbalanced mentally. The passage however becomes very simple and very reasonable when properly translated thus: "Ye have the anointing of the Holy One and ye all know it." The one receiving the anointing should know it, whether others know it or not. And yet the character of this anointing has been presented

R2225 : page 288

to the Christian mind in so confused a manner that the vast majority to day do not know whether they have the anointing from the Holy One or not. Nor have they any idea what such an anointing would imply in

their own personal experience. We may therefore profitably examine this subject together, "that we may know the things that are freely given unto us of God."

The word "anointing" and the word "unction" carry with them the thought of oiling, making smooth, lubricating. From earliest times God has used oil as a type of the holy spirit: for instance, the kings of Israel, before being installed in office, were anointed; likewise the priesthood. (Exod. 30:22-32.) Christ is the antitype not only of Israel's kings, but also of Israel's High priests--the two offices unite in him. And as we have already seen, "the Christ" according to divine arrangement is to be a composite body, the elect overcoming Church, under Christ its glorious head. Hence, the oil which was poured upon the head of the king and the priest in type, and which ran down over the entire person, represented the holy spirit of God, poured out upon our Head, Christ Jesus, which subsequently reached the Church which is his body, at Pentecost, and which has been flowing down ever since, anointing the various members of his "body" from that day to the present time.

And the antitype, the holy spirit upon God's elect, should be expected, in some respects at least, to resemble the type. As the effect in the type was to cause a shining of the face, so the antitype, the holy spirit, is indeed the "oil of joy" which counteracts the spirit of heaviness in all those who receive it, causing their faces to shine and their hearts to rejoice with joy unspeakable. Oil was used in olden times for anointing the skin to give smoothness and softness and suppleness to the joints and muscles: so the holy spirit brings to all

R2225 : page 289

who are anointed with it a smoothness and softness of character and manner not previously theirs. The Apostle in explaining this holy spirit, this spirit of Christ, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of God, calls it Love; and properly so, for God is Love, and hence the spirit of God must be a spirit of love. Explaining the spirit of love, the Apostle declares that it is the sum of all its graces. He enumerates some of these, calling them gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, affection, long-suffering; all these graces together, love. He likewise points out what characteristics are opposed to love and denominates them the carnal mind or disposition, whose characteristics are anger, malice, hatred, strife, vain-glory, emulations and all such works of the flesh and of the devil, which are contrary to the spirit of God but are elements of the spirit of the world.

As the Apostle John says, whoever has received the spirit of Love, the holy spirit or disposition, the spirit of the Truth, has an unction, anointing, lubrication from the Holy One: for it has no other author:

it is the spirit of God, which proceedeth and came forth from him, bestowed upon his faithful. As the Apostle further declares, "Ye [who have received it] all know it."

The possession of this spirit of Love, the spirit of the Truth, is an evidence that the possessor has been begotten of God and is a child of God; and that if faithful to his Lord and Head, even unto the end, he will by and by be made a joint-heir in his Kingdom. The possession of this spirit on the part of those who believe in the Lord Jesus as their Redeemer constitutes therefore, as the Apostle says, the seal of their adoption into God's family--"whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption [deliverance]." (Eph. 4:30) The absence of this unction or anointing, even tho accompanied with some knowledge of the truth, is an evidence that the heart has not been fully consecrated to the Lord; the will not fully resigned to his will and Word.

In the beginning of the Gospel age it was proper that the manifestation of divine favor should be not only through the fruits of the spirit, faith, hope and love, but also that it should be manifested by outward signs, or "gifts" of the spirit,--tongues, miracles, prophesyings, etc. And hence the Pentecostal blessing not only sealed the Lord's people with his spirit of love, but also gave miraculous physical "gifts" to the Church: they however soon passed away--the power to communicate those gifts being limited to the Apostles.

The spirit of the Law age was the spirit of Justice. During that epoch God manifested the element of his character which we term Justice, and his Law, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," was the one according to which the Jewish ideas formulated. But when in the fulness of time God manifested another element of his character, namely Love, then that became the pattern,--the next lesson for all who would be taught of him to learn. "Herein was manifested the love of God, in that he gave his only begotten Son;" "in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins."--1 John 4:9,10.

Accordingly, we find our Redeemer, who was filled with the holy spirit of love himself, speaking as the mouthpiece of the Father and declaring, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

We find him also explaining the Law, and showing that while it signified justice, yet it could be fulfilled only by love. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law." We hear him summing up the entire significance of all that had been taught to Israel, saying, (1) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul [being] and strength;" and (2) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments

hang all the Law and the prophets." The Apostle John and others of the Lord's disciples heard his wonderful teachings and witnessed his exemplification of this holy spirit of love and marveled; but it was not their privilege to possess the same spirit until Pentecost. Before that they received him and became his followers, disciples, and received some instruction respecting the way of life; but it was expedient for them that he should go away--that he should pay the ransom-price, be raised from the dead by the Father's power and ascend up on high to appear as their high priest and make an atonement for their sins--else the Comforter could not come, they could not receive and be begotten by the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love, the holy spirit. (John 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:7.) And this is the declaration of the Apostle John, "As many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God [beginning at Pentecost]; even to them that believe on his name: which were begotten [beginning at Pentecost] not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."--John 1:12,13.

It was only natural and to be expected that the believers in the early Church would overlook the most important blessing, the sealing, the anointing of the holy spirit of Love; and that they should think chiefly of the "gifts"--of tongues, healings, miracles, etc. It was therefore necessary that the Lord through the Apostle should call their attention to the fact that the fruits of the spirit, faith, hope, love were the essentials, and not the tongues, miracles and other gifts. He

R2225 : page 290

says, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"--following after love, whose development and ripeness will be a gradual and progressive work. And the Apostle points out clearly that one might have all the various "gifts," healing-power, miraculous power, ability to speak with tongues, etc., yet if they did not possess in addition to these the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the Truth, the spirit of Love, they would be simply tinkling cymbals, sounding brasses--drums without spiritual life or vitality in any degree, and consequently without any proper hope respecting a future life or the Kingdom.

If we have this holy spirit, this anointing, this unction, we surely know it as a fact, whether or not we have always discerned it as being the spirit of our adoption to the divine nature. However true it is that this holy spirit is to be a gradual development in the Lord's people, a growth in grace, it is nevertheless equally true that it had a definite time of beginning. It did not begin when first we came to know the grace of God in Christ, in the precious blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins. With repentance and faith

came justification, and its "joy and peace through believing;" but it was not until later that we had, by the same faith, "access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of [sharing] the glory of God."-- Rom. 5:1,2.

This latter grace we attained only by learning to admire to some extent God's character of love. He invites us to consecrate ourselves fully to him, to lay aside and to sacrifice our own wills and to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, who did not his own will but the will of his Father who sent him: and it is when we reach this point of full surrender of our own wills to the will of God that we may be purged of selfishness, the spirit of the world and of earthly ambitions, and be filled with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love. Then we are accepted of the Lord as "new creatures in Christ Jesus" and receive an impartation of his spirit of holiness, love, as the seal or mark of our acceptance --"being transformed by the renewing of our minds." Thenceforth, all holy things, the things of God and the people of God, as well as God himself, draw forth our hearts; no matter who they are nor under what circumstances, we love the Lord's people and everything which is in harmony with the Lord's Word and character. And correspondingly from the same moment of full consecration we are the enemies

R2226 : page 290

and opponents of sin, we "hate every evil way" and everything sinful, mean, selfish, contemptible, and contrary to love, whether we find its stain upon our own flesh or upon others of the fallen race. Thenceforth it is our mission as new creatures to be representatives of God and his truth and his spirit of love, and all other considerations are secondary; and the language of the heart is:--

"Henceforth my chief concern shall be,
To live and speak and toil for Thee."

This is the new life, and from the time it begins we are reckoned as "new creatures in Christ Jesus; old things have passed away, all things have become new." But the new creature has various difficulties to contend with, all of which are permitted of divine providence for his development and perfecting, which will not be accomplished until he has proved faithful unto death, and in the first resurrection has been clothed with the spiritual body and its new conditions against which there will be no necessity for warfare. "But we [new creatures] that are in this tabernacle [present earthly conditions unfavorable to the new creature] do groan, being burdened [by the constant conflict with the powers of darkness as well as with the motions of sin in our own flesh and the contact with sin abounding on every hand]." The new creature finds in the

present existence necessity for a continual battle between his flesh and himself as a new creature, an adopted and begotten son of God, whose disposition or spirit is one of holiness and love toward God and men; for he is opposed by inherited imperfections and depraved tendencies in his own physical system. Hence, he is obliged continually to recognize the two personalities, as the Apostle expresses it--the new "I," which loves God and men, especially the household of faith, and which desires holiness, seeks peace and endeavors daily to become more and more an exact copy of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the other "I," the natural man, which is reckoned dead, but which will not be actually gotten rid of until literal death; which continually seeks to obtrude its will and preference, and requires to be continually kept under by the new "I," in complete subjection to the will of God in Christ, to the holy spirit of love.--1 Cor. 9:27.

The beginning of this experience as a "new creature" varies somewhat with different individuals. The spirit of the Lord, the spirit of Love, has to a certain extent won favor with very many of the worldly, and many of these to some extent, conform their lives to it slightly, even tho they have never been begotten by it to a complete transformation of disposition. As a consequence, we find that the so-called "Christian world" which has not received the holy spirit as a comforting and guiding influence, nor as a seal or mark of adoption into the Divine family, has nevertheless adopted some of the outward features of the holy spirit of love as its standard, and outwardly at least has been blessed thereby. For instance, gentleness is one element of the holy spirit, and some people who are thoroughly

R2226 : page 291

worldly have cultivated this grace of gentleness to a very large extent and are pleased to be known as gentlemen and ladies (gentlewomen). Indeed, amongst a certain class of thoroughly worldly people for one to say to the other, You are not a gentleman, sir! or You are not a lady, madam! would be a sure method of arousing anger, malice, hatred, strife and various other qualities which would prove beyond question that the persons so jealous of their reputation for gentleness are really devoid of the spirit of Love, and hence, that their gentleness is not a fruitage of the holy spirit within, but is merely an outward adornment, fastened on externally.

Similarly, we have noticed business men exercise wonderful patience in dealing with unreasonable customers, and may have marveled how they attained so good a degree of proficiency in patience, and self-control; but perhaps after the customer had been served, cordially shaken hands with and bidden good-bye, those who were near have heard the burst of passion and indignation,

accompanied perhaps with profanity, which indicated that the patience and self-control manifested were merely from a love of money, and not the fruitage of love, the holy spirit. In society, the lady who is very gentle in manner and in word, and very patient, and who perhaps manifests her love with much gusto and a kiss and with many gentle and affable manners, will sometimes in private reveal the fact that such conduct was not the fruitage or result of having her heart filled with the holy spirit of Love, but was merely a display on the surface of carefully cultivated gracious manners; the heart perhaps revealed its true condition privately in speaking evil of the one on whom kisses and demonstrations of affectionate love had been showered but a few moments before.

With the "new creature," begotten of the spirit of Love, matters are wholly different: the demonstrations of love for God in worship are not outward formalities or mere habits of worship, but the homage of the heart, which delights to not only outwardly worship, but to bow before the Lord in secret and to serve him with its very best of time, influence, voice or other means. Its love for humanity is genuine, sincere, also: it loves chiefly amongst men those who have the most of the Lord's likeness in their characters; and whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, the mark of divine acceptance, the seal of the spirit of the Lord upon any, is quite sufficient to draw out for such love and interest and service according to the necessities and the opportunities --as unto the Lord. Even toward the worldly and the wicked (who are not knowingly and wilfully wicked) there is a sympathy, an appreciation of the blindness of their minds which has come from the god of this world, and which hinders them from appreciating the goodness of God and the beauties of his character. Feeling a sympathy for these and for all who are under the distresses of the "curse," the new spirit, the loving or holy spirit, prompts them not only to "love unfeigned" for the "brethren," but to sympathy unfeigned for the entire "groaning creation." From this condition springs their gentleness to all, their patience with all, their kindness and moderation and long-suffering, Love. But these who have the true spirit of love and who in this have an evidence that they "have passed from death unto life,"--that they have the spirit of Christ, without which they would be none of his, that they have been "sealed with the holy spirit of promise" as the earnest or beginning of the new nature,--these are the few exceptions even amongst those who have named the name of Christ.

It need not be surprising to us that all Christians have not exactly the same experience in reaching the beginning of this spirit-begotten condition, with its renewed mind. Let us remember that some are born into Christian families where the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love, has been to a considerable extent

recognized: either the outward graces of gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, etc., have been set up as home rules and standards, and have helped to bring blessing and peace, or the true spirit of love itself, has control of one or more influential in the family, in whom these various graces are a natural fruitage or outgrowth, which makes some impression on each member of the family. Those who are born and reared under such favorable conditions, and who thus have learned to appreciate love and to practice it to some slight extent, are indeed highly favored. Yet nevertheless, when they shall have reached years of discretion and personal judgment, and after they have confirmed with their maturer thoughts the faith of childhood respecting the redemption which God has accomplished through Christ, each should come to the point of making a definite, positive and everlasting covenant with the Lord,--presenting himself a living sacrifice to him, to his truth and to his service. Understanding that this means the dethronement of self, and the enthronement in their heart of the will of the Lord, as instead of their own will, not only as respects evil things, but in respect to every matter, such thereby become new creatures in Christ Jesus; consecrated and accepted as members of "the Church which is his body," and as heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, their Lord, if so be that they will "suffer with him that they may also be glorified together" with him. When such a young person, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord shall have thus completed his covenant by laying himself upon the altar of the Lord, he will be sealed with the holy spirit of love: he will

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 294.)

R2226 : page 294

feel a broader and a deeper love both for God and for his fellows, than he ever before experienced. Nevertheless, in his case the change will be less sharply defined than in the case of one differently born and reared --one reared under the influence of undiluted sin and selfishness; who, believing in Christ as his Redeemer and repenting of sin, subsequently presents himself a living-sacrifice to the Lord. With the latter, the change from feelings of hatred, envy, strife and selfishness, suddenly giving place to warm, loving devotion to the Lord and sympathy and love for fellow-creatures, would be a great and much more startling experience. Hence some of these latter, if of a demonstrative turn, may sing or weep for joy and feel like embracing everybody near them, when first they receive of the spirit of love and holiness.

But while the Apostle's statement of the matter must always be true, that those who have received the anointing from the Holy One "all know it" themselves

--can readily discern the change of their own sentiments
--it is also true that it should not be very long
after they received it and know it, before others should
know it also. The Lord has indicated one particular
way in which he desires every new creature, whose will

R2227 : page 294

has been baptized into the will of Christ and who has
received of the holy spirit of love and who has become
a new creature in Christ, pledged to walk in newness
of life, to indicate this change to others; namely, by an
immersion in water, as a symbol of the consecration
and immersion of the will; and while this should be
promptly attended to as a confession before fellow-creatures,
yet such a confession would not be a sure
sign of the new life: for many have thus confessed
"newness of life" whose living epistles seem to contradict
this.

When however the holy spirit is received into the
heart as the actuating principle of a life guided and
instructed by the counsel of the Lord, it will not only
obey the Lord in the matter of symbolic immersion,
but it will also soon manifest itself in the various affairs
of life, to those with whom the "new creature" comes
in contact. The anointing which comes upon the Lord's
people must soon or later affect their outward conduct
by manifestations of greater meekness, patience,
gentleness, brotherly-kindness, affection and generosity
of word and deed. All of this is in the illustration
of the anointing oil which typifies the spirit from which
we have an unction or anointing or lubrication. But
this lubricating and mollifying of character will come
slowly, gradually, and we must not expect a miracle
or as sudden a change in our earthen vessels as we had
in the spirit of our minds: nevertheless, the "new
creature," the renewed will, is to control the earthly
body and impart its spirit and disposition to it, so far
as possible, and should begin the work at once. If the
new mind or spirit or disposition of love for God and
man dwells in us richly, as new creatures, it will speedily
begin to lubricate, make smooth and unctuous the
earthen vessel.

In this day of machinery all have some knowledge
of it and of why machinists put oil upon all its joints
and bearings: it is in order that it may operate with
the greater ease and perform its duties the more perfectly.
Without the oil the tendency would be for the
various parts to bind and produce friction, heat, wear:
with the oil, the mechanism will perform its duties much
better than without it. Nevertheless, as we all know,
machines are of various degrees of perfection and imperfection,
hence while the oil will be of advantage to
every machine, it will not produce the same evenness
and smoothness of motion in every part of each. And
so it is amongst Christians: while every Christian will

be blessed by the holy spirit, the unction, anointing and lubrication from the Holy One, through the spirit of love received, nevertheless all Christians will not be alike smooth, regular, moderate, gentle, long-suffering, tenderly affectionate one toward another in love. The anointed heart or will can be, will be, must be striving for perfecting in love and actuated by it as a motive power, but the outward working of this upon the natural body, the outward man, will vary according to its natural makeup and its rooting in selfishness --sin. The man or woman who was naturally bad tempered, cross, selfish, hateful, mean will be helped from the time the anointing of the holy spirit of love is received; yet it may be weeks or months or years before the friction in certain parts of the disposition is worn smooth; and it should be the constant effort of every "new creature in Christ," first of all to be sure that he has received the unction, the spirit of love, and secondly to grow in that spirit and grace, to be filled with the spirit of love, letting the spirit of Christ dwell in him richly and abound, and thirdly he should constantly and earnestly strive to let the light he has received so shine before men that they may see his good works, that they may see that the spirit of Christ has produced in him a great change and an increasing change toward meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, benevolence, in all the workings and operations of life, that thus he may glorify God in his body and in his spirit (new mind) which, with all he has, are given to the Lord by consecration as well as being his by redemption.

Whatever friction may be unavoidable between the new creature and the world, which has a different spirit and which therefore operates along different lines and on different principles, there should be no friction amongst those who are the Lord's people, and who

R2227 : page 295

have all received of the same spirit. We recall the Apostle's words respecting the body of Christ in which he urges that even the speaking of the truth should be done in love one for another; that we "may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth [lubrication] according to the effectual working of every part in its own place, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:15,16.) The Apostle's thought seems to be that while each new creature may be considered as a complete member of Christ, and have all the parts of his own character thoroughly lubricated with the spirit of love, yet in addition to this all the new creatures are to recognize themselves as members one of another, and of the body of Christ, the Church; and are to exercise toward each

other in their various efforts toward cooperation in obedience to the will of the Lord, such love, such unction, such anointing, such lubrication, as will prevent friction and enable the whole body of Christ to cooperate for its own upbuilding in the graces as well as for its own completion in numbers.

This same thought is brought to our attention through the prophet David who, after saying, "How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," adds, "It is like the precious ointment upon the head"--the anointing oil upon the typical priest, Aaron, representing the holy spirit upon the royal priesthood, head and body.--Psa. 133.

R2350 : page 295

SOME DAY.

"Some day all doubt and mystery
Will be made clear:
The threatening clouds that now we see
Will disappear.

"Some day what seems a punishment,
Or loss or pain,
Will prove to be God's blessing, sent
For very gain.

"Some day our weary feet will rest
In sweet content;
And we will know that we were blest
By what was sent;

"And, looking back with clearer eyes
O'er life's short span,
We'll see with wondering, glad surprise,
God's perfect plan;

"And, knowing that the way we went
Was God's own way,
We'll recognize his wise intent,
Some day, some day."

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R2227 : page 295

"HE THAT HUMBLETH HIMSELF SHALL BE EXALTED."

--DEC. 5.--PHIL. 2:1-11.--

"Let this mind be in you, which was

also in Christ Jesus."--Phil. 2:5.

THE exhortations of this lesson are taken from the Apostle's letter to the Church at Philippi. It will be remembered that this Church was the first one founded in Europe: the particulars connected with its small beginning were noted in our lessons for July 4th and 11th. Referring to the smallness of its beginning Dr. McLaren, commenting upon the account of how the Apostle and his companions found outside the city by the river bank a place of resort for prayer and "spoke unto the women which resorted thither," says:--

"Not blowing of trumpets, not beating of drums of any sort. A few women and some worn out travelers talking together by the banks of the rushing river. How scornfully the great folk of Philippi would have smiled, if they had been told that the chief title of their city to be remembered at all would be the presence in it of that one insignificant Jew, and his letter to the Church founded on that morning!"

The Apostle indirectly reveals something respecting the general character of the Philippian Church in the Epistle written to it: we find in it nothing like reproof or correction, as we find in most of the epistles written to other Churches by the same Apostle. It is a particularly beautiful and loving letter and indicates a very close sympathetic bond between the Apostle and this Church in particular. Moreover, this Church on four different occasions that we know of rendered the Apostle practical sympathy by financial assistance, as well as by words of comfort and cheer. While at Thessalonica he twice received their gifts in his support; again while he was at Corinth they ministered to him, and again when he was a prisoner in Rome they did not forget him. It was their messenger, Epaphroditus, who brought this last memorial of their love, who was "sick unto death"--probably prostrated by the malarial fever. On his recovery, the Apostle Paul sent back with him this beautiful letter known to us as The Epistle to the Philippians. (Phil. 2:25-28; 4:14-19; 2 Cor. 11:9.) The other Churches may possibly have ministered

R2227 : page 296

to the Apostle also, but if so the fact is not recorded; apparently they missed a great opportunity, and we may be sure that while the Apostle did urge them to contribute to the relief of the brethren at Jerusalem, during a period of famine, he would not make a request for personal assistance, however much he may have been in need, or however much he might have appreciated even small manifestations of their love for him and the cause he served.

* * *

The lesson before us respecting Christian humility does not intimate that this grace was lacking among the Philippians, but that the Apostle recognized it as being one of the most important of all the graces, and one which required continual cultivation, in order to a continual growth in the likeness of Christ. The opening words of this lesson are an exhortation to brotherly-love and affection amongst themselves. He says, If there be any consolation in Christ, if there be any comfort of love to those who are in him, if they have any heart, if they have any mercies,--as tho he would put them to the test whether or not any would deny that these graces appertain to all who have come into Christ as new creatures. Then, as tho they had assented to his proposition, conceding that there is comfort, love, fellowship, sympathy and consolation in

R2228 : page 296

Christ for one another, he adds: You can fill my joy full by being thus minded toward each other--having love for each other, being in sympathy and accord with each other, and having one mind or purpose or will as a Church, the Lord's will. How grand an expression this is, his joy would be filled merely by knowing of their sympathy and love for him, not by knowing of their professions of love for the Lord, but by knowing that they loved, sympathized with and consoled one another, in the proper fellowship of the members of the body of Christ! This would fill his joy more full than anything else that he could know respecting them. Likewise, we may be sure the same conditions would be most pleasing and most acceptable in the sight of our Lord and Savior. The Apostle John had the same thought respecting brotherly-love in the Church as an indication of its godliness, when he says: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"--1 John 4:20.

To this end--that such a spirit of perfect unity and fellowship might obtain amongst the believers at Philippi, Paul exhorts that all shall cultivate the grace of humility, and that in every affair each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vain glory," that self-laudation and strivings for preeminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the spirit of the Lord and the blessing of the Church. On the contrary, each should have that lowliness of mind which can see the good qualities of fellow-members and appreciate some of these qualities at least as superior to his own. Lowliness of mind does not necessarily signify an ignorance of any talents or graces which we ourselves may possess; but so long as the Church is in the present imperfect or tabernacle condition, the perfection of all the graces, and all the talents, and all the abilities, need never be expected in

any one person in any congregation. So, then, each one may, if he be of lowly mind, see in others certain good qualities or graces superior to his own and should delight to recognize these and to esteem their possessor accordingly.

For each one to look merely upon his own things, interests, welfare or talents and to ignore these in others would manifest a general selfishness, and consequently a dearth of the spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love and generosity. In proportion as we are filled more and more with the holy spirit, love, we will find ourselves interested in the welfare of others. This was the mind, disposition or spirit which was in our dear Redeemer,--which he so wonderfully manifested, which we must copy and develop in our characters if we would ultimately be of the "little flock" who shall be joint-heirs with Christ in his glory: concerning whom God has predestinated that to be accepted with him to this position they must be "copies of his Son."-- Rom. 8:29.

That we may partially discern how our Lord Jesus exemplified this spirit of humility, the Apostle briefly sums up in few words the story of his humiliation and how it led to his present exaltation. He points out to us that when our Lord Jesus was a spirit being, before he stooped to take our nature and to bear the penalty of our sin, he was in "a form of God"--a spirit form, a high and glorious condition. But instead of being moved selfishly to ambitiously grasp for higher things than those which God had conferred upon him--instead of seeking to set up a rival empire as did Satan-- he did not meditate a robbery of God to make himself his equal (Satan's course), saying, "I will ascend above the stars [the bright ones, the angelic hosts], I will be as the Most High [his peer, his equal]." Quite to the contrary of this, our Lord Jesus, "the beginning of the creation of God," was willing in harmony with the Father's plan to humble himself, to take a lower nature and to do a work which would imply not only a great deal of humiliation but also a great deal of pain and suffering. The Apostle points out how the "Only Begotten" proved his willingness and humility by complying with this arrangement; and that after he became a man he continued of the same humble spirit, willing to carry out the Divine plan to the very letter, by dying as man's ransom-price; and not only so, when it

R2228 : page 297

pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, perhaps beyond the requirements of the ransom merely, he did not draw back, but said, "Thy will not mine be done," and stooped even to the ignominious "death of the cross."

Here, as the Apostle points out, we have the most

wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that ever was manifested or that could be conceived of. And this is the pattern the Apostle points out that we should seek to copy. "Let this same [humble] mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

It was on account of this humility, which enabled him to render perfect obedience, that the Heavenly Father has so highly honored our dear Redeemer as to raise him from the dead to the Divine nature, to a station far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. That this is his argument is shown (verse 9) by the word "wherefore;" i.e., on this account, on account of this humility just described, God hath highly exalted him.

Not only did our Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrate that he was loyal to the core to the Heavenly Father, but it also demonstrated that in him the Father's spirit, Love, dwelt richly, for he shared the Father's love for the race he redeemed. On this account also he is found worthy to be the divine agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, as per the terms of the divine covenant made with father Abraham. Thus he has become the head of the "Seed of Abraham" which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to him that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, when Jehovah's "due time" shall come for the pouring out of divine blessings upon the redeemed world--that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life.

The Apostle not only holds up the Lord Jesus as the great example of a proper humility, self-abnegation and obedience to God in the interest of others, but he would also hold up before us the reward, the high exaltation of our Lord by the Father, the result or reward of his obedience, that we also might be encouraged, and realize that, if faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer and sacrificing the advantages of the present to serve the Lord and his cause, then, in due time, we also may expect to be glorified with him and to share his name and throne and work, as members of his anointed body, his Church, his joint-heir.

In the succeeding verses (12-16) the Apostle gives a most beautiful tribute to the Church at Philippi, while urging them to continue on and to make more and more progress in the race-course in which they had already started, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character, the disposition of Christ, with fear and trembling, and thus working out each his own share in the great salvation to glory, honor and immortality which God hath promised.

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ, and being called with the heavenly calling, we can make our calling and

election sure, we can work out our own share in the great salvation to which we have been called in Christ, by giving heed to the instructions of the Lord; by following the pattern which he has set for us. Not that we will attain perfection in the flesh, but merely perfection of will, of intention, of heart; and keeping the body under to the extent of our ability, its weaknesses and imperfections will be reckoned as covered by the merit of our Lord, the Holy One.

It is encouraging also for us to know that this warfare is not merely one of our own, against weakness and sin; but that God is for us, has called us, and is helping us. He already works in us, by his Word of promise, and has led us thus far in the willing and the doing of his will, his good pleasure: and he will continue thus to lead and to help us and to work in us by his Word of truth, if we will continue to give heed to his counsel. "Sanctify them through thy truth --thy Word is truth." The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" to every one that so accepts it; and no greater stimulus to true godliness can be found than the "exceeding great and precious promises given unto us; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."--2 Pet. 1:4.

Moreover, in following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, running the race for the great prize set before us in the Gospel, we are not to murmur by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and narrowness; nor are we to dispute respecting it, nor to seek to have any other way than that which divine providence marks out before us, realizing that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the school of Christ, and realizing also that, if obedience were possible while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and our lot which he has permitted, it would indicate that we were at least out of sympathy with the spirit of his arrangement; and such an obedience, if it were possible (but it would not be possible), would not meet the divine approval, nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke,...holding forth the Word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the World."

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R2229 : page 298

PAUL'S DYING WORDS.

--DEC. 12.--2 TIM. 4:8,16-18.--

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course: I have kept the faith."--2 Tim. 4:7.

PAUL wrote these his dying words to Timothy whom he dearly loved, and frequently refers to as his son. He was in prison in the city of Rome, and is supposed to have been sixty-three years of age at this time. His imprisonment in Rome referred to in a previous lesson, when he was permitted to live in "his own hired house," had terminated by his being released from custody; and it is supposed that during the period of his release, about three years, he revisited some of the Churches previously established and also carried the gospel into Spain.

It was during this interim of his freedom that the great persecution arose in Rome under Nero. That brutal Emperor is supposed to have caused the city of Rome to be set on fire that he might witness a great conflagration from the tower of his palace, or possibly with a view to having it rebuilt in a more modern style a monument to himself. But the losses occasioned by this fire, which could not be gotten under control for six days, and which laid a large portion of the city in ashes, stirred up so great a commotion amongst the people, so aroused their anger, that he thought it discreet to let the blame be laid at the door of Christianity; --the charge being that the Christians were the incendiaries and responsible for the great destruction wrought. Following out this line of policy, Nero began a terrible persecution of Christians, thus directing the suspicion of the people away from himself and against those who had taken the name of Christ: who were unpopular anyway with the wicked and the idolatrous. Multitudes were slain with the sword, exposed in the amphitheaters to be torn by wild beasts, or covered with the skins of wild beasts to be torn to pieces by dogs, while some were wrapped in sheets covered with pitch and tied to stakes and set on fire as torches, to illuminate Nero's garden.

This persecution commenced shortly after Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome; and the spirit of bitter persecution thus aroused was still hot, when, three years later, he was again arrested. This time, as he explains in the words of this lesson (verses 16-18), it would appear that he had a public examination, possibly before Nero himself; but the fear of the people was so great, and quite probably the Apostle's language so bold, that he was forsaken of all, as was his Master when before Pilate. He tells us nevertheless, that he had with him the Lord's presence, which strengthened him to such an extent that he spoke the Word with a boldness which permitted the gospel to be fully known to the Gentiles thereabouts. He evidently was more anxious to make known the "good tidings" than to preserve himself from pain and death. He was a true and noble soldier of the cross--a close follower in the footsteps of our great Chief Captain, Christ Jesus. Paul's prison was a very uncomfortable place we

may be sure. We visited the place which tradition points out in the city of Rome as being the place of his incarceration. It is a dungeon below the surface, dark, damp and extremely forbidding. But notwithstanding all this the reader must be struck with the tone of triumph which pervades the Apostle's writings from there. What else than the power of God could so sustain an able and cultured man under the various trials and vicissitudes through which he passed, including this his last imprisonment and his final execution, which followed shortly after the writing of this epistle to Timothy? He was spared from crucifixion by reason of being a Roman citizen, and instead he was beheaded, says tradition.

* * *

In the light of the foregoing circumstances, Paul's charge to Timothy is, so to speak, his dying message; and so regarded, its solemnity and impressiveness are increased before our minds. What was this dying charge? It was that Timothy should be diligent, zealous in preaching the Word of God; that considerations of his own convenience should be entirely set aside and every opportunity for declaring the message of God's love in Christ availed.

As considerations moving to this end the Apostle mentions first the Father, God,--his approval; and second, the Lord Jesus Christ, the appointed Judge of all, living and dead, at his appearing and Kingdom. Only when moved by all of these considerations, can the preaching of the gospel be most effectual. He who does not believe in God the Father and in his Son, our Lord Jesus, could not preach the gospel at all; and even tho believing in the Father and the Son, no man can really preach the good tidings intelligently who does not believe also that the Son has been appointed by the Father to judge the world in the appointed Millennial day (Acts 17:31), and that this judgment of the world will be at (during) his manifestation and Kingdom, at his second advent.

The Apostle explains that, as a minister of the grace of God, this declaration of the gospel may include three features; (1) reproof, (2) rebuke, (3) exhortation. But it is safe to caution all of the Lord's people against a too liberal use of the first two features. In order to reprove properly, the heart should be very

R2229 : page 299

full of love and sympathy; else the reproofs and rebukes may be sharp, and possibly do more harm than good. Even with the heart full of love, it requires a head that is exceedingly well-balanced to be able to make use of reproofs and rebukes to good advantage to those who really need them. And herein God's people are to be

wise as serpents, harmless as doves. Exhortation is the form of faithfulness which quite evidently can best be used by the majority of the Lord's people. And even it, as well as the other efforts, should be characterized by patience, longsuffering, brotherly-kindness.

Another point to be noticed is, that it is the Word of God that is to be preached, and not the word of man. However God may use human instrumentalities in expounding his Word, the distinction between the Word of the Lord and the word of the expounder is to be continually recognized. Moreover, all this is to be done with "doctrine," better translated as in the Revised Version, "teaching." The Apostle links "teaching" with "long-suffering and patience," and gives us the thought that he who would be a successful servant of the Lord, really helpful to the Lord's flock, will be willing to dispense the message "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," as a teacher; backing up the Word of the Lord with reason, and exemplification in his own life in connection with the exhortations, etc.

This message to Timothy, who was a public minister, would of course have special force and application to all who are endeavoring to feed "the flock over which the holy spirit hath made them overseers" (Acts 20:28); but it applies to all who are truly the Lord's, every one of whom is to be a preacher of righteousness, a servant of the truth, "holding forth the Word of life" to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In this connection the Apostle prophesies, as in some other instances, and foretells a future day when sound teaching would not be endured by those avowing themselves to be followers of Christ. Prophetically, he points out the great falling away which culminated in the organization of Papacy. This reached a fulfilment very quickly after the death of the apostles. Teachers assumed to be a separate class and designated themselves "clergy," branding all others "laity." And this seemed to be more generally pleasing to the carnal mind than the divine arrangement. The people preferred that some one else should do their thinking and studying for them, rather than be merely their helpers or teachers, respecting the Word of the Lord. Thus darkness more and more dense came on the Church, resulting in the establishment of the great "abomination" noted in the Scriptures.* The minds of the people were turned away from the truth to fables, from the study of God's Word to the doing of penances and vain repetitions of prayer; from faith in the precious blood of Christ, as the continual and only and ever acceptable sacrifice for sins, they turned to "the mass" and its fresh and oft repeated sacrifices for sins. Instead of walking by faith, the minds of the people were turned to fables respecting sacred relics and wonderful cures wrought by these;--nails from the

cross, pieces of the cross, bones of saints, etc., etc. So completely were they turned to fables that for centuries the Word of God was wholly neglected; and that period is known in civil history as "the dark ages."

Altho a Great Reformation set in and the Word of God reappeared amongst the people, and altho the preaching of it has brought great blessing and liberty to the people since, nevertheless the adversary still perverts the truth, and induces God's people to separate themselves, the one from the other, and thus to destroy the force and value of the Reformation and the influence of God's Word. Satan's present methods are suited to the occasion: he cannot prevent the circulation of the Scriptures, but he can blind with prejudice and superstition the minds of those who read, and see that what they read will profit them little: this is his present method of procedure. Under sectarianism he endeavors to offset the testimony of God's Word with the declarations of faith in the various creeds of Christendom.

The Apostle's words are as forceful as ever for all who would be ministers of the Word of God and not of the traditions of men; with all who would have their works stand in this day of fiery trial into which we are coming. To all such the Apostle's words to Timothy

*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. 9; VOL. III., Chap. 4.

R2230 : page 299

have a special appropriateness--"Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist [a teacher and expounder of the gospel and not of human tradition]."

How humble and yet how confident are the closing words of the great Apostle's testimony (verses 6-8), "I have fought a good fight," etc. He did not boast of perfection in his flesh, but on the contrary disclaimed it, saying, that he had constant need to keep his body "under," in subjection to the new mind. He did not boast of how many Churches he had established, nor how many converts he had made and baptized. He did not boast of his knowledge of the Lord's Word, nor of his ability as a speaker, nor of how many epistles he had written, nor of his imprisonments and sufferings for the sake of the gospel. His boast, on the contrary, was simply that he had fought well, fought faithfully, fought the best he was able, against sin abounding on every hand and weaknesses in himself. His boast was not that he had made a faith, nor that he had expressed

R2230 : page 300

the gospel in the most clear and positive manner which

would descend generations after him to glorify God and to bless his people; but his boast merely was that he had "kept the faith," the faith which God through his Word had inspired, the faith which he had received, and was given to all of the Lord's people; he had kept it, he had been faithful to it, he had not bartered it for a mess of pottage, earthly advantages.

On the strength of these two points,--his having kept the Word of the Lord's testimony obediently, and his having fought in defence of it to the end of his course, to the best of his ability--on the strength of these two things he builds his hope for the crown of rejoicing in the Kingdom with the Redeemer and his faithful, at his appearing.

What an encouragement is here for the very humblest of God's people; not by intellectual or physical strength, not by wonderful works, not by anything that we can do or have done for the Lord, his cause, and his people, are we to hope for eternal glory; but simply with the Apostle we are to seek to use what talents we do possess and what opportunities the Lord provides for us, faithfully. We are to keep the faith, not denying the faith under any consideration--not to secure the favor of any, nor to avoid the frowns of any, may we be unfaithful to the Word of God's testimony. We too, are to fight the good fight against selfishness in its every phase, especially in ourselves, and to develop in ourselves more and more under the Lord's instruction, his spirit, the spirit of love, the holy spirit.

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R2230 : page 300

INTERESTING LETTERS.

page 300

Minnesota.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Volume IV. has been duly received and once read. To say that I am pleased with it, will hardly express my sentiments. You are certainly to be congratulated, as it bears not only the marks of laborious compilation but especially of deep study. To those already interested in present Truth it will be of inestimable personal value, and I think may awaken the interest of many who have carelessly neglected to study the other volumes.

Yours in Christian love, C. H. DICKINSON.

R2230 : page 300

For the encouragement of our readers, and as showing that there are still opportunities for service in the colporteur work, we publish a letter from a dear Brother who is employed all day in business, but spends what time he can in the evenings in spreading the knowledge of the truth among the people in his city.

Minnesota.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Enclosed please find our report for DAWNS delivered the past 30 days. It is simply wonderful how the dear Lord is blessing every effort here put forth to spread the good news. Considering the few hours employed in this service, he seems to be leading me in many of the smallest details of his work so as to get the best possible result in the least possible time. Blessed be his name forever!

The last month has far overtopped my highest expectations in DAWN work, 272 VOLS. being delivered. May we pray God always to keep us humble, so he may condescend to accept our sacrifices, not because of their own, but because of Christ's merit. May the Lord's richest blessings rest upon you and yours is my prayer. Yours in the Redeemer, M. P. THORI.

page 300

Virginia.

MY DEAR BROTHER:--Just a word to thank you for DAWN VOL. IV. I have read it with some degree of care (shall study it), and regard it as a masterly portrayal of the present condition of things in the social, political and ecclesiastical world. He is blind indeed who, after reading it (even if he could not before), cannot see that all things are rapidly approaching the final catastrophe. Many do see it who yet do not know what it means, and who do not see and will not believe that it means the end of the present order of affairs, and the establishment of a glorious, better order under the rule of the Christ. What insight into the deep things of God has been bestowed upon you! I thank God from the depth of my heart that he has been pleased not only to bring these wonderful things to my attention, but also that he has given me the receptive mind and heart to take hold of and rest on them.

I pray God's richest blessing upon the work in which you are engaged, as well as upon yourself personally and the whole household. I feel very lonely in my isolation here, but God knows what is best. I find frequent occasions to present the truth, but none seem able to accept it fully.

Yours in the love of the truth,

WM. W. MURRAY. M.D.

Wisconsin.

TO THE AUTHOR OF MILLENNIAL DAWN.

DEAR BROTHER:--Having been very much interested in the reading of the DAWN, and particularly of VOL. IV., which I am now reading, and feeling that it contains an amount of information from every source which, if true or trustworthy, is of the greatest value, and finding that many feel disposed to question the reliability of the figures you give, I take the liberty to ask you for some direct word of assurance along this line. I am a class leader in the M.E. Church of this place and have charge of other work in the county, and feel anxious about these things. Please kindly give me such words of assurance as you can.

Yours in Christ, H. D. WHITE.

[Reply.--All the quotations and statistics given in VOL. IV. of DAWN are properly credited to their respective authors, and stand or fall on the merits of those authors and on their veracity. We did not put into the book anything which we thought could reasonably be questioned, and you will notice by going over the names of the various journals and persons quoted that they are nearly all well known and of international reputation. --EDITOR.]

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page 301

VOL. XVIII. DECEMBER 15, 1897. No. 24.

CONTENTS.

Do You Desire Z.W.T. for 1898?.....302
Songs in the House of Our Pilgrimage.....303
Poem: "My Peace I Give unto You".....307
Tract Society's Report for 1897.....307
Confession and Forgiveness.....310
Baptism of Jesus and Announcement
of His Work.....313
Interesting Letters.....315
Index for Zion's Watch Tower of 1897.....316

page 302

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R2238 : page 302

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MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV.

The friends of the truth will be pleased to know that the
paper-bound edition of VOL. IV. is already exhausted. The next
lot will not be ready for filling orders before February, as our
printers are extremely busy just now. We still have some in
leatherette and in cloth covers.

The public demand for VOL. IV. promises to exceed that for
any other of the series, altho we have not yet sent many copies
to newspapers for review.

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R2230 : page 303

SONGS IN THE HOUSE OF OUR PILGRIMAGE.

"Thy statutes have been my songs in the
house of my pilgrimage."--Psa. 119:54.

GOD'S PEOPLE during the Jewish dispensation

as well as during the Gospel dispensation are spoken of as "pilgrims and strangers" in the "present evil world." They are such, because they have heard of "a better country," whose ruler is God, and whose law is love--"the perfect law of liberty." To such pilgrims the strife for wealth and vain glory, the pride, haughtiness and tinsel that everywhere prevail now, are distasteful; while the battle for wealth or position, especially when it leads to unrighteousness, oppression, slander, envy, strife and every evil work, is repulsive. Having obtained a glimpse of the perfection of divine character with its absoluteness of justice and love, it has become their ideal: and they have heard "the voice of him that speaketh from heaven," instructing them that sin and evil shall not always prevail, but that the God of heaven by and by shall set up his Kingdom which will renovate and bless the world of mankind, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Since they have heard this, and the more they learn to appreciate it, the more, necessarily, they are out of harmony with the contrary conditions of the present time. Hence it is that they feel themselves, and are portrayed in the Scriptures as being, pilgrims and strangers who seek the fairer clime of the coming age.

It was in this view of matters that the Apostle declared that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were "pilgrims and strangers on the earth," who sought a better country, a home under more righteous conditions. They sojourned in the very land promised to them, but it was not their "home;" because it was still in the hands and under the government of those who were aliens and strangers from God. They waited for the fulfilment of God's promise to give them that country under his divine blessing and laws, when it would become to them a heavenly country, a country under heavenly direction and blessing. They were obliged to wait for two reasons: first, as a test and development of their own faith and trust in the Great Promiser; and secondly, because "the wickedness of the Amorites was not yet come to the full."--Gen. 15:16.

Commenting on this, the Apostle declares that if they had been mindful, i.e., wishful, to have returned to Charran, their own country prior to the promise of Canaan, they might have returned to it,--when they found the land of promise still occupied by other peoples, and that God was not yet ready to fulfil to them his promises. (Heb. 11:15.) But they preferred to hold on to God's promises, and chose accordingly, for the time, to be pilgrims and strangers in the land of promise. Stephen in his discourse (Acts 7:2,5) points out this pilgrimage and sojourn, as strangers, of Abraham and his seed--waiting for possession of the promised land. Stephen says, "God gave him none inheritance in it: no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession,

and to his seed after him."

We are to understand, accordingly, that the heavenly country for which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the faithful of the fleshly house of Israel waited as "pilgrims and strangers" is after all to be earthly, in the sense of being on the earth; but it will be heavenly in the sense that its government, regulations, laws, etc., will be heavenly laws, etc., and not "earthly, sensual, devilish." Consequently, when the Apostle

R2230 : page 304

says that they "looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" and that God

R2231 : page 304

"hath prepared for them a city," we must understand this promise, so far as they are concerned, to be in harmony with the other promises made to fleshly Israel.

The "city" referred to is not a literal city, but the symbolical one mentioned in Rev. 21:2,9-27. In symbol a city signifies a government, and this city which comes down from God out of heaven symbolizes the Kingdom of God, his rule or government, which will be established in all the earth. This "city" or government will consist of The Christ--the "Bridegroom" and "the bride the Lamb's wife." "Then shall the righteous shine forth"--the city will have the glory of God. When this Kingdom is established, the nations* shall walk in the light of it.--Rev. 21:24.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the faithful pilgrims and strangers prior to the atonement, while they will not be members of the bride company nor of the new Jerusalem, the Kingdom, will nevertheless be very closely identified with it in the work of blessing the world of mankind in general. And hence it is that they are represented as waiting for this "city," this government which God will establish in the world; preferring to have their inheritance at that time, and under the blessing and bright illumination of that heavenly city or government, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. It is in harmony with this thought that we are taught to pray, "Thy Kingdom [the Heavenly Jerusalem, the city which hath for foundations the twelve Apostles--Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone] come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This city will shine and bless the world until all the willing shall be helped and reconciled to God. Its reign will be for a thousand years, after which a new dispensation will open, under new conditions, in which mankind (perfected) will be granted the privilege of ruling themselves in harmony with the divine law.

In a certain sense then we might designate the present era, "the present evil world," to be the general

house of our pilgrimage for all who love and long for righteousness; and the better condition of the future, the "new heavens and the new earth" promised as the heavenly home or condition which will be found abundantly satisfactory to all who shall attain thereto.

"OUR EARTHLY HOUSE" AND "OUR HOUSE FROM HEAVEN."

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 5:1-10) writing concerning this pilgrimage and addressing specially the consecrated Church of the Gospel age, uses language which, while not out of harmony with what we have just seen, foregoing, may be nevertheless properly understood to refer to the present mortal bodies of the saints, as their houses of pilgrimage--their temporary houses, while on the way to their permanent homes, the spiritual bodies which God hath promised to them that love him, and which the same apostle described to the same readers in a previous epistle.--1 Cor. 15:38,42-45.

Moreover, since we well know that very much in the Psalms was written prophetically, respecting the Christ, head and body, the overcoming Church of the Gospel age, we may well infer that the language of our text had special reference to these pilgrims of the Gospel age. The Apostle says, "We know that if our earthly house of this temporary dwelling place were dissolved, we have a permanent structure of God, a house not made with hands [not produced by human powers] everlasting in the heavens." Since the renewed earth, altho it will be a permanent house for the world of mankind, will not be "in the heavens;" and since the Church when granted their new spiritual bodies in the resurrection will be thereafter everlastingly in the higher or heavenly condition, it seems but proper to construe the Apostle's language as relating to the earthly bodies and the heavenly bodies of the Church. And such an application seems to fit his discourse throughout thoroughly. It is true that in this present body or temporary house of pilgrimage we groan--oppressed not only by the evil influence of the world and the devil on every hand but also and especially by the weaknesses of our own flesh. For when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that the good which we would do we are often hindered from doing, while the evil which we do not approve often obtrudes itself on us and requires to be continually resisted and overcome. As the Apostle elsewhere declares, we "which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body,"--the Church, into the glorious likeness of our Lord.

But our groaning is not with a desire to be unclothed; we do not wish to be without a body, for that at very best all down through the Gospel age would

mean to be "asleep in Jesus," waiting for the resurrection morning that then we might be "clothed upon with our house from heaven," our new, perfect and permanent body, our "home." What we prefer is not to have the little spark of present life extinguished, but to have it swallowed up, absorbed into the perfect conditions of the perfect life to which we are begotten, with its perfect body.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same

*The words "of them that are saved" in this text are not found in the older MSS. Very evidently they are an interpolation; because after the nations are saved, brought into harmony with God, they will no longer be "nations" (Gentiles, heathen), but parts of the one holy nation, the Kingdom of God.

R2231 : page 305

thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the spirit." This perfect condition which we are to obtain in the resurrection will be the grand consummation of our salvation which God has promised; and the new mind, the new will begotten by the Word of truth, is reckoned as the beginning of that new creature, which will be perfected in the divine nature when the first resurrection shall have completed it. The holy spirit granted us in the present time is a hand payment so to speak, an "earnest" or assurance of the grand and gracious results for which we are hoping and striving, groaning and praying.

"Therefore we are always confident knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions--ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord." If we were living near to him, "walking with God, we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc.; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains, is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight.

"But we are confident [full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith], and are well pleased rather to be from home [homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth] and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship.

For this cause we are striving, that whether it be by and by when we reach our home, or whether it be in the present time when we are actually away from home, pilgrims and strangers, we strive that we may be acceptable with the Lord; that we may have his favor and blessing and realize his fellowship and presence and know that we shall ultimately be accepted by him. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat

of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to the things he hath done whether it be good or bad." All through this pilgrimage we are standing at the bar of our Lord's judgment: he is testing us, proving us, to see whether or not we love him and the things which make for righteousness and peace; and if so, how much we are willing to sacrifice for righteousness' sake. He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for his sake, the truth's sake.

But to thus speak of our bodies as houses can be true only of the "saints," the "new creatures" in Christ. Others of mankind have not duality of nature, and could not properly apply to themselves such expressions as that of Romans 8:10,11, "If Christ be in you the body is [reckoned] dead because of sin; but the spirit alive because of [the imputed] righteousness" of Christ. The new nature of the saints, begotten by the word of truth, is really only the new will, which however is thenceforth addressed as the real person, and it alone is recognized of God who knows us not after the flesh but after the spirit of our new minds--Christ-minds. Notice also Romans 6:3,4. These "new creatures" have an old man or outward man that is perishing, and a new man, inward man, or hidden man of the heart who is being renewed day by day.--2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:9,10; Eph. 4:23,24; 1 Pet. 3:4.

It is written, he "giveth songs in the night," and "He hath put a new song into my mouth." It causes us no surprise to know that the saints will "be joyful in glory" and sing aloud with the high praises of God in their mouths, when it shall be given to them to execute the judgments written (Psa. 149:4-9); but it may strike some as peculiar that the present conditions of God's people, the condition of imperfection and physical frailty, in which we groan and are burdened, should be a condition in which songs and thanksgiving and joy should prevail with us. Nevertheless, this is the divine will, as it is the divine statement, respecting all who are truly overcomers: they are all to be joyful in the house of their pilgrimage. Respecting this joy our Lord declares "Your joy no man taketh from you." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."--John 14:27; 16:22.

So then, while there is a measure of groaning because of some burdens on the part of those who have

R2232 : page 305

attained to the new life, there are also blessed joys which the world cannot give, neither take away: and these are the source and cause of the unceasing joy and "songs in the night," before the glorious dawn of the new Millennial day: these songs are inspired by the

joys granted us in the house of our pilgrimage--while we are actually absent from our "home."

What are our joys which no man taketh from us? and which persecution and affliction and trouble can only deepen and widen and make more sweet? What joy is this? This joy is a foretaste of the blessings to come, an earnest of our inheritance. It is inspired by confidence in him on whom we have believed: confidence that he is both able and willing to perfect the work which he has begun and which we desire shall be perfected in his own best way: confidence that so long as we are firmly holding to his gracious promises with the arms of our faith, he will not permit us to be separated from him. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation and persecution? Our confidence is that "no one is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand," and that "the Father himself loveth" us, and will not turn us away so long as we desire to abide obediently in his love. Yea, we are

R2232 : page 306

confident that all things are working together for good to those who love God; confident that he who is for us is more powerful than all who can be against us. Such confidence is sure to bring joy beyond the world's comprehension, and a peace of God that passeth all understanding, which keeps the heart.

And such joy, produced by the true gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ received into an honest heart, naturally and properly awakens the "songs in the house of our pilgrimage."

"Mid all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing,
It finds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing."

The word "song" has a wider meaning than simply a musical cadence: it is used in the Scriptures and elsewhere to indicate a joyful message of any kind. For instance, we say, referring to the gospel, the knowledge of the divine plan, "Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." And it is a fact that those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, those who have received the joy which no man can take from them, those who have tasted of the grace of God in Christ, will not only rejoice and literally sing musical songs with their lips, but they will also rejoice to have their entire lives a song of praise and thanksgiving unto God. The song will bubble over on every proper occasion, wherever hearing ears are found: so fully will the cleansed, justified and consecrated heart appreciate God's goodness and so greatly will it desire to--

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings,
And speak of the time of rest that nears."

Wherever Christians find themselves without this joy of the Lord, and where they have no song in the house of their pilgrimage, they have reason to fear that

there is something wrong,--that the connections between their own hearts and the Lord are not full and complete. If they are unacquainted with this joy and these songs, it is because they have either never fully accepted the Lord as their portion, and consecrated themselves to his service, or else because certain false doctrines have so terrorized their minds and so completely enslaved them to fear that trustful joys are impossible to them. Such should at once take the proper steps either to make their consecration to the Lord complete, so that he can put his spirit into them as members of his body, and give them the "seal of adoption," and cause them to know the joys of his salvation; or, if fully consecrated and hindered from joy and songs through false doctrine, they should diligently search the Scriptures and find the Lord's message,-- "Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."--Isa. 29:13.

IN THE CLOUDY DAY.

It is true, nevertheless, that our Christian experience is not always of a kind calculated to produce an exuberance of spirit: it is doubtless to our advantage that sometimes there are dark hours such as our dear Redeemer experienced when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Such experiences no doubt draw us nearer to the fountain of comfort, of joy and peace, and are blessings in disguise, and amongst the "all things" which are working together for our good. But even in the very midst of trials and difficulties, and while cast down so that the songs do not abound, we may nevertheless in all conditions and at all times realize God's love and care and so firmly hold on to the Lord, with the hand of faith, that we would in the darkest moments be able to realize the joy of our Master's sympathy and love and help, and thus have the joy which no disaster of the present time can interrupt.

Despondency and loss of these joys and songs may sometimes result from ill health: in which case, if the illness be the result of selfish gratification, we have room for a lesson and reform; or it may seem to be the result of unselfish fidelity to the service of the truth, along the lines of duty, and if so, as soon as this is recognized, our joys and songs will return. In illustration let us remember Paul and Silas praising God in the prison of Philippi, while their backs were still lacerated and bleeding.

It should be the aim of the Lord's people to cultivate this joy and the conditions favorable to it, daily. The condition of our hearts has much to do with it; for this joy is not wholly dependent upon the heads,--our knowledge of the divine Word and plan. Its possession and increase depends chiefly upon the heart--the center of our affections. If we set our affections,

our hearts, on earthly things and seek for joy through the various gratifications of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, etc., we will thereby quench to some extent the spirit of the new mind, and correspondingly decrease the joys of the new mind. On the contrary, the more we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, the more we seek to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, the more we seek for the fellowship and communion of our dear Redeemer, the more we seek to do those things which are pleasing in his sight, so much the more will we have of the joy and peace which no man taketh from us and which trials, difficulties and persecutions can only make the more sweet and precious.

And the more we have of this new mind, and the closer we are in sympathy with the Lord, the more we will desire to sing heartily "The old, old story of Jesus and his love."

"How happy and blessed the hours,
Since Jesus I always can see!
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all gained new sweetness to me."

R2238 : page 307

"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU."

"When He giveth quietness, who then
can make trouble?"--Job 34:29.

"Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect--yet it floweth fuller every day;
Perfect--yet it groweth deeper all the way.

"Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand.

"Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the sun of love.

"We may trust Him solely all for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly, find Him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest."

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R2233 : page 307

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.

REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DEC. 1, 1897.

AN ANNUAL report of this Society's work is due to our readers, almost all of whom, directly or indirectly, financially or otherwise, are colaborers and associates in this service of the Lord and his truth. It will be encouraging to you to know of the prosperity of the general cause, even as it encourages us, to learn of the progress of the work of grace in your own hearts and in the local churches in various quarters. The Lord's work is one, and every feature of it must be of deep interest to all who love him and who recognize that we are living in the "harvest" of the Gospel age, and that the Chief-Reaper is the Superintendent, under whose guidance the sickle of truth is being thrust in, for the gathering of all the true wheat into his Kingdom garner.

Hence, these annual statements should not be construed as boasting, nor yet as solicitations for further donations. Surely there is no room for boasting; all that we all unitedly have done, or can do, is so little, compared with what we all would like to do, so little in comparison to what we have received of our Lord, the value of which is beyond computation in silver or gold, that we feel regret for its smallness, and realize that we are not profitable servants who bring our Master gain, but are still his debtors to an infinite amount and can only hope to have him say to us, Well done, good, faithful servants, you have done what you could!

As for soliciting, we have never done it and will never do it. If this is the Lord's work, and as we believe a special "harvest" work, and he, the great Reaper, is in charge, we need not fear that voices and money and all things needful to its successful accomplishment will not be supplied. Our only concern should be lest we should fail to embrace all the opportunities which come our way. Let us fear, lest an opportunity for service being put within our reach (along any line), any of us should fail to improve such opportunities and be unworthy of the words, "She hath done what she could."

In the election of the "little flock" for the Kingdom, nothing is more evident than that God has refused to define what sacrifices we must make--except that it shall primarily consist of a broken and a contrite heart. The outworking of our consecrated lives will prove to what extent our naturally selfish hearts have been broken and are contrite. He who loves the Lord and his cause much, will serve proportionately, and will know no limit to that service except ability; which will be so used as to make the most of it.

Nor are money talents and voice and pen talents the only ones the Lord is pleased to use in the "harvest" work: many are rendering very efficient service to the truth as Colporteurs and tract distributors. Indeed, probably one half of all who now rejoice in the present truth are indebted under God's providence to these efficient colaborers,--whose work in many respects closely resembles that of the twelve and the seventy sent out by our Lord in the Jewish harvest, who went from house to house with the good tidings of the Kingdom. Besides the fruitage already seen, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a wide influence for the truth and against error has been exerted by the DAWNS and TRACTS and TOWERS, far beyond those who have confessed the truth. There are many evidences of this, not only in the increased opposition of the "chief priests and scribes," but also in the many private and anonymous letters received, asking questions, asking for literature and expressing confidence; but as at the first advent "for fear of the Jews" holding back. Many of these of course may never become "overcomers," and may constitute members in the "great company" that will fail to take a proper stand for the Lord and his truth until the complete collapse of Babylon and the attendant "great tribulation" shall thoroughly arouse them. Others of these, however, altho timid and fearful and disposed to inquire, "Have any of the chief priests or scribes believed?" will by and by gain strength and courage from the "meat in due season" and come out bravely on the Lord's side as "overcomers."

We see no reason to think, as some appear to,

R2233 : page 308

that all that can be reached with the truth have already been reached. Quite to the contrary, altho this may be true in some places, it does not seem to be generally the case. We are inclined to believe that the Lord is using certain channels to divert conscientious persons from "Babylon" and to more or less prepare them for the full message of present truth; and from these we expect large results during the next few years. For instance; Socialism, Single-Taxism and Nationalism have attracted some people of excellent intentions who, as they see the impossibility of these systems and theories bringing the Balm of Gilead and real blessings for which the groaning creation waits, will be good subjects for the truth. We have considerable hope for a favorable influence from DAWN, VOL. IV., upon such. We see also among various earnest "come-outers" and amongst Baptists and Mr. Dowie's followers and the Christian Alliance people and Plymouth Brethren and Adventists good fields for active service with tracts, TOWERS and DAWNS,--meekly, lovingly, wisely presented, with a word in season, "seasoned with salt."

The work from this standpoint divides itself into the following branches:--

(1) The WATCH TOWER, which as your servant seeks to do you all the good possible, by stirring up your pure minds by way of remembrance, altho you know many of the things which it presents from the Scriptures, and altho its readers are generally established in the present truth. You will be glad to know that its subscription list, which quite generally represents the deeply interested, is gradually increasing. We were greatly surprised, also, that notwithstanding the depression in financial matters the number who get the TOWER free, as the Lord's poor, decreased about two thousand, while the self paid subscriptions increased about the same number. Our only fear is that some who cannot afford to pay are neglecting to avail themselves of this feature of the Lord's bounty, which he provides, and which we as his servants take pleasure in dispensing.

(2) The Correspondence Department, with which is associated the keeping of accounts, attention to your orders for DAWNS, TRACTS, TOWERS, BIBLES, etc. This department handled about twenty-one thousand of your letters, and sent out about fourteen thousand four hundred replies. Thank God for the mail facilities of our favored day. Your welcome letters, some full of joy and rejoicing and telling of successes, and some full of sorrow and trouble, asking our prayers and counsel, are all esteemed a privilege and a part of the service which we rejoice to be privileged to engage in. We trust that we of the TOWER office are also remembered in your prayers, for we have trials and discouragements as well as joys and encouragements.

"Blest be the tie that binds

Our hearts in Christian love,

The fellowship of kindred minds

Is like to that above."

While this love and fellowship extends to all who own our Lord (whether or not they follow with us) yet properly it extends in an especial degree to those who manifest the holy spirit of love, who are striving to walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice and to whom the Lord's favor has been manifested, in the opening of their understanding to the present truth. We have efficient colaborers in this department, and will extend it to meet your demands upon it as far as possible. As frequently as possible, however, we refer to the DAWNS or back TOWERS as replies to questions; because the answers there given are generally more thorough than we could give in the compass of a letter, and besides will save time for other features of the work.

(3) The Colporteur Department.--This department might be termed the Evangel-department in this "harvest" work. Dear, consecrated brethren and sisters devote their time and strength and talents to house to house visitation to call the attention of fellow

Christians to the "meat in due season" now provided by the Lord for all "the household of faith." Largely through the agency of this department nearly a million copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN in its several volumes have been put into the hands of the public, and millions of tracts distributed. Many who read this article owe their knowledge of the truth (under divine providence) largely to the courage, faith and perseverance of the dear children of God who serve in this department. Laboring not for worldly applause or advantage, but at the expense, the loss, of these, they shall surely have a gracious reward from the great Judge when he makes up his jewels. One dear brother, an Express Co.'s agent in a western city, recently interested and very active in the Lord's service, longed to be in the colporteur work or to do something to assist in this department, and finding another brother anxious for the work he became sponsor for his account and started him as a colporteur. His deficit during the year was probably \$120., but he rejoices in this as the next best thing to being a colporteur himself. He has become still more deeply interested, and besides a liberal donation has written promising the proceeds of some property as soon as he can sell it. It is needless to add that he is greatly blessed in heart, and growing in grace and knowledge.

The past year has been one of greater encouragement to these vineyard laborers than several preceding, and very generally they have been able to fully

R2234 : page 308

meet their expenses by economy. They were greatly helped and encouraged by the assistance rendered them last year by Bro. Hay's donation. Several new laborers

R2234 : page 309

have recently entered this service. The fourth volume of DAWN promises to be specially saleable and an entering wedge for the other volumes and thus an aid to the Colporteurs, some of whom now are making more than their expenses. Let us remember at the throne of grace constantly these whose special service puts them into the forefront of the battle for the truth.

(4) The Tract Distribution Department.--Every WATCH TOWER reader is invited to become an active participant in this branch of the service--by enclosing them in your letter, or by wrapping one in each bundle if you keep store, or by handing them to your fellow passengers if you travel, or by handing special ones to friends and neighbors as you have opportunity, or by street distribution about the hour when prayer meetings, lectures, etc., take in or dismiss--standing at a little distance (say half a block) so as not to give offence as implying that church people need tracts, however

much you may be sure that they do need them.

By reference to another column of this report it will be seen that the tract circulation for the past year reached the highest point yet attained--nearly thirty millions of pages. We congratulate you on the faithfulness which this implies. The Lord's blessing surely has been with you as fearlessly and not ashamed to own the Lord and his Word you have done what you could to dispel superstition and darkness from the minds of God's people, and to enable them to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

All the interested have not the same opportunities for tract distribution, and some who used comparatively few were the most zealous in furnishing the financial means by which these could be supplied free in so large quantities: for be it remembered that all tracts are supplied free, being published out of voluntary contributions to the tract fund. However few and unpopular we are, dear friends, no other tract society can make so favorable a report. The Lord be praised that his free grace shed abroad in our hearts prompts us to the voluntary services. And having done what we could we feel it an offering far too small, and wholly unworthy of divine notice and acceptance, except in and through the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice.

(5) The "Pilgrim" Preaching Department.-- While all of the Lord's people are pilgrims and strangers and pilgrims journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, and while all also are preachers to the extent of their opportunities and talents, yet we use the above term to describe those who are going about from place to place where as many as four TOWER subscribers reside to meet with and encourage the brethren, both with public and private meetings. Like other departments this one is for your service and the Lord's glory, and not for money making. You are not asked to guarantee a salary of one or two hundred dollars per night for the service, but it is free--no collections even are taken up, and no money solicited in any manner: not even for traveling expenses. Three brethren are at present giving their entire time to this branch of the service, while twelve give more or less of their time; all of them are very zealous, however, and seeking to be more qualified and used by the Master in his service.

The traveling and other necessary expenses of these ministers (servants) are met out of your voluntary donations to the Tract Fund; and they ask no wages, preferring to wait for the rewards which God has promised. Nor are they laggards and drones: when they visit your town or city or village it means business --the King's business, which requires energy. They come to you expecting to hold afternoon and evening meetings daily, while they stay; and their stay will be for one, two or three days as per cards of notification. These are the Lord's servants, and your

servants for his sake: receive them as such. Let them receive the love of brethren; show toward them the hospitality you would surely extend to the Lord, for they are "members of his body," and like yourself his representatives.

One very earnest Brother, who for years has been a generous contributor to the work and helpful every way, writes us that being appreciated by his employer he has received a substantial increase in his salary and thereby expects to be able to considerably increase his '98 contributions to the general fund for the spread of the good tidings: and having heard one of the "Pilgrims" he desires to become responsible for the expenses of one of these, after which, if he be able to give more, it shall go to the general work. This dear Brother, who resides in eastern Pennsylvania, is as modest and meek as he is zealous and unselfish and insists that his name be not mentioned. But he does this unto the Lord, and the Lord knows of it and, we may be sure, appreciates it and will by and by reward. Graciously our Lord has provided that every one that loves him may in some manner manifest that love;-- whether by casting two mites into his treasury or by giving even a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. "Where there's a will there's a way."

(6) Through the "Pilgrims" and through leaders and others, we have reports from all over the "harvest" field, continually. We are glad to be able to inform you that while our great adversary, Satan, is permitted by the Lord to trouble and prove and sift his people as heretofore, and in some respects more than ever, yet in our opinion the Church everywhere has been growing in grace during the past year, more than ever before; and consequently is better able to stand

R2234 : page 310

such attacks and get a blessing instead of an injury out of them, even tho the siftings result in the falling away of some, who despite every effort toward "pulling them out of the fire," become "offended."

Many letters have told us of blessings which resulted from following the suggestions of the Aug. 15th TOWER,--that as an assistance in the cultivation of the holy spirit of love each should ask help from on high each morning and should review the success or failure of the day before the Lord at evening prayer; and that on alternate Sundays Matt. 5:1-16 and 1 Cor. 13:1-13 be read and pondered. We trust that many more than we have yet heard from have followed this plan and experienced a blessing. There is a blessing in it for all who will practice it we believe and for our own part we will continue it during 1898. Who will join us? Brethren and Sisters, pray for us, as we also pray for you all!

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT.

During the year from Dec. 1, 1896, to Dec. 1, 1897, there has been circulated free the following reading matter, paid for out of the voluntary donations to the Tract Fund,--

Copies of OLD THEOLOGY TRACTS,..... 1,423,010.
" " ZION'S WATCH TOWER,..... 332,212.

Since tracts vary greatly in the number of their pages, it is customary to state their circulation by pages.

Thus stated the foregoing represent a
Total of Tract Pages..... 29,347,838.

The total number of copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN, circulated by the cooperation of this fund (not at its expense), was..... 69,891.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNT.

EXPENDITURES:--

For Tracts and TOWERS sent out free,..... \$7,296.90
Labor, for mailing same,..... 540.00
Postage, freight, wrappers, etc.,..... 760.00
Foreign translations, etc., account,..... 1,341.99
Traveling expenses, "Pilgrims," etc.,..... 1,935.20
Balance cash on hand,..... 191.80

Total,..... \$12,065.89
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RECEIPTS:--

Cash balance on hand, Dec. 1, '96..... \$ 314.35
From "Good Hopes," 8,165.61
" other sources,..... 3,585.93

Total,..... \$12,065.89
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"Good Hopes" blanks go with this issue, as usual; but do not understand them to be requests, they are merely notifications of an opportunity to join in this service.

The office associates and colaborers join in sending to all the TOWER readers our best wishes, Christian love, and the compliments of the holiday season. May our Lord give us all more and more to abound in all the fruits of the spirit and the service of each other and the truth.

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CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."--1 Jno. 1:9.

THE Apostle's address is not to unbelievers, unjustified persons, "sinners" in the ordinary sense of the word; on the contrary, he is addressing the justified and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and he classes himself with these, using the plural pronoun "we." The frequent mistake of applying this and similar passages to sinners in general has been injurious in two particulars:

(1) It has been injurious to the unregenerate, in that it has given some the impression that there is no difference between the Church and the world; and that all alike have access to God in prayer and for the forgiveness of daily trespasses. It has thus hindered some from realizing the necessity of faith in the atonement, and from definitely entering into covenant relationship with the Lord under the terms of the New Covenant. On the contrary all should be clearly informed of the fact that repentance and a particular, positive acceptance of Christ as their personal Savior are absolutely necessary, before they can "be accepted in the Beloved," and be treated as "sons of God," and enjoy the privileges of this relationship,--prayer, fellowship with God, divine care or providential oversight of their affairs and interests, and the favor of forgiveness of daily trespasses through the merit of the great High Priest.

(2) This oversight has had an injurious effect upon some Christians who have gone to the extreme of claiming that they can never commit sin, after their past sins have been graciously forgiven by the Lord, and after they have entered into the New Covenant relationship. Hence, we have the very wrong views and teachings of so-called "perfectionists" who claim, not merely that they are reckonedly perfect now, but that they are actually perfect in all their thoughts, words and deeds,--deceiving themselves and laying themselves liable to many grievous errors, as the Apostle declares in this connection.--Verses 8,10.

The object of the Apostle John in writing this epistle he clearly states, saying, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." It is a noteworthy fact that the vast majority of Christians never

R2235 : page 311

experience the fulness of joy and peace and blessing that they might possess. Too many are content with simply diluted first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and, as the Apostle Paul declares, such are merely "babes in Christ." They have a blessing of course in any relationship to the Lord, but they have not the fulness of joy which would be theirs if they progressed

in grace and in knowledge "to the full stature of a man in Christ." The object of the Apostle's writing them was to stir up the pure minds of believers to an appreciation and enjoyment of their privileges, that thereby they might grow and develop.

The Apostle follows the example of our Lord Jesus in symbolizing truth and righteousness as Light, and sin and every evil way as so much of opposing Darkness. God himself thus considered would be the very perfection of light,--"in him is no darkness," no sin, no imperfection. With this thought before the mind, the Apostle points out that any growth of fellowship with God which we may aspire to, must be along the lines of truth, goodness, purity; and he points out that it would be sin for us to say to others or to imagine in our own hearts that we are walking with God and having fellowship with him, if our course of life is a dark, a sinful one. Such are merely deceiving themselves and others: they are not deceiving God, and they are not getting the blessings of those who do "walk in the light."

Moreover, to the extent that we walk in the light and in harmony and fellowship with God, we will find ourselves in fellowship with all others who are like-minded. So then, if we do not "love the brethren, whom we have seen," so as to be able to have fellowship and spiritual pleasure with them, that would be an indication that we are not wholly in harmony and fellowship with God. But who are the "brethren?" Our Lord tells us that not all who profess his name are true brethren; he says, "Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven [be recognized as his brethren and joint-heirs], but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." We thus see that it is by our deeds and not merely by our professions that we are accepted of the Lord who again says, "Who are my brethren?... Verily, I say unto you he that doeth the will of my Father the same is my brother."--Matt. 7:21; 12:50.

So then, we are not to anticipate "fellowship" with all who name the name of Christ as a proof of fellowship with the Father, and that we are in the light: we are merely to anticipate this true fellowship with those who are earnestly seeking to do the Father's will, to serve his cause and exemplify the instructions of his Word, in their deeds as well as in their professions. Between all such there must be, whether hidden or open, a bond of fellowship and union--that bond is the one faith and one baptism into the one Lord.

But while this fellowship between us and the Lord and all who have his spirit is based upon our walking in the light, our following in his footsteps to the extent of our ability, nevertheless it does not imply absolute freedom from the imperfection of sin; altho under the New Covenant arrangement nothing is charged up to us as sin except in proportion as it has been wilfully

done. Nevertheless, because of the manifold temptations, and the weakness of our flesh, the result of inherited predisposition toward sin, it is impossible for us to avoid "short-comings" and faults. These may be properly termed sins as in this lesson, because "sin is a transgression of the law," however unintentional. But the divine arrangement under the New Covenant, on behalf of the Lord's people, is that these unintentional faults and short-comings need not be charged up against us as sins; but instead may be cleansed away upon our application to the Great High Priest, through the merit of the precious blood. Thus it is that the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin--keeps us clean from sin, if realizing our imperfections we continually make application for forgiveness.

The Apostle uses the word "sin" in a different sense than the above, further on in this epistle, saying (3:6-9), "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him nor [even] known him....He that committeth sin is of the devil.... Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God." Again he says (5:18), "We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not."

In these passages the Apostle uses the word "sin" in its full or absolute sense, meaning wilful sin, deliberate sin, intentional sin; sins that are not merely short-comings and faults, due largely or wholly to the imperfections of the flesh, inherited from our ancestors.

No one, the Apostle assures us, who has been begotten of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness and truth, could have any sympathy with sin so as to wilfully, knowingly and intentionally engage therein. All who so love sin and wilfully do it and approve it after they have a knowledge of the truth, are children of darkness who love darkness and who thus show that they have the spirit or disposition of Satan.

But let us return to the consideration of the other use of the word "sin" as found in this lesson, applying the term to the faults and imperfections which God's people are zealously striving against, and seeking to stamp out of their mortal bodies, and against which they are continually fighting a good fight and coming off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The Apostle intimates that there is danger that some will go to the extreme of denying that they have any faults, and thus deceive themselves and get into a snare of the adversary. It may be asked, What difference can it make if they are seeking to live

that they are imperfect and apply continually for cleansing through the precious blood. We reply that it makes a great difference: only as we confess our sins can they be forgiven, consequently those who deny that they have any sins, faults, imperfections, have a great load of them uncanceled, unforgiven, charged up against them; and because of this they would be accounted unworthy to be taken further along in the path of light, under the lead of the holy spirit, into the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love and wisdom of God, as revealed in his Word as meat in due season for the household of faith. Thus we see that there is but the one proper course of faith and conduct, in which we may have a complete fellowship with the Lord: those who take any other course are making God a liar, and he would not fellowship with them, but he will leave them to the darkness of their own way. Can we wonder then that so many are in darkness and lack evidences of fellowship with God, when we see how few confess their faults and seek to overcome them and to be cleansed in the only way of divine appointment?

These things are written not to cultivate in us the thought that we may sin with impunity, and be overtaken with faults through carelessness and inattention to the divine Word, and then go to the Lord for forgiveness. Quite to the contrary, these assurances of divine favor and willingness to forgive are designed to have upon our hearts a mellowing influence which will

R2236 : page 312

make us all the more careful to avoid sin, and to maintain fellowship with him who is the perfection of light and holiness. "These things are written that we sin not;" that we become not boastful of self, self-righteous, self-justified, and thus abominable in the Lord's sight: but that, fleeing from our weaknesses and imperfections, we lay hold upon the grace of God in Christ for their forgiveness, and for grace and strength increasingly to fight a good fight against sin.

"If any man [in Christ] sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here again, "any man" does not refer to those who are out of Christ, but to those who are under the terms and conditions of the New Covenant. Such alone are addressed in this Epistle. The world has no Advocate with the Father, because it has not accepted Christ, and he is the Advocate only for those who have accepted him and who are striving to overcome sin.

Our Advocate is more than an advocate, more than a representative at the bar of divine justice, interested in our welfare and forgiveness; he is in addition the one who gave himself for us, who at Calvary finished the work of making a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins. This is the reason why we may come "with boldness to the throne of grace," not only

realizing that God is for us, and that our Lord Jesus sympathizes with and is our Advocate, but also and specially realizing the merit of the sacrifice which he has already paid to Justice, and which he has made fully applicable on behalf of all who love and obey him, on application.

But, says the Apostle, he is the propitiation not merely for our sins (the Church's sins), but "also for the sins of the whole world." What does this mean? Is he the Advocate for the whole world? No; not yet. The world has not yet been called and drawn to holiness and truth. During the present age "no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him." And this drawing influence of the truth is at present extended only to "him that hath an ear to hear." A great mass of mankind have never heard in any sense of the word of the grace of God, and of the propitiation and forgiveness, provided for all in Christ. Indeed, it is a remarkably small number who "have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

Yet so surely as the propitiation was made "for the sins of the whole world," just so surely shall every member of mankind be brought to a knowledge of the fact, and to an opportunity to avail himself of the provided blessing. It is to this end that the great Millennial age has been promised and is being prepared for: and it is concerning that age of blessing to "all the families of the earth" that the Lord declares through the prophet "In that day the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears shall be unstopped." It is of that time that our Lord Jesus also declared, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." It is by virtue of his having been lifted up as the propitiation, the sin-offering, "for the sins of the whole world," that our glorified Lord will eventually be privileged to be the Judge of the world and to grant forgiveness and reconciliation and restitution to all who will heartily obey him; while "whosoever will not obey that Prophet will be cut off from amongst the people,"--in the second death.--Acts 3:23.

As the drawing now, by the Father, is not a compulsion, but merely a constraining by the truth, through a knowledge of it, so the drawing of the Millennial age upon the world of mankind will not be a compulsion, but merely the influence of righteousness and truth constraining toward love for righteousness and thus to the reward of righteousness--eternal life.

The Apostle seems to intimate in our lesson that quite a good number may claim an intimate knowledge of God falsely, and hence with great plainness of speech he informs us that, "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him." It is thus very evident that the Apostle does not mean merely a knowledge about God but an intimate knowledge of God; implying fellowship and

communion with him: he then gives us a test by which we may judge accordingly whether or not we are new creatures in the Lord and have the love of God developed in us to any extent. The test is obedience. In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the holy spirit, the spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us to both will and do his good pleasure--to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. And altho we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be "changed" and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless all the while we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with him: and by confessing our faults and seeking his forgiveness we may continue to the end of our journey clean from sin, even tho we must still acknowledge the imperfections of the flesh,--that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection.

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R2236 : page 313

BAPTISM OF JESUS AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS WORK.

--JAN. 2.--MATT. 3:7-17.--

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."--Matt. 3:17.

JOHN, the Baptizer, was a fearless minister of the truth, whose courage qualified him well for the work given him to do, the announcement and introduction of our Lord Jesus and the new dispensation which his ministry inaugurated. And unless it be clearly recognized that a great change of dispensation was due and at hand at that time, and that John was the divine agent in announcing that crisis in their affairs to Israel, the lesson before us cannot be rightly appreciated or understood.

At the time in question, Judaism was in many respects in a more flourishing condition than it had ever before been: idolatry in its cruder forms was unknown, and Phariseism was the controlling influence. The word Pharisee to-day has come to be the synonym of hypocrite and impostor, but at that time it was the name given to and accepted by the professedly most pious class in Israel, people who professed consecration to the Lord, who studied the Law diligently and were zealous in prayer and the propagation of the Jewish religion. It was the time of the greatest missionary effort that had ever been made by the Jews, as our Lord testified, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte." The Sadducees also professed holiness of life, altho they denied much of the Scripture and were

practically the "higher critics" in religious matters, among the Jews of that day.

Under these circumstances we may imagine the surprise and consternation which John's preaching would arouse when he addressed members of the leading religious sects as sinners, "a generation of vipers." He thus implied what our Lord plainly stated to the same classes, namely, that their religion was one of outward forms and ceremony merely, and not of the heart. We fear that if the same inspired teacher were to preach to-day he would similarly address and surprise many who have "a form of godliness" and outward devotion to Sectarianism and to its propagation.

"Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" We do not understand John's language here to refer to flames and torments after death, but to a wrath of God about to come upon that nation; because of its hypocritical formalism and failure to live up to the light and privileges which it enjoyed.--Compare 1 Thess. 2:16; Rom. 9:22,27-29 and Luke 21:23,24.

The fact that the Scribes and Pharisees came to John and were baptized of him signified repentance and turning to God; but John points out that more than an outward profession of repentance is necessary; that there should be such a reform of life as would yield fruit and clearly show the repentance. He clearly saw that the Jews were resting self-satisfied in the divine promises to Abraham; feeling that because they were his natural offspring they must therefore, necessarily, be the heirs of the promises made to him. Thus God's favor to them was proving an ensnarement, a hindrance to their proper humility of heart and carefulness of life. John would have them see that to be heirs of the Abrahamic promise would necessitate that they should have also Abraham's faith, and works or fruits corresponding and resulting. And he declares, therefore, that God is able to raise up children to Abraham, to inherit the promises, wholly outside of Abraham's fleshly posterity: which he has done during this Gospel age;--taking not stones, but Gentiles for the purpose.

Proceeding, John boldly declares that the testing time, the critical time for them as a people, has come. For centuries they had been the recipients of divine favor and blessings and mercies: now the question with them was,--To be or not to be longer God's peculiar

R2237 : page 313

people. The axe of divine judgment is whetted, and the time of crisis has come, and it would thenceforth be an individual matter and not a national question as to who shall be the children of Abraham. Every one of them in whom would be found the good fruitage of righteousness would be spared of the Lord and transplanted into the more favorable condition of the Gospel dispensation, while every one of them found unworthy

would be cut off from divine favor, even tho they outwardly made loud professions. Thus cut down they would be cast into the fire,--the fire of trouble which came upon that nation, the "wrath" of verse seven, which ended with the complete overthrow of their polity.

John recognized and freely stated that his work was merely a reformatory and preparatory work and that the one who was to do the testing was mightier than himself--the Messiah. He declared himself so inferior as to be unworthy to be his sandal-bearer. This greater one, for whom he was the forerunner or introducer or herald, was the one who would bless all those found worthy of a blessing, by baptizing them with the holy spirit from on high; and he also would be the one who would send the "fire," judgment, tribulation or destruction upon the others of that nation found unworthy of the holy spirit. This prophecy of John we recognize as amply and literally fulfilled. Those gathered out as a result first of John's preaching, and subsequently of the preaching of the Lord and his apostles during his ministry, were blessed with the benediction of the holy spirit, the "spirit of adoption," at Pentecost; and others subsequently were gathered and likewise blessed by the ministry of the holy spirit in these; and it was not long after Pentecost before the fires of sedition, strife, envy, malice, hatred, etc., began to burn throughout the land of Israel and ultimately resulted in the utter destruction of their national existence, A.D. 70.

John uses the harvesting process as an illustration of our Lord's work; and this is in full accord with the statement of Scripture, that our Lord in the end of the Jewish age was the reaper or harvester who had a definitely appointed harvesting time, in which he gathered the real wheat of that nation into the Gospel garner and then cleaned up the field by burning the chaff or refuse. John declared that he would thoroughly cleanse the "wheat," fan out the "chaff" from the "wheat." The separation between the mere professors and the Israelites indeed should be thoroughly and completely accomplished at the hands of this great harvester during the harvest time of that age. The unquenchable fire in which the chaff of that people suffered, was the time of trouble already referred to in verses seven and eleven, which culminated A.D. 70. It was an "unquenchable fire" or destruction: they endeavored to quench or stop the trouble many times, but all their

R2237 : page 314

efforts were fruitless: it was unquenchable because the Lord intended that it should thoroughly consume them nationally. Nor have they ever since succeeded in restoring their national polity; nor will they succeed until the full number of the elect Church has been completed

(Rom. 11:25), and until the times of the Gentiles (the period apportioned to Gentile governments, Luke 21:24) shall have run their course, A.D. 1915.

Another Scripture shows us that our Lord at this time, when coming to John to be baptized of him, was thirty years of age. The age of thirty was the beginning of manhood's estate according to the Law, and since John was only six months older than Jesus, it is the reasonable presumption that he had been preaching just six months before our Lord's baptism occurred. John's objection to the baptism of Jesus (his cousin) whose nobility of birth and character he already recognized (Luke 1:41-44), was because he recognized baptism only from the Jewish standpoint, and not from the standpoint of the new dispensation, which began with our Lord. John's baptism of the Jews signified merely a repentance of sin and reformation of life. But not so our Lord Jesus' baptism: it meant another thing entirely. Our Lord had no sins to repent of, nor to reform from, being "holy, harmless, separate from sinners," as John also recognized. Our Lord's baptism signified consecration, a full giving up or burial of the will, its immersion into the will of God. Our Lord made such a consecration himself at the earliest moment possible under the Law, thirty years of age. And now he was merely symbolizing that real baptism by a water baptism, which constituted an outward confession of his consecration to God, and was an example for all who should afterward seek to walk in his footsteps.

As our Lord came up out of the water the Father granted a special manifestation of approval, by communicating to him the holy spirit, marking his acceptance and sealing him as the heir of the blessings already promised. Not only was the holy spirit given, but an outward manifestation of the gift was granted, especially to John; that he might know of a surety that Jesus was the Messiah, accepted of God as such, and might announce him to those who had accepted his ministry and become truly repentant of sins and desirous of bearing the fruits of righteousness. It does not appear that the multitude saw the manifestation of the spirit in the form of a dove lighting down upon our Lord.--John 1:29-34.

Why the form of a dove should be adopted for a manifestation of the holy spirit is a question. We presume because a dove is a fit representative or emblem of gentleness and meekness; and from the time that a dove returned to the Ark of Noah, with an olive branch in its mouth, both the dove and the olive branch have been symbols of peace and good will. The dove, therefore, was a most fitting emblem of the spirit of meekness, patience, long suffering, brotherly-kindness, love, and faithfulness which is the spirit of the Father --the holy spirit.

At this same time came a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well

pleased." It would appear that such a voice was heard on three different occasions. (1) At the time of our Lord's baptism here narrated. (2) On the mount of transfiguration. (Mark 9:7.) (3) At the close of our Lord's ministry, just before the crucifixion. (John 12:28.) Yet apparently these voices, while understood and appreciated by some as attestations to our Lord's acceptance with the Father, were by others variously attributed; some saying that an angel had spoken and others that it thundered. (John 12:28,29.) And so it seems to be with every manifestation of divine truth. Those who are in a right attitude of heart can and do receive the Lord's message and find abundant ground for faith and trust; while others, out of harmony with the divine arrangement, are continually therefore skeptical and lacking of to them satisfactory evidence. The truth, evidently, then as now, was meat only for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and these who have the hearing ear are such as have honesty of heart and a full consecration to the Lord.

To draw a lesson from these things specially applicable to our own day should be a part of our object. We have come to the "harvest" time of the Gospel age: again the Chief Reaper is present; not in the flesh, to be a sin-offering, but now in the glory of his exalted divine nature. The axe is laid to the root of the trees again. It is no longer a question of being a citizen of favored Christendom, nor of being a member of its various sects; but it is an individual test. Every one (not every individual in the world, just as it was not every individual in the world in the days of John the baptizer--then it was every one in the Jewish nation, now it is every one in the nominal Christendom, and does not at all refer to the masses of heathendom) is now to be subjected to certain tests, and by these tests he will either be accepted and further blessed or be rejected and suffer the consequences. The testings of the "harvest" of this age which are parallel to those of the Jewish age and were typified thereby, are clearly pointed out in our Lord's discourse of Matt. 13:24-43. The Jewish harvest is spoken of as being a separation of wheat from chaff, while the harvest of this age is designated a separation of "wheat" from "tares." As the Jews little realized that the Lord and his apostles in their ministry were doing this separating work by the preaching of the truth, so nominal Christendom little realizes to-day that a similar work and separation as between "wheat" and "tares" is now in progress. As the Jews in general failed to recognize the gathering of the "wheat" of their age into the garner of the Gospel dispensation, so nominal Christians to-day fail to see that the "wheat" of this age is being gathered by the Lord into his garner, the Kingdom. As the Jews failed to recognize the binding and blinding influences which came upon them and enkindled amongst them the fires of judgment,

wrath, destruction, so nominal Christians to-day, while they recognize the peculiar binding together in social bundles now in progress, and while they see all the preparations for the coming great social revolution, time of trouble, wrath, burning, destruction of present systems, etc., are nevertheless blind respecting what all these things really mean, and fail to see that these are features of the "harvest" work now in progress, under the supervision of the great Reaper. They fail also to recognize him present, notwithstanding the repeated declaration, similar to that made by John at the first advent--"There standeth one among you whom ye know not."

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page 315

INTERESTING LETTERS.

Pennsylvania.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--My letters to you recently have been few and far between; but now thankfulness to our Lord and to you as his instrument for the good things of DAWN, VOL. IV., calls for a letter of recognition at least.

As with the other three volumes, it is as far as I can see in thorough harmony with the Scriptures. Chapters 1, 11, 12, 13 and 14 are grand--they impressed me especially. Chapters 2 and 3 are also splendid--and the testimony in the remaining portions of the book, from the press, etc., is wonderfully corroborative of Scripture. I suppose most all of the Lord's people are like myself, especially interested in his Word: so while I think the statements of ministers, philosophers, statesmen, etc., in the DAWN will be very helpful to the Church, in fact almost invaluable, and were greatly appreciated by me, yet the greatest teachings and the lessons most enjoyed were such as "Our Lord's Great Prophecy." It always was a great prophecy to me, but now it has a greater meaning still. I am so thankful for a clear comprehension of that discourse of our Savior.

How many passages of Scripture make reference to this time of trouble, and yet how few we meet seem willing to believe it. They all admit we are in "dull times," "things are bad," etc.; but, as a gentleman said to me, "It is only like a point on a wheel, it is going down now, but soon it will start to go up, and we will have prosperous times till it passes the top again." That voices the popular sentiment; they fail to see the length and severity of the trouble, neither do they know that this trouble ends creation's groaning. Thank God for giving us light!

The Lord has still continued his blessings to us. I feel unworthy of them, and am trying to show my appreciation by using the opportunities and talents he gives me. Suffering for Christ is not yet unknown, neither is the accompanying grace. We love him more, know him better and trust we may ever continue to draw nearer to him who is our strength and shield, as well as our God and Father.

Yours in Christ's service, BENJ. H. BARTON.

Scotland.

DEAR BROTHER:--Brother Houston and myself frequently call upon each other, and have much good fellowship in the truths of MILLENNIAL DAWN. Many a time I feel overjoyed and thankful to the Lord for the clear light which you so well show us on God's own Word. My only regret is that being so busily occupied with my daily duties I am able to do so little in cooperation with Bro. H. to make known the truth. In this town, however, the views are fairly well known to most of the leaders in church matters, but their prejudice is great and their opposition most bitter. Be the truth ever so carefully set forth, and altho the vast importance of the gospel to this age be ever so strongly emphasized, any idea of future probation for the ignorant masses of the world at once sets up a strong prejudice, and we have to be careful that injury is not done to these precious truths in our hands. Bro. H. and myself feel more and more that the great thing is the personal living of the truths of DAWN. But oh! how we feel the littleness of all we can do, and how unworthy we are to be witnesses to the truth even in this limited degree.

Of Bro. H. I should not say that his work has been little. He has been able to make some very successful journeys in colporteuring DAWN, and has great power and fluency in declaring the glad tidings. Both of us take every opportunity in suitable conversation of bringing the truth under notice, and place tracts from time to time. At our Young Men's Guild meetings I have had several opportunities of presenting the doctrine of the ransom in its true light, and a good many have been interested.

As an introduction to the truths of DAWN, I find it usually very efficacious to draw attention to the endless doctrinal contradictions in the so-called Orthodox creeds of the day. In correspondence, too, I am able to do a little in the way of getting friends interested, but I must say a vast amount of indifference to such things abounds on all hands. Bro. H. and I have talked of getting up a little "DAWN Circle for Bible Study," and will see if it cannot possibly be managed judiciously this winter.

Before closing I must add that we are delighted to see that VOL. IV. of MILLENNIAL DAWN is now out, and pray that our Lord's blessing may follow every

copy, and be the means of turning many from darkness to the marvelous light.

I remain, your brother in the faith of our great
Ransomer, R. J. G. MILLAR.

Wisconsin.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--The last TOWER came to hand in due course, and is very welcome after its vacation. "The Day of Vengeance" was, you say in the preface, partially a review, but its order, and putting affairs so plainly and compactly, is a great service to those older in the truth, while making it particularly timely and valuable to those more recently coming to a consideration of these things.

The spirit of the last TOWER is especially refreshing and edifying. Oh! that we all might be so thoroughly in the Vine that his spirit only would control us, rooting out all variance, emulation, strife, and everything contrary to this blessed spirit of the truth, that all might more and more be transformed into the likeness and character of him who bought us with his own precious blood.

I send you this word of fellowship and greeting, praying a continuance of divine favor on you and all your associates, to whom I send greeting.

Yours in the Redeemer, W. E. PAGE.

Pittsburg, Pa.

"The fourth volume of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series, issued under the ominous title of 'The Day of Vengeance,' certainly takes in a very wide field, as it gives an extensive collection of facts and figures relating to almost every phase of social, political, financial and religious matters, as they bear upon the present situation. Nor are these dryly stated; on the contrary, they are introduced in such a manner as to fascinate every reader who is at all interested in the consideration of the wonderful events of 'our day.'"--
Pittsburg Press.

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