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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

CHRISTIANITY AND CONQUEST.

"IT WOULD be difficult for a confirmed cynic
to make a more bitter comment upon what we
may term political Christianity than has just been offered
in the conduct of the European Powers toward

China. In considering the partition of that Empire, the natural rights of its Government and people have not been taken into account, but only the desires and covetousness of the rival spoliators. And, however mild may be the later negotiations of the Germans at Kiao-Chau, their first intent, and the direct command of the Emperor, was to 'strike with a mailed fist' and take whatever they wanted by force. That is, or was, the attitude of that nation of Christian Europe, whose ruler most vaunts himself upon his divine right.

"Briefly stated, the doctrine is that heathen nations have no rights which Christian nations are bound to respect. The powerful Christian nations of Europe approach the weak heathen nations of Asia, to oppress and rob and murder. They say, 'Let us rob them of their land, which we covet'--in the name of him who commanded, 'Thou shalt not steal' and 'Thou shalt not covet.' They say, 'If they resist us, let us kill them'--in the name of him who said, 'Thou shalt not kill.' They say, 'Let us oppress them and compel them to do our will'--in the name of him who said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' That is what the Christian nations are practically saying and are actually doing....

"For Prince Henry of Prussia, who leads this great campaign against the Orient, and who goes thither to avenge the death of missionaries and to carry the beneficence of Europe to the benighted heathen, declares in terms that he will preach not Jesus of Nazareth, but William of Germany; not Christ crucified, but William crowned! Let there be no injustice done. Here are his identical words, spoken with the foreknowledge and approval of the Emperor himself: 'One thing,' he said, 'is the aim that draws me on. It is to declare in foreign lands the gospel of Your Majesty's hallowed person (das Evangelium Eurer Majestats geheiligter Person), to preach it to every one who will hear it, and also to those who will not hear it. This gospel I have inscribed on my banner, and I will inscribe it whithersoever I go.' Such, then, is the evangel of these few closing years of this nineteenth century of the Christian era.

"The German seizure of a part of China is probably the consummation of a long laid plan. There is reason to believe that such action was decided upon some years ago, to be taken as soon as a pretext was afforded. The pretext came in the murder of a couple of missionaries, and the seizure of Kiao Chau immediately followed. That the murders occurred when they did was a matter of chance, but the time could not have been chosen more opportunely to serve the German Emperor's ends. A foreign campaign for the acquisition of a new empire in China will give him the greatest possible aid in getting his Navy bill through the Reichstag, especially since the murdered missionaries whom he is avenging were Roman Catholics, and

it is the Roman Catholic vote in the Reichstag that he most needs. It will also serve to divert German attention from domestic distress and to make the people forget their poverty for a time in their enthusiasm for what is termed the honor of the Fatherland.

"There is perhaps no need greater than this latter, unless, indeed, it be to remedy the poverty, instead of merely glossing it over with military glory. For Germany, with all her progress, is wretchedly poor. With one of the greatest armies in the world and with commerce whitening--or blackening--every sea, her people are grovelling in abject poverty. The facts in the case are actually startling. In England the line of exemption from income-tax is drawn at \$800. In Prussia it is drawn at \$225. One would think that would leave all except paupers subject to taxation. On the contrary, it taxes only 8.46 per cent. of the people. No less than 91.54 per cent. of the people of Prussia, then, have to live on incomes of less than \$225 for each family! That is a picture of poverty literally appalling. That more than 29,000,000 out of 32,000,000 people

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should be living on incomes of less than 62 cents a day, such an income generally having to suffice for a whole family, is the blackest picture of German social economy that any enemy of the Fatherland could wish to draw.

"A generation ago matters were not as bad as they are now. Or, if they were, the people had not yet been waked to a realization of the fact, and they had no one in particular to blame for it. But Germany is now wide awake. The people know and feel how wretchedly poor they are. Rightly or wrongly, they blame the Government for it. Some demand more aid from the Government, in tariff protection and bounties. Others clamor for free trade, which may not increase their incomes, but would, they imagine, lessen their expenses. Others see in the vast expenditures for army and navy the source of all their woes. And others, weary of the problem, seek to escape it by expatriation. There is a desperate chance that foreign war, or at least colonial conquests, may for a time allay the rising discontent. But that will be an anodyne for the pain, not a remedy for the disease. The latter is something that is to be sought through other mediums than blood and iron."

* * *

Thus does the New York Tribune comment on the greed of the so called Kingdoms of God and of Christ --"Christendom," whose kings and emperors claim to reign "by the grace of God." No wonder, then, that people whose religious theories are in line with and

built upon such claims, and who believe that the Bible so teaches, are inclined to repudiate the Bible and to modernize Christianity and make of it a society for social and political reform, and without creed or any tests as to religious faith. Alas! that God's wise and gracious plan and its record, the Bible, should be so misrepresented amongst those who love and seek righteousness, justice.

THE UNITED STATES TO BE A KINGDOM OF GOD.

Notwithstanding the foregoing and all the records of the past fourteen centuries that claims on the part of worldly governments to be Kingdoms of God are hypocritical and blasphemously false, there are quite a number of very good but very much blinded people, who think that they could add to these Kingdoms of God another, if they could but get the name of the Creator into the Constitution of the United States. These people recently held a convention in the City of Philadelphia to forward their views and unanimously passed the following resolution without debate:--

"We recognize in our various young people's societies, in connection with the visible church, one of the mightiest forces on the side of Christian citizenship, and that we gladly anticipate the day when the united forces, now for many years drilled for active service, will, in connection with other Christian forces, so control the Constitution and administration of our Government that this nation will be a confession before the world, and, in fact, a kingdom of our Lord."

THE CHURCH A SOCIAL CLUB.

The Rev. Dr. Rainsford (Episcopalian) who is a leader in the Social Uplift movement in New York City recently preached a sermon to men, in which social and political and moral reasons only seem to have been advanced as reasons for joining and attending church. Commenting on quotations from that sermon a metropolitan editor says:--

"It will be seen that in all this there is no reference to the Church as a divine institution, in which lies the means of salvation for men. It is treated as a fallible human institution, which commends itself to men as a voluntary association simply, of moral and religious usefulness to them. That there is any divine obligation to join the Church and that its sacraments are a means of salvation is not contended by Dr. Rainsford. With all its faults, his argument is, the church is a desirable association for men, and attendance upon its services is of moral advantage to them.

"That is, in the view of Dr. Rainsford, the church is a sort of religious club to which a man should go for moral improvement. He says nothing about any religious belief required by it from him, but inferentially leaves him to believe or deny according as he is minded. So far as the Bible is concerned, he gives men an example of denial by himself refusing to accept its infallibility. Go to church, he says in substance, because the influences in it are good and pure, as a man might say, associate with refined people if you wish to take on refinement.

"Dr. Rainsford, moreover, commends the church specifically as a political club, and he referred to the late municipal election to illustrate its advantages as such. In that campaign his particular church was especially active as a political club. The Citizens' Union movement, so-called, was started in St. George's Church. Its candidate for Mayor was one of its vestrymen; the Chairman of the concern was another, and among the officers generally were a majority of that vestry. Dr. Rainsford, therefore, calls on men to join St. George's as a political club."

Thinking people have seen for some time that the religious features are gradually being dropped out of the "churches" and "gospels" of our day. This began

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in the centres of culture, but it is spreading everywhere.

* * *

Another earnest Christian gentleman, Rev. Robt. Johnston of London, Ontario, speaking at another convention for social uplift, said:--

"I utter no slander upon our own time nor upon any nation when I say that as an age we have lost the vision of the Almighty. The remarkable resources of our great continent, resources that multiply in variety and increase in vastness the more we learn of them, throw in the path of the nation exceptional dangers. History has written it in letters big with the ruin of

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nations and vivid with the fires of devastating armies, that an age of mammon worship and of luxury is ever an age of withering blight upon all institutions of social and civic strength. And such, in this free land of ours, this age threatens to be, unless God in his mercy turns us from our infatuation. The age needs heroic souls who, with clarion call, will, in the old prophetic spirit, lead us back to a sight of things that are true and eternal."

These men see clearly enough that our civilization,

energized by the spirit of selfishness, is leading the world to the great whirlpool of discontent and destruction which the Scriptures have distinctly portrayed, but which they have misread because of their false creeds and theories which have led them to believe that human efforts are to bring in the Millennium of blessing and peace in which God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Mark the earnest prayer for heroic souls to lead the Lord's people back "to a sight of things that are true and eternal." We cannot question the sincerity of this prayer, and yet, strange to say, experience proves that nine out of ten, if not ten out of ten, of those who use similar language, are thoroughly unapproachable so far as the truth and appeals to God's Word are concerned; and the "heroic soul" that ventures to present the real "glad tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people," is tolerably sure to need a great deal of heroism and divine grace to take meekly and patiently the disdainful, cold reception which he will encounter and the calumnious epithets that will be hurled at him.

But why should good men be so bound up with error? It is the influence of sectarianism and is undoubtedly a part of the blinding influence of Satan, which the Apostle Paul describes in 2 Cor. 4:4. And such bounden and deceived ones deserve our sympathy rather than any unkind feelings. We can rejoice in the fact that the time is near when Immanuel with his elect and then glorified "little flock," the true Church, shall bind Satan and set at liberty his blinded captives. --Rev. 20:2,3; Isa. 61:1.

EVANGELIST B. FAY MILLS' THEOLOGY.

Evangelist Mills, after for a long time preaching hell and damnation instead of the Gospel of Christ--that the entire race is doomed to everlasting torment because father Adam ate the forbidden fruit, found it too much for his heart as well as too much for his intellect to believe. Consequently, some time ago he changed and switched off to another gospel--equally unscriptural: he is now a Universalist. Note his statement of his present faith as presented in a Boston sermon and reported by the Boston Herald, as follows:

"You need not ever give yourselves the least concern about the old question of God's forgiveness for the past. You have had wrong ideas of God. The past does not need forgiveness or atonement in his sight. It is only the present that needs correction and the future that needs inspiration.

"I realize to-day that the only real, powerful motive for the future for intelligent people, that shall lead them to practice purity and to grow in all that is

good and beautiful, will be what might well be called 'the social motive for individual righteousness.' As I said in a former sermon, the old individualistic motives, and the appeal to man to be good on the ground of personal reward or punishment, has become an ignoble appeal, and has been abandoned by the best minds and noblest souls. Woe be to us if the stronger motive and impulse for righteousness does not take its place, and this motive is nothing more nor less than the realization that we are all bound together in a common body of humanity--that if one suffers, all must suffer; that if one sins, all must be hampered in their development, that "no man liveth unto himself," and that in any real sense, no individual can be truly saved until the whole community is saved."

How remarkable it does seem that the great Adversary is so successful in getting people to believe either one or the other of errors, extremes, and keeps hid from them the golden truth between!--that the penalty of Adam's sin was death, destruction, and not life in torment, and that this death sentence has been inherited with its mental, physical and moral blights in a natural way, by heredity (Rom. 5:12); and that a ransom for Adam (and hence for all lost through him) was paid by the death of our Lord Jesus, who died, the just for the unjust, to open for man the way back to life, and whose second advent is to be for the double purpose of glorifying his elect little flock and restoring to perfection and life so many as will accept divine favor on divine terms.

ZIONISM AND THE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES.

Some years ago, being curious to know how learned Hebrews view the Old Testament references to Christ, --as "a lamb for the slaughter," etc., we visited a friendly Rabbi, and asked him the question. He replied that Hebrews apply those prophecies to the Hebrew people and their centuries of bitter experiences under more or less of persecution. We are forcibly reminded of this false method of interpretation by the statement of Dr. Herzl at the Basel Congress, held Aug. 29th, last;--to the effect that that Congress was the birth of their Messiah;--that the Messiah class which they hope will fulfil all the good promises of Scripture concerning Abraham's seed was there organized. It appears, too, that the date (Aug. 29) was selected in harmony with a tradition prevalent among the Bulgarian Jews to the effect that Messiah would be born on that date.

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This is quoted with some assurance of endorsement

by Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf in a recent discourse from which we quote the following comment on the Zionist movement and Congress. He said:--

"The boldness of that dream startled the world.

As for me, when the full report reached me and I read the fearful story of the 'Judennoth,' that was submitted to the congress, I could not wonder at the statement made by Dr. Herzl, the president of the congress, during the first day's session: 'The Bulgarian Jews have long believed that the Messiah should be born on a 29th of August. They were right, THE MESSIAH HAS BEEN BORN TO-DAY in the Zionist Congress.'

"It was a magnificent assemblage of Israelites that had gathered there in congress. Two hundred delegates, representing as many hundreds of thousands of people, had come with a most sacred purpose, that of putting an end to the persecutions and miseries of millions of Jews, by reacquiring for them of their own native Palestine and reestablishing them there in peaceful and honorable industries.

"It was beyond doubt the most remarkable gathering in the whole history of Israel. The venerable Dr. Lippe opened the congress and Dr. Herzl gave the key note of the movement, comparing the inflictions of the modern anti-Semite with the Jew baiter of former centuries. A similar tale of woe was told by Max Nordau. It was the same refrain by all, and the congress concluded that the settlement of Palestine was the only solution of the Jewish question.

"It was a dream and yet not all a dream. Some very stern reality was beneath it all, which neither skeptic nor scoffer can sneer away. It has come to stay. The superstructure of the castle will, in all probability, take a different and more practical form from that outlined in its first designs, but the foundation upon which it rests will remain unchanged. Among those builders who had come from different parts of the world to discuss the plans for an ark of safety, there may have been many a visionary, but there were also those who know from personal bitter experience the real need of an ark that is to bear the Jew high on the crest of the flood of the 'Judennoth' that is rushing in upon us from all sides. The foundation timber is: Relief of the fatally congested centers of Jewish population by means of agriculture and colonization at home, abroad, in adopted lands, in Zion, anywhere, everywhere, but always agriculture with its accompanying handicraftsmen, industrialists and men following professions.

"Upon research, I have found that Palestine, with the adjacent countries stretching between the Euphrates and the Tigris, that are now almost deserted, could amply support millions of agriculturists. The soil is luxuriantly fertile, the climate salubrious, the water pure and abundant, the irrigation canals of the ancients still available. The winters are short and mild, the

summers long enough to ripen two harvests. The products of all the land can be laid down in the capitals of Europe within five days after their shipment and in price and excellence they can drive from the market those of other competing countries. Because of these conclusions I have been proclaimed a Zionist and asked to attend the second congress at Jerusalem next summer."

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"TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?"

"Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."--John 6:68.

THERE are numerous voices in the world, calling mankind to follow in the pursuit of pleasure, of riches, of wisdom, etc., and various are the inducements presented, and to the young and inexperienced the bewilderment of so many attractions is great. But experience has taught many of us, that these seductive Siren voices would but lead us to shipwreck upon hidden rocks and shoals, and that "all that glitters is not gold." We have learned that the cravings of our own human natures are quite unreliable, that we are fallen beings, that our tastes and appetites are perverse, and so depraved that frequently we crave the things that tend to do us injury, and are inclined to reject the things which are best for us. Our Lord speaks of these various voices calling mankind and leading astray, and contrasts them with his own call of his own "sheep" who hear and obey it, saying, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; strangers will they not follow, because they recognize not the voices of strangers. --See John 10:3-5.

Not all are able to hear and recognize the Shepherd's voice in the present time; the majority are deaf on this subject, however acute their hearing may be as respects the inducements held out to them by the world, the flesh and the devil. Consequently the Scriptures say, "He that hath an ear to hear [the gospel] let him hear." But the opening of our ears to hear the good tidings, of which Christ is the center, does not close them to the various voices of selfishness, ambition, pride, avarice, and vain-glory, and the other voices proceeding from the world, the flesh and the devil: it would seem indeed that, after accepting us to be his sheep, and after giving us some opportunity to learn the sound of the Shepherd's voice, the voice of Truth, we are intentionally exposed to the various voices which would call us away from our Shepherd, and from following in

his footsteps. And Oh, how many stray away! "Walking after their own desires." How many thus become side-tracked on the way to the heavenly city! How many are ultimately entirely switched off into another direction! How many have thus gone "back and walked no more with him!" How few, what a "little flock," they are that follow on, day by day, to know the Shepherd more fully, to walk in his paths, and ultimately

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with him to reach the heavenly Kingdom!

It will be remembered that the words of our text were called forth by a certain sifting of the discipleship. Our Lord's ministry had progressed considerably: at first, the people hung upon his words and said, "Never man spake like this man," and "great multitudes followed him." But towards the close of his ministry, as the jealousy and animosity of the "Doctors of Divinity" and the Pharisees began to manifest itself, he became less popular, and in our context we find that many of his hearers were leaving him, and he said, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered and said unto him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." Such siftings and testings of the Lord's disciples have been in progress throughout the Gospel age, and still continue. Many have directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, repudiated the great Shepherd, his leading and his instruction. Some, because the chief priests, scribes and Pharisees said, "He hath a devil and is mad. Why hear ye him?" Some, because they did not understand his teachings, and they said, "This is a hard saying: who can believe it?" Others, because his teaching drew the line too sharply between righteousness and sin, between God and Mammon; and we may understand as literal our Lord's statement that eventually only a "little flock" will be found worthy of the Kingdom.

It may sound harsh to some, because of their misconception of the subject, when we say that the Lord's message and leading were as much intended to shake off and repel one class, as to attract and to hold another class. That would be inconceivable, if the ones repelled and shaken off were understood to be shaken into a hell of eternal torment, and such is the general misconception of the subject. On the contrary the attraction and the drawing was to the Kingdom, and the repulsion was from the Kingdom, and the sifting and separating of our Lord's day, and since and at the present time, is to the intent that the Lord may gather out and separate from those who nominally profess to

be his followers, and to be seeking heirship with him in his Kingdom, all who are unworthy of those blessings. As it is written, concerning the end of the Gospel age, and the final glorification of the "little flock," "He shall gather out of his Kingdom [class] all things that offend and them that do iniquity....Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." We may rest assured that none who are fit for the Kingdom will be sifted out. Of such it is written, "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand;" and again, "If ye do these things [hearken to the voice of the Lord and cultivate his spirit and walk in his ways], ye shall never fall [for so doing], and an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

How all-important then it is, that we have our minds thoroughly made up respecting the voice that we will obey and the footsteps that we will follow--for "a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." We "cannot serve God and Mammon," however much we try. We cannot hear and obey the voice of Satan and Sin and the World and Self and the Flesh, and at the same time hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd, the voice of Truth, the voice of Love. Let this be settled and fixed in our minds, that it may keep us from all wavering after we have once taken our place amongst the Lord's sheep.

In order that the decision may be the proper one, and in order that it may be the final decision, from which we will not think to turn, it is well that we should note the different voices calling us, and to what they lead. We will not notice these voices as they appeal to the world in general, but merely as they appeal to those who have already heard the voice of the Good Shepherd. They assume that they will not antagonize our faithfulness to the Shepherd, but that they will heartily cooperate. The Shepherd, however, declares that this will not be the case; that the selfish voices of the world are calling, influencing, drawing away from him and the path in which he leads his sheep.

Wealth calls to us, holding out its golden charms, and promising great things; suggesting meanwhile that our religious zeal is right enough, but overwrought, fanatical, and that in this measure only it is in opposition to wealth; and that even if obliged to leave the Lord for the sake of wealth it need only be temporarily, and that soon, having acquired wealth, we could pursue after him with redoubled energy and thus gain the Kingdom. Alas, how delusive! and yet how many are attracted by this call and presentation! Well does the Apostle say that "The love of money is a root of all evil, which some coveting after have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Then, too, how false are these hopes, how few amongst the many who pursue wealth ever attain

it! Indeed, it is not the wealth that is the evil, for God is rich above all; it is the love of earthly wealth and the manner in which it absorbs the heart affections, away from the truth and its service and heavenly things, that constitutes the evil and the snare of wealth which remarkably few ever resist, overcome and bring into subjection to the divine will.

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Many hear the voice of Fame, and pursue it, if peradventure they will become famous, highly esteemed among men. The impelling motive here is, in part at least, pride and approbateness--ambition for self--not for God, nor for righteousness. And how few who turn aside from the Lord's way, in whole or in part, to gain fame, worldly renown, honor of men, ever attain to fame in any considerable measure! It is a false voice leading on to false hopes, soon shattered in death, if not before: it would induce us to turn aside from the humble path of obedience and self abasement in the divine service whose reward is "Glory, honor and immortality" at God's right hand of favor.

Others hear the voice of worldly pleasure, and see the millions of earth seeking it in the gratification of the flesh: and there is a great drawing to go with the multitude, seeking pleasure through the gratification of our perverted natural tastes. How long it takes us to learn assuredly that worldly pleasures are fleeting, and that they have a bitter which counterbalances every sweet, and that the tendencies of Vanity Fair are quite contrary to the new ambitions, new hopes, new desires of our new natures! How many efforts all of the Lord's people have made, to blend or mix the pleasures of the world with the heavenly joys, only to find that they will not blend, and that true happiness for those who would abide in Christ and follow in his footsteps, means the rejection of all pleasures which have a sinful combination or tendency! How long it takes us to learn that the only pleasures which the new creature can truly enjoy, are those in which our Lord can be our companion, those which we can discuss with him and in which we can enjoy his fellowship!

All of these besetments, be it noticed, have their roots in selfishness--they are all in some form inclinations to self-gratification: on the other hand the voice of the Good Shepherd is calling us away from our debased

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selfish conditions, moods and desires, to a higher plane of sentiment, a plane of benevolence, love of God and righteousness and fellow men, which seeks to "do good and to communicate." We see, too, that having set before us the new conditions, our Lord, our Teacher, is permitting the selfish tendencies of our

natural hearts and of the world in general to call us in other directions; so that by learning to resist these, we may more and more establish for ourselves strong characters, rooted, grounded, fixed, in righteousness and love, strong and able to resist the weaknesses of our own flesh as well as the influence of friends and of the world in general.

Only such as thus develop character can possibly be "overcomers" of the world, and only such will be accepted of the Lord as his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. It will thus be seen that the Lord is not merely seeking for those who will make a covenant with him, but by lessons of trial and discipline and testings by the way he is seeking to prove his people--to test them, to find and to separate to his own service not those who are strong in self-will, strong according to the flesh, but those who, abandoning the will of the flesh, give themselves so completely to the Lord that they become transformed by the renewing of their minds,--"strong in the Lord and in the power of his might."

In harmony with this thought are the words of the Lord to fleshly Israel, the typical people,--"The Lord your God proveth you to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (Deut. 13:3.) This explains the object and intent of the divine course with us, the true Israel, throughout the Gospel age: he has been proving his people, testing them, to ascertain the degree and the strength of their love for him. He tells us that "Not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter the Kingdom:" that many who make the covenant of full consecration will fail to keep it, fail to obey its requirements, and that their failure will indicate a deficiency of love for him, and that self-will still reigns in their hearts, giving God only the secondary place. And the Kingdom is only intended for those who by God's grace shall at heart become like to the Lord Jesus, in that they will love the Lord with all their hearts, with all their souls, and be able to say, "Not my will, but thy will, O Lord, be done." No other condition than this condition of full submission to the Lord can make us acceptable for the Kingdom; for no other condition represents full self-submission and full love to God. And let us not forget that all the heavenly things which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," God hath reserved for them that love him supremely.

Hence, however desirable it may be that our friends and neighbors should surrender themselves to the Lord on their death-beds, if they will not sooner surrender, it is nevertheless very evident that those who so repent in their dying hours, are not to be regarded as in any sense of the word, "heirs of the Kingdom;" for it is not supposable that in the few short hours or days after their repentance they could develop the requisite staunch characters: they have not passed

through such testings of faith and love and zeal for the Lord as would develop in them the characteristics of "overcomers"--the Kingdom class. Those who surrender to the Lord on their death-bed may, however, be encouraged to hope for his blessing in the Millennial age, and for an opportunity to come to a fuller knowledge of the Lord and to have an opportunity to cultivate character in that Paradisaic condition--as the Lord promised to the dying thief.

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If we could but keep in memory the fact that every trial, every persecution, every difficulty of life, permitted to come upon those who have made the covenant of sacrifice with the Lord, is intended to prove them, to test their love, to see whether or not their characters are fixed, rooted and grounded in righteousness and being built up in love, it would put all these trials, difficulties and temptations in a new light before us, and greatly assist us in fighting a good fight and overcoming. We would say, If by these little trials the Lord is proving my love and devotion to him, then, however trifling they may be or however important, I will diligently use them as favorable opportunities to demonstrate to my Lord the fulness of my love and devotion to him and his cause. Thus viewed and thus met, every trial and every difficulty would prove to be a blessing: as the Apostle puts it, "Beloved, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;" "greatly rejoice, tho now for a season ye are in manifold temptation, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth, tho it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." "Blessed is the man that endureth [faithfully under] temptation; for after his trials he will receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory"--if rightly utilized.--1 Pet. 1:7; Jas. 1:2,12.

Thus we are again assured that those who love the Lord, and who in consequence will receive the Kingdom, will be those whose love will have been tested by trials and temptations on the way to it. Those who do not love the Lord with all their hearts, in whom self or some other idol has first place, will be seduced by the world, the flesh or the devil into some form of rebellion against the divine Word or divine providence: they will have schemes and theories which they will prefer to the Lord's plan, and their own theories and plans when analyzed will usually be found to be based either upon selfishness or ambition or upon an evil spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, etc.

The Lord's leading and the Lord's words lose their attraction to such, and they lose their interest correspondingly,

and like those who turned away from the Lord at the first advent, saying, "This is a hard saying" --they walk no more with him. But some will continue to walk with the Lord; some will not be driven from him by any of the arts and wiles of the evil one. They are such as are at heart fully the Lord's, not their own; they will follow wherever the Lord may lead, because they have no will except his will. These will follow the Lord in the narrow way of trial, discipline and testings during the present life, and by and by, as he has declared, "They shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." (Rev. 3:4.) Nor will this company lack in numbers by reason of the falling away of some. No, it will be full, complete, the predestinated number which God foreordained he would select to be joint-heirs with his Son, our Lord Jesus. His foreknowledge permitted him to make full allowance for all who would turn back, as well as to foreknow that the requisite number would go on.

Those who go on will all have the general character of Christ--faithfulness to the Lord and to his word of promise: and when various voices call in various directions, away from the narrow way of consecration and sacrifice, humiliation and self-denial, they, in answer to the Lord's query, "Will ye also go away?" will answer as did the apostles of old, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." They know nowhere else to go; they cannot turn back, for they can see clearly that to turn back on their part would be as the Scriptures express it, to "turn back unto perdition," to the second death. Having heard the calls of the world, the flesh and the Devil, they have seen also the emptiness of all their false promises, and how none of them can give a satisfying portion. But in our Lord's call they have recognized not only righteousness, justice, but have recognized, also, the promised reward of righteousness through Christ, which he has promised to them that love him--namely, eternal life.

Nowhere else is there such a promise; from no other quarter comes such a hope; in no other service, therefore, could they think of engaging but in this service. With the hope of obtaining this prize of eternal life, they could rejoice even in laying down this present life. Truly, this is that "blessed hope." With such hopes before them, clearly understood, and with the narrow way distinctly marked out, and with an understanding of why it is so narrow and why so few find it (because it leads to the great exaltation of the Kingdom and its joint-heirship with Christ), who could think for a moment of turning aside, or even listening, to the voices calling to wealth, honor, fame, pleasures of this life, etc., seeing that even hearkening to them would interrupt our progress in the way to the Kingdom, and thus frustrate our hopes and make the exceeding great and precious promises of none effect to

us. The rather, therefore, will we lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us in the gospel.

As the faithful disciples realized a meaning in the Master's teachings at the first harvest which the majority could not realize, so now at the second advent his words have a preciousness and a meaning and a force to those who are in heart-harmony with him,

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which they do not have to others; hence now, as at the first advent, some are stumbling and going back, and others are being drawn to the Lord more closely than ever, by the "present truth" which he is supplying as "meat in due season." As we progress in the way, toward the close of this harvest, we shall not be surprised if the way should grow still narrower, more difficult, and if the tendencies to "stumble" should become more frequent. Let us each, therefore, more and more be on our guard against the wiles of the Adversary; and let the perfect love of God rule in our hearts, driving out self-love and world-love, and their pride and ambition and folly; and let this devotion to God bring into our hearts the promised fulness of joy

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and rest and peace; and let us abide in him, the Vine, and be fruitful branches, responding to all the prunings of the great husbandman with more abundant fruitage; and if beguilements come to us, let us view the matter as did the apostles and say, "Lord, to whom should we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

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"YE CANNOT SERVE GOD AND MAMMON."

--FEB. 6.--MATT. 6:24-34.--

"He careth for you."--1 Pet. 5:7.

PROBABLY no other period of the world's history ever had as great need, as our own, for this lesson. The spirit of our times seems to lead directly to the service of Mammon--wealth, earthly advantages and comforts. The attainment of Mammon's reward would appear to be the main object of life, to which every other interest is made subservient, so far as Christendom is concerned. As we look into the far East this is less so; the millions of India and of China know far more contentment in their ignorance, than do the millions of Christendom with their large

degree of knowledge. Knowledge evidently is not conducive to peace, happiness, contentment:--"Godliness with contentment is great gain."--1 Tim. 6:6.

What is known as the progress of civilization is in many respects good, excellent; but it has a wrong motive power. The motive power of modern progress is selfishness--Mammonism--and increasingly so. Nor can we imagine that the civilized world, intellectually awakened but not in heart regenerated, not possessed of the spirit of Christ, the holy spirit, the spirit of love, could be in its present condition moved by any other spirit than that which possesses it--the spirit of selfishness, the spirit of Mammon. We are not, therefore, surprised to see what we do see on every hand--a mad rush and struggle for wealth, and for position and fame which are wealth of another kind and bring financial wealth. The spirit of selfishness in the millionaire stirs him to activity and to the use of his opportunities, not because he needs more, but because he is possessed of the spirit of avarice, the spirit of Mammon: the same spirit exactly takes hold of the artisan who, with a moderate income, has secured for himself and family a modest little home and a frugal competence. Many of these are now reaching out after wealth, and finding by experience the truth of the Apostle's words, "They that will to be rich [whether they succeed in carrying out their will or not, if they have the will, the Mammon spirit] fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts [desires and habits] which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money [the Mammon spirit] is a root of all evil: which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith [crowding out the spirit of love and wisdom from above, and losing the spirit of the truth, also the letter of the truth and the faith], and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."--1 Tim. 6:10,11.

It is impossible for us to read each other's hearts and to know positively the mainsprings of activities in each others' lives; and hence the Lord's people are likely to be misunderstood by the world. The child of God is commanded to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" he is also commanded to provide things needful for those dependent upon him: thus required to labor for his daily bread, he is brought in contact with others not begotten of the heavenly spirit like himself, but who have as the mainspring of activities the love of money--Mammon. It may be difficult from the world's standpoint to note the difference in the two spirits in the two classes, for both are active, energetic, patient and persevering; and both are paid at the end of the week in the same coin, and both are counted by the world as servants of Mammon. Wherein then lies the difference?--Which are the servants of God? and how can we know them?

"By their fruits ye shall know them," said our Master. What will be done with the proceeds of the

labor, is the only outward evidence we could have respecting what was the motive of the laborer. If the proceeds of the labor are merely accumulated in property or in banks or in old stockings, or if the proceeds of the labor over and above the necessities of life are merely used in gratification of the flesh, in trinkets, bric-a-brac, or other forms of self-gratification, or for evil purposes, the only reasonable deduction would be that the laborer was inspired to his energy by the spirit of selfishness, and that he is a servant of Mammon. But if on the other hand the proceeds of energetic

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labor, after appropriating for the necessities of life, are used benevolently in the Lord's service, in the service of the Lord's people, in "distributing to the necessities of the saints," either temporally or spiritually, or to the necessities of "the groaning creation;"--if this be the use to which surplus moneys are put, the reasonable inference is that the laborer was energized not by a spirit of Mammon, a spirit of selfishness, but by the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love; because the use of the same in the Lord's service would be a proof of the motive and object of the laborer.

This simple rule (by which we may all test ourselves, even if we may not measure others by it too carefully) would seem to show us that the great mass of mankind are servants of selfishness, servants of Mammon, and not servants of God, whose main object in life after providing things decent, and honestly, for themselves and their dependents, would surely be to use it to glorify God and to bless their fellow creatures. Let each one who has named the name of the Lord judge himself very carefully along this line:--scrutinizing his own objects and methods, and determining according to this lesson whose servant he is--a servant of selfishness and of Satan, or the servant of love and of God.

Nothing in what we have said is intended to imply that it would be wrong for any of the Lord's people to own his own home or to enjoy some of the comforts of life; nor to make a reasonable provision for tomorrow, with a view to the necessities of his family, and for such uses as he may consider to be the Lord's will respecting him and the means entrusted to his stewardship. (2 Cor. 8:21.) But it would be a great mistake for the child of God to make, should he conclude that he must spend no money in the service of the Lord and of humanity until he has attained a certain competency in life. Whoever adopts this theory and plan will almost assuredly find by the time he obtains a competency, that he has gained so much of the spirit of Mammon as to be less satisfied, less contented than ever; and that he has lost so much of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love and generosity, that he has

little disposition to spend his strength for anything that will not selfishly minister to his personal comfort or the gratification of selfish aims. And if he who earns \$1,000 a year should have the spirit of devotion and is sure to be blessed in its exercise, the same is true of the man who earns but \$100 per year: even if he have difficulty in obtaining the necessities of life, he will be blessed in heart, in mind, in spirit, if he will deny himself, sacrificing something of earthly gratification, in order to render some thankoffering to the Lord.

The great argument which the Adversary uses to enlist servants for Mammon, and to get the servants of God to attempt to serve both God and Mammon, is fear: fear of want, fear of distresses. In our lesson, therefore, the Lord takes up this feature first, urging his followers, not as verse 34 would represent the matter, to be thoughtless, indifferent and careless in respect to our food and clothing, but, to be without worry--not anxious and fearful and troubled about tomorrow and its affairs. The plowman, when he breaks up the land, and the sower, when he scatters the grain, are taking thought for the morrow, in a proper, legitimate manner that has the divine approval: if they are God's children they are to plow in hope, and sow in hope, and wait for the crop in hope; and to trust that, if the Lord should permit some blight or drouth to render their labors unfruitful, he nevertheless will not leave them destitute, but will care for them and provide for them in some way. And they are to exercise their confidence in his goodness and to expect that all the lessons of life are profitable ones in preparation for the eternal life, if they will be rightly exercised by them.

Our Lord's words in this lesson in which he encourages confidence and trust in the Heavenly Father, are not addressed to mankind in general--not addressed to the "children of wrath," but addressed to those who have become "children of God" upon the terms of his Covenant. This point cannot be too strongly urged: it is very necessary that those who have never made a covenant with the Lord should know that the promises and blessings of the divine Word are not theirs and will never become theirs until such times as they come unto God in his appointed way, and take upon them his prepared covenant. All his promises are yea and amen only to those who are in Christ Jesus.

This class, while just as busy, just as active, just as fervent in spirit as any of the worldly, have not the fret, have not the worry of the others; because the Lord Almighty has covenanted with them that he will do for them according to heavenly wisdom what would be for their highest welfare. So then, these can rejoice--

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale or abounding in wealth."

The Lord's people, while active in the affairs of life, are not working for the things of this life, but are seeking the Kingdom of God: it is the first thing, the principal thing, the principal object of life and energy. God has promised his people a share in an everlasting Kingdom which shall bless the whole world, and this exceeding great and precious promise fills the heart, fills the mind and constitutes with love and hope the mainspring of every question in life. And in seeking the Kingdom, they are also seeking God's righteousness; because no one who loves unrighteousness will

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love God's Kingdom which will be the foe of all unrighteousness and sin. And only those who love righteousness and who labor for righteousness are in any proper sense seeking God's Kingdom and its reign. An earnest Christian traveling salesman was once asked the question: "What is your business?" He replied, "I am preaching the Lord Jesus Christ, and selling hardware for _____ & Co. to meet my expenses." This is the relationship between God's people and their earthly occupations that should be recognized and fully lived up to by all who win the prize.

Our Lord assures us that if the main thought of our hearts is his service and the promotion of righteousness and an attainment of the Kingdom which God has promised to them that love him, then we need carry no anxious cares respecting the future. As his disciples we will have trials and tribulations enough, day by day, and will need daily to lean upon the Bridegroom's arm as we seek to walk the narrow way. Sufficient for each day will be the evil of itself: and thanks be to God also, we have the promise that daily his grace shall be sufficient for us.

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"THEY THAT BE WHOLE NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN."

--FEB. 13.--"FOLLOW ME!"--MATT. 9:9-17.--

HERE we have Matthew's own account of his acceptance to the apostleship. He had undoubtedly been acquainted with the Lord and his work, and the Lord acquainted with him, prior to this call. The Lord had evidently seen in his heart an honesty of intention that made him worthy, not only of the truth, but of this great favor--the apostleship. It is worthy of note that Matthew tells us of himself that he was a publican (Matt. 10:3), while none of the

other evangelists make this comment, doubtless because the occupation of a publican was considered a very dishonorable one--unpatriotic. Publicans were usually men of some ability as business men, sharp, shrewd, quick at accounts and discerning. Their occupation was that of collecting taxes for the Roman government, and it must be said that, while there may have been honest publicans who collected their taxes with justice, both to the Roman government and to the tax-payers, yet the class as a whole had the name of being tricky, unscrupulous, dishonest. It was claimed on the part of the taxpayers that they were frequently oppressed and made subjects of extortion by the tax-collectors who thus accumulated wealth not only as foreign emissaries, but as leeches and parasites upon their own suffering countrymen.

Hence, for Matthew to tell us of his previous occupation as a publican may be esteemed an evidence of his humility, and his desire not to represent himself more honorably than was truthful. On the other hand, our Lord's choice of a publican to be one of the favored apostles indicates the impartiality of his selections; and implies that Matthew could not have been one of the dishonest publicans. It shows us also that our Lord passed by no Israelite indeed merely because there was prejudice amongst the people against him or his class. As an evidence of the detestation in which the publicans were held by their Jewish brethren, we note the fact that they were classed with sinners and harlots in New Testament usage, and that the Hebrew Talmud classes them with murderers and thieves, and regards their repentance as impossible.

Matthew was known by the name of Levi, while he was the publican (Luke 5:27), but his name was changed when he changed his occupation and became a member of the Lord's company. His new name, Matthew, signified "the gift of God," just as Simon, the son of Jonas, had a new name given to him, namely, Peter, "a rock." But how great a change the gospel of the Kingdom produced upon Matthew, to lead him to forsake all--the profitable income of his occupation, leaving it to others--and to become a follower of the despised Nazarene!

The influence of the fact that our Lord would accept a publican to be his disciple, was far-reaching, and no doubt inspired an interest in our Lord amongst the degraded and outcast classes. We are not surprised, therefore, when we are told shortly afterward, that many publicans and sinners resorted to our Lord, and gave ear to his teachings. Nor did he treat them after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees, but on the contrary received them as the children of Abraham --as some of the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

This breach of the rules of etiquette amongst the Jews was a great surprise to the scribes and Pharisees who, however much they opposed the Lord, recognized

him as a great teacher; hence, they did not think of him as demeaning himself or degrading himself by receiving sinners, but asked the question, Why he did this, and promptly received the answer that the more sick a man is, the more need he has of a physician. They were ready to admit that the publicans and sinners were in need of a physician, but many of them did not realize their own need of a physician: hence, Jesus was certainly giving his services where they were needed. This furnished our Lord with an opportunity to preach a very short sermon from a text in Hosea (6:6) to the effect that his message was not a message of destruction, but a message of mercy, and

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that his call to the Kingdom was not a call of the righteous, but of those who realized themselves to be imperfect. And herein lay the distinction between the two classes and the reason why publicans and sinners were more attracted than the self-satisfied Pharisees: the latter trusted in themselves that they were righteous and spurned to ask or accept mercy; the former admitted that they were unrighteous and had need of mercy. Humility and a realization of the need of a Savior, and a great one, are essential to all who would come unto the Father through Christ and his atonement.

The influence of Jesus' ministry was beginning to be recognized; it was increasing while John's work had for some time been decreasing, and comparisons were naturally instituted. One of these was respecting the fact that Jesus had given his disciples no specific directions respecting fasting; and the inquiry as to why this was so. Did our Lord disapprove of fasting? The answer came promptly to the effect that fasting is a concomitant of mourning and sorrow, and that our Lord's disciples could not consistently fast and be troubled at this time;--because the Bridegroom was with them and their joy was at its full. He pointed out, however, that, later on, times of trial and sorrow and fasting would come to his disciples.

Fasting is proper enough when intelligently done and from a right motive, but it is certainly worse than useless when done as a formality or ceremony, or to be seen of men, that they might think us holy. Fasting is specially commendable to the Lord's people at times when they find themselves lacking in spirituality and exposed to severe temptations from the world, the flesh and the devil; for by impoverishing the physical force and vitality, it may assist the full blooded and impulsive to self control, in every direction. We believe that a majority of Christians would be helped by occasional fasting,--a very plain diet for a season, if not total abstinence. But fastings, to be seen and known of men or to be conjured up by our own minds as marks

of piety on our part, would be injurious indeed, and lead to spiritual pride and hypocrisy which would far outweigh their advantages to us in the way of self-restraints.

The Lord wished his disciples to recognize the difference between the work he was doing in starting a new dispensation, and the work that John the Baptist and the Pharisees had been doing in attempting to reform the Jewish nation. He illustrated this under the figure of patching an old garment with a piece of new cloth, or putting new wine that had not yet fermented into old wine-skins whose strength and elasticity were gone and which would be sure to burst under the pressure of the fermentation. This was perhaps the first intimation our Lord had given of the fact that Israel as a nation would not be found worthy of the Kingdom and would be rejected. Likewise, it was the first intimation that the class which he was gathering was not being gathered with a view to reforming the nation or readjusting its affairs, but with a view to constituting the nucleus of a new nation, "a holy nation, a peculiar people," which, when fully developed, would be fit to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom and to engage with him as his bride in inviting all the families of the earth to receive divine favor, symbolized as "water of life," which will be offered free.--Rev. 22:1,17.

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"FREELY YE HAVE RECEIVED, FREELY GIVE."

--FEB. 20.--MATT. 10:2-15.--

THE LORD selected his disciples from time to time during the earlier part of his ministry, but it was not until they had received considerable instruction from him that they were recognized in their office of apostles, and fully empowered for their special work. They had freely received of the Lord the good tidings of great joy that he was the Messiah, and that the time for the establishment of the Kingdom was at hand; and now they were to give this message to all those who were in the condition to hear it. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

The twelve apostles are mentioned by Matthew apparently in the order of their sending forth, two by two. As someone has said, "One of the ways Jesus took to overcome the imperfections of his followers and to the better prepare them to do a work which required perfection, was by his grouping of the apostles, whose imperfections were perhaps like our own, of the nature of halfness: we too frequently see one side of a truth and not the other. We too frequently feel the greatness of some quality to such an extent that we depreciate

some other quality which seems contrary but is really complementary. Our Lord seems to have acted with careful reference to this, in sending out his apostles two by two in the order indicated. Peter, the bold, impetuous man, is joined with Andrew, the apostle chosen by the Scotch as their national patron--as far-seeing, careful, cautious. James and John were paired, the former elderly, the latter young. Philip, the slow-witted was paired with Bartholomew (Nathaniel), the quick-witted. Thomas, the doubting, skeptical intellect was joined with Matthew, one of the heroes of faith. James, the son of Alpheus, the advocate of works, was united to Jude, a man of doctrine. Simon,

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the zealot, a man of enthusiasm and independence, was linked with Judas Iscariot, the conservative economist. So, the Master made one full man out of two half men in each case."

Having grouped his disciples, our Lord endowed them with power, gave them of his spirit or power over various diseases (Luke 9:1) and sent them forth. But they were not to go at random, anywhere and everywhere; a particular work was to be done, and no other --the true Israelites only were to be sought, and hence the charge, "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." How evident it is from this that our Lord's work at the first advent is considerably misapprehended: he very evidently was neither dealing with the world nor teaching the world, but fulfilling his own commission to the seed of Abraham, as he elsewhere expresses it, saying, "I am not sent, save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The message which the apostles were to deliver was not for the Gentiles, neither was it for the Samaritans even, altho the latter were a mixed people and had been dwelling for centuries in the land of Israel and claimed Jacob as their father also;--it was a message only to the legitimate Israelites. These were called lost sheep, not because they had wandered out of the land of Israel, for they were in it; nor because of having lost their identity as Israelites, for they had not; but because they had wandered from the Lord and from their covenant. They are similarly spoken of by Isaiah, the prophet (53:6), "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The reason for sending the disciples only to the legitimate Israelites is evident when we notice the message they were to carry: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." God had promised Abraham that of his seed he would raise up the great ruler of the world, Messiah, and the hope that Israel long enjoyed was that when Messiah would come as one of their brethren,

they, as his family or nation, would be specially blest and made associates with him in his Kingdom. For eighteen centuries they had been waiting for the fulfilment of this Abrahamic covenant, and now Messiah having come, all the gracious promises of God, made to them, were ready to be fulfilled through him. And therefore, the message was as above.

The ears of all true Israelites would certainly tingle, as they would hear such an announcement; but inasmuch as they had waited long, and with much disappointment, it need not surprise us that they were generally skeptical, and refused to believe that theirs was the favored day, and that the unpretentious Nazarene and his heterogeneous company of disciples were the nucleus of a great Kingdom which should bless the world. Their faith staggered,--that is, the faith of all those who did not have sufficient faith. But, as we have elsewhere seen, the Lord gave special helps to all those who were right at heart; true Israelites indeed --such as Nathaniel, subsequently called Bartholomew.

It will be noticed that the preaching commissioned was wholly different from that done by "Evangelists" to-day. The latter no doubt would feel like criticising our Lord for sending out twelve teachers with any such commission, because their views of what should be preached are so different from our Lord's views. Had they lived at that day, and been confidential friends of our Lord, they no doubt would have offered a suggestion like this: Master, with all deference to your abilities, we want to suggest that the message is not the proper one: you should instruct these evangelists to give the pure gospel. They should tell the people plainly and distinctly, "You are all miserable sinners straight on the road to hell fire and eternal torment; repent, therefore, and come to the mourner's bench, if you would escape it." This, Master, is the true gospel that you should send forth, and if you neglect it, these disciples themselves ought to disregard your instructions to the contrary and should go forth to save souls from hell, and to preach accordingly.

But we, dear readers, are not to suppose that our Lord made a mistake, but rather that some of his deluded followers of the present day are mistaken respecting what constitutes the gospel. The gospel which our Lord and the apostles preached was really gospel,--"good tidings of great joy:" it was, then, a message to that one nation only, but later, in its full development, it will be unto all people--to every member of Adam's race.

In announcing that the Kingdom was ready, if Israel was ready to receive it, and to constitute its channels of mercy for the blessing of all nations, it was appropriate that some signs or proofs respecting this matter should be given. Hence, the miracles which our Lord performed, his apostles were commissioned to perform also. These were to be understood as manifestations

of divine favor coming with the Messiah as proofs of his Messiahship; and they were so understood, and the disciples merely represented themselves as being the advance agents and heralds of Messiah, and properly did not claim any of the powers exercised as being their own. The cures performed were merely foregleams of the blessings which in fuller measure would result from the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom, in which, according to the prophets, they understood to expect that all the blind eyes would be opened, all the deaf ears unstopped, all the lame leap for joy, etc.

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The apostles had something to give, but not to sell; freely they had received, freely they were to dispense God's mercies. They were, nevertheless, to live, to obtain their daily bread, from those to whom they ministered. To this intent they were not to make advance provision, neither in money nor in clothing, nor even an extra cane: in other words, they were not to go as travelers, but rather as persons who were thoroughly at home, and who expected to find a home and the necessities of life wherever they went, giving back, in exchange for these temporal blessings, the blessings they had been empowered to bestow; namely, (1) the physical healings and (2) their peace or blessing. The Lord evidently intended by this method that all should be witnesses that his gospel was not one of self-seeking, nor for show, nor for money making. Not only was there no uniform provided, but no arrangement was even made for carrying gifts, let alone taking up collections, for they were to take with them no scrip; that is, no valise or satchel wherein to carry surplus.

On entering a city they were to seek for the worthy ones--they were not to be careless respecting where they lodged, nor to expect that any except the worthy would appreciate their message: nor were they to go from house to house as beggars for their meals and lodging, but rather to expect to remain with some true Israelite during the period of their brief stay in each village. If received into a house, their peace or blessing was to be with it--they were not to stay in any place where the Lord's blessing would not be appreciated. There is a special sense in which a blessing goes with every true child of God wherever he may go, now as well as then; but apparently a special blessing was designed of the Lord to rest upon those who entertained his special representatives, when bearing the harvest message in the end of the Jewish age. The family would be blessed of the Lord because of the presence of his representatives, and they would lose nothing by having entertained a herald of the Kingdom. Similar instances are recorded of olden times, for instance, Elijah's stay with the widow and her son:

the divine blessing going with the prophet caused that the barrel of meal did not exhaust, neither the cruse of oil. Likewise we remember it is written that while the ark of the Lord was in the home of Obed-Edom, a special blessing rested upon his house, his family, his affairs. Here we have a lesson respecting hospitality and how the divine blessing rests upon all those who endeavor to do anything for the Lord's disciples, because of love and respect for him--even a cup of cold

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water to one of the least of these shall have a reward, we are assured.

We are forcibly reminded here of the fact that we are now living in the harvest time of the Gospel age, the exact parallel of the Jewish harvest; and that our same Master and Lord is now sending forth to the nominal "holy nation and royal priesthood," Christendom, a similar message, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!" and is sending this message in much the same manner that he sent the message to the fleshly house of Israel. It seems now also to be his general method to send the messengers, who bear to the household the present truth, in couples. These take with them a more elaborate message as represented in the various volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN; but it is the same message that was carried at the first advent, namely, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." True, the methods are slightly different as the times are different, but the general principle is the same, in that the messengers in the present truth are not self-seekers or money-gatherers, but merely accept, in exchange for the blessings which they confer, enough financial support to meet their expenses, economically. And we have no hesitation in saying that whoever may receive these representatives of the Lord and the present truth will receive into their homes with them some measure of the divine blessing in compensation for any service they may render them.

The shaking off of the dust from the apostles' feet when leaving a house or a city where they were not received, was not to be done as a vindictive expression of hatred, but rather as a closing part of their declaration, namely, that if their message was not received, if their hearers were not interested in the Kingdom, the result would be that they would fall under judgment as being unworthy of any part or lot in that Kingdom. It was a symbolic act implying that they renounced all responsibility for what the consequences of the rejection might be.

Our Lord's words confirm this thought, for he says, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city." As a matter of fact, the people and cities of Israel, after the rejection of our Lord, were given over to a great time of trouble which resulted in very general

loss, trouble, calamity upon all except the few who did receive the Messiah, and who were gathered out as "wheat" for the garner of the new dispensation. It may be said truly, that in some respects the destruction which came upon Sodom and Gomorrha was less awful than the destruction which came upon Jerusalem and other cities of Palestine during the burning day at the close of the Jewish "harvest."

The remainder of the discourse (vss. 16-42) would seem to indicate that the work done by the apostles then sent forth was designed to be representative or typical of the entire work of the Gospel age; and so it has proved: not many have received the Kingdom message gladly; but enough will be found to complete the elect "little flock" to whom it will be the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom.

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INTERESTING LETTERS.

England.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Our little band still gather together to commune on those most precious truths which have been shown to us of late, and we have been helped in a marvelous way. In several instances at our meetings we have dwelt upon difficult questions which have been put forward by brethren or others, and of course many times we have not quite gained a conclusion which seemed satisfactory. But peculiarly the very next TOWER that appeared contained some helpful solution, and that before any mail could get to you. This has occurred not once but several times and has greatly stimulated us.

Three weeks ago our brother Thirkettle took a few tracts, etc., to a spot a mile or two away from town and commenced distribution. This was Sunday morning, and in the same week he had communication from a gentleman who had received a "Do You Know?" tract and was much impressed by it. The gentleman stated that he had never before to his remembrance been absent from early prayer meeting and morning service at Chapel, but on that morning he seemed impelled to take a walk rather than attend chapel. He took his walk, though from quite a different district and by a different way, which brought him to where Bro. T. was giving his tracts. I had a long talk last Sunday with him. He confessed his desires had continually been for something higher than the formalism of Christendom, and now he's got it. He has already finished DAWN, VOL. I., and says that he feels convinced of its teaching. This is the latest instance of

God's dealing. Bless his name! We also have with us a brother who was once an active spirit medium, but is now a medium [or holy temple] of the spirit of truth.

Yours in the Lord Jesus, FRED. GUARD, JR.

California.

EDITOR WATCH TOWER:--I received MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., and have been privileged to read I., II. and III. during the past year, through the kindness of friends in Oregon. I think I can imagine the feelings of a miser who should suddenly find a pile of gold as large as Mount Shasta. How helpless he would feel, because he could carry so little away. The books are stupendous!

Kindly give me a little information as to the best way to circulate them and oblige,

Yours in His Name, J. L. BROWN.

Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--After I clearly understood the necessity of withdrawing from the Nominal Church, and fully determined that I would do so, I delayed, allowing myself to think that I could reach many with these truths that I could not if I separated myself. The Master has been very good to me in enabling me at all times to clearly see that I must do so, but the delay was until I thought I had reached all that it was possible to reach. However, now I can see that the delay has been not only of no advantage so far as teaching was concerned (for no one has been reached who could not have been under other circumstances), but my continuance in the denominational fold has been deleterious to my growth in grace;--for altho I have had great liberty and freedom, yet it has had an insensible reactive influence, for I can see that it has required a discipline of the spirit to maintain my growth that I would very probably have not required. And among other things the Word has taught me that it is best to first obey a positive command of the Lord, and then wait for the spirit to give us wisdom later to clearly understand why. If we do this --render absolute obedience--wholly trusting in the wisdom and power of our Lord, instead of waiting to learn the why and the wherefore, it will be conducive to more rapid growth in grace than anything else we can do. We will learn when we render prompt obedience and implicit trust to not only this command ("Come out of her [Babylon--Nominal Church], my people!"), but all others, that "Obedience is better than sacrifice," for we will receive the blessing of the obedient.

With love to all, and praying that these thoughts

will be helpful to some brother or sister still hesitating,
I remain, Yours in fellowship and service of our Lord
and Master Jesus Christ, C. C. SEABROOK, M.D.

Jamaica.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have been lending both the TOWER and DAWN to a few friends. I am so full of the new and glorious teaching that I am anxious that others should see it too. Since I have read your books I see the Bible in a different light; once it was all a dark and mysterious composition, now it is all a glorious light, and God a different God, a God that the poor sinner can venture to approach through Christ, and not the dreadful being that we have been made to believe he is by the various teachers of the present day.

In conversations I have had with some about the books a few have expressed a desire to read them while others are indifferent; the general idea is that any teaching which differs from what the parsons preach must be something dangerous and would better be avoided. However, I am determined to do what I can at my own cost to introduce this precious knowledge of the Lord's gracious mercies toward fallen man, and so have enclosed \$5 in greenbacks and ask you to send me tracts and DAWNS.

I will ever pray the Lord to bless and prosper you in this glorious work. Pray for me also that I may ever keep close to the Lord under all circumstances.

Yours in the Lord, JOHN SMYTH.

Texas.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have been reading the 4th volume and find the array of evidence simply overwhelming. How any can shut their eyes to the impending convulsion is more than I can see. God bless your and the Church's work in sealing the foreheads! The holding back of the four winds is as much of a standing miracle as the standing walls of water on either side as the Israelites passed through the Red Sea.

Of course, you, too, have your discouragements and trials, but bear up, brother. My kindest thoughts and regards to you and the Church in Allegheny.

Yours in Him, E. C. LEIGH.

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OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD--IN CHRIST JESUS.

--CHRIST OUR WISDOM--

"Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness
 [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]:
 he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."--1 Cor. 1:30.

"WISDOM is the principal thing:" "With
 all thy getting get understanding," thus
 wrote the wise man, Solomon, and so we all agree:
 wisdom is necessary at the very beginning of any matter
 that would result favorably. Wisdom is craved by
 the whole world of mankind, and the majority, even
 while going in divers directions, would claim to be
 seeking to walk in wisdom's ways. How important,
 then, that we discriminate as between the true wisdom

and that which is so frequently misnamed wisdom,
which is really folly!

Mother Eve in her perfection had a craving for wisdom, but inadvertently took the wrong advice and the wrong course in seeking its way. It would appear that the very basis of her temptation, through which she fell from divine favor and into sin, was the exercise of this laudable ambition to be wise. She perceived that the serpent was the most cunning, most wise, amongst the beasts, and she perceived that the serpent ate the fruit of a particular tree which Adam and herself had been forbidden to eat of. She gave credit to the tree and its forbidden fruit for the wisdom of the serpent, and concluded that its fruit was "to be desired to make one wise." The desire for the wisdom led to the disobedience--to the fall from divine favor, under the penalty of sin--death, and its associated troubles and miseries.

Many of Eve's children are seeking wisdom in a similarly wrong direction. Her proper and wise course would have been to have acknowledged that she knew comparatively little, was seriously lacking of wisdom, and that God, the very embodiment of wisdom, was also the embodiment of love and her truest friend, and that his command was the command of wisdom. Had she followed the divine command, trusted the divine wisdom, she would have been saved from her great mistake and its terrible consequences. She needed to learn that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and obedience to him the completeness of wisdom. Had she been obedient to the Lord, no doubt in due time and in a much better way he would have granted her all the wisdom she desired and was capable of using. The same principles hold true with Eve's children: all who would walk in wisdom's paths should learn that all true wisdom "comes from above" and that any other is "earthly, sensual, devilish."

One of the first lessons of life to be learned is, that our own judgments are unsafe, and even those who are least unbalanced by the fall and who, therefore, more closely resemble mother Eve who was perfect, are as liable as she was to make the mistake of seeking wisdom in a wrong direction--leaning to their own understanding. (Prov. 3:5.) Those, therefore, who would take the wisest course should promptly admit their own un wisdom and seek for divine direction, divine wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not."--Jas. 1:5.

But alas, how few are disposed to accept the wisdom that cometh from above! The majority have so large a degree of selfishness that they seem indeed to make miserable failures out of the best opportunities of their lives, before they realize that they lack wisdom and need guidance by the great Teacher. Hence, as the Lord declares, only the humble, only the "poor in spirit," are in the way that leads to eternal life and

the Kingdom--because only these will seek for and

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obey the heavenly wisdom from the great Counselor. This class alone is in the condition to be taught of God: and concerning all who shall attain to the fulness of divine favor it is written, "They shall all be taught of God."

It is for this reason that, as we look about us in the world, we find just the condition of things which the Apostle described in the verses preceding our text, namely, that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the [worldly] wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen." Do we not see that as a rule the men and women of largest natural ability, and greatest natural wisdom, fail to obtain the riches of divine grace in knowledge and in experience, which some of the less favored naturally do attain? Surely, the reason of this generally is that the greater our mental poverty, the greater our humility, and consequently the greater our trust in the Lord's wisdom, and reliance upon his instruction, and obedience thereto.

Not always is this true, of course; for we find that some of the most haughty and self-conceited of our race are really the most poverty stricken as respects real ability: and occasionally we find some possessed of rare abilities, who are extremely humble minded and very reliant upon God; but neither of these cases is the rule: they are exceptions to the rule. Gather together a company of God's devoted, consecrated people in any place and scan them critically, and you will be convinced that not many wise, or great, or mighty are being chosen; but chiefly the poor of this world, rich in faith to be heirs of the Kingdom. The worldly-wise to-day are not to be found among the open scoffers and infidels, for worldly wisdom dictates to them a different course; they are to be found rather in the most respectable and aristocratic congregations of professed Christians. Many of them are too honorable to be open hypocrites, and therefore rarely take part in meetings or say anything respecting their inmost convictions, --their inmost thoughts or doubts respecting the creed of their own church and the creeds of all other

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churches; nevertheless they feel that it is wise to support Christianity, because of its moral influence on their families, their employes and their neighbors; besides even the doctrines which they at heart repudiate

have, they believe, a restraining influence upon the "lower classes:" hence their wisdom, worldly-wisdom, guides them into the support of Christianity, but forbids them to go to any extreme, such as annunciation of faith in Christ or full consecration to his service.

For the humble, however, God has provided true wisdom in Christ. His words no less than his example show us that we are sinners and that "no man cometh unto the Father" except by him. He tells us of the Father's pity, and of the redemption provided through his own blood, and of our privilege to accept of divine grace unto full forgiveness and reconciliation, and of our need of the heavenly wisdom for every step of the journey, if we would walk the narrow way, which leads to the glory of the Kingdom and life everlasting. And all who accept this "call" accept the great Mediator's instruction and guidance, as the very essence of divine wisdom. With varying degrees of promptness and after varying degrees of wandering from this good Shepherd, and being sought and found by him, the faithful eventually reach the position where they put no confidence in themselves and their own wisdom, but all confidence in the wisdom of him whom God hath appointed to be our wisdom--"who of God is made unto us wisdom." When this degree of progress has been attained, a measure of rest and contentment takes possession of the true sheep, which permits them to look up to God with confidence in every matter and at every time--especially in seasons of distress and grief and trial. They learn not to trust to their own wisdom any longer; but to trust implicitly to the wisdom and goodness of the great Shepherd.

But not for a considerable time is such a development of confidence in the Lord's wisdom attained: meantime, they have many battles and contentions against the wiles of Satan, who would tempt them to use their own wisdom or the wisdom of other men and to doubt the results of following the divine wisdom and its program. On every hand, the flesh, assisted by the devil, offers inducements and seductions to follow its way and to cease to follow in the Lord's way. In business affairs, in church affairs, in home and family affairs, the temptation is continually advanced, that we should choose our own way, follow our own preferences and thereby reap larger and better results. It is only after considerable experience, and frequently after many failures, that the "pilgrim" for the heavenly country learns to trust no wisdom but that which cometh down from above and is in accordance with the divine Word. Describing the attitude of the true children of God, abiding in Christ as branches in the vine, the Apostle says:--

"He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mysteries of his will."--Eph. 1:8.

"We also pray for you and desire that ye might

be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every

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good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."
--Col. 1:9,10.

Let your hearts be "knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."--Col. 2:2,3.

Notwithstanding the fact that those who accept Christ are the "meek," "the poor in spirit," and lower than the average standard along the lines of worldly wisdom and power and wealth, yet nevertheless, the acceptance by these of Christ as their wisdom makes them really wiser than others;--not only in respect to the greater riches which they are laying up in heaven, but also wiser in respect to the most ordinary affairs of this present life. This is not because they miraculously receive new brains or a better and more orderly arrangement of the brains they have, but because submitting their judgments on every subject to the will of the Lord, and walking according to his directions in every matter and in every particular, they have his wisdom, his spirit, to guide them. Hence, altho their own minds are imperfect and unbalanced, as much or more than the average of the race, the Apostle is able to say of such, "God hath given us the spirit of a sound mind."--2 Tim. 1:7.

The spirit of a sound mind enables its possessors to view things more correctly than they would be able to view them of themselves; for instance, it cautions us not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think, but according to the measure of the Lord's spirit possessed. Yet while cautioning us to be very humble, it guards us against being fearful, men-pleasers, sycophants. While constraining us to be peace-lovers and peace-makers, and kind, and forgiving, and generous, without maliciousness or vindictiveness, it nevertheless cautions us to be firm respecting principles of righteousness and truth. We may and should gladly yield our own preferences to those of others, for the sake of serving others or doing them good, yet we must never do so at the expense of the truth and principle. In the family, love is to be the rule, blended with mercy and justice, kindness and generosity; nevertheless, the rod is not to be spared if its use be necessary to the proper training of the child. And the Christian father is not only to be "kind and gentle toward all," but is to "rule his own family well, having his own children in proper subjection." Thus, we might multiply the various counsels of the heavenly wisdom, as it enters into the lives of those who are fully devoted to the

Lord and gives them wisdom and grace for the affairs of life far beyond any that they would have had without it.

After exhorting us that "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God," the Apostle James (1:5) says, "Who among you is a wise man and endowed with knowledge? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have strife in your hearts, glory not [to think yourselves led of the Lord and guided by his true wisdom], and lie not against the truth. This wisdom [which in selfishness seeks its own gratification and advancement, envying others and striving selfishly for its own advancement] descendeth not from above but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make for peace."--James 3:13-18.

Let us remember well this analysis of the wisdom that comes from above.

First, It is pure, guileless, sincere, honorable, open, above board: it cometh to the light, loveth the light, it is not of the darkness, nor of sin, it is utterly opposed to secret whisperings, back bitings and all slanderous and underhanded works and ways. It takes the Lord at his word, receiving the pure word of wisdom into a good and honest heart. It is honest: it does not deceive itself into believing that self-will is the Lord's will.

Secondly, It is peaceable: that is to say, so far as is possible and consistent with honesty and purity it is peaceable. It loves and desires peace, harmony, unity; but since peace is not first, but purity first, therefore it can only be fully at peace and fully in harmony with that which is pure and honest and good.

Thirdly, It is gentle--it is not rude, course, rough, and has no sympathy with such a spirit and such methods. It is not only of God, but God like. Nevertheless, its gentleness follows its purity and peaceableness: those who receive this wisdom are not first or primarily gentle, and therefore peaceable and pure, but they are primarily pure, sanctified with the truth, and therefore are peaceable, and therefore are gentle, and therefore are easy to be entreated. But they can only be easily entreated in harmony with purity, peace and gentleness: they cannot be easily entreated to assist in any evil work of bearing false witness or scandal-mongers, or slandering, or evil-speaking, nor into any of the works of the flesh and the devil.

Fourthly, It is full of mercy and good fruits: it rejoices in mercy, because that is a part of its very self; mercy and all the good fruits of the spirit of the Lord are sure to proceed from the heart in which rules

the spirit of love, honesty, purity, peaceableness and gentleness. But this mercy, while taking hold upon

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the ignorant and the unintentional evil-doers with sympathy and help, cannot have the slightest sympathy or affiliation with wilful wrong-doers, because the spirit of wisdom is not first mercy, but first purity; hence, the mercy of the spirit of wisdom can only exercise itself upon the unintentional wrong-doers, or the ignorant wrong-doers.

Fifth, Without partiality (which would signify injustice): the purity and peace, gentleness, mercy and good fruits of the spirit of wisdom, lead us to be no respecters of persons, except as character shall demonstrate real value: the outward features, the natural man, the color of his skin, etc., are ignored by the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom that cometh from above. It is impartial and loves that which is

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pure, good, peaceable, gentle, true, wherever found and under whatever circumstances it exhibits itself.

Sixth, It is without hypocrisy. This heavenly wisdom is so pure, so peaceable, so gentle and so merciful, toward all that are worthy of consideration or notice, that there is no necessity for hypocrisy where it controls. And it is bound to be out of harmony, out of sympathy and out of fellowship with all that is sinful; and in fellowship and in sympathy with all that is pure or that is making for purity and peace and gentleness --so that it has no room for hypocrisy.

Let us, dearly beloved, as children of God, more and more fully accept Christ as our wisdom, for all of the affairs of life--little as well as great, temporal as well as spiritual. Let us seek to be more and more filled with the spirit of true wisdom that cometh from above, whose ultimate teaching is holiness to the Lord.

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SWEET THE HOUR AT JESUS' FEET.

Sweet is the hour to those who meet
In fellowship at Jesus' feet,
Communing of the wondrous love
That drew him from his home above
Down to this world of sin and woe,
That we the way of life might know,
Might here by faith in Him prepare

That precious robe the "bride" shall wear.

Sweet is this hour; but none can tell
What glories in those mansions dwell,
Reserved beyond life's rolling tide;
For those who in the Lord confide,
Who bear the toil, the cross sustain,
And know to die in Christ is gain,
Shall in his Kingdom glories share
And shine as jewels bright and fair.

Sweet is this hour; but oh how blest
The one that ushers in our rest!--
That ope's to our enraptured eyes
The glories of our heavenly prize,
Where clothed in bridal robes we'll stand
As kings and priests at Christ's right hand,
While heavenly hosts before him fall
And hail him King and Lord of all.
--A. H. Bigelow.

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"THINK IT NOT STRANGE."

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as tho some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."--1 Pet. 4:12,13.

NEVER have we known a time when the Great Adversary seemed more energetic in his assaults upon the "harvest" work, than now. Information comes from every quarter of fiery trials, pitfalls and persecutions being operated or prepared against those who have followed the light of present truth, and who have set their faces to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath set us free. It is not best that we should publish all that reaches us, for, while there is much to discourage, there is much also to encourage; which, we thank the Lord, more than counterbalances. We do, however, desire that all should know in a general way, for two reasons, (1) It will help to fortify them for their turn, when it shall come; and (2) it will develop in them sympathetic love: for when one member of the body suffers, all the members are benefited by suffering with it.

We will mention one case here because its narration may serve to point a lesson to some. Brother Bahret's letter states the trouble as follows--

New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I must tell you of our experiences. Some time last June Brother W. de Ronden Pos came here from N.Y. City and held a meeting in the evening, speaking on Rom. 8, and I would say that it was a very good and blessed meeting. He expressed at the time his intention of leaving the nominal church and engaging in some other pursuit and said that, if he could, it might be possible that he would come here to live. Of course, we expressed our desire that we should be glad to have him in our midst, but nothing further was done. Later on he was in the city again for a week's visit and held a few meetings, but my brother and I, being in Germany, were not present and did not know what arrangements had been made till we came back. I was told that he had concluded to come here and take up any occupation he could find, as for instance an agency, or that he buy a place in the suburbs of the city where he could raise

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some vegetables and chickens to help to make a living. I was given to understand that he was a man of some means who was not entirely depending on his work. We thought our meetings would be continued in the same way as before, only he taking the lead for the most part of the time.

We intended to assist him with temporal things to the extent of our ability, and when he came here a short time after my return from Europe, I said we ought to make it \$15 per month, and informed our treasurer that I would make up any deficiency.

We had a few good meetings after he came. At that time in one of the Wednesday night meetings he made the proposition that we should organize. I made the suggestion that we would better consider everything well before taking action; but then he put the vote that all those in favor of organizing should signify it by rising, and all arose; I did the same rather hesitatingly, altho I had no definite objection to offer, and did not want to vote No. However, I said that we ought to have another meeting before the time set for organization-- a week afterward, on Dec. 15th.

We brothers then held a meeting, he being present, but all the time was taken up by speaking on baptism which he thought ought to be enforced, we urging that we should not force anybody or exclude anybody because he cannot just see as we do respecting water baptism, if otherwise they are children of God, believers in Jesus Christ. We supposed he had agreed with us on that point, and so on the evening of Dec. 15th we had a meeting, and after some words by him, reading the "Confession" which he had formulated, we signed it: I one of the first, because I said I can subscribe to that anytime. The confession we subscribed to was a very simple one which acknowledged

the Heavenly Father and Jesus his Son our Savior and Master. I think twenty-two subscribed that night, some of them people we had never seen before, who were no more of us than other people of the world. Brother de Ronden Pos spoke then on baptism at some length, saying that he would not let any go to the Lord's supper if not immersed, not even his own mother, and tho it should break her heart. Some of our number then asked their names to be erased from the roll, others objected, and then the trouble commenced.

In this same meeting Bro. Pos expressed his position to the effect that he was no more nor less than any other member, and if at any time he had had any aspiration of being "something," he had entirely given it up, and that any of the brethren stood on the same level with him, and therefore he would not put his name down first on the roll of membership, and only signed towards the last. It therefore seemed strange to some that he should take the liberty at the same meeting to declare that he would not let any come to the Lord's table that were not immersed, when he knew that the others thought differently.

Before I go any farther now I must give another explanation: the Sunday before this Bro. Pos brought before the meeting his thoughts that the "Lord's Supper" ought to be observed every week. Some agreed and others did not agree with him on this subject.

The next Sunday we observed Lord's Supper and Brother Pos read Rom. 14 and stated that the Lord showed him through the very circumstances what to do in the case of the unimmersed (for, as I said before, there were some who subscribed whom we really did not know, as they only attended a few times at previous meetings and a few not at all; but they were of the denomination called "Disciples;" they had been immersed, but were yet to all appearances only nominal Christians); he said to enforce this rule would let in some people who, altho immersed, were yet of the world, while others who were much more in harmony with us would be excluded, and so he readmitted these and rejected the others for the time: but later on he let them in again; and these are the ones who are now his chief standbys. Things went along with ups and downs, till about the first week in January; by that time we saw the necessity of having some system, and it was proposed that some elders be elected, which we found Scriptural and your advice in the Nov. 15, '95, WATCH TOWER. Meantime I wrote you a letter that I thought he had much ability to preach, and it would be a pity if he could not make full use of it, and suggested to you the plan that he be employed in part by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. It seemed rather strange when I heard from you that you had heard very little of him of late, as I thought you were in steady correspondence; but still I thought I would let him know that I had written to you and that you

considered it favorably, but would like to hear from himself. I intended to speak to him on a Sunday afternoon, after the meeting, and was only waiting till he should be through speaking to somebody else, when all at once he commenced to denounce the doctrines of MILLENNIAL DAWN as from the pit; and he said, may the Lord forgive those people who say the Lord has come. I said then, "Brother, be careful what you are saying: do not say hastily that a thing is from the devil." He said then, "I do say it's from the devil, and a good many have stumbled over these doctrines," and he denounced them even more.

We were all shocked, at least I was; but I did not want to write anything to you about it then, as I hoped that when I would get opportunity to speak to him about it and explain, he would see his error. But matters went from bad to worse.

Two weeks ago we had a meeting appointed for the election of elders. It was only a meeting of the brothers, as Bro. Pos said (and we partly agreed with him) that in the ruling of the church the women should be silent according to Paul's teaching. He said that the women are so easily deceived that it is not safe to let them vote, for they are much more apt to choose according to personal liking than qualification. The question came up, How should elders or overseers be chosen? I suggested that their qualifications be made plain, as we read in Timothy and Titus, and then let each one choose according to his best judgment. Bro. Pos objected to that and thought that he as the pastor

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should have the right to choose or nominate those whom he thinks would work best in harmony with him; we could then agree with his choice or, if not, he would make another choice. The suggestion was then made that so far as we knew it was not generally understood that he was the pastor.

Well, he said, if we have no pastor and if I heretofore have only been pastor pro tem., the first thing we have to do is to choose a pastor; and if I am not

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your pastor I will not take the leading of another meeting. Why, we said, we only want to do what the Bible authorizes us to do; if it authorizes us to elect a pastor in that sense, we will do so; but we will first satisfy ourselves about the matter.

We asked him to lead the meeting meanwhile as before. This he agreed to do, but said, In the election of a pastor it's different: the sisters have then just as much to say as the brothers, because they are just as much concerned. We answered that whatever way we should find the Bible to teach we would do, but

that we were not ready to act on that night. He said, I know the sisters will be satisfied with whatever you say; and what would the people (the public) say, if they thought you had a pastor, and it turns out now that you have not? We said, we did not care what the world might say. Then, when he saw that we would not act on that night, he said, "I came here by the holy spirit, organized the church, gathered the flock, and am therefore the shepherd (pastor), and I DECLARE MYSELF AS SUCH, whether you will have me or not."

We said, if we find that to be the Scriptural way, we will accept it, otherwise not; and as it was getting late, the meeting was adjourned till a week later on Monday. On Sunday following he preached a sermon on Nehemiah (putting himself entirely in his place), and showed others trying any way and every way to destroy his work but he victorious at last because the Lord is on his side.

On Monday he went away to a convention of the "Disciples," where he was till Wednesday afternoon. Monday night the meeting was held, two Elders being chosen, Bro. Knauss and myself; but the proposition was then made that as we thought there was better talent in our midst to teach and lead the meetings an assistant minister or Deacon be chosen and Bro. Pos was chosen. A committee was appointed to inform the Brother of the results of our meeting. Bro. Knauss, Bro. Doughty and myself were appointed and we went to his house and told him. He then said, "I cannot accept that. I came here an ordained Elder and evangelist, and I am your first elder, and I will call a meeting of the church and let all know of it; and they can say then if they stand by me or not. Besides, a brother of the Disciples is coming here in a week or two, and we are going to put up in this city a wooden structure seating a couple hundred people; and if you will not stand by me you can hold your meetings as before."

I then asked for the privilege of leading the meeting for that evening. I should have liked to speak on our duty in this present time of the "harvest," whether it is our principle duty to reap or to sow more seed. I had hoped that perhaps I could have made some things plain: but he said, "I must first present a few things to the people, and if they then want to listen to you they can do so." In the meeting he first brought up the subject, saying that some seem to think that he had so far only been pastor pro tem., and that he wanted to know his position, and whether this church had a pastor or not, and therefore he made it the first business of Sunday afternoon that the church declare its position.

After he got through I wanted to say a few words, but he would not let me, saying, This is not a business meeting, we are come together for edification, and started to read from the Scriptures. I said, I will wait till after the meeting is over, and any that would like

to hear a few words of explanation could stay. After the meeting he said that he advised every one to go right home and pray. They should do so if only to please him, and if they considered his judgment better than anybody's else. I said, All those that are satisfied with a one sided presentation of a case have, of course, privilege to go home, the others are invited to stay. Some went and some stayed. Before that the suggestion was made, by Brother Knauss, that this matter should not be brought up on Sunday, but ought to be settled on another day, but he insisted on having it on Sunday; and as I now see it, his object was to get a big crowd there whereby the others would be scared. But it only worked to his own disadvantage. To avoid trouble as much as possible, we wrote out in few words that we were not willing to be joined to a denomination, as his plans were, and as he had caused to be published in the newspapers, using some of the names without consent. I handed him the papers with the signatures Saturday night and informed him that we did this in order to simplify matters, and that it had been agreed by the brethren that on Sunday afternoon we would better only have a Bible study and prayer meeting. He then said that as all his friends were coming there, he would present his case first and then give me ten or fifteen minutes to state our side; and then he would preach, and we could do what we liked after that.

So Sunday afternoon came, and quite a few strangers were present. He took his seat amongst the rest, and when the time had finally arrived he said, As long as nobody occupies the chair I think we better elect a chairman. I said then, that I, as the appointed Elder of the church take the liberty to occupy the chair, and I did. We sang a hymn and had prayer, then I stated the case as nearly as I could, also announcing the meetings for the week; and said that as Bro. Pos had expressed his intention to preach, we give him the opportunity to do so, or if he had any statements to make, he might make them.

He said that he could not preach under the circumstances and that it was not true that he wanted us to join another denomination, but that the question was whether we would fellowship with brethren that stand on the same foundation as we do.

Now as to Brother Draper's coming here I would say, We will be only too glad to have him here any time, but whether he can change the result is very doubtful, only it might strengthen those that are left. We were greatly helped by his former visit, and I am sure it gave us courage to stand through this fiery trial.

Yours in Christian love, C. F. BAHRET.

* * *

We congratulate the dear friends who have stood

this shaking, that they so loved the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, that they were unwilling to be led back again to Babylonian bondage and darkness, by a self appointed pastor or shepherd--even tho he at first came to them as a messenger of the light of present truth!

These dear friends might have been saved some of

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this trial had they taken heed sooner to the Scriptural advice we laid before them in the WATCH TOWER of Nov. 15, '95, respecting Order in the Church: the proper course for preserving their liberties in Christ from those who would "lord it over God's heritage," who would undertake to appoint themselves pastors, superior to the choice of the church; and who would attempt to dictate their own views and to determine whom they would let and whom they would hinder from partaking of the Lord's supper, etc. Their neglect on this point left them open to confusion when their liberties were attacked. We congratulate them, however, and praise the Lord for his deliverance of them.

The friends erred in their supposition that a pastor is a deacon. Deacons were chosen in the early Church to look after the more secular interests of the Church, while the Elders were all pastors or overseers, who looked after the spiritual interests of the Church. If one were chosen as pastor-in-chief and others as his associates and assistants and advisers, we cannot see that this would have been contrary to any Bible instruction. But they were quite right in not choosing, and in supposing that God would not have them choose any one who either directly or indirectly sought to grasp the position, and to browbeat and override the Lord's Church.

Too frequently the real idea of church meetings "for edification" is lost sight of under the popular desire for preaching--through a spirit of conformity to Babylon. Ability as a public speaker should never be despised or ignored, but it should be sought and appreciated only as it is unto edification. The more preaching, the worse if it be along wrong lines.

We commend also the moderation with which the matters were held straight--only that there was too much moderation at first. They were misled on the subject of the "Lord's Supper." They should have asked, Where in the Scriptures is it suggested that morning and noon meals are "suppers" or by what manner of twisting is the word supper to be distorted out of all meaning and sense. The word in the Greek signifies "An evening meal" and not otherwise. Why did they not inquire respecting the commemoration of his death on a day (Sunday) specially set apart to commemorate our Lord's release from death? Why did they not point out that the "breaking of bread" practiced

by the early Church was no more "the Lord's Supper," commemorative of his death, than was the "breaking of bread" at Emmaus? (Luke 24:30; Matt. 14:19.) They should also have asked why the "cup," the wine, emblematic of our Lord's shed blood, is not mentioned in connection with any account of the "breaking of bread" if these were memorials of the Last Supper--while it is given full importance in the

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narrative of the Last Supper in 1 Cor. 11:23-34.

It was a mistake for the brothers to elect the Elders without the concurrence of the sisters; "all are one in Christ Jesus." The limitations respecting public speaking should not be stretched. Our views of the Scripture presentation on this subject are given fully in the WATCH TOWER of July, 1893. The election should be held over again, when all who usually meet with you and who trust in the ransom and who profess full consecration to the Lord, should be invited to express, not their choice: but their judgment respecting the Lord's choice as gauged by the declarations of Scripture.

We rejoice, too, that the brethren rejected the water baptism test as to fellowship; and that they fully declared their desire to fellowship all who love and serve our Lord irrespective of the lengths and depths of their knowledge: for those who love the Lord will seek to know more and more of him through his Word.

We may be asked here, What is the difference between the profession of the "Disciple Denomination" and our position as Bible Christians, so we will here state the differences briefly.

(1) If the "Disciples" would live up to their professions they would be with us in short order. Their professions are quite right--the Bible as the only rule and guide respecting the one Lord, one faith and one baptism, and respecting our duty to God and man,--with full freedom from ecclesiasticism.

We endorse all this and live up to it; but do the "Disciples?" Surely not! Attempt to go amongst them to present the "harvest" message of present truth, and see how much of an unwritten creed they have and how tightly it binds them. Indeed, while professing in their formal statements that they are the most liberal of the sects of Babylon they are (unwittingly) the most narrow and most exclusive. We will prove this statement in our second proposition.

(2) They make a test of water immersion; and by declaring that it is for the remission of sins they assent to the proposition that all the Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Reformed and United Presbyterians, Protestant Methodists and all others who have not been immersed in water, with a certain formula of words, are all sinners--strangers

from God and aliens and foreigners as respects his grace and truth in Christ. Could any narrower creed than this one be found? If so let us know of it! Yes, we think of just one that is narrower, namely that of the Christadelphians. But then the Christadelphians consign others to destruction while the Disciples send the sinners to a hopeless eternal torment;--nor will they give an opportunity to show from the Bible the fallacy of this view. If we are incorrect we will be pleased

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to receive official notification to this effect, and will see that the truth is presented to them forthwith.

"A DOUBLE MINDED MAN IS UNSTABLE."

We first knew of Rev. de Rondon Pos in California, when he sent us the following letter which we published in our issue of Feb. 1, '92.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I must write to tell you how exceedingly interested I have been in MILLENNIAL DAWN VOL. III., which I spied out in a book store in Los Angeles. I enclose 50 cents, for which I would like you to send me, at once, VOLS. I. and II. of the series. I would also much like a sample or two of your paper--ZION'S WATCH TOWER--for if it is what I expect it to be, after DAWN VOL. III., I shall at once become a subscriber. VOL. III. is already circulating among my friends.

Yours in the waiting for Christ's Kingdom,
W. DE RONDEN POS,
Pastor First Baptist Church.

Next we heard from the gentleman from the neighborhood of Kentucky, still later at Washington, D.C.; afterward he wrote us from Montreal, Canada, that he was pastor of an Episcopal church there, and subsequently he was officiating as pastor of a Reformed Episcopal church in Baltimore, Md. We were glad to hear that the gentleman had finally concluded to stand free with us, in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free from sectarianism and its bondage. We hoped much from his association with the friends, yet feared that they were expecting too much from one who had for years shown so great a weakness for "Babylon and its corn-crib"--tho we gave no hint of our fears to any.

In view of this our knowledge of the gentleman's past affiliations it caused quite a smile when we read as above of his heroic determination that he would allow no unimmersed person to come to the communion table. We wonder where his courageous soul stood for the years he preached for and pastored the Episcopalian and Reformed Episcopalian sheep and sprinkled

their infants, and in due form and ceremony administered "sacraments" to them. According to his present "faith" those "sheep" were not "sheep" at all, but were yet in their sins--not having been baptized for the remission of sins. He received their dollars regularly, we suppose, for Episcopalians are counted good payers; but did he fulfil his trust and tell them his belief that they were all condemned sinners? Did he point them to water as the way to eternal life? or did he deceive them and receive their money under false pretence? Of course, we could not say so! we cannot judge the hearts of such people! possibly his conscience slept all those years, or possibly he has no conscience.

At all events we are confident that the truth has met with a valuable loss. We expect the opposition of such people and prefer it to their hypocritical and blatant pomposity. We have no reason to believe that the knowledge of the deep things of God, including the parousia, is intended for such. God is choosing the worldly-foolish and weak and insignificant honest "overcomers" of the world to be his joint-heirs and is passing by the "trimmers," "men-pleasers," mammon-worshippers. "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!" And beloved fellow "sheep," let us remember that those who resist the Adversary's encroachments and allurements and wiles and attacks, from any quarter, will be the stronger therefor, and be the more closely bounden together in love and sympathy and the more firmly established in the letter and spirit of the "perfect law of liberty."

* * *

A letter from another brother at the same place says:--

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--"Praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto his name while I have any being."

To these words, dear Brother, I can also give utterance at this time with my whole heart. I am sure I cannot find words to express my thankfulness to the Lord, for his powerful hand by which he has been leading us in the weeks gone by. I am glad that the Lord stood by us to enable us to stand for the truth; and it is my prayer that it may be also true of us, that we came out of the fire purified and more refined, so that these experiences may have been among the all things which will work together for good, to those who love the Lord. I think it has brought more forcibly to us than ever before the Psalmist's words, "Put not your trust in princes nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help." Truly, we are living in a time when we must put our trust in God and his Word, if we wish to stand; we are living in a time when deceptions are coming to us which are so strong that they would almost deceive the very elect. But thank God that is not possible

because we have the sure word of prophecy that shineth into the dark places and will establish our footing, if we take heed to it.

I consider it a great privilege to write these few lines to you at this time, for I know that you are in sympathy with us in these afflictions which have come upon us. Yes, and we are told in God's Word that we should share our sorrows as well as our joys, "weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those that do rejoice."

When I last wrote you I had no idea that we were standing before such a sifting time and therefore did not mention anything; everything seemed to be in harmony, altho I mentioned in my letter that Bro. de Ronden Pos had some very peculiar ideas on some things. Yet, we all thought that, as he had just come out of the nominal system, it could hardly be otherwise, and that, as he would look further into the Word, with the desire to follow the Lamb, he would lose these ideas, and be brought into the full light, and stand with us, free in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. But we have since discovered that, altho he had laid

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his hands to the plow, was sincere at the time, yet he looked back and desired to go back into bondage and draw others with him.

Hoping that you will remember us in your prayers that we may at all times prove faithful towards our Heavenly Master (it has given me great comfort to read the article in the last TOWER, "To Whom Shall We Go?"--I think it just fitted our case),

I remain as ever in Christ, Your brother
FREDERICK KNAUSS.

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"MORE TOLERABLE FOR SODOM IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT."

--FEB. 27.--MATT. 11:20-30.--

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."--Matt. 11:28.

OUR LORD'S many miracles in Capernaum and vicinity during the period of his residence there had apparently but slight effect upon the masses of the people--those who heard him gladly, and who heartily espoused his cause, were comparatively few. But the upbraiding mentioned in this lesson was not in the form of a tirade of scolding and abuse: it was a simple statement of facts respecting their indifference to the privileges and opportunities which God had presented

to them, and the sure punishment which lay before them in consequence. The punishment would not be merely for their lack of interest in the Kingdom promised, for that was a favor, and the rejection of a favor need not of itself imply vengeance against the indifferent on the part of the one whose favors were declined: but their rejection implied more than this, for altho still professing to desire the Kingdom, they were evidently unready to receive it on the only conditions on which God was pleased to offer it; and this inability indicated a condition of heart seriously out of harmony with God--a wicked, sinful condition: hence, the offer of the Kingdom and their inability to receive it on God's terms proved that they were so sinful, so alienated from God, that very evidently they would be worthy of serious punishment, not for rejecting the favor of the Kingdom, but for the sinful conditions which hindered their acceptance of it.

By way of illustrating the degree of their hardness of heart, our Lord compared them with people of other cities, which they themselves recognized as very wicked, and whose overthrow was recognized as a divine judgment because of that wickedness. The comparison was much to the disadvantage of the Jews, and was calculated to arouse their fears that, after all, the boastings of their religious classes of their holiness and piety, were probably only empty hypocrisies when judged by the Lord's standard--love for truth and righteousness. Our Lord began by comparing Chorazin and Bethsaida, cities of Israel, with Tyre and Sidon, two Gentile cities on the Mediterranean seacoast. He assured his hearers that even less teaching and miracles performed in the Gentile cities would have led their people to repentance, whereas, the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida gave no sign that they could be brought to repentance by any amount of teaching and miracles. Divine judgment would, therefore, rest most heavily upon those who had enjoyed the greater privileges, and who, because of hardness of heart, had failed to utilize them.

Then, coming to Capernaum, the city which he had made his home, and which had thus been specially favored--"exalted unto heaven" in the matter of privileges and opportunities--he declares that it shall be brought down to hades,--to death, the grave. The reason for this is stated, namely,--the mighty works should have led to repentance, would have led to repentance, had not the people been very perverse at heart. To convince them of their deplorable condition, our Lord compares them to the people of Sodom, and assures them that they are far worse than were the people of Sodom, whom they despised, and whom God judged to be unworthy to further enjoy the present life, raining down upon them destruction, fire and brimstone. Our Lord's assurance that the Sodomites, if blessed with similar opportunities to those granted

to the people of Capernaum, would have repented and would not have been destroyed, naturally leads us to inquire, Why this partiality on God's part? why withhold from Sodom privileges and opportunities which would have led to its repentance, and why grant these privileges and opportunities to a people so unworthy of them as those of Capernaum proved themselves to be?

These questions are unanswerable from the standpoint of all the popular theologies of to-day--orthodox and heterodox. They are explainable only from the standpoint of the Bible and its plan of the ages rightly understood. From this quarter we see that the Sodomites were not really on trial for eternal life in their day. They merely enjoyed an experience with the evil side of existence, but making so poor a use of it as they did, they were cut off from their privileges as a type, example, or illustration of the fact that those who willingly do wickedness shall ultimately be cut off from all of God's favors and blessings. However, the Sodomites only enjoyed and lost the remnant of Adamic life, already forfeited. Like others, they were born under condemnation of death: they never enjoyed any of the blessings or opportunities which Christ's death as a great "ransom for all" has secured for all mankind--namely, a hope of a future life and an opportunity or

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trial for its attainment. The sin of Capernaum, therefore, was not only a sin against a greater light, but since it was Christ the true light himself who was making the offer to them, their rejection of him much more resembled the condition of wicked rebellion against God that would lead to the second death, than did the conduct of the Sodomites.

But the people of Chorazin, while greatly privileged above others, had not yet enjoyed all the privileges and opportunities which God designs shall be given. Their misuse of their opportunities brought against them our Lord's censure and his declaration of the destruction of their city, as a judgment against them, just as Sodom had been destroyed as a sentence against it. Nevertheless, our Lord intimates clearly and distinctly another trial still future, for the people of Capernaum as well as for the people of Sodom--a future "day of judgment" or trial.

Verse 24. In the future judgment, our Lord declares that the Sodomites will have a better standing and be more likely to pass satisfactorily the divine inspection, than the Capernaumites. That judgment day, as we have elsewhere seen,* will be the Millennial day or age, in which all the families of the earth will be judged (tried for eternal life) by the Christ, Head and body, the "little flock," the Kingdom class. Our Lord who will be the Head Judge at that time has already declared in these words that the trial will not

be intolerable for the Capernaumites, but will be "more tolerable" for the Sodomites, in that they had evidenced already that, notwithstanding their wickedness, they were not so hard-hearted, so calloused against divine grace.

This reference to the Sodomites shows conclusively the divine purpose, as elsewhere plainly stated, namely, that all that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth--to be judged, to be tried, whether or not they will accept the grace of God in Christ Jesus, or reject it. This is the inevitable conclusion, because, as our Lord declares, as it is recorded in Genesis, none of the Sodomites escaped the destruction, "It rained down fire from heaven and destroyed them all;" hence, if they are to stand up in judgment with the people of Chorazin, and be found in a more tolerable condition than they, it must be as a result of an awakening of the dead, the very result which the Scriptures inform us has been assured by our Redeemer's sacrifice for all. In this connection note also Ezek. 16:48-55,60-63.

IT WAS HIDDEN FROM THEM.

Why did not the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum believe on the Lord Jesus? Why did not his teachings and miracles convince them? The Apostle Paul answers the question, saying, "The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not" (2 Cor. 4:4), and our Lord Jesus' words are in harmony with this, for, after upbraiding the people as above, he rendered thanks to God nevertheless, that his gospel was hidden from many, the wise and the prudent and the self-satisfied, and revealed unto "babes"--the honest-hearted, the unsophisticated. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

To the majority of people, misunderstanding the divine plan of the ages, our Lord's prayer here recorded must seem strange indeed. They cannot see how or why he should thank God that some could not and did not receive his message. It is utterly impossible to harmonize such a statement with the common, but unscriptural, false views, that the blinded people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, had gone or were going straight to a place of eternal torment. Had such been the case, our Lord could never have said, I thank thee, Father, that thou hast hidden these things from them: rather he would have entreated the Father for the opening of the eyes of their blinded understandings, for the immediate binding of Satan that he should blind and deceive the people no more: and he would have been excusable for making frantic efforts in harmony with such a prayer; just as some to-day are entirely excusable for the frantic

and unscriptural efforts which they make in their endeavor to have the blinded minds of to-day recognize our Master.

But all such efforts and prayers would be vain, because God has a definitely fixed plan, respecting this great work which he is accomplishing amongst men. In accordance with that plan, the present time is merely for the selection of the Kingdom class: and because the wise and prudent and self-satisfied of the present time, are not the class which the Lord wishes for his Kingdom, therefore Satan is permitted to blind them to the truth, because of their unfitness for it. But God is finding the very class which he desires to find, meek and poor in spirit, to be heirs with Christ in the Kingdom; and these, "babes" so far as human craft and policy are concerned, are kept from the Adversary's

*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chap. 8.

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blinding influences, and on the contrary have the truth revealed to them;--"They shall all be taught of God."

Our Lord did not want to receive any except those whom the Father drew to him, "No man cometh unto me except the Father which sent me draw him, and whosoever cometh unto me [drawn by the Father] I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:44.) This is the sense of verse 27. "All [that come unto me] are given to me by my Father, and no one can recognize the Son except by the [aid of the] Father, neither recognizes

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any man the Father, except by the [aid of the] Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."

The class that the Father and the Son unitedly are seeking during this Gospel age, are a class who feel oppressed of the Devil, oppressed by sin, and who desire the great Deliverer and his salvation. Such "babes," and from the human standpoint foolish, are invited to accept Jesus; to believe in him as their Redeemer, and to follow in his footsteps as their guide:

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." The rest and peace which the Lord gives are not entirely, nor sometimes at all, physical rest and earthly peace. This, he himself declares, saying, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth." The peace which our Lord gives is a rest of heart, a trust, a confidence--based not upon things that are seen, which are temporal, transitory, unreliable, but based upon things that are not seen, the eternal things which can be grasped only with the arms of faith and seen only with the eye of faith; but

here is rest and here is peace, such as the poor troubled world knows not of, and cannot understand. "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

Our Lord calls us to freedom from sin, and from Satan, the great task-master; and the Apostle urges us to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ makes free" indeed; and yet it is a great mistake that some make, to suppose that there are no restraints or limitations upon the "new creatures in Christ Jesus:" our Redeemer has a yoke and a burden for all who become his followers. (Verses 29,30.) The yoke, however, is easy for those whom it fits; and with that yoke the burden is light. The yoke is a self-imposed one, very different, therefore, from the yoke of Satan, which is fastened upon his slaves, the galling yoke of sin, attached to which is a heavy penalty or burden,--sorrow, death. Those who accept Christ and whom he sets free from Satan's yoke are invited to "take" the yoke of Christ and to put it upon themselves. This means consecration, the binding of ourselves, our time, our influence, means, opportunities, all, to the Lord's service. The burden it brings might be esteemed a heavy one by some: it is esteemed very heavy by the world who know not of the counterbalancing peace and joy and blessing. Our burden means, sometimes, the loss of all earthly things which we have held most sacred and most dear; yet even such a burden is light by reason of the joy and peace of the Lord counterbalancing it. As the Apostle Paul expressed it, we may well count all our losses, all our crosses, our burdens, as light afflictions, because of the excellency of the knowledge of divine favors and blessings which we have received through Christ Jesus our Lord. Yea, we count all things that we have sacrificed for the Lord and his cause but as loss and dross that we may win Christ and joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom.

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"REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY."

--MAR. 6.--MATT. 12:1-13.--

"The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day."

THOSE who have little of the truth are sometimes great sticklers for formalities. This was true of the Jews at the first advent. Feast days, fast days, sabbaths and tithings were very carefully attended to by them but the weightier matters of the Law, respecting justice and love to God and man, were sadly neglected. This is our Lord's testimony. So to-day there are people who give strict attention to church attendance and to various religious formalities, who wholly

overlook the real spirit and intention of the Scriptural commands. Their attention to the formalities seems to satisfy them that they are good, as good as need be, and thus hinders them from making a thorough reformation of life, and seeking to bring all its affairs into harmony with the divine law, love to God and for our fellows.

The Jews of our Lord's day laid great stress upon Sabbath keeping, which fact, according to some people of our day, should have been ample evidence of their holiness and full harmony with the entire Law,--but such was not the estimation of our Lord. They even undertook to chide our Lord and his disciples respecting neglect of the Sabbath, altho they generally admitted the blamelessness of their characters. On one of these occasions in which reproof was administered by the Pharisees, our Lord took up the subject and explained it, showing that they had wholly misapprehended the divine intention respecting the Sabbath.

It was not intended to be a burden but a blessing; it was not given for God's sake, but for man's sake. He called them to witness that his disciples were doing no harm, that they were merely satisfying their hunger, lawfully. He then proves the correctness of his position, from authorities they would be willing to accept. They recognized David as a holy man approved of God, and he pointed out to them how that David under stress of hunger, had eaten bread that otherwise would have been unlawful to eat. Then he laid down the general principles, that altho labor was prohibited under the Law, it was in order to bring rest, comfort, refreshment and blessing, and not to bring hunger, inconvenience and distress upon either man or beast.

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He cited them to the fact that certain work was done on the Sabbath by the priests, and under divine direction, and that this proved that labor done sacrificially for the assistance of others, as well as for their own necessities, could be no violation of the fourth commandment. After declaring himself fully qualified to decide the Sabbath question, he tells them that, watching out for the letter of the Law, they were neglecting its spirit, and should learn that the Lord desires mercy, sympathy, pity, love, more than he desires sacrifice, and consequently that any deeds of mercy, sympathy, pity, love, done on the Sabbath day, are more pleasing in God's sight, than were those sacrifices which were performed on the Sabbath as well as on other days, in the typical temple. With this proper view before their minds, they would not have condemned his disciples, whom he, the Master of the Sabbath, did not condemn.

The blindness of the Pharisees respecting the proper interpretation of the Law of the Sabbath, is shown by the fact, that even after our Lord had given

them this explanation, they evidently still supposed that while it would be right for a priest in the temple to labor in the offering of a sacrifice, it would be contrary to the same law for someone to heal the sick and relieve distress. Our Lord, however, soon discovered to them the error if not the hypocrisy of their own hearts. He well knew that in their love of gain, they would help a sheep or an ass out of a pit on the Sabbath day because it represented value, and its remaining in the pit over the Sabbath might mean its death, and hence a financial loss. Thus he showed them that they well knew how to interpret the Law correctly, liberally, when it touched their purse, but that they were so lacking in mercy, sympathy, love, that they failed to properly interpret it as respects acts of mercy, where financial loss or gain were not involved.

Our Lord, as a Jew, was bound under the Jewish Covenant so long as he lived; because he did not in any sense of the word make an end of the Law Covenant until his death--there he became "the end of the Law [Covenant] for righteousness [justification], to every one that believeth." Consequently, during his ministry it would have been unlawful, sinful, for our Lord to have violated any of the terms of the Law Covenant. We are therefore to understand from the discourse here presented to us that the Jews, while neglecting the weightier matters and the real interest of the Law Covenant, had fallen into certain habits of thought and certain customs which were perversions of the Law and wholly inconsistent with its real sentiment. Phariseism had become formalism in many respects. It is claimed that according to their definition of Sabbath-breaking the disciples had threshed the wheat when they rubbed it in their hands. So also it was claimed, and so argued with apparent seriousness, that if any one walked upon the grass with nailed shoes, upon the Sabbath day, that would be a violation of the Law, because that would produce a kind of threshing, since one might trample out some of the seeds. With equal seriousness it was claimed that to catch a flea upon one's person would be a kind of hunting and thus a violation of the Sabbath. It is even said to have been debated whether or not a fresh egg should be eaten on the first day of the week since it implied work on the part of the hen on the seventh day; and quite probably if clocks had been invented at that time they would all have been stopped over the Sabbath. Our Lord shows by his criticism that this was merely hypocrisy and self-delusion on the part of the Pharisees, who found it easier to make a show of righteousness in such trifling things than to consider

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and seek to obey the weighty matters of the Law-- justice and mercy. Our Lord showed them that God,

as he had foretold, had more pleasure in mercy than in sacrifice and that if they had his spirit in respect to the matter, they would not be hypocritically condemning their fellow creatures who were really doing no wrong, nor yet justifying and priding themselves in their superstition and hypocrisy.

This was a prelude to what followed, and prepared the way. For coming into the synagogue the same day, our Lord found a poor cripple who needed help, and while the Pharisees were looking on, waiting for a chance to condemn him for violating the Sabbath according to their false assertions respecting it, he took the opportunity to administer a rebuke before performing a cure, realizing, no doubt, that the effect upon his hearers would thereby be more favorable.

He knew what to teach them--he knew their tender spots of selfishness; and that however much they might delude themselves and others in theorizing respecting observance of the Sabbath, when it would come down to a matter of loss or gain they would be well able to rid themselves of their superstition and act accordingly, hence he put the question whether or not they would deliver a sheep or an ass on the Sabbath day, if it should fall into a pit. He and they well knew what they would do, what was the custom, and hence, without waiting for an answer, but taking it for granted, he proceeds to show that the poor cripple before him was much better than the sheep or the ass, and that he had been trapped into sin and sickness by the Adversary, and that if it were right to deliver the sheep or the ass, much more would it be right on the Sabbath day to help a fellow creature in distress.

Having thus answered their difficulties in advance and reprov'd their wrong spirit, our Lord proceeded to heal the cripple and thus to manifest beforehand,

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the glorious power and blessings that will come more abundantly with the establishment of his Kingdom--during the Millennium.

JEWISH VS. CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

Every human obligation is based upon some divine law. Looking to the Jewish Sabbath, we find that it was the seventh day of the week, and was made obligatory through a divine command--being one of the ten commandments given to Israel at Mt. Sinai, consequently it was not optional with them how they should keep it, but was obligatory upon the terms explicitly stated. To violate it, the Fourth Commandment of the Decalogue, was to violate one point of the Law; and to violate one point of the Law was to violate the

entire Law; because the offer of eternal life to the Jew was based upon his absolute obedience to this Law--not his obedience to a majority of its precepts, but his obedience to all its precepts, without a solitary exception. As we have heretofore seen, however, and as our Lord and the apostle expressly declare, no Israelite did keep or could keep inviolately all the items of their Law, and consequently, according to their covenant, not one of them was ever justified to eternal life. In view of this, the particularity of the Pharisees, that even a good deed should not be performed on that day, is as amusing and as foolish as their claim that they were holy, thoroughly acceptable to God, because of their over-particularity in the outward formal and typical features of the Law, while they neglected the spirit of the whole Law--supreme love to God and love of their neighbors as themselves.

The Christian has come into relationship to God, not under the terms of the Law Covenant made with the Jew, but under the terms of the New Covenant, sealed and ratified with the precious blood of Christ; he therefore has nothing whatever to do with the terms and conditions of the Jewish Covenant which bore only upon Israel after the flesh. The fact that by the deeds of the Law Covenant, no flesh was justified in God's sight (Rom. 3:20) leads us to rejoice that we have a "better" covenant with God through Christ,--sealed by a greater sin-offering and accompanied by "better promises." Ours, the New Covenant, is very much higher than the Law Covenant, just as its Mediator, Christ, is much higher than was the mediator of the Law Covenant, Moses; as also spiritual Israel is much higher every way than was fleshly Israel. The basis of our covenant is not the Ten Commandments, written in stone, delivered at Sinai, but a much higher statement of that divine law--the spirit of that law, the meaning, the intent, the grand completeness of the divine law, of which the Ten Commandments was but an incomplete statement brought down to the measurable comprehension of that people. Our New commandment, our new law, as expressed by our Master, Jesus, is not composed of a number of threats, Thou shalt not! Thou shalt not! but is composed of one commandment, Thou shalt love--the Lord thy God and thy fellow creatures.

Love is the fulfilling, not only of the Jewish code, but a fulfilling also of the entire Law of God, as it relates to himself and to all his creatures. In this new commandment, the basis of the New Covenant, there is no reference whatever to a Sabbath day. Nevertheless, as the Ten Commandments to Israel and their Covenant and their mediator, foreshadowed this higher law of Love and our New Covenant and our Great Mediator, so we find that the Sabbath feature of the Jewish Law has an antitype on a higher plane in the Christian's experience,--a better Sabbath. In the

type it was a physical rest to the natural, typical Israelite; in the antitype it is a mental rest, a heart rest to the antitypical Israelite. As the Jewish Sabbath day typified the rest of heart, the joy and peace which Christians may possess through faith in Christ--in realizing their sins forgiven, their iniquities pardoned and themselves reconciled to God through the death of his Son--so also the Law of the New Covenant, Love, commands all who are in Christ Jesus to rest in full faith in the great work finished for us, by our Mediator, at Calvary. As the Apostle declares, "Being justified by faith we have peace [rest] with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we enjoy the rest or Sabbath of our New Covenant. Thus the new Mediator has provided for the spiritual Israel a very much better rest than that which was provided by the typical mediator for the typical Israel. As seven is a type of perfection, of completeness, so the seventh day rest was a type of the complete or perfect rest which we have in Christ, which Israel after the flesh never did and never could enjoy.

The Sabbath or rest under the New Covenant is not merely for a day--alas, how weary we would be if we could only rest in the sufficiency of Christ, one day in seven! But we may rest continually in Christ, "every day and every hour"--trusting not to our own sufficiency, but to his. Thus we rest from works of self-justification, from all efforts to justify ourselves before God. Accepting the justification freely offered to us through the precious blood, and resting in it continually, we give our little all of loving service on the Lord's side, and in opposition to sin; not to secure rest and justification, but as thank-offerings that we have already received this blessing through divine grace. Thus, as the Apostle declares, "We rest from our works as God did from his." God gave over the matter of the world's redemption into the hands of Christ,

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and we read that "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Likewise we have committed all our affairs into his hands, and are resting in him--keeping a continual Sabbath all the days of the week and all the weeks of the year.

As respects physical rest, however, we are under no commands respecting this so far as the Lord and his Word are concerned, except that our Law of Love requires that we shall glorify God in our bodies and our spirits which are his, and hence that we shall observe such rules and regulations in our physical systems in relation to our food and clothing and rest as would best qualify us and enable us to perform the divine service. While we would be glad that all people might recognize this matter from this standpoint of the New Covenant, yet we know that none can view

it and observe it from this standpoint, except those who have entered into the New Covenant relationship with God, and these we know are comparatively few of the world's population--altho our hope is that in God's due time, the Millennial age, all mankind shall be brought to the knowledge and appreciation of this New Covenant, and may then, if they will, enjoy all of its provisions including this rest of faith, the antitypical Sabbath--which can be enjoyed only by God's faithful people.

Meantime, however, the world of mankind, amongst whom we live, have through various misconceptions, both of the Law Covenant and the New Covenant, set apart one day of the week as a Sabbath or rest day, and as Christians who enjoy the real Sabbath of rest and peace in Christ, we are glad to avail ourselves of the regulations of the world to abstain from worldly labor and to devote ourselves to spiritual works, spiritual feasting and spiritual upbuilding of character in righteousness on that day. But while recognizing and observing it carefully, because it is the law of the land, and while pleased to have this special opportunity for Christian fellowship and spiritual cooperation, we deny in toto that it is of divine obligation. And while we should observe whatever day might be appointed by the "powers that be," we are especially glad that they have by common consent adopted the day, which we prefer to all others because it commemorates the resurrection of our Lord and Master, and hence the beginning of our rest of faith in him.

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INTERESTING LETTERS.

California.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have just returned from the trip to San Jose, and I assure you there has been no time lost. I have been greatly blessed in meeting those in the truth all round. I am blessed and more satisfied with and in the work all the time, and tho the opponents get bolder and more numerous, it only forwards me on stronger in the work, while I look at the things that are not seen--except to the eye of faith--which are eternal.

If I have kept the right account in the last 33 months, I have worked in 72 towns, traveled with the horse and rig 8,000 miles, made 18,000 calls, given away 40,000 tracts, sold 4,500 DAWNS, taken 125 TOWER subscriptions, met 400 interested ones, and baptized 24. I know forty who have come into the truth and are now helping to spread it. Those who have come

out are all the way from preachers to infidels. This is encouraging, tho I should have done better, and trust I will from this on.

In Christian love, I am your colaborer in the harvest work of our King. O. A. FLOREY.

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New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I write to tell you of the most blessed time we had during Brother Draper's visit to us. His talks and his fine Christian character impressed us very much, and we want to express our gratitude for the helpful occasion. He has a remarkable talent for presenting the truth; so easy do the words flow and so forceful, that they impress the candid hearer. He spoke Saturday evening at Troy and Sunday morning at my home to sixteen of us on the "Narrow Way," and in the evening on the upper features of the chart to about twenty-five, mostly interested ones. The talks did me much good, as I learned how to arrange the talks, and will make use of his plan when I have occasion to speak in public. A number of us expect to go to Albany to hear him again on Wednesday evening at Bro. Fletcher's home.

I would say that our little church here is progressing on the way, daily striving to put down the old man and endeavoring to build up the new man.

There is a fair in progress in the Catholic church here, and a few days ago the priest gave it out that every merchant had given a present to the fair, except one (myself), and forbade his people trading with me. Of course I know that the dear Lord has not promised us temporal prosperity, so if this affects me, why, the Lord knows what is best for development of character. I count it all glory to suffer even a little for the truth's sake.

I want to express myself in regard to the work that Bro. Draper is doing. I think it is one of the best opportunities to help on the cause, and I almost envy the dear Brother the great blessing he must get in going around and meeting and helping the friends. What a joy his must be.

Your brother in the most blessed truth,
MORGAN T. LEWIS.

New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--MILLENNIAL DAWN has been widely read in our village of 2,200 inhabitants and five "orthodox" churches and is bearing some fruit, greatly to the worry of the "Scribes and Pharisees." About twenty who have been indoctrinated into present truth from four of the churches have meetings every Sabbath morning and Tuesday evening, and the spirit of the dear Lord is with us in a marked degree. We were once very influential in our different

churches, but are now characterized as a "gang," and by kindred epithets. But there is an increased reading of the DAWNS and Tracts, and much searching of the Scriptures on our account, and therein we do and will rejoice.

The WATCH TOWER increases in interest and usefulness, and I long for it more than for anything else in periodical literature I receive.

Fraternally, P. H. HULST, M.D.

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