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THE COMING ANNIVERSARY SUPPER.

COMMEMORATIVE OF OUR LORD AND HIS DEATH FOR OUR SINS.

THE Supper which our Lord instituted as a remembrancer
 of his great sacrifice for our sins,
 and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole
 world, is striking in its appropriateness and its simplicity.
 The world's great men have always sought
 very different means of perpetuating their memories.

In whatever way they would remind their followers of their merits and their greatness, it surely has not been by a reminder and commemoration of their death--especially if, as in our Lord's case, it was a death of ignominy and shame, a death as a malefactor and criminal. Another, more probably, would have left instructions for medals to be struck commemorating some of his mighty works; such, for instance, as the awakening of Lazarus, or the stilling of the tempest on the sea, or the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while the multitude strewed the way with palm branches, and cried, Hosanna to the King, the heir of David!--

But our Lord chose as his remembrancer that which represented what was, in his and in God's estimation, his mightiest work--his sin-offering on our behalf; and that which his real followers, and they alone, would appreciate more than any other feature of his mission. True, his followers would have appreciated something commemorative of his wonderful words or works, but the worldly also could have appreciated those things. But not so the value of his death as our ransom-sacrifice, the basis of our reconciliation and atonement, which has never yet been fully apprehended by any but the consecrated little flock--the elect. And it was for these that the remembrancer was arranged and instituted. And tho a Judas was present, he was given a sop and went out from the others before the supper was ended; thus no doubt representing that in the close of this age, before the little flock will have finished their part of having fellowship with their Lord in his suffering, the sop of truth will have become so strong as to drive forth from the company and communion of the faithful all who do not rightly appreciate and value the ransom accomplished by the Lamb of God for the taking away of the sins of the world.--1 John 2:19.

The date of the Paschal Supper at which the Jews ate a lamb, commemorative of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage and of the sparing of their first-born at that time, was of course calculated by the Jewish method of reckoning time; viz., lunar time. (Exod. 12:2-14.) Instead of dividing the months as we do, they allowed the new moon to mark the beginning of a new month; and the difference between the sun time (solar time) and moon time (lunar time) was equalized every year by always beginning the new year with the appearing of the new moon about the Spring equinox. In celebrating their religious festivals the Jews still maintain this method of reckoning. And since our Lord, the apostles and the early church followed this same rule for determining the date for the annual celebration of our Lord's Last Supper, we also follow it.

The first moon after the vernal equinox counts March 23d in Hebrew almanacs--probably Jerusalem obs. At 6 P.M. on that day begins the first day of the Jewish month Nisan, the first month of the Jewish

sacred year. Beginning with the 1st of Nisan the Hebrews counted, and on the tenth day the Paschal lamb was chosen or selected from the flock. On the

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fourteenth day (the full of the moon*) "between evenings" (at any time between 6 P.M. of the 13th and 6 P.M. of the 14th of Nisan) the lamb was to be killed and eaten. On the fifteenth day their Passover Feast began, lasting seven days, the first and the seventh days being observed as specially holy, as Sabbath days or "high" days. (Exod. 12:16.) On the sixteenth day the omer of the first-fruits of the barley harvest was offered to the Lord, and fifty days after (Pentecost Day) they offered before the Lord two wave loaves.--Lev. 23:17.

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

The 14th day (which this year will begin at 6 o'clock on the evening of Tuesday, April 5th, and last until 6 P.M. of the 6th) was the day in which the Paschal lamb was to be killed and eaten; and the Hebrew counting of time (doubtless divinely arranged for this very purpose) permitted the eating of the

*As the Sun is a symbol of Christ's Kingdom, so the Moon symbolized Israel as a nation. (Rev. 12:1.) The 12 and sometimes 13 lunations symbolize the tribes of that nation. The moon was at its full at the time of Christ's crucifixion. There it immediately began to wane and waned for as long as it had previously increased. So Christ's death was the turning point between the two equal parts of Israel's history. See M. DAWN, VOL. II., p.218.

As those Jews who were unclean, and hence could not keep the Passover properly in its proper season, were permitted to do so on the 14th of the second month (at the full of the next moon--Num. 9:8-13), the lesson taught seems to be that all prevented (by ignorance) from accepting Messiah as their Redeemer, when offered to them, will have an opportunity of doing so when, in the times of restitution of all things, their nation (moon) shall again be full of blessings in the latter harvest.

"Last Supper" upon the same day that the Lord was crucified. The Passover supper of lamb and herbs and unleavened bread (fulfilling the Law, which was not ended until the cross) was eaten shortly after 6 P.M. Then followed the institution of the Memorial Supper of bread and wine, representative of the body and blood of the antitypical lamb. This thereafter, as often as the occasion returned (yearly), was to be observed by his followers instead of the eating of the literal lamb--as the commemoration of the antitypical lamb and the greater passing over of the antitypical first-born which his blood effects.

The waving of the barley sheaf of first-fruits on the 16th of Nisan ("the morrow after the Sabbath" or Passover of the 15th--Lev. 23:5,6,11,15,16) typified the resurrection of Christ our Lord, as "the first fruits of them that slept."*--1 Cor. 15:20.

The two wave loaves offered on the fiftieth day, Pentecost, represented the presenting of the Church before God and its acceptance through the merit of the great High Priest, indicated by the anointing of the holy spirit at Pentecost. The Church really is but "one loaf" (1 Cor. 10:17), the two loaves representing the same thing as the two goats presented on the Day of Atonement. It indicated that, altho all presented were acceptable to God through Christ Jesus, he yet knew that all presented would not come up to the condition of faithfulness to the end. The two loaves represented, therefore, the two classes of the consecrated --the overcoming little flock and the "great company" of the consecrated servants of God who do not make the high calling theirs, by overcoming the world as they might and should do.

The method of calculating the date for Good Friday and Easter Sunday in vogue among Episcopalians and Roman Catholics differs from the foregoing in this: They celebrate as Easter Sunday the first Sunday following the first full moon after the Spring equinox, and the preceding Friday is recognized as Good Friday. This method of counting was instituted by the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, as instead of the Jewish method which we recognize. But the name "Passover" continued to be used (not Easter+ Sunday)--for a long time; it was after Papacy had become established in political influence, and the ignorant pagans began to flock to the system which enjoyed the favor

*Here is the strongest possible confirmation of the correctness of the position taken in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II.--that our Lord was not three full 24-hour days in the tomb, but only parts of the three days and nights; that he was crucified on the day corresponding to our Friday afternoon, and arose on what

corresponded to our Sunday morning. The showing of this type that the Paschal lamb was to be killed sometime during the 14th of Nisan, and the wave offering of the sheaf of first-fruits was to occur on the 16th, should settle the matter for all. It agrees with the repeated statement (1 Cor. 15:4; Luke 24:46) that our Lord rose on "the third day, according to the Scriptures." This Scripture concerning the first-fruits is the only one which we recall as in any way pointing out the time of our Lord's resurrection. Then, too, the fact that history, as represented in the traditions and customs, points out Good Friday and Easter Sunday as celebrations of our Lord's death and resurrection, should have some weight on so trivial a matter, unless some motive or reason for misstating the dates can be assigned. The only Scripture seeming to oppose all these facts is the declaration that our Lord would be three days and three nights in the earth; and the only explanation that can be offered to this is, that the expression is used in a general and not in a specific manner, the nights being mentioned to preclude the idea of any cessation of death until the third day. Thus understood, the expression would signify that during portions of three days and nights our Lord would be in the tomb. At all events the evidence is overwhelming that he died on the 14th of Nisan and rose on the 16th--the third day after.

+The use of the word Easter in Acts 12:4 is a mistranslation; it should be rendered Passover.--See Revised Version.

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of the government, that the name "Easter" was substituted for "Passover," because about the same time as the Passover the pagans had been in the habit of celebrating the festival of their goddess Easter (German Ostera)--Estera, goddess of the East. This was one of the many methods adopted by an ambitious "clergy" for gaining numbers and influence.

Sometimes the two methods of counting, Jewish and Roman Catholic, indicate the same days, but not often; and occasionally their results are nearly a moon or month apart.

The Jews will celebrate as a "feast" the Passover week, beginning April 7th (at 6 o'clock P.M. April 6th), the 15th of Nisan. We in the Memorial Supper do not celebrate the feast-week but the day previous, the 14th of Nisan, beginning on the evening of the 13th (April 5th, '98) which is the anniversary of the proper date for killing and eating the Paschal lamb--the anniversary of the death of our Lord Jesus; the true Lamb of God, because of whose sacrifice we the "Church of the first-born" are passed over from death unto life--already by faith or reckonedly, by and by actually in "the first resurrection." The antitype of the Passover Feast week is found in the rejoicing of heart of all the first born of true Israel--the seven days signifying the perfection or completeness of the joy and the salvation.

We have given the details as to the counting as a

general answer to many questions on this subject, and not because of any weighty importance or bondage attaching to the exact anniversary day. We recognize no such bondage upon those made free by Christ. For tho desirous of observing the Memorial Supper properly, upon its proper anniversary, as intended by our Lord when he said, "This do ye [every time you celebrate this yearly memorial] in remembrance [lit., for commemoration] of me," we esteem it more as a privilege than as a duty; and if we should err in the matter of selecting the day, through ignorance or misunderstanding, we believe the Lord would accept our good intentions, and forgive the error and grant his blessing. Indeed, we believe that the Lord owns and accepts the good intentions of many of his children who, because of erroneous teachings and human traditions, select various other times and seasons for celebrating this memorial of his death, instead of its anniversary which he designated. Similarly we would sympathize with the patriotic intentions of the man who should "celebrate" the independence of the United States three, four, or fifty times a year, forgetful of the date, or ignorant of the fact that the Fourth of July is the anniversary of the event, and was appointed as the appropriate date for celebrating it.

This like other truths long buried under the rubbish of the dark ages, God is now making clear to his people. And all who are truly his people are anxious for the truth and the right upon this, as upon all other subjects revealed in God's Word.

YE DO SHEW FORTH THE LORD'S DEATH.

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

There is no necessity for discussing with honest minds what is and what is not meant by the expression --the Lord's death. Some, in an anxiety to get away from the doctrine of the ransom, or, rather, in their anxiety to get away from the logical deductions associated with the doctrine of the ransom, are claiming, regardless of all Scripture to the contrary, that our Lord Jesus had two deaths, one when he came into the world, and the other at Calvary; and that the death of the "man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a

ransom for all," at Calvary, was of small importance as compared with the other. They seem willingly ignorant of the fact that the Scriptures declare, "In that he died, he died unto sin once;" and that that one death, and the only one ever referred to by our Lord or his apostles, was the death at Calvary.

The apostles declare that he spoke of the death which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. This one and only death of our Redeemer is what is symbolized by this Remembrancer--his body, his flesh broken for us, and of its merits and life all who would have life everlasting must partake. "Let no man deceive you by any means," on this important question.

But as water baptism is not the important baptism, but only the symbol representing the real, so partaking of the emblematic bread and wine is only the symbol of the more important feast--our appropriation of the merit of Christ, which secures to us eternal life through his broken body and shed blood. Thus by faith accepting his finished sacrifice, and by similar faith, as instructed by him, appropriating to ourselves all the merits and perfections and rights which the man Christ Jesus possessed and laid down in death for us, we really feed our hearts upon the bread of everlasting life, the bread which God sent to us from heaven. This is the true bread of which if men will eat they will never die--the flesh which he gave for

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the life of the world, that all the dead and dying race may have life. This is, primarily, what the literal bread symbolizes and signifies to all who partake of it rightly and intelligently. It is a memorial of the ransom of Adam and his family from the bondage of sin and death.

Another thought: the bread was unleavened. Leaven is corruption, an element of decay, hence a type of sin, and the decay and death which sin works in mankind. So, then, this symbol declares that our Lord Jesus was free from sin, a lamb without spot or blemish, "holy, harmless, undefiled." Had he been of

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Adamic stock, had he received his life in the usual way from any earthly father, he, too, would have been leavened with Adamic sin, as are all other men; but his life came unblemished from a higher, heavenly nature, changed to earthly conditions; hence he is called "the bread from heaven." (John 6:41.) Let us then appreciate the pure, unleavened, undefiled bread which God has provided, and so let us eat of him--by eating and digesting the truth, and especially his truth--appropriating to ourselves, by faith, his righteousness; and let us recognize him as both the

way and the life.

The Apostle, by divine revelation, communicates to us a further meaning in this remembrancer. He shows that not only did the loaf represent our Lord Jesus, individually, but that after we have thus partaken of him (after we have been justified by appropriating his righteousness), we, by consecration, become associated with him as part of the one broken loaf-- food for the world. (1 Cor. 10:16.) This suggests the thought of our privilege as justified believers to share now in the sufferings and death of Christ, the condition upon which we may become joint-heirs with him of future glories, and associates in the great work of blessing and giving life to all the families of the earth.

This same thought is expressed by the Apostle repeatedly and under various figures, but none of them more forceful than this, that the Church, as a whole, is the "one loaf" now being broken. It is a striking illustration of our union and fellowship with our Head.

We quote: "Because there is one loaf, we, the many [persons] are one body; for we all partake of the one loaf." "The loaf which we break, is it not the participation of the body of the anointed one?"-- 1 Cor. 10:16,17.--Diaglott.

The "fruit of the vine" represents the sacrificed life given by our Lord. "This is my blood [symbol of life given up in death] of the new covenant, shed for many, FOR THE REMISSION of sins." "Drink ye all of it."--Matt. 26:27,28.

It was by the giving up of his life as a ransom for the life of the Adamic race, which sin had forfeited, that a right to LIFE may come to men through faith and obedience under the New Covenant. (Rom. 5:18,19.) The shed blood was the "ransom [price] for ALL," which was paid for all by our Redeemer himself; but his act of handing the cup to the disciples, and asking them to drink of it, was an invitation to them to become partakers of his sufferings, or, as Paul expresses it, to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (Col. 1:24.) It was the offer to us that if we, after being justified by faith, voluntarily partake of the sufferings of Christ, by espousing his cause, it will be reckoned to us as tho we had part in his sacrifice. "The cup of blessing, for which we bless God, is it not a participation of the blood [shed blood --death] of the Anointed one?" (1 Cor. 10:16--Diaglott.) Would that we all might realize the value of the "cup," and could bless God for an opportunity of sharing with Christ his "cup" of sufferings and shame: all such may be assured that they will be glorified together with him.--Rom. 8:17.

Our Lord also attached this significance to the "cup," indicating that it signified our participation in his dishonor, our share in his sacrifice--the death of our humanity. For instance, when asked by two of his disciples for a promise of future glory in his throne,

he answered them: "Ye know not what ye ask; are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of?" On their hearty avowal he answered, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup." The juice of the grape not only speaks of the crushing of the grape till blood comes forth, but it also speaks of an after refreshment; and so we who now share the "sufferings of Christ" shall shortly share also his glories, honors and immortality--when we drink the new wine with him in the Kingdom.

"TILL HE COME."

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

Since our Lord who instituted the Memorial Supper placed no limit upon its observance, this expression by the Apostle is not to be understood as limiting the length of time in which it will be appropriate to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, our ransom sacrifice, and our consecration with him to sacrifice. Rather, he is showing that it was not to be considered a limited arrangement, for a few years, but was to be continually observed until the Lord's second coming. Looking down to and speaking of the second coming of our Lord, the Apostle includes in his expression the gathering and exaltation with Christ of his Church or Kingdom to rule and bless the world. This is even yet a common and proper way of speaking of matters so closely identified and so dependent one upon the other. The Christ, Head and body, is coming to rule

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the world in power and great glory. The presence of the Lord or Head is necessary first; then commences the change of the sleeping members of his body, the sifting of the living members, and their gradual gathering together unto him.

Even tho the Kingdom may be considered as begun from the time the King began the exercise of his great power (Rev. 11:17) in 1878, it will not be "set up," in the full sense of the word, until the last member of the Kingdom has been changed or glorified--until the breaking of the "loaf," the Church, Head and body, is completed. While one member suffers the body suffers; while one member is unglorified the Kingdom is not fully come into power and dominion.

It is the coming of Christ as including the full exaltation of his Church or Kingdom that the Apostle evidently meant when he said, "As often as you may eat this [Passover] bread and drink this cup, you declare the death of the Lord [as your hope and confidence] till he come. The same thought of the Kingdom glory being the end of the symbol may be gathered

from our Lord's own words on the occasion of the institution of the memorial--"I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."-- Matt. 26:29.

And surely if it were ever proper and expedient for those who believe that our Lord's death was the ransom-price for sinners to confess it--to show it forth as the basis of all their hopes--it is now, when this foundation doctrine of God's Word is being traduced and misrepresented.

Let all who hold fast the confidence of faith in his precious blood [his sacrificed life] as the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world, be more zealous and fervent than ever before in confessing this great truth; "for even Christ our Passover [sacrifice] is slain; therefore, let us keep the feast." None of the nominal first-born shall be passed over, and become members of the Church of the first-born in glory, except those who, during this night, abide under the blood, and partake of the merits of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world,--just as in the type.-- Exod. 12:7,8,13.

WHO MAY PARTAKE?

The Lord's Supper is not for the world, nor for merely nominal believers, but only for those who, (1) accepting of Christ as their Redeemer and sin-bearer, are (2) consecrated to him and his service.

But it is not for us--nor for any man or set of men-- to decide who may and who may not partake. It is our duty to point out from the Word of the Lord what are the proper qualifications for participation in the "cup" and in the "loaf," and then to say as did the Apostle, Let every man examine himself, and then, if he think proper, let him partake.--1 Cor. 11:28.

Now that God's people are emerging from the errors of the dark ages, when this Memorial can be more clearly understood, the judging or examining of one's self can be more thorough than ever before. Let each ask himself;--

(1) Do I believe the Scripture teaching that I, as a member of the human family, was under that condemnation to death which passed upon all because of original sin?

(2) Do I believe that my only hope of escape from that condemnation of sin and death was through the ransom-sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus, my Lord?

(3) Do I believe he gave himself--his flesh and blood, his humanity--as my ransom-price, pouring out his soul unto death, making his soul a sin-offering (Isa. 53:10,12) on this behalf?

(4) Do I see that the consecration to death, made at Jordan when he was baptized, was fulfilled by his sacrifice of himself for mankind, which beginning there, was finished on the cross when he died?

(5) Do I see that the rights under the Law, which he secured by obedience to it (the right of lasting life and the dominion of earth), were what he through that same sacrifice bequeathed to the fallen, dying race--to as many as shall accept the blessings under the conditions of the New Covenant?

(6) Do I see that his flesh and blood, thus sacrificed, stood for, represented, those blessings and favors which they purchased for us?

(7) Do I see that the partaking of the bread and wine symbols of his flesh and blood signifies my acceptance of those favors and blessings which the flesh and blood of my Lord bought for me and for all?

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(8) And if I do thus heartily accept of the ransom thus memorialized, do I consecrate my entire being--my flesh and blood, justified through that ransom --to the Lord, to be broken with him, to suffer with him, to be dead with him?

If we can answer these questions affirmatively we clearly or fully discern the Lord's body, give credit to his meritorious sacrifice and may eat--should eat--"Eat ye all of it."

Those, however, that deny that a ransom for sin and sinners was required and given, who feel that they need not to partake of Christ's merit, who deny that the merit of one can be imputed to another, who have cast off the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness, who feel "happier" and "freer" in the filthy rags of their own righteousness, and who now consider the precious blood wherewith they were once sanctified a

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not-holy or an ordinary thing--such we advise to stay away from memorializing that in which they no longer believe; for they would merely be adding hypocrisy to unbelief. For such to partake, is to add condemnation to themselves and their no-ransom theories.

But, better still, let us advise all who have merely been entrapped into this error, by the sophistries promulgated through various channels by the great Adversary, to reject all vain human philosophies and to receive again the simple Word of God, the truths therein set forth;--that all are fallen, and that the only way open for our reconciliation and restitution consistent with the divine law and sentence was the giving of the full and exact corresponding price or ransom for our sins;--that in no other way could he be just and yet justify sinners. Let them recognize the fact that our Lord

Jesus, as the Lamb of God, bore the full penalty for our sins in his own body on the tree--that he gave full ransom for all.

The philosophy is very plain, but if such cannot grasp it, at least let such grasp the fact that God declares it to be so, and let them return unto the Lord and he will abundantly pardon. Let them ask for the guidance of the spirit and the anointing of the eyes, that they may be able to comprehend, with all saints, this, the foundation of all the grace of our God in Christ. Thus in true acceptance of the broken body and the shed blood--realizing that the sacrifice was for their sins and that the blood shed [life given] seals the New Covenant for all--let them commemorate the greatest event of history, the shedding of the precious blood, the sacrifice of the precious life of God's dear Son for our sins. Nevertheless we know from God's Word that these words or any words will not succeed in turning back to the way, the truth and the life those who have wilfully and knowingly gone out from under the blood of sprinkling. There will be no pass-over for them. "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." (Heb. 6:4-10 and 10:26-30.) We well know that even these words of loving admonition and these faithful references to the words of inspiration will be attributed to hatred, malice, envy and every wicked feeling on our part, instead of to the real motive-- a desire to serve the Lord and the truth, and any brethren or sisters unwittingly stumbling.

Many in the past have partaken of the emblems of the Lord's body and blood without fully appreciating the philosophy of the ransom, who nevertheless did so with reverent appreciation of the fact that the death of our Redeemer had purged us from our guilt and relieved us from its penalty. Such discerned the real significance of the Memorial, though, because of gross errors associated with the truth, they did not discern its simple philosophy as many of us may now do.

ONLY THE BAPTIZED.

But some Baptist brother will perhaps remark-- You have forgotten to mention baptism as a necessary qualification to partaking of the Memorial Supper.

No, we have not forgotten baptism. We agree with you that the baptism is necessary--that the Memorial Supper is only for the Church; and that baptism is necessary before one can belong to the Church. But we differ with you as to what the Church is. We hold that the Baptist church is not the Church. Like all other churches organized and governed by fallen men, the Baptist church contains "tares" as well as "wheat;" but the Church contains wheat only. Surely no one will claim for any sect of Christendom that his

sect contains all the "wheat" and no "tares." But the Church, "whose names are written in heaven," includes all the "wheat" and has not a "tare" on its roll. This is the one Church which our Lord established, and of which all the elect must become members--the Church Passed-over--"The Church of the First-born ones, whose names are written in heaven." --Heb. 12:23.

Nor can we admit your claim with reference to baptism. The Scriptural view is still more exclusive than yours. You have in the membership of the Baptist church some who would be far from acceptable as members of the "Church of the First-borns." They passed your test of water-baptism, but they have not passed the test of the greater baptism which is required of all members of the Church whose names are written in heaven. The real baptism is a baptism into Christ's body--the Church--by a baptism or immersion into Christ's death, and a resurrection therefrom in his likeness. Water immersion is a beautiful symbol of the real immersion of the human will into the will of Christ, a beautiful illustration of a full sacrifice even unto death; but it is only an illustration or symbol--just as the bread and wine of the Supper are not the real life-giving elements of our Lord's sacrifice of which we are to eat, but merely their symbols.

We agree, therefore, that none but the Church, the immersed, should partake of the Supper; but we recognize as really immersed all whose wills are dead and buried in the will of Christ, and who, as new creatures in him, are risen to walk in newness of life, while waiting for the consummation of their course in literal death and their awakening as actual new beings in the first resurrection. All such, wherever and wherever they may be, are the real members of Christ's body, the Church, whether they have performed the enjoined water symbol or not. Of course, when such consecrated ones, dead to their own wills and alive only to the will of Christ, come to see that our Lord's commands

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include the symbol of water immersion or burial, as well as the burial of their wills, they will be glad to follow and to obey their Head and Lord in all things --especially when as infants they were not "believers" and that a drop of water could not in any degree symbolize burial and resurrection. Such as see the value and beauty of this injunction of God's Word should, if possible, be buried in water also (as our Lord and his apostles showed us) before partaking of the Memorial Supper. See TOWER for June 15th, 93,--article headed "Baptism and its Import."

Of course, we cannot hope that only true "wheat" will present themselves at the Lord's table; we expect that some "tares" will come also, as Judas was present

at the first gathering. But since we cannot judge the heart nor separate the "wheat" from the "tares," we fulfil the whole duty when we "declare the whole counsel of God" as revealed in his Word on this subject, and should leave the decision as to whether or not he partake to each individual who professes faith in the atoning blood and consecration to the Redeemer.

HOW TO PARTAKE.

If there are in your neighborhood others of God's consecrated people besides yourself, you should know it. Your faithful love for them and for the truth should have led you to seek them out to bless them with the truth shortly after you yourself received it. If there are such with whom you can have communion and fellowship invite them to join you in the Memorial; but not if you know them to be deniers of the ransom, lest you assist in bringing additional condemnation upon them.

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

Provide for the occasion, if possible, unleavened bread (or crackers), such as the Lord used, and such as Hebrews now use; because the pure, sweet, unleavened bread best symbolizes the sinless flesh of the Lamb of God, who knew no sin [of which leaven is a symbol], who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from the race of sinners. Provide some drink from "the fruit of the vine," as the Lord directed. Undoubtedly he and the disciples used light wines, and we regard wine as unquestionably the more appropriate symbol; but since our Lord did not stipulate wine, but merely the "fruit of the vine," we can conceive of no objection that can be urged against the strained juice of boiled raisins, which are dried grapes. And surely this would be "the fruit of the vine" as really as wine is. We do not urge this raisin-liquor upon any who feel a conscientious desire to use wine; we merely remind all that our circumstances, climate, habits, etc., differ greatly from those of the early Church, and we very much doubt if our Lord would have us symbolize his blood with many of the intoxicating wines of our day--especially in view of the fact that some of the saints may have an inherited weakness of the flesh, which one taste might reenkindle into a great temptation. "Let each judge not to cast a stumbling-block before his brother." If wine is conscientiously preferred, choose a light wine, or mix a little wine with the raisin-juice.

The memorial service should be very simple--it is chiefly a season of communion. Have a table in the

midst of the assembly for the bread and wine. After

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the singing of a hymn one of the brethren should, in a few chosen words, express the object of the service and read a few verses from the Scriptures on the subject; another might then give thanks for the bread of life, the broken body of our Lord; after which the unleavened bread (or soda biscuit if more convenient) should be passed to all the communicants. An opportunity for remarks on the bread of life might here be given. Then a prayer of thanks for the cup, and for the precious blood symbolized in it, should be offered, and the cup of "fruit of the vine" passed. Here an opportunity might be given for remarks on the precious blood. But avoid discussions at this meeting. However appropriate to contend earnestly for the faith on other occasions, this is not such an occasion. This is a meeting for fellowship and communion with the Lord, our Redeemer and present King. If any seem contentious, let him have his say, and let the others refrain from discussion, that the holy moments of special communion with himself, which the Master appointed for our blessing, be not marred.

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

A beautifully appropriate hymn for closing the Memorial is No. 276 in our hymn-book. And it will surely add to our joy to realize that some of like precious faith in all parts of the world are celebrating the same great sacrifice, thinking of the same gracious Lord, being comforted and encouraged by the same exceeding great and precious promises, resolving by

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the grace of the same gracious King to do greater service and to make greater sacrifices in his service and in the service of his people thenceforth, and closing with the same song of praise and worship.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Thus before the cross we'll spend;
Life and health and peace possessing
From the sinner's risen Friend."

Of the first Supper it is written: "They sang a

hymn and went out." Let us do the same. Let each go to his home with his heart full. We suggest the omission on this occasion of the usual, general and proper after-meeting greetings, and all commonplace remarks and thoughts, thus we may prolong our communion and fellowship with the Master. Keep within sight of him throughout the next day. Hear the clamor of the people against the guileless one; see them incited by the clergy of Jerusalem; see him before Herod and his soldiers; see him arrayed in robes of mock-royalty and crowned with thorns, then buffeted and spat upon.

See him crucified as a criminal, and taunted with the very gracious deeds which he had performed--"He saved others, himself he cannot save." Remember that he could have saved himself; that he could have asked for, and would have received, "more than twelve legions of angels" to deliver and protect him; that he could have destroyed his enemies and villifiers, instead of dying for them; and that our hope of a resurrection and everlasting life depended upon his willing offering of himself as our ransom-price. Considering his love for us and for all it will surely strengthen us as his followers to endure more and more hardness as good soldiers of the cross. Aye, let us consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we become weary and faint in our minds under the light afflictions now permitted for our trial and discipline, which, if faithfully endured, will work out for each a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

THE CELEBRATION AT ALLEGHENY.

As usual the Church at this place will celebrate Christ our Passover slain for us. The service will be in Bible House Chapel, No. 56 Arch street, at 7.30 P.M., on Tuesday, April 5th. We no longer hold general Bible Study Conventions in connection with this Memorial; for it is at a usually inclement season. And, furthermore, we found that as only the few could attend from other places, their coming detracted from the interest in the home celebrations. Our advice, therefore, is that each little gathering seek to make these occasions of special interest at home. Nevertheless we shall be most glad to welcome all who may find it convenient to attend the Allegheny meeting.

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"For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned [as unfit for the honors of the high calling] who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."
--2 Thess. 2:11,12.

A DELUSION is an error which, when viewed from certain standpoints of observation, has the appearance of truth. A delusion is more or less dangerous according to the importance of the truth which it misrepresents, beclouds or falsifies; and, if followed, it leads accordingly to more or less disastrous consequences. If a merchant be deluded and misled by an apparent boom in his line of industry, the result to him may be financial disaster. If a man or woman be deluded by false ideas of life or by false appearances of character when choosing a partner for life, the result may be long years of domestic misery. And, likewise, eternal interests may be, and are, continually affected by the delusions of error on religious subjects.

When a man is deluded, he verily thinks he is right. He claims to be honest in his convictions, and he is so. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof [where the subject of delusion is of vital interest] are the ways of death." (Prov. 16:25.) The world to-day is full of delusions, and of deluded people who verily think they are right, and who expect in due time to realize their delusive hopes. There are political delusions, financial delusions and religious delusions of every shade and hue; and thousands and millions of people are following them, and devoting all their time and energy to them, only to realize in the end a whirlwind of confusion, disaster and the utter wreck of all their hopes.

The questions then arise, Who can escape these delusions so common among men? The fact is that no member of the fallen race is, of himself, proof against them. We are all, in consequence of the fall, both physically and mentally impaired; our experience is brief and varied, and our knowledge is necessarily very limited.

Tho we see that financial delusions are continually misleading men and blighting their hopes of temporal advantage; and tho we see that political delusions are forming various factions among men and leading them to strive for the realization of numerous delusive hopes, which, in the end, will bring only anarchy and a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation;

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yet those which chiefly concern the children of God are the religious delusions, or those capable of affecting their eternal interests. The saints have little to

fear from financial delusions or disasters, since they are generally the poor of this world who have little to lose, but whose bread and water are sure (Isa. 33:16), and whose treasures are not laid up here, but in heaven. Nor are they specially concerned with the political delusions which we are told shall ere long lead to the great political disaster, which is even now imminent. These are important to the world, whose only concern is their temporal interests. But the questions with us are, How shall we escape the religious delusions so prevalent everywhere? and what proof have we that we are not now under such hallucinations?

These are important questions which no child of God can afford lightly to set aside. But note the words of the Apostle above quoted, which seem to imply that God is desirous that some should be snared, and to the very intent that they might be condemned--"God will send [permit to come upon] them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned."

Who are these whom God thus desires to be snared and condemned? Paul answers, They are those who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. They are not those who never heard the truth, but those who, having once heard and understood it, turned from it, rejected it and had pleasure in unrighteousness--not necessarily in gross unrighteousness, such as crime, but in some measure of unrighteousness; often a desire for a little more liberty of self-will instead of close conformity to the divine will, and consequently a preference for the error which would grant such liberty and silence the promptings of conscience and the voice of truth. Such prefer the error

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to the truth. Those who receive not the truth in the love of it are not worthy of it, and they, therefore, must go away from it into the outer darkness that envelops the world. To these error comes in its most deceitful forms, and they quickly fall a prey to the delusion.

With the Psalmist, therefore, we may well inquire, "Who," then "shall be able to stand?"--"Who shall ascend into the hill [kingdom] of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" Now mark the answer: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." (Psa. 24:3-5.) Here is the class among whom the delusions of error can make no headway. These have a standpoint of observation from which every error appears in its true colors, and every truth in its proper light.

Mark the peculiar features of this class: They have "clean hands:" Their work for the Lord may be

very imperfect; they may tell the story of his love and grace in a very halting, awkward manner; they may minister to the temporal or spiritual necessities of the saints, or others, from a very frugal and plain store of their own; but their work will be clean; their story will be free from self-emulation and human glorying, and their works will be free from both ostentation and parade. What they do will be done with simplicity and meekness, as unto the Lord, and not for the praise of men.

They have "pure hearts:" Under divine inspection, their motives are seen to be pure. Their whole purpose and endeavor is to glorify God and to bless their fellow-men, especially the household of faith. They have not lifted up their soul unto vanity: They have no vain worldly ambitions, either secretly or openly cherished and ministered to behind the outward profession of entire consecration to God--no ambition to be great, or good, or wise in the eyes of men, nor to grasp the fleeting earthly treasures once consecrated to God. Nor have they "sworn deceitfully:" They have not made a covenant with God of entire consecration to his service, with a secret determination to keep back part of the price: nor have they since making the covenant repudiated its obligations.

The whole course of this class is one of sincerity and truth. Their character is that of meekness and faith; they love righteousness and desire to be molded and fashioned after the principles of righteousness; and they correspondingly hate wickedness and every evil way. With a realization of their own short-comings from the standard of perfection, they put no confidence in the flesh, but humbly and implicitly submit their will and judgment to the will and plan of God. So they have no schemes or plans of their own, but are fully devoted to the accomplishment of God's plan, in God's own way and time, having full faith in his sure word of prophecy and promise.

Those who have such a spirit come reverently to the Word of God to learn God's will and way, and with a desire to walk accordingly; and here they receive the divinely-provided armor of God which will protect all who carefully put it on from all the fiery darts of the enemy. Without this complete armor, no child of God is safe in this evil day. "Wherefore," says the Apostle, "take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."--Eph. 6:13.

The evil day here referred to is this Day of the Lord, in which we are now living, wherein every man's work shall be tried, so as by fire. These are the "perilous times" of which the Apostle forewarned the

because of the many subtle and delusive forms of error now springing up to intercept the progress of the truth. But God's provision for his saints is equal to the emergency of the perilous hour. Never before this "evil day" was it possible for the saints to put on the whole armor of God; and never before was it needed. For some years past the Lord has been handing us this armor, piece by piece, and has been telling us to put it on and wear it that we might become accustomed to it and feel at ease and at home in it, because the time is shortly coming when it will be impossible to stand without it.

Some--a few--have been heeding the counsel. Carefully they have buckled on every part of the armor as fast as they received it, and in consequence, today they stand completely clothed with the truth. Their loins are girt about with it; their feet are shod with it; and it covers their head (their intellectual faculties) as a helmet of salvation (salvation from the snares and delusions of error). Then they have on the breastplate of righteousness--a righteous character, which the truth has developed in them; and in their hands they bear the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God, which they are now able to handle with ease and vigor in defense of the doctrines of Christ; while their ample shield of faith is an able defense against all the fiery darts of the enemy, so that the flying arrows do not even jar the armor or for a moment stun the inner man.

Praise God for such an armor! Brother, have you put it on? Do not rest satisfied with the idea that you can get along as well as your fathers did with only a part of it. The time is coming, yea, and now is, when you must have it complete, or you will surely fall. The portions of the armor presented to the saints of the past were sufficient for their day and trial; but a greater trial of faith in this "evil day" necessitates a more complete defense.

Do not say to the Lord, "Well, I have the breastplate and the shield; no, thank you, I think I shall not need the helmet;" or, "I think I can get along without the sword." I tell you, you will need them all; make haste and put them on without delay. Some of you should have had them on long ago, and should be able to help others don them now. Many are already falling, and sadly many are feeling their lack of the helmet. Some with mere curiosity-interest have spent much valuable time in looking at the various parts of the armor as presented to them for the past few years, instead of earnestly buckling them on and proving them: and they have become so used to merely looking at the beautiful pieces of the armor that they expect the process of bringing forward new pieces to continue forever. Let such wake up to the fact that the armor is already complete, and that no more can be added to it, because anything more would be a superfluity. The

Lord has graciously shown us its entire outline, as well as the manner in which the various parts of it work together. Look at your hand: it has four fingers and a thumb. You do not say, Well, perhaps another thumb or finger will appear by and by. You know there will be no such thing. That hand is complete and another member added to it would be superfluous.

Just so those who have come to view the full completeness of God's plan, as now unfolded to us, know that nothing more could be added to it. It is gloriously complete and worthy indeed of its great Author. But, while the outlining, the general harmony and the working together of the various parts are all clear to us now, we yet have room for profound thought and study of it, and probably will still have even after we are glorified. Some make a great mistake in continually putting on and taking off various proffered armors. There is but one armor that will be of any use or protection to us, and that is that which is stamped with the scarlet stamp of the precious blood of Christ. Every piece of this divine armor is so stamped, and it all fits together. If you think to change your helmet of salvation for some other helmet, you will very soon want another breastplate to match it. And you will want another sword; for this sword will not match with any other helmet. And this shield of faith will not match with any other armor. Do not allow your head to grow too big for the helmet which the Lord has provided, and then go around hunting a new helmet to fit your swelled head and wrong ideas. If the helmet supplied in God's Word will not fit you, do not fancy the increase is real wisdom, and try to stretch the old one or to get a new helmet; but freely apply the liniment of humility and reduce it till the helmet does fit.

Put on the whole armor of God. And make sure that you accept no spurious brand. Every piece of the genuine is stamped with a cross and the words--To be worn only by the redeemed. Put on piece by piece, quickly; buckle it on securely; and, having done all, **STAND**. The position thus suggested implies an attack: the attack will surely come, and indeed has already come to many. Are you ready now to do good service as a valiant soldier of the cross of Christ? Stand! do not run away; stand your ground and battle for the truth.

As we have already observed, it is as truly a part of God's purpose to let some fall in this evil day, as it is to enable others to stand. He therefore permits the strong delusion to take possession of all who have pleasure in unrighteousness, and who therefore do not believe the truth. Such are unworthy of the truth,

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and soon or later every such one must fall. All such are condemned as unworthy of membership in Christ,

the vine; and as the time for the exaltation of the Church draws nearer and nearer, the testing may be expected to increase until all the unworthy ones are weeded out. "He will gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend [those who put off the wedding garment of Christ's imputed righteousness, etc.], and them which

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do iniquity [those who practice sin, who are not fully in sympathy with the principles and ways of righteousness as laid down in the Lord's Word]." And "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

If, then, we would escape the delusions of this evil day, let us see to it that we are in deed and in truth lovers of righteousness; let us receive the truth in meekness, hold it with humility and thankfulness, and serve it with energy and zeal.

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THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

MAR. 13.--MATT. 13:24-30,36-43.

"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man."--Matt. 13:37.

COMMENTATORS in general notice that the cluster of our Lord's parables, one of which is dealt with here, all relate to "the Kingdom of Heaven." Yet strangely enough they almost all ignore this Kingdom feature in interpreting these parables. Of this one, for instance, it is customary to say that God began sowing the good seed, the "wheat," in the Garden of Eden; and that there also shortly after Satan sowed the "tares." Their difficulty seems to be a failure to apply rules of order and logic--they fail to rightly divide the Word of truth. Certain false principles of theory and interpretation are at the bottom of their difficulty. It is essential that we empty ourselves of the many false doctrines "received through the traditions of the elders" and from the dark ages, if we would hear (understand) the Word of the Lord--if we would be taught of him.

The gospel of the Kingdom was not preached in Eden. It was implied but not clearly stated in the promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This Kingdom was hoped for and expected by Israel, because they were the natural seed of Abraham. The Kingdom which began in Israel with the reign of Saul, succeeded by David and Solomon, and reached its climax in the latter and thenceforth deteriorated, never was the Kingdom

of God in the full sense of the promise to Abraham. At the very most it was a typical Kingdom of God, in the hands of a typical people of God--Israel after the flesh. The Israelites themselves recognized this fact and waited for Messiah the great King, to come and establish his Kingdom and to rule the world. Consequently there could be no proper application of these Kingdom of Heaven parables, in any manner or degree, previous to that event.

On the contrary, when our Lord began his ministry, the message sent forth was, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand"--"is come nigh unto you." The commission to the disciples was to proclaim Jesus the King and to announce that he was ready to establish his Kingdom. Yet his ministry with that nation closed a few days before his crucifixion, when he, weeping, uttered the solemn denouncement, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." (Luke 13:34.) The literal seed of Abraham having thus failed to accept the Kingdom (as God foreknew and foretold through the prophets), the next step was to find another nation more worthy than the Jews.

But no other nation could be found suitable to God's purpose, and hence a new nation was to be formed: and this has been the work of the Gospel age, to call out "a holy nation, a peculiar people" from every nation, kindred, people and tongue, to constitute this Kingdom of Heaven. The "Israelites indeed," but a small remnant of the Jewish nation, were attracted by the truth and were the first accepted members of the "holy nation," at Pentecost. They in turn as ambassadors for God, were sent with the King's good tidings of the coming blessed Kingdom to us Gentiles, --to gather from all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues a sufficient number to complete the "holy nation," "worthy" to be the Kingdom of Heaven and as such to bless the world.--Rev. 5:9,10.

It is this "holy nation" in its preparatory and embryotic condition that is referred to in the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven. These parables of the Kingdom, therefore, gave prophetically the Church's experiences from various standpoints,--from the time the work of selecting began, to the time when that work will be completed: when the full number of the elect "little flock" will have been called, found faithful under the tests and disciplines and polishings of the great Master. Then as a whole it shall be glorified, and shine forth a glorious Kingdom, full of the excellency and power of God and in every way fully qualified to fulfil the original promise to Abraham, by blessing all the families of the earth with the true light, and drawing them all (through a knowledge of the truth) to the

great Life-giver, that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

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Our Lord tells us why he uttered his teachings in parables;--that it was because the truths he taught were intended only for the Kingdom class, not for the average hearer; and his words are very plain to this effect: "To you [my believing and obedient disciples] it is given [granted] to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but to all those who are without [outside --strangers to God and unconsecrated] all these things are spoken in parables: that seeing they might see and not understand, and hearing they might hear and not believe." In this instance our Lord, we are told, first dismissed the general multitude and then expounded the parable to his disciples privately. And this was his general custom--"Without a parable spake he not unto the [general] people."--See verses 10-16.

Our Lord himself "soweth" this good seed of the Kingdom, which germinating constitutes his Church, spiritual Israel. This is shown in his exposition (vs. 37), "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man." The good seed itself, we are told, was the message respecting the Kingdom--"the word of the Kingdom." (Vs. 19.) This word, or message of the Kingdom was planted by our Lord and his servants the apostles, as it is written, "Which at the first began to be spoken by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders."--Heb. 2:3,4.

So long as our Lord lived, the Adversary, Satan, found no opportunity for sowing the seeds of error amongst the seeds of truth: our Lord declares, "While I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept." (John 17:12.) And so long as the apostles lived the Church was similarly protected from the errors which the Adversary fain would sow: the apostles for this very purpose, we understand, were specially holden and guided of the Lord, so that whatever they bound on earth might be understood as having the full confirmation in heaven, and whatever things they loosed or abrogated or set aside on earth, might be understood as having the full heavenly sanction. And the Church did recognize this divine supervision and accepted the apostolic rulings as inspired and authoritative.--See Acts 15:24-29,31.

"But while men slept"--after the apostles had fallen asleep in death, Satan, the great enemy, found little difficulty in sowing the seeds of error,--false doctrine. And as the true doctrine produced true children of the Kingdom only, so the false doctrines introduced produced false children of the Kingdom only. The wheat seed could not produce tares; the tare seed could

not produce wheat.

The difference between wheat and tares is very great. Wheat is the standard food of the world and is said to contain the elements of nutrition in the best proportions for man's use: how apt a symbol the Lord chose when he would represent the truth, the whole truth, and the children of the truth--the children of the Kingdom. The tare as a symbol is likewise very appropriate. It resembles the chess or cheat of America and the darnel of Europe. The tare seed is poisonous and acts as an emetic, causing vomiting; and it occasions the husbandman great annoyance, because it must be thoroughly separated from the wheat before the latter can be used. The statement here in the Greek implies that the tares were over-sown--intentionally, maliciously sown in the midst of the wheat, for the very purpose of damaging or totally spoiling the entire crop. Such malice would probably be understood very well by our Lord's hearers, even if they did not comprehend the import of the parable. Professor Shaff mentions a similar act of malice in Ireland, where an out-going tenant, in spite, on account of his ejection, sowed wild oats in the fields which ripened and seeded before the crops and caused great difficulty to the farmer. Wheat and tares, while growing, look

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exactly alike until they head out: then the difference is very apparent. The wheat heads, full of heavy wheat, bend over with the weight, while the tares are very erect and have the appearance, where they are thick, of being the superiors, the masters of the field. What a beautiful illustration of the modesty and meekness of the true and fruitful Christian, and of the proud boastfulness of those who are Christians in association and outward appearance only.

As in the parable the servants inquired of the Master whether or not the seed sown had been good (pure, free from weed and tare seed), so to-day and all down through the Gospel age, the Lord's people have sometimes wondered how it comes that the Church is, and always has been from the first, infested with a class of people who have a form of godliness, but not its power and spirit. They have wondered whether or not the truths sown by the great Teacher could possibly produce such a varied crop as is seen in the church which nominally is his Church. The Lord answers our question, assuring us that the seed truths which he planted were pure, good, and that the tare seeds were planted by his enemy, Satan. And looking over the field, the world of mankind (the kosmos, not the ge, the earth, nor the aion, the age, tho both of these are often elsewhere improperly translated "world"), we can readily see its wheat-field,--the field wherein the truths and the errors respecting the Lord's coming

Kingdom have been planted,--where these plantings have brought forth correspondingly, a true and a false Kingdom class.

The kosmos, the world of mankind as a general field, was all more or less adapted to use as a wheat field; but it was not all planted with the good seed: the good seed was planted in Palestine, Asia-Minor and Europe, and from thence has spread to America and to some slight extent elsewhere. But, strictly speaking, Europe and North America are the wheatfield in which grows side by side, intermingling, and often with their roots tangled, the wheat, the children of the Kingdom, begotten of the truth, and the tares, children of the evil one, begotten of error; and the name of this wheat field in common parlance is "Christendom," --i.e., Christ's Kingdom; for the "tares" claim to be the true Kingdom class and that the "wheat" are fanatics.

The fact that the wheat-field was not free from tares was not discovered by some of the faithful servants (and indeed was difficult to discern) until the fruit began to appear;--then the question was, How should the matter be dealt with? Any attempt to root out the tares--to separate between the children of God, the children of the truth, and the children of Satan, the children of error--any attempt at positive judgment

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along these lines was positively forbidden; the instruction being, "Let both grow together until the harvest." While therefore God's servants were not to attempt the separation, the true from the false, throughout the Gospel age, they nevertheless were to understand that the mixed condition would not be permanent --that a time of separation would surely come-- in the harvest, in the closing time of the Gospel age.

Apparently the tares have grown more thriftily than the wheat; no doubt indeed the intention of the Adversary was to utterly choke the true wheat, and hence he has sown the tares with extremely liberal hand, so that our Master informs us that out of the entire wheat-field, he looks only for a small harvest of good, fully ripe wheat.--"Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." By reason of the choking influence of the tares, however, there will apparently be much of the true wheat not fully ripe for the harvest--not "overcomers," but merely "babes in Christ."

It would be a great mistake to suppose that the "tares" of Christendom are merely the murderers, thieves, knaves, etc., morally corrupt: on the contrary, the "tares" are not on the low level of the field, but rise up out of the field (the world) as does the wheat, proclaiming that they are Christians by associating themselves in religious institutions, and with much

profession holding their heads higher, and making their boasts louder than the true "wheat" class. They are generally moral people: this is implied in their association with the wheat class, they have "a form of godliness." Are we not told by the Lord that such people are "children of the wicked one?" Does not this seem rather harsh, considering that none of them sprang from the good seed of truth, but that they were all begotten of error--with which fact they themselves possibly had little to do?

The general view of this matter is, we think, not only unkind, but unjust and unscriptural. To our understanding the whole world of mankind (excepting the true Christians), born in sin and shapen in iniquity, aliens and strangers from God, may be spoken of as "children of the wicked one," because they came into their condition of alienation from God more or less directly through Satan's instrumentality. And considering that merely nominal Christians were brought into Christian profession not by the truth but by falsehood, by Satan's misrepresentations and perversions of the truth, and that deluded by these errors many of them are what they are in all good conscience--we can think of them sympathetically; for they do not appreciate the hopes and aims and sentiments of the true "wheat" class, but think of these as deluded, fanatical, over-enthusiastic, visionary zealots. The "tares" consider themselves to be the real Church, the real crop, sown by the Master, and look with pity often upon the true "wheat" class, considering them abnormal growths of piety and superstition. The "tare" idea of religion is that it is for the restraint of vice, for the promotion of civilization and for the cultivation of social qualities in humanity. This is the Kingdom by which now and for centuries past the "tare" class has sought to rule the world--with sword and gun and prison, in concert with the preaching of good morals, to be preferred when they do not cost too much. The "tares" are far too respectable a class of people to have been planted by the great Enemy, for any other purpose than to act as a powerful antidote or offset to the influence of the truth and the true children of the Kingdom. Had he been able to keep the world in the darkness of heathen superstition, he never would have planted so respectable and orderly and moral a class as the "tares"--imitations of the "wheat:" but seeing the influence of the truth in the world, Satan sought heroically to counteract it along advanced lines. In this he is true to his Scriptural character--ready to wear garments of light, as represented in the sciences, etc., and to put upon his faithful the same.

With this view of the "tares" we may look upon them with respect and realize that altho they can never hope to enter the Kingdom, and altho they must be destroyed as "tares" in the fiery times of the day of vengeance just at hand, yet this need not suggest their

utter destruction in the second death as human beings, nor that they will have no hope of any blessing under the Kingdom, when it shall be established in power and great glory. On the contrary, the "fire" of this day of wrath (into which we are already entered) is as symbolic as the "tares" it will burn. It will destroy the "tares" as "tares"--as pretended children of the Kingdom, of which really they never were a part, but intruders, deceived. It will still leave them as members of Adam's race, bought with the precious blood, amenable to the conditions of the New Covenant, and to all the blessings of the Kingdom, as they shall flow to all the families of the earth, after the true "wheat" class have been separated and caused to "shine forth as the sun [with their Lord Jesus] in the Kingdom of their Father."

To our understanding of the Scriptures,* we are already in the "harvest" time of this age. The great Chief-Reaper, the Lord Jesus, is now, through his messengers or servants, gathering the harvest of the Kingdom truths which he sowed 1800 years ago; and very soon the last of the ripe wheat will be gathered into the "garner" (the glorified state--the heavenly condition --"changed") and then, very quickly, the sons of God will be manifested and their great work of blessing the world will begin. (See Rom. 8:21,22.) This Sun of Righteousness, composed of Christ our Lord and all the faithful overcomers of this Gospel age glorified, shall "shine forth" as the prophet has declared, with healing in its beams--provisions of mercy and restitution for all mankind.

The furnace of fire in which the tares will be destroyed (as "tares," and fully and freely confess that they and their institutions are not the Kingdom of God, that they have neither part nor lot in that matter, but were mistaken) is the great time of trouble, the day of vengeance; the day of the overthrow of Satan and his representatives; the day of Satan's binding that he shall deceive the nations no more; the day when the rod of divine vengeance shall smite and break the systems of earth as potter's vessels, preparing the world of mankind thereby, for the blessings and favors which divine grace has provided in Christ Jesus our Lord, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOLS. II. and III.

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Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Brother Arnold met with us, according to arrangements, to our joy. We found in him, we think, a loving Brother, possessed of the spirit of meekness. Notwithstanding the extreme cold weather, the meetings were well attended, and good interest was manifest all through. Those who bitterly opposed the truth could not stay away, even some who never ventured to show themselves in the house before, and I am satisfied the Lord will bless the brother's efforts. Many express their sorrow that the meetings closed so soon.

I am very happy to inform you that never did a better feeling prevail among the brethren here, than at present; and some who a few months ago could not find words severe enough in the way of epithets against those who are of like faith in the truth can now be heard defending it. How true the word that God will make the wrath of man to praise him.

Yours in the Lord, F. Z. GROFF.

Tennessee.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Enclosed you will find Express Money Order for \$1.00, the price of TOWER.

I received in due time the fourth volume of the DAWN series, and read it eagerly, without stopping, only to eat and sleep a little. After carefully reading and rereading it I feel that it is just the message the world is needing and waiting for, and therefore is of the Lord's leading and under his direction. I congratulate you my dear Brother upon the successful accomplishment of so great a task.

I have suffered much of late, and, in addition, the increasing infirmities of accumulating years render me less and less inclined to exertion of any kind, physical or mental. Under such conditions we naturally seek the easy chair and the chimney corner, and live more in the memories of the past than in the activities of the present, and put off until to-morrow things that should be done to-day; but even the old are not justified in indulging in sentimental reveries or natural inclinations amid the astounding developments of these last days. The hope that the Master has some work for me in the stirring scenes of the near future bears me up amid the depressing environment.

Yours in Christian love, S. G. KERR, Sr., M.D.

"This is the fourth volume of a series of books dealing largely with eschatology, the views enunciated in which caused no little controversy in this county a year or two ago. Indeed, a specific doctrine in VOL. I. formed the subject of a set theological debate between the Rev. Mr. Davidson, lately of Canisbay, and Mr. C. N. Houston, Wick, an able and eloquent expounder of the views. Basing his position chiefly on the assertion of Scripture that the Atonement was "a ransom for all," Mr. Russell shows how God's purposes in the ages towards mankind have been revealed, notably in the typical kingdom of Israel and his dealings with them, as so minutely recorded in Holy Writ. The main contention is that these purposes involve the election or selection during the Gospel age of a Church--the body of Christ--which, when completed, will reign with Christ as a spiritual kingdom, through whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed during the Millennial age, which is due shortly to be ushered in.

"In the present volume [IV.] the author steadily and logically pursues his theme, proving from the Scriptures that the 'Day of Vengeance'--the dark day prior to Millennial dawn--is upon us, and that this is the meaning of the unrest which is so prevalent on every hand and in relation to every subject. Not content with giving his own views (or rather the Scripture testimony which he applies), the author has fortified these immensely by quotations from scores of prominent men--Doctors of Divinity, Statesmen, Jurists, Financiers, Historians and Editors--many of whom, we presume, realized but imperfectly the import of their own words as they are here quoted to prove that the history of our day is the fulfilment of prophecies eighteen to thirty centuries old.

"The volume certainly will be valued for its extensive collection of facts and figures, relating to almost every phase of social, political, financial and religious matters as they bear upon the present situation. Nor are these dryly stated; on the contrary, they are introduced in such a manner as to fascinate every reader who is at all interested in the consideration of the wonderful events of 'our day.' We must compliment the book for its fidelity to the Scriptures and to principles of righteousness, and for the even-handed justice with which it deals with some vexing problems. It is a book that will probably make some warm enemies, but it is sure to make a host of warm friends. Its enemies as well as its friends will read it with more than ordinary zest, and will want it always by them as a work of reference. Its influence will surely be far-reaching, for its counsels are wholly on the lines of law and order and peace, even though it points out from prophecy that very shortly peace will be removed

from the earth. A lengthy chapter entitled 'Our Lord's Great Prophecy' is devoted to an exposition of Matt. 24, and the views given forth cannot fail to interest Bible students. A shorter chapter, the last, entitled 'Jehovah's Footstool made Glorious' will be found most interesting to the same class. Zech. 14:4 is wholly unique, and will be found deeply absorbing to Christian thinkers and others.

"The author, while holding to the Second Advent of Christ and the then establishment of his Kingdom, very evidently has more exalted idea of those events than is common to 'Pre-millennarians;' he views it, as we have already indicated, as a spiritual Kingdom, though none the less a veritable dominion which shortly will be the channel of divine blessings to men--tho introduced by a 'day of vengeance' and trouble which will figuratively break and wound the hearts of men, preparatory to their healing with the 'Balm of Gilead.' There is so much thought on new lines to be met with in the volume that the value and ability of the work will be readily admitted even by those who may be unable to fall in with its conclusions."--John O'Groat Journal, Wick, Scotland.

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send a Postal Card each December, stating their cases and requesting the paper.

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REMEMBER THE MEMORIAL SUPPER, APRIL 5TH,
AFTER 6 P.M.

IT HAS been suggested by some that the day preceding
(April 5th) be spent, to some extent, as partially a fast day and
a day of much private prayer for the welfare of Zion. Let each
of us do as is in his heart, in this matter. We of the WATCH
TOWER will remember you all on that day, as we do every day,
but more particularly. "Brethren pray for us."--2 Thess. 3:1.

Answering a query, would say:--

The Hebrews will celebrate Passover Feast for a week, beginning
(Nisan 15th) 6 P.M. April 6th. We celebrate the death
of the Lamb in the "Memorial Supper" (Nisan 14th) the night
before, after 6 P.M. Read the TOWER article again.

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R2278 : page 83

"BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL."

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,
redeeming the time, because the days are evil."--Eph. 5:15,16.

THE WORD "circumspect" is from circum, signifying
around, and spectus, signifying to look,
to watch. The true Christian pathway is so narrow,
so beset with tests and pitfalls and wiles of the evil
one that, if we walk carelessly even (not to say wickedly),
we will be in great danger of mishap. It requires
not only that we look all around at every step,
but more than this, it requires that we be wise,--wiser
than our fellow creatures of earth--wise with the wisdom
that cometh from above, which is pure, peaceable,
loving; yet first of all loyal to the Lord and his Word.

At a centre to which flow by mail the records of
the trials and difficulties through which many of the
Lord's people are called to pass, we are in position to
know that their trials are now more numerous and more
severe than for a long time at least. Appeals for prayer

on their behalf and for counsel respecting the way of the Lord come by nearly every mail from tried ones who are anxious to "walk circumspectly." These are gladly answered, to the best of our ability,--pointing out the Scriptural lines that must guide all who would walk with the Lord.

We now wish to call attention to some general principles, applicable to every member of the body of Christ, at every time; and especially necessary to be remembered and practiced at the present time, because of the special activity of our Adversary;--"because the days are evil." For it would appear that, as in the "harvest" of the Jewish age, so in the present "harvest" of the Gospel age, opposition prevails not only in the synagogues, from the Scribes and Pharisees, but in the home circle--between parents and children, and husbands and wives--and among the Lord's people. And in proportion as the Adversary seeks to stir up strife, let each of the consecrated be the more on guard to give no avoidable offence either in word or deed. "Walk circumspectly,...because the days are evil," --days of special trial and testing.

HELPFUL RULES FOR OUR DAILY LIFE.

The rules we have to suggest are as follows:--

I. Let each resolve to mind his own business.

The Scriptural injunctions along this line caution us not to be busy-bodies in other people's affairs. Everyone of experience in life has learned that this is a good rule; yet few walk by this rule, circumspectly. If we have not sufficient of our own business and of the Lord's service to fill our hands and moments and mouths, there is something wrong with us that needs careful prayer and study of the divine Word to set right.

This does not mean that we should be indifferent to the welfare of others under our care, or for whom we are in any degree responsible; but, even in doing for these we should be careful to recognize their rights and the rights of others, and specially careful not to exceed our own rights. Let us never forget that justice must govern in our interferences with the affairs of others, tho we may not require full justice in respect to our own interests, but exercise mercy.

II. We should exercise great patience with others and their faults--more than in dealing with ourselves and our own short-comings.

When we remember that the whole world is mentally as well as physically and morally unsound through the fall, it should make us very considerate for their failings. Since the Lord is graciously willing to cover our blemishes with the merit of the precious blood, we

cannot do less than be "very pitiful" and of tender compassion towards others;--even tho their failings be greater or different from our own. This general rule is specially applicable to your own children. Their defects to some extent came from you or through you; hence, in dealing with their faults, you should do just as in correcting your own faults,--earnestly, rigorously, for their correction in righteousness, but sympathetically, mercifully, lovingly.

III. Do not be touchy and easily offended. Take a kindly, charitable view of the words and acts of others. A trifling slight or rebuff could well be passed unnoticed--covered with the mantle of generosity and love. A serious offense should be assumed to be unintentional, and inquiry should be kindly made in words that would not stir up anger, but in "speech seasoned with grace." In a majority of cases it will prove that no offense was meant.

This rule in the Scriptures comes under the instructions not to indulge in "evil surmisings,"--imagining evil intentions and motives behind the words and acts of others. "Evil surmisings" is ranked by the Apostle as contrary to the words of our Lord Jesus, opposed to godliness, and of the same spirit as envy and strife--of a corrupt mind, works of the flesh and the devil.--1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21.

The other side of this subject is brought out by the Apostle's injunction respecting the elements of the spirit of love, of which God's people are begotten and which they are to cultivate daily,--the development of which is one of the chief proofs of their being "overcomers." He says, "Love suffereth long and is kind, ...is not easily offended, thinketh no evil,...beareth all things, believeth all things [favorably], hopeth all things, endureth all things."

It may be urged that such a disposition would be imposed upon frequently, by the evilly disposed. We reply that those who possess this spirit of love are not necessarily obtuse nor soft: their experiences in cultivating this degree of love have served to develop them and make them of "quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." They will be cautious where there is even the appearance of evil, even while avoiding the imputation of evil intentions until forced to concede them by indisputable evidence. Besides, it would be better far to take some trifling risks and suffer some slight losses, many times, than to accuse even one innocent person. And the Lord who has directed this course is abundantly able to compensate us for any losses experienced in following his counsel. He is both able and willing to make all such experiences work together for good to those who love him. He places obedience to his arrangements first (even before sacrifice) saying, "Ye are my disciples, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Whoever neglects the Lord's commands along this line of "evil surmisings" weaves a web for his own ensnarement, however "circumspectly" he may walk as respects other matters; for, a heart impregnated with doubt, and suspicion toward fellow creatures, is more than half prepared to doubt God: the spirit of sourness and bitterness implied is at war with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love. Either the one or the other will conquer. The wrong spirit must be gotten rid of, or it will defile the new creature and make of him a "castaway." On the contrary, if the new nature conquer, as an "overcomer," it will be along this line: if evil surmisings are overcome, half the battle against present difficulties and besetments is won. The surmisings are from the heart, and lead us either to good words and acts, or to evil words and acts.

IV. If you have been slandered, you may explain, to set yourself right, either publicly or privately; but surely avoid doing more than this. If you slander in return you make two wrongs out of one. Let no man render evil for evil to any one;--no, not even if what you should tell be the truth, while what your neighbor told was falsehood. And in contradicting and explaining false charges, remember not to go beyond this to make counter-charges against your defamer; for thus you also would become a slanderer.

This is the Scriptural rule. We are to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, and not as they do unto us. The wrongs done toward us will never justify wrong doing on our part. God's true children are to have no sympathy with Satan's delusion --"Do evil that good may result." But while no Scripture forbids our explaining away the errors and false statements of slanderers, experience proves that, if we followed Satan and his deluded servants of unrighteousness around, to contradict every adverse criticism and evil report, we should be kept more than busy. And if Satan found us willing to do so, he would no doubt lead us such a chase as would prevent our having any time to tell forth the good tidings of great joy; thus he would gain a victory, and we should lose one.

Rather let us commit our reputation to the Lord, as a part of the sacrifice we laid at his feet when we surrendered all in obedience to the "call" to run the race for the great prize of our high calling. If thus we suffer some loss of reputation, by reason of our resolution not to neglect the King's business to fight for our own tinsel, we may be sure that it will count with him as so much endured for Christ's sake; and so much the more will be our reward in heaven, when the battle is over and the victors are crowned.

Meantime, however, it behooves each of the Lord's people to be as circumspect as possible at every step of the way. Remember that in proportion to faithfulness

and zeal in letting the light shine we will have the malignant opposition of our great Adversary, who seeks to turn and twist and maliciously distort and discolor our every word and act;--because the accuser of the brethren can find no real charges; and because he is exceeding mad against the humble servants of the truth, as he was against the Chief Servant--our Lord. He, let us remember, was crucified as a law-breaker, at the instance of the prominent ones of the church, and betrayed to them by one of his own disciples.

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your minds" when attacked by the Adversary,--whoever may be his agents and whatever their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lord's sight, if we endure faithfully; and he can do no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the good of his cause--tho that good may sometimes mean "siftings" of chaff and tares from the wheat.

V. Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are strictly forbidden to God's people, as wholly contrary to his spirit of love--even if the evil thing be true. As a preventive of anything of the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out one only way of redress of grievances, in Matt. 18:15-17.

Even advanced Christians seem to be utterly in ignorance of this divine ruling, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandal-mongers. Yet this is one of the few special, specific commandments given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, Ye are my disciples if ye do whatever I command you, its constant violation proves that many are not far advanced in discipleship.

Let us look carefully at this rule which, if followed, would prevent gossip, "evil-speaking," "backbiting."

Its first provision, for a conference between the principals alone, implies candor on the part of the accuser who thinks that he has suffered; and whom here we will call A. It implies his thinking no evil of the accused, whom we will style B. They meet as "brethren," each thinking his own course the right one, to discuss the matter; to see whether they can come to the same view. If they agree, all is well; the matter is settled; peace prevails; the threatened break has been averted, and no one is the wiser.

If they cannot agree, A may not start a scandal by relating his version;--not even to confidential friends may he disclose the matter, saying, "Don't mention it; and especially don't say I told you." No; the matter is still "between thee and him [A and B] alone." If A considers the matter important, so as to wish to prosecute the subject further, he has but one way open to him, namely, to ask two or three others to go with him to B and hear the case from both sides and give their judgment respecting its right and wrong sides.

These should be chosen (1) as persons in whose Christian character and good sense and spirit of a sound mind A himself would have confidence, peradventure they should favor B's view of the matter. (2) They should be chosen as with a view to B's appreciation of their advice, if they should give their judgment of the matter in A's favor.

It would, however, be wholly contrary to the spirit of justice as well as contrary to the spirit of the Master's instructions here, for A to "talk it over" with several friends from whom he desired to select these "two or three witnesses," to make sure that they favored his story (without hearing the other side) and would go to the conference prejudiced,--with their minds already determined against B. No; the matter is between A and B alone, until the two or three friends are brought in to hear both sides of the dispute in the presence of both parties.

If the judgment of the "brethren" is against B, he should hear them, should accept their view of the matter as the just, reasonable one;--unless it involves some principle in which he cannot conscientiously acquiesce. If the "brethren" see the matter from B's standpoint, A should conclude that in all probability he had erred; and, unless conscience hindered, should accept the position and apologize to B and the brethren for the annoyance caused by his poor judgment. But none of the parties are at liberty to turn scandal-mongers and tell the matter, "confidentially," to others.

If the decision went against A, and he still felt that he was injured and had failed to get justice through a poor choice of advisers, he might (without violence to the principles laid down by our Lord) call other advisers and proceed as before. If their decision were against him, or if he felt that he could not trust to the judgment of any, fearing that all would favor B, he should realize that part at least of his trouble is self-conceit, and would do well to fast and pray and study lines and principles of justice more carefully. But A has gained no right to tell anything to the Church nor to anyone, either publicly or privately. If he does so, it marks him at once as disobedient to the Lord and exercised by a bad spirit, a carnal spirit,--contrary to the spirit of the truth, the spirit of love.

If the committee decide partly against B, and only partly in favor of A, the brethren (A and B) should endeavor to see the matter thus, and to arrange matters amicably. In this case there would be nothing respecting the matter to tell;--nothing that is anybody's business.

If the committee decide wholly against B and wholly in favor of A, and if B will not heed them and make reparation for the wrong or cease

from injuring A, the latter is still not at liberty to become a scandal-monger; nor are the brethren of the committee. If A considers the matter of sufficient importance to justify further action, there is just one course open to him: he with the committee may lay the matter before the Church. Then the Church shall hear the matter, both sides, and whichever (A or B) shall refuse to recognize the advice of the Church shall be thereafter considered and treated by all as an outsider --as not of the Church, not to be fellowshiped; as dead, until such time as he may repent and reform;--a not very likely thing after rejecting such faithful treatment.

Thus did the Lord guard his true disciples from the insidious sin of slander which leads onward to other and grosser works of the flesh and the devil, and stops growth in the truth and its spirit of love. And let us note, too, that those who hear slanders and thus encourage slanderers in their wrong course, are partakers of their evil deeds; guilty partners in the violation of the Master's commands. God's true people should refuse to listen to slanders and should point the offender to the Lord's Word and the only method therein authorized. "Are we wiser than God?" Experience teaches us that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd explicitly.

If any Brother or Sister begins to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly but firmly. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them." Refuse to have any share in this violation of our Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. Supposing the Brother or Sister to be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject, Matt. 18:15, and 1 Tim. 5:19. If the conversation is not directed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil-speaking," "back-biting" and telling you his "evil surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go,--I cannot, must not hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are--violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story, I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his plan of redress for grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word can not be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples. Then withdraw fellowship from such until his error has been confessed with promises of reform. If to any extent you listen to such conversation or express "sympathy" with it or the gossip or slanderer, you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed,

you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.--Heb. 12:15.

A slanderer is a thief according to worldly standard: as Shakespeare wrote, "He who steals my purse steals trash; but he who steals my good name takes that which doth not make him rich, but leaves me poor indeed." According to the Christian standard, still higher, as voiced by the Great Teacher, slanderers are murderers. (See Matt. 5:22; 1 John 3:15, Revised Version.) Thus seen, the very suggestion to slander is to be shunned, as of the spirit of Satan.--Jno. 8:44.

VI. God's people should beware of pride as they would avoid the most deadly plague.

This rule, always good, and well backed by Scripture, seems doubly needful to those who are blessed with the light of present truth. This may seem strange: it may be reasoned that the receiving of so much grander views of God's character and plan would make his people feel the more insignificant and humble, the more dependent on divine goodness, and the more trustful of God and the less trustful of themselves. And this should be the effect, always and ever: but alas, with very many it is not so.

Many get to feel that the knowledge of the plan of the ages proves them specially wise or great or good: they seem to forget that God hides the truth from the wise and great--that no flesh should glory in his sight. They love the truth selfishly, as dealers love their merchandise, for the sake of what they can get for it. If they cannot hope for wealth in exchange for the truth they can hope for small notoriety--to appear wiser than others, that they may dole it out in fragments and thus perpetuate their notoriety for wisdom, and gratify their pride or vanity. Such people do little to help circulate the present truth. If they cannot avoid it, they may mention MILLENNIAL DAWN or ZION'S WATCH TOWER or Tabernacle Shadows or Food for Thinking Christians or About Hell or About Spiritism; but when they do so it is usually with some disparaging remark; as for instance, that they "disagree in a good many things;" or that "they pin their faith to no man's coat sleeve but go to the Word of God direct;" or that "the author isn't much, merely reprinted what wiser people had written, and was endeavoring to make himself famous at their expense."

Beware of all such people; sooner or later they will fly the track entirely, and injure more than they ever helped. God does not wish such people to serve his cause, and will surely permit their vanity to stumble them,--however much their natural ability--and it is generally people of real or fancied ability who are thus afflicted with the spirit of pride and vanity. God opposeth

We call every reader of our publications to witness that the author has never boasted of his wisdom or originality, either publicly or privately. We have boasted in the truth, and shall continue to boast of it--that no human philosophies can hold a candle to its brilliant electric ray; but we have never boasted of being its originator. On the contrary, it is because we did not manufacture it, but because God has revealed it "in due time" as "meat in due season," and because it is so much more wonderful than we or any other human being could originate or concoct, that we have confidence that none other than God is its Author and its Revealer.

If by the grace of God we have in any degree been used by him in serving present harvest truths to others, we rejoice in the service, and will continue to strive to be faithful to our stewardship: but as for vanity on this account, we see no room or reason for it. We are well aware that our Master could readily have found many others as fit and worthy of the service, and many more capable naturally: we can only suppose, therefore, that herein as previously--"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty,...and the things that are despised...to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."--1 Cor. 1:27-29.

We therefore caution all who by the grace of God have been translated out of darkness into God's marvelous light, that they walk proportionately the more humbly before the Lord: because, if the light received should become darkness, how great would be the darkness, and how hopeless the condition. It would, as the Apostle declares, be better for such never to have known the way of life. If salt lose its flavor it is good for nothing more than sand.

VII. Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men. Begin with the heart--the thoughts: harbor no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ Jesus as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded upon you, either from without or from within, lift your heart to him in prayer for the grace promised to help in every time of need. Keep constantly near you the thought and prayer, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer."

VIII. While treasuring and seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come into sympathy with the principles which underlie the divine law: this will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we get to understand and sympathize with the principles

of divine law, to that extent we are getting at the spirit of the divine Word.--See Psa. 119:97-105.

IX. Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit or disposition of Christ--contrary to love.

A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the devil and their various snares, and this fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed;--against sin, first in ourselves and secondly in others; if used for the Lord and his people, and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This in the Scriptures is called fighting the good fight: and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for right and truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and his people's liberties.

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

Let us be on guard on this point. Let us first of all judge ourselves lest we cast a stumbling block before others: let us fight down in our own hearts the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over littles and nonessentials. "Greater is he that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the truth be not from motives of self glorification; but from love for the truth, love for the Lord and love for his people, the brethren. If love be the impelling spirit or motive, it will show itself accordingly, in loving, gentle, patient, humble efforts toward the fellow-servants; and let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the cutting.

X. Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions directly or remotely connected with malice, envy, strife, hatred. Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do you great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all his creatures,--the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have his spirit and walk in his directed way.

XI. Do not trust your conscience. If it were a sufficient guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws

of God given to guide conscience. And still worse off than these are those mentioned in 1 Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and walking circumspectly according to its light.

XII. Do not be bold, except for the right, the truth. So far as yourself is concerned preserve a reverential fear--of sin, and of displeasing the Master, and of losing the great reward--"the prize of our high calling." Nearly all who "fall away," first lose all fear and become self-confident. They forget that it is only "If ye do these things ye shall never fall." (2 Pet. 1:5-10.) "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it." (Heb. 4:1.) Partly because of the loss of this proper fear, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance."

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FEET WASHING.

SOME feel that the feet-washing mentioned in John 13:4-17 is as important as the Memorial Supper; and hence we will here consider the subject: altho only one of the Evangelists remembered even to mention it.

In Eastern countries, where sandals were worn, and the feet thus exposed to sand and dust, feet-washing was a regular custom, and an actual necessity. This service was considered very menial, and the humblest servants or slaves performed it for the family and guests.

Our Lord had noticed among his disciples a spirit of selfishness; he had overheard them disputing which of them should be greatest in authority and dignity in the Kingdom he had promised to share with them; and, foreseeing that this spirit would injure them in proportion as it grew and strengthened, he had rebuked them for their lack of humility. So indeed it did, in the fourth to the sixth centuries, blossom and yield bitter fruit, in the organization of Papacy, and the train of evils and errors which still flow from that impure fountain.

To illustrate the proper spirit which should characterize all who would be his disciples, he took a little child and set him in the midst, and said, Except ye become (artless and simple) as a little child, you are not fit for the Kingdom for which I am calling you. Ye know how the Gentiles lord it over one another, and recognize caste and station, but it must not be so with you. Ye have but one Master, and all ye are brethren; and he that would be chief, let him become chief servant.

(Mark 10:35-45.) They who serve you most, you must mark as your chief ones. I am the chief servant myself; for the Son of man came not to be served by others, and honored thus, but he came to serve others, even to the extent of giving his life in their service. As therefore my greatest service toward you renders me your chief, so shall it be among you. Esteem and honor one another in proportion as you find in each other unselfish sacrificing love and service. Esteem such very highly for their works' sake.--1 Thes. 5:13.

But for all this, the spirit of pride and a desire to "lord it" over others, and be revered as chief, was there, even after three and a half years spent with the Master, and under his example; and as he was about to leave them. Jesus sought, even on the last evening with them, to impress this lesson indelibly upon their hearts. So, after the Passover Supper, he arose from the table and performed for his disciples the most menial service, in washing their feet. They probably had not even thought of performing such a service for each other or for him, and even had consideration enough to object to his thus serving them in so humble a manner.

When Jesus had finished, he said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him." If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. If you understand and appreciate the lesson I have given you, and will practice it, you will be blessed thereby, helped in my service, and prepared for the Kingdom in which I have promised you a share.--John 13:4-17.

That the lesson had its designed effect we can scarcely doubt, as we look at the course of several of

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the apostles, and see how, with much self-denial, they served the body of Christ, of which they were fellow-members, following the example of the Head, who was chief servant of all.

The question arises, What did the Lord mean when he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done?" Was the example in the principle, in the lesson of service one toward another? or was the example in the method of service, in the ceremony of feet-washing? To suppose the latter would be to hide the real lesson under a form. And if the example were in the form, then every item in the form should be observed: an upper room; a supper; sandals should be worn; the same kind of garments; the towel girdle; etc. But no: the "example" which we should

follow lay in the humble serving of the disciples by the Master, regardless of form. His example of serving the fellow-members in even the most menial manner is what we should follow--and blessed will we be in proportion as we do follow it. In that proportion we shall be prepared for the everlasting Kingdom and service of God.

Those now living in Eastern countries, where sandals are still worn may find an opportunity now to follow the example, the same form which the Master used, as well as other forms; and those differently circumstanced may follow the "example" in a thousand forms. Some of the fellow-disciples probably live in your city and in mine. How can we serve them? How can we show them our love and sympathy according to the Lord's "example?" Not in this climate by washing their feet--this would be an inconvenience, the very reverse of a pleasure and service to them, and therefore contrary to the "example." But we can serve the "body" otherwise, and truly follow the example. We can improve our various opportunities to serve them in matters temporal as well as spiritual. We can be on the lookout, and when we see sadness or discouragement, we can lend a helping hand to lift our brother's burdens, or our sister's sorrows, and we can let them see by deeds, as well as words, our anxiety to serve them--figuratively speaking, to wash their feet.

Do not wait until they request your assistance; for in proportion as they are developed disciples, they will not ask your aid. Do not wait until they tell you of their burdens and trials, but watch to anticipate; for in proportion as they partake of our Master's spirit, they will not be complainers, but will live "always rejoicing"--rejoicing even in tribulations.

Be not ashamed of such service of the "body,"

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but seek and rejoice in it--"ye do serve the Lord, Christ." But still more important than temporal service is our service one of another as "new creatures."

The washing of the body with the truth--the sanctifying and cleansing of it with the word--is in progress now. (Eph. 5:26,27.) What are you doing to cleanse and purify the faith and lives of your fellow members? Do you approach them humbly with the truth, sincerely anxious to serve them, to bless and comfort and refresh them therewith? If so, go on; grand is your service; the Master served thus; this is his example; follow on. The more you can thus serve, and at the greater cost of time, and effort, and convenience, and self-interest, the greater will you be in the eyes of the Master, and the more honored and beloved of the body when they shall come to see and know you, as the Lord sees and knows your love and service.

Follow closely, then, the noble "example" of Jesus: wash and be washed one of another, cleanse and purge away the defilements with which each comes daily in contact in the world, that ye may be clean, "through the word spoken unto you." Purge out the old leaven of hypocrisy, and envy, and self-exaltation, even as ye have already been justified from all things and reckoned pure and holy by the merit of the precious blood which the chief servant and Lord of all gave for all.-- 2 Tim. 2:20,21.

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"THE NIGHT COMETH WHEREIN NO MAN CAN WORK."

THE article from Brother Woodworth, which follows, will be read by all with great interest. If it be merely speculation, it is surely ingenious. We received it eight months ago, but after careful consideration wrote our dear brother W. that we enjoyed the reading of it but could not endorse it as truth--that it is more fanciful, inferential and speculative than anything we have ever published. Brother W. was by no means offended at this, but urged that if published even as a conjecture or with a suggestion that it may be only a cunningly devised fable, it might do some good by awakening some to the fact that whether this calculation be right or wrong, evidently "the time is short," anyway, for labor in this great harvest work. We give a portion of his letter:--

February 16, 1898.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--In reply to your loving letter of the 14th, I beg to assure you that I sympathize with your statement that you have considerable hesitation in respect to this matter, for I think I realize quite clearly just how important it is that you should be cautious in what you place before the Lord's hungry "sheep." If, therefore, after you have carefully considered the points, you still feel averse to publishing the article, how would it do to mention that you were considering some further points in the chronology, which, if correct, would show that the night will begin to settle down early next year--that you had not yet fully satisfied yourself as to their correctness and that since the time is now so near at hand you think best not to make any definite statements for the present, but to wait and see whether the date will be corroborated by developments? It would seem to me that you would thus be provided with a good opportunity for an exhortation to special effort during the year, and at the same time no harm can come in case we should find my arguments unsupported by the facts.

However, this is merely a suggestion.

I treat the Time of Harvest as one complete day, from sunrise to sunrise. It seemed to me clear that having established the proportion of

light : darkness 14.6 : 9.4

in its application to a representative harvest day of 24 literal hours, the same proportion should hold good in the division into day and night of the great forty-year harvest day in which we are now living. Reasoning in this way I found the date February 1st, 1899.

In my understanding the period from Oct. 1st, 1874, to Feb. 1st, 1899, would therefore represent the 12 Jewish hours of daylight, while the period from Feb. 1st, 1899, to Oct. 1st, 1914, would represent the four "watches" of night, the night including a period of twilight at each end.

Do as you may think best, and be assured I will continue to be, as ever, your brother and servant in the hope of the Gospel, CLAYTON J. WOODWORTH.

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We conclude to place the matter before the TOWER readers with the foregoing cautions against accepting this matter as of the same weight and authority as the more definitely stated prophecies treated in the MILLENNIAL DAWN volumes. Should the outward work of "sealing" with the truth be stopped at the date indicated it will surprise us greatly--our expectation being that it will continue for probably eight years yet, until the Religious Federation shall have been consummated and have gained sufficient political prestige to deprive us of our rights of publication, etc. Nevertheless, we wish to use this year and every year as tho it were the last for this precious service of the Lord, his Word and his "sheep." And this is the spirit of all possessed of the holy spirit of God's dear Son.

Brother Woodworth's article follows.

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THE WHEAT HARVEST.

ITS CLOSE NIGH AT HAND.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--In a back number of the WATCH TOWER (1893) you quote from a subscriber who says:--"It is evident that a portion of the forty years of the Gospel harvest will be a 'night,' without opportunity for labor, and this harvest time

is now nearly half consumed. Since there probably will be ten years of 'night' but little more than a decade remains for active service."

Then follows an editorial comment in these words: "May not this imply that the forty-year day will be practically divided in the middle, and hence that from 1895 onward the darkness may be expected to gather more and more?"

These suggestions seem to me to be the first steps toward the unfolding of a great truth. It will occur at once to any person who gives the subject careful thought that as, during the harvest season, the days are somewhat longer than the nights, the same should be true of the Gospel harvest, and this is the experience of those who are now laboring as co-reapers with the Master. The time of harvest is more than half gone, but the daylight still continues; there is still here and there an "Israelite indeed" who, when he hears the "joyful sound" is glad to come "out of darkness into His marvelous light."

But as, in a literal harvest day, the length of the daylight does not greatly exceed that of the night, so, in this harvest time, we should expect the present favorable opportunity for effective service to soon draw to a close; and indications are not wanting to the watchers in Zion that ere long the last "over-ripe" (parched, thirsty) head of wheat will have been gathered, and the harvest of this age will have been fully reaped.--See Matt. 13:30 and Rev. 14:16, Revised Version, margin.

In Matthew 13:24-30,36-43, our great Teacher and Chief Reaper, in speaking of this time of harvest, has called it a wheat harvest, and it would seem that if we could by some means ascertain what is the representative wheat-harvesting day of the world, and what its length is, we might learn something of value. At first thought this may seem a difficult thing to do, but with the Lord's help the problem may be solved more easily than one would suppose. The first step in its solution is to find

WHERE TO LOOK FOR THE WHEAT.

Thanks to the labors of those who "run to and fro" in this day of increased knowledge, this is a very simple matter, and below are given, from the American Agriculturist hand book for 1897, the latest and most reliable statistics available of the wheat crop of the world.

[Brother W. here furnishes statistics for each state in the United States and for the several wheat-producing countries of the remainder of the world. These statistics show that Minnesota and North Dakota produce the largest crops of the United States, and that

Russia, France, Hungary, Germany and Italy are the chief wheat countries of Europe in the order named, British India being chief in Asia.]

We give the summary as follows:--

Continent	1895.
	Bushels.
North America.....	538,563,000
South America.....	85,000,000
Europe.....	1,443,233,000
Asia.....	404,578,000
Africa.....	48,842,000
Australasia.....	32,461,000

Grand Total.....	2,562,677,000

If you will kindly take an atlas and look up the location of these countries, you will be surprised, first, to find that in every instance the larger portion of the country named lies within the Temperate Zone (north or south), while in the great majority of cases the entire country lies wholly within that zone. But you will be still more surprised if you investigate the matter further, to find that in the few countries which do touch or project into other zones, the wheat producing provinces lie entirely within the Temperate Zone. This means that

THE ENTIRE CROP IS GROWN IN THE TEMPERATE ZONE.

Of the wheat production of India, the Encyclopedia Brittanica says:--"Broadly speaking, it may be said that wheat does not thrive anywhere south of the Deccan" (which lies on the border between the Torrid and Temperate Zones). The entire civilized region of Egypt lies in the Temperate Zone, and the sections of Western Australia and Queensland which extend north of the tropic of Capricorn are barren and uninhabited." It is interesting to note, however, from the Encyclopedia Brittanica that wheat has been "grown in Norway as far north as latitude 65 degrees," only 1-1/2 degrees from the arctic circle. We thus have conclusive evidence that practically all of the wheat of the world is grown in the Temperate Zone.

[Brother W. next proves satisfactorily (we omit the evidences which are lengthy) that the 45th parallel is the center of the wheat producing belt: and this line he finds runs through the principal wheat state of these United States--passing through its capital city, Minneapolis, the greatest wheat and wheat flour market in the world;--with twenty-six flouring mills producing over 10,000,000 barrels per annum.

Seeking next for the date of harvest, he gives abundant statistics to prove that the first day of August would represent the average middle of wheat harvest the world over, and continues--]

THE LENGTH OF THE DAY.

Having thus ascertained beyond all reasonable question that the center of the world's wheat belt is the 45th parallel of latitude, and that its representative harvest day is August 1st, it becomes a comparatively simple matter to ascertain the length of the average wheat harvest day. It is only necessary to find the time of sunrise and sunset on the 45th parallel of latitude on August 1st.

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[Further elaborate calculations are given here, showing that--] From 4.48 A.M. to 7.24 P.M. is 14 hours and 36 minutes, which, if these calculations are correct, is therefore the length of the harvest day of the world.

FEBRUARY 1ST, 1899, MARKS THE CLOSE OF THE DAY.

We are now ready to apply what we have learned. If the length of the harvest period from October 1st, 1874, to October 1st, 1914, be considered as a day, part of which is light and part darkness, we can easily find what portion of the forty-year period will correspond with the daylight. To begin with, we will reduce the forty years of "harvest" to months. 40 times 12 equals 480 months. Now, taking the length of the average harvest day, we have 14 hours and 36 minutes = 14.6 hours = $14.6/24$ or $146/240$ or $292/480$ of the day. The 14 hours and 36 minutes from sunrise to sunset, therefore, corresponds to 292 months from the time when the Sun of Righteousness arose, October 1st, 1874. (MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., p.188.) 292 months equals 24 years and 4 months. 24 years and 4 months from October 1st, 1874, brings us to February 1st, 1899, as marking the close of this harvest day (sunset), and would seem to indicate that by that time the harvest work [of gathering from the world] will be finished [--tho much threshing and winnowing may still be in order]; i.e., that the last of the "overcomers" will have been sealed with the knowledge of present truth, and the shadows of the night, wherein no man can work, will then begin to settle down.

But, even after the sunlight is withdrawn, it seems probable that there will still be a period corresponding to twilight, in which those who are really anxious to labor in the Master's cause may find the opportunity. It is plain that there must come a time when the last member of the prospective bride of Christ will come to a knowledge of the truth. It is clear also, that after that time has come, he or she must, to some extent at

least, "spend and be spent" in the Master's service. This being the case, it follows as a matter of course, that the "door" of opportunity will not be immediately and forever closed when the last saint has been sealed, but that the shadows will gradually deepen. It seems clear to me, therefore, that while it will still be possible to work for the Master after February 1st, 1899, it will not be possible to do any further [outward] harvest work, for the last overcoming saint will have been "sealed in his forehead" with a knowledge of the truth before that time. It behooves us all to do with our might what our hands find to do, while it is called to-day.

CONFIRMED BY THE TIME OF PUBLICATION OF THE
"PLAN OF THE AGES."

From a careful study of Revelation, I became convinced long ago that the 10th chapter refers, in general, to the rise and development of present truth, but specifically to MILLENNIAL DAWN; please see also pages 88, 89 of Volume III.

As nearly as I can ascertain, the publication of the first volume of this wonderful set of Bible helps was looked for eagerly by all the friends of the truth, and the book itself was and still is regarded by its author as his first clear and systematic presentation of the divine plan of the ages. In support of this I quote from pages 114, 115 of Harvest Siftings, as follows:--

"It was about this time that...I took occasion to promise MILLENNIAL DAWN, which should present the Plan of the Ages in the clearer, more orderly manner made possible by the new light shed upon every feature of it by the lessons from the Tabernacle;" and again: "Some who have The Three Worlds or the old edition of Day Dawn, would perhaps like to know my present opinion of them--whether I still think them profitable books to loan to truth seekers. To this I reply, Certainly not; because the very immature views of God's truth therein presented fall far short of what we now see to be God's wonderful plan....All now so clear was then blurred, mixed and indistinct. Neither had we seen the steps or planes, shown upon the Chart of the Ages, MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., which have assisted so many to distinguish between justification and sanctification, and to determine their present standing and relationship to God....Even Food for Thinking Christians I no longer commend, because it is less systematic than later publications." Again, in speaking of these earlier works it says: "Things which are now clear as noonday were then cloudy and mixed."

Thus, by your own words, it is apparent that the light of truth did not shine upon all the features of the Divine Plan until we were well on in the harvest day--until noonday--until the "Sun" had reached the zenith and poured its light-giving rays into the secret recesses

of the deep things of God. And what was noonday to you was noonday to all, as soon as The Plan of The Ages had been published.

To find, therefore, the time of publication of the Plan of the Ages will, it seems to me, be to find midday of this harvest season, and this can be easily done. On the fourth cover-page of every paper bound copy of The Plan of the Ages occur these words: "Special Issue of Zion's Watch Tower, representing numbers 3, 4 and 5 of Volume VIII.," which numbers correspond to November 1st, 1886, December 1st, 1886 and January 1st, 1887. As the middle date of these three is December 1st, 1886, that is evidently the midday hour of this harvest day.

In the "Helps" in the back of my Bible I find the following remarks under the heading "The Day and its Divisions:" "The hour varied in length with that of the daylight to be subdivided. To compute any given hour of a Jewish day in modern terms is thus a matter of some complication, as only one hour of the Jewish day,--that of noon--would always correspond with one hour of our day." Reckoning back, therefore, from this important hour, midday, to sunrise, (assuming the publication of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., to have been midday in this 40 year harvest day) we find that the difference between October 1st, 1874, and December 1st, 1886, or, in other words, the first half of the harvest day (from sunrise to noon), is 12 years and 2 months. Accordingly, the last half of the day, or from midday to sunset, will be of the same length. 12 years and 2 months from December 1st, 1886, brings us to February 1st, 1899, and exactly confirms what we had previously learned. If this were all the evidence to show that February 1st, 1899 marks the date of sealing of the last overcomer, it would be sufficient, but there is still more.

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CONFIRMED BY THE HALF HOUR OF SILENCE.

After mentioning, in Chap. 6, the various epochs which, under the symbols of seals, mark the events connected with the rise and fall of Papacy and with those of "the time of the end," Revelation 7:2,3, says: "And I saw another angel [messenger] ascending from the East [the messenger of the covenant--the Sun of Righteousness], having the seal of the living God [the seventh and last]" and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." The balance of the chapter, verses 4-17, seems to me to be a parenthesis,

thrown in to conceal, until God's due time, the meaning of the first verse of chapter 8. If I understand the subject correctly, this verse closes the subject of the seals, the balance of chapter 8 dealing with an entirely different subject.

Correctly translated, the verse reads, "And when he had opened the seventh seal there was silence in heaven during half an hour." The word "silence" has a double significance. It not only conveys the impression of a time of deep study and thoughtfulness, but of a calm before a storm, and as here used seems to me to plainly mean both. Please note carefully that this time of silence takes place

(1) While the saints are being sealed.

(2) While the winds of the time of trouble are withheld, and see how perfectly it coincides with both thoughts.

Again, Christ and his Church, since April 1st, 1878 (the date when "He took to himself his great power and began his reign") really constitute the heaven, and as the prophecy, "He uttered his voice [i.e., broke the "silence"], the earth melted," is not yet fulfilled, I hold it to be unmistakable evidence that the time of silence and the work of sealing are one and the same thing; and that both began April 1st, 1878. This is the date when it was first possible to apply the Lord's command, "Come out of her, my people;" for it was not till then that Babylon was cast off; this is the date marked in the time parallels as the time when our Lord took to himself his great power and began his reign; it marks the rejection and commencement of the fall to everlasting destruction of what has constituted the heavens all down during the Gospel age; it indicates the beginning of the return of favor to fleshly Israel; it is the end of the 360-year periods or "times" of Revelations; it is the date when the first resurrection (of the Church, the body of Christ) began, and the time from which it is said, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now henceforth." It is, therefore, a focal point toward which the rays of prophecy converge.

Moreover, since then the work of "sealing" the saints has progressed in an orderly, systematic and wonderfully thorough manner. During all this time the winds of the time of trouble have been held and the "silence in heaven" which commenced, as we have shown, on April 1st, 1878, still continues. The seventh seal, by way of contrast with the other seals, is called the "Seal of the living God." It lies wholly within God's day,--the seventh thousand-year day, the Millennium, --and the events which occur under it are specially under God's direction. The scale, therefore, by which the half hour of silence should be measured is not the "year for a day" scale by which God measures human events, but is the scale by which God measures his own work. In speaking of the events of

this day of judgment, Peter says, "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day." (2 Peter 3:8.) Using this divinely provided scale it becomes a very easy matter to find the length of the half hour. One half hour is one forty-eighth of a literal day. One forty-eighth of a thousand years is 20 years and 10 months. 20 years and 10 months from April 1st, 1878, brings us again to February 1st, 1899, as marking the date when the last overcomer will be sealed, and the storm of the great time of trouble will begin to break. Perhaps it will be worth mentioning that by this scale one hour would be 41 years and 8 months, this corresponds with the period from the beginning of the seventh thousand years or Day of the Lord, to October 1st, 1914, and reminds one of Rev. 18:10,17,19, where it is thrice repeated that "in one hour" the judgment and desolation of Babylon takes place.

CONFIRMED BY THE LENGTH OF THE NIGHT.

In several places in MILLENNIAL DAWN reference is made to the fact that the French Revolution is a type of the great time of trouble or "night," into which we anticipate the world will soon be plunged; and it seems probable that if we can find the length of that period of unrest, we may be able to learn something of further advantage. After mentioning the gathering of the National Assembly, and their claim on June 17th, 1789, that they were the legitimate representatives of the French people, Anderson's General History, page 572 says:--

"Thus was inaugurated that tremendous social and political convulsion known as the French Revolution, which in its progress not only overturned the government of France, but threw the whole of the civilized world into violent commotion, uprooting institutions that had withstood the assaults of ages. The king and his ministers, dismayed at the determination shown by the lower order and desiring to check their proceedings, attempted to exclude them from their hall and thus suspend their sittings....An insurrection of the populace of Paris ensued, and the Bastille, a noted prison, was stormed and captured by the mob, July 14th, 1789. The excited populace then proceeded to Versailles and demanded that the king and royal family should return to Paris, and Louis felt himself obliged to comply." (July 17th, 1789.)

Concerning king Louis' memorable journey from Versailles to Paris, Abbott's "Life of Marie Antoinette," says:--

"As on the morning of the 17th of July, the king entered his carriage, with a slender retinue and with no military protection, to expose himself to the dangers

of his tumultuous capital, this whole body formed in procession, on foot, and followed him. A countless throng of artisans and peasants flocked through all the streets of Versailles, and poured in from the surrounding country, armed with scythes and bludgeons, and

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joined the strange cavalcade. Every moment the multitude increased, and the road, both before and behind the king, was so clogged with the accumulating mass that seven hours passed before the king arrived at the gates of the city. During all this time he was exposed to every conceivable insult. As Louis was conducted to the Hotel de Ville a hundred thousand armed men lined the way, and he passed along under the arch of their sabres crossed over his head. The cup of degradation, he was compelled to drain to its dregs."

As the first great result of the French Revolution was to humble royalty, to destroy reverence for "names" of men, (Rev. 11:13), we are safe in fixing upon the date of the humbling of the French monarch, July 17th, 1789, as the time when something more than claims had been made, or mob violence attempted, and the people had begun to know their power and to use it. We therefore look upon this date as the real beginning of the "tremendous social and political convulsion" of that period.

Now looking ahead to the great time of trouble coming, we know that it will only come to its final end when Isaiah 2:2-4 is fulfilled--"And many people shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths." With this in mind we look amid the troublous events which stirred France from end to end a century ago, for a personage who was not only a mighty factor in those events, but who, so far as he was able, so shaped them as to cause them all, eventually, to work together for his own aggrandizement. Needless to say we find him in the "Man of Destiny"--Napoleon Bonaparte, he who so narrowly missed becoming a universal monarch that he is described at length in that wonderful eleventh chapter of Daniel, in which they all find a place.-- See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., chapter 2.

As all students of history know, Napoleon, during the latter part of the French time of trouble, caused the fickle populace to really play into his hands. He became successively the First Consul, then Consul for life, and finally Emperor. But even when he had been crowned Emperor of the French he had not yet attained the height of his power, and we must look for an event in his life which will correspond with the homage which, about October 1st, 1914, we expect will be paid to the rightful Lord of Earth. Such event did occur, and by those who feared and hated him was considered

of such importance that it caused a coalition to be formed against him by the combined governments of Europe. From Arnault and Panckoucke's *Life of Napoleon*, Part I., page 206, I quote a description of this event:--

"Napoleon no longer indulged the least hesitation in putting upon his head the iron crown of the kings of the Lombards. In reality, as Napoleon had established royalty in France, he could not think of suffering a republic to subsist in the north of Italy, and as, during his Consulship, he had prepared the French for an imperial regimen, he had also brought the Italian republic into such a state that it was impossible to preserve its independence. From its first existence this republic had been led by him, as it were, in leading strings, but from the moment he was declared Emperor of France a change in the Italian constitution was to be expected. In order to be more sure of the assent of his new subjects, he used the same means as he had adopted in 1802. He summoned the Italian consulta to meet him at Paris for the professed purpose of adding those modifications and changes that times and circumstances had rendered necessary. On the 17th of March, 1805, therefore, M. de Melzi, Vice President of the Italian republic, arrived at Paris at the head of a deputation from the Cisalpine Republic, to express their cordial acquiescence in a monarchical and hereditary government, and also their wishes that Napoleon, being (already) proclaimed king of Italy, would not suffer a year to elapse before he came to be crowned," etc.

This, I believe, was the proudest day of Napoleon's life, when the representatives of that country which for two thousand years had--under one form of government or another--ruled the world, came to lay their homage at his feet and beseech him to be their lord.

Anderson's *General History*, page 579, under the heading "King of Italy," says:--

"Napoleon received the crown of France from the hands of the Pope; and subsequently, at Milan, caused himself to be crowned King of Italy, with the famous "iron crown" of the Lombards (1805). These assumptions of power led to another coalition against him, on the part of England, Austria, Russia, Sweden and Prussia."

From this date, March 17th, 1805 (when his imperial power was first recognized by the Italian government), back to the beginning of the French Revolution, July 17th, 1789, was 15 years and 8 months, and if I am acting upon right premises this should be the length of time from October 1st, 1914, back to the beginning of the great time of trouble. 15 years and 8 months back from October 1st, 1914, brings us again to Feb. 1st, 1899, and confirms all we have previously learned!

Having found the length of the "night" to be 15 years and 8 months, it may be of interest to note if we divide this into four equal watches,--as was the Jewish

custom,--where the end of the cock-crowing or third watch, and the beginning of the morning or fourth watch will occur. 15 years and 8 months equals 188 months; three quarters of 188 months would be 141 months, or 11 years and 9 months. 11 years and 9 months from February 1st, 1899, brings us to November 1st, 1910. This synchronizes very closely with the teachings of the pyramid (Vol. III., p. 363). The difference of one month from October 1st to November 1st, suggests that possibly the "month" referred to by Brother Dickinson in the November 1st, '96, TOWER may have a literal as well as a symbolic fulfilment, and that some great catastrophe, the worst event of the year of October 1st, 1910 to October 1st, 1911, may occur about that time, and that as Christ has promised his followers that if worthy they would be permitted to escape the severest troubles of this coming day of wrath, he will take the last one to himself before that catastrophe has come. It seems reasonable, also, to suppose that it will take but a very short time after the last members of the body of Christ (the light of the world) have been taken from the earth, until the darkest hour of that dark night will have involved Great Babylon in inextricable confusion and dismay.

In love and fellowship, Your brother in Christ,
July 12, '97. CLAYTON J. WOODWORTH.

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JOHN THE BAPTIST AND HIS MURDERERS.

--MAR. 20.--MATT. 14:1-12.--

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."--Prov. 4:23.

THIS lesson relates more particularly to Herod and Herodias, than to John the baptizer. It will be remembered that John had faithfully reprov'd Israel's sins, calling the nation to repentance--in preparation to receive their Messiah and the long promised Kingdom of God. His work, while faithfully done so far as he was concerned, and while not devoid of fruits, was nevertheless a failure as respected the bringing of Israel into a proper condition of heart, that as Israelites indeed they might be prepared to receive Jesus as the Messiah. Had John succeeded, the mission of Jesus to Israel would have been successful; and then, instead of the nation's being rejected from divine favor and overthrown in a great time of trouble, it would have received additional divine blessings, taking the place now occupied by the Christian Church: but, as it was, the words of the prophet were fulfilled, "Tho Israel be as the sands of the sea, yet a remnant only shall

be saved." The unready stumbled, were "broken off."

In this respect we have seen that John, like Elijah, was a type or illustration of the entire Gospel Church in the flesh,--in its earthly career.* John himself, however, tho a loyal servant to the Lord and a martyr for the truth, was not a member of the Gospel Church. He belongs on the lower plane, with the overcomers of the Jewish age. Our Lord clearly declares this; "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the Kingdom of Heaven is preached." (Luke 16:16.) Again he said, "There hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven [Church] is greater than he." (Matt. 11:11.) None could share in the "high calling," nor in any manner be recognized by the Father as members of the house of sons, who died prior to our Lord's death and resurrection,--prior to the giving of the holy spirit of adoption, whereby all the house of sons are "sealed unto the day of redemption."--John 1:12; Eph. 4:30.

John's position in the future, therefore, will not be that of a member of the Bride, the Heavenly Kingdom class; but with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets, amongst whom he was one of the chief, he will be privileged to participate as a member of the earthly phase of the Kingdom, and be one of the "princes in all the earth." And as a servant of the Kingdom he will be greatly honored and blessed and used, in that position to which by the grace of God he was called. And we might here remark that the ancient worthies who will thus be the servants of the Kingdom class, are not thus differently honored from the Church because less faithful than the overcomers of the Gospel age: on the contrary, had they not been faithful they would not be honored at all. Only overcomers will have any part in the Kingdom work; and any part in that work will be honorable and desirable. God desired two classes and hence in his plan called two classes, both honorable and to honorable service; --the one on the earthly plane, the other on the spiritual. There was no obligation to "call" either class: it is an honor to be called and to be used of the Lord in any part of his service; and all thus used will be perfect, each on his own plane, and be perfectly satisfied with his estate: just as fish are better satisfied to be in the water, while birds are better satisfied to be in the air.

John's candor in reproving Herod for living in adultery with his brother Phillip's wife, brought against him not only Herod's ill-will, but especially the ill-will of the woman. It would seem indeed that it was the woman, Herodias, that was the instigator of Herod's entire course toward John. We read, "Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him and would have killed him; but she could not, for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and saved him; and when he heard him, he did many

things, and heard him gladly."--Mark 6:19-25.

Herodias was therefore on the lookout for some opportunity to overcome Herod's sympathy and fear, and to accomplish the death of John, who had now been imprisoned, at her instance, for over a year. Her opportunity came when, at a birthday banquet, Herod, surrounded by his "lords and high captains," and charmed by the dancing of Salome (the daughter of Herodias), promised her whatever she might ask even to the half of his kingdom. The wickedness and intense malignity of the woman's heart against John, simply because of his reproof of her wrong course, is fully shown by the fact that at her instance the daughter chose the death of John in preference even to a half of Herod's kingdom.

Incidentally, too, this narrative shows how great an influence a wrong-minded woman can exercise. Herod was under her influence to such an extent that he had put away his lawful wife to make room for this wicked woman: her daughter was under her influence so that she was willing to relinquish half a kingdom to fulfil her mother's wicked will. One lesson here set before us is that, while women naturally are more sentimental than men, and under favorable circumstances dominated by good sentiments, yet, if they become evil-minded and vicious, they are correspondingly disposed to go to even greater extremes of wickedness

*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 251.

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than their brothers. It is of absolute importance to men that they should not only be emptied of the evil spirit of selfishness and sin, but that they should be filled with the spirit of Christ, the holy spirit: all this is still more important as respects woman, with her more sentimental nature for either good or evil.

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What a suggestive lesson is here for mothers in respect to their power over their daughters either for good or for evil. And here we trespass upon our subject sufficiently to remark that woman's proper sphere of influence is the home--as saith the Scriptures. A true, pure, noble, sensible mother has an almost untellable influence for good or for evil with her husband and sons as well as with her daughters. What a great mistake has been made by some well-intentioned but not Scripturally guided mothers in leaving the home privileges, opportunities and duties put into their hands by Providence, to go out into the world to attempt its reformation. How frequently the homes of female

suffragists and female reformers are neglected, the evil effects thereof falling upon husbands and children. Let every mother feel that in her own family and family connections, and in the opportunities opened to her in the Church, the Lord's family, she has abundant opportunity for the exercise of every talent and grace, and that in a manner fully in accordance with the divine Word and therefore in harmony with the wisdom which cometh from above.

Herod was grieved, "sorry," for the unexpected turn matters took in connection with his unwise offer. We are not to infer from this any heart repentance, but merely that the matter was incongruous to his sentiments and wishes. But proud of his word as a king, proud also of the power, and desirous of appearing omnipotent as possible before his nobles, none of whom probably were of a kind to have any sympathy with John, because also of his oaths, Herod concluded to grant the request, and as a result John was beheaded, and the cruel, vindictive and wicked Herodias received the ghastly present of his head, while John's followers buried the remainder of his body and bore the news to Jesus, his friend.

John's courage and fearlessness in reproving the King should not, we believe, be taken as an indication of proprieties, by the Lord's people. To our understanding John exceeded his mission when he undertook a personal correction of the king. He was right in speaking publicly and boldly against sin in its any and every form; and had Herod inquired of him respecting the subject, it would have been duty for John to have made the statement here recorded. And it is barely possible that Herod did inquire and that John was not a busybody in the king's business, but merely told the truth in answer to an inquiry. This however does not appear from the general narrative. We suggest, however, that the Lord's people would generally best proclaim the truth in a general way without making applications of it to persons in particular, rulers or others, unless so requested by them. It is, we believe, sufficient, if principles of righteousness are firmly held and publicly stated.

However, it is altogether possible, indeed probable we think, that John's course which brought him into conflict with Herod was in some degree typical of the course of the Gospel Church in this present time; and of the course of events that may be expected. If it be a type, Herod would represent civil government, and the unlawful wife would represent the nominal church, which throughout the symbolic Scriptures is represented as a woman, Jezebel, etc. Should it prove to be a type by its fulfilment in antitype, the fulfilment will probably be on something like the following lines: (1) A partial reunion of Church and State. (This seems to be now in process of development.) (2) In such case it would become the duty of the true Church,

the forerunners and announcers of the Messianic Kingdom, to reprove the civil powers as well as the nominal church systems, and to declare their union unlawful--contrary to the Word of God. (3) The effect of this would pretty surely be to awaken the animosity of both civil and religious powers; but it would draw out specially the animosity and venom of the latter. (4) The church nominal, in her false position would be anxious to stifle the reproofs and to destroy the reprovers, and the effect would be that the civil power would be induced to pass such legislation as would restrain the liberty of the faithful ones and hinder them from public utterances;--as John was hindered by imprisonment. (5) Jezebel's personal influence being insufficient may subsequently be augmented by the influence of her daughter (united Protestantism) who will be so fully in sympathy with her as to become her tool in the destruction of the most loyal servants of God.

The Golden Text of this lesson is well worthy of being deeply engraven upon the hearts of all who seek to make their calling and election sure: "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." If the heart, the thoughts, be kept strictly under control in full harmony with the Lord and his Word, all the opposition of the world and the flesh and the devil will not be able to overcome us. Being filled with the Master's spirit and guided by him, we shall thus come off victors, conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved us.

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--QUARTERLY REVIEW.--MAR. 27.--

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"THE DOGS EAT OF THE CRUMBS WHICH FALL FROM THE CHILDREN'S TABLE."

--APRIL 3.--MATT. 15:21-31.--

"Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me."--Matt. 15:25.

SIDON and Tyre lay between Galilee and the Mediterranean sea, and the border line of these two countries, where they touched the land of Israel, are in this lesson called the "coasts." Our Lord did not go into the countries of Tyre and Sidon, for those were Gentile countries, and he had already instructed his disciples not to go into the way of the Gentiles. His journey, mentioned in this lesson, was still in Israel, in Galilee, but over toward the border

of Tyre and Sidon. The woman who is the central figure came from the Gentile side of the border: she no doubt had heard of Israel's hope in a coming Messiah, who would be of the house of David, and whose Kingdom it was predicted should be a universal Kingdom. And she had undoubtedly heard also of Jesus and his wonderful works, and of his claim that he was Israel's Messiah. Hearing of his close approach to her neighborhood, she came to him on behalf of her daughter

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who was possessed of a demon, obsessed.* In harmony with her knowledge she cried to Jesus for help, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou Son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed of a devil."

Our Lord's course in making no answer for a time was perhaps intended to test the woman's faith as well as to manifest it to others, then and since. Perhaps also his delay was in order to consider well the path of duty, the work which the Father had given him to do. What a lesson is here for us: if our Master went into the wilderness and into the mountain to pray and to meditate, and if here he paused to consider the Father's will, how much more need have we to do so;--we, whose judgments have so often proved to be unsound, and who know that to begin with we are sadly fallen and imperfect. Our dear Master's caution should be a reproof and a lesson to us; for how apt the majority are to speak and act without one moment's thought respecting the will of our Father in heaven.

Our Lord was perhaps weighing the subject, fully recognizing the fact that his powers were to be specially used with Israel and Israel only, as he himself had testified. He seems to have been considering whether or not he might reasonably and properly reward the faith of the supplicant. While he delayed to answer, his disciples seemingly took up the woman's cause, whether from sympathy or from vexation because she was interrupting their opportunity for study and communion with the Lord, we cannot judge; but their suggestion evidently was that the Lord grant her request and "send her away" in peace. As tho still weighing the question and as tho desirous that the disciples should discern the logic of his course and the propriety of his decision, he answered the disciples, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."-- Verse 24.

Quite probably the poor woman heard our Lord's disclaimer of any mission to the Gentiles; but so great was her love for her daughter, and so great her faith in the Lord's power, that she persisted, and falling before the Master, she worshipped him, saying, "Lord, help me." Her daughter's cause was her cause. Our Lord's response, that it would not be proper to take the food away from the children of God to give it to

dogs, she understood fully. She recognized Israel as the children of the Kingdom that God had promised to their father Abraham and his seed; and she well knew that all Gentiles were reckoned as "dogs." But our Lord's language seemed nevertheless to give her some hope, for it would appear that he used a word

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for dogs which signifies not ferocious dogs but house-dogs --dogs which were friends and companions of the children. And so the poor woman, taking advantage of this thought, pressed her prayer for help, saying that the friendly dogs do get some of the children's bread, sometimes, cast to them from the table: and she desired that some crumb of favor might be granted to her. Our Lord was greatly touched by her faith which, while persistent, was not intrusive nor assertive; and as a result her prayer was granted. Her daughter was healed.

Here, too, we have a valuable lesson respecting what course is pleasing to our Lord when we approach him; for our Lord approved the woman's course. Let us note that she was not brazen and assertive. She did not attempt to be wiser or more just than God, and to criticize his partiality toward the elect seed of Abraham. So far from demanding that her wishes be granted instanter she did not even express a wish. She merely told the Lord the nature of her trouble, and said, "Lord have mercy on me." "Lord help me." She left it entirely to the Lord's wisdom how the help and mercy should be bestowed.

Alas! how many Christians of years of experience have less idea of how to approach the Lord acceptably than had this poor heathen woman. But it is not too late to learn better. Let us remember this example of what was pleasing and acceptable eighteen centuries ago; for we deal with the same Lord who changes not. Sometimes our Lord may be pleased to grant physical relief and at other times he may do as he did to Paul --give us the more grace to bear the physical ills, saying "My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Turning his course inward again toward the Sea of Galilee, our Lord rested in the mountain and healed the multitudes, lame, blind, etc., all "afflicted of the devil." For we are to remember that all afflictions are either directly or indirectly of Satan: by his temptations he first induced our first parents to sin, and thus brought upon them the penalty of sin, death,--with all its train of attendant evil, pain, sickness, sorrow; difficulty, mental, physical and moral. And subsequently, all the way down, by additional temptations to sin, through the pride of life, the lust of the eye, etc., Satan has continued to ensnare and to injure the fallen race. And thus all sickness and blemish, of every

kind, may be either directly or indirectly charged to him. Our Lord in healing the people was doing so much in offset to the work of Satan; but all that was done in the few years of his earthly ministry, was only a type, a figure, a foreshadowing of the great coming work of blessing the world with restitution--which will include not only physical, but mental and moral recuperation and release from Satan's power. "For this purpose Christ was manifested that he might destroy death and him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil."--Heb. 2:14; Acts 3:19-21.

It is claimed by some that miracles are impossibilities and the reason that they give is that they are contrary to the laws of nature. But this is shallow reasoning. Every person of observation knows that mankind has the skill and ability to overcome the laws of nature to some extent, and that he frequently does so to his own comfort and advantage. For instance, gravity is one of the known laws of nature, yet, every time we walk upstairs and are lifted upward in an elevator, we are overcoming and going contrary to the laws of nature. According to this same law of nature water gravitates downward, yet by overcoming this law of nature with pumps, etc., mankind has one of his greatest conveniences in the waterworks systems of the civilized world. If then the laws of nature can be controlled to some extent by man for his own convenience, how much more able is God to control the operation of his own laws, so that all things shall work together for good to them that love him;--and for the carrying out of any and all of the divine purposes, in this age and in the ages to come.

*See--What Say the Scriptures about Spiritism?

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