

page 161

VOL. XIX. JUNE 1, 1898. No. 11.

-----

CONTENTS.

-----

Provoking One Another.....163  
 Poem: The Truth Shall Conquer.....167  
 Must We Abandon Hope of a  
   Golden Age?.....167  
 The Jewish Faith in the Millennium.....168  
 A Look at the Crucified One.....170  
 "A Spirit Hath not Flesh and  
   Bones".....174

page 162

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,  
"BIBLE HOUSE," 56-60 ARCH STREET, ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, \$1.00 A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, N.Y. DRAFT, MONEY ORDER, OR REGISTERED.  
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL  
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age or accident, or other  
adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they  
send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the  
paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list  
constantly.

=====

R2314 : page 163

PROVOKING ONE ANOTHER.

-----

"Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good  
works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the  
manner of some is: but exhorting one another; and so much  
the more as ye see the day drawing on."--Heb. 10:24,25.

THE WORD "provoke" signifies to arouse or  
incite, or stimulate to activity. It is generally  
used in an evil sense, but is applicable, as in our text,  
to describe an incitement to good works, good thoughts,  
etc. The tendency of fallen human nature is toward  
things that are mean, selfish, grovelling, and the natural  
bent is to incite or provoke or encourage similarly

mean and unworthy thoughts, actions and words in others, and it has become a proverb, that "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Everyone of experience knows this general tendency of evil to beget evil, and to corrupt and to pollute whatever is nobler and purer than itself; hence we have the Scriptural pronouncement, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Those who neglect this counsel need not be surprised if they are continually falling into temptation, and if the influence upon their own lives results in a measure at least of ungodliness and sin, and disfellowship from those things which are noble and true and pure.

But the "new creature in Christ Jesus" is one in whom the transforming influences of the Lord's spirit have already begun--one who has a new heart, a new will, a new disposition. With such, "old things have passed away, and all things have become new:" they have been begotten again; i.e., re-begotten--to new hopes, new wishes, new ideas of propriety. Instead of the earthly wisdom and way with its "bitter envying and strife," which "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish," they have now the wisdom that is from above, and a heart (a disposition) to appreciate and pursue its counsels, which are, first purity, then peaceableness, gentleness, meekness, mercy, good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the disposition of this class, in proportion to their attainment of this heavenly wisdom and new nature, will be to "provoke" or incite or encourage one another, and all with whom they come in contact, to similar goodness of thought and word and act, in harmony with the heavenly wisdom which is guiding their own course.

This is laid down in the Scriptures as an unvarying rule: "A bitter fountain cannot send forth sweet water, and a good fountain cannot send forth brackish water." A thistle-bush cannot bear grapes, and a grape-vine cannot bear thistles. It is the Master himself who says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." If, therefore, we desire to prove ourselves, and to judge respecting our progress in mortifying (putting to death) the old nature, and our growth in the new nature, we will judge ourselves by this standard; answering to ourselves the question,--Is my own spirit (disposition) one which delights in sin in its various forms (not necessarily in its grosser forms of murder, theft, etc., but in its more refined forms, falsity, envy, strife, vainglory, slander, evil-speaking, evil surmises, etc.), or is my delight increasingly in righteousness,

R2314 : page 164

truth, goodness, gentleness, meekness, patience, love?  
If the former, we are yet, either wholly or partially,

in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity, and have need to go at once to the Great Physician, and to submit ourselves to his radical treatment --the cutting off of sin, the mortifying of such fleshly desires, etc. If the latter be our condition of heart, we have cause for rejoicing, yet no cause for pride or boastfulness; for we can say no more than that we have merely done our duty, having merely learned, and that imperfectly, the lessons set before us by our great Teacher.

The Apostle is addressing the Church, the consecrated, the new creatures in Christ Jesus. This is shown in the text, for he classes himself with these, using the word "us;" it is also shown by the context. He calls the attention of the consecrated to the influence which goes out from each to each, and the consequent importance that the influence shall always be stimulating, or provocative of that which is good. No doubt the Apostle found in his day, as we find now, that many who are consecrated at heart fail to see clearly how this consecration should associate itself with and mark itself upon our every act and word. Perhaps he saw then, as we see now, that the holy influence of truth, gathered at a meeting of the Lord's people, through their communion of heart, with each other and with the Lord, is not infrequently spoiled, dissipated entirely, by inconsiderate or unkind remarks of some of the company, upon dismissal.

Who, of experience, does not know how great a matter a little fire may kindle; how much evil may be started by the fire of the tongue; how many unkind thoughts, evil suspicions, surmises, how much envy, malice, hatred and strife, may be started by a mere insinuation? Since the Lord declares, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," it follows that the hearts and lips from which emanate these evil influences, are not controlled by the wisdom which cometh from above, tho they be in some measure consecrated to the Lord.

It is a great mistake, also, to suppose that because the evil thing is said in a kind and gentle manner, therefore it is a good thing, and evidence of a pure heart, that is full of love; quite to the contrary, we know that the great Adversary himself is continually presenting himself in garments of light, that he may exercise the greater influence for evil upon those who have made a covenant with the Lord. So, likewise, those who implant evil thoughts, surmises, etc., in a smooth and polished manner, and perhaps with a tear, are the most dangerous foes of peace and fellowship, and often accomplish the greater harm; because they succeed in planting roots of bitterness and thoughts of evil in hearts which would utterly resent the same evil thoughts and evil surmisings, if presented in a coarse, offensive and obtrusive manner.

We are not to be reckless of each other's interests.

In our contact with each other, whether a personal contact or a contact by mail or a contact through the columns of this Journal, we are to "consider one another." We are to consider what would be helps, and what would be hindrances, what would be encouragements, and what would be stumbling-blocks; and we are to do all in our power to assist one another to run with patience the race for the heavenly prize. If we are truly consecrated to the Lord, we can do nothing "against the truth but [every effort must be] for the truth." (2 Cor. 13:8.) What a burning and shining light every Christian would be, if his every act were considered and shaped for the benefit of those with whom he comes in contact! What a blessing it would be in the home! What a blessing it would be in the Church! This brotherly consideration is what the Apostle is urging upon us: "Consider one another, to provoke [incite, encourage] to love and to good works." Avoid every word and every act, so far as possible, that might incite to hatred, envy, strife, bitterness (and bad works, corresponding to these feelings), all of which are "of the flesh and of the devil."

The Apostle links this advice with the exhortation to forget not the assembling of ourselves together, as the Lord's people. None of us are so strong in the new nature that we can disregard the fellowship of kindred minds. But even if we did feel sufficiently strong for ourselves, the spirit of love in us should so control that we would delight to meet with "the brethren" for their sakes, if we ourselves received no benefit therefrom. But we are more or less like coals of fire, which, if separated, will tend to cool rapidly, but which, if brought together, will tend to increase in fervency the entire mass. Our Lord has encouraged his people to seek each other's fellowship for companionship in the study of his Word, and in prayer, pronouncing special blessings upon the meeting of his people together, even if so few as only two or three.

It is true that sometimes isolated ones, who have no fellowship in the present truth (except through the WATCH TOWER) are often amongst the most staunch and devoted and self-sacrificing of the Lord's people; but we should not from this infer that the blessing comes from their isolation, but rather, since their separation is unavoidable on their part, we may reasonably suppose that our Lord makes up to them, in his own presence and blessing, that which they lack of fellowship with other members of the body. But if one had opportunity for assembling with others for worship of the Lord and the study of his Word, and

R2314 : page 165

neglected to avail himself of his privilege, we need not expect that for his benefit the Lord would work special miracles of grace. The Lord's miracles may be expected

only in times of emergency, to make up for natural deficiency.

Besides, we are to remember that through the WATCH TOWER and the mail the Lord has established a channel of communication amongst his people so that none need be without such fellowship and spiritual intercourse. And we call attention to the fact that the terms of our Journal are so liberal that the very poorest of the Lord's people may avail themselves of this privilege of communion. If they refuse or neglect to use this grace which the Lord has put within their reach, at a cost of one postal card per year, it is their own fault; they are disregarding the Lord's instruction, through the Apostle, and are neglecting the means open before them for having fellowship with others of like precious faith. If such find themselves growing cold, as a result of neglect of the Lord's arrangements and providences, they have themselves to blame. We do not know how to make the WATCH TOWER terms more reasonable than they are. We exhort all to recognize it, not as a personal gift, but as a part of the Lord's provision for his people, to which they are welcome as to all the features of his grace. Freely we have received, freely we will give the message of his love and mercy.

The Apostle intimates that, as "the Day" draws near, there will be the more need for the observance of this instruction respecting the fellowship and communion of the Lord's people with each other. And experience proves this: the great Millennial Day which has already begun, chronologically, has brought with it new activities in mind and body, a greater pressure of business and rush to keep abreast of the times, and a correspondingly greater danger to the Lord's people of being choked with the cares of this life, or with the deceitfulness of riches, or of seeking riches. We need a counteracting influence, to off-set this increasing influence of the world and its affairs upon us; and this counteracting influence is to be sought and to be found by the Lord's people among themselves,--communing one with the other and with the Lord, and exhorting and encouraging one another to steadfastness along the lines of instruction laid down in his Word.

And not only so, but we find that the beginning of this great Millennial Day is a "day of trouble." We find that the latter part of this day of trouble is to be upon the world, and that the Lord promised his Church that, if faithful, they shall be "accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world." But we have found also that the forepart of this day of trouble, which is the day of preparation for the world's trouble, will be a special time of peculiar trouble and trial, testing and sifting, upon the Church; for--The judgments of this day "must begin with the house of God." We see this sifting and shaking in progress all about us in the nominal Church,

and still more intensely among those who occupy a still higher position and enlightenment through the knowledge of the present truth. "The great day of his wrath [judgment, testing, sifting, first of the Church and afterward the nations] is come, and who shall be able to stand?" We hear the Apostle's exhortation, as he looked down prophetically to our day, saying, "Wherefore, 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. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in exalted positions. --Eph. 6:13,14.

It is "as we see the day drawing on" that we are to be the more diligent in assembling ourselves with those of like precious faith; the more earnest in exhorting and provoking to love and to good works, and thus to assist one another in putting on "the whole armor of God"--the graces of character, meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, faith, truth, hope--that with these as the divine panoply or armor, protecting us from the assaults of the Adversary in this day, we may be able to stand. The clear intimation is that, unless we have on this armor, we will be unable to stand. And this armor includes more than mere head-knowledge, represented by the helmet; it includes, be it noted, the entire breastplate of righteousness, purity of heart, and it includes the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, and the sandals of consecration.

In the succeeding verse the Apostle mentions the possibility of wilful sin among the Lord's people, and what it would imply--the second death (the sorer punishment than the first death, in that it would be without hope)--"everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power."

While wilful sin has always been the same, it would not be unreasonable to infer from the Apostle's words that the temptations and dangers of "this evil day" in which we live will specially tend to trial along this line. Let it be clearly noticed that the Apostle is not speaking of sins of ignorance nor of accidental missteps by being overtaken in a fault, whose sin is not unto death, but from which the transgressors may be restored in a spirit of meekness. He is referring directly to full, complete sin--the sin upon which the full penalty is justly and properly to be recompensed.

At first thought, many may be inclined to say,

R2314 : page 166

Well, I am in no danger of that sin, for I am sure that I would not commit sin wilfully, intentionally, designedly. But let us notice, dear friends, that there is a way in which sin may come upon us without being

at the time a wilful sin, but which later might become wilful sin: for instance, any transgression committed, either in total ignorance or with only a partial acquiescence of our wills, might become a full, wilful, deliberate sin afterward, if we afterward came to a clear knowledge of the truth respecting the subject, and failed to repent of it to the Lord, and to undo so far as was in our power the wrong toward our fellow-creatures. To consent to a sin clearly and fully understood, simply because at the time of its committal we were in ignorance, and to refuse to make amends for it, and thus to endorse the sin intelligently, would appear to make of it a will-full sin.

With this view of the matter, the children of God cannot afford to sanction in their own minds even the slightest injustice or untruth towards each other, or towards any. The essence of this thought is found in our Lord's command: "If thou comest to the altar [if we have anything to offer to the Lord, either of service or of worship or of thanks], and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee [that some one has been wronged by you, either in word or thought or act] leave there thy gift before the altar [do not think that it will be acceptable to God while in your heart or outwardly you are practicing injustice toward others]; first go and be reconciled to thy brother [make amends to him, apologies, explanations in full, of whatever wrong you have done him] and then come and offer thy gift [assured that in such an attitude of heart the Lord Almighty will be pleased to accept your gift]."

In describing these who sin wilfully, the Apostle uses very strong, figurative language, declaring that, inasmuch as they are in heart-sympathy with sin, and not in opposition to it, they are the opponents of the Son of God, who was so out of sympathy with sin in its every form that he laid down his life to redeem us from its power and curse. The Apostle declares that such wilful sinners may be esteemed as the enemies of Christ, who really trample him and his goodness and love under their feet, figuratively, disdaining his mercy and favor as well as his instruction in righteousness. He says that, inasmuch as they were once sanctified, as a result of their faith in the precious blood and its cleansing from sin, their turning now into harmony with sin would imply that they now disesteem the precious blood of Christ which sealed the New Covenant, counting it a non-sacred thing--common--and do despite to the spirit of divine favor which had held out to them freedom from the yoke of sin, and ultimately release from its penalty, death; and the attainment, as the Lord's people, of the crown of life eternal.

While holding up before the Church the dangers of sin, and the danger of falling away from steadfastness for Christ and to the principles of his righteousness,

the Apostle encourages us to continue our fight against sin and its influence in ourselves and in others, "perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." Accordingly he calls our minds back to our first love and first zeal--"the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of affliction; partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and affliction, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." He would thus encourage the Lord's people to continue the good fight--to continue to wage warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil, and the spirit of these, especially each within himself, in the battlefield of his own soul. And he urges that faith in the Lord and the rewards which he shall grant by and by, when he shall be glorified in his saints, is very necessary to our endurance of hardness as good soldiers in the fight against evil, both within and without, saying, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward"--"forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another; and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

And this reminds us of the words of the Lord, through the prophet Malachi (3:15-17): In the time when the proud are happy, and they that work wickedness are established in power and influence, and they that tempt God seem to be blessed--"then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another [sympathizing with and encouraging one another, so much the more]; and the Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him of them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." But while all should seek to provoke to love and to good works and to happy looks, we well know that the majority do the reverse. Hence, we suggest that the Lord's peculiar people may be so controlled by his Word and its spirit that they will be incited to good works, good deeds and good looks by the most unfavorable conditions. Consider Stephen, confronted by those who afterward took his life: not only had he courage to preach to them, but his heart was so provoked to love and good works that his face shone with an angelic beauty. (Acts 6:15.) And the same grace abounding enabled him to pray for his murderers. (Acts 7:60.) Nothing could provoke such a spirit-filled saint to evil. Let us follow the example of such close followers of our Lord's footsteps.



-----  
"An arrowy shaft of lightning flame,  
Forth from unlettered lips it came;  
Winds bore it, and the songs of birds;  
It clove its way in burning words,  
And, on a holy mission sent,  
Through languages and lands it went.

"Some heard it, but they did not heed,  
Some welcomed and performed its deed,  
Some fought it and were stricken dumb;  
They knew not what a power had come,  
And, struggling to eclipse the light,  
Were crushed by its resistless might.

"It barbed the hero's scorn of wrong,  
The poet shaped it in his song;  
It nerved the speaker on the stage,  
With it the author warmed the page;  
And hoary error shrank away,  
Dazzled and blinded by its ray.

"O, spark from heaven, touched by thy light  
The farthest hills with day are bright;  
New forms of love and beauty rise,  
New splendors tint the arching skies,  
The ancient wrongs that vex us cease--  
We hail the thousand years of peace."  
--Selected.

=====  
R2313 : page 167

MUST WE ABANDON HOPE OF A GOLDEN AGE?

-----  
MISS Frances E. Willard, deceased, highly esteemed  
for her works in the cause of temperance  
and morality, is accredited with an epigrammatic  
statement which is generally supposed to contain  
an essence of wisdom amounting almost to inspiration,  
as follows:--

"ONLY THE GOLDEN RULE CAN BRING THE GOLDEN AGE."

Were we sure that Miss Willard was inspired, or,  
were we sure that in this sentence she had gathered  
up the spirit and essence of divine revelation on this  
subject, we would in either case lose all the hope we  
now entertain for the glorious future.

It is over eighteen centuries since our Master promulgated  
the Golden Rule; and his disciples and followers  
for all these centuries have preached it. His  
words have been translated into every language under  
heaven, and yet, at this moment, how extremely few

there are of the world's population of fifteen hundred millions who practice this rule! Nay, how few there are even of our Master's professed followers who make any pretense at governing their actions, their words and their thoughts by this Golden Rule! Let the answer come from every quarter,--from the nations of Christendom, from the business men and manufacturers, from the mechanics and laborers, from the home circles, where selfishness mars everything, and, finally, from the Churches professedly advocating the Golden Rule. How much we see of slander, anger, malice, hatred, selfishness, meanness; how little we see of any effort to control these in the lives of professed Christians; and how little reason we have, therefore, to suppose that the rule is observed in their hearts.

And yet, if Miss Willard were a true prophetess, or if she voiced the testimony of the Bible prophets, the only hope of a Golden Age lies in man's acceptance of this Golden Rule which has met with such slight acceptance for more than eighteen centuries. Must we abandon hope of a glorious Golden Age? Can there be no Millennium until all mankind, or a majority at least, shall have voluntarily accepted the Golden Rule, and brought their hearts and lives into conformity therewith? If so, the Millennial dawn will never come. Reason and logic can reach no other conclusion than this. Must we give up hope?

No, we will not give up hope, for we have "a more sure word of prophecy," to which "we do well to take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn." (2 Pet. 1:19.) We are still in the dark place; sin and selfishness still abound; the Golden Rule does not control; we see no evidence of a general acceptance of it: but the more sure word of prophecy foretold this very condition, foretold that the present would be a dark time, and foretold that a glorious dawn would come. We do well indeed to take heed to the prophetic testimony respecting what great light will usher in the Golden Age.

So far from telling us that the Golden Age will come by the adoption of the Golden Rule among the inhabitants of the earth, the more sure word of prophecy tells us to the contrary, that the Golden Rule will come more and more into disrepute; and that the rule of selfishness and sin will abound; and that the result thereof will be a total wreck of present institutions, in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation (Dan. 12:1): a time of anarchy, brought on by the neglect of the Golden Rule; a time in which "every man's hand shall be against his neighbor; and there shall be no peace to him that goeth out nor to him that cometh in."--Zech. 8:10.

This same sure word of prophecy leaves us not to grope on in doubt and fear, but assures us that beyond

the coming trouble Immanuel shall reign--that he will set up his Kingdom upon the ruins of the present selfish institutions and systems which will then be ground

R2314 : page 168

to powder and become "as the chaff of the summer threshing-floors." (Dan. 2:35.) It informs us that Immanuel will establish his Kingdom by means of this time of trouble, and indeed that the trouble itself will be his judgment against sin and selfishness, against the neglect of the Golden Rule which he laid down, and that he will break in pieces and consume all these present institutions, and establish in the earth a kingdom of righteousness, whose law will be the law of Love--the Golden Rule.

In harmony with this is the testimony of the more sure word of prophecy that, "When the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the earth [producing the great time of trouble], the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9.) They will learn the inexpediency of sin and selfishness, and that thereafter under divine direction, under the rule of the Heavenly Kingdom (Christ and his Church, in spiritual power and glory), no other laws or rules than the Golden Rule shall be permitted; and under its glorious administration, the prophetic testimony is, "the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the great deep;"--so that it shall no longer be necessary to say one to the other, "Know thou the Lord!" because all shall know him, from the least to the greatest.--Jer. 31:34; Heb. 8:11.

This is the glorious day, foretold by Moses and by the Apostle Peter, when the great Prophet, Priest and King,--the Christ,--shall rule the world in righteousness, and execute justice in the earth; when he shall lift up also the poor and the needy, and him that hath no helper, and lay justice to the line and righteousness to the plummet, and bless all the families of the earth with the knowledge of the Lord and with opportunity, if they will, to come into harmony with him and to obtain the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord: while all who reject the grace of God and the New Covenant shall be destroyed from among the people, in the second death.--Acts 3:22,23.

Let all those who desire the truth, and who desire to have its sanctifying influence upon their hearts and lives, give the less heed to earthly prophets and wise men and women, however good they may be, and give the more earnest heed to the "more sure word of prophecy; whereunto they do well that they take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn."

Neither logically nor Scripturally is there ground for hope of the Golden Age except in the institution of

the Kingdom of Christ, for which he taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Not only is this Kingdom the world's hope, but it is also the Christian's hope: he hopes to become a joint-heir with his Redeemer in that Kingdom. And, "he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure."--1 John 3:3.

Let us therefore change the statement, and tell to the whole world the "gospel of the Kingdom," the truth, that--

ONLY THE REIGN OF CHRIST CAN BRING THE GOLDEN AGE.

=====

R2314 : page 168

THE JEWISH FAITH IN THE MILLENNIUM.

BY RABBI GOTTHEIL, OF NEW YORK CITY.

"THE belief that Jesus would return to earth in the near future formed, according to Schleiermacher, the basis of the theory of final redemption with the early Christians; and Dorner considers it the first dogma laid down by the rising Church.

"Misgivings and consequent doubts sprang up only with the widening breach between Jewish and Gentile converts. As long as Christianity was viewed merely as a reformed Judaism, as the fulfilment of the Scriptures; as long as the Jewish nation retained in the eyes of the followers of Jesus its prerogatives and high vocation among the nations of the earth, no reluctance was felt to identify the great hope with the national restoration of Israel. It appeared but natural that the place where the Messiah suffered defeat should also witness his final triumph. Such a consummation would silence all doubts as to his authority forever. Israel had rejected him. Israel should be the first to receive him, repent and lead the rest of mankind to the foot of the cross, and thereby the Scripture should be fulfilled.

"But time wore on without bringing the looked-for reappearance of the Messiah. Christianity meanwhile left its native soil more and more behind, carrying the cross beyond the seas and into distant lands; while at home disaster after disaster devastated the land and drove its inhabitants in scattered fragments among the Gentiles for shelter. The preachers of the new faith chafed under what they considered an unnecessary burden--nay, a positive hindrance to the success of their missionary labors. Unfortunate people are always unwelcome; the defeated are undesirable companions of those who mean to conquer the world. In the case of the Jews, there was superadded the scorn bred by the thought that their downfall was the vengeance of the gods whom they denied and despised.

To be thrown together with this wandering tribe was very undesirable to the Christians--nay, appeared as

R2314 : page 169

a stumbling-block in their way. Can it not be removed? Can the stigma not be got rid of? A new interpretation of the passages in the Bible predicting the restoration of Palestine as the beginning of the new and better order of things on earth was sought and, of course, found.

"Divorce!" became the shibboleth of many leading spirits. 'No Judaism!' grew into a cry like 'No Popery!' in later England, and for the most part carried the day. In others, however, the first dogma of the Church held its own and gained new strength as the Christian writings were being gathered together, and the New Testament appeared as 'sacred Scripture' by the side of the Jewish canon. The words are all too clear and definite to be easily interpreted away. Endless controversies ensued, which are not finished to-day. Everybody knows what part the 'second advent' played in the history of the Church. There were times when large numbers of Christians actually prepared for the wonderful event, and if a recent statement made on good authority may be trusted one-half of the English clergy are firm believers in the primitive dogma, and are laboring to prepare the world for the impending manifestation of Christ.

"It is a great pity that the 'No Judaism!' cry was ever mingled with the disputes of the new faith. Had it never been heard, why, the truth must have become apparent that the breach between the old and the new covenants was not nearly as wide as it seemed to be: that mother and daughter were not fatally separated, and might pursue their own ways as friends and not as foes. The dearest hope the Israelite nourished in his bosom during all his wanderings--what was it but the coming of the Messiah, the Goel (Redeemer), the Savior of his people; the one who would rebuild

R2315 : page 169

'the fallen Tabernacle of David' and restore his throne to greater than its pristine glory! That was the same throne on which the Christian expected Jesus to sit, surrounded by the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel and the resuscitated saints and martyrs, who should there receive their final reward. Jew and Christian hoped that Jerusalem would rise from her ruins, change her sackcloth and ashes for robes of honor, and, instead of being despised, become the desire of all nations.

"The question who that chosen vessel of God would be, whether the one who in his own person shared the fate of Jerusalem, or one who had not yet

been seen on earth--could that be of greater weight than the common belief that he would unfailingly appear? A scion of the house of David he would be, an Israelite after the flesh, a ruler of his own people. If he should reveal himself as the man of sorrow who was nailed to the cross, the Jews would be the first to do him homage. Here was a clear and firm point of contact, strong enough to keep the two faiths together until 'the day of his coming.' But the new faith had grown into churches--churches of various tongues and divers nationalities, split up into sects, warring with each other about subtle points of dogma and ceremonies and persecuting one another with ruthless hatred.

"Amid these ever-growing conflicts Christianity was lost. I mean Christianity as it came from the lips of its Jewish teacher. His living words had congealed into creeds and systems, which, passing through the hands of writers of greatly divergent minds shaped these words--could it be otherwise?--into likeness with themselves. Powerful organizations arose which so far overshadowed their common origin that the Jew was mentioned only for condemnation, as the hater of the cross and the enemy of the Gospel, a tool of the devil to obstruct the kingdom of Christ. Yet half of his contention was widely conceded; viz., that the work of the Messiah was not complete; that it had been only preparatory for the final redemption of the world.

"But this availed nothing, and the chasm was dug out deeper and deeper, which kept the two faiths apart --at what cost to the very purposes which were nearest the heart of Jesus we leave unsaid here. Instead of it let us refresh our hearts at the thought that after all the idea of a Millennium has not been lost to us-- nay, that its kernel of truth is better understood now than ever before. For what it has failed to do in olden time, and must fail to do as long as it remains covered with dogmatic shells, it has begun to achieve in its liberated state. There is abroad now a new spirit of fraternity and community of sacred interests among the various religions; a desire for cooperation in those things good and true and helpful which are the very beginning of the Kingdom of God on earth. If the Christian thinks he must do that service in the name of his Redeemer, that need not hinder his neighbor of a different belief from grasping his hand and becoming his fellow laborer. If the Jew is seen to do Millennial work, why should the Christian keep aloof? God has made all nations not only of One flesh, but also of One heart and of One mind; planted in each the same hope, the same pity; tries them all by the same sorrows, and gathers them all at last to the same earth. As in all things, so Heaven can only help us to peace and good will if we are earnest and zealous in seeking and pursuing them.

"What is the Millennial outlook at present? For the Jew; disheartening to almost despair, sadder even

at the end than it was at the beginning of the century. The paeans with which he hailed 'the era of enlightenment' have died away from his lips. He stands aghast at the cruel rebukes he receives everywhere. The

R2315 : page 170

age of persecution has returned for his brethren in many lands. For what sin or misdeed? I will speak frankly; he who is branded as an unbeliever had only too much faith in the professions of his Christian surroundings. He flung himself into the currents of life, as they opened for him, with the ardor of youth; but when he reaches the desired shore in larger numbers than pleased his competitors he is pushed back and all the hateful vocabulary of scorn, abuse and calumny emptied on him with new vehemence. It is impossible for the non-Jew to realize the bitterness of soul which this disenchantment awakens in the Jew. Once he could bear it all in patience, because he felt the hand of God in it and thought it his portion during the dispersion; he walked his thorny path, as one of his poets sang:--

"His eye to earth, his heart to heaven.

"Now, his manhood rises against the injustice he suffers; the free man in him writhes under the indignities heaped upon him, and he has unlearned to seek and find compensation in the synagogues or in the Talmud.

"But for all that the Jew stands at his post and defends his old flag. He will not recede a hairbreadth from the ground so far gained. Firm in his oldtime tried and fireproof faith in the coming of the Millennial Messiah, he labors on; where that is made impossible by the iron hand of his oppressor, he practices the art no one has learned better than he--'to stand and wait.' Whether that coming of the Messiah will be the first or the second, no matter, if only the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven.

"It is not the will of man to direct his steps, says Scripture; nor in that of mankind either. Civilization, and it alone, is sought--and behold, Millennial fulfilment comes with it unsought and inevitably. The spirit cannot be restrained nor put behind prison doors; it moves where it listeth. Freedom of speech, e.g., our undisputed possession, cannot coexist with church tyranny. The open court of an untrammelled press is the best safeguard of public justice. As it is shown in France, frenzied by artificially fanned passions to blindness, the combined power of civil and military authorities cannot wholly silence the voices, growing louder every day, which demand justice, justice at all hazards.

"Electricity quickens thought as well as muscle; the telephone sharpens the mental as well as the bodily ear. Growing ease and comfort in our homes, in

travel, in the sickroom, make us more sensitive for the sufferings of those who are deprived of them, and also for the aches of the soul and the stings of conscience. Organized handicraft and manual labor have increased the sum of manhood among us a million times. Despite their many drawbacks the unions are a splendid school for self-discipline and self-government. They have taken the sons of toil out of their isolation, taught them the value of social order and of subordination to established laws. States within the states support each other as the pillars do in the steel framework of our modern towers of Babel. It was the confusion of tongues that marred the plan of the first one. Our workmen understand each other; there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard intelligently. The bugbear of a war between capital and labor is fading more and more into air, for it would be just as wise as a war would be between the wheel of an engine and the steam that drives it. Our societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, can they fail to make cruelties to man more and more hateful?

"With the doors of our public schools open to all comers, with our colleges and universities freeing themselves ever more from dogmatic fetters and sectarian narrowness; with free libraries, increasing every year by the thousands, reaching the most outlying districts and offering their treasures to the cottager in village or hamlet; with our Chautauquas and other active societies for the diffusion of knowledge; with our charities becoming wiser and more truly charitable as the spirit of humanity spreads, and with Toinby halls and settlements and sisterhoods and brotherhoods for personal service finding ever greater favor; with pulpits on all sides in which the religion of truth is taught as well as the truths of the religion for which they stand--thus splendidly equipped we may surely approach the gateways of the centuries with the calm composure born of the confidence that humanity has now advanced too far to be forced backward to any great distance or checked for any length of time.

"Our faces are firmly set toward the rising sun, and wherever light and love and right prevail God is present and is worshipped by all his servants in divers forms, yet One in spirit and aspiration. What if our songs are 'Songs before Sunrise,' and many deep shadows of uncovered wrong and unredeemed oppression cover still the earth--the watchman on the hill cries, 'The morning cometh' and 'The counsel of the Lord standeth forever.'"

=====



--JUNE 12.--MATT. 27:35-50.--

"Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures."--1 Cor. 15:3.

ALTHO the Scripture narrative of our Lord's crucifixion is told in a most simple and artless manner, and without apparent attempt at embellishment to give it tragic effect, nevertheless in its simplicity it is one of the most touching narratives of history. As no novel could present a more eventful life, so likewise none ends more tragically than did this great real drama set upon the stage by the Almighty, as an exhibition both to angels and to men of his Justice and Love combined. How strikingly depravity of fallen human nature was illustrated in those who witnessed our Lord's many wonderful works, and then his

R2316 : page 170

unresisting sacrifice for our sins, coldly--without appreciation. Nothing could illustrate this better than the account of the division of our Lord's garments and the lot cast to see who would get the seamless robe,

R2316 : page 171

which so beautifully represented his own personal perfection, and which had probably been a gift from one of the noble women mentioned as being amongst his friends. (Luke 8:3.) The climax was reached when, after finally dividing the spoils, his executioners un pityingly viewed his sufferings and death--"Sitting down they watched him there."

Moreover we are compelled to concede that while the influence of the Gospel of Christ has had a large influence upon the world of mankind, producing a civilization which certainly is to be appreciated as a great advance over more rude and barbarous conditions of the past, nevertheless, we can readily discern that under the veneer of worldly politeness and civilization there is yet a great deal of the depraved disposition in the natural heart. For are there not many to-day who, after coming to a knowledge of the facts of his case-- a greater and clearer knowledge, too, than that enjoyed by the Roman soldiers--after learning of the wonderful works and of the sufferings of Christ, and that these were on our behalf, instead of falling at his feet and exclaiming, "My Lord and my Redeemer," on the contrary do just as the Roman soldiers did--"sitting down, they watch him there?" Their hearts are not moved with pity, or at least not to a sufficiency of sympathy to control their wills and conduct, and they continue to be "the enemies of the cross of Christ;"--for as he declared, "Whoever is not for me is against me."

It was probably with irony that Pilate wrote out the inscription that was placed above our Lord's head on the cross, "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." He knew that the rulers of the Jews had delivered Jesus to death because they were envious of his influence as a teacher; and since the charge that they brought against him was "He maketh himself a king," claiming, "We have no king but Caesar," and since by this hypocritical course they had forced Pilate to crucify him, on the claim that it was necessary to the protection of the throne of Caesar, therefore Pilate now retaliated and used their weapon against themselves. But little did he think, of course, that this was the true title of the wonderful man Christ Jesus, whom they caused to be put to death. Another evangelist tells us that the leading Jews objected strongly, but that Pilate refused to alter the inscription.

It was a part of the ignominy which our dear Redeemer bore and a part of the "cup" which he desired that, if possible, he might be spared drinking, that he was crucified between two thieves, and as an evildoer. The Apostle says that we should consider this from the standpoint of enduring contradiction or opposition of sinners against himself, and suggests that it will make us stronger (not in fighting with carnal words or weapons, but) in enduring similar though lighter opposition and afflictions and misrepresentations.

"He suffered much for me, more than I now can know,  
Of bitterest agony he drained the cup of woe.

He bore, he bore it all for me. What have I borne for thee?"

It is proper in this connection to remember that it was not the pain which our Lord endured, not the agony, which constituted our ransom-price;--it was his death. Had he died in a less violent and ignominious manner our ransom-price would have been equally well paid; but the trials, sufferings and contradictions which our Lord endured, while no part of our ransom-price, were expedient, in the Father's judgment, as being a part of his testing. The patient endurance of these proved his loyalty to the Father and to righteousness to the fullest degree: and thus proved his worthiness of the high exaltation which the Father had prepared as his reward. It was in view, not only of his humiliation to man-nature and his death for our sins, but in view also of the cup of shame and ignominy which he drained, that it is written, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth, and things under the earth."-- Phil. 2:9,10.

How strangely the average mind, in its fallen estate, unguided by the sound principles of judgment and the Lord's word, can be swayed from one extreme to the other. This is illustrated by the fact that many of those who wagged their heads and reviled the Lord

upon the cross, and taunted him with his declaration that he was the Son of God, and with his statement respecting the temple of his body, had evidently been amongst those who heard him during the three and a half years of his ministry. Some of them probably had seen his "many wonderful works," and were among those of whom it is written, they "marvelled at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;" and who said, "When Messiah cometh can he do greater works than this man doeth?" Yet when they saw the tide turned against him, and especially when the influential of their religious teachers opposed him, they seem to have been easily swayed. We feel ashamed for the weakness of our fallen race as here shown. Yet the same thing is exemplified to-day: however pure and however luminous may be the presentations of the divine truth, if the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees of Christendom denounce it, they sway the multitude: however pure and true and honorable the lives of the Lord's servants, Satan can still suborn false witnesses, and secure honorable (?) servants to slander and reproach them. But this is what we are to expect. Did not our Master say, "It is enough for the disciple

R2316 : page 172

that he be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord: if they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" Did he not assure us also, "When they shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven"? Thus is fulfilled in us the declaration of the prophets also, "The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

The reproaches of the scribes and Pharisees were evidently the most cutting of all. When deriding Jesus' kingly office, and power, and faith in the heavenly Father, and his claimed relationship to him, they bantered him to manifest that power and to come down from the cross. O, how little they knew that it was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer these things to enter into his glory. How little they understood the divine plan, that Messiah could have no power to deliver Israel and the world from the hand of Satan and death, except he first of all should lay down his life as our ransom price. How thankful we may feel that our dear Redeemer was not controlled by passion and revenge, but by the Father's will and word, so that he endured the abuses of his tormenters in meekness and bowed his will to the will and plan of the Heavenly Father.

And similarly how the living members of the body of Christ are misunderstood; not only by the worldly, but especially by the prominent Pharisees of to-day. Verily, "as he is so are we in this world." As the

world did not understand the Master's sufferings and trials, and could not see the necessity for his sacrifice, but rather considered these as marks of divine disfavor, as it is written, "We did esteem him smitten and afflicted of God," so with the Church;--the fact that God's consecrated people have his favor in spiritual and not in temporal blessings, is misunderstood by the world. They see not that the blessing of the spiritual nature and the spiritual favors which we seek are to be obtained by sacrifice of the earthly favor. But all who are of this sacrificing class, and running the race for the prize of the high calling may, with the Apostle, rejoice in the sufferings of the present time, and count its crosses but as loss and dross that they may win Christ and be found in him--members of the body of the glorified Christ.

It was not surprising that the two criminals on either hand of our Redeemer should join with the others in reviling Christ. The only little word of sympathy, however, that he received on this occasion, so far as the record goes, came later from one of these thieves. Our readers are referred to our issue of June 1, 1896, in respect to our Lord's promise to the penitent thief.

Our Lord's crucifixion took place at the sixth hour, nine o'clock in the morning--appropriately as represented in the type, for this was the hour of the morning daily sacrifice, and his death occurred six hours later, at three o'clock in the afternoon which, according to the Jewish reckoning, was the ninth hour. This also was appropriately represented in the type, for the daily evening sacrifice was offered at this hour. It was fitting also that nature should veil her glories before such a scene, and that there should be darkness. We are not, however, to suppose that it was a dense darkness, but simply darkness, as stated. Nevertheless, it must have been supernaturally dark for, as it was the full of the moon, a solar eclipse could have lasted but a few minutes at most.

It was now that our Lord uttered those agonizing words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" He had borne, with wonderful fortitude, the contradictions of sinners against himself, and Peter's denial, and the fact that all of his disciples fled from him, and that his last hours were spent amid the jeers of his enemies; but when the moment came that the Father's fellowship of spirit was withdrawn from him, that was more than he could bear, and it is claimed that he died of a literally broken heart, and that this was evidenced by the fact that both blood and water proceeded from the spear-wound inflicted shortly after his death.

It may be questioned by some whether or not this was a failure of our Lord's faith merely, and not an actual withdrawal of the Father's favor and communion.

We hold, however, that the philosophy of the subject proves that it was the latter, and that this was a necessary part of our Lord's suffering as the sin-bearer. The penalty of Adam's transgression was not only death, but additionally separation or alienation from him of divine favor and communion: consequently, when our Lord Jesus took Adam's place and suffered in his room and stead, the just for the unjust, that he might redeem us to God by his precious blood, --it was not only necessary that he should die on our behalf, but it was also necessary that he should experience the full cutting off and separation from the Father, which was a part of the penalty of Adam's transgression. He was not alienated or separated from the Father as a sinner throughout the three and a half years in which he was laying down his life; neither did he suffer the full penalty during those three and a half years; but the moment of crisis came at the cross, and for at least a brief period he must be deprived of the Father's fellowship, and must thus die--as a sinner, for our sins; in order that "as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead."

When we consider our dear Master's experience,

R2317 : page 173

we do well not to judge much from the last words of the dying, respecting their own spiritual state. False theories may beget false hopes in some, and lead them to believe that they are "sweeping through the gates of the New Jerusalem," when really they are sweeping through the gates into the great prisonhouse of death. The most extravagant dying expressions were not made, so far as the record goes, by the Lord or his inspired Apostles. Nevertheless they had a good hope, a firm hope, a Scriptural hope, a hope which gave them strength for the battle of life and to its very close to be faithful to the Lord and to the Word of his testimony: on the contrary, many of those who die with extravagant expressions of hope on their lips were less faithful to the Lord, less faithful to his Word, and less fully consecrated to his service. Let our faith, confidence and rejoicing be as was that of the Master and the Apostles, not so much in the experience and feelings of the moment as in God's Word and its testimony, --the "more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light which shineth in a dark place."

Matthew does not record the words of our Lord when "he cried again with a loud voice," but we have them from Luke and from John. He said, "It is finished! Father into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Many false teachers tell us that nothing was finished,

and declare that no sacrifice for sins was needed, and that none was given; but the testimony of the Scriptures is explicit on this subject that without a sacrifice, "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins." Our Lord's sacrifice dated from the time that he reached manhood's estate, thirty years, when he came promptly to John at Jordan, and was baptized--thus outwardly symbolizing his full consecration of himself unto death, in doing the Father's will. The sacrifice there begun was faithfully continued down to his last moment. When he had endured to the very last all the ignominy, all the shame, and was finally cut off from communion with the Father--this was the last, and so our Lord indicated by the words, "It is finished." His work was finished; the redemption price was finished; the sufferings were over; he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do, so far as its shameful and ignominious features were concerned. Another part of his work remained and is yet unfinished, namely, the work of blessing all the families of the earth, bestowing upon them the gracious favor and opportunities of eternal life secured to them justly by his sacrifice for sins.

He gave up the ghost, that is the spirit. What spirit? He did not yield up his spirit body; for at this time he had no spirit body. Thirty-four years before he had laid aside spirit conditions and nature, to become partaker of a human nature, through his mother Mary--the spirit of life which belonged to him there having been transferred to human conditions. He enjoyed and exercised this spirit of life or life-power, as the animating, vivifying principle of his human body, for thirty-three and a half years; now he was surrendering it up in death--dissolution. The crucified flesh was to be his no longer, for, as the Apostle declares, he took upon him the form of a servant, for the suffering of death, and not for the keeping of that form of a servant to all eternity. The promise of the Father was that he should be glorified with himself, and even with a still higher glory than he had with the Father before the world was,--and that was a spiritual glory, and not a human glory. He left spiritual conditions when he "was made flesh and dwelt amongst us;" but he trusted in the Father that when he had finished the work given him to do he should be again received up into glory--the spirit condition. Thus he said to the disciples, "What and if the Son of Man should ascend up where he was before?"

His commitment of his spirit to the Father's care implied therefore that he knew thoroughly just what death is--a cessation of being--yet had confidence in the Father that he would not be permitted to remain forever in death, but would be granted again, in resurrection, the spirit of life which he now laid down in harmony with the Father's will. He knew and had foretold to his disciples that he would be raised from

the dead on the third day. He recognized that his spirit of life, his vitality, his being, came from the Father, originally, and was subject to the Father's power and care: and knowing that the Father had promised to give him being again, he here merely expresses his confidence in this promise. And his confidence was abundantly fulfilled, in that God raised him from the dead, highly exalted in nature, not only above human nature but far above angels and principalities and powers," to the very highest plane of the spirit nature, namely, to the divine nature.

And, remarkable as it may seem, this is the very same invitation that is extended to the Church of this Gospel age, that they may have fellowship with their Master's sufferings, and eventually have fellowship also with him in glory, and as "partakers of the divine nature" and its glory, honor and immortality, far above the honor and nature of angels, tho that be grand, and a little higher than perfect mankind. (2 Pet. 1:4; Rom. 2:7; Psa. 8:5.) In view of all this we may well exhort one another to "lay aside every weight, and to run with patience the race set before us in the gospel, looking unto Jesus, the author of our faith, until he shall become the finisher of it."

=====

R2317 : page 174

"A SPIRIT HATH NOT FLESH AND BONES."

--JUNE 19.--MATT. 28:8-20.--

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore."--Rev. 1:18.

WOMAN had the honor of being first to be made acquainted with the fact of our Lord's resurrection, and to receive his first message thereafter. Perhaps this was in part because the feminine mind seems naturally to grasp such subjects more quickly than the masculine mind, by what is sometimes termed intuitive faith, in contradistinction to what might be termed analytical faith. Or this may have been as a special recognition of woman's tender sympathy, which sought the earliest opportunity to bring balms and spices and to otherwise show sympathy and love for the deceased. At all events the women, who were earliest at the sepulchre, had a rich reward for their service, and for the love which prompted it.

They were fearful and surprised when they received the angel's message that Jesus was risen; yet they grasped the fact by "intuitive faith." As they eagerly ran to carry the joyful news to the brethren, Jesus met them in the way, revealing himself in such

a body as they could recognize. They worshiped at his feet, and held him fast, as tho fearful that he would leave them; but the Master consoled them, and sent them on their journey as bearers of his message to his disciples.

His words, "Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father...and to your Father, to my God and to your God" (John 20:17), were doubtless uttered at this time, and need examination; because they have been sadly misconstrued. Professor Young's Lexicon shows that the word here rendered touch has the significance of "hold on." Mary evidently had already touched the Lord, for, as Matthew declares, they were holding the Lord by the feet. They evidently were fearful that the power which had raised our Lord would transport him elsewhere. Probably, too, from the time the angels told them that he was risen, they had been discussing the matter and remembered that he had so told them and had said that he would "ascend up where he was before." So now, when they saw him and really embraced his feet they feared to let go, lest they should see him no more. From this standpoint of view our Lord's words plainly meant: Do not hold me as tho fearful that you will never see me more; my time to ascend to your Father and God and mine has not yet come. Go carry the news to the brethren. And remember that my God is your God, my Father in heaven is your Father in heaven.

In view of the fact that our Lord thus sent women as his special messengers, we may well consider it as an indication

R2318 : page 174

to us that while the Lord and the Apostles never commissioned women to take the chief and public place in the preaching of the Gospel, yet they have a good place in this great service of the truth, a not less noble, tho less public mission in connection with the promulgation of the gospel. It is safe for us to suppose that the natural tenderness and love supplemented by the holy spirit of love, fits and qualifies her for many important tho less obtrusive and aggressive services for the Lord and his people. And happy are the brethren, and happy the sisters in the Church of Christ, where their mutual helpfulness in the service is recognized, and where each cooperates with the other, and seeks to follow as nearly as possible the divine order and custom in the use of their respective talents. See "Man and woman in the divine order," in our issue of July, '93.

The narrative of the sealing of the sepulchre and the setting of the watch, lest the disciples should steal away the Lord's body, seems to show conclusively that the religious leaders of the Jews were thoroughly blinded, and that our Lord's character, works and teachings, had no influence whatever upon them;--that they had



not the slightest suspicion of who he was, nor of the fulfilment of his prediction that he would arise from the dead. Their only thought was that a fraud might be perpetrated by his disciples. But their evil suspicions were overruled by the Lord for good, and became a testimony of the truth, and an assistance to faith on the part of believers.

It was not necessary to our Lord's resurrection that the stone before the sepulchre should be moved, and the body from within also be removed; because the body which he has now is no more his former body of flesh than that body of flesh was his former spirit body, which he had before he became a man: nor were the atoms of matter composing this earthly body transformed into spiritual atoms to compose his spiritual body, any more than our natural bodies will be our spiritual bodies, if we have part in the first resurrection, or their elements be required from which to construct our spiritual bodies. The Apostle Paul makes this very clear by his statement, "there is an animal body and there is a spiritual body."

These two kinds of bodies are dissimilar. A fleshly, an earthly or animal body is composed of flesh, blood and bones; but, as our Master declared, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones," etc. As our Lord could not use his heavenly or spirit body, when he came to be man's substitute and ransom price, and as he was therefore obliged to lay aside the glory of that higher nature and humble himself and take "the form of a servant, for the suffering of death," so, when he had finished the suffering and death, finished the work that the

R2318 : page 175

Father had given him to do, and was to be received up again into the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, the human body would no longer be suitable. He must have again a spirit body. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The form of a servant would not be suitable for him whom the Father delighted to honor and to highly exalt even above his former glorious station--"far above angels and principalities and powers and every name that is named." He therefore must be given a glorious body, "the express image of the Father's person;"--and such his resurrection body was.

It is difficult for some, because of long-established habits of incorrect thought on this subject, to realize what the Apostle Paul means when he says, "Tho we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more;" or what the Apostle Peter means when he says, "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit." Just what this means may be seen with greatest clearness, perhaps, from the words of the Apostle Paul, in describing the resurrection

of the overcoming Church, the first [chief] resurrection," in which all the members of the body of Christ are to share, with their Head and Lord. Since we are to know "the power of his resurrection" as members of his body (Phil. 3:10), it follows that any description that we can obtain of what our resurrection will be, must of necessity be a description also of his resurrection, since we are to share his resurrection--the first resurrection.

Concerning this first resurrection, the Apostle teaches that not the body that is sown will be raised, but another body, according to divine arrangement. And contrasting these two bodies, the one which we now have, and the one which we shall have, he declares that the body which dies is sown in corruption, the body which shall be is raised in incorruption; the body which dies, dies in weakness, the body which shall be raised will be raised in power; the body which dies, dies in dishonor, the body which is raised will be raised in glory. The body which dies is a natural body, an animal body, an earthly body; the body of the resurrection will be a spiritual body, a heavenly body, not flesh and blood--not a human body.

The point of connection between our Lord's earthly body and his spiritual body is confused in the minds of many by reason of a certain fact which is not generally taken into consideration, namely, that our Lord, after his resurrection, had a work to do with his disciples to establish their faith in his resurrection, and to prepare and equip them for the work before them, of proclaiming the gospel to every creature. Because they were still natural men, and had not yet fully received the baptism of the holy spirit which came upon them at Pentecost, after Jesus was glorified, therefore they were not prepared to understand or appreciate spiritual things; as the Apostle Paul declares, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned." But it was necessary that the disciples should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, before he ascended to the Father, in order that they might be in the proper attitude of heart to be made the recipients of the holy spirit at Pentecost, for it was not to come upon unbelievers, but upon believers.

In choosing how he would reveal himself to his disciples and make known his resurrection from the dead, our Lord surely chose the best method; and yet his method was different from that which he afterward adopted in dealing with the Apostle Paul. To Paul he showed his real body, the brightness of which affected his eyesight, making him blind, and felling him to the earth; shining, as he declared, with greater brightness than the sun at noonday. Had our Lord appeared thus to the women when they went to the sepulchre, or to the disciples, as he met them subsequently, the effect would have been much less favorable

than by the method which he did pursue; they were already astounded enough, at the wonderful things which had transpired in the preceding few days. He therefore adopted the method which had been in vogue previously, the method used by angels sent on special missions to men, and by our Lord himself on some of these missions, before his nature was changed --before he "was made flesh"--while he was still a spirit being. For instance, he appeared as a man to Abraham, and talked with him and ate with him; but that appearance to Abraham was not a change of nature, but merely a veiling of the heavenly nature in a body of human flesh. Thus veiled, he could talk with Abraham and Sarah and do so without alarming them. Just so it was after his resurrection; altho he was no longer a man, but had become a partaker of the divine nature, and the express image of his Father's person, yet he appeared as a man--and in different forms at different times; once as the gardener, to Mary; again as a stranger, to the two who went to Emmaus; and again, in the upper room, he appeared in a body like to his former self, bearing marks of the nails and of the spear. This was to convince Thomas, who declared that otherwise he would not believe in the resurrection; nevertheless with the desired evidence the Lord gave a gentle reproof to the effect that others, who could believe without demanding that physical test, were the more blessed.

Even as it was, with all these precautions and evidences to the "natural man," we are informed that

R2318 : page 176

tho they worshiped him, "some doubted." If he had appeared to them as he appeared to Saul of Tarsus later, can we doubt that they would have been perplexed more than enlightened? They would have been unable to recognize that it was the Lord who had previously been a spirit being, and who became a human being for our redemption, who had now been revived from death, no longer a man but a spirit being: that now he possessed all the powers of a spirit being, to appear in any form found desirable--as a burning bush or as a man, as a fisherman, or as a gardener, or as a wayfarer, or as his former self. As the Apostles had time to gradually take in the situation, they understood that it was he, their Lord, yet that he was now changed, and totally unlike his former self, and without human limitations. They were not prepared to understand the meaning of the teaching that we must all be "changed," in the twinkling of an eye, during the last trumpet, in order that we may "be like him, and see him as he is"--not as he was, nor as we are.

Our Lord's message, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," is in sharp contrast with his

previous utterances, prior to his resurrection, while he was finishing the work of sacrifice which the Father had given him to do. Then he had said repeatedly, "Of my own self I can do nothing; as I hear I speak." What was the change? Why now speak of himself so differently--as possessing a power which he previously disclaimed? It was because he had been "changed." --He was no longer the man Christ Jesus, to suffer death; but having suffered it he was now risen, glorified, "Lord of all." His own trial and testing for worthiness to be heir of all was past. His resurrection as a spirit being was the evidence that he was accepted as "worthy to receive glory and honor, dominion and

R2319 : page 176

might, forever and ever." And not only so, but by his death he had purchased humanity and all the hopes, privileges, rights and interests originally belonging to humanity, as well as those conferred upon it through the divine oath of promise to father Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob, and David. These words, then, were a modest announcement of the great victory won for himself, and for Adam and his race.

Such an announcement of his own victory and of the purchase of mankind, and of his present power, therefore, to uplift mankind out of sin and out of death, was a proper prelude or preface to the commission which he then and there gave to the Apostles, saying, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."

His own teaching and that of the apostles had previously been confined to the Jewish nation, in harmony with God's covenant with that people, through Moses; but now, having sealed the New Covenant with his blood, having consummated this New Covenant, ratifying it at Calvary, he was authorizing that it be put into operation. Now was the proper time, therefore, to declare it to be both broader and deeper than the Law Covenant instituted by Moses, (1) in that it is not confined to Israel after the flesh, but is for all nations, (2) in that it is efficacious to the perfecting of all those who come unto the Father through its mediator, and according to its terms, and not merely a temporary assistance.

The teachings which were to be presented to the nations are specified by our Lord as being--"whatsoever I have commanded you." This, then, proves that the kernel of the Gospel is not the Jewish Law, nor certain scientific theories and abstruse problems; but the simple teachings which our Lord delivered to the apostles. What were these?

(1) He taught that all men were sinners.

(2) That he came into the world to "give his life a ransom"--a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world.

(3) That no man could come unto the Father,

but by him.

(4) That all who would come by him must, in addition to the exercise of faith in him, also take up his cross and follow him.

(5) That all believers are one with him, as the branches of a grapevine are parts of the vine.

(6) That every branch to abide in him must bring forth fruit, else it will be taken away.

(7) That those who trust in him are to hope for and to expect his second coming--"I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

(8) That the ultimate end of our hope for all promised blessings is in and through a resurrection of the dead.

(9) That Love is the law of the New Covenant--"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul and strength; and, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

We are fully authorized, therefore, to teach and to believe that these are the points of faith and practice which are necessary to both Jews and Gentiles who shall be favored with the call of this Gospel age; and that nothing else is necessary or pertinent to the "doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ" or "the faith once delivered to the saints." Whoever makes tests greater or lesser than these is in error.

Our Lord's statement that he would be with his people always even unto the end of the age, no more signifies that he did not leave the world, than it signifies that his hearers would continue to live until the end of the age. His words here are not to be understood as contradictory of his words elsewhere; but they should be understood in harmony with other statements, to the effect that, while he would be absent from his people during this age, having "ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us," nevertheless, his power and spirit and care and love would be with his people throughout the age; to guard their interests, to overrule in their affairs, and to cause that all things should work together for good to them that love him;--until in the end of the age, according to his promise, he would appear a second time, not as a sin-offering, but unto salvation--to receive his Church unto himself in glory, and to bless the sin-sick and blinded world with the true light which, it is promised, shall enlighten every man.--  
John 1:9.

=====

-----

CONTENTS.

-----

Mean Christians and Noble Unbelievers.....179

The Need of the Good Physician Not Realized.....179

The Law of Heredity Involved.....181

"The Testimony of the Lord is Sure, Making Wise the Simple".....182

"See that Ye Love One Another".....183

Poem: "The Light of the Word".....184

"The Waning of Evangelicalism".....184

Solomon's Kingdom Divided.....187

Elijah, the Prophet.....190

page 178

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY,  
"BIBLE HOUSE," 56-60 ARCH STREET, ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

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

Those of the interested who, by reason of old age or accident, or other adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if they send a Postal Card each December, stating their case and requesting the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our list constantly.

=====

R2319 : page 179

MEAN CHRISTIANS AND NOBLE UNBELIEVERS.

-----

SURELY none will dispute the statement that there are noble characters amongst unbelievers as well as amongst Christians; neither will anyone of experience dispute that there are mean people amongst Christians as well as amongst worldly. But how shall we account for this? Should we not reasonably expect that the noble principles of true Christianity would attract all of the best minds of the world, and rather repel the meaner dispositions? Should we not expect that the doctrines of Christ, the spirit of his teachings, namely, meekness, gentleness, brotherly kindness, love, would attract all who have sympathy with these qualities, hence all of the noble-minded of the world? And should we not likewise expect that since the Scriptures

and the spirit of the Lord condemn all anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife, backbitings, evil speakings, impurities, etc., that all those who have sympathy with such works of the flesh and of the devil would be repelled by the Gospel of Christ?

Whatever the tendency of our mental philosophy on the subject, the facts of the case prove to us that proportionately a larger number of the world's noble-minded children reject the Lord and his Gospel, and that a larger proportion of the world's ignoble children accept the Gospel of Christ. The still more interesting and perplexing question therefore is, how shall we account for this very peculiar condition which seems contrary to all and every expectation.

We account for it along the lines of our Lord's statement, that he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. True, there is none righteous, no, not one; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; the fall of father Adam involved every member of his posterity; hence all are sinners and all need the grace of God in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins: but those who find themselves morally and intellectually less fallen than some of their neighbors are inclined to a self righteous feeling, even tho they would disclaim perfection. They are therefore the less inclined to acknowledge themselves to be nothing, unworthy of divine favor, and to bow themselves in the dust at the foot of the cross, and to receive, as an unmerited gift of God, the boon of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### THE NEED OF THE GOOD PHYSICIAN NOT REALIZED.

-----

They feel that some of the more degraded of the race do need divine pity and forgiveness, and they feel glad that God has compassion for these, and will help them; but somehow they feel that they do not need the imputed robes of Christ's righteousness to cover them; they feel as tho they are so respectable that if God accepts anyone to a future life he will surely not exclude them. They look about them and compare themselves with Christians, and often with a large degree of complacency assure themselves that their ideas of right and wrong and of moral responsibility, and of benevolence etc., are higher, nobler, better than those of professed Christians: and say to themselves, God is just, and while I am not perfect I am a great deal better than the majority of Christians, and I am sure, therefore, that God in justice will take as much care of me as he will of others who I see are inferior to me in some of the good qualities of heart and mind. Like the Pharisee of old, they thank God that they are not as other men and

neglect "the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved."

The class we are describing is a numerous class, more numerous than many persons would suppose until they reflect on the subject. And it includes many far from hypocritical who have never understood the gospel. Several of the presidents of the United States, have been men of this class,--reverent toward religion, moral in their course of life, just in their dealings--for instance, Lincoln and Grant; and we merely mention these as ensamples of a class. Besides, many properly of this class are either Church attendants or Church members. They appreciate the fact that directly or indirectly the moral uplift of civilization is associated with Christianity and are pleased to take their stand on the moral and popular side, tho they have never accepted at the hands of divine grace the forgiveness of sins through faith in the precious blood of Christ.

We see their difficulty: it is that they do not recognize that the Lord is dealing upon principles of strict justice and law. Divine law and justice declare that all imperfection is contrary to God, that God's work was perfect originally in Adam, and that he

R2320 : page 180

never can accept to harmony with himself anything that is imperfect. They fail to see that under this law, whoever is guilty in that which is least, is nevertheless guilty; and comes under the same death penalty with him who is guilty of many and more serious offences. Since, then, all men are imperfect--none absolutely righteous--the one sentence of death grasps every member of the human family. And there is no door of escape from death, no door of entrance into life except the one which God has provided--Christ Jesus, the righteous, who became man's Redeemer by the sacrifice of himself. He who fails to go through the door never attains to life, however much he may strive against sin, and however closely he may approach to the door. Only passage through the door can mean an entrance into eternal life. "He that hath not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God [the sentence of death] abideth upon him."--John 3:36.

The same philosophy of the subject shows to us why it is that a proportionately larger number of the world's ignoble than of its noble children come to Christ. Only those who feel that they are sinners, who feel that they need relief from sin, appreciate the offer of forgiveness. Only the sick, who realize that they are sick, feel their need of the Great Physician. Many indeed seek the Lord's grace because they realize to some extent their own fallen, degraded condition, and that they are meaner people than others;--only this seems to awaken them to a realization



of their position; only this leads them to cry out, "Have mercy upon me, thou Son of David." And this attitude of the realization of personal unworthiness of the divine favor is necessary to all who would accept the grace of God on the only conditions upon which it is offered.

Having thus found the philosophical basis of our subject, we proceed to inquire concerning the result. What is the legitimate result of acceptance of Christ? We answer, the inevitable result of a proper acceptance of Christ, under the terms of the New Covenant must be moral uplifting; because the condition upon which Christ receives anyone is, that he desires not only to be forgiven the sins that are past, but he desires also to forsake sin for the future. The lower he may be in the scale of morality the more radical will the change eventually be, but the less proportionately will he realize at the beginning of his conversion all the steps of purification, of word and thought and act, which lie before him in the Christian pathway. He will at first think merely of the reform of the grosser manifestations of sin, but step by step and lesson by lesson he will be instructed by the great Teacher, and brought onward in knowledge and in appreciation, and in character upbuilding, if he continue in the school of Christ.

The requirement of the great Teacher, through the Apostle, is that those who come unto him, in full consecration, after being accepted on the ground of faith, must at once begin to "put away all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord." Whoever will not make the attempt to do this will not be continued in the school of Christ, because he has not his spirit, and not having his spirit he is "none of his." "Whosoever practices sin [knowingly, willingly] is of the devil." (1 John 3:8.) Nevertheless it may require years of schooling and discipline under the Great Teacher before some of those who were deeply sunken in the mire of sin and selfishness, and many consequent meannesses of disposition, become even moderately or passably good, noble characters. Character is more like the oak than like the mushroom; it requires time for its development. Yet, as the oak might be quickly killed with an axe, so even a strong character might be quickly undermined, prostrated, overthrown by sin. In other words, upward development is slow, but downward tendencies may take effect rapidly, if permitted. Consequently many Christians can see that while the religion of Christ has done much to help them and their friends out of the miry clay of sin, and to put them on the Rock, Christ Jesus, and has cleansed them from many of the defilements of the flesh, and many of its meannesses of disposition, yet perhaps after ten, twenty or forty years of such discipline and perseverance, they may with surprise behold some unbeliever whom they

must acknowledge to be their equal in moral probity, uprightness or generosity.

#### THE LAW OF HEREDITY INVOLVED.

-----

The question arises, How is this? We answer that as moral deflection affects the children to the third and fourth generation, so moral attainments may affect the children to several generations. Hence parents who have been upright and Godfearing, who have endeavored to cultivate in themselves the graces of the spirit, not only benefit themselves, and approach more nearly than at first to the grand standard of perfection, but their children will be born with better natural qualifications as well as under conditions more favorable to righteousness and nobility of soul. For the heart attainments of the parents are reflected in the physical conditions of their children.

And this, by the way, proves conclusively that many professedly pious parents are less noble at heart than we could have hoped; for if, during the period of conception and gestation, parental thoughts, feelings, sentiments have been cultivated along the lines of nobility, purity, holiness, reverence, benevolence, justice and love, their children would show it; and results would be blessed both to the children and the parents. The natural qualities of the child were willed to it before its birth, chiefly by the mother, and the mother's ideals were considerably those of the father if they were well mated. Christian parents should awake to their responsibilities in the exercise of their procreative powers entrusted to them by the Almighty. It is a disgrace to our civilization that so many in civilized lands are low-born, even amongst those who recognize the laws of heredity and who carefully guard the breeding of their cattle and sheep and dogs and horses: it must be that the influence of the parental mind upon posterity is not recognized. Let these thoughts not only guard parents in respect to future offspring, but also make them very patient and painstaking with present children when attempting to train out of them blemishes of character which they helped to implant. The first duty of a parent to his child is to give him the most favorable start in life within his power.

The children of Christian parents, favorably bred, if they also become Christians and begin a warfare in their own hearts against moral uncleanness and sin, and against all the mean and selfish propensities of the fallen nature, may, by the grace of God, attain to a moral position higher than that attained by their parents, --through putting into practice the instructions

of the great Teacher. But here comes in another side of the question: God does not accept the children of believers on account of parental faith beyond the period of their minority. So soon as years of accountability have been reached, a personal covenant with the Lord is required, if they would be his in any special sense; otherwise they are reckoned as being of the world and under its condemnation, and not under the justification which extends only to believers and their minor children. (1 Cor. 7:14.) God makes the entrance into his family and school an individual matter.

And here we find the secret of how it comes that some of the noblest men of the world are not the Lord's people. They are the children of some whose feet have been lifted out of the miry clay of sin; they have inherited through their parents a share in the uplifting which the teaching of Christ brought into the world, amongst those who follow his teaching. Thus we see that Infidelity has nothing to boast of in its noblest sons, for what they have that is noble and great came generally through the belief, the faith, of their ancestors. On the contrary, the tendency of unbelief is toward sin and its degradation. It may not come in one generation, or it may. The son of noble Christian parents who has inherited a more noble mind than the masses, may maintain that mind to some extent through life, and if he take pride in his morality he may, at least on the surface, keep up a good appearance, and may transmit some of it to his posterity. But eventually selfishness will undermine and destroy nobility, and we may as surely expect a degradation in the posterity of such who do not receive Christ, as we may expect an advancement on the part of all who do accept Christ.

#### ILLUSTRATED IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

-----

The general operation of this law can only be appreciated as we look out over a grand scope of territory and over centuries of time. As we look back to the days of our Lord and the Apostles, we find that the Gospel laid hold upon the very class that we have here described, the publicans and sinners, the lower classes, while it was rejected by the worldlywise, the hypocritical and the pharisaical, who were morally and intellectually the superior class, and on this very account rejected Christ;--not feeling their need of a Savior. Looking intently at the Gospel Church, with its lowly beginning, in the poorest class, we find that whoever entered the school of Christ and was taught of him was uplifted by obedience to that Teacher. This higher teaching of the Master, to the effect that we should love not only one another, but should sympathetically love even those who hate us, who malign us

and who persecute us, saying all manner of evil against us falsely, for his sake; and that divine blessing rests upon the meek, the patient, the humble, the peacemakers; and that the sum of all graces is love; became the standard among his followers. We find the

R2320 : page 182

very same teaching coming from the humble fishermen and publicans who accepted him, and whom he sent forth as the Apostles of his grace.

R2321 : page 182

For instance, we find the Apostle Peter saying, "Add to your faith patience, experience, brotherly kindness, love." We find the Apostle John saying, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" We find the Apostle James saying that all who are taught of the Lord should "show out of a good conversation [life] his works with meekness of wisdom, but if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not...Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. Speak not evil one of another, brethren." "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

We hear the Apostle Paul, who once was of the nobler, the Pharisee class, giving utterance to the same truth, and in all humility acknowledging that "there is none righteous, no, not one," and explaining that only as we accept Christ have we the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation with the Father; and explaining further that having put on Christ we should be new creatures in him; that old things should be past and gone, forever, and that we should walk thenceforth in newness of life, not according to the will of the flesh but according to the purpose of the Lord. Hear him exhorting those who have taken the name of Christ, assuring them that they must also take his spirit or disposition, and have the same mind [disposition] which was also in Christ Jesus our Lord, a mind in opposition to sin and meanness and selfishness, a mind in harmony with truth and goodness and purity and benevolence, love.

And he explains this, saying: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; love is the fulfilling of the law. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light; let us walk honestly. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. Recompense no man evil for evil. Provide things honest

in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink."

He explained in particular the love which is the essence of the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, which all followers of the Lord must have if they would be and continue to be his, saying: "Love suffereth long and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Love beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth."

"THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD IS SURE, MAKING WISE THE SIMPLE."--PSA. 19:7-14.

-----

It would be impossible for any class of people, however mentally and morally degraded they might be, to receive such instructions into good and honest hearts, without being uplifted by them, made more noble, more Christlike, more Godlike. It does not surprise us, therefore, to find that in the first century even, the Lord's people became noted for their high principles and morality, insomuch that the masses of the people "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of him." Then we see how the adversary corrupted the truth from the simplicity in which it was presented by the Lord and the Apostles. We see forms and ceremonies, genuflections and masses, bondage to creeds and theories of men, taking the place of the pure gospel of Christ, and we note the result, that in proportion as the teachings of Christ were ignored, in the same proportion superstition came in, and the spirit of Christ was lacking.

Nevertheless, with all the corruption which came into the world with the second century, there was a sufficiency of the true spirit intermixed with the error to work a vast reformation in the savages of Europe, and to bring them into a condition of civilization higher than that of the rest of the world. And when in the divine providence the Reformation movement was inaugurated it lifted the same class of people immeasurably higher in moral tone. It restored much of the primitive purity of Christianity and of the spirit of Christ; and in proportion as the Word of God has been free amongst the people, and in proportion as they have received it gladly and have permitted its ennobling sentiments to germinate in their hearts and bring forth its fruitage, in this proportion we have seen the

peoples which came under the direct influence of the Reformation lifted still higher than the remainder of the world.

THE WASHED SOW STILL CRAVES THE MIRE.

-----

In all of this we observe the principle at first set forth; namely, that it is the spirit of Christ, the spirit of truth, the spirit of righteousness from the Word of the Lord, which is the civilizing, enlightening and ennobling influence which has wrought the marvelous

R2321 : page 183

changes of this Christian era and especially of this last century. Papacy and sectarianism hindered but could not thwart its influence. It still continues to take hold of the lower classes of society, and lifts them up; and the tendency is still observable, that when they are lifted up they are the less likely to be appreciative of the divine goodness. Thus it is that not many great, not many learned, not many wise according to the course of this world, hath God chosen; but the poor of this world, rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom.

The broader and clearer our view of the situation, the more will we be able to sympathize with those of our brethren in Christ who by nature are mean, ignoble, selfish, lacking in benevolence of thought and word and conduct. When we realize that God has accepted them,--not because of their good and noble character, but because they admit its deficiencies and because they desire to become reformed, transformed, by the renewing of their minds--then all who have the Lord's mind or spirit will likewise receive them. In proportion as we have the mind of Christ, the holy mind, we will view them from the divine standpoint of sympathy for their weaknesses and ignoble qualities; and instead of condemning them and spurning them and cutting their acquaintance, because they do not come up to the noblest standards, we will desire all the more to help them up and seek kindly to point out to them the matters which they do not clearly see. We will be patient with them as we see them striving to overcome. We will realize that they contend against a mental disease that they have to some extent inherited, and which can only be gradually eradicated.

From this standpoint we will learn to view them and to think of them not according to their flesh, not according to their natural tendencies and dispositions, but according to the spirit, according to the intentions of their minds, according to their covenant with the Lord. Thus, as the Apostle declares, we know each other no longer after the flesh, but after the spirit. Each one who has accepted God's grace under the New

Covenant, and become a partaker of the spirit of holiness, and is striving against sin in all its forms,--in thought and word and conduct,--all such are striving for the grand perfection of character of which our dear Redeemer is the only perfect illustration. All such confess themselves imperfect copies of God's dear Son and seek to grow in his likeness. All such are seeking to put away all the works of the flesh and the devil,--not only the grosser evils (murder, theft, etc.), but also the more common elements of an ignoble, perverted nature, anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc. And all these are seeking to put on more and more the complete armor of God, and to resist sin; and to cultivate in themselves the same mind which was also in Christ Jesus,--meekness, patience, long-suffering, brotherly kindness, love.

"SEE THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

-----

Let us (Christians), then, take a broader view of matters, and especially of all who have named the name of Christ, and who give any evidence of seeking to walk in his footsteps. Let our love for them cover not only the little, trifling blemishes and differences from ourselves, but let our love cover also a multitude of imperfections in their flesh, so long as we see that their hearts are loyal to the Lord, and that they are seeking to walk not after the flesh but after the spirit: so long as they profess to be seeking to get rid of the meanness and selfishness and littleness of the fallen nature and to cultivate in themselves the nobility of character which belongs to perfect manhood, the image of the divine nature.

And let each one who has taken the name of Christ be on the lookout to apprehend and eradicate every trace of the meanness, selfishness, rudeness, dishonesty, which as members of the fallen race still cling to us and are become so much a part of us that we are often disposed to call them natural traits. Let us remember that, even if our Lord and our brethren in Christ overlook these blemishes (rightly distinguishing between the "new creature in Christ" and these contrary elements of his old nature reckoned dead), yet the world cannot so distinguish and will charge to the cause of Christ all the faults and imperfections they see in his professed followers. Thus that holy name is profaned among the Gentiles, daily, by many.

Let us remember, too, that ill-nature cannot be transformed to good-nature in a day; the transformation of mind and speech and conduct requires patience and perseverance; but it can be accomplished by those who have made the New Covenant and who are obedient

to the commands of the Great Teacher. "See that ye refuse not [obedience to] him that speaketh from heaven." Whoever neglects his teachings, neglects the great salvation offered during this Gospel age at very least; for none will be amongst the elect except those who in their hearts at least are noble, true and good,--conformed to the image of God's dear Son.--Rom. 8:29.

If all could fully realize the influence of our minds over our own bodies, as well as their less direct influence over the minds and bodies of others, a great Thought-Reform Movement would speedily begin in the world; and especially amongst God's consecrated people. Surely, such should cooperate with the inspired prayer--"Create in me a clean heart [will], O God; and renew a right spirit [disposition]....Then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto Thee."--Psa. 51:10,13.

R2334 : page 184

"THE LIGHT OF THE WORD."

-----

"The light of the Word shines brighter and brighter,  
As wider and wider God opens my eyes;  
My trials and burdens seem lighter and lighter,  
And fairer and fairer the heavenly prize.

"The wealth of this world seems poorer and poorer,  
And farther and farther it fades from my sight;  
The prize of my calling seems surer and surer,  
As straighter and straighter I walk in the light.

"My waiting on Jesus is dearer and dearer,  
As longer and longer I lie on his breast;  
Without him I'm nothing seems clearer and clearer,  
And more and more sweetly in Jesus I rest.

"My joy in my Savior is growing and growing,  
As stronger and stronger I trust in his Word;  
My peace like a river is flowing and flowing,  
As harder and harder I lean on the Lord.

"My praise and thanksgiving are swelling and swelling,  
As broader and broader the promises prove;  
The wonderful story I'm telling and telling,  
And more and more sweetly I rest in his love."

=====

R2322 : page 184

"THE WANING OF EVANGELICALISM."



-----  
"WHAT remains but the teaching of catastrophe?  
'The ax will be laid to the root of  
the tree.' In such a manner Richard Heath closes a  
striking article, bound to create discussion, in The  
Contemporary Review (May). It is an indictment of  
the Evangelical movement started by Law, carried on  
by Wesley and Whitefield, later by Finney, later still  
by Moody, Spurgeon, and 'General' Booth, for its  
neglect of a great opportunity, its failure to interpret  
God's message in history, its disloyalty to the masses,  
and its blindness to the great truth of the unity and  
solidarity of humanity. As a result of all this, it is a  
waning movement--rapidly waning. It has failed to  
hear the voices of the prophets--of Maurice and Carlyle  
and Ruskin and Tolstoi. 'What remains but the  
teaching of catastrophe?'

"Mr. Heath's article is divided into four parts, the  
first of which describes the rise and spread of Evangelicalism,  
the second arrays facts showing its decline,  
the third aims to dispel the idea that this decline is due  
to agnostic or skeptic views, and the fourth is an attempt  
to portray the real causes of decline. By Evangelicalism  
he means the movement that is really one  
in doctrine with the Methodist revival movement of  
the Wesleys, being based upon the fall of man, the  
sacrifice of Christ not only on behalf of man but in  
place of man, grace the sole originating cause of man's  
salvation, justification the sole instrumental cause, the  
need of a new birth, and of the constant and sustaining  
action of the holy spirit. These doctrines were  
already imbedded in the formularies of the Church of  
England and Nonconformist creeds when the Evangelical  
movement began. But the revivalists took  
them seriously and lived up to them. The movement  
has spread to vast proportions. Revivalism has been  
its most characteristic feature, but not its chief source  
of influence. Two hundred thousand sermons every  
Sunday--more than ten million a year--can be attributed  
to it. Thousands of missionaries have been sent  
out by it, great non-denominational and non-ecclesiastical  
societies have been formed by it, a vast number  
of churches and chapels have been built by it. It awoke  
English religion out of its torpor, has produced generations  
of remarkable pulpit orators, and attained such  
power that it may be called the English religion of the  
nineteenth century, and became a leading if not the  
leading fact in the history of English-speaking lands  
for two centuries.

Now the movement is waning. In the Church of  
England, the Evangelical clergyman may say with the  
lonely worshiper of Jehovah:

"I watch, and am become  
Like a sparrow alone on the housetop.'

"According to the Bishop of Liverpool, 'the Evangelical clergy are to day but a small minority of the Church of England.' The great Evangelical institutions are burdened with growing deficits. The Evangelical denominations are declining in membership, or at least not keeping pace with the population. The Baptists (in England) just about keep pace with the population. The Wesleyans increased but 5 per cent. from 1888 to 1896, while the population increased 7-1/2 per cent. In Birmingham and Liverpool, while the church accommodations have been greatly enlarged since 1861, the attendance upon the services has actually decreased. In this country a similar waning of power is seen in the fact that the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies returned, in 1896, 3,000 churches which did not report a member added in the previous year by profession of faith. In Europe we find the same state of things, but much aggravated. The Huguenot, a monthly organ of the Reformed churches of France, declared in 1893 that the French Protestant churches are declining at the rate of one church (6,000 members) a year, and at this rate there will be no more Protestants in France at the end of the next century. In Berlin, it is said, only 10 per cent. of the population attend church and in Hamburg only 12-1/2 per cent. If these figures and facts are not convincing, Mr. Heath refers us to 'the voice of the people,'

R2322 : page 185

as heard in the letters from the working classes sent in 1897 to The Methodist Times, of London, in response to an invitation to them to tell the reasons for their non-attendance at church.

"Very briefly Mr. Heath dismisses the surmise that general agnosticism is to blame for this alienation of the people from the Evangelical churches. 'All who really know the people,' he asserts, 'know that they are quite as truly religious as they ever were, and those who have mingled freely with them must feel that it is not Christianity as taught in the New Testament, but as practically exemplified by the nineteenth-century Christianity, that they repudiate.'

"What, then, is the reason for the waning of Evangelicalism? Says Mr. Heath:

"Evangelicalism, coming into existence under an extremely individualistic and competitive order of things, has seen nothing in the Gospel but a plan of individual salvation. It has had but little idea of the common salvation, of the unity of mankind in Christ, and of the mutual responsibility of all men. It has hardly seemed to understand that a divine Helper was in the world, opening men's eyes to what is evil, gradually giving them higher notions of what is right, and a better judgment as to the real good and the real evil; and, failing to comprehend this, Evangelicalism has

never understood the age in which it has run its course.'

"The attitude of the early Evangelical leaders, Wesley, Whitefield, Howell, Harris, Fletcher, and others, in condemnation of the French Revolution and the American Revolution, are cited in illustration of the above statement. Hannah More published with 'the approbation of the whole Evangelical party' her 'Village Politics; or, Will Chip,' ridiculing the notion of equality and fraternity. The power and energy of Evangelicalism have been centered upon the upper middle class, whose sole idea of life was to struggle upward, let the rest of mankind sink as they might. Its dependence on this class has made Evangelicalism 'shut its eyes more closely than ever to the great social revolution which, commencing in the last century, is still going on.' Mr. Heath continues his indictment:

"Evangelicalism has denied God in history, has refused to recognize his providential government of the world, or if it has not formally taken up this infidel position, it has treated the question with a true English contempt for consistency. God was in the Reformation, but not in the Revolution. He came to judge Christendom in the sixteenth century, but not in the eighteenth. It is this indifference to truth, when truth interferes with prejudice and interest, that has done so much harm to Evangelicalism.

"For this blindness to the great social sunrise which has lit up the whole century, and is gradually leading to the emancipation of the laboring classes in Europe and America, has lost Evangelicalism the opportunity it has desired--to be the herald to them and all the world of the great salvation. And still more this blindness has strengthened in it that hardness of heart and contempt of God's Word and commandment which characterizes the whole of Christendom, and which is one of the reasons why its official representatives have not only lost their hold on the masses, but have driven into antagonism so many of the more conscientious and finer souls in Europe and America.

"This hardness of heart has not only appeared in the methods at times adopted by Evangelical revivalists, but more especially in the astonishing lack of Christian brotherhood displayed in all sections of Evangelicalism, even to the point of permitting those who have worked for the Gospel as their agents and representatives to sink into being recipients of parish relief or to die in the hospital or workhouse. And in that class which has afforded Evangelicalism such support, and whose families have been its peculiar domain, how many hundreds of merchants, traders, and farmers, of whom it has made much in their prosperity, has it allowed, when ruin overtook them, to die broken-hearted or in bitterness of spirit?

"Contempt of God's Word and commandment is a serious charge, but can it be said to be too severe a description of a movement which has systematically

and persistently ignored the main teaching of the Gospels?  
If in Christ, as Evangelicalism has always  
taught, 'dwelt the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' if  
he was in fact the divine Wisdom teaching men the

R2323 : page 185

true way of life, how can Evangelicalism be acquitted  
of contempt of God's Word when, in place of obeying  
his commandments, it has led its followers to regard  
the Sermon on the Mount as an impossible ideal which  
no sensible man could really think of taking as a rule  
of life?--causing men, therefore, to regard God's  
Word as something Quixotic and Utopian.'

"Because of this 'hardness of heart' Evangelicalism  
has failed to understand contemporary history,  
failed to see that revelation is continuous, failed to recognize  
the great truth of the unity and solidarity of  
humanity.

"The old Evangelicalism is waning; but this waning  
may precurse a new waxing:

"As among the decay of a past summer we often  
see, ere winter is over, new shoots springing up which  
will be the glory of the coming year, so it is with present-day  
Evangelicalism--its spiritual life is already  
taking new forms. Efforts to do away with sectarianism  
and to repair the broken unity of the church, efforts  
to find expression in the church for the mind and  
soul of the coming generation, efforts to live the life

R2323 : page 186

which Christ himself enjoined on his disciples, efforts  
to share in the sufferings of the miserable, sunk in the  
sordid life of the slums, and to lift them out of it--  
such efforts, and many similar ones, may indicate the  
coming of a new Evangelicalism."

--The Literary Digest.

\* \* \*

We publish the foregoing for the sake of the truth  
it contains, and as a basis for criticism. Mr. Heath's  
views, briefly stated, are,--

(1) That the religion of personal salvation (by which  
is meant escape or "salvation" of a few from a hell of  
eternal torment to which the vast majority hasten and  
are "lost") has had its day and is on the decline. In  
this he is undoubtedly correct even to a far greater extent  
than his statistics show; for large proportions of  
those who are members of various "Evangelical churches,"  
and of those who still flock to hear Moody, Jones  
and others, are in part or in whole persuaded that the  
theory of eternal torment is at least questionable, and  
hence the Evangelical salvation from it questionable  
also.

(2) That there is an astonishing lack of Christian brotherhood--lack of interest in the temporal welfare of the world or even in the temporal welfare of the "saved" brotherhood. The recent tendencies toward social uplift are credited not to Evangelical salvation theories, but rather to their decline. He credits these evidences of "good will to men" to the broader and more benevolent views of modern Christianity, which is now taking shape in efforts toward the social-uplift.

Is there not considerable truth in this charge? Is it not true that the teaching that the vast majority of mankind is hastening to a hell of eternal torture, and that those who do not become saints richly deserve this fate, has a tendency to harden the heart and to dull all the finer sentiments? Surely those considered worthy of eternal woe could not be considered worthy of much consideration or mercy in the misfortunes of the present life.

And in proportion as the real spirit of love is lacking and fervor for denominational progress in "saving souls" takes its place, everything not of utility to the one object is likely to be neglected. Hence, those able to render aid are esteemed for their usefulness rather than loved; and when they cease to be useful they are in danger of neglect.

(3) In Mr. Heath's judgment, from the roots of dying Evangelicalism is sprouting a new and better Christianity which recognizes "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man" and whose gospel is civilization, social-uplift, good citizenship, on the basis of the Golden Rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

While bound to admit the fact here claimed, respecting the trend of Christianity, we cannot endorse the conclusions. We dissent.

The tendency of human thought seems to be to go from one extreme to another; hence the need of a divine revelation to guide our judgments,--especially on religious subjects. "To the law and to the testimony, --if they speak not according to this rule, it is because there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.) The Scriptures make the entire subject plain and harmonious and satisfy our longings as nothing else can do. They do indeed show us a personal salvation, but not from eternal torture. They show us that "the wages of sin is death [not torment] but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." They set before "believers" a great prize to be sought during this age, and to be won by a "little flock." They also set before us a mark or standard of life endeavor necessary to be attained by all who would gain that prize. That mark is the spirit or disposition of self-sacrificing love, which rejoices not in iniquity but rejoices in the truth--in doing "good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." This is the personal salvation of the Scriptures, misinterpreted

by so called "Evangelicalism."

Nor are the Scriptures silent respecting the much needed social uplift. God has not been unmindful of the poor world's necessities. In the next age--the Millennial age--he will uplift the world to a degree that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man--but which he has revealed to his faithful in his Word.

God's Word is full of promises respecting the glorious epoch, the golden age, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord" (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14); when "every man shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Micah 4:4); when "they shall not build, and another inhabit," but when home ownership shall be general (Isa. 65:21-23); when every high one shall be humbled, and every lowly one shall be lifted up (Luke 1:52; Matt. 23:12) when "the Lord shall pour out his spirit upon all flesh." (Joel 2:28.) The Apostle Peter speaks of that epoch as "times of refreshing" and "times of restitution," and declares that every holy prophet since the world began prophesied of that time, and that it would begin at the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ.--Acts 3:19-21.

Thus the Bible-taught Christian finds in the faith once delivered to the saints all the aliments for spiritual nutrition. He has before his mind the straitness of the narrow way and the necessity for heart religion and full personal conversion and consecration to God without hardness and bigotry and uncharitableness

R2323 : page 187

toward others. Indeed, his sympathies for men become more and more deep, as he realizes that all are fallen from the image of God and are by heredity weak, and that Satan, the god of this world, is persistently deceiving them.

Furthermore, the hope for the world in the next age--its mental, moral and physical uplift--is indissolubly united to his hopes and personal salvation; because the very hope set before him in the gospel is that, by personal victory and salvation and the attainment of the mark of the prize of his high calling, he shall become a sharer in the great work of uplifting humanity during the Millennium--helping whosoever then will to return through Christ and the New Covenant to fullest divine favor, including life everlasting.

Such cannot agree to the common fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of men; for they well know that only those who have the Father's spirit are "sons of God." (Rom. 8:14.) They know to the contrary the meaning of our Lord Jesus' words to some evil doers of his day, "Ye are of your father the devil, and his works ye do."--John 8:44.

But while distinctly identifying the two fathers'

families--the children of God and the children of the devil, and pointing out the mistake of confounding the two, we, nevertheless, are able from the divine Word and standpoint to see that many of Satan's followers and children are deceived, and we look forward with joy and expectancy to the time when Immanuel shall take his great power and bind Satan that his deception of mankind should cease, and that all may be brought to a knowledge of good as well as of evil, of truth as well as of falsehood,--a knowledge of the Lord, whom to intelligently accept is life eternal.

=====

R2323 : page 187

#### SOLOMON'S KINGDOM DIVIDED.

--JULY 3.--1 KINGS 12:16-25.--

"A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger."--Prov. 15:1.

SOLOMON'S wonderful reign was not an unmixed blessing: in it we see much of divine providence and guidance, such as Solomon had requested at the beginning of his reign, but in it also we see many marks of human imperfection and unwisdom. In so far as Solomon respected God, and sought to exercise his kingly office in harmony with the principles of the divine law, his reign was a success; but in so far as he followed his own judgment and sought to be cosmopolitan and to fashion his kingdom after worldly ideals, it was comparatively a failure from the divine standpoint, altho this made it the more renowned from the worldly standpoint.

Solomon was a man of broad ideas, and like other men of similar good mold in this respect, he was the more susceptible to the temptation to think the Lord's ways and methods narrow; and to seek to be more

R2324 : page 187

broad and liberal than the Almighty. His error along this line is particularly shown in his recognition of foreign religions, which, according to God's law, had no right to be recognized in any sense or degree, in Israel.

Women have always exercised a potent influence in the affairs of the world, and Solomon's deflection, and the consequent deflection of his kingdom, were due in large measure to his foreign wives and their natural attachment to the false religions of their fathers. Mismatch was one of the first of Solomon's steps in the wrong course: it was taken, no doubt, with a view to a closer relationship with surrounding nations and

royal families. It was a worldly-wise step, but an unwise one from the standpoint of the Lord, who desired Israel to be his elect, holy, and peculiar people, separate and distinct from all the families of the earth.-- Amos 3:2.

Yes, from a worldly standpoint Solomon's reign was a marvel of success. At the time of his death he dominated and collected tribute from a territory nearly seven times the size of Palestine; his capital city had become enormously wealthy, so that the war shields of some of his soldiers were made of gold, while the record is that--"the king made silver in Jerusalem to be as stones for abundance." (1 Kings 10:27.) While he lived, his wisdom and fame and the glitter of his success held the entire nation loyally to him, notwithstanding the fact that his methods, by which these brilliant results were achieved, were in a considerable measure oppressive to the people. This was especially the case with those of his people who resided at a distance from the capital city, and who did not so particularly share in the wealth there accumulated, but more particularly shared the general burdens of taxation and conscription of service, by which the wealth was amassed. Consequently, at Solomon's death, when the glitter faded, his kingdom, established not upon the loving loyalty of the people, but upon his own magnetic power and wisdom, was ready to disintegrate.

As we have already pointed out\* the original organization of Israel was practically that of a republic, in which the heads of the tribes exercised a sovereignty similar to Congress or Parliament. When the people desired a king like unto the nations around them, and God let them have their way, they nevertheless

-----

\*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chap. 3.

R2324 : page 188

still clung to some extent to their original tribal custom. Hence it was, that upon the death of Solomon there was a meeting of these heads of tribes at Shechem; and Rehoboam, already recognized by the heads of his own tribe, Judah, presented himself at the meeting, expecting, as a matter of course, that he would be accepted as king by these representatives of all the other tribes. To his surprise, he was requested to state himself respecting the policy he would pursue if accepted as king; and it was clearly intimated to him that the rigor of his father's reign, which accumulated wealth in the capital city at the expense of the remainder of the nation, would not be tolerated from him.

King Rehoboam took three days to consider the matter with his counsellors. He first consulted the elders--probably the chief men of the tribe of Judah,



who already had acknowledged him, and who probably had accompanied him to this council. Their counsel was wise, in that it advocated at least an outward deference to the just claims of the people; but, recognizing the fact that the young king was full of ambition to be as great as or greater than his father and to have no diminution of the revenues of the kingdom, they probably meant him to understand that their advice was that he should merely promise reforms, until he should have the endorsement of all the tribes and be fully established in the kingdom, when he might do as he pleased.

But Rehoboam also consulted the young men-- his wealthy companions and friends, with whom he had grown up. Their advice was that to make promises of reforms would imply a weakness on the part of the king, and make the discontented people more self-assertive and more rebellious than ever; and that now was the proper time to state himself strongly, to put down his foot with authority, and to dare the people to cross his will. Probably proud of heart, and vain-glorious, this last foolish advice was most in accord with the king's sentiments. And it was followed. He gave in substance the message of the young men: "My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins; and now, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:10-14.) The reference to whips and scorpions should be understood: it was the custom then, and is still the custom to a considerable extent in the far East, for the kings to draft the people to do service in the building of public works, kings' palaces, etc.; and these drafted men were treated for the time as the veriest slaves, being under taskmasters, who kept them up to the notch of diligence with whips. The scorpions referred to were scorpion whips, which differed from other whips in that they had a stinger at the end of the lashes, consisting of a sharp-pointed piece of lead.

No wonder that king Rehoboam is noted as the foolish king; his unwise, boastful, vainglorious language, which no doubt was the abundant overflow of a heart in similar condition, which meant all that it boastfully said, caused him the loss of more than two-thirds of his dominion and subjects. The chiefs of the ten tribes promptly declared that Judah and Benjamin might have Rehoboam for their king, but that he was not acceptable to the remainder of the tribes. They accordingly chose one of their number, Jeroboam, who had once been one of Solomon's conscripts, and because of his natural ability as a manager of men had been made an overseer of a department of the government. It was he whom the Prophet Ahijah had already anointed to be king over the ten tribes, prophesying that he should yet occupy that position.--See

1 Kings 11:29-38.

Some one has said, "Solomon had a thousand wives but only one son, and he was a fool." His folly consisted in seeking advice from a wrong quarter. Had he recognized, as did his grandfather David and his father Solomon, that the throne of Israel was "the throne of the Kingdom of the Lord," his course should have been to seek counsel of the Lord, as did his father and his grandfather. But the fact is that Rehoboam's folly was really a part of his father's folly, for his mother was Naamah, an Ammonitess and idolater, for whom Solomon built, adjoining the Mount of Olives, and opposite the Temple of God, a temple to Moloch (a heathen divinity), the site of which is still pointed out to the traveller and known as "The Mount of Offence." Did not Rehoboam come by his folly honestly? Could we expect more of the son of a heathen mother, and of a father who, while worshiping the true God himself, was so lacking in firmness and principle in the conduct of the religious interests of his home?

Rehoboam's unwise decision in his affairs is but an illustration of the many unwise decisions by mankind in general in respect to various questions of life, far reaching in their results. All cannot lose a kingdom, in the same sense, but each may win or lose another kingdom, in the sense signified by the poet, when he said:

"My mind to me a kingdom is."

Questions come before every intelligent person, at the threshold of maturer life, the decision of which, one way or the other, will have a bearing on all the remainder of the present life, and perhaps also a strong influence upon the interests of the life to come, provided for through the atonement. Happy and wise will be the choice, if the counsels of the Lord are sought and followed--less happy will be the conclusion

R2324 : page 189

if the wisdom of the world is sought and followed--disastrous will be the conclusion if the wisdom of the unwise and inexperienced be followed.

We have the Lord's word for it that the division of Israel into two parts or nations--the ten tribes, known by the original national name, Israel, and the two tribes thereafter known as Judah--was of his foreknowledge and arrangement. In some way the Lord saw that such a division would work favorably for the development of his purposes. We may, perhaps, surmise how it would be. The entire nation, while still loyal to Jehovah, had become permeated with what would to-day be termed "liberal views on religion"--views which tolerated, if they did not countenance, idolatry; and which gradually were undermining its interests in the special hope which God had set before that nation, that it, as the seed of Abraham, should be a

peculiar people, separate from all the other nations and ready at the coming of Messiah to become his associates (his Bride) in the work of blessing and enlightening the world, and establishing them in the ways of righteousness and in the knowledge of the true God.

It was because this hope had grown faint, that the ten tribes were so ready to break the bonds of relationship which connected them with the tribe of Judah; from which tribe the prophets of the Lord had declared that Messiah, their great King, should ultimately come. The loss of this faith meant the loss of cohesive power in that nation, and it does not surprise us that when the ten tribes had organized a separate government, had cut themselves loose from the royal tribe and family, and from the Temple and the opportunities of approach to the Lord through it--it does not surprise us that under these conditions, and the preparation of "liberal views on religion" which led to these conditions, the ten tribes speedily drifted into idolatry, and became more and more like the nations round about them.

So also it is with the Gospel Church: in proportion as the second coming of Messiah and the promises of a share in his Kingdom are kept in mind, and the

R2325 : page 189

contrast between the Church and the world is sharply drawn, so long will practical and vital Christianity prosper.--"He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure."

As the example of a drunken father sometimes proves a most salutary lesson to his son, and as the gross corruption of Papacy led to and developed the Reformation movement, so the division of the Kingdom of Israel and the rapid progress of the ten tribes toward irreligion and idolatry had the effect, by contrast and suggestion, of awakening the people of Judah to a greater and more intelligent appreciation of the Kingdom hopes and divine blessings of which their kingdom was the representative. And the further the ten tribes went into idolatry the more the two tribes seem to have been quickened in religious fervor in upholding the sublime truths of which they were the representatives. This thought is the more forcibly impressed upon us when we remember that the ultimate decline of Judah--the two tribes--into idolatry, prior to their captivity, was after the ten tribes had gone into captivity a considerable time.

Chagrined at the failure of his policy, and full of haughty determination that he would prove to them the weight of his little finger, Rehoboam hastened to his capital, and summoned his army, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen warriors: but the Lord sent a special message to him and the people of Judah that they should engage in no such war against their brethren

and that the matter was of his ordering.

Disappointments are more likely to lead to humility than are successes, and so it was in this case. Rehoboam's first folly having become apparent to him, he was more humble-minded, and the more ready to hear and to obey the divine command. Thus blessings sometimes come to us through lessons of our own imperfection and lack of wisdom: if our disappointments and extremities lead us to look for counsel in the proper direction, to which we should have looked at first.

To the true Israelites the blighting of their popularity and national greatness in the sight of the world, and the consequent lessons of humility, were evidently beneficial. And thus with us who belong to spiritual Israel, the holy nation, the peculiar people, splits and divisions of the nominal mass will work for good to the Israelites indeed; but splits in the nominal mass, and the resulting benefits, do not justify splits or differences amongst those who are loyal and faithful to the Lord. As the Apostle says, there should be "no schism in the body"--of Christ. The true members of the body of Christ are held together by their common hopes, builded upon the exceeding great and precious promises of the Lord's word, and held together by the bonds of love. And those who have not these bonds of love are not true Israelites--"if any man have not the spirit of Christ [the bond of love] he is none of his." "They went out from us because they were not all of us."

"A SOFT ANSWER TURNETH AWAY WRATH."

Our Golden Text is excellent advice.

(1) It is good policy for anyone--Christian or worldly--to learn to give soft answers, even under anger-provoking conditions. Business people study this as a matter of policy: it means custom, sales, profits, wealth, and to ignore this rule in business is to be considered foolish.

R2325 : page 190

(2) But that which is merely an outward form, policy, and often hypocritical in worldly people, is to abound much more in the child of God, begotten of a new mind. In him it is not to be put on for policy's sake, but to be the outgrowth or fruitage of the holy spirit or disposition which rules him as a "new creature in Christ Jesus."

Any other answer than "a soft answer" is incompatible with the holy spirit of Love--with its meekness, gentleness, patience and brotherly kindness. If the truth must needs be spoken and if under the circumstances the truth be severe, hard, nevertheless and indeed all the more the hard thing needs to be stated as softly as possible. This evidently is the thought of the

Apostle when he recommends "speaking the truth in love."

This advice is nowhere more needed than in most of home circles. Each unkind, ungenerous, hard word or deed, is a testimony in opposition to our professions to be the Lord's people and to be begotten of his spirit. "Put away all these, anger, malice, hatred, strife," etc.

=====

R2325 : page 190

### ELIJAH, THE PROPHET.

--JULY 10.--1 KINGS 17:1-16.--

"And the barrel of meal wasted not, and neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord."--1 KINGS 17:16.

OUR preceding lesson in this series dealt with the division of Solomon's Kingdom, after his death. Our present lesson has to do with the ten tribes division and Elijah's mission as a prophet to them. The elders of the ten tribes which refused to recognize King Rehoboam chose Jeroboam, who had been at one time an influential officer in matters relating to their province during Solomon's reign: the same who had been anointed before Solomon's death by a prophet of the Lord, with the information that he should be the king of the ten tribes. Following this announcement he was obliged to flee for his life, as he would have been considered an enemy of the kingdom. Upon Solomon's death, however, he had returned, finding favor with the elders of the ten tribes.

We saw, in the previous lesson, that the course of King Solomon had tended to break down the boundaries and barriers between true and false religion, between the worship of God and the idolatry of surrounding nations, Solomon having to some extent at least countenanced the worship of heathen gods by some of his wives, and the representatives of heathen nations at his court. This, which would be considered by many, a proper, liberal course, was out of harmony with the Lord's instructions on the subject, and did great injury to Israel--leading those whose religious instincts were on the lower levels to regard all nations as more or less right, and on a religious parity.

Jeroboam, fearing that the people by going to Jerusalem to worship the Lord at the Temple, as previously, would become alienated from him as their king, and become attached again to Rehoboam and the line of David, took advantage of the fact that the people had become indifferent to the true religion, the worship of the Lord, and for the sake of establishing his kingdom and perpetuating the separation from Judah,

he established idolatry, casting two golden calves, and saying to the people, "These be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." These two golden calves were set up in different parts of the land, one at Bethel and one at Dan, so that some could go to worship one, and some the other, a part of his pretext being that the former custom of worship at Jerusalem was too difficult for the people. Moreover, still further to separate the peoples, he instituted feasts and sacrifices at different dates from those appointed of the Lord through Moses, and still practiced in Judah. It has been suggested by some that these calves were originally set up as representatives of Jehovah; but we think not. A calf was chosen as the symbol for God, probably because the people while in Egypt were accustomed to the worship of the sacred bull Apis, of Egyptian mythology, and quite probably the Israelites had joined in that worship to some extent during their bondage. Their tendency toward bullock or calf worship is illustrated also by the fact that this was the form of idolatry to which they naturally took when Moses was absent from them for forty days in Mount Horeb, receiving the Law. The King himself had just returned from exile in Egypt to take the throne: he had therefore been several years under the influence of Egypt's idolatry.

During the twenty-two years of Jeroboam's reign Israel made great progress away from the Lord and into idolatry; and to the more thoroughly accomplish this end the king built altars to these bullocks and instituted a new order of priesthood that, so far as possible, he might cause the people to entirely forget the true God, and his Levitical priesthood as well as his Temple at Jerusalem. Jeroboam seems to have appointed himself the chief priest of the new religious institution, for he offered the incense at the altar.

Following the death of Jeroboam there was a period of repeated insurrections against king after king who took the throne of Israel, until Ahab, of whom it is written, "Ahab, the son of Omri, did evil

R2325 : page 191

in the sight of the Lord, above all that were before him." Ahab's wife, Jezebel, was seemingly still more wicked than himself, and really instigated most of his evil deeds. It is a well recognized fact that a good wife can be a great help to her husband: the history of Jezebel shows that a wife's influence for evil may be even more potent. It was during the reign of Ahab that as the Lord's servant and prophet Elijah delivered the messages and did the works recorded in this and several succeeding lessons.

The work of establishing a new religion, which Jeroboam began, was ably carried on by his successors: and Ahab, influenced by Jezebel, his wife, seems to

have out-done his predecessors not only to establish the new religion, but to exterminate the religion of Jehovah. He and his wife openly established the worship of Baal and slew the prophets of Jehovah,--the first religious persecution on record. Not only the out-spoken prophet of the Lord who delivered the message, but all the true Israelites who had respect to Jehovah, were obliged to hide from Jezebel's wrathful zeal for the worship of Baal.

R2326 : page 191

Under divine direction, Elijah appeared in the presence of King Ahab and delivered a message, saying, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth [whom you seem to think is dead] before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." At first, probably, the matter was considered a foolish boast, but when the dew and rain ceased and scarcity and famine resulted, the full purport of the judgment began to be understood, and the King sent hither and thither, everywhere, to find Elijah; presumably to induce him, either by entreaty or by cruelty, to lift from the land what he probably considered to be an evil spell or curse. But God had directed Elijah where to hide, in a place where he could himself be supplied with water, and where he could be fed by ravens.

Elijah's prediction of a famine was not merely a prophecy; rather, it was the declaration of a divine judgment upon Israel. The object of the famine was to bring the Israelites to their senses--to show them that they were leaving the true God to trust in idols. The force and appropriateness of this particular kind of a judgment may be recognized, when we remember that the claim made for Baal was that he was specially the god of the forces of nature: his worship was presumed to bring increase in the home and in the field. The drouth and consequent famine would be a contradiction, therefore, of these claims made in the name of Baal, and would shatter faith in him, and prepare Israel to recognize and worship again the true God, Jehovah.

Meantime, Elijah, following the directions of the Lord, lived for about two years at the brook Cherith, drinking of its waters, and fed there by the ravens. Various efforts have been made to discount the miracle implied in the statement that the ravens brought Elijah bread and flesh morning and evening. Some have claimed that the word translated "ravens" might, with a little different accent, be translated "Arabian," or signify the inhabitants of a village called Orbo. But, in addition to the fact that God is abundantly able to work such miracles as are necessary to his plans, we know that the raven of the East is in many respects a peculiar bird, which exhibits not only extraordinary

intelligence but sometimes also sympathy. For instance, Bishop Stanley, in his "History of Birds," relates that a gentleman who had been driving ran over and bruised the leg of his Newfoundland dog, and says: "While we were examining the injury, Ralph, the raven, looked on also. The minute the dog was tied up under the manger of my horse, the raven not only visited him, but brought him bones, and attended him with particular marks of kindness."

A missionary in India says, respecting ravens in general, and these which fed Elijah in particular-- "While I do not claim to know where the ravens got the bread and meat, a residence of thirty years in the East helps me to guess where they got it. My own little children have often come crying into the house, their hands scratched and bleeding from the claws of kites and crows [the raven is of the crow family] that had snatched from them the food they were eating. Our nurse was one day preparing a fowl to be grilled, for my sick wife, and standing in the doorway, plate in hand, she called the cook to come for the fowl. When the man came, the nurse discovered that her plate was empty; a kite or crow had carried away the fowl without her knowledge. Meat sellers are obliged to be on the alert to prevent crows and kites from robbing them. I do not profess to know anything about it, but it is my firm conviction that those ravens [which fed Elijah] stole the food from the bazaars of Jerusalem or Jericho."

In any case, the lesson to us is one of the divine care and providence over those who are devoted to God's service. He who sustained Elijah can equally sustain us. The important question with each of us should be, Am I the Lord's servant, in the place and doing the work which he has directed? If so, our bread and our water shall be sure, and no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly.--Isa. 33:16; Psa. 84:11.

"Nor is it a singular case--  
The wonder is often renewed,  
And many can say to his praise  
He sends them by ravens their food.

R2326 : page 192

"Thus worldlings, tho ravens indeed,  
Tho greedy and selfish their mind,  
If God has a servant to feed,  
Against their own wills can be kind.

"Thus Satan, that raven unclean,  
Who croaks in the ears of the saints,  
Compelled by a power unseen,  
Administers oft to their wants.

"God teaches them how to find food,



From all the temptations they feel,  
This raven who thirsts for my blood  
Has helped me to many a meal."  
--John Newton.

Next Elijah was directed to a widow of Zarephath, across the border, in the Kingdom of Zidon. Our Lord refers to this, and incidentally confirms this entire piece of history respecting Elijah, the three and a half years of famine, and his visit to Sarepta.--Luke 4:26.

Considering that the drouth and famine extended also into Zidon, it would seem to have been a bold request of the prophet, to ask the widow woman for water to drink, and bread to eat. Her willingness to share with him was remarkable under the circumstances. It suggests to us a fact that with all our increase of civilization and wealth, the people of to-day are far less hospitable and less generous. A writer familiar with the customs of the East, says that there the gift of water to the thirsty is regarded as a sacred duty, saying: "Never yet, during many years' residence in Syria, and many a long day's travel, have I been refused a draught of water by a single individual of any sect or race. The Bedouin in the desert has shared with me the last drop in his waterskin." The Lord's people have great need to cultivate a large generosity, not only of thought, but of deed; and the blessing which came to the widow of Sarepta as a result of her generosity to Elijah, should serve to impress this lesson upon our hearts.

Furthermore, altho the woman was a Gentile, she had respect to Jehovah, and in some manner evidently recognized the Prophet as one of his servants. This, no doubt, had to do with her willingness to share her last morsel of food. Indeed, the intimation of our Lord is that this poor Gentile widow was more worthy of divine care than many of the widows of Israel. She explained to Elijah that her barrel, or rather stone jar, of meal was about exhausted; and that she was preparing for herself and her son what she presumed would be her last meal before they would die of famine. The Prophet's demand that he should have a small cake from it first was not because of greed or selfishness on his part, but as one feature of the lesson of faith which the Lord wished to inculcate. If the woman had the faith necessary to obey, then she would be esteemed worthy of the Lord's assistance through the Prophet; if she did not exercise the faith, another widow might have been found who would. Thus it is with us,--at various steps in the journey of life the Lord brings us to the place where he tests our faith. If we exercise the faith we will get the blessing; if we do not, we will lose it. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Nevertheless the woman was not asked to exercise this faith without being first given a definite promise from the Lord; and so with

us--we are not to be blindly credulous respecting the words and promises of men, and to consider this to be faith in the Lord; but when we recognize the word of the Lord, we are to trust it implicitly, and to act accordingly.

Not always, or even often, does God deal with his people after this manner of miraculous provision for their sustenance. Nevertheless, we are to recognize him as the author of all our blessings--"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights." His promised provision is not for weeks and months and years in advance, but "daily bread"--bread for each day--"thy bread and thy water shall be sure." Nor are we to expect or ask for the luxuries of life, but to remember that our "Father knoweth what things we have need of"--what things would be for our highest welfare and best interests.

The meal, the bread, of that time might fitly be considered as a symbol of the bread of truth, of which we are privileged to eat, and of which our supply is continued from day to day. The olive oil, used by the ancients much as we use butter, is frequently used in the Scriptures as representing divine grace and the holy spirit; and so we, as the Lord's people, are not only supplied with the bread of truth, but also with the spirit of truth, which helps to make it nourishing and profitable to us. Another prophet speaks of the experience of the world during the dark ages, saying, "There shall be a famine in the land,--not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord."--Amos 8:11.

We have elsewhere shown that this famine of Elijah's day and the period of its duration, as well as the Prophet and his experiences with Jezebel, etc., were typical of God's dealings with the Church, and her experiences during this Gospel age.\*

Note here also the beautiful poem by Mrs. Charles, found in POEMS AND HYMNS OF DAWN, page 127. It suggests a very profitable thought respecting the Lord's blessing upon the widow of Sarepta, and shows how an application of its lesson may be made by all who are the Lord's people.

"Is thy cruse of comfort failing?  
Rise and share it with another."

-----

\*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., Chap. 8.

=====