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THIS JOURNAL AND ITS MISSION.

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THIS journal is set for the defence of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated,--Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6.) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to--"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which...has been hid in God,...to the intent that now might be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God"--"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed."--Eph. 3:5-9,10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken;--according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

TO US THE SCRIPTURES CLEARLY TEACH

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That the Church is "the Temple of the Living God"--peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age--ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief corner stone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.--1 Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.--Rev. 15:5-8.

That the Basis of Hope, for the Church and the World, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," "in due time."--Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5,6.

That the Hope of the Church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.--1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the Church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.--Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the World lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ's Millennial Kingdom--the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified Church.--Acts 3:19-21; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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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.

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WITHDRAWAL LETTERS--FREE.

We again remind our readers of these letters specially prepared

and ready for the signature of any desiring to use them. Send for a sample, and then, if it suits your purpose, ascertain the address of each member of the church from which you wish to withdraw, and notify us of the number. We will be pleased to send you, free, enough letters to send one to each--with suitable tracts and envelopes.

Experience proves the wisdom of this course: for your real sentiments, motives, etc., are so apt to be misunderstood and misrepresented. You owe it to your sectarian friends and to the truth, not to be misunderstood--not to have your good deed evil spoken of, or evil thought of. Besides, you did not join the preacher, but the congregation;--hence, your withdrawal and the reasons therefor should be addressed to the congregation, each, all.

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#### POEMS AND HYMNS OF DAWN--CHEAPER.

The cost of paper, printing, binding, etc., is constantly falling (in other words, the purchasing value of our gold standard dollar is constantly rising): and thus we are enabled to reduce the price of these books nearly one-half. The price hereafter will be 50 cents each plus postage 8 cents each. The wholesale price (granted to TOWER subscribers) is one-half, namely 25 cents each, by freight or express,--if by mail, add 8 cents postage.

We know of no other collection of poems and hymns so choice as this one.

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UNLESS WE HEAR FROM YOU PROMPTLY,  
YOUR NAME IS LIKELY TO BE DROPPED FROM OUR LIST,  
IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS IN ARREARS.

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#### GREETING AND EXHORTATION FOR THE NEW YEAR.

--1899--

DEAR Friends of the WATCH TOWER family,  
accept, please, our editorial greetings and  
good wishes, as we cross the threshold of another year.  
We trust that each of us can truthfully sing with the  
poet,--

"Looking back, we praise the way,  
God has led us, day by day."

And let us remember that the great Watchman of  
Spiritual Israel, the Lord, changes not; his exceeding  
great and precious promises are all yea and amen to  
those who obey him--to all who by faith abide in him,  
trusting in the merit of his atonement--who, possessing  
his spirit of love, are seeking to walk circumspectly

in his footsteps. To all such, if they continue thus and abound, we guarantee that the year, 1899, will be a happy year, basing our guarantee upon the Lord's promises.

But how many, who know this full well, are disposed to be fearful, doubtful, unbelieving: and thereby are paving the way for troubles! How long it requires for some of the pupils in the school of Christ to find out why they are in this school and under the Teacher! Surely, the object should be to be taught--to learn of him whom God has appointed to be the Teacher of all his justified and consecrated sons, adopted into his family. We do not come to this Teacher to obtain his certificate that we need none of his instruction; but that from his Word in conjunction with the daily experiences in life (his "providences" to all his pupils) we may grow daily in his likeness;--in grace and in knowledge.

If at first we, as pupils, get confused and mistake self-will for God's-will, and our Teacher points this out to us by some failure of our projects, we are not (1) to be rebellious and resentful of the lesson; nor (2) to be discouraged and disheartened. On the contrary, we are to profit by every experience; seeking that the lessons of one day shall be put in practice and become our aids on following days.

The most important lesson of this school-term is Faith: the faith with which we became the Lord's and entered his school must grow. And our faith can only grow by knowledge (We do not refer to worldly knowledge, worldly learning.), knowledge of the Lord--of his methods, his plan, his character. Hence we must study well our Teacher's words and general conduct and as well his providences or private instructions to us individually--interpreting these always by his words. Much of what we accepted at first by faith (respecting the Lord's goodness and wisdom) will gradually become knowledge: giving basis for still greater lengths and breadths of faith as well as for greater love and appreciation of our Redeemer.

As in other schools, so in this, different degrees of learning are represented in the students;--some are in the primary stage of development; some in the intermediate, and some in the graduating class. The graduating degree of discipleship in the school of Christ is the one that all are to strive for: it is absolutely essential that we reach this degree, if we would pass examination --finish our course with joy and be granted the Master's "Well done!" and the prize of our high calling at the end.

We want to outline this course of "study" and to ask all the dear brethren and sisters of the WATCH TOWER family, who have not already started in this course, to take it up for the year 1899. Blessed are sure to be the results. You will find as you progress in it the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,

ruling in your hearts: this will transmute the trials of faith and of patience into blessings, and the sorrows and disappointments of earthly hopes into channels of God's grace, and the perplexities of life into full assurances

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of faith. This graduating degree of faith, hope and love is attained by--

#### A FULL SUBMISSION OF OUR WILLS TO THE LORD'S WILL!

Do you answer,--Why, that is what I have been wanting to do ever since I consecrated myself to the Lord; but I have not attained it;--What more can I do? Ah yes! so it has been with all fully consecrated children of God; for a long time we all made the same mistake of wanting to fully submit our wills to God's will, instead of doing so.

A good wish is an excellent thing, very important indeed, but if the wish does not lead to performance it is valueless. Some people never get beyond the wishing point in any of life's affairs: they wish to rise at a certain hour in the morning, or to attend to certain recognized duties, or render some service, or speak some word of kindness or encouragement in the name of the Lord,--but they never fulfil their good wishes in deeds. The good wish should be followed by a good and determined will, which is sure to be favored by a way in matters fully in accord with the divine will. Now, without dropping a single good wish, let us begin immediately to make this a successful year, by throwing the entire strength of our wills into doing.

But now take care--you are on treacherous ground: a strong will is as dangerous as it is valuable. If misdirected, you have started a force, an energy, which may lead you far astray. And conscientious people are in danger along this line especially: for when their wills get hold of a matter which their consciences approve they may make as much of a blunder as did Saul of Tarsus under similar circumstances.

There is but one safe course; and to prepare the Lord's people to know, to realize this, is the object of all the preliminary courses in the School of Christ, leading up to this graduating course. This final lesson to be learned is that the wills that are to be exercised in good deeds and good words are not our own wills, except as by adoption we have taken the Lord's will to be ours. When we became the Lord's pupils it was by and as a consequence of the surrender of our own wills; and our first lessons in this school were in keeping our wills dead. We can see as we look backward that by the Great Teacher's aid we won some victories over self-will, and have come to the place where our real desires are, as expressed by the poet,--

"Lord, at length Thy love hath conquered,  
None of self, and all of Thee."

But even after we have adopted the Lord's will  
(as instead of our own natural preferences) and made  
it ours; and after we have resolved to do the Lord's  
will;--still we are in danger and need to walk carefully,

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lest we misapprehend the Lord's will and adopt the  
will and plans of fellow men or of a church, instead  
of the Lord's will. Consequently, without despising  
human aid in the ascertainment of the Lord's will,  
while remembering that God still, as in times past,  
makes use of human agencies in instructing his people,  
it must not be forgotten that Satan also uses human  
agents to mislead and to deceive, and that God permits  
this, in order to teach us that he is the real Teacher.  
Hence he puts his Word, the Bible, as the test by  
which his people are to distinguish between true and  
false teachers, saying, "If they speak not according to  
this Word, it is because there is no light in them."--  
Isa. 8:20.

Coming to the Scriptures to ascertain God's will,  
we find that the great work which God asks of us is  
not work for others, but work in ourselves; subduing,  
conquering, ruling self. "This is the will of God [concerning  
you], even your sanctification!" (1 Thes. 4:3.)  
Everything else, therefore,--our service of the  
household of faith, and our doing good unto all men,  
by home and foreign missions, etc., etc., is subservient  
to this most important work within. For, as the Apostle  
by inspiration declares, Tho we should preach the  
gospel eloquently to others, and tho we should give  
all our goods to feed the poor, or become martyrs for  
a good cause, without love, the spirit of Christ and the  
Father, developed in us as the ruling principle of life,  
we would be nothing, from the divine standpoint.

On the contrary, if we be sanctified to God by the  
truth--if our wills be dead, and the Lord's will be fully  
accepted as ours, in thought, word and act, we have  
attained the will of God and will win the prize as  
"overcomers"--even if, opportunities being denied us,  
we never preached, never gave to the poor and never  
suffered as martyrs for the truth's sake. Let us all  
note well this point,--"This is the will of God [concerning  
you], even your sanctification." Let nothing  
becloud or obscure this truth;--neither other truths  
nor errors. Let it dominate our course in life, and then,  
if God's will is really our will, we have a clearly marked  
pathway before us, which is very important.

But without doubt, God will open before all such  
opportunities to serve the truth to others,--to let their  
light shine to the glory of the Father and the blessing  
of fellow creatures; for this is his command to us: and  
we may be sure he gives no commands impossible to

be obeyed. If you have been seeking opportunities of service and finding none, there must be something wrong: you may have been seeking some special service of your own preference (your old will meddling with your newly adopted will--the Lord's). Possibly the great Teacher sees pride remaining--pride which you would have been prompt to crush, had you recognized

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it; but which hid itself from you under the cloak of "self-respect." Possibly the great Teacher by his providence and his Word is saying to you, "Do with thy might what thy hand findeth to do." Possibly he sees that you would be spoiled by giving you a more important service for others, before you have learned the lesson of humility--all important in the Lord's sight. Act quickly, therefore, the time is short,-- "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God [to do whatever service his providence has made possible to you], that he may exalt you in due time." --1 Pet. 5:6.

"THINK IT NOT STRANGE CONCERNING THE  
FIERY TRIALS."

Have you never suffered for righteousness' sake-- a martyr to principle? Strange, when the Master so plainly declared that "Whosoever will live godly shall suffer persecution." Can it be that the Lord erred? Is not the danger rather that you have not been living godly? You say that it is your highest wish, to live godly: but do not forget the distinction already drawn between wishing and doing. Resign your own will entirely, put it all away and begin to do the Lord's, item by item, just as you are able to find and prove it in his Word--using the best human help you can obtain, in this seeking and proving. Soon the persecutions will come: and from most unexpected quarters.

And when the persecutions come, be prepared for them--forearmed by God's Word; for they will be temptations to your flesh: through them the Adversary will seek to embitter your soul and to stir up in you the elements of the old nature reckoned dead--anger, malice, hatred, envy, strife. If this be the effect of persecutions in you, the Adversary is gaining the victory --you are not overcoming evil, but being overcome by it. The old nature will even call upon its best qualities to fight against persecution--it will call upon your natural sense of Justice to come, help and resist; it will call upon Conscientiousness to agree that the persecution is unmerited; it will call upon Benevolence and Spirituality, your love of family and friends, and every other good quality of your being--all will be appealed to either to fight the persecution or to abandon the course of godliness which led to it.

Then you will be in the thick of the fight, and unless previously armed with the panoply supplied in the divine Word, you are almost sure to lose faith, become terrified and flee. And whoever does this is sure to be wounded, if not captured by the enemy: for our armor is a front armor, not a back armor. It is invulnerable so long as we stand firm for the right, the truth, in our great Captain's name and strength--it is a hindrance to those who draw back.

But why should we flee terrified? Is not this the very test of our loyalty and devotion to the Lord and his Word, for which all of our previous experiences and instructions were but preparations? Is not this the very test the Lord declares indispensable to all who would be accounted victors and be made his joint-heirs in the Kingdom? Is not this the very opportunity for which we prayed, and are not the incidental persecutions exactly what our Lord forewarned us would be part of the cost of faithful discipleship? And are not these the very persecutions whose absence earlier in our Christian experiences made us wonder whether or not we were acceptable sons of God?--Heb. 12:8.

Surely, our answer to these questions must be, Yea, Lord! even tho because of weakness of the flesh the answer be not joyous as it should be, but through unbidden tears. And with this answer on our part the Lord is pleased; and angels of his mercy--his promises exceeding great and precious--minister unto us and strengthen us.

That is the time to "fight the good fight"--and, triumphing over self-will completely, to accept the buffetings and slanders and misrepresentations of good intentions and good deeds with meekness and patience. That is the time when the Lord's spirit of love, dwelling in us richly, will manifest itself in the control not only of our words and actions, but of our inmost thoughts. If even so much as a bitter feeling against our traducers and maligners arises, it is to be fought, and so complete a victory gained over it that every fiber of our beings will be in sweet accord with our Great Teacher's instructions, "Love your enemies. Pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. Bless and injure not."

Your earliest definition of "injure not" will probably have been that you should not kill or wound your enemies physically: but as you look to the Teacher and heed his word you will hear him say, "Learn of me," and you will note with the Apostle, that tho he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, yet, "When he was reviled he reviled not in return; when he suffered he threatened not; but committed his cause to him that judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:22,23.) If you are a faithful pupil it will not be long until you see that the perfect law of liberty, the law of Christ, is a discernor of the very thoughts and intents of the heart, and that while you must hate all sin, you cannot hate



any sinner and yet have the love of God perfected in your heart. You see that this means that you not only must not retaliate and revile your foes, but must not even wish to do so. The evil wish must be conquered and the selfish conditions which gave it birth must be utterly destroyed and replaced with love--the spirit of Christ.--Compare 1 Cor. 4:12 with 1 Cor. 6:10.

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Are you tempted to repine, to feel disappointed at your lot in life or your experiences by the way? That is the time to remember that all repining, discontent and disappointments indicate that self-will in you is not so dead as you had hoped. For he who has buried his own will completely in the will of the Lord can know no disappointment; but in every affair of his life he sees by faith divine appointment or supervision, and hears the Word of the Lord in all of life's affairs assuring him: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28.) It is one of the evidences of reaching the graduating condition of heart, when we are able to take the oppositions of the great Adversary and of the world and of our own flesh patiently, uncomplainingly, uncomplainingly, "joyfully"--as a part of the disciplinary experience meted out to us by our all-wise and all-loving Lord.

Such is the "good fight." The first battle is the severest, and each subsequent victory is easier; for with each victory the new will (the Lord's will in us) grows stronger, and Hope's sight of the things God has in reservation for the faithful grows keener, and Faith's strength and endurance greater. And with the very first victory come blessings, which are added to after every victory: blessings of rest, peace, joy in the holy spirit and full assurance of faith, as our Teacher promised,--"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad!"

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From this standpoint, and from no other, is it possible to accept with fortitude and resignation whatever tests of patience, perseverance, faith, hope and love the Lord may see fit to permit to come upon you. In this condition all our experiences will result in blessings, however unpropitious they may appear on the surface.

It is from this standpoint (of victory over self-will --unto sanctification of spirit through obedience to the truth) that all the blessings and promises of the divine Word are ours in the fullest sense--"All things are

yours,...whether things present, or things to come; ...[for] ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." This is the graduating degree of the School of Christ, dearly beloved, in which we all seek to be approved during the year just begun. Let us unite our hearts and prayers, and above all our new wills, with each other's and with our Master's, to this end that we may be wholly sanctified and for the Master's use, present and prospective, made meet. "And the very God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."--Rom. 16:20.

Let our prayers every morning ascend to God,-- "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength, and my Redeemer." (Psa. 19:14.) And every evening let us review the day, judging our hearts (wills) by the Lord's law of perfect love--praying his forgiveness of shortcomings, and thanking our Lord for the strength and grace which brought its victories.

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"Come, let us anew our journey pursue,  
Roll round with the year,  
And never stand still till the Master appear.  
His adorable will let us gladly fulfil,  
And our talents improve,  
By the patience of hope, and the labor of love."

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#### THE CHURCH'S DIVINELY APPOINTED MISSION.

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"Seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not."--2 Cor. 4:1.

WHAT is the mission of the Church?--What ministry or service has the Lord appointed to his consecrated people? This question is one that should be prominent and clear before the mind of every consecrated child of God. It is of the utmost importance that the servant know what is expected of him before proceeding far in rendering service; otherwise he will be more than likely to waste his energies in wrong directions--leaving undone those things which ought to be done, and giving attention to matters which would better be attended to otherwise according to the plan and arrangement of the great Supervisor of the plan of salvation--the Lord.

The answers to this question throughout Christendom would probably divide themselves into three groups --two of them quite unscriptural, and the third, altho Scriptural, by reason of other errors generally associated

with it, is made unreasonable, and held in its purity and consistently by but few. We will examine these as follows:--

(1) THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW of the Church's mission is that she is the ruler of the world, appointed to be such by the Almighty, and duly empowered and authorized to rule over kings and nations, to order all the affairs of earth, moral, political, financial, social and ecclesiastical,--the pope and his hierarchy constituting this spiritual kingdom. This spiritual kingdom, it claims, reigned gloriously in the past,--during the period which the remainder of mankind denominate "the Dark Ages." They claim that now this kingdom is suffering a reverse at the hands of infidelity, Protestantism, etc., and is deprived of its proper, God-given and God-intended rights, as the supreme government of the earth. It claims that very shortly there will be a grand

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change in earth's affairs, which will put back again, into its possession and under its control absolutely, all peoples, nations, kindreds and tongues, so that again, as of yore, the pope shall be the recognized head of the world, all other religions be overthrown and effectually stamped out, and that thus the world shall be blessed --by a return to medieval conditions.

We dispute this theory, and hold that the Scriptures teach to the contrary: that the reign of the Church as the Kingdom of God to rule and bless the world is declared to be not during this "present evil world" or age, but in one to follow this, to be inaugurated by our Lord Jesus with power from on high, at his second advent. The Scriptures point out, in harmony with sound reason, that the sufferings of the Church are not coincident with her reign, but precede it. The sufferings of this present time, they assure us, are not worthy to be compared with the glories which shall be (future) revealed in us. (Rom. 8:18.) These sufferings, tho they are to be unto death, are to be esteemed light afflictions and to be rejoiced in, because of the divine assurance that they are working out for us (preparing us for) a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory, as yet unseen.--2 Cor. 4:17.

(2) THE COMMON VIEW AMONGST PROTESTANTS respecting the mission of the Church resembles the foregoing considerably, except that the pope and his associates are rejected as respects their claims to special divine authority to rule the world. The claim of the Protestants, however, is that religion should undertake to rule the world, and to place its representatives in power amongst the nations; and that higher and better forms of religious sentiment should be cultivated, the religion of the world growing with its politics and its social conditions, and thus leading the world onward and lifting the degraded masses up to

good citizenship. In other words, this claim, growingly prevalent amongst Protestants, is what may be termed the worldly idea of the Church's mission; viz., to engage in merciful, philanthropic, educational, moral and benevolent works, in the interest of mankind. In other words, this view recognizes the Church as the moral influence which God has placed in the world for the world's uplift and regeneration.

We hold that this view is wrong, wholly unscriptural; that it is a mistake to suppose that the Church is placed in the world as a reformatory institution. But if we are asked, Should Christians not take a deep interest in all reforms--in temperance reform, for instance, in social purity, in political reform, in good citizenship, in anti-tobacco crusades, in socialistic developments, in financial reforms, etc.? we answer, Yes, indeed; no one could be a true Christian and yet be without sympathy as respects all these and every other possible effort for the mental, moral and physical uplift of our race. And yet you say that this is not the mission of the Church? Yes, we answer; altho our sympathies are with every good work, we are at the same time to inquire of the Lord respecting how, where, what, we may do in his service, if we would be colaborers together with him--"Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" Our query should not be addressed to fellow-men, nor should we accept the burdens and duties and obligations which their judgments and consciences would lay upon us. Rather we are to hearken to the voice of the Lord (the Scriptures), and are to follow his directions, regardless of our own and other people's conjectures as to what would be most expedient.

Nowhere in the Scriptures are God's people directed to spend their time in efforts at morally reforming the world. Our Lord did not engage in this work, neither did the apostles, nor did they offer any suggestion to the effect that the work of the Church should ever differ from the work which they performed and directed us to continue. On the contrary, they declare that we have the apostles for ensamples of how we ought to walk. They declare that our Lord's course was in full, perfect harmony with the divine will and plan, and that the apostles faithfully followed his example: and we are exhorted to simply become coworkers together with God in his work, already instituted, --not to alter or attempt to improve on them. There were moralists and moral reformers in our Lord's day; some along the line of total abstinence, some along the line of asceticism, inculcating rigid self-denials in food, clothing, etc., as essential to a moral uplift of the people. There were also political reformers, who sought the establishment of republican institutions, in his day; and social reformers, who sought to establish forms of communism. There were also dress reformers at that time, who advocated certain peculiar styles of clothing, beneficial to health, morals and religious

sanctity. Do we find that our Lord or his apostles ever associated with any of these, or that they ever in any word or act gave sanction or encouragement to any of these theories or reforms? No, not once.

It may, indeed, be claimed that a kind of Christian communism at the beginning went without rebuke, even if it were not commended by the apostles. We answer that the short-lived communism of the early Church was to some extent the result of the new doctrines promulgated by Christ, the central feature of which was love to God and love to fellow-men, as opposed to the selfish sentiments of fallen man: so that without divine instruction there was a disposition on the part of believers to have "all things in common." But if the holy spirit sanctioned and permitted this, in the beginning, it was evidently only as a lesson, as an

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experience to the Church, to show that union and communion of this kind is not practicable under present conditions, while all are troubled by imperfections of the flesh--their own and that of other men. At all events we do know that the Lord did not permit that communism to last long, but, as we are told, permitted instead a great persecution to arise against the Church, which scattered the would-be communists everywhere to preach the Gospel.

Nor did the apostles ever recommend such procedure, or attempt such an arrangement amongst the Christians elsewhere. If, then, the teaching and example of our Lord and his apostles are our criterion of the will of the Lord, the Church's commission is not to morally reform the world. But perhaps someone will say, Times are changed from what they were, and the Church's work should change accordingly. We answer, that the Apostle Paul declares in so many words, "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:27.) Whatsoever, therefore, is additional to that which was stated by the Apostle is not the counsel of God. And any counsel from any other quarter is not to be received by Christians, and is sure to be misleading. Again, the Apostle says to Timothy, respecting the Word of God, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16,17.) If, therefore, it was God's design that the Church's mission should change at some future time we should be able to find in the Scriptures some intimation of this kind, and some authority for the change. And if we find no authority for a change in her mission, we should make no change.

But some one inquires, Did not our Lord especially go after the publicans and sinners, and specially

welcome them; and was not this an indication to us that the Church's work is to be largely amongst the lower, depraved classes of mankind? We answer that the publicans and harlots were not made the subjects of special missionary efforts on the part of our Lord and his apostles: it was when these classes came to his ministry, to his preaching, manifested interest therein and signs of repentance and reformation, that he received them cordially; he did not refuse to recognize them, as did the Pharisees. The record is not that he went on slumming missions, after the publicans and harlots, but, he "receiveth [publicans and] sinners," and that many of these lower classes heard him gladly. (Luke 15:2; Mark 12:37.) Furthermore, be it noticed, these publicans and sinners were members of the Jewish Church--for that entire nation was accepted of God as his people, and they were all included under the typical sacrifices for sin, on the Day of Atonement; and they were all reckoned as under the Law Covenant --Covenanters. These lower classes had slipped away from the outward observance of the Jewish law, but our Lord testified that many of them were in far better condition of heart to receive his message than were many of the outwardly pious Pharisees.

### (3) THE CORRECT VIEW OF THE CHURCH'S MISSION.

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The question then arises, If the Church is not to rule the world in this present age, and if she is not to be the world's instructor, uplifter, by moral reforms, what is her mission--what other mission can she have? And this brings us to the third view, which quite a number hold in a more or less confused way--their commingled errors beclouding and vitiating the truth.

(a) Her chief mission is toward herself. She is to lift up the light in the world, the True Light,--not with the expectation of enlightening the world, not with the thought that her feeble lamp shall scatter earth's night of sin and darkness of superstition; for that can be accomplished only by the coming of the morning, the Millennial morning, when the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams. She holds up the light of the truth, the light of the Gospel, during this night, to attract some--"a peculiar people"--not to attract and gather all, but "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:39.) Her message respecting the love of God and the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, as it rings out into the world, is not expected to awaken the world and to lead the world to the Lord. No, she is merely bearing "witness"--a witness which will have to do also with a future knowledge and opportunity to be granted to the world during the Millennium.

She is instructed by the Word of the lord not to

expect that any but a comparatively small number will appreciate her light or her message: as the Prophet foretold, so she has found it, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Isa. 53:1; John 12:38.) As the Scriptures declare, so she finds it, that the vast majority of mankind are blind, so that they cannot see the light: some are stone blind, so as to see nothing: while others are partially blind and can get a little glimmer of it by which they can discern some things indistinctly. In hearing, likewise, the world's ears are dull of hearing--"deaf," say the Scriptures. Some hear nothing, others hear very imperfectly, few hear the message of divine love and mercy clearly and distinctly. The Church is to realize that her mission is not to these, the blind and deaf, but to him "that hath an ear [to hear],--let him hear!"--Rev. 2:7; 3:6,13,22.

Our Lord remarked this condition to his followers,

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when present with them in the world, saying, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear," and he declared that his parables and teachings were not uttered with the intention of making the blind see and the deaf hear, but purposely so that the deaf might not hear, and so that the blind might not see. When the disciples inquired respecting the interpretation of a parable, he said, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; but to them that are without, all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand." (Luke 8:10.) They had indeed the natural sight, and the natural hearing, but they lacked the mental sight and hearing. And the message that our dear Master preached, and that he commissioned his apostles and his Church to preach throughout this age, is the same --not for the blind, not for the deaf, but for those "blessed," favored ones who have eyes and ears.

As our Lord did not expect many to respond to his preaching, and particularly implied that only a small number would be able to do so, saying, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which sent me draw him," so his Church throughout this age is to realize that when she lifts up the light and lifts up her voice no man will come in response except as the Father draws him. And as the Father drew only a comparatively small remnant of the Jewish nation to our Lord, so the Church should not be surprised that he has drawn only a comparatively small proportion of Gentiles throughout this age.

Following our text the Apostle points out why this is the case: why the majority of mankind are not in a condition of heart to see and appreciate the light, to hear and to rejoice in the Gospel, not in the condition

to be drawn by the Father. He declares that it is because "the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded their minds" (vs. 4), and thus hindered the light of divine truth from shining unto them. He points out that all such are in a lost condition, without God and without hope in the world. Not, however, that they are any more lost now than they have been all along for six thousand years; for whoever is not in Christ, whoever is out of relationship to God, is a member of that large class, servants of sin, still under condemnation, still strangers from God, still lost in the wilderness of sin. They have not yet been found by the great Shepherd who promises that in due time all the true sheep shall be found;--that all the Satan- and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened to see the light of divine goodness and truth; and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped to hear the message of the grace of God.--Isa. 35:5.

(b) It is another part of the mission of the Church to care for those who do see the light which she holds up, and who are attracted by that light, and who come unto the Lord. She is to teach and instruct such, and to introduce them to the full fellowship of the high calling by making clear to them, as the Lord's mouthpiece, "what is the hope of our calling," present and future --now to suffer with Christ for righteousness' sake, to cultivate his spirit, his disposition, to bear much fruit of the spirit in our own hearts and lives, and thus, under divine supervision, to be fitted, polished and prepared for a place in the glorious Temple of the future, for a share in the glorious work of the incoming age, --the blessing of the world.--1 Cor. 1:26; Eph. 1:18; 2 Thes. 1:11.

The Church is supplied by her glorious Head, Christ Jesus, with certain gifts of the spirit, amongst her members of the earth; and these coworking together in their various offices are to strengthen, establish, upbuild, develop, one another, growing in grace and in the knowledge and spirit of the Head, until the whole Church shall eventually, by the close of this age, be brought to the stature of the fulness of perfection as the Body of Christ, under the Lord Jesus as the Head. (Eph. 4:13.) But she is not to expect that all, even of those who see her light, and who hear her proclamation, and who draw near in harmony with her message, will eventually come into full membership in this glorious Body of Christ. On the contrary, she is assured of the Lord in advance that, while only a few,

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comparatively, will hear her message, the call, a still smaller number will accept the call--for many are called, proportionately, to the few who are chosen--who make their calling and election sure by faithfulness to the conditions imposed.--2 Pet. 1:10.

(c) The conditions imposed upon the Church are



designed of the Lord to be crucial tests of her loyalty to him, and to the law of the New Covenant under which she was received by him. Trials, difficulties, persecutions, are useful in proving whether or not her covenant of consecration is from the heart: those who have merely made a lip covenant will be sifted out, manifested, separated from the true ones whom the Lord designates his jewels, and his sons; and whom he purposes to make joint-heirs in the Kingdom with his well-beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. It is for this reason that this call and election or selection of the Church takes place during this present age, while evil is still permitted to reign in the world, and while the majority of mankind are under the blinding influences of the great Adversary, not yet bound.--Rev. 20:1-3.

As our Lord explained, the darkness of sin and error is in direct antagonism with the light of truth, and consequently when his people lift up the light,-- "let their light so shine as to glorify the Father in heaven" who has called them "out of darkness into his

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marvelous light,"--the effect upon the darkened world will be to awaken opposition, antagonism; because the effect of the light is to make manifest the evils of darkness which would not otherwise appear; and thus to disturb and make uncomfortable those in sympathy with darkness. Consequently those who love darkness, those who love evil, those who love sin, in its varied forms, hate the light, neither come to the light; but either publicly or secretly oppose the children of the light, the enlightened ones, the light-bearers. And even those who have gotten out of the extreme darkness of moral pollution into a kind of twilight of civilized reformation and moral reform cannot endure the clear, searching light of the true Gospel; they much prefer a measure of darkness.--John 3:20.

It is in consequence of this conflict between light and darkness that our Lord suffered at the hands of those who professed to be children of the light, children of God, and who had at least a little light. Our Lord was not maltreated by the Roman governor and the Roman soldiers of their own volition, for they were so totally blind as not to appreciate anything of the light which he displayed. His persecutors were those who had some light but who hated the brilliancy of the great light which shone upon them. Similarly, all the way down through this Gospel age those who have been burning and shining lights in the world have been hated and persecuted, largely, we might say chiefly, almost exclusively, by those who had some light, but whose light was darkness in comparison to the great light of the holy spirit shining in and through the Lord's fully consecrated ones. Thus was fulfilled our Lord's testimony, "If they have hated me, they

will also hate you." "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Lord's followers in the present time are called upon to suffer persecution for righteousness' sake, not because it is either reasonable or proper, but because the Lord, wishing to test, prove and polish his people, is willing to permit the evil, opposing influences to prosper, and persecute and oppose his "members," and thus to serve his cause in the preparation of his elect for a future work of service. Thus the persecutors of the "Body," like the persecutors of the Head, are cooperating to fulfil the divine plan in a manner they little suspect.-- John 15:18; 1 John 3:13; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thes. 2:14,15; 2 Thes. 3:4; John 16:2; Acts 14:22.

We might multiply the Scriptural declarations that this is the call of the Church in the present time--to let the light shine and thus to attract persecution, and to endure the persecution for righteousness' sake, and to be rightly exercised by it in patience, brotherly-kindness, pity and love--toward the persecutors and toward all men.

As it was the mission of our Lord not to rule the world, nor to judge the world, at his first advent, but to lay down his life for the world, so it is the mission of the Church, the Body of Christ, not to rule the world, nor to judge the world now, but to "lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16.) Our Lord declares, "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) The Son of Man came to lay down his life for the world. (John 6:51; 10:15.) "My Kingdom is not of this world." (John 18:36.) And so the Apostle assures us that we are not to reign now, but on the contrary to suffer with Christ, if we would reign with him by and by: that we are not to judge the world now, but on the contrary to judge nothing before the time; but he assures us that in God's due time the saints shall judge the world, and that to the world's blessing. He assures us that it is our mission "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the Church." (Col. 1:24.) He tells us, along the same line, that while we are to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, our service is to be specially to the household of faith. Our efforts that will go toward the world of mankind in general are to be only the side-glances, as it were, the overflow of our efforts expended chiefly and directly upon the members of the body of Christ, the consecrated Church, --expended in building one another up in the most holy faith.--Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 4:5,6; 6:2; Gal. 6:10.

(d) Quite a goodly number of Protestant Christians theoretically take more or less of the position which we have herein stated, especially our Presbyterian and Baptist friends. But when we come to consider God's object in thus specially dealing with the Church we find that very few indeed even of these have any comprehension of it. The general thought

is that God merely wishes to elect the Church, and that he is thoroughly indifferent as respects the poor world, that for six thousand years has lain in a lost condition under the blinding influence of Satan, and deaf to the Gospel call. Here we must differ, for we find the Scriptures to teach a much more wonderful, much more just, much more benevolent, much more grand plan of God than that.

We find it to teach that this Church, now being selected or elected, is merely a first-fruit unto God of his creatures, and that a great work is to be done for the world of mankind, through this Church, after she shall have been glorified and associated with her Lord in the heavenly Kingdom. The same Scriptures which tell us that now the world is blind and deaf, and that Satan, "the prince of this world," "the god of this age," has directly and indirectly had much to do with this blindness, tell us also that the time is to come when all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears

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shall be unstopped, and when Satan, the great deceiver, shall be bound, restrained, permitted no longer to deceive humanity. These Scriptures assure us that the Church now being selected and proved, and thus made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, is to be God's channel of blessing to mankind; and that Head and Body, Jesus and his Church, shall constitute in the full sense the promised "Seed of Abraham," or Spiritual Israel, through which all mankind shall be blessed with a knowledge of God's true character, and with an opportunity for gaining eternal life in the Millennial judgment day which God has appointed. --Gal. 3:16,29.

One of the particular trials with many of the Lord's people is that they are frequently upbraided by less consecrated, worldly-wise professors, with the suggestion that they are selfish, and neglectful of the true work of the Church, because they do not join with others in the various political, social, financial and moral reforms of the world; or in "revival" efforts to drive and scare the worldly, whom God has not "called" by the truth along Scriptural lines. If we are obliged to endure something on this score for Christ's sake, it is only a part of "the sufferings of Christ" in which we should rejoice; realizing that the Lord knows our faithfulness to him and to his Word. We may realize, also, that in due time others shall see the divine plan actually fulfilling, as we are now permitted to see it by the eye of faith; and they will then see that the "wise virgins" were wise in that they hearkened to and obeyed the Lord's Word, and made themselves ready for the future work of service for the world.--Rev. 19:7; Eph. 4:12.

We can sympathize with those who see nothing;

we can sympathize also with those who see a little, and who strive toward moral and other reforms, and in various ways for the sectarian prosperity rather than for the upbuilding of the saints, the Church of the living God, whose names are written in heaven. We should have patience, particularly with those who give evidence that they are laboring in harmony with their convictions. If they are engaging in good works of any kind they deserve our sympathy, and undoubtedly will obtain a blessing as a result. The true Church is laboring not merely for a blessing, but for the blessing --"the prize of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14.) Let all, then, who see the prize, and who see the light of God's glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, be faithful to the Father's terms, conditions, calling, service. Let all such give attention to this ministry (service) which we have received, and faint not; be not discouraged, whether men hear or whether they forbear, whether they think ill of us or whether they speak ill of us; let us remember that our report at the end of the trial is to be rendered to the Lord himself, when he is making up his jewels. Let us remember that the first condition of acceptance with him is loyal obedience to his Word, the

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evidence of love for him and faith in him. (2 Cor. 10:5,6.) Let us remember, also, that the second qualification he will look for in us is love for the brethren, readiness to be, to do and to suffer, to die on behalf of those who are really, truly consecrated children of God, seeking to walk in his ways.

All thus following in the ministry (the service) which we have received of God, find themselves to-day walking in the footsteps of Jesus and the apostles, and find the various predictions made respecting the entire Church applicable to its living members also, as, for instance, following our text, the Apostle declares of this class who have this ministry:--

"We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants [the Church's servants, not the world's servants] for Jesus' sake....

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, yet not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus [always representing Christ and his sacrifice as dying members of his body] that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live [as new creatures in Christ Jesus] are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake [our consecration at the beginning was a consecration to death; it changes not; it will always so continue, until we have finished our course and have actually died], that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."--

Verses 5-11.

In other words, the truly consecrated Church of Christ, all "whose names are written in heaven," are his representative members upon the earth, throughout this Gospel age. The Head suffered eighteen hundred years ago, the members of the Body have since been suffering with him, and have been learning the same lessons of obedience to the divine will, and trust and confidence in the divine wisdom, and love for the brethren; and by and by the entire Body of Christ will have finished its course, and will have been received by the Head into his glory, and then will begin God's great work for the world, for which all his dealings with the Church are but the divine preparation. In the Church the Lord will give to the world Kings, to rule in righteousness,--in love, instead of in selfishness and pride; but the Church will also be Priests, to bless with the knowledge of the truth, and with help out of the mire of sin, back to full harmony with God, all who desire to return to him. It will then be true, "Thou hast made us unto our God Kings and Priests: and we shall reign on the earth."--Rev. 5:10.

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NOW HIS WILL IS MINE--1899.

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"Once I sought a blessing; now I've found my Lord;  
Once I sought for feeling: now I've found his Word;  
Once his gifts I wanted: now the Giver own;  
Once I sought flesh-healing: now himself alone.

"Once it was my working: his it hence shall be;  
Once I tried to use him: now he uses me;  
Once the power I wanted: now the mighty One;  
Once for self I labored: now for Christ alone.

"Once 'twas painful trying: now 'tis restful trust;  
Once a half-salvation: now the uttermost;  
Once 'twas ceaseless holding: now he holds me fast;  
Once 'twas constant drifting: now my anchor's cast.

"Once 'twas busy planning: now 'tis trustful prayer;  
Once 'twas anxious caring: now he has the care;  
Once 'twas what I wanted: now what Jesus says;  
Once 'twas constant asking: now 'tis ceaseless praise.

"Once I hoped in Jesus: now I know he's mine;  
Once my lamps were dying: now they brightly shine;  
Once for death I waited: now his presence hail,  
And my hopes are anchored safe within the veil."

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QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

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WILL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HEAVEN AND EARTH  
BE RE-ESTABLISHED?

Question.--If the saints and the Lord are not visible to the world during the Millennium, how will their loved friends, who did not have the same hope of union in Christ, have fellowship with them?

Answer.--In the present life the "saints" themselves do the most of the loving: true, they also are beloved to some extent by some who are not now the Lord's people, and not called to the high calling, but the loving of the latter is usually more of the selfish order of love, and less fervent.

The saints will be as able to love their kindred and the world in general as at present, and, we might say, more able, because of their perfected powers. Now, their chiefest love is for the Lord himself, their secondary love is for the household of faith, and as they love not the world, neither the things of the world, their love for the worldly is more of a benevolent hope--a wish for the welfare of mankind in general, and in particular of all to whom they are attached by earthly ties. The Prophet, speaking for these, declares: "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness;" with our perfected powers received in resurrection change we will comprehend the lengths and breadths, the heights and depths of the divine provision for our friends and for all men;--secured by God's love and wisdom, through the great sacrifice of atonement finished at Calvary.

As for the worldly: they will have little difficulty generally in assuaging their sorrows. This is evident from the fact that partings caused by death so soon lose their poignancy. The chief cause of much of the grief manifested at the present time is the fear and uncertainty with which the majority of people regard the future of the present life, and of that which is to come. The latter fear is born of misinterpretations of Scripture, inspired by false human traditions. When they shall come to know that their erstwhile friends, the saints, are forever with the Lord, they will be as satisfied as we now are satisfied to think of our Lord Jesus, our best Friend, as being highly exalted and on a different plane of being from ourselves.

As for the method of communication between the glorified Church and the world undergoing the disciplines of the restitution: we need not suppose that much communication and personal attention and care for our loved ones of earth will be necessary. What would be good for one person would generally be good for all, and our Heavenly Father's plan is so abundant in its provisions

for the blessing of all that, understanding something of his character and plan, we already realize that he proposes to do for all mankind exceedingly abundantly more than all that we could have thought or asked for those we love most. So when the world has that which divine provision will make general during the Millennial age, there will be very little necessity, if any, for special interventions, or special communications by the saints to those for whom they now feel so solicitous.

And yet we can readily suppose that God has made some arrangement by which, eventually, there will be a communication between the (restored) earthly and the heavenly planes of being, as there was in Eden before sin entered,--when God either personally or through a representative talked with our first parents. Just how this communication will be established we are not informed, nor need it specially concern us, since we know that our Father is abundantly wise, and abundantly able, and abundantly loving, to do for his creatures all things needful to the comfort and happiness of those who love and obey him.

#### ARE GREAT SACRIFICES AND SUFFERINGS NECESSARY TO JOINT-HEIRSHIP?

Question.--What about the majority of Christians who, believing in Christ, are not yet called upon to make any great sacrifices for his sake?

Answer.--For a general answer, we refer to the article in our issue of May 1st, 1895, entitled, "Perfect Through Suffering." Everyone who seeks to walk carefully and honestly before the Lord, in the footsteps of Jesus, will surely find that it will cause something of self-sacrifice--the sacrifice of human aims or plans or preferences.

But this question may be viewed in another light

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The questioner may mean to lay stress upon the word "great," and may have in mind the endurance of persecutions such as came upon our Lord, the apostles, and others of the faithful in the past--imprisonments, "cruel mockings and scourgings," and violent deaths. Our answer, from this standpoint, is that it is not for us to supervise the trials and difficulties which may beset us. It is for us to make an unreserved consecration of ourselves to the Lord, and then leave to him the decision of how great shall be our trials and besetments--how great our sacrifices in following his leadings. The Lord may see that some need special trials, more than others, and those things which to some would be great trials and imply great sacrifices, to others, because of greater love to the Lord and his cause, and greater zeal for service, the sacrifice might seem to be, as the Apostle expresses it of his own, "light afflictions, which are but

for a moment, and which are working out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If we are doing our part faithfully--if we are faithful to the Lord and to his people, and to his truth, to the best of our knowledge and ability, God will surely oversee our affairs so that we shall have just the right experiences to develop us; just the proper opportunities of sacrifice which his wisdom sees to be appropriate and needful to us. He will leave no true son without chastisements, disciplines, neither will he forsake us in our trials, but will stand with us, so that we shall not be tempted above that we are able, having provided a way of escape.

In this enlightened day physical scourgings are not sanctioned by the world, nevertheless we may be called on to endure patiently and uncomplainingly "cruel mockings" of the tongue;--we may be imprisoned in the sense of being ostracized for the truth's sake;--as our Lord foretold, "They shall cast you out of the synagogue and separate you from their company: yea, whosoever shall kill you shall think that he doeth God service." Many to-day are thus imprisoned and killed in influence for the truth's sake. Thus the Apostle also declared, "I die daily." And all who will constitute the elect overcoming Church, must die thus. In the symbolic language of Revelation this is termed beheading, and we are assured that all who will share the First Resurrection and the Kingdom will have been thus symbolically beheaded.--Rev. 20:4.

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FOLLOW THE LAMB WHITHERSOEVER HE GOETH.

--JAN. 8.--JOHN 1:35-46.--

"Behold the Lamb of God!"--John 1:36.

JOHN'S mission was to bear witness to Jesus. He knew him well from his infancy to manhood, and as cousins according to the flesh they doubtless had discussed various features of the divine law, and they were of one heart as respects service to the Lord. Neither could begin a public service until thirty years of age, since this was one feature of the Law, but John being six months the elder was thus privileged to begin his ministry six months in advance of our Lord. During that brief period he had evidently made a considerable commotion as a reformer, his message being, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."--Matt. 3:2.

The Jews had been waiting for the Kingdom for centuries; they realized that the Kingdom given to Saul, David, Solomon, etc., had not fulfilled the promises, and that a Kingdom in a larger sense, and under a greater than David and a greater than Solomon, was to



be expected. The Apostle assures us that this thought was continually before their minds. (Acts 26:7.) John's mission to that nation, therefore, was the announcement that the fulfilment of the divine promise was at hand, and that in order to be ready to receive the divine favor they should repent of sin and turn to the Lord. And as our Lord declared subsequently, if that nation had believed John and acted upon that belief they would have been ready to receive the Lord himself, and to have fulfilled to them all the gracious promises of the Kingdom to which they were heirs, as the natural seed of Abraham.

It was because they were not in a right condition of heart that they were not fit to have the Kingdom, the promise of which, therefore, was taken from them, to be given to a new nation, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood--which God has been selecting from amongst all peoples, kindreds and tongues, during this Gospel age, and which will now soon be completed, and be glorified, and begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as the Spiritual Seed of Abraham.-- Gal. 3:29.

John did not preach to the people that they should believe on God, for he was addressing only the believing, covenanted people, Israel. His message was respecting things already known to them, and believed by them. He therefore exhorted merely repentance from their sins, and a return to their proper and covenanted relationship with God. In all this John's ministry is very different from the ministry of the apostles to the Gentiles, who not only had been without knowledge respecting God's purposes, Kingdom, etc., but also without faith or any ground of hope. As the Apostle declares, they were "without God, and having no hope in the world." Nor did any hope reach them, nor was the Gospel message sent to them, until after Israel's rejection in consequence of their rejection of Messiah.

"The baptism of John" was to the Jews only, and was wholly different from the baptism appointed for

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those called from amongst the Gentiles. The Apostle makes this fact very clear in Acts 19:2-5. John's baptism was not a baptism into any thing, or into any body, whereas our baptism is a baptism into Christ, as members of his body. John's baptism merely signified the putting away of sins, and thus to return to a condition of holiness and consecration already enjoyed. Our baptism signifies something very different from this--not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the submission of our consciences, our wills, fully and unreservedly to the will of Christ, that we should henceforth have no will of our own, but be guided entirely by the will of our Head, as members of his Body. Thus becoming

dead to self-will we are reckoned alive as "new creatures," "members in particular" of the Body of Christ.--1 Cor. 12:27.

The Jews as a nation had already been baptized into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2), the mediator of their Law Covenant, and to the Jew, Christ took the place of Moses, and his New Covenant took the place of the Law Covenant, so that any Jew, already baptized into Moses, and already thus in covenant relationship, would, by merely accepting Christ as the Messiah, the antitype of Moses, and the Mediator of the New Covenant (and, in harmony with his faith, repenting of sin), be adopted, reckoned as a member in the Body of Christ, instead of as a member of the Body of Moses. All others, however, who were of the Gentiles, and not of the natural seed of Abraham, are not to come first to Moses and the Law, and then through John's baptism into Christ, but are to ignore the Law Covenant entirely, and avail themselves of the better covenant direct, and hence they are instructed to be baptized into Christ, by being immersed into his death, and to testify to this consecration outwardly, to their fellows and before God, by an immersion in water.\*--Rom. 6:3,4.

We have no record that John the Baptist was ever immersed himself--nor would we need to have, since he evidently was a godly man, living up, to the best of his ability, to the standard of the Law Covenant. His baptism, as he himself explained, was only for sinners, --those who had been living knowingly in violation of the principles of righteousness. Hence also John objected at first to the baptism of Jesus, assuring him that he was not a sinner, and that if Jesus needed to be baptized, much more appropriate would it be that John himself should be immersed. "I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me?" But our Lord, while admitting the force of John's argument that a baptism of repentance and remission of sins would not be appropriate in his own case, requested him to proceed with the matter anyway, intimating that he had some other reason why it was right. The fact is that our Lord's baptism was the beginning of the Christian baptism: it symbolized the consecration which he had just made (at the first hour of manhood), his full consecration to do the Father's will, even unto death;--the giving up of his human life, a sacrifice on behalf of the world. It required all of the Lord's three and a half years' ministry to complete what was there symbolized, and he said just before his crucifixion, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." (Luke 12:50.) And so with the baptism of consecration, "death," into which we are to be baptized: as members of his Body we are to become living sacrifices, dead to the world, alive toward God, as is particularly set forth in Rom. 6:3-5.

It was in connection with our Redeemer's symbolical baptism in water, which promptly followed his consecration

to death at thirty years of age, and was the public declaration of that devotion unto death, that the Heavenly Father bore witness to his adoption to the divine nature. We are not informed that any but John witnessed the descent of the holy spirit upon him, but John bore witness that he saw the spirit thus descend, and that the Lord, in sending him to preach, had previously testified that this was to be the sign by which he would surely know the Messiah (John 1:32,33). It was in harmony with this that he declared to his disciples subsequently, as Jesus passed by, "Behold the Lamb of God." John doubtless knew and expected that some of his disciples would cease cooperation with him, to follow the Messiah. Indeed he declared to them, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

The two who heard John's testimony promptly followed Jesus with a view to getting as close to the fountain head of the truth as possible; and all must admit

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\*Our friends of the Disciple denomination wholly misunderstand this matter, and are practising John's baptism of repentance and remission of sins, instead of the baptism of Christ. They should note the Apostle's words and correct this matter, as he instructed others to do in his day--by a fresh baptism.-- Acts 19:2-5.

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the propriety of their course. How this suggests to us our own proper course, to follow the Lord as nearly as possible, and to seek as much as possible to come into fellowship and communion with him. And the noble, self-ignoring course of John appeals to all who have the right mind upon the subject--that similarly all of the Lord's servants should call attention to the Lord and not to themselves. Let us each bend our energies to pointing men to the Lamb of God, and not to self-seeking. And let us remember that following Jesus, in the best sense, means that we walk in his paths, strive to do as nearly as we are able what he would do to-day, taking our lessons from what he did and said personally, and from the instructions which he has left for us, through the apostles, respecting the path of fellowship in his sufferings, the path to glory and joint-heirship

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in his Kingdom. The Lord is found of all those who diligently seek him from right motives, and such are by and by to be granted full joint-heirship with him. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."--John 15:14.

The evangelist furnishes us the name of only one of the two who first heard John the Baptist speak of

Jesus. It is possible that the Apostle John himself was the other one, and that through modesty he refrained from bringing himself into special prominence, in his own records, just as, in another place, he speaks of himself as "that disciple whom Jesus loved, who leaned on his bosom." Modesty is a gem, wherever found, one of the graces of the spirit, which all of the Lord's consecrated ones should seek to have largely developed and well polished.

The narrative of how Andrew found Peter and how Philip found Nathaniel (supposed to be the disciple called Bartholomew) is interesting, and shows that true devotion to the Lord is unselfish--desires to confer upon others all blessings and truths enjoyed. This is still the spirit of true discipleship: having found the great Light of the world, and having seen thereby something of the lengths and breadths, heights and depths of the divine character and plan, we are and should be anxious to serve the same favor to others. And this desire to serve the Lord, the truth and our fellows should be so strong in us as to make it impossible for us to withhold the good tidings from any selfish consideration. Indeed, if we have the spirit of the Lord, which is the spirit of the truth, the spirit of true discipleship, we will be so anxious to make known the good tidings as to be willing to "lay down our lives for the brethren,"--to help them "out of darkness into his marvelous light."

It will be noticed that these who found the Lord were full of faith respecting the Messiah, of whom Moses wrote in the first five books of the Old Testament, called the Law, and of whom all the prophets also wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the reputed son of Joseph. They had not yet learned that Joseph was not the father of Jesus.

Nathaniel's answer, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" reminds us of the prejudice which now exists respecting certain quarters from which good things may or may not be expected. For instance, some of our English friends tell us that when the present truth was first brought to their attention they were inclined to disregard it, and consider it unworthy of special investigation, simply because it came from America; for tho they might expect many useful things to come from America, the product of "Yankee skill," they had no expectation whatever that any new light upon the Scriptures would come from America, where they seemed to imagine everyone given over to cheating and muck-raking for wealth, and that consequently it would be one of the last places in Christendom in which the Lord would cause the harvest light to shine out for the blessing of his people. This undoubtedly has hindered many foreigners from investigating the truths which are now meat in due season for the household of faith. America is Nazareth with them, and they expect nothing of the kind from this quarter.

Similarly, others will inquire, What denomination

backs up these religious teachings? and when told that no sect or party has endorsed these things, and that not many great, or rich, or wise, have in any sense of the word become interested, they say to themselves, if not to others, What could you expect?--Can any good come out of Nazareth? Nevertheless, all who are of the Nathaniel type of character, "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile," will find sufficient reason for investigating, and on investigation will find sufficient proofs to satisfy them,--"as nothing else would do." Our answer to all such objections should be that of Philip, "Come and see,"--test, examine, prove for yourself.

Another lesson here, that should prove of value, is found in the words respecting Andrew, "He first findeth his own brother Simon." So all who find the Lord, and who are anxious to make him known to others, should similarly begin in their own households, with their own brothers and sisters, father or mother, or husband or wife. There is frequently a diffidence about mentioning the Lord and the truth to those who are of the family and home circle which is surely much out of place. True love for our kin should lead us to make an extra and special effort on their behalf.

In conclusion let us remember that those who follow the Lamb through evil as well as through good report--those who follow his teachings and example--are they who ultimately shall be with him and share his glory as members of his elect Zion.--Rev. 14:4.

\* \* \*

"Caesar's friends? or friends of Jesus?  
Solemn question for to-day!  
Friends of Caesar! Friends of Jesus!  
Take your sides without delay.  
If ye pause for man's forbidding,  
Caesar's friendship ye secure;  
If ye do the Father's bidding,  
Scorn, reproach, ye shall endure.

"Free from Caesar, friends of Jesus!  
Stand in phalanx! never fear!  
Love, severely tried, increases;  
Courage yet! the Lord is near!  
Onward still, his name confessing,  
Weaving crowns to grace his brow;  
Lo! his hands are full of blessing,  
Lifted for your succor now."

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WATER TURNED INTO WINE.

--JAN. 15.--JOHN 2:1-11.--

"And his disciples believed on him."--John 2:11.

THE third day from the calling of Nathaniel to discipleship found our Lord and his disciples invited guests at a wedding, in Cana. Cana was near to Nazareth, for many years the home of Jesus, and quite probably those who invited him, his mother and his disciples were either relatives or old acquaintances. This is implied in the fact that Jesus' mother knew when the wine was exhausted; a matter which rather implied scarcity of provision, and which would be carefully kept from the knowledge of outsiders who might be guests. It is also implied in the statement that Mary gave commands to the servants to do whatsoever Jesus should direct, a matter which would have been quite improper in an ordinary guest.

The fact that our Lord was willing to attend the wedding implies a sympathy with the marriage institution. Indeed, we know that God himself instituted marriage as between our first parents, and we have the Apostle Paul's inspired explanation that this union between man and woman which God approved was designed to be an illustration of the union between Christ, the heavenly Bridegroom, and the Church, his Bride. --Eph. 5:22-28.

Jesus' mother seems to have had some intimation of his power to help the friends out of the difficulty and ignominy of a feast in progress and the supplies run short: and yet she could not have known of the Lord's power to turn water into wine from any previous experiences during the thirty years of her acquaintance with him; for, contrary to all apocryphal stories, the boy Jesus did no miracles, nor did the young man Jesus do miracles, but, as here declared, the miracle at Cana was the beginning of his miracles. Nevertheless, his mother had considerable confidence of some sort, else she would not have instructed the servants to give heed to anything Jesus might command.

Our Lord's reply to his mother has rather the appearance of rudeness, but we may be sure that this was not the case. The sense of the Lord's words would seem to be to call his mother's attention to the fact that while he had, in every sense of the word, been a dutiful son for thirty years, he had now reached the period of manhood, according to the Law, and was now devoted, consecrated, to the Lord. No doubt he and his mother had talked the matter over previously, and he was thus reminding her that his life being consecrated now she could not expect him to be under her direction to the same extent as formerly--the time had fully come that he must now be about his Father's business.

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The six water-pots mentioned as for purifying were

probably intended for the use of the guests for washing their hands. Washing of hands had become an important part of the Jewish observance, and "unless they washed off they ate not." (Mark 7:3.) We nowhere find these washings and waterpots referred to in the Law. They were, therefore, probably part of the tradition of the elders, to which our Lord so frequently referred as taking the place of the Law of God. These water-pots had handles, permitting them to be tipped over, so as to pour water upon the hands of those who washed, and the six held about one hundred and twenty gallons of water for the supply of the many guests. Our Lord made use of these water-pots in the performance of his miracle for two reasons: (1) Such vessels were probably rarely or never used for wine, so there could be no misunderstanding of his miracle. (2) He probably intended a symbolical lesson in their use; for we are expressly told that this miracle was a manifestation of his glory beforehand (vs. 11)--a manifestation of his work in the Kingdom. Water is a symbol of truth, both as respects its cleansing properties and also as respects its refreshment, one of the necessities of life, from which thought we have the expression, "water of life." Thus during the Millennial age the servants of the truth will fill up all of mankind who are suitable vessels, and all thus filled with the truth, and brought into harmony with it, under our Lord's direction, shall then, by supernatural power, find the truth transformed in them into the wine of joy--a joy superior to any other joy, as the wine in the miracle was superior to any other wine.

It cannot be claimed for our Lord Jesus that he was a total abstainer from alcoholic liquors, and the claim made by some that the word "wine" here mentioned signifies a non-intoxicating wine, is not true. It can, however, be said on the other side of the question, that many of the wines of that vicinity and time contained much less alcohol than do many of the wines of to-day. It may also be noted that changes have taken place in humanity, so that the inhabitants, particularly of the temperate zone, are more highly nervous than those of any other time. Hence, with stronger wines and with weaker nerves, there is a largely increased tendency to excess and to injury. It is our opinion, therefore, that if the Lord were living where we do, and now, he would be a total abstainer from alcoholic liquors, not only on his own account, but also as an example for others.

This miracle was evidently not only designed to establish faith in our Lord by his disciples, and amongst the people in the vicinity of his home, but also, as already suggested, was particularly designed to manifest in advance the still future glory of Messiah's great work.

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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.

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TEMPT NOT THY NEIGHBOR.

A brother recently mailed us a letter containing a donation to  
the Tract Fund in money. The letter was lost in transit--a person  
of weak conscience in the Post Office (by practice possessed  
of a keen sense of touch) recognized the nature of the contents  
and stole it. The brother wrote subsequently that, as the money  
was for the Lord's cause, he thought it proper to trust it to his  
care. This was a mistake of the head, not of the heart. We are  
to do all in our power before expecting divine interpositions.



We are not to tempt Providence thus. See a Scriptural illustration of this principle in Matthew 4:6,7.

On the other hand, the command is that we shall love our neighbor as ourselves, and lay no snare for his weaknesses. Covetousness, we know, is a general weakness amongst men; and we should so far as possible guard and shield them from temptations of this and of every kind: besides, this is only business prudence. P.O. Money Orders or Express and Bank drafts are safe, and we advise that these be used.

During the month of December we received 3997 letters and cards and have reason to think that about one hundred sent to us were stolen by someone tempted to dishonesty by reason of the touch of a bank bill or the bulky appearance of the letters.

By the way, last month's mail was our largest--exceeding any previous month in the history of this work.

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#### BALTIMORE'S ONE-DAY CONVENTION.

There will be a gathering of the friends of present truth residing in Baltimore, Md., and vicinity on Sunday, Jan. 22nd, at 10.30 A.M. and 2.30 P.M., at Dushane Post Hall, corner Baltimore Street and Postoffice Avenue, Baltimore.

The Editor of ZION'S WATCH TOWER (D.V.) will address the meetings. Brethren and Sisters will be cordially welcomed, also their friends to whom they have been making known the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love of God. A noon luncheon will be provided.

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#### THE DATE FOR THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

In the interest of readers in "the uttermost parts of the earth" (Australia, South Africa, Russia, China, Japan, etc.,) we give, thus early, notice that this year the date fixed by Roman Catholics and Episcopalians agrees with the true date for the anniversary of our Lord's death, as reckoned by the old Jewish method. Consequently, Thursday evening, March 30th, after six P.M. (the beginning of the 14th of Nisan), will be the proper time for the celebration of the Memorial Supper. The next day ("Good Friday") will be the anniversary of our Lord's death, and the Jewish Passover week should begin that evening--in exact accord with the record in the Gospels. But for contrariness' sake, to keep away from the Christian date, or for some other reason unknown, the Jews this year depart from their proper mode of reckoning and begin the Passover week on March 26th which would really be the 9th of Nisan instead of the 15th, if properly reckoned.

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VIEW FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

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BLINDNESS BEGINNING TO TURN FROM ISRAEL.

A REMARKABLE lecture was recently delivered before the "Council of Jewish Women" at Philadelphia by Rabbi K. Kohler--on "The New Testament in the Light of Judaism." It illustrates the new attitude of Jewish thought toward Christianity, and indicates the first stage of fleshly Israel's recovery from the gross blindness of the past eighteen centuries.-- Rom. 9:31-33; 11:7,10-12,20,25-29.

The following extracts were the Doctor's most favorable references to Jesus and Christianity, and might be misleading, did we not explain that, while making these remarkable admissions and concessions to Christianity, he attempted to offset them and neutralize their effect by claiming that our Lord's most forceful teachings were merely a fresh presentation of the sentiments and sometimes the very phraseology of the Jewish teachers who preceded him. His criticisms of the Epistles of Peter, James and John are in similar strain. These, he claims, were all Jews and merely restated or rehashed Jewish doctrines and precepts. All the seriously anti-Jewish and anti-Law teachings are charged to the Apostle Paul.

The Doctor fails to see the point. Biblical Christianity makes no claim of being in antagonism to ancient Judaism. Quite to the contrary, it claims that "holy men of old [Jews] spoke and wrote as they were moved by the holy spirit." It claims, however, that the real force and the true meaning of those inspired words were not appreciated, nor intended of God to be understood until, the antitypical sin-offering having been presented by "the Lamb of God," the holy spirit was granted to all consecrated believers. For instance, we heartily assent that the Golden Rule in "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"--was delivered to Israel as a part of the Law sixteen centuries before our Lord repeated it (Lev. 19:18); and our Lord quoted it, not as an original saying of his own, but as a teaching of the Law. (Matt. 19:19.) What we claim is that those words were never understood, never comprehended, until our Lord Jesus, the great Teacher sent of God and illuminated with the holy spirit, expounded them by his example and teachings. More than this, we claim that the Jews and the majority of professed Christians do not understand these words now;--that only such as have consecrated themselves to the Lord and have received the holy spirit are able to "comprehend the lengths and breadths and heights and depths" of this

and other "deep things" of God's teaching. If any man will do my Father's will, he shall understand the teaching.--John 7:17; 1 Cor. 2:7-12.

Respecting the writings of the Apostle Paul, not only the Jews, but all others, in proportion as they come into close accord with both the letter and the spirit of the divine Word, will find in them the keys of the mystery of God--supplied to the Church by the Lord that they may be "all taught of God"--"that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work;"--revelings of "the whole counsel of God;" capable of elaboration under the spirit's guidance, but quite "sufficient" for such elaboration.--John 6:45; 2 Tim. 3:17; Acts 20:27.

The extracts referred to follow:--

"There was a time when you and I were taught not even to mention the name of Jesus the Christ in order not to transgress the Law, which says: 'Ye shall not mention the name of other gods, neither shall it be heard upon your mouth.' Nor need we wonder at that. It was little short of idolatry which a paganized church made herself guilty of in her worship of Jesus and his mother. Christianity has advanced since toward the light of Jewish monotheism. It is Jesus as a Man, as

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an ideal of humanity, that is now held up for adoration and emulation by Christian theology, in spite of the Trinitarian dogma. Both art and literature portray him no longer as a God, but as a wondrously gifted teacher and healer of men, who appeals to our human sympathy. Nay, more. His Apollo face gave way to the historically more correct type of the Jews. He is recognized as one of Israel's great sons, whatever the restriction in the flesh may amount to. Should we then, as Jews, not also gladly and proudly own him as one of our noblest of men and accord to him the proper position in our own history?...Ought we, notwithstanding all difficulties, not learn to appreciate the exquisite sayings and teachings contained in the New Testament, if only from a literary and humanitarian point of view?

"There is but one answer: Find the right focus, and the colors and shades of the object in view will lead you in the direction of the one light. We need no clear sky to see the sun rise on the Eastern horizon. The clouds reveal rather than hide the dawn of light. So do the myths or legends that gather round a popular hero disclose rather than obscure the existence of a personality impressing the people with its charm and power. It must not needs be exact historical truth what we are told concerning Jesus. Those beautiful and strange tales about the things that happened around

the Lake of Galilee show that there was some spiritual daybreak in that dark corner of Judea of which official Judaism had not taken sufficient cognizance, that a movement was inaugurated then which did not receive its impulse or its sanction from the regular authorities or schools. It matters not whether we accord to Jesus the claim and title of Messiah or Christ or not, whether the people and authorities of Judea did or not, or whether he himself assumed it at any moment of his life....

"It is one of the most interesting historical and psychological studies of Judaism to follow this movement through all its phases from the moment the cry of the coming--"the Kingdom of Heaven"--was heard on the shore of the Jordan among the humble Baptists until the fishermen of Galilee carried the good tidings or good spell (gospel) as the watchword of a new faith triumphantly out into the wide world. All the written and unwritten records point in unison to John the Baptist as the starter of the movement, the prophet-like preacher of righteousness whom, according to Josephus (Ant. xviii, 52), Herod the Tetrarch feared for the mighty power he wielded upon the multitudes following him to the Jordan to purify themselves of their sins. Of course Josephus, writing for the Romans, took heed not to allude to that Messianic message of his--the cry: "Repent, for the Kingdom of God is near;" that is to say, the kingdom of Rome, the satanic power of Edom, has reached its end. All New Testament reports agree that Jesus was among those

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who received the consecration of baptism from that popular saint of the time. Still, between the simple Messianic hope and promise of John the Baptist, with his fasts and ablutions and prayers and the bewildering faith of the Christians that the Messiah has appeared, and, tho crucified, has risen from the tomb, now to sit at the right hand of God as his son--there yawns a wide chasm which no ordinary reasoning of either Jew or Gentile could easily bridge over....

"Beneath the thick crust of the second century hatred which endeavored to malign the Jew in order to court the favor of Roman rulers, we can still read the true story of Jesus' tragic end from his own lips as he, on the road to Jerusalem, announces his fate to his disciples, saying that "He shall be delivered to the high priests and the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death and deliver him to the heathen to mock and to scourge and to crucify." (Mark 10:33; Matt. 20:18; Luke 18:32.) The priestly Sadducees and not the people and their Pharisean leaders were interested in having Jesus brought to trial for his open attack on the priestly misrule, and from fear lest the Romans might hold them responsible, as Caiaphas, the high

priest, actually says in the older record in John's gospel.

"All the anti-Jewish utterances are the work of the Pauline school....Every word uttered by Jesus was the ring of Jewish sentiment and betrays the originality of a religious genius....

"We cannot close our eyes to the one great fact that this man Jesus must have made a wonderful impression upon his hearers by the thousand and one sweet and beautiful things he said, no matter by whom they were uttered before or after, or else he could not have been made the author of all these a generation or two after he lived....

"Suffice it to say that his greatness consisted in belonging to no school. He was a man of the people. ...'Christianity,' says Leroy Beaulieu, 'produced saints; Judaism, sages.' I say: Christianity gave us Sisters of Mercy; Judaism, noble types of wives and mothers."

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That Doctor Kohler is not merely giving expression to views of his own far in advance of the general trend of Jewish thought, is evidenced by the following comments on his lecture by the editor of The Jewish Exponent:--

"Dr. Berkowitz, in discussing the lecture, said that it could not have been delivered in other times, because the lecturer's life would have been imperiled thereby. There was another reason why this was true; which is, that there would have been no one to listen to it. Christians, of course, would have objected, and to the Jews the New Testament was forbidden fruit. Our ancestors regarded the reading of the New Testament books as next door to apostasy itself. That Jewish mothers should wish to be acquainted with its contents would have been unheard-of perversity.

"All this has largely changed. The Jews have gone out into the world; they meet Christians on equal terms. The dread of the Christian religion has disappeared with the effort to forcibly convert Jews. They have gone out into the full tide of Christianity, and behold, they have not been swept away. On the contrary the love of their own faith has grown. It is an evidence of strength that leads the Jew to wish to ascertain the true character of that literature so intimately connected with his own and yet so widely different; so world-embracing in its influence; so potent in its effects upon his neighbors, so freighted with consequences for himself. When before would rabbis have been found who would have invited their people, and

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especially the women, under any circumstances or conditions, to read the New Testament? Yet here it was

done. It need hardly be said, however, that such reading must be conducted with care, and, if possible, under conditions which, if not favorable to Judaism, will be at least not hostile thereto....

"But, however the Bible is read, with whatever preconceptions, it is extremely difficult to escape the pervasive influence of its purity, its strength, its exaltation both of Deity and humanity, its powerful plea for righteousness. Its influence in the Christian world is incalculable; not so much in making Jews of Christians, as in refining and purifying Christianity of its dross and bringing it nearer to the pure stock whence it sprung. In every reformation of Christianity the testament of Israel has been the starting point and the great foundation for the religious enfranchisement. The trend of enlightened Christianity of to-day is towards a return to Israel's simple and pure religious conceptions. Not a little of the antagonism felt towards the Jews and their scriptures is due to the fears of Christian reactionaries, who would crush every attempt to elevate and purify the church under the opprobrious epithet, 'It's Jewish.'

"What, then, would be the effect of the study of the Christian Testament in the light of the Jewish scriptures as indicated by Dr. K. Kohler? Certainly it will have an important influence. It will not only disclose beauties of its own, but also open Jewish eyes to treasures in their own scriptures, to which, with the indifference of inherited spiritual wealth, they have been hitherto oblivious."

\* \* \*

This means the opening of the New Testament to the Jews--not willingly upon the part of the Rabbis, but by force of circumstances, the growth of intelligence and the fact that the best people of the world have drawn their inspirations from it. It was this same force of circumstances that compelled the Roman Catholic Council of Baltimore some years ago to grant Roman Catholics residing in the United States liberty to own and to read the Bible.

Surely this removal of the Jewish ban from the New Testament will mean the reading of it by the purest and best of that long blinded people. And the reading of the New Testament will mean the gradual turning away of their blindness. So far as our observation goes, nearly all the Jews who have ever gotten their eyes opened to see Christ as Messiah have been converted by reading the New Testament and not by tracts or other treatises--altho other writings are as necessary to them as to others as helps in understanding the divine plan of the ages, after they have accepted Jesus as Messiah.

Is not this the beginning of the fulfilment of our Lord's words, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not

my words, hath one that judgeth him [Compare John 5:45-47]:  
the word that I have spoken [directly and  
through the apostles] the same shall judge him in the  
last day." (John 12:48.) Are we not entering the  
Millennial period--"the last day?"--and are not the  
blinded ones getting ready for the eye-salve? They  
are still proud, and their words are still stout against  
Jesus as the Messiah--it is merely their race-pride perhaps  
which now leads them to acknowledge the great  
Teacher's greatness, because he was a Jew. But in  
the great time of trouble near at hand, which will include  
"Jacob's trouble" as well as "Babylon's" fall,  
the honest and humble ones will look unto him with  
the eye of faith and shall see him thus, and then will  
be fulfilled Zechariah 12:10.

#### ZIONISM MAKING PROGRESS.

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Zionist Jews--those Jews who are identified with  
the recent movement for a resettlement of Palestine by  
the Jews--report that the cause so near their hearts is  
not languishing. Their leader, Doctor Herzl, has recently  
had interviews with the Sultan and the Pope,  
and with four prominent compatriots was present at  
Jerusalem at the time Emperor William visited that city  
and were kindly received by him. Dr. Herzl is reticent  
respecting the amount of encouragement given by these  
potentates; but as one result of his visit to the Sultan  
he bears a badge of the Order of Mejidie, which would  
seem to imply that the man and his plea were not disdained.  
That the door of Palestine will open to the  
Jew, and that shortly, we have no question; altho it  
has been effectually closed for now nearly seven years  
--no Jew being permitted to enter it except as a visitor  
whose period of stay is expressly defined and limited.

Respecting Doctor Herzl's efforts, etc., Rabbi S.  
Wise, Hon. Secy. Amer. Fed. Zionists, writes:--

"The exact tenor of the Kaiser's courteous reply,  
spoken in the presence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
Von Bulow, has not been disclosed. Enough is  
known, however, to enable us to predicate that the  
Kaiser is prepared to vouchsafe his benevolent sanction  
to the Zionist movement, calculated as it is to foster  
the agricultural life of Palestine under the acknowledged  
sovereignty of the Sultan. The members of the  
deputation have since returned to Vienna and have  
practically made this declaration, altho they have  
couched their interviews, which appeared in the official  
organ of the movement, in terms of becoming  
reserve....

"We do not ask that the holy places be committed  
to our exclusive keeping; let these remain, as they are  
now, in the hands of those who guard and cherish  
them. Surely the Christian world requires no assurance

on our part that every spot which Christians hold in reverence will be precious to us. The Jew shall not cease to honor true devotion to an ideal--least of all in the land which his past has hallowed for all time.

"Not in vain do we place our reliance upon Kaiser and Sultan. Help and deliverance have come to us before through the grace of 'stranger kings.' Two

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historic instances recur to us of Israel marvelously saved and prospered with the help of reigning kings. In the year 538 of the pre-Christian era Cyrus took Babylon and graciously permitted the Babylonian exiles to return to their fatherland.

"The momentous results which followed from the reestablishment of the Judean Commonwealth are part of--and the largest part of--the world's history. A tree of two great branches flourished in time on the soil which the former captives by the rivers of Babylon began to cultivate with all the ardor and assiduity of their nature--two branches, the one the religion of Ezra and the latest prophets, of Hillel and the rabbis, the other, the faith of Jesus, later become the Christianity of his countless followers. And all this came to pass, as Dr. Max Nordau has aptly pointed out, owing to the hardihood of a handful of the earliest Zionists, who, availing themselves of the rights accorded them by Cyrus, the noble, chose to give up their peaceful and secure residence in Babylon in order to live and labor in Zion and rebuild its waste places. The second exile is soon to end. In the words of Josephine Lazarus, 'once planted again upon native soil, "taking root downward," as Isaiah has it, who can tell what "upward flower and fruit" the immortal branch may bear--what new birth of the spirit, the undying spirit of Israel may give to the world?'

"Another King there was, greater even than Cyrus, who, like him, befriended the Jews. In the course of his victorious marches Alexander visited Jerusalem in the year 332. Legends in great number have been woven around this visit, picturing the manner in which this youthful Prince, who had come to scoff, remained to pray. Whether it be true, as rabbinic tale has it, that Alexander was so deeply impressed by the visage of the venerable High Priest Jaddua and the priestly train that he was moved to bow in humility and adoration before these whom he had set out to conquer, and that he even caused sacrifices to be offered up to the Most High in the Temple of Jerusalem, we cannot tell. We do know, however, that this Macedonian ruler, far from despoiling and violating the shrine, as had been and continued to be the custom of earlier and later invading princes, openly befriended the Jews and treated them with the utmost consideration and generosity."



"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."

--JAN. 22.--JOHN 3:1-16.--

NICODEMUS displayed both a noble and an ignoble disposition in coming to the Master.

(1) He had a nobility of mind which was able to discern distinctly that Jesus was not an impostor, but a Teacher from God; and it was his desire for the truth which led him to seek it from the lips of one of no reputation amongst the worldly wise. (2) But he displayed the ignoble element of his disposition by coming privately, secretly, at night, whereas he should have acted up to his convictions fairly, and have come forward to inquire of the Lord, if not in public, at least in daylight and openly. There are a good many Christians of the Nicodemus type. They have a standing in the nominal church, and a great respect for the "honor of one another," so general in it.

Some to-day, for instance, see something of the light of present truth, and are convinced that the meat in due season now spread before the household of faith is from God's Word, and not human speculations. They will confess this much to themselves, and privately to some of the servants of present truth, and privately, secretly, so far as their denominations are concerned, they procure and read MILLENNIAL DAWN and ZION'S WATCH TOWER--perhaps subscribing in the name of some one else, "for fear of the Jews." But altho this is an ignoble course, the Lord does not refuse them the opportunity they seek and, like Nicodemus, they are made acquainted with the truth. But, as we hear little more respecting Nicodemus, so the Nicodemus class of to-day very rarely develop into true overcoming disciples, servants of the truth. Fear is good, caution is good, when properly exercised; but when these are allowed to have any voice in dictating our course after we have found the truth, their influence can only be evil, enslaving, demeaning. Those who are thus bound by love of human approbation, and fear of the consequences of a public, bold advocacy of the Lord and his truth, are not worthy of him, as he declared: "He that is ashamed of me and my word, of him will I also be ashamed." We urge that all who find in themselves the Nicodemus disposition seek immediately to overcome it, and to get their hearts so filled with the love of God and the love of his truth that it will make them free from bondage to sectarianism, and to fear of man, which bringeth a snare. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Whom the Son makes free is free indeed.--1 John 4:18; John 8:36.

Evidently but a small portion of this conference between Jesus and Nicodemus is furnished us--merely the leading features. Evidently the questions which Nicodemus asked related to the Kingdom of God, which John the Baptist had declared was at hand, and which our Lord also declared to be at the door. As a teacher amongst the Jews, Nicodemus was surely imbued with this hope of Israel--that in due time God would send Messiah, who would establish the long-promised Kingdom of Israel--superior to all the kingdoms of the world, and over them all,--to bless all the families of the earth, according to the promise made to Abraham. Not only might we infer that his question pertained to the Kingdom, but our Lord's answer plainly indicates this, for he began at once to talk about the promised Kingdom.

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The great Teacher's explanation respecting the Kingdom-class must have struck Nicodemus as totally new. He had been accustomed to think of all the nation of Israel as being the children of the Kingdom, or, if not the entire nation, at least their most intelligent classes, the scribes, the Doctors of the Law, and their holiness class, the Pharisees. But here was a new thought--none would be in this Kingdom, sharers of its glory and of its work of blessing all the families of the earth, except they should be "born again." Nay more, the intimation was that the Kingdom would be an invisible Kingdom, that none could even see it, except he would be born again. Failing to grasp the thought of begetting and birth to a higher nature, Nicodemus was puzzled to think how a person who had reached maturity could ever be born again according to the flesh: and of course he was right in considering that an impossibility. The new birth is not to

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be a birth according to the flesh: as our Lord explains, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The Master's teaching was not that we should be born again of the flesh, but quite to the contrary, that those who would constitute the Kingdom class must be begotten and born of the spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of the truth.

There is a great lesson here for many pre-millennialists, who vainly think, as Nicodemus, that the Kingdom of God will be a fleshly Kingdom, that the Kingdom-class will have what they are pleased to call "glorified flesh." Our Master's plain declarations thoroughly set aside all such expectations: and to us, as well as Nicodemus, he positively declares that none shall enter into the Kingdom except he be born again.

The statement that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," is so unqualifiedly plain, and proves so emphatically that the spirit-begotten and spirit-born class, the "little flock," which will inherit the Kingdom, will not be flesh-beings in any sense of the word, but spirit beings, that there is no room for controversy or for misunderstanding on the part of those who have no will of their own in the matter, but are seeking to be taught of the Lord.

All recognize the meaning of the expression, "born of the flesh," that it does not mean merely begotten of the flesh, but a birth into independent flesh-life as a result of the begetting and gestation. And precisely the same thought should attach to the expression, "born of the spirit." It does not relate merely to the begetting of the spirit through the word of truth, which occurs during the present life, and at the time of our consecration to the Lord, but on the contrary, it implies and includes a subsequent birth to perfected spirit conditions--the entrance of the spirit existence in the resurrection--the result of the present begetting of the truth, and the present period of gestation or development as "new creatures in Christ Jesus."

That this is the proper Scriptural thought to be attached to this word, "born," is manifest from other Scriptures which declare that our Lord Jesus was, at his resurrection, "the first-born from the dead," and "the first-born amongst many brethren." (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:18.) Our Lord was begotten of the spirit at the time of his baptism, when the holy spirit came upon him. The new nature there begun, in the flesh, developed during the three and a half years of his ministry in proportion as the flesh, the human nature, died. Thus, as the Apostle expresses it, he was dying daily, as the man Christ Jesus, but was being renewed day by day in the inner man, the new creature, the spirit being.--2 Cor. 4:16.

The complete death of the flesh, with our Lord, was the victory of his new nature, which refused to draw back, refused to save the flesh, which had already been devoted to sacrifice, as our sin-offering. It was because of this faithfulness of our Lord, as the "new creature," in offering up his flesh as a sin-offering, that the Heavenly Father was pleased to resurrect the "new creature"--not the flesh, which was man's ransom price. The resurrection of the "new creature" in a spirit body, glorious, powerful, immortal (1 Cor. 15:42-44), was our Lord's birth of the spirit, as the first-born amongst many brethren. As the Head of the Kingdom was thus begotten of the spirit, and in due time born of the spirit, so likewise must it be with those who will be members of that Kingdom. "Flesh and blood [human nature]" shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,--"cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 15:50.) Hence, we who would be

heirs of the Kingdom must all be changed--made like our spirit-born Head, ere we can either see the Kingdom or share its glorious work as members.

Not only did our Lord clearly state the matter thus, but he gave an illustration which is in absolute harmony with this understanding of his words, but meaningless from any other standpoint. He declared that as the wind comes and goes, but is invisible to men, so will all those be who will be members of the Kingdom, born again. Our Lord illustrated this teaching in his own person, after his resurrection. Altho he was present forty days, he appeared only a few times to the disciples, in all apparently not more than seven, and even on these occasions he appeared in a form of flesh (as angels did during previous dispensations) and communed with them for a few moments, and then vanished out of their sight. As the wind he came, as the wind he went, and they knew not whither. Invisible

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as the wind, he was present with them, taking note of all their affairs, during all that forty days, and merely appearing at the proper times to give the needed counsel and directions and assistance. So it will be with all of the Kingdom class, when they are born of the spirit; they will be able to go and come and attend to all the various functions of the Kingdom, without being visible to mankind. They will be as the wind. It will be within their province to appear as men, as the angels have done, if there be necessity for so appearing, altho we incline to think that there will be no such necessity, as God has already provided an earthly class as the representatives of the Kingdom amongst men.--Heb. 11:39,40.

We are in no sense denying or objecting to the ordinary thought, that a work of grace takes place in the heart of the Christian when he is adopted into the divine family as a son and prospective heir of God, a "new creature in Christ Jesus:" on the contrary, we are affirming this, as an absolute necessity to a share in the Kingdom, for whoever is not begotten of the spirit surely can never hope to be born of the spirit. We are merely making the proper distinctions between the begetting of the spirit, which is merely the beginning of the work of grace in us, and the birth of the spirit, which is the completion of that work, when we shall be like the Lord and see him as he is, and behold and share his glory.

We cannot wonder that Nicodemus was astonished when we remember that the holy spirit was not yet given, and that Nicodemus was not a member of the house of sons, but merely of the house of servants. We wonder far more that some who have been begotten of the spirit do not readily comprehend this spiritual teaching: for it is their privilege to understand "the

deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10.) As our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" we may, with much greater point, say to Christians who cavil to-day, Are you begotten of the spirit, and taught of God, and yet ignorant of these things?

Our Lord does not even class this teaching as being specially spiritual, but rather earthly, such as the natural man, in proper harmony with God, should be able to understand and appreciate. He says, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Those whose minds are on so gross an earthly plane that they cannot appreciate so simple a matter as this are not in the condition to be inducted into the deeper things of God. They are at most but "babes," and have need to be fed with milk instead of with strong meat. (Heb. 5:12.) Nicodemus, unable (or perhaps we should say, because of prejudice, unwilling) to believe this message concerning the spiritual character of the Kingdom, was unprepared for any further teaching along that line--he was unwilling to receive the truth, the only message which Christ had to give, altho he was already persuaded that our Lord was a teacher sent from God. Hence our Lord says, "Ye receive not our witness."

Our Lord's statement, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," deserves further consideration. We have seen what he meant by the expression, "born of the spirit," viz., born from the dead by the power of God as a spirit being, but what is signified by the expression, "born of water?" It is claimed by a very large number indeed that this refers to water baptism, and that those who are not born out of water will not have part in the Lord's Kingdom. We are willing to admit the truth of this only to a limited extent. We hold that the Lord refers to the true baptism, which is merely symbolized by immersion in water, and the rising out of it. We hold that the real thought is the burial of the old nature, and the rising of the new nature to newness of life, and that this is accomplished through consecration of the will to the will of the Lord, a burial or immersion of the human will to death, as the necessary step to be taken in connection with the obtaining of the holy spirit, the holy mind, the mind of Christ, the spirit of Christ, which is the beginning in our flesh of the new creature, which must be developed and made ready if it would be born of the spirit in the resurrection.

This same thought seems to be in the mind of the Apostle, when he refers to the bath of a new birth, the making new by the holy spirit. (Tit. 3:5.) Cornelius evidently had this bath of the new birth, the making new by the holy spirit, before his baptism in water (which was a symbol of it, and an outward confession

to others). And so it is, we believe, with some Christian people to-day. They have had the bath of the new birth, and the making new by the holy spirit, and are thus genuinely new creatures in Christ Jesus, without having had the symbolical immersion in water,-- because, being mistaught as a result of the errors of the Dark Ages, they do not discern the beauty of the symbolic baptism in water, and the Scriptural command thereto; and this ignorance and disobedience God evidently has passed over, with many of us, for years. But when, in the abundance of his grace, a knowledge of his will on this subject ultimately reaches us, there should not be one moment's hesitation--there will not be one moment's hesitation, if the will of the flesh is entirely dead, and the mind of Christ fully in control.

The oldest Greek MSS. (the Sinaitic and Vatican) omit the last four words of verse 13, with evident propriety,

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for, altho our Lord is now in heaven, he was not in heaven at the time he addressed Nicodemus. The words in this verse were intended to remind Nicodemus that he need not look to fellow-human creatures for information respecting heavenly things, as they could not know them, any more than himself; but incidentally this verse teaches us something more, viz., that no man has ever been in heaven except our Lord Jesus. This not only agrees with the statement of Peter, on the day of Pentecost, "David is not ascended into the heavens," but it also agrees with the Apostle Paul's statement, "Flesh and blood [human nature] cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."--1 Cor. 15:50; Acts 2:34.

The only ground for hope that any of the fallen race of Adam will ever know anything about the heavenly condition is then stated by our Lord to depend upon his own justifying work on man's behalf. He must be lifted up as the great sin-offering, the antitype of the brazen serpent which Moses lifted up in the wilderness, the antidote for the bites of the fiery serpents, which represented sin.

Our Lord's reference to the results gives the thought of the wideness of God's mercy, and of his provision for our race. Altho now this mercy is confined to the elect Church, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call," it is in due time to be world-wide, and a blessing to "whosoever believeth on him." Then the grand Gospel provision is briefly stated in few words--God's sympathetic love for the world, his provision of the ransom in the person of his Son, and that provision made not merely for an elect class, but for the world of mankind in general--whosoever believeth.

Another thought: God's provision is not to rescue any from the flames of hell, from an eternity of torment; but to rescue them from death, from destruction,

from perishing, from nonentity, and to grant to  
whosoever is willing to have it, on the conditions of the  
New Covenant,--Everlasting Life.

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#### THE WATER OF LIFE.

--JAN. 29.--JOHN 4:5-15.--

"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall  
give him shall never thirst."--John 4:14.

EARLY in his ministry, in sending forth the Apostles  
to preach the Kingdom of God at hand, our  
Lord had instructed them that they were not to go  
amongst Gentiles nor to Samaritan cities to deliver their  
message. It was easy to avoid the Gentiles, because  
comparatively few of them resided in Palestine: the  
governors of the land, Herod and Pilate, the centurions,  
and the soldiers, were probably the only Gentiles they  
were likely to meet, and these they were to seek to  
avoid, as the message of the Kingdom was not for them.  
But it was a difficult matter to avoid the Samaritans,  
for the district called Samaria lay between Judea proper  
and Galilee, and was necessarily passed through repeatedly  
by our Lord and his chosen twelve.

The Samaritans, it will be remembered, were not  
Jews, altho they were worshipers of God, and had come  
largely under the influence of the teachings of the Law.  
They were descendants of those mixed peoples which  
were placed in possession of the land of Israel, as colonists,  
when the ten tribes were taken captive and colonized  
amongst the Gentiles. As the Israelites in a foreign  
land took up with the religious customs of those lands  
to a large extent, so these Gentiles, transported to Palestine,  
took up with many of the religious customs, etc.,  
related thereto. But their belief in God, and the fact  
that they worshiped the true God, did not constitute  
them proper subjects for the Gospel call, which was confined  
exclusively to the natural seed of Abraham up to  
the time of our Lord's rejection;--then their house was  
left desolate, and the middle wall of partition between  
them and other nations was broken down, and the Gospel  
of the Kingdom was sent forth, without restraint,  
to whosoever would have the ears to hear it.

It was while our Lord and his disciples were passing  
through this Samaritan territory, between Galilee  
and Judea, that, coming to one of the cities of Samaria,  
he was refused entertainment, and James and John inquired,  
Wilt thou that we command fire from heaven  
to destroy them? and Jesus refused, saying that his  
mission was one of salvation and not of destruction.  
The Samaritans did not refuse entertainment because

they were opposed to the Lord and his teachings, for, quite to the contrary, they apparently would have been very willing to receive him, recognizing him as a teacher sent from God, who performed many wonderful works. Their refusal to entertain him was because he did not purpose to stop with them to teach them, perform miracles in their midst, heal their sick, etc., but was merely passing through in his journey to perform his miracles upon and teach the Israelites.

It was while our Lord and the Apostles were similarly passing through Samaria again, that, weary with his journey, and probably not wishing to appear unkind, nor to be similarly repulsed again, Jesus waited beside Jacob's well, and rested, while the Apostles went to the city of Sychar to replenish their stock of provisions. And in the interim a woman of Samaria met Jesus at the well, when she came to draw water. It was evidently with less of a desire for the water for his own comfort, than from a desire to teach the woman, that

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our Lord asked her for a drink. While he could not invite her, or any other Samaritan, to a place in the Kingdom, which was the central thought of his Gospel, he could nevertheless appropriately give her some food for thought, which later on might do her good, and prepare her to have a hearing ear against the time when the Gospel call would be unrestricted--for whosoever hath an ear to hear.

The completeness of separation between the Jews and Samaritans, as of different classes or castes, is clearly shown in the woman's surprised reply to our Lord's request. Not that the Samaritans were averse to having fellowship with the Jews, but that the Jews, imbued with the thought that the promises of God were to the seed of Abraham exclusively, would "have no dealings with the Samaritans," would ask no favors of them, and apparently would grant few favors to them. While our Lord was bound to act in line with that truth, that the seed of Abraham, and the promises made to it, were distinct and separate from all others, yet he was not influenced by feelings of pride, caste, etc., and in this instance he pursued a policy in harmony with the Apostle's admonition--that good be done to all men as we have opportunity,--preferably to the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10.) For the time our Lord was not in a position to speak to Israelites, to do them good, and he was prompt to embrace the opportunity to do what good he could to even a Samaritan woman. And therein is a lesson for all of his followers to-day: we should serve the household of faith wherever possible, but when this is impossible, and an opportunity offers, we should seek to do some good to others--to speak words which may help them by and by, if not in the present time or age.

Not entering into a dispute with the woman, nor



into explanations of the distinction between the seed of Abraham and others, our Lord proceeds to talk of something much more important to her, and in this also sets a good example to all those who would speak his truth in his name, in his way, wisely. He told the woman of a more important matter,--that he alone could give the water of life. While physically he was weary, and needed the natural water, yet in a higher sense the woman was the weary one, heavy-laden with sin, who needed the invigorating water of life of which the Lord himself is the fountain.

The thought in the expression, "living waters," is that of a fresh spring in contrast with stagnant waters, which become contaminated and foul. The water which our Lord proposed to give the woman was certainly not the holy spirit, for this is distinctly termed the gift of the Father, and is symbolized by the anointing oil. The water of life is the truth, which both cleanses and refreshes. A portion of this our Lord could properly give to the Samaritan woman, if she were hungering and thirsting after it, and he did give her a drink of it.

The woman classed herself as a daughter of Jacob, and thus implied a hope on the part of Samaritans that notwithstanding their rejection by the Jews from heritage in the Abrahamic covenant, they nevertheless trusted in some blessing. And indeed there was a mixture of Israelitish stock amongst the Samaritans, for certain poor Israelites had not been deported to foreign countries, and these, ignoring the strictness of the Abrahamic covenant, had intermarried with the Gentiles and in general had abandoned circumcision and the other conditions of Judaism, and hence could be no longer recognized by the Lord as in any respect different from the other nations,--Gentiles. So, too, it was with many of the Israelites who were deported: they mixed and mingled with the Gentiles, abandoned the sign of circumcision in the flesh, and in general all the provisions of the Lord's covenant: these, in every sense of the word, ceased to be Israelites, and had no further hopes under that covenant,--being as much strangers and foreigners to the promises of the Covenant as any Gentiles.

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Thus, from our Lord's treatment of the Samaritans we can readily see the baselessness of the expectation of some, who style themselves "Anglo-Israelites," and claim to be the descendants of these deported Israelites who abandoned circumcision and all the features of the Law Covenant, given to Israel. Those who lean on such a prop lean upon a broken reed. The only Israelites who can hope for any mercy and blessing at the Lord's hands, under the Law Covenant, and as the natural seed of Abraham, are those who have a sufficiency of Abrahamic faith to at least maintain the outward signs in the flesh, and an outward attempt at obedience

to their Law Covenant. As for the others, who become part and parcel of the Gentiles, they have neither part nor lot any longer with Israel: they may, however, through Christ, come under the still more beneficent terms of the New Covenant, sealed with his precious blood. But the blessings of the two covenants cannot be mixed, and, as the Apostle Paul distinctly declares, whoever hopes for justification under the Law Covenant and under the New Covenant is making a great mistake, and is falling between them both. Whosoever he be, Christ profiteth him nothing; he is yet in his sins, and not an heir, neither as a member of the natural seed, nor yet as a member of the spiritual seed.--Gal. 5:2.

The woman's slowness of comprehension is striking, and yet so it is with all of us when first we came in contact with spiritual truths. Our Lord's patience as a teacher, with a congregation of only one, and that one a woman of a low caste, should be a lesson to all of his followers who seek to distribute to others a taste of the water of life.

Our Lord's explanation of the peculiarities of the

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water of life of which he is the fountain for mankind is very beautiful, but its force can be appreciated only by those who have received this blessing at his hands --only by those to whom he has communicated his truth and who have been sanctified by that truth, set apart as his disciples--as fountains of truth for others.

Errors, falsities, may satisfy temporarily the cravings of those who have never yet tasted of the truth, the water of life; but nothing can give permanent, lasting satisfaction except the truth: and our Lord himself, the Word, the Logos, the message of the Father, full of grace and truth, is the embodiment and representative of this satisfying water of life. Whoever receives the Lord as his Redeemer and Leader and Teacher, through whom all the gracious promises of God are to be fulfilled; --whoever receives this water of life, receives a satisfying portion, and will never be found looking for truth in other directions. It will satisfy his longings as nothing else could do, and so abundantly as to leave no appetite for strange waters.

The saints, the Body of Christ, the prospective Bride, are the only ones who receive this water of life in its fullest and completest sense during this Gospel age; and of them it is true that this water is always fresh, springing up within them everlastingly. And when these many well-springs shall in God's due time be brought together in the Kingdom, then will be fulfilled through them unitedly, as the Body of Christ, the prediction, "Out of thy belly shall flow rivers of living water."--John 7:38.

This river of water of life does not flow at the present time: it cannot flow out to the "nations" until

all the "little flock" as well-springs shall be brought together in the Kingdom. And thus it is pictured in Revelation, that after the throne, the Kingdom, is established, from under it shall flow the river of water of life, clear as crystal. Truth will then flow as a mighty river, refreshing and blessing the whole earth, and causing the trees of promise to bring forth "leaves for the healing of the nations [the heathen]." And then shall be fulfilled a promise of the Scriptures which is misapplied by many to the present time: "The spirit and the Bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. 22:17.) The Bride cannot say, Come, in this sense of the word, until she becomes the Bride, when the marriage of the Lamb is come, and the new age has fully opened. Neither can she invite the whole world to come to the river of truth until she herself has been glorified, and until that river of life flows. While looking forward to that glorious day, when grace shall be free to every creature, we nevertheless rejoice in the election of the present time, in which the Gospel call is intended not for everyone, but for only those who have ears to hear, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call."--Acts 2:39.

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FAITH REWARDED--"THY SON LIVETH."

--FEB. 5--JOHN 4:43-54.--

"Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house."--John 4:53.

TWO days were spent preaching to the woman of Samaria and completing the journey into Galilee, etc., ere the nobleman's son was healed. Galilee was a part of the territory which formerly belonged to the ten-tribe Kingdom of Israel, and the district called Samaria lay between Galilee and Judea. It will be noticed that, while our Lord journeyed hither and thither, he never went outside the territory occupied by the twelve tribes. It will be remembered that Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, not far from Jerusalem, and that his parents, shortly after his birth, fled into Egypt, under the Lord's direction, before the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem: and on the return from Egypt, instead of returning to Bethlehem, they located at Nazareth in Galilee,--"that he might be called a Nazarene," and that thus odium for eccentricity might attach to the Lord, as an offset to his wonderful personality and the "gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth" --"such as never man spake" before or since;--to the

intent that only the Israelites indeed might hear in the true sense of the word, and be healed and accepted as sons of God under the New Covenant of grace.

It will be remembered that our Lord's disciples were known as "Galileans," and himself as the "Galilean." And recognizing the truth expressed in the proverb, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country," our Lord did not begin his ministry in Galilee, but in Judea. It seems probable that after his first miracle at Cana he, with his disciples, went to Judea, and was present there at the time of the Feast of the Passover, and at that time performed many notable miracles, on account of which his fame went abroad, not only throughout Judea, but also into his own country, Galilee: for it was the custom for large numbers of the devout Jews to go to Jerusalem to the Feast of the Passover every year, and these from Galilee had brought back word of the works and fame of their countryman. Hence our Lord was now returning to his own country, a great prophet, because of the fame first gained elsewhere.

Our Lord's experience was no exception to the general rule: it is a trait of human nature to lightly esteem things with which we are intimately acquainted. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." When one sees

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a mountain at a distance, its outlines stand out with boldness and symmetry, but when he comes close to it the beauty and grandeur are apt to be marred, in his estimation, because his eye rests upon the smaller fragments and the silt and soil and tangle of common weeds. Nevertheless, the view and thought from a greater distance are the truer ones, the proper ones. So, too, some of earth's characters who are highly esteemed to-day were much less esteemed by those who came most closely in contact with them in their day: not that the present view is the false one, but because those who were closest to them, and who were affected by the commonalities of daily life, failed to rightly appreciate them. This is often true in the households and family connections of the world's notables. The little things of life are seen, and the character is measured by these, rather than by its larger features, which alone are seen in the distance. For instance, Julius Caesar, who by all the world is acknowledged to have been a great man, was lightly esteemed by Cassius, his intimate friend and servant, who once saved his life from drowning, and who was with him when sick, and who measured him by the weaknesses of these occasions and others, rather than by the largeness and greatness exhibited at other times. He, for instance, called attention to the fact that "when Caesar was sick he cried, 'Give me some drink, Titanius,' like a sick girl." His closeness hindered him from seeing the greatness which others, less

close, could readily discern; and thus he says,--

"It doth amaze me,  
A man of such a feeble temper should  
So get the start of the majestic world,  
And bear the palm alone."

So it was with Jesus: "Neither did his brethren believe on him" (which expression in olden times signified kinsfolk, including cousins as well as brothers). They knew Mary, his mother, they knew his brethren, they knew Joseph, the husband of Mary, and apparently they knew also that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but was conceived before Joseph had taken Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:18); for this was the evident purport of

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their sneer at him, when contending with him they said, "We be not born of fornication." (John 8:41.) They knew him as the young man who probably had worked as a carpenter in their midst for years. They knew that his home city, Nazareth, had never been reputed for its wealth or its learning--its sons were not the bright ones of the Jewish firmament. It was correspondingly difficult for them to realize that this one whom they knew so well could be the great one of whom Moses and the prophets did write.

Hence we find that in his own city, altho they said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and this miraculous power?" they also said, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary, and do not his brothers James, and Joses, Simon and Judas, and all his sisters, live with us?...And they stumbled at him. ...And he did not perform many miracles there because of their unbelief."--Matt. 13:54-58.

But, returning to our lesson: The news that the great Galilean Prophet and healer of the sick had returned to his home, soon reached Capernaum, which was only about twenty miles distant from Cana; and a person of social and political rank in that city was amongst the first to manifest his faith, and to receive a corresponding blessing; for we are told that the healing of his son was the "second miracle" performed by our Lord after his return from Judea.

It was doubtless by way of testing his faith that our Lord seemed at first to object to his petition, saying, in effect, You do not have faith in me as the Messiah; it is my signs and wonders that you are interested in. The troubled and affectionate father showed by his answer that his interest was not merely one of curiosity and desire to see a miracle performed: his was a true faith in Christ's power, which, he did not question, was able to save his son from death--"Sir, come down ere my son die." His true faith had its reward, and yet he was required to exercise it still further, and to believe that his request was answered, notwithstanding he could have no proof of this for several hours. His faith

again stood the test, and he went his way, ascertaining later that the child had begun to mend at the very time our Lord had granted the request. And his faith brought him a still greater blessing than the physical recovery of his son's health, for it made him and his family "believers" in the Messiah, and thus brought them within reach of the great privilege of sonship and joint-heirship mentioned in John 1:12.

Our Lord's object in this and other healing miracles was evidently not merely the recovery of the sick from pain and disease. Had this been his object, he might have commanded the healing of all the sick in one breath: and more than this, he might have remedied the evil conditions which tended to promote sickness. For instance, the nobleman's son had a fever, and quite probably there were many others in Capernaum similarly afflicted, as the city was built near low, marshy ground, and is noted in history as a malarial locality, unhealthy. The Lord did not do this work of general healing, but this is no evidence of a lack of sympathy, nor of a lack of appreciation of what would be necessary to make that and other portions of the earth healthful, any more than it could be considered a lack of interest in mankind on God's part which had permitted malarial and other evil conditions and resulting sickness and disease throughout the whole world for thousands of years. On the contrary, God foreknew the sickness, and designed to permit the evil conditions, as accompaniments

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of the sentence against man as a sinner--as accessories and concomitants to his death sentence.

The time will come when he who redeemed mankind, and who redeemed also from the curse the earth, "the purchased possession" (Eph. 1:14), will cleanse it from all evil, baneful influences--and there shall be no more death, nor pain, nor sickness, nor crying, for the former things shall have passed away, and all things will be made new. And the period of the renewing of the earth and of mankind, for whose use and blessing it was intended, is Scripturally termed, "the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." And this restitution the Apostle Peter, speaking under the inspiration of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost, tells us will begin at the second coming of our Lord Jesus.--Acts 3:19-23.

At his first advent our Lord's mission was specifically to give himself as the world's ransom price, and secondarily to furnish evidences which to a certain class would be a ground for faith in him, in his teachings, and in his future work--to the intent that such "believers" of the present age might come to the Father, receive the adoption of sons, and the promises; and through faith and obedience unto self-sacrifice might

become joint-heirs with Messiah in his great future work of restitution--in the work of blessing all families of the earth.

Bringing the matter down to an individual one, we find that the nobleman received the blessing through faith, and that his faith was attested by his conduct. And so must it be with all who would be acceptable to God, and who would win the great prize set before us in the Gospel. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith:" but "Faith without works is dead." Faith cannot live without manifesting itself. All of our services to the Lord are valuable chiefly as proofs of our faith in his promises.--1 John 5:4; Jas. 2:26; Heb. 11:6.

A story is told of how a private soldier in Napoleon's army exercised faith in his word, and as a result of acting thereon received promotion to a captaincy. Napoleon was reviewing his army in the city of Paris, when the bridle dropped from his hand and the horse started on a gallop. A soldier leaped from the ranks, caught the horse and returned the bridle to Napoleon. The Emperor thanked him, saying, "Much obliged, captain." The soldier immediately responded, "Of what regiment, sir?" And the Emperor, pleased with his quickness and confidence, answered, "Of the Guards." The soldier immediately took his place amongst the officers, altho his clothes were those of a private and notwithstanding the fact that they ridiculed his faith. He believed the Emperor's words, and acted on that belief, and was a captain. So our Lord has given unto us "exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature;" and those who will attain the exceeding great and precious things which God has in reservation for them who love him will be the ones who take him at his word, become "children of the light," and "walk in the light." Such, ultimately, shall be members of the great Sun of Righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams, to refresh and bless the world by scattering the darkness of sin, superstition, evil.--Matt. 13:43.

But let us guard ourselves against the error of some who have great faith in themselves, and consider this a proof that they are of the "elect." Only the soldier who served as well as believed Napoleon was rewarded. Each should therefore ask himself--Are the exceeding great and precious promises to me? Are there conditions attached to those promises? and if so, am I living up to the conditions so as to make sure of my calling and election?

To answer his question so as to have "full assurance of faith," he should search the promises--their significance and conditions, and then act accordingly, if he would win the prize: remembering our Lord's word's, "Not every one that saith, Lord! Lord! shall enter the Kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father in heaven."

ENCOURAGEMENT TO FAITHFULNESS AND PROGRESS.

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"Rouse up, O heart, brooding o'er earth's broken friendships,  
Mistakes and griefs. Retrospection truly brings  
Relief at times; but to scan too oft life's pages  
Brings weariness, sapping strength thou need'st for progress.  
The past forget! As a mighty vessel swings  
To right her course, while the skies, serene and fogless,  
And calming seas, tell no tale of tempests' rages,  
So thou, O heart, whilst her pennant Mercy flings,  
Retrieve the past; and returning calm and sun  
Shall not condemn--only speed thine onward journey,  
    Forgiving and forgiv'n.

"Fret not, O heart!--not because of evil-doers.  
They soon shall cease. When their cup of crime is full  
To overflow, then the great and just Avenger,  
With girded loins, sword unsheathed and wrath enkindled,  
Will tread the press, and his blood-stained hand annul  
Their ill kept lease, and shall vanquish all the tinsel  
Recruits of sin. But, O heart, heed thy great danger.  
Besetting sins, and fair vanities which lull  
To fancied safety the listless, thou must fear,  
Lest that dread sword thee mark also for its victim,  
    A reprobate despised.

"Awake, O heart! Hurriedly from drowsy slumbers  
Arise, arise! Night is sleeping time, not day.  
Press nobly on, heeding not the faithless numbers!  
The mid-day glare tempts to quietness and shadow;  
Suave lethargy, friendly false, persuades the way  
Is soon retraced from the cooling brook and meadow;  
But he who turns from the strife and glare, and cumbers  
Himself with pleasure's delights, will ne'er essay  
The path again; and yet thou, O pilgrim weary,  
Foregoing rest, shalt be strengthened with all might:  
Thy faith, sore tried, shall develop eagles' sight,  
And penetrate, past environment, to glory  
Unspeakable, where in Heaven's effulgent light,  
    Thy glorious Leader dwells."      --Unknown.

WHO IS JUDGING THE CHURCH?

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--A brother who gave a lesson here recently spoke on the judgment-- and claimed that Christ had been judging the Church during this age. A number of the friends took exception to this. For my own part, I have studied all the texts on this subject, and I cannot find one text that favors the idea that Christ is the Judge of the church, unless it be Rom. 14:10;--but that is a wrong translation. Tischendorf, Rotherham, Revised Version and all the best authorities render it "the judgment seat of God."

In 2 Cor. 5:10, the Church is said to appear before the judgment seat of Christ--not to be judged, but to receive, etc.

All krisis (judgment) has been given into the hands of the Son, but the Church does not come into the krisis.--John 5:22,24.

The judgment seat of Christ does not come into existence until his thousand-year reign begins; and the krisis or the krisis day does not begin until the dead come out of their graves, and Christ sits on his own throne.--John 5:29; Rev. 14:7.

"God has appointed a day [the krisis day] in the which he will judge the world by that man," but where does it say that God has been judging the Church by Christ?--Acts 17:31.

Peter says, "If ye call on the Father [not on the Son] who without respect of persons judgeth," etc.-- 1 Pet. 1:17.

Christ says, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches, and my Father the husbandman." "Whom the Lord [the Father] loveth he disciplines, and scourges every son whom he receiveth."--John 15:1; Heb. 12:6-10.

When the judgment of the world is spoken of the Greek word krisis is always used, but never krima. On the other hand, in speaking of the judgment of the

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Church the word krima is used, but never krisis. The Church does not come into the krisis, but it does come into the krima.--1 Pet. 4:17. Compare with John 5:24.

It is this krisis, into which the Church does not come, that God has placed in the hands of Christ.-- John 5:22.

I would like to hear from you on this matter. I hope this communication will find you well in every way, and that the Lord will continue to give you strength for every trial. You are surely having abundant practice in suffering, and ought to become quite a proficient sufferer. Paul says, "I glory in tribulation, for tribulation works out the capacity for enduring. And the capacity for enduring works out approval, and approval works out hope, and hope maketh not to be ashamed."

May our dear heavenly Father continue to be with you alway--and that you may continually realize his

approval and smile--is my prayer. Sister McPhail and I often talk to ourselves about your severe trials, and wonder how you have been able to bear them as you have. I often think of Paul's words, 'We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed,' etc. (2 Cor. 4:8-11.) God's grace was always sufficient for him, and will be for you.

Wishing you a happy and successful new year, with Christian love from Mrs. McPhail and myself to you and all with you,

Your brother in Christ, M. L. McPHAIL.

IN REPLY: DEAR BROTHER:--I am glad to know that I have the Christian love and sympathy of yourself and family. One thing in connection with my troubles gives me great satisfaction, namely that, repeatedly and carefully searching my heart, I find in it no hatred toward those who have been maligning me --no desire to render evil for evil, but on the contrary a desire to do them all good, if possible. There is a great satisfaction in this, as it affords me one evidence that the spirit of love has possession of my heart. I trust that it may never be otherwise; but that more and more I may become a copy of God's dear Son, our Lord,--"who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered threatened not, but committed his cause to him who judgeth righteously." (1 Pet. 2:23; 1 Cor. 4:12.) You will be glad to know that I have on the girdle of love; that the peace of God rules in my heart; and that I have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward men.--Col. 3:12-15; Acts 24:16; 1 Pet. 2:19; 3:16.

Respecting the proposition that Christ has been judging the Church during this Gospel age, would say: The Church is the Body of Christ, and as such is collectively at the judgment seat of the heavenly Father. Our Lord Jesus is not presented to us as our Judge, but rather as our Advocate before the Judge, our Bridegroom, our Friend, our Lover, our Redeemer, our Deliverer, our Head, our Governor, our Guide. As the Head he takes the supervision of the Body, he commands, instructs, guides, in the affairs of his Church, and takes it into fellowship with himself in the building up of the Body of Christ in the most holy faith. If we love him we will keep his commandments, and he that loveth him will be loved of the Father. Thus his commandments are to us a line of judgment, rules of life, daily; we are in him as members of his body, who professedly have given him our wills,--accepting his will or judgment instead of our own. Nevertheless he has given gifts unto men, unto the Church--a measure of his spirit, his will, to every man to profit withal; and for the use of these gifts received from our Lord Jesus we are accountable to him. And our use or misuse of these will constitute a judgment with which he will have to do, as represented in the parables of "The

Pounds" and "The Talents." I presume these were the thoughts which the Brother had in mind, when he spoke of our Lord Jesus as judging the Church during this Gospel age. As the head judges or criticises the body, succors it, shields it, supervises its affairs, so does Christ with the Church, which is his Body.

Seemingly you have overlooked the Greek word, krino, which is also rendered judgment, and which occurs more times than krisis and krima both together, in the New Testament.

Strong (in substance) defines these words thus:--

Krisis--Decision, for or against. Justice.

Krime--Decision, in respect to crime.

Krino--"To distinguish, decide, try," etc.

Krino is used in referring to the judgment (trial) of the Millennial age when the Church (head and body) will be the judges.--See Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 4:5; 6:2,3.

The same word, krino is used in attributing that coming judgment to God.--See Acts 7:7; Rom. 3:6; Heb. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:17.

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These seemingly contradictory statements are made harmonious by two other texts in which this same word krino is used--thus: "God shall judge [krino] the secrets of men by Jesus Christ" (Rom. 2:16.) God "hath appointed a day in the which he will judge [krino] the world in righteousness by that man whom hath ordained;"--the Christ, head and body "one new man."--Acts 17:31.

From this standpoint--of "God the judge of all," we need not be surprised if we find not only that the world's judgment (trial) by Jehovah is committed to the well beloved Son, but the Church's judgment (testing, trial) also. Hence our Lord's statement, "The Father judgeth [krino] no man, but hath committed all judgment [krisis] unto the Son." (John 5:22.) This judging in the Church is not only referred to in the parables of the Pounds and Talents, etc., but the Apostle particularizes respecting it in 2 Thes. 2:8-12. And here the statements respecting the Father's part and the Son's part are so intertwined as to prove that they are united in the one work of judgment--of the Father, by the Son. In this text krino is rendered "might be damned."

Again, "ye that are spiritual" are to take part in the work of judging the Church now;--especially each one is to judge himself and help each other to look into the perfect law of liberty (Love) by which all are now being judged (Jas. 2:12) under the New Covenant. "If we would judge [dia-krino--"thoroughly judge"] ourselves, we should not be judged [krino]. But when we are judged [krino] of the Lord we are chastened, that we should not be condemned [kata-krino--"judged

down"] with the world."

It is in harmony with the above that the Apostle declares our Lord Jesus "the Lord, the righteous Judge," who will give him his crown of life (2 Tim. 4:8); and in harmony with this thought that the Church, the Lord's body, is being judged now, under his supervision, and is not (directly) in the Father's hands for judgment, is the Apostle's expression in Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." To be judged by Jehovah directly, none of the imperfect race of Adam could stand--all would fall under his just sentence: but under the New Covenant, God is dealing with the Church now as "the body of Christ"--so long as we severally abide under the robe of Christ's righteousness, our wedding garment,--not imputing our trespasses unto us, but unto our "Head" who died for us. Nevertheless, we (the Church) are "accepted in the Beloved" in a manner different from the world: they will not be accepted at all, nor have any intercourse with the Father until the close of their trial at the close of the Millennium.--1 Cor. 15:24-28.

Similarly Jehovah is the Creator of all things; yet he does this by proxy through him who was "the beginning of the creation of God." (John 1:1.) Likewise it is written, "They shall be all taught of God," yet Jesus was the Teacher sent of God; and we are in the school of Christ, learning of him.

With much Christian love, very truly your brother and servant in the Lord, --THE EDITOR.

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LETTERS FROM DISTANT COLABORERS.

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Massachusetts.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--It is with pleasure that I write a few lines to you. I should have written before, had not sickness prevented. I am glad to say that I have nearly recovered from it, and hope to be in the colporteur work again very soon, and my purpose is to stay in the work just as long as I can do so and keep out of debt. Not having any family duties to keep me from doing so, I see that it is my duty as well as my privilege to be thus engaged; for I realize that it is a very important part of the harvest work. How much the truth and knowledge derived from reading the DAWNS have done for me, the dear Lord and myself only know. My prayer is that I may ever be faithful to the truth. I will write to you again when I am ready to start into the work. With greetings of the season I remain, your brother in the dear Lord,

THOMAS BRIDGFORD.

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Kansas.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I take this opportunity to drop you a line, to inform you that I feel somewhat better; my lungs are not nearly so sore as they were, so I hope soon to be able to be out again in the work. I feel that I should go to Oklahoma, as I ministered to some of our Lord's dear children there before I came fully out into the light of present truth; and I believe I shall be the means in our Lord's hands to seal some of them with the present truth. I have had two letters from there the past week, also one from \_\_\_\_\_ in Kansas; they are rejoicing in the truth as revealed in the DAWNS. Let me quote from one of these:

"I have read my WATCH TOWER and MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., and commenced on VOL. II. I am just surprised to see the grand truths so plain, and wonder that I never saw them before. There has been a large book opened, and a flood of light has poured in upon this benighted and prejudiced mind, till I can only say, it's wonderful; and that does not express it so that others can understand it. I wish I had the power to tell it to every person so that they could understand it."

Brother Russell, in regard to the WATCH TOWER for 1899, I do not want to miss an issue, as it always has just that food which I need most. I pray that our Lord's choicest blessings may rest on you and all your colaborers in the WATCH TOWER office, and I would kindly ask you to remember me in your daily prayer (as I always do you, night and morning), that I may have wisdom and humility enough to show forth his death and resurrection.

Your brother in Christ, FRED. H. ANTHONY.

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Canada.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have just to-night received the Christmas number of the TOWER, and have scanned it through hurriedly, intending to study it tomorrow. In renewing my TOWER subscription, I wish to write to you more particularly.

You know well my sentiments towards yourself, but on this anniversary of the Savior's birth, a grand and happy time, I think it is fitting for me to express them once again. For years and years I hungered for truth, and longed to know and understand the Bible, and nobody gave to me the spiritual food. I searched

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the Bible for myself, and the more contradictory it grew: and the preachers never tried to explain it to me.

At length God answered my prayers and gave me the understanding of the glorious Gospel, and for his great goodness in sending me the truth I cannot love and serve him as I would; I can only ask him to accept such services as I have and to count them perfect through the Savior's blood.

It was through you that this glad tidings came, and I know how you must have loved me, for the Lord to have used you: "He that desireth the office of a bishop desireth a good thing;" and I know that you desired it in the real Scriptural way; that is to say, you said in your heart, "The Lord's people are hungry and thirsty. Lord, I wish to 'serve' them." And truly, you have done so. In all my intercourse I have never known you otherwise than as you sign yourself, --a brother and a servant: and therefore I send my heartfelt thanks.

My feet had well nigh slipped, after I had received the truth, for I was growing cold and losing my first love, and again your loving words helped me and put new life into me, and just lately you have honored me by giving me an opportunity to share with you the work of feeding the Lord's sheep. It is a grand and glorious privilege, and most heartily do I thank God and the Lord for giving me this opportunity.

With regard to the "Good Hopes" I thoroughly endorse your words; no need is there to urge those to give who know this truth, for it is so satisfying that we long to tell it to others and, if we have money, to use it in the spreading of the "Good News." God willing, I purpose devoting to this the interest accruing to me this coming year from the money loaned to the Tract Society, and I have every reason to hope I shall be able to do so.

Your brother in the Lord, W. HOPE HAY.

[The above is from the dear Brother whose donation of \$10,000 to the Tract Fund was noted in our issue of Dec. 15, '96. He has since then deposited with us as a loan, at low interest, money which he is not certain if he can spare. He is going out now as one of the "Pilgrims." May the Lord bless and "water" him while he thus serves the "flock!"--EDITOR.]

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Scotland.

DEAR BROTHER:--We wish you a very bright, happy and prosperous new year. Enclosed find order for four pounds, three shillings. We think possibly your own comforts are not sufficiently attended to, and we think you should take two pounds of enclosed for your own special wants. It is a small thing for us, the recipients of so many spiritual blessings by God's goodness through you, to repay you with carnal things.

The Lord himself will abundantly reward you. May you never fail or be discouraged, till all the will of the Lord has been fully wrought out in you, and by you. We know a little of the difficulties of the fight of faith, and of enduring hardness as good soldiers of Christ; therefore we send our hearty greetings, and deepest love and sympathy.

The TOWERS continually come, laden with blessing. We have by means of them, and especially in our busy work in worldly affairs, a rich spiritual feast every time. The last one, Dec. 1, was particularly interesting and blessed. Some of the readers here say that the facts recorded are merely to bring out the points of the truth, and that we must not think of it as an actual reality. We contended, saying, all the facts of the case--the train journey, the Presbyterian minister, the conversation, his conversion, his resolve to preach the fuller Gospel--were all an actual reality, tho written up in proper form, for a TOWER article. Could you kindly let us know which is the case, and if possible who is "B."

We are still trusting that the Lord will open up our way that we may yet get free to distribute the glorious truth ere the dark night closes in. We have started (a month ago) a "Dawn Circle Bible Class."

I am yours in our blessed Lord, C. N. HOUSTON.

REPLY: DEAR BROTHER:--I am always glad to hear from you. I congratulate you that the past year brought you so many opportunities for serving the truth--by holding meetings, by writing articles in defense of the truth for the public press, by the using of your various little vacations from business in colporteur-ing the DAWN and circulating tracts: and I thank God on your behalf that you have the will to thus serve both the Chief Shepherd and his sheep.

I am glad to know that the things pertaining to our Lord's cause are so first in your heart, and your business so secondary, that you are seeking release from the latter in such a way as will permit more and more of your time and energy to go to the former. I am sure that our Lord is pleased with your efforts to do what your hand has found to do; and I feel sure he will continue to open the door of opportunity before you in proportion as he sees you humble and faithful. I trust that the present year may be a very blessed one to you and to all of the Lord's faithful.

I thank you most heartily for the proffered (L.2) two pounds sterling for personal use: but as my wants are at present well supplied, I am sure you will take no offence at my declining it as a personal matter and joining with you in making it a part of the heavenly treasure by covering it into the Tract Society's funds. Your other contributions to this fund are greatly appreciated also, dear brother. Your orders have had attention.

Respecting the discussion of The Bible vs. Evolution

in our Dec. 1, '98, issue: It is an ideal sketch, intended as a hint to brethren and sisters respecting good opportunities and methods for preaching the truth to others when on a journey. Nevertheless, about nineteen-twentieths of that dialogue (almost word for word) actually occurred on our homeward journey returning from the Council Bluffs Convention. "Betha" represents the Editor. All articles in the WATCH TOWER are editorials, unless otherwise indicated.

Very truly your brother and servant in the Lord,

--THE EDITOR.

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