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THE DATE FOR THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

IN our last issue we noted that the Hebrew Calendar seemed
this year to disagree with the original methods of reckoning
(and we have experienced similar difficulties in the past). Since
then we have interviewed Rabbi Mayer on this subject. His
explanation is that the Jews had great difficulty in securing
uniformity of date for the Passover, because, after the watchers
had noted the new moon, the fact required to be signalled by
fires from hill tops, and by messengers sent to various communities,

etc. Consequently, about fifteen hundred years ago, in the fourth century, Hillel's Calendar was adopted, and it has been followed since.

We are to bear in mind two important matters relating to the date of the Passover. (1) It was to be after the Spring Equinox (yet not too long after), so that the 16th of Nisan, the date of our Lord's resurrection, could be provided with a sheaf of the first-fruits of the harvest--a type of "Christ, the first-fruits" born from the dead. (2) The lamb was to be killed at the full of the moon, as representing the fulness of God's favor under the Law Covenant, to the Jews, which culminated there, and which was followed by the rejection of that nation and their waning in accordance with their prayer, "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

The decision regarding the month to be esteemed the first month was seemingly left to the Elders of Israel, subject to the limitations foregoing; and it appears that they did not always wait until the Spring Equinox, and then after that wait for the following new moon, to begin counting Nisan. (To have done so this year would have been to begin Nisan as late as April 11th.) On the contrary, knowing when to expect the equinox, they accepted as the beginning of this first month, the beginning of their year, the appearance of the new moon whose full would be about the harvest time, and after the equinox. And this evidently is the rule which we should follow.

Following this rule, we find that the full moon after the equinox this year will be on March 27th, which therefore should be recognized as the 14th of Nisan, the anniversary of our Lord's death: and according to Jewish reckoning the 14th would begin on Sunday, March 26th, at six o'clock, P.M., the anniversary of the Last Supper. From this it will be observed that the date given in our last issue was in error, as well as the Jewish date, and we are glad to have opportunity of correcting the matter thus early.

Some will doubtless notice that almanacs give the date of the new moon as March 11th, but if the fourteen days were counted from that date it would not bring us to the full of the moon. We assume, therefore, that the Jews, instead of accepting the dark moon for the new moon, waited until a sufficiency of the moon would be visible to the eye, and counted from that date. So counting now, the new moon would be expected to be visible on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th of March, which would be Nisan 1st.

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"ARE CHRISTIANS DESERTING LOWER NEW YORK?"

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I send you herewith a page taken from the New York Herald, Jan. 8th, the principal part of which is devoted to--

"A STUDY OF A REMARKABLE CHURCH SITUATION
IN LOWER NEW YORK CITY."

The array of facts showing a steady and uniform surrender of ground by the churches, notwithstanding the increase of population, should indeed prove an astounding revelation to the "Christians" appealed to.

And the fact that these matters are promulgated by one of the eminent leaders of the New York pulpit, and are verified and added to by the Herald's investigations, makes the statements well nigh indisputable.

It seems to me that the "study" of the conditions here presented lies not so much in the apparent, surface truth presented, namely, that south of 14th street the "church" would appear to be doomed to practical extinction, as it does in an inquiry into the results which may be expected from this moving and movable church in its later surroundings.

The mistake of abandoning this field can and may easily be remedied, if the conscience of the powers that control the situation be sufficiently deeply pricked. But the causes which suggested, and eventually accomplished, such sweeping changes are still at work in their new abode, and are accomplishing still other changes.

It is to be noted that the new field of these old "churches" is to-day the fashionable quarter of the city; and of course it is to be expected that these old "churches" are called upon to cater to the new requirements. Accordingly we are not surprised to learn that one such requirement is EXCLUSIVENESS.

In the old abode, the idea would not have been tolerated; but conditions are now changed, and the new environment is such, that what before seemed to be sinful may now be regarded as an aid to the upholding, if not the upbuilding, of the edifice.

Pursuing this thought, it would be interesting if there could be collected, for purposes of comparison, the subjects discussed, and texts preached from, in these older edifices, in days gone by, and those now made use of in the new fields. I am convinced the relation would be as startling, almost, as the facts here given.

When we reflect upon these things, can we wonder that our friend, Mr. Moody, in his last evangelizing work in New York city, told its ministers and people that if Jesus Christ should appear in person in one of their "churches," he would be driven out, because they would not recognize him!

Since reading the statement of facts alluded to, my attention has been called to another ministerial occurrence, which has its bearing on this particular line of "study."

An eminent D.D. of the metropolis, with a big church, fat living, well liked, and ostensibly doing a

good work, is offered a professorship in one of our seats of learning. Rumor has it that he wants to accept it. Meeting a friend of the aforesaid D.D., I took occasion to allude to this call and its probable acceptance. "Yes," said this friend, "you know _____ is not patterned after the old style preacher; he is a club man, something of a sportsman, can take his little toddy, and is 'hail, fellow, well met' generally. He is very popular, and is beloved by his congregation, which is fighting hard against this call. But he has literary aspirations, and consequently favors it." Thus we see at work the same underlying evil which succeeded in driving the "church" out of the down-town vineyard.

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The student of history, noting such potent and disturbing events as here stated, discovered to-day in New York, sees them to-morrow reflected in London, events, tho peculiar to a locality, having at the same time a universal significance; he hears the alarm sounded, not by the pessimist, but by the brains and conservative judgment of the church as it is understood to-day, and cannot fail to see the inevitable trend of events.

Can these conditions be changed? Reason answers, about as easily as the heathen are to-day being changed or converted. It must be obvious that the powers which now obtain are as impotent to work the desired change (if indeed it be even desired) in the one case as in the other. What a profoundly sad outlook must the array of facts, which give rise to these and cognate thoughts, produce in this, the closing year of the century.

Sad must they be to the student of events, unless indeed he be also a student of God's Word, and can discern his times and seasons, and their peculiar events. Then what a change! As one season alternates another with precise regularity, each doing the work allotted to it, so he sees the conditions now prevailing fulfilling their purpose, only to give way to still other conditions in a later development of God's plan.

He looks ahead to that future great epoch in the history of time, which is to take the place of the present, and by faith he realizes some of the changes then to be established. Among these changes, he is assured that "an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, The way of holiness;" and "the way-faring men, tho fools, shall not err therein."--Isa. 35:8.

As one of those who are quite ready and willing to note the signs of the times, tho more especially because he is assured by the Word of truth that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;" and confident in the comforting assurance that in that day (Millennial morning) pauper "churches" will be unknown and unnecessary, because the way of holiness

shall be open to all, and all shall then know the Lord from the least unto the greatest (Jer. 31:34), I remain, in the common faith,

Faithfully yours, JOHN W. ALEXANDER.
Extracts from the Herald are as follows:--

"ARE CHRISTIANS DESERTING LOWER NEW YORK?"

"Dr. Peters says so in a sermon, and the Herald here shows that twenty-three churches have been abandoned or moved from below Forty-eighth street in the last ten years.

"The church, instead of adjusting herself practically to the changed conditions in civilization in New York, moves up town and puts on style....A church is located with reference to clientele. So much money must be paid to support it, and it must locate where the rich live, and, as a result, those needing the saving influence of the Church most are neglected;'-says the Rev. Dr. Madison C. Peters.

"This is a startling arraignment of the church in New York; yet the Rev. Dr. Peters quotes statistics which bear out what he says. The church in the Borough of Manhattan is moving up town, and the lower part of the island is every year becoming more churchless. An investigation made by the Herald shows that within the last ten years seventeen houses of worship have moved up to the less thickly populated parts of the city, where the wealthy live, and six churches below Fourteenth street have gone out of existence. In the region from the Battery to Forty-eighth street twenty-three churches have in ten years either moved up town or have become extinct, and little has been left in their place.

"The Christian forces at work below Fourteenth street,' to again quote the words of the Rev. Dr. Peters, 'with a population of 700,000, are not as much as they were twenty-five years ago. Altho during that time over 200,000 persons have moved in below Fourteenth street, twenty churches have moved out. One Jewish synagogue and two Catholic churches have been added, so that if we count the churches of every kind there are seventeen fewer than twenty-five years ago.'

"It will be seen by consulting the table of churches which have moved up town that all of them belong to Protestant denominations, with the exception of one Catholic organization. There have been from time to time utterances from various pulpits denouncing the lack of fervor shown by the Protestant churches. It is not an optimistic view of the work of the church among the masses who live in the lower part of the city which is drawn from an analysis of the uptown movement of the churches.

"There are many who maintain that the churches are doing missionary work in the fields which they have left. With the exception of the efficient work of Trinity Parish, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and the work of the Catholics, this field in the lower part of the city is practically left to the sower of tares. ...There is no escape from statistics. The majority of those who dwell in the lower part of the island are churchless. South of Fourteenth street there is one church to every 4,732 persons. In that section there are districts where there is one saloon to every 111 persons.

"In discussing the causes of the movement of the churches, Dr. Peters, the pastor of the Bloomington Reformed Church, told me that the fashionable churches were becoming fashionable clubs.

"Let me give you two examples of what I mean,' said he. 'A man who belonged to one of the uptown churches told me recently that in his church there was only one poor man, and "he a Scotchman who could not be snubbed into leaving." Another man, a member of a church of the exclusive uptown kind, told me that in his church the pew rents were made so high that only a "certain class" could come.'...

"Statistics show that in comparison with the growth of population here the Presbyterian Church in this city has lost eighty per cent. in the last twenty-five years. The Methodist Church, supposed to be

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the most aggressive force in Protestantism, has in the last twenty years increased only twenty-five per cent., whereas in proportion to the increase of population in the borough it should have increased eighty-five per cent. The Dutch Reformed Church has in the same proportion lost ten per cent. The only Protestant church doing anything like holding its own here is the Episcopal Church. That is largely owing to the fact that much of the enormous wealth of Trinity Corporation is used in work among the poor. The census of 1890 gave the Catholic population of the then city of New York as 380,000. If the Catholic Church had held her own she should have had 900,000."

* * *

Some one failing to grasp the situation will perhaps say or think--"Well, you criticize others, but what are you doing in the line of mission-work?"

We reply that it is not the actions of these "churches" that we find fault with, but the inconsistency of their actions and professions. These denominations, one and all, profess in their published creeds that they exist for the very purpose of converting the world; and that all not converted by them will suffer a horrible

eternity: and straightway they leave the world to what they say is its fate, to meet for essays, lectures, music and social pleasures--as "social clubs,"--called "churches."

Our views of the divine plan for human salvation are very different from theirs: and hence the question is not, are we following their theories more consistently than they follow them? but, are we following our own conception of the divine plan consistently? --are we practicing what we preach and profess to believe, faithfully? We trust that every regular WATCH TOWER reader can answer promptly,--I am doing with my might what my hand finds to do, in harmony with my understanding of the divine will concerning me. And if any cannot so answer, promptly, we trust he will begin at once such "reasonable service."

We hold that none are in danger of eternal torment --that the very thought of such an unjust punishment for sin is in antagonism to God's revealed plan, rightly interpreted, utterly repugnant to "the spirit of the truth," "the spirit of Christ," "the holy spirit."

We hold that ignorance neither justifies nor condemns --either in New York or Africa or elsewhere; but that knowledge alone brings blessings and corresponding responsibilities. Nor do we understand that all knowledges bring grave responsibilities and are savors of life unto life or of death unto death; for but one knowledge, one science, is thus made a test in the Scriptures--the knowledge of the way, the truth and the life; the knowledge of the true God, the God of Justice, Wisdom, Love and Power.

We hold that the masses in down town New York, not possessing this knowledge, but being blinded in their minds by the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4), are not on trial now, as are we who have this knowledge, but will have their trial by and by, during the Millennial age, at the same time with the "heathen" millions of Asia and Africa;--after Satan has been "bound" and deceives the peoples no more (Rev. 20:1-4), after the Lord and his elect Church have begun the reign of righteousness. And we hold the same to be true of their polished and wealthy and better educated

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neighbors who have moved up-town; and who, "blinded," mistakenly call themselves "churches."

We hold that the Lord's Church, the only one to which the name ecclesia, body or church, is properly applicable, is so insignificant, so unostentatious, and comparatively so poor in this world's riches, that it is not recognized nor recognizable from the worldly standpoint. It is neither man-made nor man-ruled; nor are its members enrolled on earth, but in heaven. (Heb. 12:23.) Its head and bishop is the Lord, its law is his Word: it has but one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;

and it is built upon the testimonies of the holy apostles and prophets--Jesus Christ himself being its chief corner-stone.

We hold that, while neither the masses of lower New York nor the classes of upper New York constitute this Church, some in both may be eligible to its membership and blessings--"even as many as the Lord our God shall call," and no more. And we hold that in New York, as elsewhere, many more have been called than will be chosen;--because the call being to a very high post of service and honor, God has made the way to it narrow--so narrow that few find it, and fewer still care to walk therein after they have found it; a way of self-sacrifice, self-denial.

In harmony with this our faith and knowledge respecting the divine plan, we are neither sitting in the seat of the scorers, drawing nigh to God with our lips, while our hearts are far from him (rebellious against him as monstrously unjust and unloving--as blasphemously misrepresented in the creeds of Christendom), nor are we excitedly and frantically with drums and tambourines and "War Crys" striving to save from eternal torment fellow creatures--under a theory that God would horribly and unjustly misuse them, but for our efforts.

On the contrary, we are endeavoring to do as Jesus and the apostles and the early Church did, before the errors ("tares") of false doctrine were planted by the great Adversary. We are striving to find those who are not wholly blinded by the god of this world; --the "called," those who have "ears to hear," among the "masses" and among the "classes;" we are seeking to find, and to explain to them the way of the Lord more perfectly. And whether they hear and obey, or

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whether they forbear, we doubt not for a moment that all the gracious purposes of our all-wise God will be accomplished, --that the foreordained number of the "copies of his Son" will be completed, and that then these as the body of Christ, "the Seed of Abraham," as God's glorious Kingdom, shall rule and relieve from blindness all mankind and bless and uplift all willing to obediently return to God's favor through the great Redeemer.

Above all we are seeking now, because it is the "harvest" time, the time of preparation for the marriage of the Lamb, to prepare ourselves, and each the other, for that great event which shall complete our joy and usher in the world's blessings;--that we may be in heart (and as nearly as attainable in the flesh also) "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."-- Eph. 5:23; Rev. 19:7.

Additionally, we are sympathetic toward all secondary influences of our Light--moral reforms.

JUDGMENT--KRINO, KRISIS, KRIMA.

QUESTION. (a) In the last WATCH TOWER we note that you refer to krino as having the significance of judgment. Do you refer to its significance in Greek? I do not find it rendered "judgment" in our Common Version English Bible.

Answer. (a) Certainly, krino is a Greek word, and its significance in that language was what we sought to present. The word occurs more times than krisis and krima together: it is variously rendered in our English common version Bible,--Judge, Conclude, Condemn, Decree, Determine, Damned, Ordain, Sentence. The thought in every instance is that of judgment or trial. This is the word used by our Lord when referring to the honor to be given to the apostles, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." It is the same word used by the Apostle Paul when referring to the future work of the Church, saying, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge [krino] the world? and if the world shall be judged [krino] by you,...know ye not that we shall judge [krino] angels?" --Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30; 1 Cor. 6:2,3.

Question. (b) Do you consider the definitions of krisis, krima and krino, given from Strong's Concordance, reliable?

Answer. (b) Yes. You can convince yourself of this fact by noting the uses of these words in the New Testament. Any definition at variance with those given could not be applied to every text in which these words occur. This is the best way to test any definition, whoever gives it: test it by the Scriptural usage of the word.

We will give here Liddell and Scott's Greek Lexicon definition of these words (our comments in brackets):--

Krma. "A decision, decree, judgment"--in New Testament usage, "Condemnation, sentence." [This word seems not to contain the thought of trial, except in the past. It relates to and signifies sentence.]

Krissis. "(1) A separating, putting asunder: hence a choosing. (2) A deciding, determining, judging, judgment." [This word includes the thought of trial culminating in a decision that is final, irrevocable.]

Krino. "(1) To separate, part, put asunder; hence also to order, arrange. (2) To inquire, search into, investigate." [This word is full of the thought of trial, or testing, or criticism; but it does not imply finality of decision.]

Indeed, krino is the root word from which krima

and krisis are derived. (1) Krino relates to probationary trials and testings and corrections (now, and in the coming age). (2) Krisis points out a decision or a time of decision. The Jewish "harvest" was such a time of decision or krisis to Fleshly Israel: the present "harvest" is a time of decision or krisis to nominal Spiritual Israel. And the entire Millennial age will be a time of decision or krisis for mankind in general, ending the krino or probation of that age with a "harvest" time of decision or krisis. (3) Krima relates to the final and irrevocable sentence upon evil doers. Compare these definitions with the New Testament usage of these words and be fully convinced.

Question. (c) If "the Father judgeth [krino] no man, but hath committed all judgment [krisis] unto the Son, so that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father," would it not imply that there is no judgment of any kind in progress by the Father directly during this Gospel age?

Answer. (c) Yes.

Question. (d) And if our Lord Jesus has nothing whatever to do with the judgment or correction of the Church, but must wait and begin his judgment (krisis) with the world, and the Millennial age, would it not imply that the Gospel Church is not on judgment (trial) at all during this Gospel age? And would not such a conclusion be an unreasonable one?

Answer. (d) Yes;--to both questions. The only solution to the problem, the only way to harmonize these statements of Scripture, was, we believe, offered in our last issue.

We there showed that ALL krisis or decision has been committed to the Son, but the Son does not exercise that krisis authority until the harvest, the end of this age. He then exercises krisis power in respect to the Church and the world--rewarding his faithful and

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bringing a great time of trouble upon the unfaithful of the Church and the world. We are already in this krisis time--thousands are "falling"--"Who shall be able to stand?" The humble, faithful few only, "shall never fall, but an entrance shall be ministered unto them abundantly, into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Thus says the Apostle of this class, "Love has been perfected in us that we may have boldness in the day of judgment"--krisis.--1 John 4:17.

Altho all judgment (decision, krisis) was committed to the Son, there is only one text which even implies any exercise of krisis judgment (decision) by our Lord during this age: and that is the Apostle's statement, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment [krisis]." (1 Tim. 5:24.) This would seem to imply that, altho the Lord's decision respecting

the majority of the Church will not be manifested until the "harvest" of this age, yet there have been exceptions to this rule; and the Apostle mentions such exceptional cases. (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-29.) But the casting of many into outer darkness now, because of unfaithfulness to the Word of the Lord or its spirit of love, is not thus exceptional; for the time of krisis has arrived;--yea, and it will mean a final sentence (krima) to some; for, as the Apostle declares, "The time is come that krima [sentence] must begin with the house of God."--1 Pet. 4:17.

But respecting the judgment, criticism or inspection represented by the word krino: it does not wait for the "harvest," but has been in progress throughout this entire age, in the Church. It is practically the only kind of judgment that has thus been in operation. It was respecting this judgment that our Lord Jesus declared, "The Father judgeth [krino] no man." (John 5:22.) Who, then, exercises this krino judgment? We answer that the krino or trial or probationary judgment, as well as the krisis or decision, is committed of the Father to the Son. Yea, all power in heaven and in earth, as it may relate to mankind, has been committed to the Son--the Father rests the entire matter in his hands.--Heb. 4:10; John 5:17.

The Lord gives us his Word, his teaching, as representing himself, saying, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory." (Luke 9:26.) The teaching of the great Teacher and of his chosen twelve apostles is to be the kriterion or rule of judgment (krino) to his followers, who by their faithfulness or unfaithfulness to those teachings may be said to judge (krino) themselves. The Apostle thus uses the word krino to some whom he addressed, saying, "Seeing ye judge [krino] yourselves unworthy of eternal life." (Acts 13:46.) Again, to the Church the Apostle says, "For if we would judge [dia-krino--thoroughly examine, criticise, judge] ourselves, we should not be judged [krino]; but being judged [krino] by the Lord, we are chastened that we should not be condemned with [kata-krino--on trial with] the world." (1 Cor. 11:31,32.) Does the Apostle here refer to the Heavenly Father under the name Lord, or to our Lord Jesus? To the latter unquestionably; for his words must be in accord with the words of our Lord Jesus, "The Father judgeth [krino] NO MAN." This teaches us that in addition to his Word our Lord gives a personal supervision or correction or disciplining to those who at heart are seeking to walk in his footsteps.

Moreover, the Apostle exercised this kind of judgment (krino) in the Church as an Apostle, as a special representative of our Lord Jesus, and in his name. We read, "I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged [krino] already, as tho I were present,

concerning him that hath done this deed." (1 Cor. 5:3-5.) He reproveth the Church for not judging and reproveth such persons of their number as were known to be living in sin: and he most positively enjoins such judgment and that those thus found guilty be no longer associated with as "brethren." Then, answering a misunderstanding of his previous message--that they were to withdraw from evil doers not professing Christ, he says (we paraphrase his words),--It is not my business to judge (krino) those who are outside the Church and name of Christ. My complaint of you is that you neglect to judge (krino) those who are within the pale of Christian brotherhood. Those outside the Church God will judge (krino--in his own time and manner --Acts 17:31). Expel from your midst evil doers.-- See 1 Cor. 5:9-13.

This thought that the Church is in duty bound to look after the outward conduct of those it recognizes as "brethren," and to (krino, judge) settle points of misunderstanding amongst themselves, is clearly set forth by the Apostle in his discourse following the above reproof. (1 Cor. 6:1-6.) He points out that the Lord's people should not think of going to law before the courts of the world to settle differences between "brethren." Here he uses the word krino (judge, examine) and asks if there is not in their midst a single person in whose wisdom they could rely, and ironically suggests that if they have lost confidence in the leaders whom the Lord has "set" in the Church for such like purposes, they should at least choose as judges the least esteemed in the Church as preferable to a court of unbelievers. Thus would he shame them and urge that if they had no confidence in each other, they at least do not manifest more confidence in outsiders, but preferably suffer wrong and injustice, rather than dishonor

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the Church and her Head, the Lord. But all this only proved that they had not been careful to judge (krino) and to disfellowship the outwardly impure and unrighteous.

This judging by the Church of its own faithful is by virtue of the spirit of the Lord in the Church, as the Apostle declared (1 Cor. 5:4); the thought is that our Lord is in a church of even two or three met in his name, to direct such as seek his guidance. Hence we read, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, ...pastors and teachers and evangelists,...for the edifying of the body of Christ"--in these chosen members of his "body," the Church, the qualities of the "Head" were represented. Thus, representatively, as well as by his Word, our Lord Jesus has been judging, correcting, guiding his Church throughout this Gospel age. Take his own statement of this his work of judging his body, in his messages to the seven stages

of his Church, recorded in Rev. 2 and 3. We read,--

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent,...else I will come upon thee quickly and remove thy candlestick." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "I have a few things against thee;...repent, or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna." "I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel....I gave her space to repent. ...I will cast her...into great tribulation,... and I will kill her children with death; and all the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works....He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations." "I have not found thy works perfect before God....He that overcometh,... I will not blot out his name out of the book of life." "These things saith he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth." "Behold I will make them of the synagogue of Satan...to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God." "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich....As many as I love I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent."

Here we have our Lord's own word for it, that he is supervising and correcting his Church now, and that as a culmination of this trial (krino) time will come final decision (krisis)--rewards and punishments.

We repeat that the proper thing to do is to harmonize these various statements--some of which refer to the Heavenly Father as the "Judge of all" and corrector of the Church, while others declare that the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. Nor is it difficult to harmonize these: the Scriptures themselves indicate how both are true, pointing out that the Son is the representative and honored agent of the Father in the judging (krino) or probationary trials of this age and will be also his agent and representative in giving (krisis) decisions --rewards and tribulations--in the end of this age. And with his glorified Church he will give similar judgment (krino and krisis) to the world in the Millennial age--the world's day of judgment.--Acts 17:31.

So far from this being peculiar or exceptional, it is the general rule of Scripture in matters respecting the Father and the Son. In the matter of creation, for

instance, the Heavenly Father is always named as the Creator, and yet we are assured that the Only Begotten was both the beginning and the ending of the Father's direct, personal creation; and that "all things were made by him [the Only Begotten] and without him was not one thing made that was made." (John 1:3.) The matter is explained by the Apostle, saying, All things are of the Father, and all things are by the Son.--1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15-17.

Take another illustration. In the familiar 23 Psalm we read in the original, "Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want," etc. But do not all realize that the Great Shepherd's great Son is our Shepherd also? It is the Shepherd-Son that the Apostle Peter declares to be "The shepherd and bishop of our souls." (1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20.) It is our Lord himself that declares, "I am the Good Shepherd." (John 10:11.) Not only so, but our word, "pastor," signifies shepherd, as does also the Greek word rendered "bishop" in our common version New Testament: and God, the Great Shepherd, "set" these in the Church, says the Apostle. Again he says that the Good Shepherd, Jesus, gave these gifts to his Church. Is there conflict between these statements? By no means; they are all true and all consistent when viewed from the right standpoint: the Head of the under-shepherds is Christ, the Good Shepherd, and the Head of the Good Shepherd is the Great Shepherd, and the flock is one. The key is in the oneness of purpose and of work between the Father and the Son--"I and my Father are one." But this statement can only be apprehended by becoming one with the Father and the Son, in harmony with our Lord's prayer.--John 17:21-23.

Question. (e) You point out the Apostle's injunction

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that we should judge, krino; but does not our Lord use this same word in Matt. 7:1, saying, "Judge [krino] not, that ye be not judged [krino]; for with what judgment [krima, sentence] ye judge [krino] ye shall be judged [krino]?" How shall we harmonize these commands of the Lord and the Apostle?

Answer. (e) The two are in accord: the Apostle speaks of the duty of the Church as a Church to judge its members on common moralities. In the above expression the Lord discountenances criticisms and accusations and sentences of one another as individuals.

Elsewhere the Apostle also discountenanced individual judging, accusations, back-bitings, etc., saying, "Why dost thou judge [krino] thy brother?...Let us not therefore judge [krino] one another any more: but judge [krino] this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." --Rom. 14:10,13.

And our Lord not only approved of judging on

the part of the Church, but gave explicit directions to all its individuals respecting how to avoid judging one another and how to submit themselves to the judgment of the Church as the body of Christ.

(1) They were to avoid judging a brother or sister guilty of wilful wrong-doing and were to attempt to reason the matter out privately, that the one or the other might see his error.

(2) If this proved unavailing, the one feeling himself aggrieved (yet still not judging his brother wilfully guilty) is to call in two or three brethren to hear both sides of the controversy. (As the Apostle suggests, those called in should be "wise"--1 Cor. 6:5; --such as both the accuser and the accused would recognize, and whose judgment they would respect and follow.)

(3) If these brethren, called on to act as judges, and his own choice of "wise" brethren, give their verdict against the accuser, that should settle the matter: the accuser should recognize his error. Not to do so would imply that he was not seeking to ascertain the truth, but that he had judged his brother personally, the very thing that both the Lord and the Apostle warn us against. If the accuser be not able to see matters fully in the same light as his "brethren," he should nevertheless accept their decision and trust and pray to the Lord that he would be guided into clearer views. But should the brethren, called in to judge, agree with the accuser, the accused of course should yield,--especially if he had acknowledged the judges to be "wise." The violator of the judgment of such "wise" brethren (if the matter were considered of sufficient importance) was to be charged and the cause heard before the Church--whose decision was to be final; and disregard of its decision implied excommunication. --Matt. 18:15-35.

We have examined this question somewhat in detail, because fearful that something in our last issue might have seemed to sanction personal judging. The Lord, however, does recognize his Church and does promise to act through it and to give his judgment thus to those who seek it, promising in this very connection that, Where two or three are gathered in his name, he is in their midst. The great difficulty with many is their lack of faith; they do not believe the Lord's Word, nor trust to his providences, but want to take matters into their own hands. And this is particularly the case with those who are in the wrong.

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WE have heretofore mentioned the fact that the Lord has raised up efficient servants of present truth who are colaboring in Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. The success of the work in these fields for 1898 is more encouraging than in any previous year;--as we should of course expect. Particulars did not arrive in season to be itemized in our annual report in the Dec. 15th TOWER: and even now that they are at hand, they are difficult to harmonize and unify--matters which will be duly rectified for 1899.

We have already mentioned the earnestness and devotion of Brother Weber who has charge of the French work, Sister M. Giesecke, our representative in Germany, and Brother Winter, colaborer in Denmark. These have been in the harness for now several years, and the Lord's blessing upon their efforts has stirred up other colaborers in this "harvest;" so that during 1898 many hands served the truth in circulating tracts and DAWNS personally and by mail. Nor were these content merely to circulate the truth--they also shared the financial burden generously, contributing according to their abilities; and that without solicitation --prompted by their love of the truth and by its spirit.

The German and French works are closely identified because Switzerland and Belgium are common fields where both languages are spoken. The reports show that nearly one thousand volumes were disposed of (900 DAWNS and 100 booklets); about 15,000 tracts circulated free; and many thousand sample copies of the German WATCH TOWER.

We feel confident that 1899 will be a favorable year in Europe, as several who have found the truth recently seem to be persons of ability who are zealous to serve it to others. One is a Salvation Army Captain

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in Sweden, another is a sister in France who has been for some years a mission worker, another is a sister of influence in Austria, besides quite a number in Switzerland and Germany--an editor, a minister, several school-teachers and merchants.

The Lord's blessing be with these efforts, as well as upon the still larger work going on in the English tongue! And, by the way, the work in Great Britain is a work in Europe also, and larger up to the present time than any other there. We pray that it also may be greatly blessed and prospered of the Lord, and that his noble servants there may have large measures of the spirit of the truth. We recognize no national or tongue distinctions among those who have become new creatures in Christ: this "holy nation" is indeed a peculiar people, gathered out of all nations so completely

that henceforth they know each other not by their mother tongue nor by the place of natural birth, but solely and only by the tie of Christian love which binds their hearts and hopes and aims in one.

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IS PRESENT TRUTH UNREASONABLE?

THE pastor of a Baptist church writes us, saying in substance that he sees much in the teachings of the WATCH TOWER to commend; and that in general its reasonings on the Scriptures are logical, its applications of Scripture found to harmonize well with the context. He would be convinced of the entire position, but for one thing--the smallness of the movement. He says that he knows of no other publications than those from this office that present these views which we denominate "present truth," asks if he is mistaken in this, and whether it is not unreasonable to believe that so important truths should be committed of the Lord to so narrow, so comparatively insignificant, a channel. Admitting that the Scriptures teach that at his second coming the Lord will not find the faith general on the earth, but that on the contrary the Apostle declares that the close of this age will witness an increase of headiness, pride, disobedience to parents, unthankfulness, unholiness, etc., and declares that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, he wants to know how to harmonize these things with the progress of philanthropy, gentleness, etc., in the world to-day.

Answer (a): We cannot deny the fact that ZION'S WATCH TOWER AND HERALD OF CHRIST'S PRESENCE is the only publication in the world teaching that we are now in the harvest of this Gospel age, that the Master is present harvesting the wheat, that it soon will be garnered, and shine forth in the Millennial Kingdom (Matt. 13:43), and that after the Lord has thus set up and glorified his "jewels" in kingdom power, the blessing of restitution will begin for the world of mankind in general. This, however, is no argument against the truthfulness of our position, which must be tested solely by the Scriptures.

And we are here reminded of our Lord's words at the first advent "harvest"--the type of the present "harvest,"--"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24.) The "Doctors of Divinity" of that time not only ignored our Lord's teachings, but opposed him and said all manner of evil against him and his work, falsely, and even accused him of being possessed of the prince of devils; and they warned, cajoled and hoodwinked the

common people who heard him gladly, until they cried for his blood. But none of those things hindered that "harvest" work to the extent of preventing it. Likewise the present "harvest" work will go right along to completion, regardless of who shall attempt to hinder or make light of it.

It should not be forgotten that, as set forth in our September issue (reissued as an Extra on Nov. 7th), the Lord's purpose at the present time is not to arouse and startle and inform the world, but, on the contrary, to have the day of his presence come as a thief in the night--stealthily, quietly, unobservedly--in the which he will test and gather his jewels, preparatory to letting loose upon the world his corrective chastisements, retributions, and vengeance upon evil deeds and evil doers.

But you are mistaken, dear brother, in saying that ours is the only voice raised on behalf of the "present truth." On the contrary, all who hear the joyful news of heavenly grace are privileged to join in the proclamation of these "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." And we assure you that all who receive this "new song" into good and honest hearts are prompt to give utterance to it; and are singing it daily, as they find opportunity, to those who have ears to hear. But, as the Scriptures point out, no man is able to learn to sing that song clearly and harmoniously except such as are "taught of God"--only such as have been called to the high calling, and have accepted the call, and are in the way of obedience. Whoever leaves the way of humble faith and consecrated obedience, loses his power to sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb" harmoniously, properly.--Rev. 14:3.

You will be glad, we are sure, to know that with those of "this way" all who hear the message are preachers of it. We recognize no "clergy" and "laity" classes; for all who are in the true Church of God are, as the Apostle expresses the matter, "priests," members of the Royal Priesthood, of which our Lord is the Head or Chief Priest. Asked not long ago, "How many ministers

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are of your way of thinking?" we replied, to the astonishment of the questioner, that there are about ten thousand, who are preaching every day to the best of their ability. Then we explained that from our standpoint, the Scriptural standpoint, every member of the Body of Christ is anointed of the spirit, and is fully commissioned to make known the good tidings to everyone who has an ear to hear. Some have talents for public speaking, others find a field for usefulness as preachers in colportaging the truth, and still others for private conversation and private circulation of the good tidings in printed form.

The effect of the combined effort of these ministers of the truth is that the sound thereof is extending to

the utmost parts of the earth. Not all, however, are able to clearly discern the sound now, and we believe that it is intended for only such as have "ears to hear," to whom alone it will be a special blessing in the present time. We look forward with pleasure, however, to the time promised in the Scriptures, when all "the deaf ears shall be unstopped," and all "the blind eyes shall be opened," and when, as a consequence, the true knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, as the waters cover the great deep--the sea.--Isa. 35:5; 11:9.

Answer (b): We are living to-day under a glare of light, such as the world never before enjoyed. We are not, therefore, to expect the grossness of the past; but while there is a polished veneer upon the world in general to-day, such as it never had the opportunity of having before, this only gives a corresponding amount of responsibility, from the divine standpoint. Where much is given much will be required. The Scriptures assure us that the only proper course for those who have the enlightenment, which we enjoy, is a recognition of our own imperfections, and of the Lord's standard of righteousness, and an acceptance of the salvation which he has provided in Christ, and a thorough change of heart, will, sentiment,--from sin to righteousness.

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True, the numbers in Christendom, who now outwardly observe rules of propriety and decency are larger than ever before; but we doubt if the proportion of the truly consecrated, the "saints," is greater. We have frequent evidences, too, that the veneer of the present time is very thin, and that the old nature, unconverted, is underneath. For instance, this was shown a year or so ago, at the notable French Charity Bazaar, when the fire occurred, and when so many who were esteemed to be thoroughly polished socially gave evidence of fierceness and brutality worthy of the Dark Ages. A similar evidence that mankind, as a whole, are practically unchanged at heart, was furnished in the savagery displayed at the time of the disaster to the steamer La Bourgogne. Nor have we reason to question that in all civilized lands the spirit of discontent which prevails would, under favorable conditions, show up as horribly as in the "Reign of Terror" of the French Revolution. Indeed, the latter is set before us in the Scriptures as a picture or illustration of the conditions which will prevail throughout the entire civilized world, and in the midst of which the torch of civilization will for a short time be utterly extinguished. For further evidences along this line we refer you to MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV.

As an illustration of modern cruelty of thought take the following from the pen of a man of learning, a highly esteemed French gentleman--M. Rochefort. Assailing his political opponents, the judges in the Dreyfus case, he said:--

"To smear them over with pitch, and make live torches of them, as Nero did with the Christians, would be somewhat of an antiquated amusement. An idea has occurred to me of a punishment which might give satisfaction even to the most exasperated. The members of the Court of Cassation having been previously drawn up in single file, an executioner duly trained to the work should cut off their eyelids, so as to leave the eyeballs denuded. Then spiders of the most venomous kind should be enclosed in nutshells, applied to the eyeballs, and properly fastened behind the culprit's heads. These spiders in a famished condition could not be expected to be very fastidious, and would slowly and gradually feed on the culprit's eyeballs until nothing but a ghastly cavity remained. This done, these hideous blind men should be chained up to a pillory erected before that Palais de Justice where their crime has been perpetrated, and on their chests a placard should be affixed, bearing these words: "Thus does France punish the traitors who attempt to sell her to the enemy."

If the venerated and polished can think such thoughts and use such language, what may we not expect of the ignorant and uncouth when frenzied and in despair, in the coming anarchy!

Answer (c): It is not for us to judge the hearts of others, and we shall not attempt to do so, but we believe that the Lord has arranged his truth so that it will do the judging. Our Lord voiced this sentiment, saying, "My words shall judge you in the last day"--the Millennial Day. This judgment of the last day is already upon us, and, as the Apostle Peter declared, so we find it, "Judgment must begin at the house of God," --the Gospel Church, nominal and real. The fact that the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law of to-day do not accept the message and evidences of the second presence of our Lord, so far from being contrary to the teaching of the Lord's Word, is in perfect accord therewith. Has he not said to us that not many great, mighty or wise, according to the course of this world, will be worthy of a place in his Kingdom? And do not all the great ones of to-day, to whom you refer, claim to be great and wise, according to the course and judgment of this world?

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Moreover, our Lord gave us a sample or foreshadowing of the present harvest, and what we may expect here: it was furnished in the Jewish nation and its harvest at his first advent. Present conditions exactly correspond to that prototype: there as here it was inquired, Have any of the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law believed on him? The answer was then, as now, No. Of course the mass of the people then followed their leaders, and so also it will be now. Of that time our Lord

said that the leaders were blind leaders of the blind, and that all would fall into the ditch, and it was so: the Jewish nation as a whole was overthrown in the time of trouble with which their age ended, and their house was left wholly desolate. So we expect it to be here: the masses of "Christendom" will follow their blind teachers, blind guides, and have a confidence in them worthy of a better previous record, and will eventually be greatly surprised when the "little flock," the Lord's Jewels, have been gathered, and the time of trouble breaks forth which will engulf all present institutions,--social, financial, political, religious, and prepare the way for the fulfilment of our Redeemer's prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

Answer (d): If you want to be guided aright, dear brother, you must not look to human authorities, but to the Chief Shepherd himself, who declared, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow [obey] me." We do not set ourself as a leader of the Lord's sheep, and we neither ask nor expect any to follow us as their leader. We seek merely to be, so far as the Shepherd may be pleased to use us, his mouthpiece, to call attention to the Shepherd, and to the way in which he is leading. None should follow us, except as they discern that we are following the Master, as saith the Apostle. --1 Pet. 5:3; Phil. 3:17.

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ASPIRATIONS OF A NEW CONVERT.

I wish I were as pure, as fair to view,
As yonder blossom, sparkling with the dew;
But then I could not wear my snowy dress,
The Savior's gift--his robe of righteousness.

I wish I were like mountains, towering high,
Strong and majestic, piercing cloud and sky;
But then I could not feel my weakness thrill
With strength to do my blessed Master's will.

I wish my life were placid as yon lake,
Unmoved by storms that o'er the ocean break;
But could I realize such rest and peace
As when the Master bids my troubles cease?

Lord, all my wishes, all my heart's desires
Find consummation when the world retires,
And Thou before my raptured gaze dost stand,
In perfectness complete, a pattern grand.

Ah! would I were, my blessed Lord, like thee!

Then should my heart thy fragrant garden be!
Then should my prayers past mountain tops ascend,
My peace be fathomless, my joy attained.

For Thee leapt high the sacrificial fire,
Let it of me my cleansed parts require!
Into Thy nostrils let the incense rise,
A token of accepted sacrifice!

--R. B. HENNINGES.

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"GREATER WORKS THAN THESE."

--FEB. 12--JOHN 5:17-27.--

"This is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."--John 4:42.

JESUS was again in Judea, probably attending the Feast of the Passover, as was his custom,--these annual gatherings constituting the very best opportunities for reaching the devout Jews from all parts of the Holy Land, and from surrounding countries.

Our Lord, in his quiet Sabbath walk about Jerusalem, came to the Pool of Bethesda, which had a wonderful reputation for its healing qualities, on account of which its porches and sheds were crowded with sick people with divers ailments, waiting to take advantage of what was considered to be a miraculous action in its waters. What is to-day known as the "Pool of the Virgin" is supposed to be the one formerly known as the Pool of Bethesda, and a peculiar movement in the waters of the Pool of the Virgin is well known. Travelers whose word is reliable declare that they have seen this spring rise twelve inches in five minutes, and then subside about as quickly. There are other springs which have this same intermitting peculiarity. One of these is at Kissingen, Germany. Its flow is accompanied with an escape of gas, and its water is reputed to be more valuable at the time of its movements, and probably because surcharged with gas.

The intermittent movement of the water of the Bethesda Pool is referred to in vs. 7 of this chapter, but the explanation about the angel troubling the waters, etc., contained in the last seven words of the third verse, and all of the fourth verse, is omitted from the oldest Greek MSS. (the Sinaitic and Vatican). There was probably nothing whatever miraculous connected with the spring, but some peculiarity of the channel,

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which caused the water from one compartment to syphon out into the other at intervals; or possibly the action was

caused by gas. The healings experienced were quite probably what to-day would be termed mind cures, a beneficial action of the mind and will upon the physical organism.

We do not know that the Lord made any movement toward the general healing of the multitude who were waiting for the movement of the Pool, and hoping for relief; nor do we know that he extended his beneficence to any, except the one whose healing is the subject of this lesson, who was more helpless than the majority, and whose case was apparently hopeless, in that it was chronic, of thirty-eight years standing. Nor could the impotent one have had much ground for hope at the Pool, for, as he himself explained, others less feeble than himself availed themselves of the fountain before he could reach it. It was to this heart-sick and weary one, hopeless and helpless, that the Lord addressed himself, "Wilt thou be made whole?" He readily answered that he was anxious to be made whole, and our Lord did not even wait for him to manifest a previous faith in his power, but allowed the man's faith to be testified by his obedience: and exercising the faith, astonished and bewildered, he obeyed, taking up his couch, not even knowing his benefactor.

So it is with the greater miracles performed by our Lord throughout this Gospel age--some of the weakest and most hopelessly powerless for good are morally healed, strengthened, renewed, transformed, through the operation of faith and obedience. Yet such cases are but few compared to the world of mankind, similarly or even less diseased with sin, who are all eventually

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(during the Millennium) to be made acquainted with the Great Physician.

This miracle brought upon Jesus the opposition of the Pharisees, who, because of a wrong attitude of heart, mistook the real object and purpose of the Sabbath day, and tacking on to the divine command traditions of the elders, had made of it a mere outward form, robbing it of its true thought. We are not to consider that our Lord performed so many of his miracles on the Sabbath, apparently in preference to other days, as signifying any disrespect to the day, nor as signifying a desire to provoke the Pharisees. Rather, we may suppose that the performance of the notable miracles on this day was largely in order to thus point out the great Seventh Day Sabbath, the Millennial Day, the seventh thousand year period of earth's history, when the anti-typical and far greater miracles and blessings will come to mankind. "These things [miracles] did Jesus, and manifested forth [beforehand] his [coming] glory."-- John 2:11.

The conduct of the Jews, in wishing to kill one who, according to their own testimony, had done nothing

amiss, but had done much good, simply because he differently interpreted the Law, and disregarded the "traditions of the elders," is a parallel to the opposition which is sometimes manifested by present-day Christians--sectarians of the strictest sort. They might not indeed seek literally to kill the one who would do violence to their theories and traditions, but many of them would have very little hesitancy in assassinating his character, if thereby they could defend the falsities of their systems.

Our Lord's reply respecting his authority angered them the more: not because he declared himself to be Jehovah, the Father, as many seem to think, but because he declared himself to be the Son of Jehovah, who had been given a work to do by the Father. Nor did the Jews misunderstand him in this; their anger was because, in claiming to be the Son of God, he was claiming an honor and place so much higher than themselves --a place which implied a closeness of relationship and of nature to Jehovah, a claim which they considered blasphemous. The successors of the Pharisees in our day go far beyond our Lord's claims, and claim for him what he never claimed for himself; viz., that he is the Father, and that he always has been the Father as well as the Son, and that the two are one in person, and not merely two persons of one harmonious mind, purpose, sentiment, will. These take great offence at any of the Lord's "brethren" of to-day who claim to be sons of God, and who apply that term in its Scriptural force and significance. As is well known to many, a prominent Doctor of Divinity and Professor in a theological seminary in Ohio has published a scurrilous review of MILLENNIAL DAWN, the chief point of which is the holding up to ridicule the hope of the Church's "high calling," therein set forth, based upon and supported by the exceeding great and precious promises given to us in the Scriptures, the intention of which, the Apostle declares to be, "that we might become partakers of the divine nature."--2 Pet. 1:4.

The declaration that "the Son can do nothing of himself," if it were not backed up as it is by a score of other testimonies from the same interested and inspired Teacher, is a contradiction to the common thought of Trinitarians, that the Son is the Father: it is in direct conflict with the statement of the catechism, that they are "equal in power and in glory." Nevertheless the Father "loveth [filio--has affection for] the Son," and as a consequence of this affection has shown, is showing, and will show forth through him greater marvels, greater wonders. And our Lord Jesus has promised us that, as the Elder Brother (of the Gospel house of sons), whatsoever the Father shall make known to him he in turn will make known to us. This is brought forcibly

to our attention in the Book of Revelation, which expressly declares that it is--"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." (John 15:15; Rev. 1:1.) Our Elder Brother, our Bridegroom, our Captain, has promised further, that in due time we also shall share with him in doing greater works than any which he performed at his first advent.--John 14:12.

Amongst the greater works the Lord mentions the quickening of the dead--claiming that, as the Father has the power to raise the dead, so also this power is granted to the Son. Nor should we suppose that our Lord, in this statement, referred to the awakening of Lazarus, and the son of the widow of Nain, and the daughter of Jairus. These at most were awakenings, and not, in the full sense of the word, resurrections--these individuals were not lifted up completely out of death into the perfection of life. Rather, we may suppose that our Lord was looking down into the future--to the resurrection of the Church in glory, honor and immortality, and to the subsequent resurrection (under trial or judgment) of the world during the Millennial age.

This thought is borne out by the statement of vs. 22, that all judgment has been transferred to the Son. The resurrection life is to be the reward of those who will successfully pass the judgment. The first resurrection will be the reward of those who are "overcomers" in the trial in progress during this Gospel age, under the conditions of the high calling, and its narrow way to glory, honor and immortality. The Church is on judgment, on trial, under the terms of this high calling, now, during this Gospel age. The Lord will also judge the world of mankind redeemed by his own sacrifice,--during the Millennial age: and in that judgment of the world he has promised to associate with himself the Bride class, whose judgment trial is now in progress. (1 Cor. 6:2.) Those of the world of mankind, awakened and brought to trial during the Millennial age, who shall develop characters in harmony with righteousness, and fully acceptable to the Judge, shall attain to full resurrection, and enter life, complete and everlasting, at the close of the Millennial age--at the close of their day of trial, while the residue will be cut off in the Second Death.

That this judgment of the world did not begin at our Lord's first advent, we have his own testimony: "I came not to judge the world." (John 12:47.) And again, his declaration, "My Word shall judge you in the last day"--the last thousand-year day of the seven, the Millennial Day. It is in full harmony with this that the Apostle declares, "God hath appointed a day [period--epoch] in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained"--the Christ, Head and body.--John 12:48; Acts 17:31; 1 Cor. 6:2.

In harmony with this, also, is the statement in vs. 17 and Heb. 4:4,10. God rested from his work of creation when man became a transgressor, and instead of proceeding with the work, he abandoned it, placing a curse upon it,--a penalty of death upon his chief handiwork. But altho he abandoned the matter, in one sense of the word, he did not abandon it in his purpose, but intended and foretold that he would raise up a seed of the woman which should eventually crush the Evil One, delivering the race from his power--implying incidentally the revocation of the death penalty, a resurrection. Our Lord Jesus was in person the promised Seed of the woman, but, as we have already seen, the divine plan included also the Church, "members of his body." The sufferings of Christ, Head and body, are mentioned in the promise of Eden, as the bruising of the heel by the serpent. This has been in progress throughout the Gospel age; Jesus was crucified by the forces of evil, yielding himself up a sin offering; and the members of his Body are suffering with him, "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."--Col. 1:24.

Soon the time will come when this great Seed, the Christ, shall be fully glorified, all the members sharing in the glory of the Head: and then, as the Apostle declares, "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." (Rom. 16:20.) And it is this great Deliverer, whose Head and Lord has redeemed the world with his own precious blood, that the Father has appointed to be the Judge of the redeemed race, when it shall be on trial during the Millennial age, while Satan is bound. The work of the Son will not be complete until all evil has been thoroughly subjugated, which will be at the close of the Millennial age. He will reclaim, by a knowledge of the truth, and chastisements and corrections in righteousness, so many as are willing, and the residue shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:23.) And when he shall thus have put down all opposing authority, rule and power, the Apostle assures us, he will deliver up the Kingdom to God even the Father. Thus the Father worked previously to man's fall, and has committed the work of reconciliation of man to the Son, and also the judgment of the race, and will receive it back again under divine jurisdiction, when, through the Son as his agent, he shall have made all things new.--1 Cor. 15:24; Rev. 21:5.

It is therefore a great mistake to say, as some do, "Jesus is our Judge, like the Father," for our Lord's own words assure us that the Father judgeth no man, having "committed all judgment unto the Son." The judgment of the Church, in progress during this Gospel

believe and obey to the extent of their ability have everlasting life guaranteed to them, as a result of thus favorably passing the present judgment or trial. These are assured that they will not need to come into the general judgment of the world during the Millennial age, because they pass from death unto life as the result of the judgment of this age. The word "condemnation," in this verse, signifies judgment, and is so rendered in the Revised Version.--Compare 1 Cor. 11:32.

In vs. 25 the general judgment of mankind during the Millennial age is specially referred to, when all the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, be brought to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4), and when they that hear (obey that knowledge) shall live: shall be rescued not only from the tomb but also from all the imperfections, mental, moral and physical, which have come upon the world through sin--be raised up to perfection of life. The fact that this judgment work begins with a little flock during this Gospel age is suggested by the expression that the hour for the dead to hear the voice of the Son of Man has already commenced, "now is." The whole world, from the divine standpoint, is spoken of as dead, because it is already nine-tenths dead and under sentence of death to the full. It was from this standpoint that our Lord said to one, "Let the dead bury their dead."

Our Lord realized that his hearers could not appreciate the possibility of his doing so great a work as a man, and hence he makes the explanation that the Father, who has life inherent (immortality), hath given (promised) the Son the same inherent life (immortality), as well as given commandment (authorization) that he, the Son of Man, to whom the work was committed, as declared in the prophets, should execute judgment--the divine will. And it is in view of this high honor conferred upon the Son by the Father that we are told (vs. 23), "that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (Revised Version.) The explanation of this statement follows, and shows that the honor to the Son is as the Father's appointed representative and agent in the great work, saying, "He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent him."

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FEEDING THE HUNGRY.

--FEB. 19.--JOHN 6:1-14.--

"I am the bread of life."--John 6:35.

"AFTER these things," says John; and various connected incidents show that it was nearly

a year after the miracle and discourse of our last lesson. It is well understood that the Gospel of John does not claim to be a full record of our Lord's sayings and doings. It would appear to have been written after the other Gospels. John evidently recollected matters which, in whole or in part, had been overlooked by the others, and his Gospel sets forth some very interesting incidents and prayers and discourses, whose omission would have been a serious loss to us. Thus we see how God operates in various ways to accomplish his purpose. He could have miraculously used any one of the Evangelists to give the full and detailed account, but he chose rather to allow each to state himself in his own manner, and to supply the details in four narratives, in preference to one.

This very arrangement, indeed, has led to a greater search of the Scriptures, and has thus brought the various details more pointedly to the attention of the Lord's people. We are to remember, however, that, altho a liberty was allowed, the matter was nevertheless under divine care and supervision, to the intent that the records should not err in their statement. Our Lord's promise we may rely upon, viz., that whatsoever the apostles bound or loosed on earth, is bound or loosed in heaven, so completely were they under divine direction and protection against deception and misstatement.

News had just reached our Lord and his disciples that John the Baptist had been beheaded, and "when Jesus heard of it he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart." (Matt. 14:13.) Our Lord withdrew, probably in part to have an opportunity for private meditation and conference with his disciples, who undoubtedly would be greatly agitated by this news, and needed his calming influence and assurance that Herod could have no power over him or them except such as might be permitted of the Father. The wilderness place to which they went was just outside the boundary of Herod's dominion, near Bethsaida. And the fact that our Lord's conference with his disciples had a pacifying and strengthening effect is evidenced by their return that same night to Galilee, Herod's territory.

It was while they were thus quietly aside, on the mountain slopes on the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, that they beheld "a great company coming toward them." The largeness of the company is accounted for by the fact that it was near the time of the Feast of the Passover, and according to custom large numbers of the religiously inclined were on their pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

From the other Gospels we learn that the day was spent in healing the sick of the multitude, and preaching to them the things pertaining to the Kingdom of

God, and that it was toward evening that they were miraculously fed on five barley loaves and two small fishes,--and had twelve baskets of fragments remaining. (Matt. 14:15; Mark 6:34; Luke 9:11.) It is remarkable that the Gospels do not parade our Lord's generosity and kindness, but content themselves with recording the simple facts: yet these facts give ample testimony to those who have eyes to see, showing them in him "the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Here, for instance, we note the fact that he specially sought rest and privacy with his disciples, yet when he saw the multitude he was "moved with compassion toward them:" he could not refrain from giving them his vitality in curing their ailments, and pouring in the oil and wine of truth, and satisfying their hungers and thirstings of heart with the good promises of the Kingdom, and finally providing them natural food. And such will be the spirit of all the Lord's followers, in proportion as they have learned of him, and become partakers of the spirit of his holiness. Their delight will be, not in self-gratification, but chiefly in "doing good unto all men as they have opportunity, especially to the household of faith." "So shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."--Gal. 6:10; John 13:35.

John's narrative, in connection with those of the other Evangelists, shows us that our Lord counseled with the apostles respecting what should be done with the multitude, and that their general advice was that they be sent away, that they might find lodging and victuals in the nearest villages. The people themselves seem to have been so entranced with the good tidings that they entirely forgot their own necessities. Our Lord specially addressed Philip, respecting the matter, because his home was in the neighboring city of Bethsaida.

The general conclusion of all the apostles was that the feeding of such a multitude was beyond any reasonable hope of theirs. And it must have been with bewilderment that they obeyed the Lord's direction to seat the people in orderly companies, and proceeded to distribute their scanty supply. All had sufficient to satisfy their hunger, and the fragments that remained, gathered into the haversacks (mistranslated baskets) in which the twelve apostles carried their provisions, were a good supply for their future necessities. Thus did our Lord additionally teach economy, frugality. The disciples and the multitude would be very likely to draw the inference that, where there was such power to create and to multiply, there would be no necessity for frugality. The course pursued by our Lord is a valuable lesson for our time also. It implies that those who receive of the Lord's bounty should be none the less appreciative of it, and careful in its use. According to the divine arrangement, it would seem to be the proper thing that wilful waste, sooner or later, brings

corresponding woful want.

The Lord's people should be careful to avoid wasting, in earthly food and temporal matters, not because of selfishness, and a desire to hold and accumulate, but, as the Apostle explains, "that ye may have to give"--that thus we may have opportunity to be imitators of our Heavenly Father, who is continually giving to the needy, some of his blessings being bestowed alike upon the worthy and unworthy. (Eph. 4:28.)

The same principle applies to some extent in spiritual matters. We may partake of our spiritual blessings to our full satisfaction, and with thankfulness; but we are not to waste spiritual privileges because they are God's free gifts. Rather are we to prize every spiritual morsel and to gather up in store for future needs of ourselves and others. The memory is our "basket," our haversack, and divine provision is so bountiful that every disciple may gather his basket full.

The same generous heart which had compassion upon the multitudes, declaring that they were as sheep having no shepherd, and following blind guides, and about to fall with them into the ditch of Israel's great calamity, and who taught them, healed them and fed them, is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. We may know, therefore, that he is to-day looking with

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sympathetic compassion upon the multitudes of so-called "Christendom." He sees that the great doctors of finance, of sociology and of theology, tho thoroughly blind and disputing with each other respecting the way, are nevertheless leading the people on to the great time of trouble that is nearing. He beholds the multitudes, dissatisfied with the husks of human tradition and philosophy, hungering and thirsting after righteousness (truth), yet blinded from seeing it, by prejudice and superstition, and led of error by priestcraft and human subserviency. He sees the dark night of trouble approaching, but before sending the people away he instructs all who are his disciples to supply them with something to eat--with spiritual food, with truths pertaining to the Kingdom, which will afford them some strength and some encouragement during the dark hour of that "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."

The Lord has already made provision sufficient in quantity and variety, under his blessing; and he bids each of his specially consecrated ones to have faith, and to go forth in the distributing of the food, trusting the result to him. Brethren and sisters, let us be energetic in handing forth the bread of life, the "meat in due season," to the multitude,--to whoever is hungry enough to desire to partake. Those who thus distribute will find in the end--their own vessels full.

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NOTIFY US RESPECTING MEMORIAL CELEBRATION.

Will all the little groups appoint some one of their number to notify us the next day respecting, (1) The interest manifested; (2) If a blessing were enjoyed; (3) The number in attendance. Only a few words are necessary, and postal cards will suffice. We are interested in having such reports complete as possible, and thank you all now, in advance, for them.

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ALLEGHENY CHURCH MEETINGS.

Preaching and divine worship every Sunday afternoon in Bible House chapel, No. 56 Arch street, at 3 P.M.

Cottage meetings for prayer and testimony on Wednesday evenings; and Dawn Circles for Bible Study on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings--various localities, Pittsburg and vicinity--inquire at WATCH TOWER office.

MARCH 1ST AND 15TH ISSUES OF THIS JOURNAL
--WILL BE A NEW EDITION OF--
"TABERNACLE SHADOWS OF BETTER SACRIFICES"
(IN PAMPHLET FORM FOR CONVENIENCE).
NEXT ISSUE IN USUAL FORM WILL BE APRIL 1ST.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

HOW sacred the memories which gather around the anniversary of our Lord's death! It calls to mind the Father's love as exhibited in the entire plan of salvation, the center of which was the gift of his son as our Redeemer. It calls specially to our thoughts him who gave himself a ransom--a corresponding price--for all. Then faith comes still nearer to him who "suffered, the just for the unjust," and with grateful, overflowing hearts and with tear-dimmed eyes we whisper, My Savior! My Redeemer! My Lord and Master! "He loved me, and gave himself for me." Ah, yes!--

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend:
Life and joy and peace possessing

From my best and truest Friend."

How blessed the thought that he cares to have us think of him and call him ours;--he so great--"far above angels" and every title that is named, next to the Father himself,--and we so insignificant, so imperfect, so unworthy of such a friendship. And yet, to think that "he is not ashamed to call us brethren;" and that he is pleased to have us memorialize his death; and that he gave us the bread to emblemize his broken flesh, and the wine to emblemize his shed blood,--the one to represent the human rights and privileges purchased for all, and of which all may partake, the other to represent the life he gave which secured everlasting life for all who will accept it!

How delightful, too, to count, as he and the Jews did, the days and the hours, even until finally, "the hour being come," he sat down with his disciples to celebrate the death of the typical Paschal lamb, and to consider the deliverance of Israel's firstborn from the great destruction which came upon Egypt, and the subsequent deliverance accomplished through those firstborn ones for all the typical Israel of God.

How precious to look beyond the type which was commemorated, and to hear the Master, as he took new emblems say, "This [celebrating of the Passover] do [henceforth] in remembrance of me!" Ah yes! in the crucified One we can now see "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." "Christ our passover [lamb] is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast;" for as oft as we do this we do show forth our Lord's death until he come again--until, his Kingdom having come, we shall be permitted to drink with him the new wine (the new life and joy) in the Kingdom.--Matt. 26:29; 1 Cor. 5:7,8; 11:26.

But we are not only privileged to enjoy the favors of our Lord's sacrifice (by partaking of its merit and its consequent advantages; viz., justification and restitution rights and privileges by faith, as redeemed), but more than this: we are invited to share with our Master in the sacrifice and in its glorious reward. He says to us, Whoever is in sympathy with my work and its results--whoever would share my Kingdom and join in its work of blessing the world--let him also be broken with me, and let him join me in drinking the cup of self-denial, unto death. To all such he says, "Drink ye all of it." The Apostle confirms this thought, saying: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion [fellowship] in the blood [death] of Christ? The bread [loaf] which we break is it not the communion [common-union] in the body of Christ? For we being many [members of Christ's body] are one loaf and one body; for we are all partakers of that one loaf."--1 Cor. 10:16,17.

Gladly, dear Lord, we eat (appropriate to our necessities) the merit of thy pure human nature sacrificed for us--for our justification. Gladly, too, we

will partake of the cup of suffering with thee, realizing it to be a blessed privilege to suffer with thee, that

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in due time we may also reign with thee;--to be dead with thee, that in the everlasting future we may live with thee and be like thee and share thy love and thy glory as thy bride. Oh! that we may be faithful, not only in the performance of the symbol, but also of the reality. Blessed Lord, we hear thy word saying, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup and be baptized with my baptism." Lord, we are not of ourselves able thus to sacrifice; but thy grace is sufficient for us, for we are wholly thine, now and forever.

Oh! what a thought; that if faithful in the present privilege of drinking of his cup and being broken with our Lord as his body, we with him will soon be that "Church of the first-born ones whose names are written in heaven," and as such shall constitute the Royal Priesthood, which, under our great High Priest, will lead out of the Egyptian bondage and slavery all those slaves of Sin whose groanings and prayers for deliverance have entered the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

These will be some of the thoughts which will constrain numbers of the Lord's people all over the world to meet in little groups (and sometimes quite alone with Jesus) on the evening of March 26th, next, after six o'clock, to celebrate on its anniversary the most notable event in the history of the Universe of God. (We prefer to get the date of this anniversary memorial as exact as possible; tho we do not understand that it would seriously matter if we had not the exact day: it is the event and not the day that we celebrate. Nevertheless, a uniform annual date is desirable.)

Eat and drink, O beloved, says the Bridegroom to his spouse. (Sol. Song 5:1.) Let us eat and drink reverently,

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devotedly, thoughtfully, prayerfully, tearfully perhaps, as we each think of our Redeemer's love and sacrifice, and pledge ourselves afresh to be dead with him. Meet with any who recognize him as their ransom, and who are pleased to do this in remembrance of him--or else do it alone.

Let your heart be so full of the reality that forms and ceremonies will generally be forgotten, except such as are needed for decency and order. Prepare beforehand some sort of "fruit of the vine." Our preference is for stewed-raisin juice or unfermented grape juice: and for bread either Jewish unleavened bread or plain water-crackers, which are about the same in substance --flour, water and salt, without leaven. Leaven being a symbol of sin or corruption, yeast-raised bread

is not an appropriate symbol of our Lord, the "undefiled and separate from sinners."

The Church at Allegheny will meet at "Bible House" chapel, Arch street, at 7 P.M. of the day named. All who trust in the substitutionary sacrifice finished at Calvary, and who are fully consecrated to the Redeemer's service, and who can make it convenient to meet with us, will be made very welcome. Some who profess that their wills are fully immersed into the will of Christ, desire to symbolize their baptism; and an opportunity will be afforded after the 3 P.M. services.

On the subject of Baptism see your TOWER for June 15, '93. For further particulars concerning the Memorial Supper, see March 1st, '98 TOWER.

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AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

FEBRUARY 26.--JOHN 7:14,28-37.

"If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

AS A RESULT of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, noted in our last lesson, the multitude pronounced our Lord a great prophet, and proposed to take him by force to make him king. He, however, knew that such was not the Father's program; that, on the contrary, he was to fulfil a mission of contradiction of sinners, which would end in death, and that the Kingdom to which he was heir could only thus be attained--that the Kingdom promised him was not of this world, not of the present order and arrangement, but of a new dispensation. Our Lord therefore sent his disciples away by boat, while he himself withdrew to the mountain, subsequently meeting his disciples, walking on the water.

Six months more of preaching and teaching in Galilee, without any apparent effort to take advantage of the popular interest in his miracles, to forward his cause as a king, began to tell upon his brethren--his kinsfolk--who began to lose confidence, for their interest all along had been rather of pride than of faith. Now the time to go up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles having come, they noticed that Jesus was making no special preparations to attend. They were anxious that his power should be put to the test--Either do something, and make yourself great in the eyes of the whole world, or give the whole matter up and admit that your claims to Messiahship are fraudulent--was their attitude. Hence they said, Why do you not go up to the feast? Any person who makes such claims as you put forth should not make them in secret, but should seek the largest opportunities

for publicity. You tell us that you have eternal life, and that you are able to give it to others, but apparently you are afraid to risk your life: "For neither did his brethren believe on him."

Our Lord's answer pointed out that it was very different with them than with him--they might go at any time, but he was under certain restrictions. They

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had not drawn upon them the murderous animosity of the most influential and powerful class of the nation. He had done this, by faithfulness to the truth which he came to the world to serve. While it is true that "Jesus did not walk in Jewry (Judea) because the Jews sought to kill him," yet this evidently was not for any fear of death, but because he realized that "his hour was not yet come." He felt it, therefore, to be his duty to cooperate to the extent of his ability with what he knew respecting the Father's plan, and not to ignore that plan so as to require a special miracle for his deliverance, that the divine plan might not be frustrated.

There are lessons here for all who are seeking to walk in the Master's footsteps:--

(1) If we are finding no opposition in the world it is because we have not been faithful to our Father's Word, and to our appointed mission in connection with it,--not been about the Father's business: for our Master declared that it would be with us, his followers, as with himself--not being of the world the world would hate us, would say all manner of evil against us falsely, and think that those who persecuted us did God service. The positive declaration is, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Tim. 3:12.) We are still in this time of persecution; the great Adversary is not yet bound, and if we are entirely free from such opposition it is a sure indication that we are not living up to our privileges in godliness--not following closely enough in the footsteps of Jesus to incite the animosity of the Adversary and his blinded servants.

(2) We are to remember that the special opponents of our Master were not the unbelieving world, but were the unbelieving, unfaithful professors of holiness and of complete devotion to the divine law. So with us, our special opponents and defamers and persecutors are to be looked for inside and not outside the pale of the nominal Christian church.

(3) We may profit by our Lord's example in not needlessly and unwisely placing ourselves in positions of jeopardy, expecting the Lord to miraculously intervene for our preservation. Like our Lord, however, we are not under any consideration to deny the truth, nor to forsake a duty for the preservation of our lives. We see that when the most wise and appropriate time

came our Lord went to the Feast, and spoke fearlessly and boldly. So our caution in the protection of life, etc., is not to be the result of fear and lack of confidence in divine providence, nor lack of courage to do our duty, but merely the caution and prudence which desires to cooperate as far as possible with the divine will.

Our Lord knew the disposition of the Pharisees to kill him. He knew also that they would hesitate a great deal more to make any attempt against him on the occasion of these Feasts, when Jerusalem was full of visitors, thousands of whom would be from Galilee and more or less his friends and the friends of his disciples, who were also Galileans. He may have known, too, of some arrangements among the rulers to apprehend him at the beginning of the feast, during the commotion incident to the arrival of pilgrims. At all events, acting upon his own superior knowledge of the situation, he deferred his going until after the multitudes had gone, and then went in a quiet manner, avoiding teaching, miracles, etc.

In the midst of the feast-week he appeared in the Temple, teaching the people. His enemies had sought him previously, and were rather surprised that he had not come as usual, but now they beheld him teaching publicly and boldly; but they refrained from laying hands on him, because they feared the people--they feared that too large a proportion would have at least a sympathy for his teachings, recognizing that he "taught them as one having authority," with positiveness, and not with uncertainty, as themselves. The fact that many of the multitude were favorably impressed, and inquired amongst themselves whether or not they could expect any greater miracles from Messiah at his coming than those which Jesus had already performed, and the fact also that he was teaching publicly, and the rulers did not interfere with him, led some to inquire, "Do the rulers really acknowledge that this is the Messiah?"

Thus the rulers saw that their timidity was really advancing the cause which they hated, and they sent officers to take him; but apparently these felt that they must hear some rebellious, anarchistic or blasphemous utterances from his lips or they would not be justified in the eyes of the people in making the arrest, and so they waited, to watch him. They were charmed with "the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," and returned without him, saying, "Never man spake like this man." Then Nicodemus, in his heart believing Jesus to be a teacher, sent from God, tho doubtful of his being the Messiah, raised his voice, being a member of the Sanhedrin, and expostulated, defending the officers, and exclaiming, "Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?" Even this plea for justice was met with the sarcastic remark, "Art thou also of Galilee?" And

the meeting disbanded, angry because they were foiled in their murderous attempt.

This should be true as far as possible with all of the Lord's footstep followers: their speech should be with grace, with moderation, the overflow of hearts full of loving sympathy for the truth and all who love

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and seek it. Their words should always be well within the limits of reason and righteousness, and strictly in conformity to the Word of the Lord. And their manner, their conduct, as living epistles, should harmonize with this, so that even their enemies would marvel, and take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus and learned of him.

Having in mind the murderous designs of his enemies, and that thus it behooveth the Son of Man to suffer and to rise from the dead, and knowing that the end of his pilgrimage was only about six months distant, our Lord said, I will be with you but a little while, "and then I go unto him that sent me." Then, taking into account the predicted troubles to come upon Israel, expounded to his Apostles subsequently (Matt. 24) and that they would endure much before he would offer himself to them again as the Messiah at the second advent, he added, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me." The Jews have been seeking the Messiah during the eighteen centuries of trouble experienced since that time, for, as the Apostle declares, "the rest were blinded," except the remnant which received the Lord at his first advent--"the day of their visitation." So our Lord declared to them subsequently, "Ye shall see me no more until that day when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The prophet tells us that they shall then look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as an only beloved son, and that then the Lord will pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication, their blindness being then turned away.--Rom. 11:27-32.

When our Lord declared that they could not follow him to the place to which he was going, the people speculated whether or not he meant that as he had shown himself willing to preach to the lowest classes of Israel (publicans and sinners), he might now purpose to leave Palestine entirely, and go to the "dispersed amongst the Gentiles," the scattered Jews amongst the Greeks,--speaking the Greek language and not the Syrian, the language of the Jews in Palestine. Here we see afresh the error of the so-called "Anglo-Israelites," who have a theory about "lost" (?) tribes of Israel. The scattered Jews were not considered lost in our Lord's time, evidently, and this statement of the multitude is in full accord with the statement of the Apostle, when he speaks of "the twelve tribes scattered abroad." The only sense in which

these tribes are lost is that they have become so thoroughly combined and amalgamated that all tribal distinctions are lost, and very few Jews in the world to-day have the slightest idea of which tribe their ancestors belonged to.

Our Lord's remark, "Thither ye cannot come," is worthy of consideration from another standpoint. He did not mean that he was about to establish a kingdom, and that they could not get into the kingdom, but he did mean that he was going to heaven, and that they could not come to heaven. This is evident from his further statement, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I have said, therefore, unto you that ye shall die in your sins."--John 8:21-29.

But the poor, disbelieving Jews are not the only ones who cannot go to heaven. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the holy prophets, have not gone there. (See Acts 2:34; Heb. 11:39,40.) Moreover, this same declaration was repeated by the Lord to his believing followers, saying "Yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and I said unto the Jews, Whither I go you cannot come; so now I say to you." (John 13:33.) It is because the believers of the past as well as the believers of the present age could not go to our Lord, that all of them who were rightly instructed from his Word looked earnestly for his return, his second advent, his coming in glory and kingdom power, according to his promise, "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am ye may be also."--John 14:3.

Many have lost sight of the hope set before us in the Gospel, and have accepted instead a hope that has no foundation, except like the errors of fleshly Israel, in "the traditions of the elders"--the hope that when they die they will not be dead, but more alive than ever: a hope that is as contrary to reason as to the Word of God, in which it finds not one solitary word of support. "But he that hath this hope in him [the hope of the second coming of the Lord to make up his jewels, to receive his faithful ones to himself] purifieth himself even as he is pure." There is no greater incentive to faithfulness than this, the true Gospel hope.

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles was the eighth day, for it lasted in all for that period. The seven days of the feast were devoted to sacrificing, seventy bullocks being burned upon the altar, and understood to be sacrificed on behalf of the whole world, but the eighth day was specially a Jewish day, and was the most joyous day of this joyful thanksgiving feast. Describing it, Geikie says:--

"The whole week was full of excitement, the great altar smoking with whole burnt offerings of oxen, lambs and rams, besides the solemnity of the morning

and evening sacrifice, the Sabbath sacrifice, and countless private voluntary sacrifices and offerings of all kinds. Every available spot inside Jerusalem, and in the hollows, and on the slopes around it (which, by legal fiction, were counted holy ground) was covered with huts or tabernacles of wattled or interplaited twigs, set off by

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branches of trees, fronds of palms, and all kinds of ornamental greenery."

But the last day of the feast, called the great day, the day of special rejoicing, had one peculiar feature --its Water-offering, and it was on this day, and probably in connection with the pouring out of this libation, that, taking it for a text, our Lord lifted up his voice, saying, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." He is here presenting himself as the giver of the water of life, as in the more private discourse to the woman of Samaria. He is the fountain of life, the fountain of truth, the fountain of refreshment, to all who accept him. In every human heart there are thirstings, longing desires, and all who have sought to satisfy these desires from earthly fountains of fame or pleasure or wealth have found that they do not satisfy; but those who have received the water of life, the truth, the grace of God in Christ, have received the only satisfying portion. Lord, ever more give us of this water.

An able writer, Edersheim, gives us a very interesting account of the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the great day, as follows:--

"Let us suppose ourselves in the number of worshipers who, on 'the last, the great day of the feast,' are leaving their 'booths' at daybreak to take part in the service. The pilgrims are all in festive array. In his right hand each carries a branch consisting of a myrtle or willow branch tied together with a palm branch (Lev. 23:40). In his left hand he carries a bough of the so-called Paradise apple, a species of citron. Thus armed, the festive multitude would divide into three bands. One of these, to the sound of music, started in a procession from the temple. It followed a priest who bore a golden pitcher, capable of holding three log (rather more than two pints). They proceeded to the fountain of Siloam, in the valley south of the temple. Here the priest filled from this fountain the golden pitcher, and brought it back into the court of the temple, amid the shouts of the multitude, and the sound of cymbals and trumpets. The rejoicing was so great that the rabbis used to say that he who had never been present at this ceremony, and at the other similar ceremonies by which this feast was distinguished, did not know what rejoicing meant. The return was so timed that they should arrive just as they were laying the pieces of the sacrifice on the great

altar of burnt offering, toward the close of the ordinary morning sacrifice service. The water from the golden pitcher was poured upon the altar. Immediately the great 'Hallel,' consisting of Psa. 113-118, was chanted antiphonally, or rather with responses, to the accompaniment of the flute. At the close of this festive morning service there was a pause in the services while the priests prepared to offer the special sacrifices for the day. At this moment there arose, so loud as to be heard throughout the temple, the voice of Jesus. He interrupted not the services, for they had for the moment ceased; he interpreted, and he fulfilled them."

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"YE SHALL BE FREE INDEED."

--MARCH 5.--JOHN 8:12,31-36.--

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."--John 8:36.

OUR Lord's discourses of this lesson are presumed to have been delivered on the day following the eighth or great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, referred to in our last lesson: this conclusion is based upon the statement of the first verse of this chapter and the last verse of the seventh chapter. It appears that, altho the eighth was the last day of the Feast proper, another day was kept to a certain degree, the people being loth to relinquish the joys of the season. Another view is that this was a part of the discourse of the eighth day.

It is said that during this festival there were two great lights near the porch of the Temple, where Jesus discoursed (the Court of the Women--the portion of the Temple structure open to women as well as to men). These lights or candelabra, ornamented and gilded, were about seventy-five feet high, and threw a great

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light over the city, extraordinary for that period. It is presumed that this may have given Jesus the text for a discourse on the light of the world: but it is possible that our Lord took occasion to make this observation at the time of the performance of a certain ceremony by the Jews, described by Buxdorf as follows:

The ninth day, or day after the expiration of the eighth, which belonged to the "Feast of Tabernacles," is a solemn day likewise, and is called, "The Feast of Joy for the Law;" because on that day the last section of the Law was read, the rest having been read weekly during the course of the preceding Sabbaths. On this ninth day the custom of the Jews was to take all

the books of the Law out of the chest, and to put a candle into it, in allusion to Prov. 6:23, and more particularly to Psa. 119:105.--Synag. Jud., c. xxii.

This act, symbolically considered, would imply, first, that the Law was a light, and secondly, that ultimately the Jewish Law would be superseded by the True Light--the Gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Either this last, or the two great lamps, or both of them, were quite a sufficient suggestion and illustration of the lesson which our Lord designed to inculcate. The thought of the one is that the world is in darkness, and needs the Light of Life, and that he who walks in the light will not stumble. The thought or suggestion of the other is equally comprehensible, implying that ultimately the veil of ignorance shall be removed, and the spirit of the truth shall be discerned,

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and thus Jesus, as the True Light, shall lighten every man that cometh into the world, respecting the divine character and law, and the conditions upon which eternal life may be enjoyed.

Another suggestion is that, as this Feast of Tabernacles represented the period of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness, en route to Canaan, the great light to be followed would probably refer to the pillar of fire and cloud, which led Israel during the wilderness journey as a great light, and which was to their enemies who pursued them a cloud of great darkness. This thought is in full accord with the others, for we realize that spiritual Israel is journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, through the wilderness of sin, and that our Lord and his teachings are a light and a guide to his people--to the entire household of faith, but especially to those who are vigilant and attentive to the heavenly counsel.

That relationship to Christ is not a matter which, being put on in the instant of consecration, can never be dissolved, is clearly shown by the statement of vss. 31 and 32. Therein our Lord sets forth that discipleship is the thing that is entered into by those who accept him as the Savior and the privileges and blessings obtainable only through him. And discipleship, as here shown, does not signify mastery: on the contrary, it signifies that the one who becomes a disciple is, until perfect, a novice, who becomes a disciple in order that under the Master's instructions he may come, morally and intellectually, to the full stature of manhood in Christ. A great mistake is made on this point, not only by worldly people, who expect perfection in all who have named the name of Christ, but also by Christians themselves, who vainly imagine that a fulness of consecration to the Lord should produce in them instantaneous perfection: some vainly and sinfully

claiming that they are without sin, and thereby give the inference that they have no need of a Savior, a Mediator, and his merit, to cover their blemishes of omission and commission.

The correct thought to get is the one which is clearly set forth in our Lord's Word; viz., that sinners are not called to discipleship, but are called to repentance and faith in the Redeemer for the forgiveness of their sins (justification): but this is all to the intent that as justified persons they may, by a full consecration to the Lord, become his disciples,--pupils in the school of Christ.

Why do we enter this school? What lessons are we to learn in it? And for what reasons do we seek to learn these lessons, and consecrate ourselves to their study?

The incentive to enter the school of Christ is the heavenly Father's invitation to justified believers who approach his throne of grace by the new and living way--Christ: to such he extends a "high calling," inviting such to become "sons of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

This school of Christ may be considered a school of self-denial, of self-sacrifice, prompted by love and maintained by devotion. The great Teacher of this school, appointed by the Father to instruct those who shall be accepted as his "brethren," was himself educated in the same school, under the Father's inspection and direction--"He learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect [acceptable to the high station to which he was called--the divine nature] he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."--Heb. 5:8.

It was necessary that the "Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," should be tried in all points like as we are--that his obedience to the Father's will at any cost should be fully proved and demonstrated, as well as his love for his neighbor, humanity, whom by the Father's arrangement he came to redeem and to uplift. Much more, it is necessary that we who belong to this fallen but redeemed race, having been called to joint-heirship with him, should receive instruction and disciplining in this school which the Father has provided for those invited to be his sons, --partakers of the divine nature,--to the intent that we may fully put on the spirit of Christ, which received the Father's unstinted approval. Indeed, we have the plain declaration to the effect that we are all called according to a predestination on God's part that we might become copies of his Son, and thus be "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light," as joint-heirs in the Kingdom.

From this we see that in joining the Lord, through faith and consecration, we are not proclaiming ourselves

graduates and heirs, but are proclaiming ourselves students, disciples, who desire to be prepared to inherit "the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." If this thought be kept in mind, as the divine teaching on this subject, it will help to prevent our discouragement with ourselves when we find that unavoidably we do those things which we ought not to have done, and leave undone those things which we ought to have done, and that in our flesh dwells no perfection.--1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 7:25.

Moreover, we are to remember that it is not the flesh that has entered the school of Christ, and is under his instructions and preparation for the Kingdom,--for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. (1 Cor. 15:50.) Our acceptance of the divine call to spirit nature meant the renouncement of the earthly nature in

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every sense of the word, and meant our begetting as new creatures--"sons of God." It is the "new creature," the new mind, the new will, that is in the school of Christ, and that is to be perfected--to be brought into full accord with the divine will--to become a copy or likeness of the Lord. We will never succeed in getting our flesh into absolute harmony with the divine law, because of its imperfections, inherited and otherwise. And he who is looking for perfection of his flesh, and who is resting his faith therein, must of necessity have a poor hope of ever attaining to the likeness of Christ--of ever becoming one of the predestinated class--"a copy of his Son."--Rom. 8:29.

It is unnecessary that we should point out that the new mind, in proportion as it develops in likeness to the mind of Christ, will relax no efforts to keep the body under, with its motions of sin--to keep the will of the flesh dead. Surely, no spirit-begotten son of God could allow sin to reign in his mortal body: should sin to any degree control him, it will not be willingly, and hence could be but momentarily--until the new mind, the new creature, seeing the uprising of the flesh, would conquer it, obtaining the promised grace and help in every time of need, from the heavenly store-house of grace,--Christ.

This thought, rightly entertained, will help true disciples to appreciate their own position, and not to be utterly cast down if overtaken in a fault of the flesh, so long as they realize that their hearts are not in sympathy with the sin and unrighteousness, but on the contrary in full sympathy with the principles and instructions of our Teacher, and longing to be pleasing and acceptable in his sight. And this correct thought will also help all such to exercise fervency of love amongst themselves, toward the "brethren," who similarly are disciples, pupils in this school,--new creatures, not according to the flesh, but according to

the spirit of their minds. If, therefore, each shall see blemishes in the flesh of the "brethren," disapproved and striven against, each should remember that the evil which he sees is that of his brother's enemy and not the evils of the brother himself, the "new creature;"--if so be that he gives us the assurance that his heart, his will, is in harmony with the Lord and his law of Love; and that he is daily seeking to learn the lessons taught in this school of Christ; and seeking to fight a successful warfare against the weaknesses of the flesh.

This is Scripturally termed walking in the light, and not stumbling about in the darkness--understanding and acting upon and in harmony with the divine arrangement--viewing matters as God views them, and as he presents them in the Word of his grace. We need not, however, expect the worldly-minded to be willing or able to view the Lord's consecrated people in this light--of love, of charity, of patience, of long suffering, of brotherly kindness. On the contrary our Adversary, "the god of this world," points out to them the hypocrite, who uses the name of Christ and the

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law of Love as a cloak of maliciousness, selfishness, etc., and this Adversary continually seeks to misrepresent the terms and conditions of the school of Christ, not only to the world and to the hypocritical professors, but also and especially to the true disciples, whom he would fain discourage and turn back from the right way--persuading them, contrary to the Word of the Lord, that they are being judged according to the flesh, and not according to the spirit, the new mind.

"Disciples indeed" are those who will finish their course in this school of Christ and graduate and become joint-heirs with their Lord, and ultimately be associates with him in teaching and blessing all the families of the earth. But joining the school does not bring these results necessarily; as our Lord indicated, it is only by continuing in the school, continuing under his direction, under the direction of his Word of truth, faithfully and perseveringly, that the grand object of this school shall be attained. Nevertheless, at each step of the journey it may be our privilege to see that we are making progress--that we are coming to know more and more of the truth, and that it is more and more making us free. We are not to expect an instantaneous knowledge nor an instantaneous freedom.

The general effect of the light of the truth, of which the Word of God is the lamp, is to break the shackles of superstition and to make people independent, but these effects are of questionable profit to those who are not disciples in the school of Christ. To others, freedom and light of knowledge are apt to bring nearly as much bane as blessing, leading often to arrogance,

self-conceit, unkindness, boastfulness, combativeness, dissatisfaction and general unhappiness.

These evil results come upon those who are made free in some respects only, and left bound in other respects: and this is the general and growing condition of the civilized world to-day, including the majority in the nominal Church.

But the true disciples, heeding the Word of the great Teacher, and continuing in all things to be his pupils, are not only set free from superstitions and ignorance, but also from the service of Sin; and receive instead a correct appreciation of their own natural weaknesses and blemishes, and of the divine mind--the truth. In consequence, their freedom is one which blesses instead of injuring them; one which brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness; one which brings patience instead of anger; one which brings generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness; one which brings joy and peace instead of

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discontent and bitterness of spirit. Truly, the Son alone can make us free indeed.

And yet, be it remembered, our freedom is not a freedom of the flesh, but a freedom of the heart, the mind, the will, the new nature. And this freedom is necessarily incomplete so long as we have this treasure in an earthen vessel--so long as the new creature must use the imperfect body of the flesh as its instrument and exponent. These "brethren" of Christ, "sons of the highest," will be free in the absolute sense only when they attain their share in the first resurrection, --"I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness."

Our Lord points out that those who commit sin are the servants of Sin, and are not free. The Apostle declares, "He that committeth sin is of the devil," and yet declares that, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 3:8; 1:8.) How, then, shall we reconcile these opposing statements and understand the Scripture which declares, "Being made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness?"--Rom. 6:18.

We answer that the Scriptures ascribe no sin to the new mind, and no perfection in righteousness to our fallen flesh: both of these facts must be kept in mind in studying this subject. The "new creature" begotten of God (whose flesh is reckoned dead) and which is represented by the new mind, CANNOT SIN, because in its very essence as the "seed" or germ, implanted by the truth, "the spirit of the truth," it is opposed to sin. (James 1:18.) This new creature is so fully in accord with righteousness, so fully imbued with the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of holiness, that it delights in holiness, and not in sin; and this must be the case so long as this begotten or holy spirit condition

continues. He that is begotten* of God sinneth not (willingly--does not approve of nor take pleasure in sin), because his seed remaineth in him,--the holy seed of the truth, the spirit of the truth, with which he was begotten, and "that wicked one toucheth him not."--1 John 3:9; 5:18.

So long as the heart (the mind, the will) is holy, in harmony with God and with righteousness,--that is to say, so long as the seed of our begetting, the spirit of the truth, the spirit of holiness, continues in us,--the new mind cannot approve of sin, but must and will be its opponent. Even tho many of the battles fought are with the members of our own fallen and weak human nature, their appetites and desires, we nevertheless, as "new creatures," are separate and distinct from the flesh and the weaknesses and imperfections of the flesh are not imputed to the new creature in Christ Jesus, but are reckoned as covered, hidden under the merits of our Lord's redemptive sacrifice.

Thus, altho our flesh, through weaknesses of the fall, and through evil besetments, may never come up to the standard of the divine law, notwithstanding all our efforts to bring it into subjection to the same, nevertheless we, as "new creatures," have the Scriptural assurance that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us ["new creatures"] who are walking not after the flesh [but resisting day by day its seductive influences to the best of our ability, and seeking divine aid] but after the spirit [we are walking,--not up to the spirit probably, but following day by day, to the intent that eventually we shall, by the grace and help of our great Teacher, arrive at the glorious condition of character as "new creatures" which even the Heavenly Father can accept as copies of his dear Son]."--Rom. 8:4.

On the contrary, if any who had thus become "new creatures" should engage in sin willingly, heartily, and live according to the flesh, it is a sure sign that the seed of truth wherewith he was begotten has perished: for so long as this seed remaineth in him, he cannot sin willingly.--1 John 3:9.

Those who are slaves of sin, who have not been made free indeed and received into sonship, may sometimes be used for a time, under present conditions, as servants of the divine plan, in the accomplishment of the plan of the ages; as, for instance, God sometimes overrules and uses the wrath of man and Satan's opposition; but God has made no provision for the everlasting continuance of sin and those who are its slaves. Ultimately the only ones who shall be privileged to exist at all will be sons of God. Not to be misunderstood here, let us remember that there are sons of two ages:--

(1) The sons of this Gospel age, begotten of the Father to joint-heirship with Jesus Christ, our Lord, as his "brethren," otherwise called the Bride of the

First-begotten, who has inherited all things. "Now are we [thus] the sons of God." This house of sons, begotten to the spirit nature, will soon be complete, and never have further additions to its members; but we are to remember that--

(2) Another house of sons is shortly to be started. For the declaration is that our Lord Jesus shall become a Father, a Life-giver, to the world--to whosoever will accept this gift of God under the terms of the New Covenant during the Millennium. Those will be the sons of the after resurrection, while the Church are to be sons of the first resurrection, the first-born ones. The Apostle, referring to these sons of Christ who will be begotten during the Millennial age, and be born to full sonship at its close, declares that they also shall be delivered "from the bondage of corruption [death] into the glorious liberty of the sons of God"--freedom from sin, death, sighing, crying, pain, etc. They will inherit these, the common privileges of all the sons of God, and in addition the earthly heritage, the "purchased possession," secured for mankind by the great sin-offering.--Rom. 8:21-23.

The restitution class of earth will thus be sons of Christ, who bought their life and who will give afresh to them that which was lost in Adam and which he redeemed at the cost of his own life. But this will not imply that such will not eventually own Jehovah as their Father also and be owned by him as his sons. On the contrary, the typical custom in Israel on this point makes this all plain. For instance, all Israelites were known as children of Abraham, children of Israel and children of Jacob.

But the central thought we would impress is that all who shall be recognized by God as sons at any time must be freed from the incubus of sin by the Only Begotten Son of God, the Mediator,--and such only are free indeed.

*Gennaio here signifies begotten, and refers to the beginning and not the completion of our "change" of nature.--See also Revised Version, and the Emphatic Diaglott.

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"WHEREAS I WAS BLIND, NOW I SEE."

--MARCH 12.--JOHN 9:1-11.--

EVERY traveler in eastern countries is sure to be impressed by the fact that blindness is much more common there than in Europe and America. Tabulated information on this subject, in Encyclopedia

Americana, shows that in 1870 the proportion of blind in America was one in 1900 population; in Europe the proportion was larger; viz., 1 in 1094; while in China the average was 1 in 400 population. According to no less an authority than Dr. Geikie, Egypt has one blind person to every 100 of population. Palestine lying near to Egypt, and having conditions very similar, especially amongst the lower classes, may be supposed to have had at least half as many; viz., the terribly large proportion of 1 in every 200 of population.

Canon Tristram, writing on the subject, says:--

"Blindness is common in Palestine to a degree which we in western lands can scarcely realize. There is probably no country in the world, except Egypt, where this affliction is so prevalent. At Gaza, for instance, it is said that one-third of the population have lost one or both eyes; and from my own observation in that city I should unhesitatingly say that the statement is not exaggerated. But amongst these cases it is difficult to find any born blind."

This blindness is in great measure the result of the scarcity of water, and the neglect of children whose eyes are in consequence attacked by the flies. The miracle brought to our attention in this lesson differs from the five other instances of the healing of the blind by our Lord, mentioned in the Scriptures, in that this man was born blind. In our Lord's time the science of surgery had not advanced so far as at present, and consequently, as herein stated by the one healed, the cure was a marvel, the like of which had never been heard of. Even yet we believe that there are only five cases on record of successful operations upon those born blind. Our Lord's cure of such blindness, with the simple prescription used, would therefore be a remarkable miracle to-day, and much more so was it in that day.

ORIENTALISM, MORMONISM, THEOSOPHY.

The question of the disciples, whether it was this man's sin or the sin of his parents that caused him to be born blind, implies either an extreme simplicity on their part, not to see that the man could not have sinned before his birth, or quite possibly it implied that some of the absurd notions of the far East--of India--had reached the Jews: one of these was and still is that each child born into the world had a previous existence, in which it had done either good or evil, the rewards or punishments of which were represented in the conditions of the present life. This absurdity is being revived, even in Christian lands, by so-called Theosophists, and by two bodies of people known as "Mormons," in the United States. It is scarcely necessary to point out that such a theory finds no support whatever in any statement of the Scriptures. Quite to the

contrary, it is most emphatically contradicted by the Scriptures, which declare man's creation to have been a direct creation from God--not a reincarnation of some being which had previously existed. This thought is consistently maintained throughout the Bible, in that we are distinctly told that the child receives its life from its father, and inherits good or evil according to his course of life, and not according to any course of life of its own in a previous condition or in another world. Thus the Lord declares that he visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation, and shows mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.--Exod. 20:5; Deut. 5:9.

This heredity, we see, comes in the natural order of things. The tendency of sin is not only to break down the moral character, but also to vitiate and impair the physical system, while godliness, altho it cannot repair and make good the impairments of sin, can check these, and hold them measurably in restraint. The Scriptures again contradict this thought, in the declaration, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin, and thus death passed upon all men because [thus] all men became sinners"--by heredity. And if by heredity then not as Theosophy, Mormonism and Orientalism declare;-- not in consequence of some previous existence and sin on the part of the child.

The whole matter is squared by the doctrine of the ransom, as all may readily see: for if our present blemishes, with which we are born into this world, were the results of sins committed in some previous condition of existence, the death of our Lord Jesus could not cancel them, and the doctrine of a ransom would be disproved. The doctrine of the ransom is unchangeably linked to the doctrine that Adam was a perfect human being in his creation, and that it was his sin and condemnation that passed to all of his posterity, through the channel of natural birth. The ransom ("corresponding price") given by our Lord Jesus, was a man's life for a man's life: that, "as by a man came death, by a man also should come the resurrection of the dead." Our Lord's ransom sacrifice, being the complete and corresponding price and offset to father Adam's sin, was constituted thereby an offset to all the results of his sin as they appear in his posterity--and thus we all were redeemed by the one sacrifice of Christ, the just for the unjust.

IS ALL SICKNESS OF THE DEVIL?

An increasingly large number of Christian people --including those who refuse medicines--are reaching the conclusion that all sickness is the direct result of

sin and the work of the devil; and therefore that godly living will prevent sickness: and that in the event of sickness, if it be a punishment for sin, medicines should not be used, but, on the contrary, prayer should be made to God for the forgiveness of sin for which sickness is a punishment, and that the cure of the disease should be expected as a reward of repentance and faith exercised.

We wonder how these Christian friends view this lesson. Like the disciples, they evidently would conclude that a man born blind must have been so born on account of sin--if not his own sin, the sins of his parents --for they account for all disease from this standpoint. Unfortunately they feel so satisfied with their conclusions on the subject that they do not inquire of the Lord, as did the apostles. And they do not hear

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his answer here given--that it was neither sin on the part of the man, nor on the part of his parents, which occasioned his blindness.

If they were students of the Word they would note also the numerous statements of Scripture which clearly point out that calamities are not always punishments for sins: for instance, our Lord's declaration respecting the Galileans whose blood was mingled with the sacrifices, and those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them. (Luke 13:1-5.) Our Lord distinctly declares that these calamities did not indicate that the sufferers were sinners above other men. Likewise, in the case of the sickness and death of Lazarus. Our Lord declares, not that it was because of sin on the part of Lazarus, but that it was permitted in order to be for the glory of God. So in this lesson he declares that the fact that the man was born blind was not on account of sin, but on the contrary, "that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

We are not denying that sin frequently brings sickness; on the contrary, we affirm this, and confirm this view with our Lord's words to some of those whom he healed, "Go, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee." There is a great difference, however, between claiming that all sickness is of sin and the devil, and admitting that much of it is produced or intensified by sin. We go even further than this, and admit that in a general way all the blemishes of the present time may be indirectly traced to our great Adversary, Satan. For had it not been for his fall, and for the temptations which he presented to our first parents, we may suppose that there would have been no sin in the world; consequently no imperfection, no sighing, no crying, no dying. But it is thoroughly wrong to credit to Satan's power all the difficulties which we experience. We are glad indeed that he is limited and restrained; because under the weaknesses with which we are born we find

quite sufficient of evil disposition and weakness received by heredity, and operating, not only between parent and child, but between neighbor and neighbor. We may be glad indeed that Satan's power to deceive is not permitted to vitiate our minds contrary to our wills, and not permitted to break down our wills, except as we give them over to sympathy and contact with evil things. We may be glad also that sickness and death working in man are not wholly subject to the prince of darkness, for altho the Scriptures declare that Satan's power is deathward, they also show us that he does not have this power unlimitedly, but can exercise it only under restraints and restrictions. This is most clearly indicated to us in the case of Job and his family. Rather, the Scriptures teach that Satan's power or influence is the result of the Adamic death operating in mankind and rendering all amenable to Satan's devices and deceptions.--Heb. 2:14.

And, by the way, Job's case is another illustration of sickness and calamities of various kinds which were not the punishments of sin; for have we not Job's own testimony of his love for God, his confidence in him, and his faithful reliance upon him? "Tho he slay me, yet will I trust in him!" And more, we have the Lord's testimony to the same effect, in favor of his servant Job, and in reproof of his friends who wrongly represented that his sickness and calamities were punishments for sin.

We conclude, then, upon Scriptural grounds, that not all sickness is in the nature of sin penalties, but that some sicknesses are as penalties. Hence, when the Christian shall find himself overtaken with sickness or other disasters, he should first of all inquire of himself, before the Lord, whether or not his difficulties are the result of--

(1) A direct violation of the laws of his reason, as, for instance, indiscretion in eating, gratification of the appetite in respect to food which he knows is not suited to his physical conditions: or violation of recognized principles of conduct, as, for instance, the endorsing of a note, contrary to the instructions of the Lord's Word (Prov. 6:1), which has brought disaster to many. If he does not find his troubles to be the result of personal indiscretion he should look--

(2) To see whether or not sin lies at his door; whether or not he has been living inconsistently, and might properly recognize his sickness or trouble as a punishment for his sin, his inconsistency. If he finds it to be so, he should of course immediately rectify the wrong to the extent of his ability, and seek forgiveness, mercy, at the throne of the heavenly grace, and expect that after suffering some chastisements he will be released.

(3) Should he fail to find a cause for his difficulties in either of the foregoing, he should consider that quite possibly his difficulty, whatever its nature, was one of the ordinary casualties of life from which God

does not wholly forefend his children--desiring them to walk by faith and not by sight: such casualties are necessary, that we may be very sympathetic with the world's troubles.

(4) In some instances, as in Job's case and the case before us in this lesson, troubles may ultimately be found to have been permitted by the Lord, to be channels of mercy and blessing, if rightly received, as in these cases.

(5) In all troubles, whether for discipline or for instruction in righteousness and the development of character, the children of God (and we are not considering others now) should forthwith begin to seek the blessing which they may be sure God has in store for them when he permits adversities. And this should not hinder their use of any means for relief upon which they can conscientiously ask the divine blessing: on the same principle that we labor for and eat the daily bread for which we pray, and which is none the less of divine provision.

The work of God made manifest in this blind man was not merely in the miracle performed upon his natural eyes. It extended beyond this, and testified to the beholders the power of God, operating in Messiah. And it extended still further, in the case of the man who was healed: leading to the opening of the eyes of his understanding, it inducted him into discipleship to Christ. Had he not been born blind, had he not passed through just the experiences through which he did pass, how can we judge that he would have been in a better condition of heart to receive the Messiah than the educated Pharisees, who, with good natural sight, were thoroughly blinded respecting Messiah, his teachings and his work, so that they crucified him?

And so it is in many instances with many who become the Lord's people. Looking back they can clearly see that things which at the time seemed to be adversities,

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disappointments, troubles, disadvantages, hardships, were really great blessings, in that they led to the opening of the eyes of their understanding,--were really providences and blessings in disguise. Those who do so realize the divine care, looking back, can praise the way God has led them day by day.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MISBELIEFS.

Amongst the various false doctrines of to-day none appears more inconsistent from the standpoint of science and Christianity than the system which brazenly and defiantly and in perversion of truth and conscience unites these two words as its name. It would be amusing,

we may be sure, to hear one of the devotees of this theory explain this Scripture. For, notwithstanding the fact that their entire system is in opposition to the Scriptures, they make a cloak, a pretense, of believing the Scriptures, and of using them in support of their theory--chiefly with novices. We may be sure that they would attempt to twist and juggle it in some manner, and get it so far away from the truth and the subject as to at least confuse many people, who have very little knowledge of the Bible, and shallow powers of reasoning, especially those "who have not their senses exercised by reason of use," in connection with Scriptural subjects.--Heb. 5:14.

Their theory is that there is no such thing as blindness, that it is simply a mistaken thought, a misbelief: since the parents of the blind man could not have misbelieved that their child would be born blind, the child itself, we presume they would say, got this misimpression before its birth. And then we have the inconsistency increased, for every one of intelligence knows that the infant at birth has no thought, correct or incorrect, on any subject. The fallacy of this theory is likewise proved, in the case of those born deaf and dumb. But argument and reason have no more force with "Christian Scientists" than have the Scriptures. Their infatuation with their delusion is so great that they are fully prepared to wrest facts, reason and Scripture--and then in perversion of all truth and consistency they call this "Christian Science."

We are not contending with them respecting their use of the word "Science," for the most stupid should be able to see that there is nothing scientific in connection with their theory: but we do contend respecting their use of the word "Christian," because many do not recognize that they have not the slightest right to the use of this term. Our contention is that a Christian Scientist of full development cannot be a Christian, in any Scriptural sense of the word.

(1) A Christian is one who believes in God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent to be a propitiation for our sins, our Redeemer and ultimately the Deliverer of all those who obey him. But Christian Science denies the very existence of God, claiming to believe merely in a principle of Good. To whatever extent a man has a good principle the God-quality is in him, say they; and to whatever extent a horse or a dog may have the good principles, to that extent these are Gods, and to be loved, etc., accordingly. Denying the Father, they of course deny also the Son whom he sent: and altho they acknowledge Jesus, it is not with a Christian acknowledgment. On the contrary, they hold that he was merely a member of the Adamic family, and that his preeminence above others was in respect to his character and teachings. And they claim that while in these respects he stood higher than other men of his day, yet he but feebly grasped at certain

principles or truths which are to-day brought to the world by her distinguished highness, "Mrs. Dr. Eddy," who thus poses as being greater than Jesus, as an elephant is greater than a mouse; tho there be certain resemblances.

(2) A Christian is one who believes in Christ as a Savior from sin as well as from its consequences;-- death and its concomitants of pain, etc. But Christian Scientists deny that there is any sin, and deny also that there are any consequences of sin; hence, logically, they deny the ransom, for how could there be a ransom for sinners if none are sinners. Thus do they deny and ignore the very foundation of Christian faith, without which no one is a Christian--Scripturally.

The absurdities of Christian Science commend themselves only to those who are either Scripturally ignorant or mentally weak; and their chief attractions are therefore--

(1) The fact that they put on, as a garment of light, gentleness and kindness of word and manner. That these do not grow out of hearts thoroughly converted to the Lord, and begotten of his spirit of love is manifest: for altho kindness and patience and gentleness are manifested, the true essence of these is lacking, namely, love. Instead of manifesting love to be the mainspring of their meekness, patience, gentleness, they manifest ambition and money-love as their inspiring motives--so far as we are able to judge the tree by its fruits. So far as we are able to learn, their efforts to promulgate their views are confined to those who are able and willing to pay for the instruction good round prices; and so far as we are able to discern, their care of the sick shows a love of money and love of fame; and hence very few of the poor of this world have been injured by the doctrines of Christian Science, or cured of disease by its treatment.

(2) The cure of disease without medicine, and sometimes almost miraculously, is in the nature of things calculated to attract and interest the "groaning creation"--just as the advertisements of patent medicines attract them. We unhesitatingly assert our conviction, that this power, manifested through Christian Scientists, is not of God, but of the Adversary, directly or indirectly. He no doubt directs his servants into the use of channels and means of which humanity in general, and even many learned physicians, are comparatively ignorant--channels of human nature which possibly in the future may be used by the Lord during times of restitution of all things. Our justification in ascribing their cures to an evil source, instead of to a good source, lies in the fact that they utterly repudiate the principles of Christianity, and we may be sure God would not cooperate to assist with his power those who deny his very existence, and who make void the gospel of the redemption through the blood of Christ. The miracle-working power in them we believe to be

the same as the miracle-working power in Spiritism and in Orientalism, and in the charms of other Occultists--namely, Satanic power.

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If it be asked, How could Satan be interested in doing a good work? we answer: he does no such work amongst those who are thoroughly and stupidly ignorant: he is doing these works merely in the most civilized lands, and especially amongst the most enlightened of the people in the various denominations of Christendom. The Adversary thus assumes the garment of an angel of light and mercy, not to lead to the Light of the world--not to lead to the cross of Christ--not to lead to the Bible--but to lead away from these, to another hope of salvation, and to another teacher: to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. And be it remembered that our Lord's words indicate that when matters come to this condition, where Satan will cast out Satan and heal disease, it is a marked evidence that his throne is tottering to its fall--that, so to speak, this is the last extremity of the Adversary's efforts to deceive.

* * *

The Lord's method of giving sight to the blind man, we may reasonably suppose, was parabolic--that is to say, it contains a lesson under a figure. Since our Lord did not explain the significance of his action in making a clay ointment out of the dust with his spittle, and anointing the man's eyes with this, and sending him to wash them and to receive sight at the Pool of Siloam, we may each exercise our mental powers in thinking of what these different things would signify. But we are limited in our speculations, nevertheless, and may not run wild, but must restrain ourselves within the limits of plain statements of the Word of God respecting his plan of salvation.

In harmony with these plain statements we may interpret our Lord's symbolical act thus: The blind man would fitly represent the world of mankind in general, who during the present life are mentally blind --who cannot now see the goodness, mercy and love of God as these may be recognized by others who are now able to see them. His being born blind would harmonize with this thought, for the blindness that is upon the world is to a large extent at least a matter of heredity. His blindness does not represent a blindness on the part of those who have once seen God's grace, represented in his Word and plan, and who have then become blind thereto, and who would represent the class mentioned by the Apostle as having once been enlightened, and who subsequently lose that enlightenment. (Heb. 6:4-6.) If then the blind man represents the blind world (who do not see, in the sense that the Church sees, of

whom the Lord said, "Blessed are your eyes for they see") the time of the healing of such blindness is in the Millennial age, as Scripturally pointed out, when "All the blind eyes shall be opened, and the deaf ears unstopped." (Isa. 35:5.) And this agrees with the conditions of our Lord's miracle, because we are informed that this miracle took place on the Sabbath or seventh day, which corresponds to and typifies the Millennial Day, the seventh-thousand year period.

Our Lord's words, nevertheless, seem to indicate that some part of this symbolical picture relates to the present age, for he said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh wherein no man can work." In this statement the word "day" would seem to belong to the present time, and to be illustrated in the making of clay with our Lord's spittle, and the anointing of the blind man's eyes. The washing of his eyes and the cure would seem to belong to the next age, the Millennial age. The Lord's spittle, the secretions of his mouth, might represent the truth as fitly as would the words of his mouth--it is another figure, but seemingly of the same force and meaning. He uttered the truth, brought it in contact with the dust of the earth--not in contact with all the dust of the earth, but with a limited portion, an elect or select portion, --and of this he made the anointing clay. The Scriptures do inform us, in harmony with this, that the Word of God's grace, delivered through and by our Lord Jesus, is designed in the present age to act upon a small fragment of humanity, and to consecrate them and make them meet for the Master's use in the blessing of the world, in the anointing of the eyes of the blind. From this standpoint of view the making of the clay would represent the formation of the elect Church for the blessing of the poor, blind world. And quite possibly not only is this work of making the clay now in progress, but perhaps some portion of the anointing work is now being done, as is intimated by the Scripture which declares that the Gospel must first be preached for a witness in all the world before the end of this age. The world must be witnessed to during this age, but the world will not have the eyes of its understanding opened during this age: it must wait until the great washing time of the Millennial age, of which the Scriptures declare, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. 13:1.) In full agreement with this is the significance of the word Siloam. It signifies "The sending forth," or "The fountain."

The Pharisees objected to the Lord's goodness, because forsooth it infringed some of their hypercritical dogmas and traditions. This is interesting, as showing to what extent religious forms and ceremonies may bind and blind intelligent and reverential people. And this should be a lesson to all the intelligent and reverent, leading them to great care in judging righteous judgment,

according to the standard of the divine Word,
and not according to their prejudices and revered creeds
and the traditions of the fathers.

Still another lesson may be found in the fact that
the man who confessed our Lord Jesus, and who stood
up in bold defence of righteousness, was greatly blessed,
in that after he had thus demonstrated his loyalty to
principle, and had suffered as a result excommunication
from the Church--then the Lord found him. Thus his
faithfulness under trials and difficulties, and his willingness
to suffer the loss of earthly fellowship and honor
amongst men, led directly to a still greater blessing,
even direct fellowship and communion with the Lord
himself. How many are there whose mental eyes have
been opened to the truth, who have been so loyal to the
Lord and so appreciative of his goodness as to be faithful
in declaring the facts? How many of these have
found that such faithfulness means separation from the
synagogue, from the church nominal? How many of
these have feared to lose prestige and influence, through
confessing the light of present truth? But all who have
followed the noble course of thankfulness, loyalty and
obedience to God, have found that such obedience,
while it led to a loss of fellowship in the nominal
church, led also to a greater fellowship and communion,
and a more intimate acquaintance with the Lord himself.

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THE GOOD SHEPHERD--THE CHRIST.

--MARCH 19.--JOHN 10:1-16.--

"I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd
giveth his life for the sheep."--John 10:11.

THE Evangelist first presented Christ to our attention
as "the beginning of the creation of God,"
"made flesh," that he might be the Light of the
world: afterward, under his presentation, we considered
him as the Feeder of the hungry; then as the Giver of
the water of life to the thirsty; next as the Healer of
human woes, and the Supplier of human needs, spiritual
as well as temporal; next as the Opener of the
eyes of our understanding. In the lesson now before
us he presents Christ's mission from another standpoint
--as the Good Shepherd.

This parable probably followed closely the closing
incident of our last lesson, in which we saw the reverend
Doctors of the Law incensed at the man whose
eyes had been opened, so that they cast him out of the
synagogue, because he confessed Jesus as the channel
of divine favor. It was doubtless as a reproof to such
false shepherding that our Lord spoke this parable.

The very ones who should have been helping the poor scattered sheep of Israel to recognize the true Shepherd, and to come unto him and become inheritors with them of the long-promised Kingdom, were seeking to prevent the Lord's sheep from recognizing the Shepherd--seeking to hinder men from entering the Kingdom which they themselves also refused to enter.--Matt. 23:13.

The illustration of the Lord as a Shepherd, and his people as sheep, is common to the Scriptures, and very fitly represents their close confidential relationship, but it is a figure that is quite contrary to the spirit of the world. The "natural man" sees little in the figure to admire, and when he expresses his sentiments he would rather represent himself to others and have them regard him as a wolf, a lion, a tiger, or some other ferocious creature, which they would best not stir up, lest he devour them. We find this characteristic well borne out in the emblems of heraldry; the escutcheons of the great are emblazoned with figures representing beasts of prey, birds of prey, and nondescripts, blending various natures--but all of them ferocious, snarling, howling, screeching, or otherwise implying fierceness and intimidation of foes. But when God would represent the emblems of his royal family, his Only Begotten Son is called The Lamb of God, and all his people are styled his sheep,--symbols of meekness, gentleness, harmlessness. "Jehovah is my Shepherd" is properly represented as their sentiment.--Psa. 23.

Sheep-raising in Palestine, and more or less throughout that vicinity, was carried on quite extensively, and yet very differently from present methods of Europe and America. The owner of the flock or his son usually did the shepherding, or sometimes an employee who was given an interest in the increase of the flock--as, for instance, Jacob, with his father-in-law Laban. Under the circumstances it is not surprising that the relationship between the sheep and their shepherds was very different from now--much more confidential. The shepherd was acquainted with his sheep and loved them, not merely as so much wealth and merchandise, but as friends, companions, with whom he conversed, and whose welfare he defended. Travelers tell us that the peculiarities of this parable are fully illustrated in eastern countries, even to this day; that a shepherd will know every individual sheep in his flock, and have a name for it, and that the sheep know their shepherd, and discern readily the sound of his voice, and cannot be deceived. Some tell us how they have experimented and proved these peculiar statements of the parable: one asked the shepherd to call some particular sheep by name, to see whether or not it would come to him; the shepherd called one that was far off, and it immediately lifted its head, looked toward him, and when the call was repeated started, and wending its way, in and out through the flock, came to his feet, where he patted its head in reward for its obedience. Thinking this possibly

a solitary instance, requests were made for repetitions of the test, with similar results. Another traveller imitated the shepherd's voice, and called the sheep, but they paid no attention. Thinking that it was because he had not on the shepherd's garments, to test the matter, he and the shepherd changed raiment, but still the sheep would not heed the voice of the stranger; but when the shepherd spoke to them, even tho clothed in the garments of the stranger, they knew his voice and at once responded.

Our Lord used these facts, well known to his hearers, to illustrate his relationship to the Lord's people, as their Shepherd, the Son of the Great Shepherd; and he pointed out that all who were truly of his flock would hear his voice, would not be deceived by the Adversary, tho he should disguise himself in garments of light, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. The important thing, then, is that we should become true members of the Lord's flock, intimately acquainted with him, and familiar with his word, his voice--disciples indeed. He is seeking no others than these for his present flock. Nor has he at the present time two flocks, one of them hearing and obeying his voice, and the other heedless of his words. He declares, "My sheep hear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Those who are not following the Lord, in obedience to his voice, expressed in word and example, are not of his flock; they are not being led to the green pastures and still waters of present truth; their table is not furnished in the presence of their foes, nor are they in the way marked out by the divine goodness and mercy, to dwell in the house of the Lord forever.--Psa. 23.

Jehovah God established a typical Kingdom or sheepfold, and accepted the nation of Israel as his sheep, but as a nation they were wayward sheep and knew him not. Nevertheless, with a Law Covenant he fenced them in. They desired a king, a ruler, a caretaker, a governor, and God let them have their wish; but none of these was the true shepherd, neither did any bring the sheep into desirable conditions. And when these were finally done away, various others presented themselves as the Messiah, falsely claiming the right to lead Israel--false Messiahs. These, as our Lord declares, were thieves and robbers, who sought the control of the sheep, not from interest in the sheep, but from selfish motives, for self-aggrandizement and exaltation. These attempted to lead out the Lord's people, not by the door, but by climbing up other ways: by climbing over the Law, or by digging under it, they would reach the sheep and become leaders; and altogether in various ways a large proportion of Israel had been led astray out of the fold, some to idolatry, and some simply to wander in the wilderness.

At our Lord's first advent this was the condition of things: God's covenant with Israel was standing as a wall around that nation, but its door was barred by justice,

as represented in the Mosaic Law--Israel's Covenant. There could be no proper ingress or egress; all were prisoners of the Law,--shut up unto that hope which should afterward be revealed, namely, Christ the Door or "way" of life. Meanwhile, tho the door was guarded zealously by the scribes and Pharisees, the fact was entirely neglected that thieves and robbers, Satan's servants, were at work plundering the sheepfold.--John 10:1,2,7,9; Gal. 3:24; John 14:6; Zech. 9:9-12.

Nor could our Lord Jesus rightfully open the fold and take charge of the sheep, except at the cost of his own life. This was the purpose of the Father, the Great Shepherd, and with this in view he shut up the sheep under the Law, to the intent that they would need to be redeemed by his Son (the appointed Shepherd), from under the dominion of the Law, before they could be made free with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free his people. And this was the first work that the Good Shepherd did for the sheep; the laying down of his life began at the beginning of his ministry, when he made a full consecration of himself even unto death, and symbolized this in baptism. It was in view of this sacrifice which he had already devoted, and was even then offering, and which was finished subsequently at Calvary, that our Redeemer announced himself as the Good Shepherd who giveth his life for the sheep.

The Apostle declares that our Lord's death redeemed Israel from under the curse (sentence) of the Law--but it not only satisfied the Law, "the porter," so that he opened the sheepfold, but it gave to the true Shepherd the ownership and control of the sheep, that he might lead them out to green pastures, and that they might go out and in with perfect freedom, as his sheep, following him. Our Lord testified, however, that many true sheep had gotten out of the fold, and were lost in the wilderness of sin. His ministry was a call to these as well as to those who remained in the fold,--to the publicans and sinners as well as to those who were endeavoring to live near to God.

Thus the true Shepherd showed his interest in all his true sheep, including the lame, the weak, the starved. He called sinners to repentance, and the true sheep, realizing their shortcomings under the Law, responded and came to him as the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. But inasmuch as many of the flock had wandered far from the position of true sheep, so that there were not enough who heard his voice, to complete the elect number of his flock, this Good Shepherd has, during this Gospel age, lifted up his voice (speaking through the members of his Body), and has called sheep from amongst the Gentiles; and a sufficient number to complete the original predestination will eventually respond.

The call of this present time is not a general one,

but, as this Scripture declares, "he calleth his own sheep by name,"--it is therefore a special call. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." They manifest relationship

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to him as his flock by their obedience to his call--by following him. The flock which is now being called, and which eventually will make its calling and election sure, the Scriptures inform us will be only "a little flock," and the fold provided for these is a special one; viz., the Kingdom.--Luke 12:32.

Throughout this Gospel age the Lord has been caring for this class; he has specially led and fed and blessed them, notwithstanding that to the appearance of others they have passed through severe trials, disciplines, sufferings. Yea, as our Shepherd himself declared, whosoever lives godly suffers persecution. But we are to remember that this is a peculiar trial time, for a peculiar and elect flock. We are to remember, also, the Shepherd's declaration that he has other sheep which are not of this fold--not provided for in the calling to the Kingdom. These other sheep are still astray in the wilderness of sin, but the Millennial Day is near at hand, in which the Lord will gather all his scattered sheep, all who would seek and love righteousness and harmony with God under favorable conditions,--that they may all be brought into accord with him and be his flock. The Good Shepherd gave his life a ransom for all his sheep--not merely for the "little flock" of this age, the "heirs of the Kingdom." Christ's larger flock will be gathered after the Kingdom is set up.--Matt. 25:31,32.

A part of the key to this parable, as it is also the key to many other features of the divine plan, is found in the fact that the sheep of the "little flock," now being called and selected to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, are to be sacrificed: as the Shepherd, the King's Son, himself was sacrificed as the Lamb of God, and not only opened the door to those who are shut up under the Law, but by the same sacrifice also redeemed the whole world of mankind, amongst which are the "other sheep" that he is yet to seek, so the sheep of the "little flock," now being called, are all to suffer with Christ--with the Lamb of God,--are all to be "living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, and their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) As the Apostle elsewhere declares, "Hereby we know love, because he laid down his life on our behalf: and we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," for the fellow-sheep.--1 John 3:16--Diaglott.

From this standpoint it will be seen that, as our Lord was the Father's Lamb, and the sin-offering for the world, so we who are of Jesus' flock are to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, in the interest of his Body, which is the Church. (Eph. 1:22.) And other Scriptures show us that all of the flock thus faithful, in following the Shepherd even "unto death,"

are counted as members of the Body of the Shepherd. Thus the entire Gospel age has been the period of suffering with Christ, of dying daily, of laying down our lives for the brethren; and not until this sacrifice is complete in the close of this age will the New Covenant be thrown open in the largest sense of the word to the world of mankind in general, and the great Shepherd be complete--Head and Body. Then the spirit and the Bride will say, Come, and whosoever will may come.-- whereas now, "No man can come except the Father draw him," and in all a "little flock."

The spirit of the great Chief (or Head) Shepherd of the flock is to be in all those now being called to association with him in the Kingdom. As the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the flock, so all of these will lay down their lives in the service of the truth. As the Good Shepherd was not indifferent to the necessities of the sheep, caring simply for himself, and how much he could get out of the sheep, so it will be with those who have his spirit--their service of the Body of Christ will not be for filthy lucre's sake, nor for honor among men, nor for earthly gain, in any sense of the word; but for the love of God, the love of the truth, the love of the flock.

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S.S. LESSON, MARCH 26TH--QUARTERLY REVIEW.

S.S. LESSON, APRIL 2ND--THE AWAKENING OF LAZARUS.

For general comments see our issue of Aug. 15, '95.

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