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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity or  
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continually.

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WILL YOU ATTEND THE INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION?

--NOTIFICATIONS--

SHOULD BE RECEIVED PROMPTLY TO SECURE ACCOMMODATIONS. THE  
CITY WILL BE CROWDED WITH EPWORTH LEAGUERS.

Arrangements are completed for a Convention of believers in  
the Second Coming of the Lord and the Plan of the Ages,--to  
be held at Indianapolis, Ind., July 21st to 23d, as follows:--

The Railroad fare will be one-half the usual, except from a  
few points which will add \$2 to the one fare for round trip. All  
passenger trains run into Union depot, which is about three  
blocks distant from the meeting place of the Convention--  
"Shover's Hall," on Market Street, between Delaware and Alabama  
Avenues.

Accommodations--good and clean--have been arranged for,

at the very reasonable rate of ninety-five cents per day, at "Barton's Hotel," No. 29 Virginia Ave. Such ZION'S WATCH TOWER readers as cannot afford even this modest sum, will be entertained free, by the Indianapolis friends, with great pleasure.

Those who ride to the hotel can take any car leaving the Union depot and should ask for "transfer" when they pay their fare. A "Reception Committee" will meet all the friends at the Barton Hotel--except during convention hours, when it will be at Shover's Hall, as above mentioned.

The following program will be followed closely as practicable:

Friday, July 21st.--The opening "rally" will be at 10 A.M., conducted by Brother C. A. Owen--an opportunity for getting generally acquainted. At 3 P.M. the assembly will be addressed by the Editor of this Journal from the text--"Looking for the blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13.) At 7:30 P.M. an address on the Ages and Dispensations of the divine plan, illustrated by the Chart of the Ages, may be expected.

Saturday, July 22d.--Testimony Meeting at 8 A.M. Preaching at 10:30 A.M. by the Editor of this Journal: subject, "The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:2.) At 3 P.M. a discourse by Bro. M. L. McPhail--"Sanctify them through thy Truth." At 7:30 P.M. a discourse from the Chart.

Sunday, July 23d.--Testimony Meeting 8:30 A.M.; at 10:30 a discourse by Bro. M. L. Staples on "The Offence of the Cross;" at 3 P.M., "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," by the Editor; at 7:30 P.M., "Preserving the Unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace"--several speakers.

All who love the Lord, trust in the precious blood and wait for his Kingdom, are cordially invited to attend this Convention which recognizes only the one Church and her one Lord, one faith and one baptism. All such will please address the WATCH TOWER SOC'Y as soon as they know definitely that they will attend, stating in few words who will be of their party, and whether or not they will stop at the hotel. There will be an opportunity for symbolizing baptism.

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"THE BISHOP OF LONDON ON 'GETTING ON.'"

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"THE Bishop of London possesses a mind of unusual interest, and everything that he says is worth paying attention to, whether we agree with it or not. In addressing the pupils of the Philological School the other day, he took as the subject of his remarks, 'Success in Life.' Considering his own career, one might expect that he would justify, and possibly glorify, success, for few men of our generation have risen more rapidly and achieved such brilliant success as he. But the Bishop did not take that line of thought at all, and we are glad that he did not. Enough and

too much has been written for boys as to the way in which they may regard the world as their oyster to open at their will. Strength, instead of purity, of will has too often been represented as the most desirable of attainments. Now we do not doubt for one moment that this element of great will-power is an important element in the building up of character. Without it nothing can be achieved that is worth achieving. But mere strength of will may, and often is, accompanied by the worst traits in human character. We need not accept all the deductions of Schopenhauer to agree with him that what he calls the 'will to live' is a root of all the crime, sensuality, and base unsatisfied longings which make up the carnal side of human nature.

"It is true that Nature itself implants this forceful 'will to live' in every one of us, and that without it the human race would soon cease to exist when confronted with the terrific forces of the material universe.

It is true that great and beneficent discoveries are due to the persistence of this intense will in us. It is even further true that many noble qualities, and no little of the social and the humanizing elements in life, are intimately connected with a powerful will. Many of the great human scourges of the race have, unconsciously and unintentionally, done immense good for mankind through the possession of this vast overflowing energy. 'There shall be no Alps,' said Napoleon in his selfish desire to conquer Italy, and the result was the wonderful roads which connected Northern and Southern Europe. If ever there was an example on a colossal human scale of the 'will to live,' it was embodied in Peter the Great, an awful and drunken barbarian; but see what he did for Russia. In this world, whose ultimate problems we do not pretend to solve, the 'will to live,' with all its potential consequences, is a great fact without which the human race would gradually die out.

"Now the successful man, in the ordinary sense of the word, is he who develops in himself in an abnormal degree this 'will to live.' We in the Western world scarcely recognize that this 'will to live' carried to great lengths is not only not universal among mankind, but is rather exceptional in its operations. It is the brute inheritance, at least on one side, against which some of the great religions of the world have contended, and contended with success. The East as a whole finds in the quiescence of the will, in its passive submission to a vast and supreme Power, the solution of the problem of life. Even among Western peoples the average man lives with content amid the

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'petty murmur of his bourg' rather than contends for the great material prizes of life, or what are supposed to be such. It is well that this is so, for if every one

were fired by the ambition of a successful general, or politician, or merchant, the competition among men would be so terrible that, from another point of view, annihilation would be the lot of humanity. Men would not be able to stand the strain, nor would Nature afford the mass of them the opportunity for attaining, or even seriously striving for, the object of their ambition. Earth would become a hell, and this green

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globe would witness tragedies compared with which the most awful in history would dwindle into insignificance. Most men are, happily for themselves and for their fellows, contented, like the Apostle, with food and raiment, and taking the world as a whole, they live the lives of decent and faithful fathers, sons, husbands, and friends. Ambition is the mark of a comparative few, and what are called the prizes of life are contended for by an insignificant minority.

"We say that this is well, and the Bishop of London is evidently in agreement with our position, for he does not think that success in life usually develops the best qualities among men. It is indeed true, as Wordsworth said, that it is dangerous to look on tyrants with a dazzled eye, and one might add that it is not quite safe for most men to take as their models those who are generally estimated to be successful men. There can be, as the Bishop said, no absolute rule as to what one should do to gain success. One may spend one's life in the most praiseworthy diligence, and yet die poor, unknown, and be accounted by the world as a failure, tho happily the world's coarse judgments do not constitute the final court of appeal. One may master all science, one may be a great thinker, and yet pass away from these noises of earth unrecognized, and even laughed at, by one's fellow-men.

"It has been reserved for few great men to attain renown in their own lifetime. They have been hated and ridiculed, while the shallow charlatan has won the success of his age. This is, indeed, such a truism, that one does not need to dwell on the fact. If we are to measure character, genius and worth by the standard of success, we should have to say that the great men of the world have been among the least successful men. What does seem to us to ensure success is some overplus of human energy with which a man is born, and which cannot be created in him afterwards, and which is directed towards the attainment of objects that can be best appreciated by the average man. There is a general demand in the world at any given time for a kind of mechanical talent rising at times to genius, but of a variety which can be estimated by common people, and which can apply itself to objects of general desire. He who possesses this kind of overplus of human energy is the successful man, because

he holds a monopoly of what all desire and of what all can appreciate. To him all the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players, and he soon finds out that he can play the best game of them all in some particular line.

"In a world such as ours, how far is it wise to encourage that kind of talent? Religion, as we have said, over most of the Eastern world has persuaded countless millions of people that this kind of success is not worth while. Buddhism and Brahminism have indoctrinated a large proportion of the human race with a positive contempt for the kind of existence which alone seems worth having for a member of the New York Stock Exchange. Indeed, if we contemplate the two varieties of mankind from a spiritual, instead of a physical, point of view, we might be led to doubt whether the human race had a common origin. There seems absolutely nothing in common between the two types.

"On the one hand, we see the action dictated by the strong will, by the 'will to live' endowed with keen intelligence and a rather low standard of aspiration. On the other side, we see a being who is striving-- for what? For the cessation of all will, for the attainment, not of material commodities, not even of mental good, but of entire peace and calm, and to him all the efforts of human life in our busy civilization seem entirely purposeless and even absurd. Are we to take the extreme Oriental view, or must we accept the standard of the strong will as believed in and acted upon by the busy men of our busy world? If the latter is a true theory of life, then we must accept the successful man as our hero, even tho we cannot teach our youths how to imitate his example.

"We think there is a mean between these extremes, as there is between most extremes. We cannot annihilate 'the will to live,' because existence itself on our planet depends upon its mysterious operation. Neither can we desire the larger development of the 'will to live,' the will carried to an abnormal point, as in a very great general or financier, among average men. All that we want among average men, as Hegel said, is that they should be good men in all the fundamental relations of life. If they happen to achieve that reward which, as Coleridge says, so rarely comes to merit, well and good.

"But it is well that most men should not go out of their way to seek rewards. So long as they are standing on the ground of right, they are safe; but the moment they quit that point of moral vantage for the perilous peaks of human ambition, they are usually lost. They must not, then, put forth the abnormal 'will to live,' but neither must they crush that will without which human life would be empty of all positive content. No, what is really needed among men is a pure will, a will cleansed of all that degrades life

while prolonging it and extending its relations. This was the best Greek idea, it is also the Christian idea, which comes to men, not as taking away the real content of life, but as giving life more abundantly; but life which can control those fiery courses of the soul instead of leaving them to their own ungoverned sway. On the whole, therefore, we say with the Bishop that success in life is a dubious object of desire, since it is connected inextricably with so much that wars against the soul. But we must not, as the Germans say, throw away the baby along with the bath. We must accept the will, but we must give to it that direction and noble purpose which render it truly free."

--London Spectator.

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#### DANIEL IN BABYLON.

JULY 9.--DANIEL 1:8-21.

"Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself."

DANIEL is set before us in the Scriptures as one whom the Lord loved. His standing with the Almighty is strikingly presented through the Prophet Ezekiel, where the Lord, speaking of the sureness of his judgments about to come upon the land of Judah, said, "Tho these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness." (Ezek. 14:14.) These words were spoken by Ezekiel shortly before the desolation of Jerusalem, while Daniel was in Babylon, where he had risen to a position of great prominence; and his fame no doubt had reached his home.

Daniel was carried captive with Jehoiachim, king of Judah, and many of the nobility of the land of Israel, eighteen years before the final captivity in the days of Zedekiah, when the land was left desolate without an inhabitant, and the seventy years of desolation began. Daniel was fourteen years old when carried captive to Babylon, and consequently lived to the extreme age of over one hundred years.--Dan. 1:21.

The Book of Daniel is one of those against which the "higher critics" expend special energy, some being inclined to call it a fiction, while others declare it to be a history of the period of Antiochus Epiphanes (over three hundred years after Daniel's death) and that it was written by some unknown writer who attached Daniel's name as a disguise. Modern science and the higher critics are very much opposed to anything in the nature of positive prophecy--anything claiming to be of direct divine inspiration, and in any sense of the word attempting to foretell the future. The

Book of Daniel is preeminently marked with these characteristics, and hence it, more than any other book of the Old Testament, has the reprobation of these gentlemen. But the Lord forewarned us, through the Apostle and the Prophet, of these wise men, whose wisdom would become a trap and a snare unto them, so that "the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid [obscured]."--Isa. 29:14; 1 Cor. 1:26-29.

Our Lord also pointed out that these things are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes --made clear to those who make no boast of wisdom according to the course of this world. (Matt. 11:25.) How true to facts we find this to be! While many of the great and learned are stumbling themselves into higher criticism and other forms of infidelity, the Lord's "little ones," meek, humble, teachable from the Father's Word, are being instructed, and are growing in

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grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

To those who have clearly in mind the presentations and interpretations of Daniel's prophecies as presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOLS. I., II. and III., there is no need for elaborate arguments to prove that this wonderful Book of Daniel is not a fiction, but more wonderful by far than any fiction that could have been written. And to them it will be useless to declare it a history of events which transpired 167 B.C. and falsely set forth as a prophecy by Daniel; for they see fulfilments, past, present and to come, far larger and grander and more wonderful than anything which occurred at the date named--they see in these fulfilments unmistakable evidence of superhuman intelligence, and that, as Daniel declared, the most high God therein revealed the secrets of his plan still future.

Our lesson proper finds Daniel with others of the Jewish captives in Babylon, where, according to custom, the king had made choice of a number of the most promising of the captive youths to pass a three-years' course of education in the sciences, Babylon being at this time the center of learning. The object in this was no doubt two-fold: the Babylonian monarch thus attempted to associate with his empire the learning and skill of the world, and to promote a friendly feeling as between Babylon and the various countries over which it held sway, that foreign nations might feel the greater interest in Babylon as the center of the world-empire, and be the more contented with the laws and regulations which proceeded therefrom, knowing that some of their own nation stood before the king as his counsellors or secretaries--magicians, astrologers and wise men, as they were then called.

The choice of the four young Israelites was no doubt a subject of divine providence, and from their

names we may infer that they were all children of religious parents, the compounds of their names so signifying, as follows: Daniel, "God is my Judge;" Hananiah, "God is gracious;" Mishael, "This is as God;" Azariah, "God is a helper." Thus did the Lord, overthrowing a nation for its wickedness, make special provision, even in its captivity, for those of that nation who were faithful to him. In choosing these four Jews for the Babylonian college course the prince of the eunuchs, according to custom, gave them new names, to break their identity with their native homes and to establish an identity with the kingdom of Babylon; hence he named them Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

From the first Daniel seems to have been the specially favored of these favored four--he was favored of the Lord in that, while all four were specially blessed, his portion included visions and revelations; he was specially favored by the prince of the eunuchs who had these youths in charge, as we read, "Now God had brought Daniel into favor and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (vs. 9). We are not to understand

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that this favor both with God and man was something wholly outside of Daniel himself; on the contrary, it is proper for us to infer that by birth (heredity) and by natural training of godly parents Daniel had a noble, amiable, winsome character, which not only prepared him the better to be the Lord's mouthpiece, but which also made him moderate, discreet and amiable toward all with whom he had to do.

What a lesson is here, not only for young people, but also for parents! How necessary it is that those who seek divine service shall endeavor to attain to characteristics pleasing to God! And if any find themselves wholly without friends, how proper it is that they should suspect that some measure of the fault lies in themselves; and how proper it would be that all such should seek to cultivate amiability and suavity at the expense of everything except principle! Only Ishmael was to have the experience of every man's hand against him, and his hand against every man, and those who have Ishmael's experience have need to fear that they have Ishmael's disposition, and should forthwith diligently seek grace at the throne of mercy whereby to overcome ungainly qualities and idiosyncrasies.

It is only when we are hated because of our loyalty to the truth (directly or indirectly) that we are to take satisfaction therein, or to think that we are suffering for righteousness' sake. As the Apostle points out, some suffer as evil-doers and as busy-bodies in other men's matters, or because of ungentleness, uncouthness, or lack of the wisdom of moderation, which the Lord's Word counsels. (1 Pet. 4:15; Phil. 4:5; Jas. 1:5.) We



are not to forget, however, that rudeness, which is an element of selfishness, may be more quickly dispelled from the heart than from the life, and all should take encouragement from the thought that God, and his people who view matters from his standpoint, judge the sons of God not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit or intention of their minds, their hearts, and have patience with the weaknesses of the flesh, where there are evidences that the new mind is endeavoring to bring the flesh under its control.

Of these four Jewish companions, Daniel seems from the first to have been leader, and his leading seems to have been in the right direction. In a new land, under new conditions, a shallow character would be likely to be thoroughly spoiled. First, the fact of being chosen, even in the probationary sense, to be of the king's council was certainly a great honor; and the tendency to a shallow mind would have been toward vanity, bombast, pride, haughtiness, etc., qualities which would have hindered real progress in the school, and thus would have made him less likely to be the king's ultimate choice as counsellor: but still more important, it would have separated between him and God, for God resisteth the proud and showeth his favor to the humble.--1 Pet. 5:5.

Daniel might have said to himself, as some would have said,--I am now far from the land of Israel; I am identified with the Babylonish court, and I therefore may profitably forget and neglect the laws of God, and consider them as having been applicable to me only in my own country, and that here, far from the land of promise, I may do in all particulars as the better Babylonians do. But, on the contrary, Daniel very wisely resolved in his heart that, since his nation had been cut off from the Land of Promise because of disobedience to God, he would be ever careful to do those things which would be pleasing to the Almighty: and, as we shall see, he soon found a place for his new resolutions.

The portion of food provided for these college students by the king's command was good--far better, probably, than they had been used to previously;--nor was Daniel's mental objection to it instigated by self-denial, but wholly by religious duty. The Israelites, under their Law Covenant, were forbidden to eat certain articles of food in common use amongst other nations, for instance, swine's flesh, rabbit flesh, eels, oysters, etc., and indeed all flesh that was not killed by being allowed to bleed to death: for the Law specially forbade the use of blood under any circumstances or conditions. The food of the king's household was not prepared along these lines, and the young Hebrew perceived that he could not hope for any change in these respects, and he was too wise to even find fault with them. He saw rightly enough that the divine Law that was upon him as a Jew did not apply to Gentiles, and he

made no efforts to interfere with the general arrangements.

Daniel's request, therefore, was a very simple one, viz., that he be permitted to have a very plain and inexpensive diet, called "pulse," which no doubt was prepared as a part of the general household meal. If the request could be granted, no one would be specially inconvenienced, and yet Daniel would thus preserve himself from "defilement" under the terms of the Jewish Law. It would appear that Daniel's companions, influenced by his decision, joined with him in this request. The prince of the eunuchs, while desirous of favoring Daniel, feared his own position if, as he surmised, this simple diet would prove insufficient for the boys, and lead to a breakdown of their health during the period of study. But finally it was arranged with the melzar (or butler) that the matter of diet should be tested for ten days.

Here Daniel's faith in God showed itself. He was confident that, even tho such a diet might not be the most desirable in every respect, yet, inasmuch as it was

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the only course open to them whereby they could preserve themselves from violation of the divine Law, therefore God would specially supervene to the extent necessary, and in this, it seems, he was not disappointed. There is a lesson for all of the Lord's people here. It is our duty not only to study the Lord's will, but also to consider well the circumstances and the conditions which surround us, and to seek to adopt such a moderate course in life as would first of all have divine approval, and secondly, cause as little trouble, inconvenience and displeasure to others as possible, and then to confidently rely upon the Lord's supervising wisdom and providence.

When we read, "As for these four youths, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams," we are not to understand that this skill and learning was wholly miraculous, like the understanding in visions and dreams, which was to Daniel only. Rather, we are to judge that under what we might term natural laws four boys who had enough character to undertake such a course of self-denial for righteousness' sake would have also courage and strength of character in respect to all their affairs and studies. We are to surmise that their determination in this matter of their food, that they would rather deny themselves than violate God's Law, would mean to them a mental and moral discipline which would be helpful in all the

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affairs of life.

And there is a lesson in this for every Christian. Many are inclined to think of the little things of life as being unimportant, but everyone who attains to any proficiency in any department of life surely learns that his attainments were in considerable degree the result of determined will-power, and that it is well-nigh impossible to be strong in will-power in respect to important things if lax and pliable in respect to things in general, even the less important. Habit is a wonderful power, either for good or evil, and the boy or girl, the man or woman, who has not learned self-control in respect to little things, indeed all things, cannot expect to be able to exercise self-control upon the greatest and most important affairs merely.

In other words, applying this matter to Christians, we might say that he who wants to be an "overcomer" at all, must make the attempt all along the line on every point, great or small, where conscience and principle call for it. It is he who is faithful in things that are least who may be expected to be found faithful also in things that are greater: and this evidently is the Lord's view of this matter. From the Lord's standpoint, all of the affairs of this present life are little in comparison with the future things. Hence he is calling for "overcomers" whose general faithfulness to principle, even in small things, will give evidence of the disposition, the character, to which may be entrusted the great responsibilities of the Kingdom glory, honor and immortality.

--Luke 16:10; Matt. 25:23.

At the end of the three years' college course, when Daniel was seventeen, came the examination before the king, and as should have been expected, Daniel and his companions, faithful to the Lord, seeking first his will, were found to be far in advance of their companions, and were accepted to the king's council. We might draw a lesson here, without in any sense of the word intimating that it was typified, for we do not so think. We might say that there is a certain correspondence as between the position of Daniel and his associates and the position occupied by all those who have been called of the Father to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Not all who are called, nor all who undertake the course of training, have the promise of acceptance: on the contrary, many are called, few will be chosen. But the character of those who will be chosen in many respects corresponds to that of Daniel and his companions. All are not leading spirits, as was Daniel, nor are all given to visions and revelations and interpretations, as was he; but all will have the same spirit of devotion to principles of righteousness, which devotion will be tested under divine providence, step by step, through the narrow way, as they seek to walk in the footsteps of him who set us an example--our Daniel, our Leader, our Lord Jesus. Let all, then, who have named the name of Christ, depart from iniquity, let all such be faithful: "Dare to be a

Daniel."

Another thought is that clean spiritual provender is important to the Lord's flock, and that those who have come to a knowledge of the truth should abstain from all food that is defiled. If this shall seem to restrict the bill of spiritual fare, and the opportunities for mingling with the Babylonians at their table, it will have its compensating advantages nevertheless, for the Lord will bless to the spiritual good of his faithful ones even the plainest of spiritual blessings and opportunities. Let a test be made, after the manner of Daniel and his companions, and see whether or not those who feed upon the clean provender of the Lord's Word, and who reject the more sumptuous arrangement and defiled food of Babylon will not be fairer of countenance spiritually, even after a short test. But let us not suppose that anything would be gained by simply abstaining from the Babylonian portion and starving themselves spiritually. Whoever abstains from the popular and defiled supply must seek and use the simple and undefiled food which the Lord in his providence supplies, otherwise their last state of spiritual starvation will be worse than the first.

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IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

--JULY 16.--DAN. 3:14-28.--

"Our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us."

PROBABLY twenty years elapsed after Daniel and his companions reached Babylon in captivity before the scenes of this lesson were enacted. Meantime Daniel had been raised to a very high position in the empire, as king's counsellor, while his three companions had been made magistrates in the provinces of Babylon. We know that their prosperity did not tend to make them careless of their duties and responsibilities toward God, for otherwise they would not have been able to stand the severe test recounted in this lesson, and which proved a great blessing to them because of their fidelity to the Lord.

King Nebuchadnezzar just before this had won some great victories over surrounding nations--Egypt, Syria, etc.--as he had previously done with Judah, and as the Lord had predicted in the dream which Daniel had interpreted for the King, which showed the Babylonian Empire as the golden head of earthly dominion. His great success no doubt had tended to feelings of pride and a desire for display. Yet these were probably not the only motives which led to the program of the great festival in honor of his victories,

and the erection of the great image which all were commanded to worship. Nebuchadnezzar's thought evidently was to unify his empire, and as a step in this direction he desired to unify the religious views and worship of the various peoples under his sway. In this his example was frequently followed subsequently, for all rulers have seemed to grasp the thought that man's mental organization is such that obedience can be best and most lastingly secured through the acquiescence of the religious organs of his mind. In other words, since man is a religious animal, no government of him can be secure and permanent which does not have, directly or indirectly, the support of his veneration. Hence it was that Nebuchadnezzar and others endeavored to associate the Creator and the king together in men's minds, that venerating the One they should respect and serve the other as his representative.

It was no doubt with a view to thus unifying the religious sentiments of his empire that this great feast was arranged, of which the very center of attraction was the great image which Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. This image, with its pedestal, was ninety feet high and nine feet wide. It was of gold, probably either made hollow or on a base of clay cement. It was located in the Plain of Dura, about the center of the walled enclosure twenty-four miles square, known as the city of Babylon. As it is a level country, and as the structures were comparatively low, the image could probably be seen from every part of the great city.

The appointed time for the festival having come, leading representatives, judges, treasurers, governors, sheriffs, etc., from all the divisions of the empire, clad in the gorgeous garments of the East, were present. A great band had been prepared, composed of all the musical instruments popular at that period, and the command of the king had gone forth that when the musicians should play upon their instruments all the vast concourse of people, representatives of his whole empire, facing the image which he had set up, should fall down and worship it, and thus indicate their loyalty, not only to King Nebuchadnezzar, but also to his gods who had given him the wonderful victories which they were celebrating.

As magistrates of the empire, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were necessarily in the great throng, tho it is quite probable that they, representing different departments, may have been at a distance from each other, each surrounded by his secretaries, assistants, servants, etc. Undoubtedly the object of the festival was clearly discerned by these intelligent men, and the question arose before their minds respecting their duty to God and the conflict of this with the probable requirements of the king. It was a crucial test for them, for they knew that the king's powers were autocratic, and that to cross his will meant death in some form.

Nevertheless, they decided that they must be true to God, whatever the cost. It might be that their refusal to prostrate themselves before the image would pass entirely unnoticed by others, or it might be that, even if noticed, the incident might never reach the ears of the king, but such circumstances could make no change in the matter of their duty; whatever others might do, they must not bow the knee to any but the true God. Daniel is omitted from mention here, possibly because, occupying a different position as one of the king's personal staff and household, his conduct would not come so directly in contrast with the general conduct.

Finally, the hour of trial came, when the great king of Babylon was recognized not only as civil but also as religious ruler, and the image which he had set up was worshiped by the various representatives of his empire--except Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. Their neglect to bow was quickly brought to the attention of the king, for no doubt these, like all good men, had their enemies: some enemies through jealousy and

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rivalry for the king's favor; other enemies because, perhaps, they had been interrupted or hindered in dishonest practices and contracts with the government.

The matter seems to have astounded the king, and hence his inquiry, Is it true, can it be true? Surely, no sane men would be so foolhardy as to oppose my decree, and that in my very presence, and upon such a fete-day as this? Not waiting an answer as respects

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matters of the past, the king voluntarily proposed for them a fresh test of loyalty and submission, nothing doubting but what, now that the matter had come to his attention, they would be moved by fear, not only in respect to their degradation from office, but by the danger of death in the fiery furnace, to render prompt obedience.

Perhaps the king's mind shot a glance backward fifteen years, to the time when the God of the Hebrews, through Daniel, had told and interpreted his dream, a matter which none of the other gods of his wise men could do; and as tho he had this in mind, and wishing to impress the matter upon these three Hebrews who had dared to challenge his power, he made the boast, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" In his arrogance of mind and under the flush of his mighty victories over the greatest nations and mightiest kings, Nebuchadnezzar felt prepared to have a contest even with the unseen and to him unknown invisible powers. He would not be backed down in his own capital city; he would demonstrate his power to inflict a penalty, regardless of what any

of the gods might do in retaliation. He would show that he, at all events, had the power in the present time, and in this respect at least was more powerful than any of the gods of whom he had knowledge.

The answer of the three Hebrews was a wise one; seeing from the king's mood that the discussion of the subject would be useless, they did not attempt to retaliate by threatening him with divine vengeance; neither did they attempt to convert the king to Judaism, knowing well that the provisions of the Jewish covenant were not for Gentiles. They simply responded that they were not anxious to avail themselves of the opportunity to argue the matter with the king. They assured him of their full confidence that their God was able to deliver them from the fiery furnace, and out of the hand or power of even the greatest king of the earth; but they answered, While our God is thus all-powerful we are not by any means certain that he will deliver us; nevertheless, "O king, be it known unto thee that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

Angered that his great festal day should be thus marred by even the slightest opposition to his will, the king did not wait to give another opportunity wherein the Hebrews might relent. He saw that it was useless, that they were men of character and determination, and he resolved that he would make an example of them before all the people. The form of his visage or his countenance changed toward these men; whereas once he had admired them, as amongst his ablest counsellors and magistrates, and an honor to his empire, now he hated them, as opponents whose course, if not interrupted, might introduce disorder into his empire, and lead to more or less sedition, if copied by others. In his rage he commanded that the furnace be heated seven times, or to its utmost capacity. The furnace, already heated for the occasion, may have been the one used in melting the gold for the image, and must have been of immense size.

Probably as a mark of his great authority, and to show that even the very greatest of his subjects were subordinate to his supreme authority, the king commanded that these three recalcitrant officials be cast into the fiery furnace by prominent officers of his army --no doubt to teach a lesson respecting the power of the army, and the willingness of its chief representatives to serve the king, as against everybody else.

The Hebrews, bound in their official garb, were evidently cast into the furnace from the top, because it is stated that they fell down bound, while the heat was so intense that it even killed those who cast them into the furnace, possibly by the inhalation of the flames, which might kill them instantly.

The king seemed to be having matters his own way, as usual; even the mighty God of the Hebrews had not delivered these men from his power. And yet

the king was solicitous and eyed the furnace, and to his surprise beheld those who had been cast into the furnace bound, walking about free in the flames--seemingly uninjured. More than this, he saw a fourth person there, of most remarkable appearance, which caused the king to think and speak of him as one of the gods. No wonder he was astonished; he was evidently contending with a God of whose powers he had been ignorant.

Nebuchadnezzar showed himself to be a man of broad mind--in his acceptance to the Babylonian college of the brightest youths out of all the peoples taken captive; in his readiness to acknowledge the God of Daniel, when he had received the evidences of his power; so now, realizing that he had made a great mistake in attempting the destruction of three of his most eminent magistrates, and that he was thus defying the great God, Nebuchadnezzar was prompt to make acknowledgement, and approached the furnace, calling out, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth and come hither." In the presence of the king's courtiers they came forth, and all beheld them that the fire had done them no injury, not even having singed their clothes or their hair. This was indeed a stupendous miracle, and doubtless was valuable in its influence, not only upon the Gentiles, but also upon the Hebrews residing throughout Babylon, who would thus hear of the power of Jehovah in delivering those faithful to him. Whether this had a bearing on the subject or not, we know well that, while idolatry had been one of

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the chief sins of the Israelites before this captivity, there was comparatively little of idolatry in its crude forms in that nation afterward.

Nebuchadnezzar's acknowledgement of the God of the Hebrews, who sent his messenger and delivered his servants that trusted in him, is very simple and very beautiful. He rejoiced in the noble character of these men, and at once made a decree "that every people, nation and language which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be a dung-hill; because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort." And furthermore, he promoted these faithful men to still higher positions, for they had still more of his confidence respecting their integrity. Men who would thus hazard their lives for conscience' sake could be trusted in the most important positions.

It is not necessary that we determine this incident to have been a type and look for correspondencies to its every feature. Without so determining, the Lord's people may readily find in it many valuable lessons and suggestions. Not all of God's people are in such prominent positions as were these Hebrews; and not



many have testings of exactly the same kind as were theirs, with a literal fiery furnace before their eyes. Nevertheless, there are trials before the Lord's people to-day that are fully as severe. Who will not agree that questions respecting a public acknowledgement of an idol and thus a public disavowal of the true God would be a point more quickly and more easily decided by nearly everyone than some of the subtle temptations of our day? For instance, various idols are set up all over Christendom, each of which, it is claimed, represents the true God, and each of which demands worship in honor and substance.

Babylon the literal was in ruins long before the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos was shown in prophetic vision the mystic or symbolic Babylon "which reigneth over the kings of the earth" to-day. The provinces of Babylon to-day are the various civilized nations --really "kingdoms of this world;" but deluded into calling themselves and thinking themselves kingdoms of Christ--"Christendom." And parallels to the king and the image are also presented in Revelation-- they are religious systems symbolically described as "the beast and his image."--Rev. 13:15-18.

Without at present examining the symbols in detail we note the fact that worship of this symbolic beast and his image are to be the great test or trial upon professing Christians in every province of symbolic Babylon in the end of this age: indeed, the testing is even now in progress. And we have the same inspired record as authority for the statement that only those who refuse to render worship to those powerfully influential religious systems (symbolized by "the beast and his image") will be counted by the Lord as "overcomers" and be made his joint-heirs as members of his elect Church. --See Rev. 20:4.

As already pointed out, the "beast" represents not Roman Catholics (the people) but the Roman Catholic system, as an institution: and the image represents not Protestants (the people) but the consolidation of Protestant systems, as an institution. We have pointed out\* that the first step in the formation of this symbolic image of Papacy was taken in A.D. 1846 in the organization of the Evangelical Alliance, and that the second step must come shortly in an active living cooperation of Protestants as one system; and that this infusion of life will result from the Episcopal Church or Church of England joining or affiliating with other Protestants under some general arrangement similar to the Evangelical Alliance.

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While the severest testings will follow the giving of life to the consolidated image, in the near future, the testing has already commenced with many, for "Churchianity" is more and more demanding reverence

and support, and those who absolutely refuse to worship its images are already exposed to fiery trials;-- social ostracism and financial boycotts. Prominent amongst these is the Roman Catholic idol; that church sets itself as the representative of God, and demands worship, obedience and contribution to its funds. It is one of the most popular as well as one of the most arbitrary of idols. The Greek Catholic Church is another idol: the Anglican is another; and the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., etc., all similarly demand worship, obedience and revenue. They have "pooled their issues," to a certain extent, so as not to war upon each other's devotees, but they unite in warfare against all who do not bow the knee to some such idol (who reverence and worship only the Almighty God, and recognize his only begotten Son as the only Head and Lord of the true Church, whose names are only written in heaven--not on earthly rolls of membership.) --See Heb. 12:23.

All who refuse to worship before any of these images are threatened with a fiery furnace of persecution, and the threat is generally carried out as thoroughly as circumstances will permit. In the "dark ages," when Papacy had a monopoly of the "church" business, it meant torture and the stake, as well as social ostracism. To-day, under a higher enlightenment, and especially because of competition for worshipers, matters are not carried to the same extreme, thank God! Yet in many instances there are evidences that the same spirit prevails, merely restrained by changed circumstances and lack of power. Still, as many are witnesses, there are

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\*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., p. 119.

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methods of torture which serve to intimidate many who would scorn to bow the knee to a literal visible idol. Thousands to-day are worshiping at the various shrines of Christendom who in their hearts long to be free from the sectarian bondage of fear--who fain would serve the Lord God only, had they the courage. And there are some the world over who, with a courage not less than that of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, declare publicly that the Lord God alone shall have the worship and the service which they can render. None, perhaps, know better than the writer the various fiery experiences to which these faithful few are exposed--boycotted socially, boycotted in business, slandered in every conceivable manner, and often by those of whom they had least expected it, who, according to the Lord's declaration, say "all manner of evil against them falsely."

--Matt. 5:11,12.

But with these, as with the three Hebrews of our lesson, the chief trial is in connection with their faith; after they have taken a firm stand for the Lord and his truth they may indeed be bound and have their liberties of speech and of effort restrained, and they may indeed be cast into the fiery furnace, but nothing more than these things can be done to them. As soon as they have demonstrated their fidelity to God to this extent, their trials and troubles are turned into blessings and joys. As the form of the Son of God was seen with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, so unseen, the Lord is present with those who trust him and who, because of faithfulness to him and to his Word, come into tribulation. How beautifully this is expressed in the familiar hymn,

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
My grace all sufficient shall be thy supply;  
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design  
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

And sometimes even the worldly can realize that the Lord's people in the furnace of affliction are receiving a blessing, and sometimes thus our Heavenly Father's name is glorified in the world, as in Nebuchadnezzar's experience. Sometimes the Lord's people who are bound, restrained of liberty to proclaim the truth, find, as did those Hebrews, that the fire burns the cords and sets them free, and really gives them larger opportunities to testify to the glory of our God than they could have had by any other course.

The Lord's providences vary, and it is not for his people to decide when shall come remarkable deliverances, and when they shall apparently be left entirely to the will of their enemies without any manifestation of divine favor on their behalf. Note, for instance, the fact that, while the Lord interposed to deliver these three Hebrews from the fiery furnace, he did not interpose to prevent the beheading of John the Baptist, altho of the latter it is specifically declared, "There hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist." We remember that, while Peter was delivered from prison by the angel of the Lord, James was not delivered, but was beheaded. We remember also that Paul's life was miraculously preserved on several occasions, and that the Apostle John, according to tradition, was once cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but escaped uninjured, while on other occasions dire disaster came upon the Lord's faithful ones, and that quickly, as in the case of Stephen, who was stoned.

It is not, therefore, for us to predetermine what shall be the divine providence in respect to ourselves; we are to note the point of right and duty and to follow it regardless of consequences, trusting implicitly in the Lord. This lesson is most beautifully set forth

in the language of the three Hebrews, who declared to King Nebuchadnezzar that their God was entirely capable of delivering them from his power, but that, whether he chose to do so or not, they would not violate their conscience. It is just such characters that the Lord is seeking for, and it is in order to their development and testing that multiform evil is now permitted to have sway.

While such testings have been in progress to a considerable extent throughout this entire Gospel age, the Scriptures clearly indicate to us that in some special sense all of the Lord's people will be tested in the "harvest" or closing time of this age. Our Lord speaks of it, likening our Christian faith to a house, and represents the trials in the end of this age as a great storm which will beat upon every house, with the result that all that are founded upon the rock will stand, and all founded upon the sand will collapse. The Apostle Peter speaks of this trial-time, saying, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which shall try you, as tho some strange thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) We are to expect a testing in the end of this age, just as there was a testing of the Jewish nominal church in the end of its age. As in that testing there was a thorough, complete separating of the "wheat" from the "chaff," so here the separating will be complete between the "wheat" and the "tares," as our Lord declares. (Matt. 13:24-30.) Throughout the age the "wheat" and the "tares," by divine arrangement, have been permitted to grow side by side; but in the "harvest" the separation must occur, that the "wheat" may be "garnered," received to the Kingdom.

The Apostle Paul, also, speaks of this time of fiery trial, and, likening the faith and works of a zealous Christian to a house built of gold, silver and precious stones, he declares that the fire of this day, in the end of this age, shall try every man's work of what sort it is, and shall consume all but the genuine faith and character structures. (1 Cor. 3:11-15.) But we are to

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remember that such loyal characters grow not suddenly, in a few hours or days--mushroom-like,--but are progressive developments, fine-grained and strong like the olive-tree.

Looking back, we cannot doubt that the step of self-denial recorded in our previous lesson,--taken for conscience' sake by the Hebrews,--had much to do with the development in them of the staunch characters illustrated in this lesson. Likewise we who have become "new creatures," reckonedly, in Christ, know that we are to be tested (if our testing has not already commenced), and should realize that only as we practice self-denials in the little things of life, and mortify (deadened) the natural cravings of our flesh in respect

to food, clothing, conduct, etc., will we become strong spiritually and be able to "overcome."

Many deal slackly with themselves in respect to little violations of their consecration vow, saying,-- "What's the use" of such carefulness and so different a life from that of the world in general? Ah! there is great use in it, for victories in little things prepare for greater victories and make them possible: and on the contrary, surrender to the will of the flesh in the little things means sure defeat in the warfare as a whole. Let us remember the maxim laid down by our Great Teacher--that he that is faithful in the things that are least will be faithful also in the things which are great. And this is the operation of a law, whose operations may be discerned in all the affairs of life.

Our Lord expresses the same thought, saying,-- To him that hath (used) shall be given (more), and from him that hath not (used) shall be taken away that which he hath. If we start on a Christian life ever so weak in the flesh and weak in spirit, we will find that faithfulness in the little things will bring increasing strength in the Lord and in the power of his might. But it is in vain that we pray, "Lord, Lord," and hope for great victories and the "crown of rejoicing," if we fail to do our best to conquer in the little affairs of daily life. In other words, our testing is in progress from the moment of our consecration, and the little trials are but preparations for greater ones which, when faithfully attained, we will be able to reckon with the Apostle as light afflictions which are but for a moment, and which are working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.--2 Cor. 4:17.

The answer of the Hebrews to Nebuchadnezzar,-- "Our God whom we serve," is worthy of note. They

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not only acknowledged God and worshiped him, but they additionally served him, according as they had opportunity. And so it will be found to-day: those who have the necessary strength of character to refuse to worship human institutions and thereby to "suffer the loss of all things," counting them but as loss and dross, that they may win Christ and be found finally complete in him, as members of his glorified body, and joint-heirs in his Kingdom, not only practice self-denials, but gladly serve and confess the Lord in their daily life. Rightly appreciated, a profession of love for the Lord would always be a profession of service to his cause. Whoever is not rendering some service to our King in the present time of multiplied opportunities has at very most the "lukewarm" love that is offensive to the Master.--Rev. 2:4; 3:16.

Let us resolve, dear brethren, as did the three Hebrews of this lesson, that we will worship and serve only the Lord our God--that we will neither worship

nor serve sectarianism, in any of its many forms, nor mammon, with its many enticements and rewards, nor fame, nor friends, nor self. God "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth," is the declaration of our Lord and Head.--John 4:23,24.

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WEIGHED IN THE BALANCES.

JULY 23.--DAN. 5:17-31.

"God is the Judge."--Psa. 75:7.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S kingdom, altho very prosperous, and wealthy by the gathering of the spoils of centuries from the great surrounding nations, was of short duration. Secular history mentions the father of Nebuchadnezzar as the founder of new Babylonia, and quite a number of Bible students have thus been misled to reckon the "Times of the Gentiles" as beginning before Nebuchadnezzar's time in the days of Nabopolassar. But while it is doubtless true that that monarch was prominently identified with the organization of Babylonia, the "Times of the Gentiles" could not have begun in his day, because God still had his own typical Kingdom in the earth, as represented by the Jews--down until Zedekiah's captivity to Nebuchadnezzar, 606 B.C. We should remember that the "Times of the Gentiles" merely means the times or years in which the world's affairs are delivered over to Gentile supremacy, between the time of the removal of God's typical kingdom and the time of the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom October, 1914.\* This Bible view of the matter is further confirmed by the fact that the ruins of Babylon show the name of Nebuchadnezzar on the bricks of the principal palaces, and thus give evidence that it was under his administration that the empire reached its

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\*See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I. Chap. 13; VOL. II., Chap. 4.

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zenith, or became, in the language of the dream, the golden head of the image, which represented Gentile dominion.--Dan. 2:38.

Secular history seems to give the name of Nabonidus, as king of Babylon, at the time of its fall, but the Scriptures make no mention of this name, giving us instead Belshazzar, denominating him the son of Nebuchadnezzar. Two explanations are possible: Belshazzar

may have been the son of Nabonidus and the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, or Nabonidus may have been his original name, and Belshazzar a name adopted when he assumed the office of king; or reversely, Belshazzar may have been his original name, and the one by which Daniel and the people at home would speak of him, while Nabonidus may have been the name he assumed officially as king. At all events the name that appears on the tablets is Nabonidus, while the name which Daniel gives repeatedly is Belshazzar, a name of the same signification as that given to Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, both words signifying "Favored of God." We can safely hold to the Scriptural account, assured that time will justify our confidence in this, as it has done in other matters.

At the time of our lesson, Babylon, the capital city of Babylonia, was the most wonderful city in the world. The following observations respecting it are from the pens of others. "Nebuchadnezzar converted his capital, Babylon, into one of the most magnificent and beautiful cities of antiquity." "Herodotus, who visited it about B.C. 450 [nearly a century after the date covered by our lesson], while its walls and buildings were still perfect, describes it as forming a square of nearly fourteen miles on each side." "The walls surrounding the city, according to Herodotus, were three hundred feet high and eighty feet broad. A hundred gates, with their great posts, leaves and sills of brass, and their bars of iron, permitted entrance to the city." "Such a city was never seen before, and was the work of Nebuchadnezzar. The bricks marked with his name, and the inscriptions which he wrote, being hidden in the ruins, have now come forth from their grave as witnesses to the truth of God's Word." "In those days Babylon was the metropolis of the world, the center of commerce, art and wisdom." "The great plain on which it lay, a Paradise of fertility and cultivation, was intersected by countless canals, both small and great, serving alike for irrigation and navigation." "Babylon was a university city. The wealth of the world poured into the coffers of the Babylonian merchants."

Such wealth and prosperity were likely to beget luxurious ease on the part of the Babylonians, as they also excited the cupidity and ambition of enemies. Accordingly, the Medes and Persians had consolidated; and their army under Cyrus for several months had been besieging Babylon, whose citizens, however, felt quite secure behind their immense walls, and amply provisioned for a longer siege than it was supposed any army could enforce. So great was the confidence of the king of Babylon in the strength of his capital that he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords.

This feast would seem to have been in the nature of a boast in the greatness of Babylon; and as tho to emphasize his power and to remind his nobles and

lords of how none of the gods of the surrounding nations had been able to deliver their peoples out of the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar had called for the vessels of gold and silver brought from the Jewish Temple, and these were profaned by drinking therefrom to the honor of Bel, the god of Babylon.

In the midst of the revelry of the feast, the king, his counsellors and lords were astonished to see a part of a hand writing certain fiery letters upon the wall of the palace. The revelry ceased, a hush of fear came over all; the flush of confidence upon the king's face gave place to one of terror; he trembled and called for the advice of the wise men to interpret the wonderful message, but they were unable to explain the matter satisfactorily. Even if they had deciphered the letters and words, they had no interpretation to offer, because from their standpoint any other meaning than the true meaning would have been more reasonable; nothing would have seemed further from the truth to Babylon's wise men than the message which these miraculously written words conveyed. The king was greatly disappointed, but his mother came to his assistance, informing him of Daniel, who had given to his father, Nebuchadnezzar, an interpretation of a dream, when all the wise men of Babylon had failed, and accordingly Daniel was sent for.

The aged Prophet, at this time about ninety years of age, as an officer of the kingdom doubtless resided in one of the palace buildings near by, and in response to the king's command he stood before them. The king, realizing the importance of the message, manifested his anxiety by offering, first to the astrologers, and now to Daniel, a great reward for the interpretation --to be robed in royal purple, with a royal golden chain as insignia of rank, and to be third in dignity and power in the empire. The first thing in the lesson which strikes us is the nobility of God's servant, in renouncing all claim to these gifts as a reward for the service of interpreting God's message. "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known the interpretation."

We may stop here long enough to take a valuable lesson, to the effect that all who would be the mouth-pieces

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of the Lord, and speak forth his Word, should, like Daniel, do so without stipulation of compensation. Only from this standpoint can any hope to be entirely free and untrammelled in speaking words of truth and soberness which may be very distasteful to those who inquire the mind of the Lord. Had Daniel thanked the king for the promised gifts, and thus accepted them as a reward for his service, he would have felt obligated to the king to such an extent that it might



have warped his judgment, or have weakened his expression of the Lord's message. And the king in turn would have felt that, having paid for the information, it should be a smooth, favorable message. And just so it is with some of the Lord's true servants in mystic Babylon. They have the opportunity presented to speak the Lord's Word; yet many of them are handicapped by reason of having received honors and robes, and are more or less inclined to hide and

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cover the message now due to Babylon in this its Laodicean epoch. They are bound by the chain of gold around their necks.--Rev. 3:14-22.

The aged Prophet displayed gentleness as well as fearlessness in the delivery of his message. It was stated as kindly as the truth would permit, but the truth was not withheld by reason of fear. He recounted to the king his father's exaltation to power, and ascribed it not to the god of Babylon, but to the God of Israel. He reminded him of how pride had been his father's downfall, resulting in his degradation to bestial conditions for seven times (seven years--corresponding to the seven times, i.e., 2520 years, of Gentile domination). He reminded Belshazzar of how in the end his father had acknowledged the God of heaven as the real ruler amongst men, and then he charged home to the king that instead of profiting by this experience, of which he well knew, he had lifted up his heart to pride, had ignored the only true God, and had even brought what he knew were the sacred vessels of Jehovah's service, to profane them in the worship and glorification of idols--"gods of silver, gold, brass, iron, wood and stone, which see not nor hear nor know." He pointed out to the king that he had thus dishonored and defied "the God in whose hand [power] thy breath is [the God of all life--Acts 17:28,29], and whose are all thy ways [who has full power to control your course]." This true God he had not glorified, but dishonored.

By thus kindly but plainly showing the king the truth, the Prophet prepared the way for the exposition of the fateful words--"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." Mene was repeated twice, probably for the sake of emphasis--Numbered! Numbered!--the limit of the time of your dominion has expired. Tekel --short weight, lacking. Peres signifies divided, and its plural form, Upharsin, gives the thought of broken or crushed into pieces--destroyed. Nothing in the word peres signifies Medes and Persians, but the Prophet knew from the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's vision that the Babylonian dominion would be followed by the Medo-Persian kingdom, and he also knew that the Medes and Persians were already besieging the city.

So far from being offended with the plain words of the Prophet, Belshazzar seems to have felt their truth, and gave command that the honors already promised should be bestowed upon Daniel. But meantime other matters were transpiring in his capital, of which the king and his lords were unaware, so that the fulfilment of the doom written upon the palace wall was close at hand.

While the Babylonians were feasting and reveling in fancied security, Cyrus, the general of the united forces of the Medes and Persians, having studied up a plan of attack, had already caused a great ditch to be dug above the city, to divert the waters of the River Euphrates into a new channel. This river flowed through the center of Babylon diagonally, and was protected by enormous gates of brass, which were supposed to be equally as impregnable as the three-hundred-foot wall. Indeed, it would appear that the Babylonians had never a fear of attack from the river, and had left it comparatively unguarded; consequently, when Cyrus had diverted the stream into the new channel he found little difficulty in marching his troops under the brass gates into the city, so that at the very time the revelry was progressing in Belshazzar's palace the soldiers of Cyrus were taking possession of the entire city, and very shortly after Daniel's interpretation of the writing the troops reached the palace, Belshazzar was slain, and the new empire of Medo-Persia was inaugurated--"without fighting," as the tablets declare. Thus did great Babylon fall suddenly --"in one hour."

The thoughtful Bible student must of necessity have always in view the many correspondencies which the Scriptures institute between literal Babylon and mystic Babylon, and when studying the account of the fall of literal Babylon his attention is naturally drawn also to the foretold fall of mystic Babylon in the end of this age. Indeed, he must be comparatively blind who cannot see that the wonderful prophecies which speak of the fall of Babylon (Isa. 14:22; Jer. 50 and 51) were not wholly fulfilled by Cyrus the Persian. The fall of literal Babylon, while it was sudden, and while it made a great commotion amongst the nations, lacks much of filling to the full the prophetic picture. Much of the prophecy still waits for fulfilment in mystic or symbolic Babylon to-day; and this

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fact is abundantly supported by the prophecies of the Book of Revelation, written centuries after the fall of literal Babylon, which unmistakably refer to symbolic Babylon, and use language almost identical with that of Jeremiah.--See Rev. 16:19-18:24.

It will be noticed, further, that, as literal Babylon sat upon the literal River Euphrates, so mystic Babylon

is said to sit upon the waters, peoples. It should be noticed, also, that as the literal city was captured by the diversion of the literal waters, so symbolic Babylon is to fall by reason of the diversion of the symbolic Euphrates, which in Rev. 16:12, it is foretold, shall be "dried up--that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared."

The kings of the East, or kings from the sunrising, are, we understand, the kings of Christ's Kingdom, who are also priests--the body of Christ, the Royal Priesthood. "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." From this standpoint of view, Cyrus and his army, overthrowing literal Babylon, was a figure or illustration of Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords, who with his faithful will shortly overthrow mystic Babylon, and take possession of the world in the name of Jehovah, to establish the Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, "Our Father...,thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

This likeness of Cyrus to Messiah is not merely in the particulars noted. It should be remembered that the name, Cyrus, signifies "the sun," and that thus in his name he reminds us of the prophecy of Christ,--"The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." Moreover, there were sundry very remarkable prophecies respecting Cyrus, made long before he had come into prominence. Through the Prophet Isaiah (44:28) the Lord speaks of Cyrus as his shepherd, who would lead back Israel, and again (45:1-14) he calls him his anointed, saying, "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall not be shut; I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass and cut in sunder the bars of iron; and I will give thee the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, Jehovah, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by name; I have surnamed thee, tho thou hast not known me." In this prophecy Cyrus is evidently indicated, and yet just as evidently a greater than he is indirectly referred to, viz., the Prince of the kings of the earth, who in Revelation is shown as drying up the symbolic Euphrates and destroying symbolic Babylon, and delivering spiritual Israel. And the time for the fulfilment of the symbol is clearly indicated, by the drying up of the Euphrates under the sixth vial of the "Day of Wrath:" and the fall of Babylon under the seventh vial, resulting in the liberty of all of God's people from the thralldom, through false doctrine, which has been upon them for lo, these many years, is portrayed as resulting.

Babylon literal fell because, when tried in the balances by the Lord, she was found wanting: mystic Babylon falls for a similar reason. Literal Babylon never was Israel, but the Israelites were for a time swallowed up in Babylon; likewise, mystic Babylon never was spiritual Israel, tho for a long time spiritual Israel has been in captivity to mystic Babylon. As the same Cyrus who overthrew literal Babylon made the proclamation which permitted literal Israel to return from captivity, so it is the King of kings who, upon taking his great power as earth's new King will set free all of the Lord's people--and in advance he sends the message to those who have ears to hear, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird....Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."--Rev. 18:2-4.

The great feast which preceded the fall of Babylon would seem to correspond well with the great denominational union expected soon, and the season of rejoicing which will accompany it. The gold and silver vessels of the Lord's house which were profaned may fitly represent not only the precious truths of divine revelation, but also the Lord's consecrated people --the golden vessels representing the "little flock," and the more numerous silver vessels representing the "great company." What may be the character of the defilement and injury of these is of course problematical, but in any case we remember that those consecrated vessels were all highly honored, and restored to the Temple by Cyrus, and likewise we know that not only the truths of divine revelation will all be cared for by our Lord, but also that all that are his shall be glorified in the spiritual Temple which he will rear shortly.

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#### INTERESTING LETTERS.

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MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Your kind favor of the 9th received, and the announcement of Brother McPhail's visit is much appreciated by all the friends here in Philadelphia. Your letter was read and discussed at our meeting, and we decided to have an all-day meeting on Sunday, the 9th of July, with intermissions for lunch; and evening meetings on Friday and Saturday; all to be held at our usual meeting-place, Dover Hall, Marshall and Susquehanna aves. Please tell Bro. McPhail to come to my house on his arrival

at Philadelphia.

I am glad to be able to say that all our meetings are smooth and harmonious: so much so as to be a little different from what we might Scripturally expect:

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but perhaps this is for a pleasant alternation to the ruggedness of the past few years. I take this opportunity of thanking you for the rich semi-monthly feasts of which we are the recipients from our present Lord through your agency; and I hope I may lay the lessons well to heart and never lose sight of the responsibility which accompanies the knowledge of the truth, but always realize that this is my day of judgment and try to be faithful to my consecration to his will.

I enclose a clipping which is strikingly corroborative of the Laodicean period of the nominal church, and yet this gentleman will in all probability refuse to be enlightened from God's Word on the strange inconsistencies of which he complains.

Sr. Walker unites in love to yourself and all those associated with you in "the work of the Lord."

Yours in Christ, SMITH WALKER--Philadelphia.

DEAR BROTHER:--Last Sunday I gathered up the rest of my Bible vs. Evolution pamphlets, slipped tracts into each one, left dinner to cook itself and went down to the Baptist church to make a beginning of distribution. The 500,000 pamphlets weighed on me, and I felt uneasy at doing so little toward the work. It was Children's Day, and services were prolonged, so I stood for half an hour, with what patience and fortitude I could, beset by inducements to give it up for that day, and nearly breaking down, when I heard the children in a responsive exercise saying, "Shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." Had no difficulty in waiting after that, and disposed of the pamphlets to the first ones who came down the stairs. All but one were kindly received; one woman passed by with her head up, but it did not disturb me. I hurried home, to find things all right, my absence had caused no trouble, and I am not sure it was known. The Lord was merciful; for this had seemed to me an impossible thing for me to do, but while I was waiting I felt that I must not let anything prevent my carrying out what I had planned to do, or perhaps I could never have attempted it again. The obstacles have been so many and great; but when it seemed that I was a little willing to be prevented, then I felt I must overcome at any cost, or grieve the spirit.

I have been letting no day pass without at the very least three witness-bearings to the truth of the Kingdom, and am greatly pleased when the number rises to seven or more, as it sometimes does. Generally, when I make opportunities in the morning, the

Lord sends me others later in the day. If evening comes before I have given any testimony, I am unhappy and do not think I could rest, if I did not mail before retiring at least three missionary envelopes with tracts. It gets to be meat and drink to do the Lord's will. I am glad there are so many ways of serving. I want to say "Any service, anywhere;" and think it has been good for me that I had not money to put into the harvest-work lately, for it has compelled me to give tracts as something I still could do, and from which I felt I had no right to shrink. It has been a valuable training, undoubtedly, in addition.

The Lord's peace is with me richly to-day. I have felt conscious of the presence of the heavenly Caretaker and, as it seemed, of the kindly down-looking of hosts of happy saints. I have felt almost ready to put away every fear at last. I belong to Christ, and I rejoice to find that God is true. His Word shall abide. That same Jesus whom I have seen slighted and decried and explained away and talked down and forgotten, by the people for whom he gave his very breath in unappreciated love,--he shall surprise them with goodness in power shortly. "Every knee" and "every tongue"! I praise his name! My health is better of late, maybe since my immersion. That seemed a relief to my mind.

The June 1st TOWER is very excellent and helpful. And also The Wonderful Story, very prettily finished and illustrated.

Wishing you all things good in the Lord's service,  
Your sister in him,  
ALICE L. DARLINGTON,--Pennsylvania.

MY DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I have just closed a meeting in Madison Co. which was the most interesting held there in a long time. I preached for them three days, and at the close of the meeting baptized five. I tried an hour and a half to explain the significance and beauty of the symbol, and I hope they understood what they were doing.

Appointments are being arranged for me to make another trip to Santa Anna in July, and I hope to be able to fill them. If I go I want to hold meetings in Milano, Goldthwaite and Mullen.

Oh how I do thank the dear Lord that he has seen fit to use me, yes, even me, in the service of the truth and those who love it! I do esteem it a grand privilege to be accounted worthy of a place in the harvest of this age. I think of the apostles who, when they were whipped for preaching Jesus, departed rejoicing that they were counted worthy to receive stripes for his name.

My poor heart leaps for joy when I think of seventeen years ago in comparison with the present. Then I stood (so far as I then knew or know yet) almost alone, and in the ministry entirely alone. Now

I look at the pile of good letters on my table from interested ones in different parts of Texas, and I read them with wet eyes and cheeks, as my heart rejoices to discern "the same mind" in the writers as I follow the lines of their letters.

We are glad that we have been "able to stand" in these seventeen years of trial, and to-day thank God our lamp is burning, and we have oil in our vessel. We have borne reproaches, our name has been cast out as evil, we have been slanderously reported and persecuted; but we rejoice, knowing that it was for "his sake." Again, how light these afflictions were compared with his peace! Oh this blessed peace! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

Oh how we feast, as we come to the table prepared for us in the presence of our enemies! His grace has been sufficient for us at all times. I think and rejoice over these things. God bless you! Let us look up; our redemption draweth nigh. Yes, we can say of each other, "whom having not seen we love." I seem to have known you since April, '83.

My love goes out to, and my prayers up for, all who love our dear Lord. Yours, in the Lord's service,  
SAM. WILLIAMS,--Texas.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS  
--ADDRESS TO--

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY,  
"BIBLE HOUSE," 610, 612, 614 ARCH ST., ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.

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

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

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WILL YOU ATTEND THE INDIANAPOLIS CONVENTION?

--NOTIFICATIONS--

SHOULD BE RECEIVED PROMPTLY TO SECURE ACCOMMODATIONS. THE  
CITY WILL BE CROWDED WITH EPWORTH LEAGUERS.

Arrangements are completed for a Convention of believers in  
the Second Coming of the Lord and the Plan of the Ages,--to  
be held at Indianapolis, Ind., July 21st to 23d, as follows:--

The Railroad fare will be one-half the usual, except from a  
few points which will add \$2 to the one fare for round trip. All  
passenger trains run into Union Depot, which is about seven  
blocks distant from the meeting place of the Convention--  
"Shover's Hall," on Market Street, between Alabama and New  
Jersey streets.

Accommodations--good and clean--have been arranged for,  
at the very reasonable rate of ninety-five cents per day, at "Barton's  
Hotel," No. 29 Virginia Ave. Such ZION'S WATCH TOWER  
readers as cannot afford even this modest sum, will be entertained  
free, by the Indianapolis friends, with great pleasure.  
Those who ride to the hotel can take any car leaving the Union  
depot and should ask for "transfer" when they pay their fare. A  
"Reception Committee" will meet all the friends at the Barton  
Hotel--except during convention hours, when it will be at  
Shover's Hall, as above mentioned.

The following program will be followed closely as practicable:

Friday, July 21st.--The opening "rally" will be at 10 A.M.,  
conducted by Brother C. A. Owen--an opportunity for getting  
generally acquainted. At 3 P.M. the assembly will be addressed  
by the Editor of this Journal from the text--"Looking for the  
blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and  
Savior, Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13.) At 7:30 P.M. an address on  
the Ages and Dispensations of the divine plan, illustrated by  
the Chart of the Ages, may be expected.

Saturday, July 22d.--Testimony Meeting at 8 A.M. Preaching  
at 10:30 A.M. by the Editor of this Journal: subject, "The Law  
of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:2.) At 3 P.M.  
a discourse by Bro. M. L. McPhail--"Sanctify them through  
thy Truth." At 7:30 P.M. a Chart discourse by Bro. O. A. Koetitz.

Sunday, July 23d.--Testimony Meeting 8:30 A.M.; at 10:30 a



discourse by Bro. M. L. Staples on "The Offence of the Cross;" at 3 P.M., "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," by the Editor; at 7:30 P.M., "Preserving the Unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace"--several speakers.

All who love the Lord, trust in the precious blood and wait for his Kingdom, are cordially invited to attend this Convention which recognizes only the one Church and her one Lord, one faith and one baptism. All such will please address the WATCH TOWER SOCIETY as soon as they know definitely that they will attend, stating in few words who will be of their party, and whether or not they will stop at the hotel.

An opportunity will be afforded for symbolizing baptism.

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#### VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

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"THE POWERS of the heavens shall be shaken," said our Lord: and all whose eyes are open can see the great shaking now in progress in the symbolic ecclesiastical "heavens" of the present time. How its stars are falling!\*

Rev. Burt Estes Howard, formerly of the First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland, Ohio, but latterly of the First Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles, Cal., and now resigned with the intention of becoming a professor at Stanford University (the richest university in the world), declares his present position of disbelief as follows:--

"Do I believe in the inspiration of the Bible, in the resurrection of Jesus, and in the virginity of Mary? No, I cannot say that I do.

"My ideas have changed regarding nearly all of the generally accepted religious tenets. My beliefs have not changed suddenly, but in the slow course of the last half dozen years. Simple faith in the Scriptures has given way to an irresistible belief in what is called higher criticism in religious thought.

"I believe that Christ was born of woman, like the rest of us.

"But I regard these matters as non-essential. The necessity of believing them is not apparent to me. I know there are many honest preachers who think they believe these dogmas.

"The old Testament is largely an historical work. There can be no question as to the Bible's power for elevating and uplifting humanity. But one does not have necessarily to believe in the miracles to feel and profit by this power.

"My whole aim in preaching has been to stimulate my people to the truest practical life. The good life is not necessarily the religious life."

## SECULAR JOURNALS TO THE RESCUE.

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As there were Gentiles who exhibited great faith in our Lord at his first advent, while the scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Jews disbelieved and scoffed, so now it is gratifying to note the zeal of a few secular journals in the defense of the Bible, while so many of the professed ministers of the Gospel are repudiating it. Discussing the trend of the high ones in the church nominal, toward infidelity,--called "higher criticism," evolution, etc.,--The Atlanta Constitution says:--

"The manifestations of unbelief in the pulpit have become so frequent and so notorious that a well-conducted newspaper cannot fail to take note, if only as a part of the phenomena of the time. Those of our readers who have access only to a few of the newspapers of the day would be astonished if we had room in these columns to present even one-half of the manifestations of unbelief that have become visible as the result of the encouragement and support which Dr. Briggs and his views have received.

"Already various pulpit imitators of Dr. Briggs are boldly avowing the conclusions to which the higher criticism leads. For instance, here is a professor in the Chicago Theological Seminary declaring that it is not necessary for Christians to believe in the miraculous birth of Christ; that such belief is not necessarily a part of the Christian creed. This professor takes the ground that the statements of the apostles on this matter are not revelations at all. Commenting on the Savior's words in the seventeenth chapter of John, this Chicago professor of theology calmly remarks:-- 'This is scarcely the utterance of one who was conscious of being the Messiah sent from God, but the preexistence which is involved is ideal.'

"We need not say that The Constitution prints this shameful, scandalous and blasphemous statement, not to horrify decent men and women, but to show how accurate were its predictions with respect to the

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\*MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., Chap. 12.

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purport and tendency of the higher criticism. Its whole aim is to tear down and undo, to uproot and destroy, the faith that has served the purposes of Christendom for nearly nineteen hundred years. Since we have quoted the sacrilegious teachings of a professor in the Chicago Theological Seminary, we cannot do

better than to quote the remarks of Dr. Adams, editor of The Advance. 'The Congregationalists may put up with loose views on the atonement, but you may rest assured [he was talking to a reporter] that they will never endure a man who denies the miraculous birth and the preexistence in heaven of Jesus Christ.'

"Apparently these are the words of an indignant man, and yet how far is the journey from 'loose views on the atonement' to a denial of the miraculous birth and the preexistence of the Savior?

"The pretentiousness of the higher criticism could not be more powerfully set forth than its claim to be 'scientific.' No word in our English vocabulary has come to have a cheaper or a more insignificant meaning. It has been tossed to and fro between theorists and cranks until its primary significance has been lost and it stands for any wild or absurd conclusion that the disordered mind of man is capable of conceiving.

"Let it be understood that there is no objection anywhere to earnest and orderly investigations into the history and evolution of the books of the Bible. So long as such investigations are set on foot by men well enough equipped for the purpose and are not undertaken for the purpose of proving a theory already conceived, they are well enough. Let it be understood, also, that there is no claim among Christians anywhere that the translations of the Bible are free from error, or that the letterpress is inerrant; these are the work of man, and man's work is necessarily defective at some point or other.

"The claim that is made, and the claim that The Constitution upholds, is that the books of the Bible, of the Old as well as the New Testament, are divinely inspired; that to prove one or a dozen to be myths or fables is to tear down the whole scheme of salvation; and that the promise and the fulfilment are so intimately connected in the scheme of salvation that to prove one false is to prove the other a fraud. This is shown by comparing the conclusions of Dr. Briggs with the declarations of Dr. George H. Gilbert, the theological professor at Chicago. Dr. Briggs says that the Bible is made up of myths, fables, fairy tales, poems and fictitious narratives. The Chicago man is sure that the world is to be saved, if saved at all, by an Eastern philosopher who was not a Messiah but a gifted idealist. This is the logical conclusion of Briggism, and this is why Robert Ingersoll regards Briggs as a modern hero.

"Dr. Briggs and those who are hurrying his doctrines to their logical conclusions have nothing to offer in the place of the Bible they are destroying; no hope to hold out to those whose faith they are trying to undermine. In place of our Lord and Savior of whom the prophets tell, and to whom the apostles bear witness, they do not even offer us Mahomet, nor Brahma, nor Confucius. What then? Why, so far as the higher

criticism is concerned, we have no choice but between Robert Ingersoll and the devil!"

WHAT LEARNED COLLEGE PROFESSORS ARE PREPARING  
AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE BIBLE.

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While Satan's arts are beguiling some from faith in the Bible, he realizes the need of a substitute, and is rapidly pushing forward his "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1.) Theosophy, Christian Science (falsely so-called) and Spiritism are being advanced and exploited in various ways, through influential channels. Recently the New York and Boston journals of largest circulation have printed columns of matter, profusely illustrated, detailing the tests applied to Spiritism by Prof. Hodgson, representative of the English Society for Psychical research, Prof. James Hyslop of Columbia College, and Prof. James of Harvard College. We extract as follows:--

"NOTED SCIENTIST OF COLUMBIA  
SAYS HE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN DECEIVED.  
"HIS PROOF OF IMMORTALITY.

"I have had in all seventeen sittings with Mrs. Piper,' said Dr. Hyslop. 'She had no possible means of knowing who I am. In not a single incident did she tell me facts connected only with my own memory. They were common as well with the memory of persons now dead.

"Now that this was not fraud is proved by this statement of Prof. James, of Harvard, in the Psychological Review: "Dr. Hodgson considers that the hypothesis of fraud cannot be seriously entertained." I agree with him thoroughly and absolutely.'

"WILL TELL ALL IN A YEAR.

"I shall be ready to lay my case completely before the world in just about a year. By that time I hope to organize a body of scientific men to examine my facts, and to get enough money to endow a fund to break down the frauds bound to spring up.'

"Prof. Hyslop is generally regarded by his associates in the faculty at Columbia as a sound-minded, painstaking and an especially keen scientific man.

"BUTLER'S FAITH IN HYSLOP.

"Prof. Nicholas Murray Butler, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy and an expert psychologist, yesterday expressed the greatest confidence in Prof. Hyslop.

"The fact,' said he, 'that he has gone at the matter in the most extreme spirit of skepticism, and

is supported in his research by such men as Dr. James, of Harvard, and Dr. Hodgson, of Boston, leads me to believe that he would not make any statement not well

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grounded on scientific facts.

"The field he has investigated is one that cannot be ignored. These occurrences need explanation, and that is what Dr. Hyslop is doing for them.'

"Dr. Franz, an assistant in the Department of Psychology, also asserted the trustworthiness of Prof. Hyslop's opinions."

Alas! poor Babylon, her lords and her teachers, in whom she has trusted, are leading on to the ditch of Infidelity, and fulfilling our Lord's prediction,--

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"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?" He will evidently find only a "little flock" walking in the light of his Word.

How opportune seems the booklet--What say the Scriptures about Spiritualism?\*" All friends of the truth should have some of these on hand to loan--as helping hands to assist our "brethren" to escape this snare of the Adversary.

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\*Supplied at fifty cents per doz.; 10 cents each.

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PRESS TOWARD THE MARK!

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"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."--Phil. 3:13.

Tho disappointments, keenly felt,  
Have traced care on thy brow;  
Tho hopes have perished that have caused  
Thy heart in grief to bow;  
Tho friends have failed thee whom thou loved,  
And foes with wicked dart  
Have drawn the cruel bow of scorn  
To pierce thy breaking heart:

Be vigilant, be strong, be true,  
And quit thee like a man;  
Be diligent God's will to know--  
Submissive to his plan;  
Heed not the counseling of men,  
E'en tho in love 'tis given.

(Shortsighted it is apt to be,  
And lead thee far from Heaven.)

But ready be to follow Christ,  
Wherever he may lead;  
To voice of stranger hearken not,  
But to his voice give heed.  
Through evil or through good report  
Undaunted follow on;  
Your feet will never find a path,  
But there your Lord has gone.

And what if men may look askance  
And sneer and laugh and scorn?  
You'll never feel a pang of pain,  
But that your Lord has borne;  
The trials of this present life  
Are not to be compared  
To glory we shall share with him,  
Whose sufferings we have shared.  
--HATTIE HENDERSON.

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#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

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QUESTION. Please give for the benefit of others as well as myself brief explanations of the following Scriptures:--Matt. 10:10; 1 Cor. 9:7-14; 1 Thes. 2:6; Gal. 6:6; 2 Thes. 3:8-10.

Answer. We reply to your questions as follows:

Matt. 10:10.--This instruction was to the twelve apostles sent forth to announce the Kingdom. It was not a general instruction for all time, but particular to the occasion. It is not applicable to the present time. The object in sending them forth in this dependent manner was largely at least to teach the apostles the lesson of the Lord's full ability to care for them under all circumstances and conditions, and they learned the lesson. Subsequently the apostles acted very differently; the Apostle Paul, for instance, making tents, etc., and their change of course was under the Lord's direction.--See Luke 22:35,36.

1 Cor. 9:7-18.--We understand the Apostle here to teach that it is the privilege of the Church to support those who are giving their entire time to the ministry of the Gospel, as was the Apostle Paul, and as some are doing now. But this does not seem to us to imply that all the elders in all the churches were supported without doing any manual labor themselves. So far as we have any knowledge of the matter, the elders generally, as the Apostle expresses it, took the

oversight of the local congregations, not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind--of a desire to serve the flock.--1 Pet. 5:2.

The Apostle's case, and that of others who did a like service, was different, and yet he did not demand support, and if it was not voluntarily rendered, he made tents, or otherwise labored with his hands, understanding that to be the will of God concerning his course--that he should not make request for support or any carnal things. This he explains in the very verses under consideration.--See vs. 15-18.

It would seem to be a feature of the divine law that whoever has received a spiritual blessing must make some sacrifice of an earthly kind, and thus show his appreciation of the spiritual favor received of the Lord, if he would grow in grace, knowledge and love. While therefore we deprecate everything akin to money-begging, and carefully avoid it in our columns, we do believe most sincerely that those who will receive the greatest blessing at the Lord's hands are those who are using their means in the spread of the truth--to the extent of their ability, if that be only two mites, as in the case of the poor widow. The salvation purchased at the high cost of our dear Redeemer's life is offered free, and the Lord refuses to permit any to pay for it, but he does not refuse to permit us to testify our love and appreciation of his grace by little self-denials. On the contrary, he appreciates these, and causes his face to shine and his spiritual blessings to fall upon those who take delight in devoting themselves

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and their substance to his service and the service of his cause, the service of his people. On the contrary, those who have never learned the blessedness of giving are informed that "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver:" and those who have not the love which leads them to respond with gratitude have not the condition of heart which the Lord loves, will not grow in grace and, because of the cultivation of the spirit of selfishness, instead of the spirit of benevolence, such are apt to grow cold, indifferent, and to fail to make their calling and election sure. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."--Prov. 11:25.

1 Thes. 2:6.--This is in harmony with the foregoing. In justice the Apostle might have said to those to whom he had brought the glad tidings:--You owe to me, as the servant of God, more than you will ever be able to pay in the present life, and it is as little as you can do to care for my temporal necessities to the extent of your ability. But the Gospel message is not given along the lines of justice, but along the lines of love and compassion, and hence the Apostle was careful not to mention these things when with the Church (tho after he had gone from them he thought it his

duty to write as we have seen, to the Church at Corinth, setting forth the facts). When with the Lord's people he neither coveted their silver and gold, nor asked for it or their praise, but was gentle and loving, "even as a nurse cherisheth her children: being so affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us, for ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail; for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable to any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God."--Vss. 7-9.

Gal. 6:6.--This injunction, "Let him that is taught in the Word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things," might properly be understood to mean that the taught were to support the teachers; and yet just as reasonably we might understand it to mean that those receiving instruction should not fear to communicate to the better instructed teaching-brother any thought that they might have respecting the Lord's word of grace. Nothing in the connection would seem to imply of necessity that it meant to communicate in carnal things: the good things with equal propriety might be considered good spiritual things. However, even if it were clear that this referred to temporal good things, we are to bear in mind that the Apostle did not impress this upon the Church on his own behalf, for he was not with them at this time. Very evidently he never spoke in such a strain when with the Church, and when his words might be understood to mean a personal appeal for money, for charity, for support.

2 Thes. 3:8-10.--"Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not power [authority, as the appointed apostles of the Lord, to demand support], but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you this we commanded you, that if any should not work, neither should he eat."

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It would appear from this that it was never the Apostle's thought, nor the meaning of any of the types or instructions of the Word of God, that a clergy class should be created or should create itself, and abstain from work and insist upon being supported in comparative idleness. Any such interpretation would evidently be contrary to the example of the Apostle, as above stated.

It may be sometimes difficult to draw the line on questions of this kind, which have two sides. The only safe way is to seek the mind of the Lord, and on the one hand to cultivate generosity and restrain selfishness,



and on the other hand to give needed assistance to ministers of the truth, without doing anything to encourage them in idleness, which is a foe both to truth and to grace.

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DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS.

JULY 30.--DAN. 6:10-23.

"The Lord is thy keeper."--Psa. 121:5.

NOTHING gives us a higher opinion of the kings of ancient times, their willingness to recognize character and merit wherever it might be found, than does the record furnished in the Book of Daniel. If we were surprised at Nebuchadnezzar's impartial treatment of his captives, in the selection of Daniel and his companions, and their education and advancement in the kingdom; if we were surprised that the king so greatly honored Daniel for the interpretation of a dream; if we were surprised that, when convinced that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were servants of the true God, Nebuchadnezzar gave them still higher positions in the empire; and if we were surprised that Belshazzar took no offence at Daniel's interpretation of the writing on the wall, but highly honored and rewarded him for his faithful, plain, outspoken words, --we are still more surprised to find that King Darius of the Medes and Persians, so far from destroying all the rulers of Babylon, including Daniel, apparently spared all except the king alive, and gave Daniel a

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very high position in the empire. We may reasonably assume that, altho God's providence was in the matter of Daniel's preferment, nevertheless there was some creditable generosity in those heathen kings, as well as some natural ability and good quality manifested by the Prophet Daniel.

As one of the three presidents of the empire, and having charge over a hundred and twenty of its provinces, Daniel stood in the way of many who sought office, and, as a man of unimpeachable character, no doubt he stood in the way of many schemes for the plundering of the treasury; for such public plundering and dishonesty, said to be very general throughout Eastern countries to-day, was probably so then to a large extent. For these selfish reasons, Daniel was sure to have a host of secret enemies, who sought his downfall. From the narrative we might suppose that these enemies, many of whom would be prominent in

official life, had watched in vain to find any real cause of complaint, and that they finally concluded that, if fault would be found at all, it must be on account of his religion.

How this reminds us of the Apostle's testimony, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution," and again, our Lord's words, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you!" (2 Tim. 3:12; John 15:19.) Even where there are no selfish motives to impel the persecution, there is ever present the distinction between "light" and "darkness:" and the fact noticed by all is mentioned by our Lord,--that all who are themselves of the darkness hate the light and all who walk in the light. (John 3:19-21.) Some one has truly said, "Whosoever does well and is faithful and true, while others are dishonest and false, must expect to be opposed and hated. Every effort will be made to injure his character, to drag him into the mire, and to make it appear that he is no better than those who assail him. Envy is sharper than a serpent's tooth, and deadlier than the poison of asps."

Shakespeare has truly said:--

"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,  
Thou shalt not escape calumny."

"That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect;  
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;  
So thou be good, slander doth yet approve  
Thy worth the greater."

Sometimes we speak of the snares that are laid for the feet of God's servants as fixed by Satan, their great Adversary, and this may be so, at least by supervision, and yet apparently there are some so fully imbued with the spirit of their "father, the devil," that his nefarious schemes and plots seem to come quite naturally to them. And thus it was with Daniel's enemies, who sought his ruin. Very skilfully they counseled with the king respecting the necessity that the people should recognize him as a god, and urged this as essential to the enforcement of obedience to the king's commands amongst his new subjects. The theory of the empire was that the king's person was specially possessed by Ormuzd, the deity of the empire, that his word was therefore representatively the word of that god, and that therefore all of his decrees were infallible and inviolable, even by himself. Taking advantage of this law of the Medes and Persians, that no decree could be altered or abrogated, these plotters succeeded in having the king set apart thirty days in which it should be a crime to offer a petition or worship to any other person or god save to Darius himself.

We are not to suppose that the king had so false an idea of his own personal consequence, nor that these his officers entertained the view that he was an infallible god: rather, it was a matter which they suggested as a piece of statecraft, a fraud upon the people, justified, in their perverted judgments, by the greater peace and security from the prevalence of such a superstitious reverence for the king and his laws. The false reasoning was of the Jesuitical sort, which says, An evil or a falsehood is justified if beneficial results are hoped for;--the same false principle which operates in the minds of many intelligent preachers who, while thoroughly disbelieving in the doctrine of eternal torment themselves, countenance and encourage, or at least do not discourage, a belief in the falsehood on the part of their hearers; hoping that the prevalent superstition on the subject may prove a restraint upon the masses.

Having obtained the king's signature to the new law, the conspirators exulted in the thought that Daniel at last was in their grasp, and already practically destroyed. They seem to have known the man's character so well as not to doubt that he would be faithful to his religious convictions, and thus furnish them all the opportunity desired for his apprehension. And it was so. After the matter was proclaimed as law, as having had the king's signet, Daniel worshiped as before, kneeling three times a day before the Lord in prayer, thanksgiving and supplication--with his windows open toward Jerusalem, his expectations bright with hope in the Lord's promises, and especially with the thought that now the seventy years of Jerusalem's desolation were about fulfilled, and that very soon Cyrus, according to the prophecy, would become king, and send back the covenanted people to the land of promise.

We are not informed why Daniel had adopted a

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habit of private worship in so public a manner as to be generally known to the people--a manner so different from that which the Lord commended to the household of faith of this Gospel age, saying, "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet [secret apartment], and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to the Father which is in secret." (Matt. 6:6.) Quite probably the custom of Babylon was such as to make Daniel's more open course the reasonable and proper one. Possibly all worship was more or less public or visible, and for Daniel to have worshiped in secret might have been misunderstood to mean that he did not worship at all; while to worship as he did, not before an idol, but with his face toward Jerusalem, the typical city of God, the great King, and its Temple, the typical habitation of God, the great King, would be his standing

confession of God before the various nationalities of Babylon, including his own people, the Jews, who would need just such an illustration of faithfulness to the true God and separation from idolatry.

Daniel was not satisfied to merely close his eyes in prayer after he had retired to rest, as do many people living under the greater light of this Gospel age, and under greater privileges and opportunities and grander promises. He had a great God who was worthy of reverence and worship, and he was great enough as a man to appreciate that it was a privilege to have intercourse and fellowship with his Creator. He was not only not ashamed to bow the knee to the Almighty, but was unwilling to assume a less humble position before God than he and others assumed toward earthly kings. Our judgment is that it is impossible for any Christian to maintain a proper consistent walk in life, and to build up such a character and faith structure as are represented by the Apostle as composed of "gold, silver and precious stones," without prayer;--more than this, without regularity in prayer;--we would almost be inclined to say, without kneeling in prayer: and we believe that the experiences

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and testimonies of the truest and best of the Lord's people who have ever lived will corroborate this.

One of the points of the Adversary's attack, surest to have a baneful influence, is along this line. When the Lord's people become overcharged with the cares of this life, instead of realizing their danger and seeking the help of the Lord to order the affairs of life differently, the suggestion comes that they are too weary to pray, or that another time will be more favorable: or perhaps they are so fully engrossed that reverence and acknowledgment to the Lord, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, is entirely forgotten: or perhaps sin lieth at the door, and they seek not to think of the Lord, and therefore avoid the throne of grace: or perhaps coldness has come in from some other cause, and the Lord seems afar off, and prayer becomes a mere formality and is by and by abandoned. The child of God who is in a proper condition of heart-harmony will desire to commune with his Creator,--not only to hear his Word, but also to offer thanksgiving and worship; as surely as he will desire natural food and drink for the sustenance of his natural body. Whoever has not this experience should seek it; and, according to our Lord's promise, he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

According to a preconcerted arrangement, the conspirators assembled themselves at the proper time to be witnesses of Daniel's devotion to the true God,

and then proceeded to the king to announce that the first one to disobey his decree, and therefore to come under its punishment, was the aged, honored and trusted President of a hundred and twenty provinces of the empire, Daniel. The king was sorely displeased with himself: evidently he had not thought of Daniel, and of the possibility of such results following his decree. He had been advised to make it, it had seemed to flatter him, he had yielded to the urgent representations of the supposedly well-intentioned and wise men; and now he discerned that he had been deliberately led into a trap for the very purpose of destroying his most valued counselor, of whom, evidently, he had not thought to ask advice before signing the decree.

The king sought every possible way to make void the decree or to excuse Daniel from its penalty; but the conspirators were close at hand with arguments to prove that such a course would be contrary to the usages of the nation, would mean the undermining of the authority of the king and the loss of confidence in his decrees by the people; and he found no escape from his dilemma: his counselors even seemed to threaten the stability of his throne themselves, assuring him that "no decree may be changed." Finally the king commanded that Daniel be brought and cast into the den of lions; expressing to Daniel, however, the hope, "May thy God, whom thou servest continually, deliver thee." The exemplary conduct of Daniel, previously and at this time, had its effect upon the king, as expressed by the word, "continually." He had confidence that God was with Daniel, and that the God whom Daniel so sincerely worshiped and so intelligently trusted, must be more powerful than all other gods. Such should be the lesson of every Christian life, one which would testify not only to his own character and faithfulness to God, but one also which would testify to the good character and faithfulness of the God whom he worships.

The conspirators were bent on having matters

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thoroughly accomplished, and hence the stone (which covered the den and was probably fastened to its place with an iron bar) was doubly sealed with wax, to prove that it was not tampered with--one seal was the king's the other that of the lords of the empire, who were amongst the conspirators, so that there might be no subsequent alteration of the conditions or delivery of Daniel during the night. If the lions were not very hungry at the moment Daniel was first cast in, it was reckoned that they would certainly become so before morning. How the hearts of these evil men longed for the death of a good man, who had done them no injury--except as his life may have been a living epistle, contradictory to theirs, or as he may have thwarted

some of their efforts to do evil!

It is very much to the king's honor that we read that he was so troubled in mind that he could not sleep, but spent the night fasting, and very early in the morning made haste to the den to see whether or not Daniel's God had delivered him. So amongst the friends and neighbors of a true Christian are some who know and appreciate God only as they know and appreciate the Christian character.

The king's words, as he approached the den, were a wonderful tribute to Daniel's faithfulness as a servant of God. "Is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions?" The king here associated, and that properly, Daniel's faithful service to God with his hope respecting God's faithfulness to Daniel. And this reminds us of the words of the Apostle (1 John 3:22), "And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."--Compare John 8:29.

The heart of Darius was glad as he heard Daniel's voice saluting him, assuring him of his safety; and he at once caused him to be delivered from the den. Daniel expressed one reason for the Lord's deliverance, in the words, "Before him innocency was found in me--as also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." We note the fact that haughtiness and bravado are wholly lacking in the prophet's announcement of the great favor of God manifested on his behalf. There is a lesson here which many of the Lord's people need to learn; namely, that, having done their part, they are not to boast of it, nor to parade their sanctity, nor to speak exultingly of the results, as tho they were of their own achievement, but are simply, like Daniel, to give the glory to God.

The expression, "God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths," need not be understood literally to signify that an angel was personally present and literally prevented the lions from opening their mouths; for tho such a course would be entirely possible, we are to understand the term, angel, in a general way to signify any power or agency which God might employ, and the expression, "shutting of the lions' mouths," would simply signify that they had been restrained from doing violence to Daniel. Nor would we question that an angel of the Lord could have been with Daniel, and kept him company in the den, if such were the will of God; but the presence or absence of an angel was not essential to the divine protection granted.

Not many of the Lord's people are cast into dens of literal lions, and yet at times quite a good many of them have had experiences which strongly resemble this--as for instance, the Apostle Paul, in recounting his experiences, mentions perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils by his own countrymen, perils by the

heathen, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, and caps the climax in the specification of "perils amongst false brethren." (2 Cor. 11:26.)

It is possible for human mouths to do us more harm than the mouths of brute beasts; the Apostle James points this out when he says: "Behold, how small a fire enkindles a great forest! And the tongue is a fire in the world of unrighteousness. The tongue is established among our members as the one which defiles the whole body and sets on fire the course of life, and it is enkindled of Gehenna; for every species, both of wild beasts and of birds and of reptiles and of sea-creatures, is tamable and has been tamed by the human race; but the tongue of men no man is able to subdue. It is an irrestrainable evil, full of death-producing poison."--James 3:6-8.

As God's providence was over Daniel, permitting him to come under the power of natural wild beasts, and making this a test of his fidelity to God and to principles of righteousness, so the Lord's providence sometimes permits his faithful ones to be exposed to the venom and malice and hate and misrepresentation and slander of human tongues, far more vicious and far more terrible every way than the wild beasts of the jungle, which can harm but for a moment. Nevertheless, as the Lord was able to deliver Daniel, he is not less able to send his angel (his providences) to shut the mouths of those who would do injury to his people. They may gnash upon them with their teeth, as the lions may have been permitted to do to Daniel, to test his faith in the Lord; yet we are to remember that all things are subject to him with whom we have to do, and whose service we have entered through vows of consecration.

In some instances it may please the Lord to grant a wonderful deliverance, as in the case of Daniel, while in other instances the providential dealings may result otherwise, as for instance in Stephen's case: his plain

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but kind statement of the truth to his Jewish brethren "cut them to the heart," and "they gnashed on him with their teeth, and cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord and cast him out of the city, and stoned him....And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." But even in such a case the victory was with the Lord's servant, of whom we read, "But he, being full of the holy spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God." And the record further is that Stephen, in the midst of such persecution, had the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to such an extent that his face was "as the face of an angel"--serene, calm, unperturbed.--Acts 6:15; 7:54-60.

The Scriptural record is that after Daniel's deliverance King Darius caused all the conspirators to be cast into the den of lions, and that thus they were all destroyed. Josephus adds something from tradition,

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to the effect that, when Daniel was delivered the conspirators claimed that his preservation was due to the fact that some one had fed the lions before he was cast into the den, and that the king undertook to demonstrate the matter by having the lions liberally fed, and then casting into the den those who had conspired against Daniel, who were speedily devoured.

This reminds us of how Haman was hanged upon the very gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. The Psalmist seems to speak of it as a principle associated with the divine government, that those who dig pits for others are likely to fall therein themselves. (Psa. 7:15,16; 9:15,16.) And who has not observed that those who gnash upon others with the tongue of scandal and falsehood, envy and malice, are likely in the end to be injured by the very falsehood and bitter words wherewith they seek to injure others? There is a law of retribution at work, in accordance with which a recompense of evil is dealt out to all evil-doers, either in the present life or in the life to come.

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#### THE NEW HEART.

AUG. 6.--EZEK. 36:25-36.

"A new heart also will I give you."

EZEKIEL wrote the words of our lesson in Babylon. They are not to be esteemed as merely the exhortations of a preacher, altho they do partake of this quality: they are more than this--a prophecy by the Lord respecting his future favors toward Israel. The context preceding reviews Israel's situation--the people in a foreign land, and their own Land of Promise a desolate wilderness because of their sinful neglect of their great King Jehovah, and of their covenant promises as his adopted people. While the Prophet's words declare a future recovery, not only as possible, but as sure to be accomplished, they nevertheless indicate certain changed conditions as necessary to such a recovery: it would not only be necessary for them to abandon idolatry, but they must obtain a new heart, a new mind, a new disposition, favorable to God and righteousness, ere such an abandonment of idolatry and sin would be permanent.



The Prophet does not here declare the time at which this new heart would be given to the people. He merely points out to them the necessity for such a new heart and the blessings of the Lord that would result from such a harmony with him; and tells them, "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them."--Vs. 37.

As a matter of fact, this new condition of heart was not attained by Israel on their release by Cyrus from the captivity in Babylon. Altho only a limited number, who had a respect for God and who trusted in the promises made to the fathers, had sufficient interest in the Holy Land to avail themselves of the proclamation made by Cyrus and to return to Palestine, and altho we might say that by means of this captivity the Lord had sifted out of Israel the idolatrous and unfaithful majority, we still cannot say that those who returned with Ezra and Nehemiah enjoyed the new heart condition which the Lord stipulated through the Prophet was essential to a full reception of his favor.

While, so far as we know, gross forms of idolatry never prevailed in Israel after the return from captivity in Babylon, we nevertheless know that the more refined forms of idolatry continually existed amongst them, as amongst other civilized nations who do not bow to wood and stone, gold and silver--an idolatry of wealth, an idolatry of self, an idolatry of Judaism, prevailed amongst them, and they never attained the condition specified in this lesson. They did not get the new heart and right spirit; they did not get rid of the stony heart; they did not walk in the Lord's statutes and judgments, nor do them; they did not dwell in the land, but were cast out of it because of the stony character of their hearts, in the rejection and crucifixion of Messiah; and they who were called God's people were cast off, and are not called his people now; and they have not prospered, but have been in fiery trials in the midst of their enemies, scattered amongst all nations from then until the present time. Nor have they yet loathed themselves, their iniquities and their abominations, nor been ashamed and confounded; nor is the desolate land tilled, and as the garden of Eden. Quite the contrary of all this is the truth.

What shall we say, then? Was Ezekiel a false

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Prophet, or has God failed of accomplishing his good purposes toward Israel because of the weakness of their flesh and the hardness of their hearts? God forbid! On the contrary, we are to understand that the prophecy of this lesson belongs to a future time--to the Millennial Day; and that whatever signs there are at the present time of the return of divine favor toward fleshly Israel and toward the Land of Promise are evidences that the time for the fulfilment of this prophecy is near

at hand.

In corroboration of this position we cite Romans 11:25-32. Here the Apostle Paul shows that Israel after the flesh, not having zealously inquired for the new heart and the right spirit, not having sought it of the Lord, was unprepared in heart to receive Messiah, and instead with wicked hands crucified him. The Apostle shows us that, as a result, only a remnant was gathered out of Israel to be of the "bride" class, and that the nation as a whole stumbled into blindness, darkness, for a time determined of the Father--until the election to the "bride" class should be completed from among the Gentiles. Then, the Apostle assures us, Israel's blindness shall be turned away; they shall all be saved from that blindness. "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

It is this covenant of the Lord to Israel to take away their sins and to give them new hearts and right dispositions that is referred to in our lesson, and we look for the fulfilment with longing anticipation--realizing, as the Apostle points out, that Israel's recovery from blindness will mean nothing less than life from the dead; for if that nation, after crucifying Messiah, and being blind to the fulfilment of the prophecies made to their fathers, shall finally be awakened to see the Lord, and look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall have the spirit of prayer and of supplication poured upon them by the Lord's providential dealing, it will be a miracle similar to the causing of a dead person to live. And if God's mercy will thus be extended toward those who sinned most egregiously, and who crucified his Son, it will mean also the extending of divine mercy to all the families of the earth, according to the statement of the various promises.

More than this, the fulfilment of God's promise mentioned by the Apostle, "So all Israel shall be saved [recovered from blindness]" will not mean merely a figurative awakening of the dead: it will mean also a literal awakening of the dead; because many of "all Israel," millions of them, have gone down into actual death, and before they could be made the recipients of the favors of this promise, they must be awakened from the sleep of death. And likewise also the promises to the remainder of mankind are similarly brought before the eye of faith by such faithfulness toward Israel; for instance, the promise that all the families of the earth shall be blessed through the Seed of Abraham must include not only those who will be living at the time of Messiah's second advent and the establishment of his Millennial Kingdom, but must include also all that are in the graves, "who shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth" to a trial for life, secured by the great ransom sacrifice.

The sprinkling of clean water would seem to signify the application of the truth: and this perhaps had some fulfilment in those who returned from the Babylonian

captivity--it was the truth, the influence of the promises made to the fathers, that affected the hearts of those who were disposed to return--in all only a remnant of fifty-five thousand out of seven millions. The influence of these promises served to separate them from their previous filthiness of idolatry. Had they earnestly gone forward seeking to realize the lengths and breadths of the divine will, they might have been ready in due time, at the first advent of our Lord, to have received the new heart; but they did not do so, hence that feature of the promise (not failing on account of their failure) carries forward more than eighteen hundred years, and becomes applicable at the second advent. Meantime a new nation, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, is sought and found by the Lord to be the spiritual Seed of Abraham and to obtain the greatest blessings--the heavenly.--Rom. 9:30-33; 11:26-32.

But we will look down into the future and see what the fulfilment of this prophecy will mean to fleshly Israel, to whom it was made, and to whom it still pertains, because, as the Apostle declares, the gifts and callings of God are things of which he does not repent.

We are not to understand that the removal of the stony heart and the giving of the new heart of flesh will be an instantaneous work or a miraculous work. The Apostle explains the method by which the Lord will do this great thing for Israel, saying, "The deliverer shall come out of Zion [the Church of this Gospel age] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for

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this is my covenant with them [Jacob, fleshly Israel]." God has appointed a day for thus blessing Israel and ultimately blessing all the families of the earth--it is a thousand-year day, the Millennial day, but in it Israel's opportunity will come first. Israel is probably as much, and probably no more, affected with the stony heart condition than other nations. A hard or stony heart represents a selfish condition of mind and sentiment. This hardening process is a result of the fall, and through heredity and practice affects all of Adam's posterity. The stony heart condition is one of self-will as opposed to divine will; of self-gratification as opposed to righteousness; a love of self which hinders the

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love of God with all the heart, mind, soul and strength, and a love of the neighbor as oneself. The stony heart condition means "me," "my," "mine," "right if I can, wrong if I must."

The breaking up of this stony heart condition, other Scriptures show us, will be accomplished to a considerable degree by the trouble (political, ecclesiastical,

financial and social) which will come upon the whole world in the "day of wrath," which is just before us; and this is particularly emphasized in the Scriptures as also being "the day of Jacob's trouble,-- but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. 30:7.) All men will come to appreciate better than they now do or ever have done in the past that the law of selfishness under which the whole world has been operating for this long time is an unjust law, and one which must ultimately work injury to all. Indeed, the great time of trouble will itself be the grand display of the ultimate tendencies of selfishness with all the brakes and restraints removed. It will speedily work the utter wreck of the highest development of human civilization. Apparently, natural Israel will be the first amongst the nations who will pass through this experience to learn the lesson, and to begin to seek after the new heart, renewed in righteousness and true submission to divine instruction.

The breaking of the stony hearts will come through the afflictions of the "day of wrath," but the transformation of those hearts into hearts of flesh will be more gradual. It will be accomplished by instructions in righteousness; for the glorified Church, with Christ its Head, will be the great Prophet or Teacher of mankind, and fleshly Israel (their past experiences in many respects serving as a preparation) will speedily become associates in the reformation work. Indeed, all mankind then coming into harmony with the Kingdom will be counted as Israelites--children of the true Israel of God--Christ. All such will be counted as "children of Abraham," who as a type of God is the "father of the faithful" with one Seed (the heavenly, Christ and the Church) as the stars of heaven, and another (faithful fleshly Israelites from all peoples, kindreds and tongues) as the sand by the sea-shore.--Gen. 22:17.

The promise of "hearts of flesh" or restored human perfection shows out strongly in contrast with the Lord's provision for the Church of this Gospel age, which is not to receive human perfection, desirable as that will be, but instead are to become every whit new creatures in Christ Jesus: begotten of the spirit through the Word of truth, they will be in the resurrection born of the spirit to perfect spiritual conditions. The Lord's provision for the world of mankind, described as "hearts of flesh," conveys the thought of restitution, the image and likeness of God, to tender, gentle, sympathetic human or earthly conditions, very good, very acceptable to the Creator. Adam's disobedience resulted in the hardening of his heart in sin and selfishness, during the centuries of his degradation, outcast from divine favor as an alien, stranger, foreigner and enemy of God.

God's proposition to give them "a heart of flesh" signifies, therefore, the bringing of fleshly Israel back to the original condition proper to perfect manhood; and the method by which this softening and restitution

of the heart sentiments shall be accomplished will involve a new will, a new mind, a new disposition, called in the text "a new spirit." This must really come first, before the new heart condition can be attained, and the new spirit, the new disposition, will be induced by the new view of matters which will then be clearly set before Israel and the world.

The difficulty at the present time is that Satan, the god of this world, deceives mankind into viewing evil things as desirable, and good things as undesirable: he puts light for darkness, darkness for light; and as the Scriptures declare, the whole world is at present blinded and deceived by him. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:3.)

When in due time the Lord's Anointed shall take the Kingdom authority, purchased with his own precious blood, it will be for the very purpose of scattering the darkness with which "the prince of darkness" has blinded mankind. And not only is the new King designated the true Light, but his Kingdom also is styled the Kingdom of sunshine, when it is declared, "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams."--Mal. 4:2.

It should not be necessary to offer argument, either from facts or Scripture, to show that this Sun of Righteousness did not arise at the first advent, nor during "the dark ages," and that even at the second coming of the King there will be a night-time, and he will come "as a thief in the night" for his bride. (1 Thes. 5:2.) Nor should it be necessary to prove that throughout the entire Gospel age the world has walked in darkness, while the Lord's people have only walked in the light by reason of having his Word as a lamp to their feet, a lantern to their footsteps. (Psa. 119:105.) The promise held out before the Church, and before fleshly Israel, and before the world, is--"The morning cometh;" and the additional assurance is given to the Church, Zion, that "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Isa. 21:12; Psa. 46:5.) Her deliverance shall come first, and then she "shall shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father." (Matt. 13:43.) Then will come the blessing upon fleshly Israel and the message to her, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!" and ultimately this light of the New Jerusalem, reflected from the earthly Jerusalem, shall enlighten all the

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families of the earth, with the light of the knowledge of God, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

The promise that the Lord would put his spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his decrees and do them, is in full accord with the foregoing. This does not refer to Spiritual Israel, altho Spiritual Israel has a somewhat similar experience in advance, as we shall shortly show. This putting of

the Lord's spirit, the spirit of righteousness, the spirit of truth, the spirit of love, upon fleshly Israel (and similarly upon all the families of the earth), is abundantly stated in the Scriptures to be distinctly separate from the pouring out of the Pentecostal blessing upon the Church, the "little flock," the bride of Christ, during this age, and before the Sun of Righteousness arises, of which Sun of Righteousness these shall form a part.

For instance, note the prophecy by Joel (2:28,29) that this promise of the holy spirit is of two parts. One outpouring of God's spirit upon his servants and handmaidens ("new creatures in Christ") has already had its fulfilment throughout this Gospel age: the other promise, that God would pour out his spirit upon all flesh, still awaits fulfilment, and will be accomplished after the overcoming Church has been glorified and the blessing of all the families of the earth has begun. The matter is covered slightly from the attention of the ordinary reader by reason of the outpouring upon the Church being mentioned last.

This same outpouring of the holy spirit upon fleshly Israel is referred to by the Prophet Zechariah, and directly applied to the end of this age. In connection with telling how the Lord would at his second advent make himself known to Israel, and that they should look upon him whom they pierced, and mourn for him, the explicit statement is, "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication."-- Zech. 12:10.

The spirit of the Lord, the holy spirit, is the spirit of the truth, and when the truth shall be made known to Israel and mankind, with that truth will go its spirit, its influence, its power to correct the heart and life, and to bring it into accord with God. For then, in the light of the truth, many will see God's character and plan in Christ as "the desire of all nations," and the great King himself as the one "altogether lovely." And the positive declaration is that all who will not hear (obey) that great Teacher--Prophet, Priest and King--shall be cut off from amongst his people in the Second Death.--Acts 3:23.

In connection with these transformations of heart and will, will come the blessing which the Lord promised upon the earth. It shall yield its increase; the wilderness shall blossom as the rose, and the whole earth shall become a Paradise of God. The beginning of these blessings will be with Israel, and thus all the Gentiles shall have not only the lessons of the Scriptures for their instruction in righteousness, but also the illustration of divine providence operating on behalf of those who are influenced by the truth and its spirit. Thus will be fulfilled the declaration, "This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden."-- Ezek. 36:35.

While the Scriptures keep distinctly separate the nation of fleshly Israel and the new nation, Spiritual Israel, nevertheless, under divine providence, fleshly Israel was in many respects made a lesson, a type, an illustration, for Spiritual Israel; so that the Apostle could declare that many of the things done for fleshly Israel were shadows of better things coming afterward for Spiritual Israel. Yet these are shadows only to

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those who discern them, and are profitable only to those who avail themselves of them.--Heb. 8:5.

The Scriptures point out to us that the new heart condition is essential also to Spiritual Israel; that all who would be in harmony with the Lord must first get free from idols, and be separated to the Lord God; and that then they must inquire of the Lord that he may do for them the good things of his promise--working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As the death of Christ was the turning point of fleshly Israel (Dives), and led them into blindness and trouble, so also it was the turning point or beginning of favor to Spiritual Israel (Lazarus carried to Abraham's bosom) --the poor, the humble, acknowledging themselves to be sinners, were freely cleansed through the merits of Christ's sacrifice and made acceptable as the children of Abraham. This class, from the day of Pentecost to the present, have presented themselves in turn, fully and unreservedly to the Lord; to have his will, his spirit, renewed in them, and such have indeed received a newness of spirit, a newness of heart. But the new heart is not with them a heart of flesh, for they are begotten unto the high calling, to be children and heirs of God, joined in heirship with Jesus Christ their Lord--to partake of the divine nature, which already is reckoned as being begun in them through the begetting by the spirit of adoption. It is for these to remember that in order to develop in the spirit they must walk in the spirit, in the Lord's footsteps, observing to the best of their ability the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;-- that thus they may be transformed by the renewing of their minds (wills) and be enabled to prove the good, the perfect, the acceptable will of God; and thus faithfully doing, to be ultimately received of him into all the exceeding glories promised to the new creatures in Christ, and to be joint-heirs with him in the great work of blessing Israel and the world through the Millennial Kingdom.--Rom. 12:2; 8:17.

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THE VISION OF DRY BONES.

AUG. 13.--EZEK. 37:1-14.

"I will put my spirit within you."--Ezek. 36:27.

THE SCRIPTURE of this lesson is frequently more or less of a confusion to the Lord's people, even after they have learned with considerable clearness what the Apostle Paul so positively declares-- that the body sown in corruption, planted in death, is not the body which shall be in the resurrection; that the bones, sinews and flesh which go to corruption have nothing whatever to do with the resurrection body, which the Lord will provide. In examining this subject heretofore we have seen that the Apostle's statement is not only backed by his inspiration, but also that it is reasonable, logical: that one atom of matter is no more valuable or necessary than another in the great work of restitution which shall be accomplished in the world's resurrection. We have seen that the human body in corruption becomes food for plant life, producing apples, acorns, etc., which in turn become food for man and the lower animals, so that the atoms of matter composing a human body are continually changing, and in centuries would pass through many changes. We have seen, too, that this process of change progresses while we still live, so that science declares that a complete change in the human organism is effected every seven years. The atoms of matter which compose a man's body at the moment of his death are no more precious, valuable or necessary to the future body than were the atoms sloughed off through the natural channels during previous years. The important thing, the thing which God has promised shall have a resurrection, is the being, the soul: that in the resurrection God will give it a body as pleaseth him--to each kind of seed his own kind of body--to the natural man a natural, human body, through restitution; to the new creature in Christ a new spiritual body, according to divine promise.

The passage of Scripture under consideration was addressed by the Lord through the Prophet to fleshly Israel, then in captivity in Babylon. The dry bones represented the Israelites themselves. As a people they had lost heart, lost hope, and said, "Our strength is dried, and our hope is lost, we are cut off from our parts"--from all tribal and national union. If they looked at their present condition, they were strangers in a strange land, foreigners, without opportunity for patriotic feelings; if they looked backward, and remembered divine intervention on their behalf, their deliverance from Egypt, their favor as a nation under David and Solomon, etc., they could think of these only as bygones, lost blessings and opportunities; if they looked forward, they could see no possible hope of their ever again becoming a nation; and as for all the great expectations which they had once entertained



respecting their nation, as God's favored people, and the heir of the promises made to Abraham, that they should rule and bless all the families of the earth-- these hopes were dead, they were gone, they could have nothing of this kind in the future. The condition of Israel, scattered throughout Babylonia, was indeed well illustrated by the dry bones of the vision.

The hand (power) of the Lord was upon Ezekiel, causing him to see this vision--he was not literally transported to any literal valley of dry bones. In the vision he was caused to pass amongst the dry bones, that he might get a full view of the situation, as they lay strewn all over the valley, very dry. Then the Lord's explanation comes, that these dry bones are, or represent, the whole house of Israel. They did not represent merely the two tribes which went last into captivity, nor merely the ten tribes which went earlier, but the whole house of Israel, the twelve tribes. They were no longer to be considered as two distinct nations, as they had considered themselves for the preceding four hundred years. They were to understand that in divine providence they were henceforth a reunited nation, and the reunion is pictured in this same chapter (vss. 15-22) by the miraculous uniting of two sticks into one in the hand of the Prophet.

And it was so: from the time Cyrus gave his decree that all the children of Israel should go free, and might return, if they chose, to their own land, the division into two nations was no longer recognized. The people that returned, tho chiefly of the tribe of Judah, represented all of the various tribes who had faith in the Lord's promises, and desired to return to Palestine. The name, Israel, was applied to the returned and restored people, not only for the more than five centuries preceding our Lord's first advent, but also they were so recognized by our Lord in all of his ministry, and by the apostles in all of their writings, which constitute the New Testament. There are no ten lost tribes which some well-meaning but deluded people continually refer to, and seem to rest their hopes in, as instead of the hope set before us in the Gospel.

The Lord propounds the question, Is it possible that any vitality could ever come into these dry bones? --Is there hope for the scattered people of Israel who not only in heart but in voice said, We are scattered, and no longer a homogeneous people, we are mixed and blended with our captors, who are heathen, in business, social and marriage relationships--there is no hope of a restored nation of Israel?

The Prophet, with quick confidence in the Almighty, refers the question back to God, as suggesting that any hope there could possibly be of a reorganization of Israel must come from God--could be looked for from no other quarter.

The Lord directed Ezekiel to prophesy, that is, to declare the divine message, and the divine message

was a foretelling of the things which would, under divine providence, come to pass. The message to be declared was that God had the power and would exercise it, by which these who were dead, and dried as respected their national hopes, would be gradually revived, would gradually become one homogeneous people, a nation in their own land. It would not be done suddenly, but gradually, and that through attention to the divine message, which the Prophet was delivering. First the dried and hopeless ones would come together, then they would begin to unite one to the other, and gradually assume a national existence, and finally would be infused with the spirit of the Lord, as the breath or energy of national life, begotten of faith in the promises, and would stand again a nation.

The people's hopes, which were thus dead, were represented by the Lord as buried in the various provinces of Babylonia, and hence this figure is combined with the figure of the dry bones, and the Lord sends the message, "Behold, O my people, I will open your

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graves, and cause you to come out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel, and ye shall know that I am the Lord." As a further part of this symbolic picture the Prophet is in vision shown the process by which the dry bones would be gathered, reorganized and revived. He says there was "a noise and a shaking." The Revised Version, apparently with propriety, renders this, "thunder and an earthquake." Following this demonstration the bones came together.

Undoubtedly one thing which contributed to Israel's despair was the mightiness of the empire which had taken them captive. Babylonia at that time was the most gigantic empire ever known amongst men. Her overthrow seemed impossible, and escape from her power not to be thought of. The thunder and great earthquake of the figure doubtless represented the commotions incident to the fall of Babylon and the

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transfer of the empire to the Medes and Persians. As a result of this the hopes of Israel in the divine promises began to revive, and shortly they were delivered.

While recognizing this primary fulfilment of the prophecy, we are not to forget the secondary fulfilment on a much larger scale, which is in progress at the present time. The withered hopes of Israel, scattered throughout the provinces of Babylonia, cut off from their parts, from one another, from tribal union and from national cohesion, was only a foreshadowing of the more general scattering of that nation among all the nations of the civilized world (mystic Babylon) during this Gospel age. With the vast majority all

hopes of the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promise had died, had withered away, and had no more vitality than a dry bone. But now, in the end of this Gospel age, the due time has come for these dry bones, scattered all over mystic Babylon, to be gathered part to part, rehabilitated and revived with hope in the promises made to the fathers. The great noise is the "seventh trumpet," which has begun to sound; the earthquake is the coming great revolution in which mystic Babylon will fall before the great Prince whom Cyrus in a measure prefigured. Meantime, as we look at the dry bones of Israel, we perceive that they already are in movement, that they are already drawing near one to another, and organizing as "Zionists," with a view to national reorganization and a return to the land of promise. Probably the hopes of the Israelites began to revive as soon as they learned that the army of Cyrus had begun the conquest of Babylon, and so now the hopes of Israel are reviving as they witness the march of events, and realize that a great day of trouble is coming upon the nations of Christendom. Their hopes will more and more go out toward Palestine and national reorganization, as the troubles of the day of wrath draw near.

A lesson might also be drawn from this Scripture for Spiritual Israelites. We are to remember that Spiritual Israel also was permitted to go down into Babylon--to be swallowed up of worldliness, as represented in our Lord's parable of the wheat-field, choked by the "tares." The field has really become a tare-field, altho nominally called a wheat-field, because the promises are to the "wheat." For centuries the "Gospel of the Kingdom," which our Lord declared was the good seed which he sowed (Matt. 13:37-42), has been lost sight of, and Kingdom hopes have lost their vitality, and the many promises of the Scriptures, relating to the Kingdom of God, joint-heirship with Christ and a future blessing of the world, have become dead hopes, dead promises; and so far as these promises are concerned Spiritual Israel has been cut off from its parts and mixed with the Babylonians, and has become interested in the hopes of Babylon rather than in the kingdom of God, in which all the original hopes and promises centered and flourished.

But now, in the end of this age, the time has come for God to call his people out of Babylon, and the voice of a greater than Cyrus is heard by those who have ears to hear, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!... Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Rev. 18:2-4.) In connection with this message there is a commotion amongst the dry bones, amongst those who are Israelites indeed, whose hopes in the Kingdom had perished, and the Kingdom hopes are revived and the promises of God as related thereto are becoming more distinct. Nevertheless, we are not to expect

that the "tare" class, the Babylonians, are represented in the movement of the dry bones, but merely the truly consecrated Israelites indeed. The Babylonians would be interested on the other side of the question --interested in perpetuating the greatness of Babylon, and in continuing the bondage of the true Israelites.

Nor do the Kingdom hopes relate merely to the living. The organization of the Lord's faithful will not only include the gathering of the living, but also the gathering of all the members of the body of Christ, for "the dead in Christ shall rise first, and [then] we which are alive and remain shall be caught away together with them, to a meeting of the Lord in the air" --in spiritual power. So many as are able to do so should apply to themselves this feature of this lesson and exert themselves to be of those who shall now shortly be organized as the "Body of Christ," "the Seed of Abraham," the Kingdom of God, to bless the world.

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#### INTERESTING LETTERS.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I thank God earnestly and reverently for the DAWNS and TOWERS, and that my understanding has been opened to receive and see the truth. When the "key" is applied, how beautifully the Scriptures open and reveal God's wonderful plan. In the June number of the TOWER you speak of dispensing truth to others, that in feeding we are fed. I know that to be true, and have verified it on more than one occasion. Will you please send some free tracts to be given out in a Dawn Circle for Bible Study that I am trying to get started in a neighboring town.

I often wonder, Brother Russell, if you can read thoughts. Several times when I have been studying over certain points and could not quite determine what was right, the next WATCH TOWER would have a full explanation of the very subject I had been studying. Is it the holy spirit that impresses your

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mind with the truth that puzzles others? It seems so. May the Lord bless the recent effort made here and your labors wherever they may be!

Yours in the fellowship of Christ,

J. M. S\_\_\_\_\_, Ohio.

[REPLY.--The EDITOR does not possess the gift of mind-reading, but our present Lord does, and undoubtedly in this "harvest" time, specially, he is

watching over the interests of all those who are truly his. He knows exactly what kind of provender his "sheep" need, and according to promise provides "meat in due season for the household of faith."

Very many have made similar observations respecting the opportuneness of certain expositions which have appeared in the WATCH TOWER. We can only account for such repeated coincidences by acknowledging the Lord's knowledge and providential care, and we rejoice in the thought that he does take supervision of our humble efforts, to direct them and bless them in his service. Nevertheless, we are far from claiming any direct or plenary inspiration. We believe, however, that there are many ways in which the Lord can guide those who are anxious to serve him, without directly inspiring or in any manner interfering with their free agency. A careful examination of the subject leads us to the conclusion that the Lord providentially shapes our course so as to give us such personal experiences in life as will bring us to his Word for comfort and instruction in righteousness; and thus he permits us to sympathize with the experiences and questionings of his people, and then to present to them at appropriate times the lessons drawn from our own experiences, backed by the instructions and comfort of the Scriptures.--EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER:--In reading Isaiah, 2d chapter, which seems to refer especially to the present time, I notice that in vs. 16 we are informed of the judgment of the Lord on the ships of Tarshish, "And over all the ships of Tarshish." If I am correctly informed, Tarshish refers to Spain and especially to the city of Cadiz and the south-west part of Spain. The wonderful events that have occurred during the last year, resulting in the utter destruction of so many Spanish warships and with such slight injury to the American ships has suggested the thought that possibly these events may be a fulfilment.

Respectfully submitted, C. C. KELLY,--Ohio.

[We present the foregoing, because the application made seems to fit remarkably well to the general context. It will be noticed that the theme of the prophet concerns the last days, and the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom, etc. (See vss. 2,3.) Vss. 19-22 seem to refer to the great time of trouble just before us, and frequently referred to throughout the Scriptures as the Day of Vengeance.--EDITOR.]

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I owe you more, I fear, than I will ever be able to repay for your many kind acts from time to time aside from a servant of the truth whom I love seemingly dearer than ever. But to say that my whole soul goes out in thankful appreciation for the brotherly interest you have manifested in my sufferings in overcoming the tobacco habit, seems to me, dear Brother, only mildly to express my feelings on this point. When I requested Bro. S \_\_\_\_\_

to lay my case before you for counsel and advice, which I knew you so well able to give from the standpoint of the Lord's word, I felt determined to "resist the devil" in his operations through the flesh in my case, if I conquered only through death. I am yet as fully determined, the Lord helping me.

The WATCH TOWERS of recent issue are appreciated as much as ever. How my heart went out to those dear brethren in New York when I read the article, "Think It Not Strange." Surely, Satan is getting desperate in his oppositions. In the Methodist Recorder, published at Pittsburg, in their last week's issue, I have been told by a neighbor, appears an article by Rev. Daniel B. Turney, A.M., attacking the truth contained in the booklet, What Say the Scriptures about Hell? From what my friend tells me it

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must be one of the boldest misrepresentations the representatives of the Lord and his truth have yet suffered from such "high places." I sent the above named Mr. Turney one of the booklets referred to some time ago as a reply to some of his unscriptural writings concerning the "Immortal essence of man," and I suppose this is the reward we and all who love the Lord can joyfully receive. (Matt. 5:11,12.) I trust you will be furnished with a copy of the above named publication.

I am glad to inform you that the interest here is growing, and we are having interesting times at our meetings every Sunday evening. How it rejoices our hearts to see the truth prosper, even tho the "increase" may be small comparatively. But, dear Brother, it is very evident that our influence for the truth's prosperity is nearly over; it seems that the time has almost come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but may we be enabled to understand and rejoice in the typical words of John the Baptist, "I must decrease." May we, dear Brother, be enabled to suffer joyfully and under all circumstances to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bonds of love and peace. I am getting much benefit from the Sunday readings suggested some time ago.

Greetings to all the brethren. Yours in love,  
J. M. G \_\_\_\_\_,--Indiana.

[REPLY.--Respecting the decrease of the work: from our broader view-point it seems as tho much work is yet to be accomplished; indeed, every month shows an increase for the past three years, and during the last year specially. The people are getting awake and groping about for truth, and now is the time to lend a helping hand to keep them from stumbling into Infidelity, Spiritism, Christian Science, Evolution, etc. The chief opponents of the truth are the "ministers," the very ones who are undermining faith in Christ as

a Savior from sin and death by teaching an Evolution salvation. Quite likely their opposition will become much more pronounced, and they may, in some form or many forms, "crucify" the members of the body of Christ: but this will furnish opportunities for attesting our love for the Lord's brethren. In view of our Lord's example and the Apostle's words, we should gladly let our light shine and render every other assistance, even tho it test our willingness to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16).--EDITOR.]

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