

page 161

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CONTENTS.

Views From the Watch Tower.....163
 Why Rev. Lyman Abbott is Not a
 Universalist.....163
 Animals Suffer Less than Man.....165
 The War Spirit Growing.....166
 Poem: "I that Speak am He".....168
 Philadelphia Convention, June 16-18.....168
 Full Assurance of Faith.....169
 "Give Us this Day Our Daily Bread".....171
 Review of the Quarter's Studies.....173
 Questions and Answers.....174
 Faithful Co-Laborers Heard from.....176
 Special Notice to Subscribers.....162

page 162

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R2639 : page 163

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

WHY REV. LYMAN ABBOTT IS NOT A UNIVERSALIST.

AT A GENERAL CONVENTION of Universalists one session was set apart as "Interdenominational Evening," and amongst other speakers was Dr. Lyman Abbott, a representative Congregationalist, who gave his reasons for not believing in universal salvation. Speaking as a liberal Congregationalist he declared that modern Congregationalism does not accept the doctrine of eternal punishment as preached by the celebrated Jonathan Edwards of the last century.

We make quotations from Dr. Abbott's discourse as follows:--

"I do not believe that any one of God's creatures will be kept by God in eternal existence simply that he may go on in sin and misery forever. The proposition has long since become spiritually unthinkable to me. I might perhaps believe that a soul could suffer eternally; but I can not believe that any being that God ever made will be kept in existence by God that he may go on in sin eternally.

"What was the old doctrine of eternal punishment?"

The Savoy Confession, up to about the middle of this century, was the recognized expression of orthodox Congregationalism. Not that it was binding on orthodox Congregationalists; but it was the only historic creed they possessed. Except in the matter of polity, and one or two minor matters, it was identical with the Westminster Confession of Faith; and this was the substance of its statement: It declared that our first parents fell by eating the forbidden fruit; that, they being the root of all mankind, their guilt was imputed and their sinful and corrupted nature was conveyed to all their posterity; that as a result we are 'utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good;' that from the race thus lost and ruined in the Fall, 'by the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestined unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death;' that those not effectually called, God was pleased, 'for the glory of his sovereign power over His creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice;' and that those 'not elected, altho they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ, and therefore can not be saved.'

"Specifically, and clause by clause, I disown that statement....This doctrine is inconsistent with the character of a righteous God. I might fear such a God; I might tremble before such a God; I might, because I was a coward, obey such a God; but I could not reverence such a God. It is inconsistent with the faith that Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh, for it was not His nature to pass any by or to ordain any to dishonor and wrath. It is inconsistent with the Scripture; inconsistent with the parable of the prodigal son, which is Christ's epitome of the Gospel; inconsistent with the declaration of Paul that 'every knee should bow and every tongue confess Jesus Christ to be the Lord, to the glory of God the Father'; inconsistent with the very chapters of Romans on which it is supposed to be founded, for they close with the declaration that 'God hath concluded all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all;' inconsistent with the splendid picture John paints, of the time when every creature that is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation."

These noble words and logical arguments surely appeal to all God-loving and God-honoring hearts and heads; and we are glad so to think: it is a sign of heart enlargement which should be admired, even tho the speaker (like other great men of our times) has swerved far from the Bible under the influence of Evolution and Higher Criticism, and is no longer trusting in the great sacrifice for sins "finished" at Calvary

for salvation. But Dr. Abbott said some more good things in that discourse. In telling his Universalist

R2639 : page 164

audience why he does not believe in universal salvation, he displayed excellent logic. In reasoning that "the ultimate fact in human life is the freedom of the human will," he said:--

"I know that I can choose the good, and therefore I can choose the evil. What I find true in myself I believe to be true in every other man; he can choose the good, and therefore he can choose the evil. And while I wistfully desire--yea, and sometimes devoutly hope--that when the great drama of life here and hereafter is ended, all God's creatures will have chosen the good--I do not know. If I were a Calvinist, I should be a Universalist. If I believed that God could make all men righteous, I should be sure that he would make all men righteous; otherwise he would not be a righteous God. But I start from the other pole. I begin with my own absolute freedom. I recognize as a fact, in my life, in my philosophy and in my preaching, that, in the last analysis, the destiny of every man is in his own hands. Father may persuade, mother may entice, influences may environ, God himself may surround with all possible persuasions, but in the last analysis the destiny of every man is in his own hands. And what he will do with it I do not know.

"Why, if God be good, has he made a world in which there is sin? Why has he not made a world sinless? Could he not? Certainly; he not only could, he has. The birds are sinless. But he could not make a world in which are free moral agents able to choose the good without giving them at the same time power to choose the evil. Power to choose the one is power to choose the other; and a world in which there are some men who choose shame, dishonor, sin and death, is a better world, I dare to say, than a world made of machines that could choose neither the good nor the evil."

We fully concur with the foregoing, reminding our readers nevertheless of the necessity for remembering the two opposite views of free agency which may properly be taken from different standpoints, as shown in our issue of Dec. 1, 1899, page 264.

But two queries naturally arise:

(1) How does Dr. Abbott harmonize his two propositions, (a) that the decision respecting his harmony or disharmony with God lies with man himself, individually; (b) that God has made no provision for the eternal torture of any? The logical mind will surely inquire, What then will become of the wicked who are unwilling to be saved on divine terms and hence unfit for the rewards of eternal bliss, if the

time is to come when "every creature that is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea shall give praise and glory to the God of their salvation"?

Is it possible that so fine a logician as Dr. Abbott has overlooked the logic of his own expressions? Oh no! We answer, the connecting link in the Doctor's logic is clear to his own mind, but he does not care to make it very public because it is not very popular yet --the same is true of many others of the ablest ministers in all denominations. The connecting link of his logic will be seen at once when it is stated,--he believes in the utter destruction of the incorrigibly wicked, as we do, and as we teach publicly.

But public teachers who keep silence on this subject and put their light under a bushel, do so at a great cost--the cost of further guidance of the Lord into the "all truth" promised. Oh, how many ministers in seeking to avoid the senseless charge, "Annihilationist," have suffered God's character to be blasphemed and his people to be deluded by the doctrine of an eternal torment of the unsaintly;--preferring numbers and popularity and honor among men and the financial emoluments of these rather than the truth! Alas! they seek to be wise and prudent according to this world's standards, entirely overlooking the fact that the Lord declares he will not reveal his secrets to such. Our Lord pointed this out, saying, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes"--who will utter the truth regardless of consequences.--Matt. 11:25.

(2) Some one will say then, If Dr. Abbott believes thus in the final reign of righteousness and the destruction of the incorrigibly wicked, is he not very close to the truth and a very hopeful subject?

We answer, No. At one time, so far as we might judge of any man's heart by his writings, Dr. Abbott was very close to the truth--a believer not only as above but also in the Atonement and in the second coming of him who made the atonement with his own precious blood. But the Doctor seems to have permitted himself to become one of the "wise and prudent" who prefer honor one of another rather than that which cometh from God only. (John 5:44.) At any rate, instead of coming out more and more boldly for the truth on these unpopular subjects, he seems to have put the light he had under a bushel until it has gone out. For according to Dr. Abbott's present teachings he undoubtedly is now an Evolutionist with all that implies of rejection of the Bible doctrine of a fall by our first parents (and we in them) from perfection and harmony with God--into sin and its mental, moral and physical degeneration and death. And the rejection of this implies a rejection of the Atonement; for if man did not fall he needed no redemption

from the fall--no Redeemer. And if the "ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6) is denied, then logically "times of restitution" to a former estate (Acts 3:19-21; Ezek. 16:55,61) must be denied also. And accordingly there would be no object in establishing the Millennial Kingdom--for Evolutionists argue the world is progressing

R2640 : page 165

splendidly under Evolution and needs Christ's Kingdom no more than it needed a sin-offering when it had committed no sin and was under no condemnation.

Thus nearly all the great and wise and prudent according to the course of this world, professing themselves to be wise, have by leaving the truth of God's revelation, the teachings of the Bible, become foolish; and their foolish hearts have become darkened. Indeed we believe this to be the secret of the greater blindness and more rapid falling away of ministers than other Christians from the very hub of revealed truth, the ransom, and hence from all truth. With greater advantages for learning the truth than others they have not loved truth so as to search for it, especially when they perceived that their search would not only cost time and energy; but the truth being now as ever unpopular would cost them popularity with all classes wedded to errors.

In consequence many ministers have so trifled with truth and with their own consciences that they not only have lost love and relish for truth as truth, but have even lost much of that keen perception for truth which always accompanies a tender and trained conscience. This is well attested by the frequent confessions of prominent ministers appearing lately in the public press. They confess to systematic deception practiced for years respecting their beliefs versus their confessions. And the fact that this is done without even an apology or any manifestation of shame for so ignoble a course demonstrates that these gentlemen either never had much conscience to hurt, or, as we prefer to think, that they have so long and so persistently trodden it in the mire of self-interest and "prudence" that it has lost its life, its power. It is for this reason that the ministers of all denominations are much less amenable to the truth than the consecrated "sheep" of their flocks;--just as it was in the end of the Jewish age. Not only so, but they are the greatest enemies of the truth--and now as eighteen centuries ago many of them do not hesitate to say all manner of evil falsely, openly and by insinuation, to stir up the evil passions of their deluded followers to reject and to crucify the Truth! Woe is surely coming upon all such hypocritical scribes and Pharisees, who will neither enter the Kingdom themselves nor permit those who would be so inclined to enter.--Compare

Matt. 23:13.

LOWER ANIMALS SUFFER LESS THAN MAN.

Infidelity's hyper-criticism has charged the Bible and the Bible's God with unsympathetic brutality in commanding Israel to sacrifice sheep, oxen, goats and doves by the tens of thousands--causing these innocent creatures intense pain merely to typify something future. Moreover, it is claimed that the method commanded by Moses' law for the killing of animals for food--namely by bleeding to death--is barbarous, causing needless prolongation of the animal's sufferings: and the Hindus of India are pointed to as examples for Christians, because they will not taste animal food even if starving: whereas the founder of Christianity, while giving his followers the law of Love, not only neglected to mention the lower animals but ate thereof himself.

Our answer has been that it is a mere supposition, quite unproven, that the lower animals suffer pain in anything like the degree known to man:--especially such as under the Jewish Law were prescribed as food for man. In our opinion the cutting of the throat, while it does not exhaust life instantly, does render those animals unconscious so that they suffer no pain whatever. The horse and the dog, not permitted the Jews as food, give many instances of greater nerve-sensitiveness than do the ox, sheep, etc., and more than any other animals, tho very much less than man. Doubtless the sensitiveness of these two is designed to make them more tractable to man's control and therefore more useful and companionable to him.

We clip from the Pittsburg Press an article corroborative of the above that may be both interesting and profitable reading, as follows:--

ANIMALS WHICH HAVE NO PAIN.
RECENT EXPERIMENTS SHOW THAT LOWER ORDERS
ARE NOT SENSITIVE.

"The old writers, according to science, assumed that an insect has sensations and feelings resembling our own--that it sees what we see and suffers as we would suffer if treated in the same way. Recently the pendulum has swung in the other direction, and high authorities practically deny that the lowest organisms feel anything that can properly be called pain.

"Thus the late Prof. W. W. Norman, of the University of Texas, maintained as the result of experiments on the flounder and lower species, that the reactions of these creatures against injury do not indicate

pain sensations at all.

"Certain motions are said to express pain, because they always accompany injury. Since they do accompany injury they are said to indicate that the injury causes the animal to suffer. This, the professor says, is a mere argument in a circle. He regards movements as the immediate consequence of physical stimulation. To prove his position he made a considerable number of experiments.

"The most striking and classic of these experiments were made on the common earth worm. If such a low animal be divided at its middle transversely, only the posterior half shows those squirming and jerking movements which, anthropomorphically viewed, seem

R2640 : page 166

to indicate pain; the anterior half (containing the brain) crawls, as ordinarily, away. Now, if each of these halves be halved again, the posterior segment of each squirms while the anterior halves crawl away. This same process may be continued with precisely like result until the pieces are no longer large enough to crawl independently.

"This striking phenomenon is explained in part by the two sets of muscular fibers in the worm, one longitudinal, causing the squirming and jerking, and the other circular, which produce the crawling. Why in the posterior segments the former set should be initially stimulated and in the anterior the latter set, Professor Norman says he does not know.

"The abdomen of a hermit crab may be cut in two without any 'but a very slight response' from any remaining movable organ. 'Limulus' stops a few seconds when four or five abdominal segments are cut away, then proceeds quickly breathing as before.

"'Geophilus' cut in two in the middle continues its crawling, the front half going forward and the rear half backward. Millipedes divided while walking do not hasten nor stop nor jerk. Dragon flies lose part of their abdomens without any appreciable change in position. Eels continue to eat when their abdomens are cut away during the process.

"Lastly, sharks and flounders, provided a current of water circulates through their gills, will allow the most tedious and deep-going operations on their heads without the slightest appreciable movement indicative of pain."

* * *

Many friends of the Truth have queried whether or not God's plan reveals any provision for the lower animals. They query whether or not there will be deaths among the lower animals during the Millennium and if so if that would not cause pain to their

human friends, etc.

Scripture promises are addressed only to man and refer to the lower animals only as they stand related to man's welfare. For instance, the promise that the lion shall eat straw like the ox and lie down peaceably with the lamb, is for man's comfort and assurance, and by no means implies everlasting life to the lamb. Altho all animals have suffered by the fall of man, it is indirectly, in that their ruler, their king, lost his balance, his full sanity, and hence has been unable to regulate and govern properly his subjects. Restitution times therefore will bring its blessings chiefly to man, who because of his much higher and finer organism has suffered by his degradation and death sentence immeasurably more than the brutes.

We may expect death among the lower animals during the Millennium as they shall live out their periods of usefulness. And by reason of the contrast the everlasting life provided for man (made in God's image) will be the more appreciated. Since summer and winter are to continue (Gen. 8:22) we may know that the flowers and all vegetation will likewise die and revive perennially, reminding restored and perfected man of the blessed change that came to him by divine grace through Jesus, his Redeemer and Lord.

These conditions prevailing in the animal and vegetable worlds will bring no pain, neither sorrow nor crying (Rev. 21:4) because all of the former things will have passed away. Amongst these will be present misconceptions by which we are inclined to attribute to the lower animals human feelings and sentiments--some even carrying these mistaken notions to flowers --loving and talking to their flowers as others do to a pet dog--imagining reciprocal feelings and sentiments.

Restitution will not only bring to men greater knowledge but also sounder minds, in harmony with the divine mind,--so that their loves and hopes, like the divine promises, will measurably pass by the lower creatures and think and plan for and be absorbed in uplifting man--"the groaning creation." And already those who receive a knowledge of the divine plan and with it the spirit of the Lord, find themselves no longer

R2641 : page 166

disposed to waste valuable time and affection upon dogs, flowers, etc., while the Lord's "brethren" need sympathy and aid and counsel in the narrow way, and while mankind in general are in so deplorable a condition as at present--mental, moral and physical. And such a change of sentiment is an evidence of their attaining more of "the spirit of a sound mind."--See 2 Tim. 1:7.

THE WAR SPIRIT GROWING.

For years Germany, France, Italy, Austria and Russia have had military fever, as is well known; and now the same has spread in virulent form to Great Britain and her colonies and to the United States. Just what bearing this may have on the great time of trouble impending is somewhat difficult to prognosticate, but it forcefully reminds us of the Prophet's pronouncement respecting our day: "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, make up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up [to battle]: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." The context following clearly describes the great day of trouble in which the symbolic sun and moon shall be darkened and the voice of the Lord shall be heard in rebuke of evil and the present symbolic heavens and earth shall be shaken.--Joel 3:9-16; Heb. 23:26-29.

In the light of the Boer war and the resistance shown to be possible for a weak nation when well armed with modern weapons, we need not wonder if some of the small, weak nations now feel themselves

R2641 : page 167

comparatively strong, and if they will be proportionately independent--even to arrogance. Belgium for instance and Switzerland are amongst the weak nations now feeling themselves strong: and it is said that the latter is now spending on its military forces and armaments (pro rata to its population) more than any other nation of Europe.

Of course this war spirit may quiet down; but while it lasts--while every boy's heart is throbbing with military enthusiasm and every school-yard is a drill-ground--when even the Sunday School scholars are organized into "Boys' Brigades"--when professed Christians are so infected with the fever as to be blinded to justice and love and pity,--things are not favorable to peace. It looks very much as tho the International Peace Congress cried Peace! Peace! when there is no peace--because the spirit of avarice controls the world and not the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love and benevolence. However, we who look from the Watch Tower can note these things with equanimity. In the world but not of it, we can sympathize with all the contestants, realizing that each nation is more or less blinded and misled by the spirit of pride which forgets or has never learned that only "righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people."--Prov. 14:34.

Every evil course amongst men seems to be the result of the misdirection or perversion of a good quality;

and so it is in this war spirit: it is the misdirection of combativeness and destructiveness,--two qualities absolutely indispensable to progress. But very few even of Christians have learned of the Lord's Word and spirit how to use these faculties properly--in fighting the good fight, in overcoming and destroying the forces of sin in themselves and in opposing error with truth, the darkness with the light--"Speaking the truth in love."

We pray that as the spirit of warfare rises in others it may be fully awakened also in the Lord's consecrated soldiers of the cross, that they may become valiant for righteousness, courageous for the truth as "good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ," and be zealous to the extent of enduring hardness,--shame, contempt, evil speaking and general opposition from the world, the flesh, the devil and the nominal Church which, blinded by false doctrines, Satan is so grievously misleading.

This thought respecting the Lord's soldiers, and the true nobility of character, and deadness to the world, and alive-ness to God necessary to victory over self and the world, much impressed us recently on the occasion of our visit to the Washington City Church. We found that, out of a total of twenty-seven professing full consecration to the Lord, three-fourths were "Volunteers," and the other fourth desirous of being such and only hindered by circumstances they could not so far control. The Editor had the pleasure of joining these soldiers of the Lord in their campaign against error and for the liberation of "brethren" still bound in Babylon;--a campaign, a warfare for a purpose, a noble purpose, a loving purpose; a warfare for God and truth and liberty, which injures none and can offend none except the great Adversary or those whom he has blinded. The Editor has longed to join in this service in Allegheny, but thus far has been restrained by the fear that harm rather than good might result because of his being known to be closely identified with the publication. It would be credited to a desire to "blow his own horn" rather than as the blowing of the Jubilee Trumpet, proclaiming the times of restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.--Lev. 25:9,10; Acts 3:10-21.

We are thankful that we can record that this war fever is spreading as well as the evil life-destroying one. The soldiers of the cross are becoming more and more courageous and coming more and more to realize that, if "we ought also to lay down our lives for the brethren," this would imply our willingness to lay down any and every lesser thing--time, influence, etc. The Boston Church (numbering about seventy) we understand has enlisted in this "Volunteer" work almost without an exception. We have sent them 13,800 of the "Volunteer" TOWERS which they are hastening to distribute before the warm weather thins the congregations

they would serve.

What a privilege is here for such as have prayed
God for opportunity to serve him and his cause!
Counting that each of these double TOWERS represents
four sermons, and that each should reach and be read
by at least three persons, can any one point out any
other method for reaching this same desirable class of
"brethren" at the same low cost? If we know of no
other method of reaching this class at any price, and
if we know of no other way by which we could preach
to them the true gospel, why should not all of the
Lord's consecrated people who enjoy the light of present
truth avail themselves of the privilege? The fact
that it is a new method of preaching is nothing. It is
surely a successful method, not only as respects the
"brethren" we would aid, but also as respects those
who have covenanted themselves as living sacrifices to
the Lord and his cause. All who engage in this service
as something done for and unto the Lord are sure
to be correspondingly blessed. Let all who can secure
a share in this blessing. See the item in our issue of
April 15th, discussing the work, method, etc., hearken
to the joyful sound of the Jubilee Trumpet and
become enthused with the spirit of this holy warfare.

R2646 : page 168

"I THAT SPEAK AM HE."

--JOHN 4:26; 9:37.--

She came, the thirsty one, to fill her pitcher,
And found a stranger sitting on the brink;
And while she poured for him the well's refreshment,
He gave the precious cup of life to drink.
And when she wondered at her life's revealing,
And if Messiah deeper depths could see,
He graciously her rising faith encouraged,--
"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so when we, blest Master, come, all empty,
To fountains, we but drink, and drink in vain;
Be thou with satisfying waters waiting,
That we may drink, and never thirst again.
Our wayward hearts' true inwardness disclosing,
Constrain our timid faith to hope in thee,
And let us hear again the gracious message--
"I that speak to thee am He!"

They turned him from the synagogue accursed,
Whose gift of sight the Savior had bestowed;
And, burning under grief and indignation,
He sought again the well-remembered road.
And while he mused upon his kindly patron,
And if he could indeed Messiah be,
Lo, One with beaming countenance addressed him,

"I that speak to thee am He!"

And so, dear Lord, when our dim eyes are opened,
And one-time friends thy healing power despise,
Be thou anear with words of cheer and comfort,
To grant our saddest hour a glad surprise.
And when life's subtle mysteries perplex us,
Unlock to us with faith's unfailing key,
That we may hear from out the open portals,
"I that speak to thee am He!"

The proud and haughty still a sign requiring,
In vain the zenith and horizon scan,
While walks among them One with vesture girded,
To wield the purging and discerning fan.
But he who humbly treads the path of duty,
With eyes unsealed shall his Deliv'rer see;
His trial hour shall brighten with this token--
"I that speak to thee am He!"

R. B. HENNINGES.

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R2641 : page 168

PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION, JUNE 16-18.

SHORT NOTICE is not always a disadvantage,
and we trust will not be in this instance.
Arrangements for the Philadelphia convention had
not been completed when our last issue went to press.
The above date gives us the advantage of the low
rates granted by all railroads to the Republican party
convention,--namely one fare for the round trip from
all directions. The season of the year is very favorable
and we anticipate a large attendance.

The convention will be held under the auspices of
the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. The Church
at Philadelphia, our hosts or entertainers for the occasion,
have made bountiful arrangements as follows:--

(1) St. George's Hall, corner of 13th and Arch
sts., has been secured for the use of the Convention.
It is one of the finest halls in Philadelphia.

(2) The Lincoln Hotel, No. 1222 Locust St.,
has been engaged upon moderate terms for the class
of accommodation, namely one dollar a day each person
for lodgings. Meals can be had at various restaurants
in that vicinity at fifteen cents and upward. It will
be safe for those of limited means to reckon expenses
at two dollars per day, for the hotel and Convention
hall are very centrally located near to depots and little
street car fare need be expended.

(3) The Convention will open Saturday morning,
June 16. The forenoon will be devoted to meeting

arriving friends, getting acquainted, etc. On that morning representatives of the Philadelphia Church will be at the various railway depots to meet arriving friends, who will be expected to identify themselves by displaying conspicuously the front page of a WATCH TOWER. Should any fail to be identified they will have no difficulty in finding St. George's Hall as above, and there a Reception Committee (recognizable by a silk badge) will look out for their welfare.

(4) Any of the friends who can attend, but who cannot afford more than one dollar a day expense during their stay, will be assisted by others more able, out of a fund already provided: and any who cannot afford the modest sum of one dollar per day, if they can arrange their railway fare will be provided for gratis.

Come, all who can, who have the Lord's spirit and who seek more of it. The assembling of ourselves together for the consideration of our Father's Word will surely bring a blessing as he has promised.

R2642 : page 168

(5) When purchasing your ticket, ask for-- "Excursion ticket to Republican Convention at Philadelphia." The railroad people assure us that such tickets will be satisfactory to them.

(6) Decide about your going as speedily as possible, and if you decide to attend, at once address,-- "Reception Committee," P.O. Box No. 3084, Philadelphia, Pa., stating by what road you will travel, and if possible the hour of your train's arrival on Saturday morning or afternoon. The Convention Program will be announced at its first session and posted up for reference. We cannot now announce the speakers, but among them, D.V., will be Brother Randle (formerly a missionary in China) and the Editor of this Journal.

(7) An opportunity will be afforded (Monday

R2642 : page 169

afternoon, June 18th) for any confessing baptism into Christ's death to symbolize this in water baptism. Robes and towels will be provided, and the service will be preceded by a discourse defining and explaining Baptism and its import.

(8) No collections will be taken up, nor other solicitations for money made. Our assemblings are for spiritual refreshment and for the acquirement of heavenly riches for all.

(9) Only Christians, who trust in Christ as the "ransom for all," are invited to this convention. It is hoped and earnestly requested that all such who come will seek preparation of heart for a blessing-- hunger and thirst after righteousness, truth, purity, holiness; and all who come humbly in this condition

will surely not only get a blessing, but also bestow blessings upon others. To these desirable ends let us each make the Convention and our own association therein a subject of prayer. We bespeak for it also the prayers of all of the Lord's consecrated people who cannot attend: and thus they will no doubt participate in the blessings.

Other Conventions for this season will be as follows:
--At Chicago, about Sept. 1st; at Dallas, Texas, Sept. 29th, 30th and October 1st. Particulars respecting the last two, will appear later.

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R2642 : page 169

FULL ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

--PSALM 23:6.--

SAINT PAUL speaks of the full assurance of hope and of full assurance of faith, as being the proper conditions for the Lord's people. (Heb. 6:11; 10:22.) And this is the thought expressed by the Prophet, in our text--full confidence that he who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it. (Phil. 1:6.) But how few Christians, comparatively, have this full assurance of faith; how few can say, Surely, undoubtedly, goodness and mercy shall follow me henceforth through life, and by God's grace I ultimately shall gain the heavenly Kingdom and the glorious things which God has promised to them that love him! The few who can enter fully into sympathy with the Apostle and Prophet in these expressions have therein a great joy, a great blessing, a great rest of heart which others do not possess. Let us therefore inquire why it is that the number who thus enter into the rest of faith is so small. What are the hindrances to the others, and how can those hindrances be removed, that a larger number of the Lord's people may enjoy their patrimony?

The hindrances are of two kinds: (1) Many who are on the Lord's side, and who have been greatly blessed of him, and who have made considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth, and who are trusting in the merit of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice as the only hope of a future life, and who are thus justified, have nevertheless failed to take the second step necessary to their full induction into sonship in God's family and into joint-heirship with Christ to all the exceeding great and precious promises which extend only to those who become his sons. This step, essential to

becoming sons and joint-heirs, is the purpose of full consecration--the full surrender of our own wills, including all the aims and objects and purposes of life, and including also all that we have in the way of time, influence, means, reputation, etc. Not having taken this step, not having taken up the cross to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, this large class very properly feels that it is questionable to what extent the Lord's promises, either for the life that now is or for the life that is to come, belong to them. And in this they are right; for none of the promises, present or future, belong to them, nor to any, until they have come under the terms of a full self-surrender, consecration, presenting their bodies living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our advice to these, then, is that realizing the situation they do not longer delay, but hasten at once to avail themselves of the greatest privilege that could possibly be offered, even by the Almighty. If they stand still they are, in the language of the Apostle, receiving the grace of God in vain--failing to use it. (2 Cor. 6:1) God's grace, as freely bestowed upon those who have come to a knowledge of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, is the grace of the forgiveness of sins, of justification through faith; and the very object of this grace is to permit or qualify us to become living sacrifices, acceptable to God's altar through the great sacrifice of our Redeemer.

Whoever, therefore, shall advance thus far and know of his privilege, and yet refuse to present his little all, has failed to be constrained by the love of Christ, has failed to appreciate the divine favor bestowed upon him, and manifests this failure by his neglect to use his opportunities, by his neglect to sacrifice the imperfect fragment of this present life, that he might obtain in exchange the great prize of glory, honor and immortality, and joint-heirship with Jesus in the Kingdom: such receive God's grace in vain,

R2642 : page 170

profiting nothing by it over and above the world, which as yet lies in darkness and blindness.

What should such do? They should at once resolve that to render all they have to the Lord's service is not only a reasonable thing, but an offering far too small--far less than what they would like to render to him who has manifested such compassion and grace toward us. And we should feel thus, even if there were no rewards attached to such a consecration of ourselves. But inasmuch as God has attached great rewards and blessings, we should feel not only that a refusal to accept would be an indication of non-appreciation of divine mercy, but an indication also of a weakness of mind, of judgment, which is unable to balance the trifling and transitory pleasures of self-will

for a few short years, with an eternity of joy and blessing and glory, in harmony with the Lord.

And more than this, the consecrated are the only ones who really fully and truly enjoy this present life, for they indeed have a peace of heart which the world can neither give nor take away--a condition which all the world is coveting and seeking after, but finding not because they seek it not in the Lord's way of full self-surrender to him. We urge, then, upon the class now addressed that they promptly make their covenant with the Lord, and thus become heirs of his good promises pertaining to the life that now is, and also of that which is to come, and that thus they lay the foundation for entering into "full assurance of the faith" and full assurance of the hope that God's mercy and goodness shall follow them all the days of the present life, and that they shall dwell in the heavenly home forever.

(2) But amongst those who are real Christians, and who have made a full covenant of sacrifice unto the Lord, we find many who say, and more who think it without saying,--"O that I could feel sure that God's goodness and mercy would continue with me all the days of my life, and that I should attain unto his Kingdom! O that I might have a full assurance of faith, a full assurance that I am accepted of the Lord, and that by his grace I shall ultimately be an overcomer!" What is the difficulty with this class? Why is it that these do not possess this full assurance of faith? We answer, that their difficulty is a lack of faith in God, and such a lack of faith is not pleasing to God, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." Such a lack of faith, moreover, is a constant hindrance to their overcoming, as it is written, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The Christian who has not the shield of faith, and a large one, is continually at disadvantage before the Adversary.--Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:4.

What must be done to overcome this lack of faith, and to have an increase of faith? We answer, that like the apostles of old he should pray, "Lord, increase our faith." And then, acting in harmony with this prayer, each should cultivate faith in his own heart:

(a) By refreshing his memory continually with the divine promises, becoming very familiar with these in the Father's Word. (b) He should seek more and more to remember that having made his covenant with the Lord these promises are his, and in his heart and with his lips he should claim them as his before the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. He should claim them as his in his own thoughts, and in his conferences on holy things with the brethren.

R2643 : page 170

When trials or difficulties or perplexities arise, he

should think of these promises, remembering that they belong to him--because God has promised them to such as love him,--who have made a covenant by self-sacrifice. (Psa. 50:5; Mal. 3:17.) He should resolve henceforth to trust the word of the heavenly Father implicitly. Thus, if some seeming accident befall him, let him call to his mind the promise that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose," and assure himself that the seeming accident would not have occurred had God not seen a way to make it the channel of a needed lesson or blessing. Let him refresh his mind with the thought that he comes under the provisions of this promise because he loves the Lord, and so loved him as to make a full consecration of himself to him; thus he is assured that this promise was intended for him.

Let such also remember the language of the Apostle, that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, so that he provided for us the great salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, much more does he love us now, since we have been justified through faith in the great atonement, and have made a full consecration of ourselves to him, and thus come under the terms of adoption into his family. Let him remember too, that he who has begun the good work changes never, and that if our hearts are still in harmony with him, if our faith is still clear and firm in the great atonement, if our consecration is still full and complete, so that we seek not our own wills but his will to be done in our affairs, then we may indeed have the full assurance of faith, because knowing that God is unchangeable, and knowing that we are still in line with his promises and arrangements, we know that all of his gracious providences are still being exercised on our behalf. This is full assurance of faith--full confidence in the Lord.

(3) It is possible, however, for the true Christian who has taken the step of justification and the step of consecration and adoption into God's family,

R2643 : page 171

and who has had the blessing of full assurance of faith--it is possible for such to lose this, if he become overcharged with the cares of this life, cold and indifferent as respects the Lord, his Kingdom, his brethren, his cause, etc. Such, of course, should not have a full assurance of faith; God does not intend it for them, but rather intends that if we leave the proper consecrated attitude we should also lose the joys and consolations which belong to it. And this is not merely as a retribution or punishment, but designed specially to awaken us to a realization of what we are losing, to the intent that such as have "lost their first love" may be revived, may renew their consecration vows,

and thus return to the Lord, who will abundantly pardon, and restore unto them the joys of his salvation.

So then, reviewing our text, we say that this assurance of faith that God's goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives, and that we shall ultimately by his grace attain to the Kingdom, is for the class mentioned in this Psalm, viz., the Lord's sheep--those who are following him, and who are having the experiences outlined in this Psalm. One of these experiences is that following the Shepherd they are not left to hunger and thirst, but are bountifully supplied in the green pastures and by the still waters of the truth. Moreover, it applies to those who experience the Shepherd's care, his rod and staff, correcting, reproving or guiding them. Such sheep as learn to love and have confidence in the Shepherd and in his guidance, and to take comfort and blessing out of all the afflictions and trials of life which may be permitted to come upon them, realizing that they are providential, and for their blessing--such continue to follow the Shepherd, continue to have the experiences of sheep, and may rejoice with full assurance of faith that he who began the good work of shepherding them and leading them out from the by-ways of sin and of selfishness into the full blessing of the heavenly Father, will continue this work and complete it, if they abide in him.--John 15:4-6.

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R2643 : page 171

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

--MATT. 6:11; JOHN 6:5-14.--JUNE 17.--

JESUS and the apostles, entering a boat, sailed across the northerly end of Lake Galilee. The boat was in full view of the shore for probably all of this distance, and the multitudes, not only of those who had heard Jesus, but other multitudes on their way to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of the Passover, going by slow journey afoot, saw the boat and judged of its objective point, and many, desirous of seeing the great Prophet Jesus, of whom they had heard many things, deviated their course toward the point of the boat's landing. And so it was that after Jesus and the disciples had reached their destination (and he had been for some time instructing them in things pertaining to the Kingdom) looking up they beheld a vast concourse of people approaching the spot.

Jesus of course knew that with the vast majority at least the object in coming was merely curiosity, not faith nor desire for instruction. Nevertheless, as always, his generous heart was full of sympathy. He beheld them as sheep having no shepherd, as following

Moses and the Doctors of the Law in a blind, almost irrational manner, and having comparatively little capacity or hearing for the good tidings which he had to give. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the fact that they were not in a condition to receive spiritual truths such as he could give to his disciples, he proposed to give them a general object lesson which might do them good physically at the time, and which might be a channel for blessing in the future, as they would look back and remember the event. He proposed to feed the multitude with natural food, and to do it in such a manner as would impress them favorably, and besides, teach a great lesson of faith and trust to his apostles, who would need in future times the faith and confidence inspired by the miracle which he intended to work.

Philip, one of the apostles, resided in a city not far from where they were; hence it was with special appropriateness that our Lord addressed to him the question of supplies--where sufficiency of bread could be obtained, etc.; not, as the Apostle explains, that Jesus was in any question on this subject, but that he wished to stimulate the thought of Philip and the other apostles, and thus to prove or test them, and develop their faith in him. Philip, however, took the question in a purely practical form, and replied that it would require two hundred pennyworth (\$34) of bread to satisfy even partially so large a company. But Andrew, apparently thinking of our Lord's power, but scarcely able to realize so great a miracle, suggested that there was a beginning of the supply at least, in the five barley loaves and two small fishes possessed by one of the company.

Combining the testimonies of the different Evangelists we might suppose the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples to have been about as follows:

Jesus.--"Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Philip.--"Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that everyone may take a little."

All the apostles.--"Send the multitude away that

R2643 : page 172

they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals." (Luke.)

Jesus.--"Give ye them to eat." (Luke.)

All the apostles.--"Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat?" (Mark.)

Jesus.--"How many loaves have ye? Go and see." (Mark.)

Andrew.--"There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes; but what are they among so many?"

Thus did our Lord prepare the minds of his disciples to appreciate the miracle he was about to perform, and then instructed them to seat the people for

the proposed meal. This was a comparatively easy task, because it was a grassy country, we are told, and the people were accustomed to a certain method of arranging themselves in groups of fifties and hundreds for general feasts.

The fact that our Lord Jesus gave thanks for the bread and fish should be an important lesson to all who seek in any degree to be his followers. If it was appropriate that he should render thanks to the heavenly Father for some plain barley bread (the poorest and cheapest sort), and for some dried fish, how appropriate it is that we who by nature are sinners and under condemnation, and only permitted to call God our Father through the reconciliation that is in Christ Jesus--how appropriate that we should lift our hearts and voices in thankfulness to the heavenly Father as the author of every good blessing and gift which we enjoy!

We cannot understand how any Christian dare neglect to render thanks for his daily food, and we thoroughly believe that those who do neglect this propriety are great losers thereby. God, of course, loses nothing, for giving does not impoverish him, neither would withholding make him rich; but the Christian who has learned in everything to give thanks, and to make acknowledgment to the heavenly Father, has learned to appreciate and to enjoy his blessing more than others.

R2644 : page 172

To such thankful hearts the plainest of food will be more appreciated, more happifying, more satisfying than to others. And it is undoubtedly a fact that a peaceful, thankful, happy mind is not only a blessing of itself, but additionally an aid to digestion and to the obtaining of good benefits from the food which we eat. How many dyspeptics know that it is possible to eat without satisfying, and to have plenty, and yet be unable to derive therefrom comfort and proper nourishment! And perhaps there is no better antidote to dyspepsia than a thankful, grateful heart, which acknowledges divine blessings and seeks to use them, not only with thankfulness, but with contentment, and thus has great gain.

True, God does not resent failures to acknowledge him in all our ways, but continues to cause the sun to shine upon the evil and upon the good, and to send the rain alike upon the just and the unjust, and to permit many of the blessings of this present life to continue with those who make no proper acknowledgment of them. Nevertheless, such cannot hope to grow in divine favor, as they might if in all their ways they acknowledged God and sought to see in all the affairs of life his providential care.

These remarks, however, apply not to the world in general, nor to mere nominal believers, but only to those who have become the Lord's people by entering into a

covenant with him through Christ. As for the world in general, who are not seeking to be the Lord's people and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus, it would seem that their offering of thanks, or prayers of any kind, would be inappropriate, as we read: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes; or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing that thou hatest instruction and castest my words behind thee." (Psalm 50:16,17.) In a word, then, there is just one right way to begin to be the Lord's followers, and those who do not wish to begin according to the Lord's direction, in self-consecration, have no right to suppose that outward acts of formalistic piety are acceptable or pleasing to God. We must first become the Lord's before we can hope that any worship or service from us will be acceptable to him through Jesus.

The faith of the apostles is well demonstrated in the fact that they proceeded to seat the people, according to the Lord's instructions, and then proceeded to divide to them the, at first, very limited quantity of food. Without faith in the Lord they would undoubtedly have refused to take any part in the proceedings, fearing that it would bring reproach and ridicule upon themselves. The lesson which they learned in this connection no doubt went with them through subsequent years, teaching them that they could do all things by the power of Christ, if laboring under his command. And the same lesson comes forcefully to us all. Neither our duties nor our privileges are wholly measured by our own abilities. A proper faith in the Lord permits us to realize his omnipotent power, and that if he be with us, for instance in the distribution of spiritual food to the hungry, the little of means and ability and opportunity at our disposal may be so blessed as to accomplish marvelous things. Indeed, have we not this very experience to-day in connection with the spread of the harvest message? Out of the little of means and talent, opportunity and ability, what God hath wrought! How many have been fed and are being fed!

The miracle was all the Lord's, and yet a great blessing came to the apostles, in that they were privileged

R2644 : page 173

to be co-workers with the Lord. And similarly here, in the dissemination of the harvest message, we recognize that it is all of our Lord, the present Bridegroom, King, Reaper, and yet that he is pleased to use as disseminators of the truth all those who have faith in him and who gladly accept his service. As our Lord could have performed the miracle of feeding the five thousand without the instrumentality of his disciples, so now he could feed the hungry Israelites indeed--who are famished, not for bread and not for water, but for the hearing of the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11)--

without our aid. Let us gratefully thank him for the privilege of being co-workers in any capacity, and let us the more zealously do with our might whatsoever our hands find to do.

Another great lesson taught by this miracle was that of economy; for the apostles who distributed the food were required to gather up for their own future use the suitable fragments which remained, and each one accordingly filled his basket or haversack, which they were accustomed to carry in their journeys. The miracle would have had only half its weight without this closing lesson of economy. The disciples and the multitude might have learned to think of God's powers in an improper light, and to have expected such provision as would compensate for their carelessness and prodigality. But the gathering of the fragments showed, first of all, the immensity of the miracle, and secondly, it taught the lesson that we are to use the means which God has put into our hands, and not to expect unnecessary miracles.

How many of the Lord's dear people need to learn this lesson of economy! How many are wasteful of the daily food which the Lord provides! How many would be the more blessed by learning to practice careful economy, not only that they might have in the future, but also that they might in emergency supply to others spiritual or natural food as opportunity afforded! Let all who are disposed to be extravagant and wasteful well consider this lesson from the great Teacher, that nothing is to be wasted, that we have a responsibility in respect to all that God has provided for us, either directly or indirectly, and that after asking divine blessing upon our affairs, and thus signifying our appreciation of them, we are to seek to wisely use them, as we think would be pleasing in his sight, and frugally, economically.

The same lesson might be applied also to our spiritual food. The fact that the Lord has given us bountifully "things new and old" does not mean that we are to treat those blessed truths carelessly, when we have eaten thereof and found satisfaction to our souls; rather, we are to be careful of all the fragments, and are to gather and preserve them for further and future use, esteeming them none the less the Lord's provision than when first we received them from his hands.

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R2644 : page 173

REVIEW OF THE QUARTER'S STUDIES.

"Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

REVIEWING the studies of the quarter we find that nearly all of them are closely related to our Golden Text.

(1) We had the Beatitudes--the conditions of heart and character essential to our participation in this Kingdom class that God has declared he is selecting from the world, and which by and by he will glorify with the King Emmanuel in his Millennial Kingdom.

(2) We had certain precepts, promises and warnings respecting how this Kingdom class must make development, not in sitting in judgment upon others now, but rather by judging nothing before the time, when they shall be granted the powers of judgment in such glorious measure as will permit their judging to be a blessing to the world, and that thus this Kingdom class must seek the narrow way to glory, honor and immortality.

(3) We had the miracle of the awakening of the daughter of Jairus, an illustration of the great work of the Kingdom when it shall be set up, and when all mankind shall be released from the prison-house of death.

(4) We had the healing of the centurion's servant, another picture of restitution blessings which are to be general at the time that our Lord's prayer, in our Golden Text, is realized, and God's Kingdom shall come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(5) We saw how the faith of John the Baptist was tested by reason of the fact that the Kingdom work did not come in his day just as he had expected it would, and we saw how carefully our Lord explained to him wherein his expectations had been partly erroneous, and indicated how events as they were in progress were in full accord with the testimony of the prophets. And so we have learned in respect to the establishing of the spiritual Kingdom now, to trust not to our own imaginations, but to go rather to the Word of the Lord, and to see what therein is written, and so doing we are able to note to-day what we would not otherwise be able to discern, how that our Lord's great plan is grandly progressing in harmony with what was written aforetime.

(6) We saw, in our Lord's denunciation of Capernaum,

R2645 : page 174

Chorazin and Bethsaida, how possible it is for some in our day to have great privileges, as those cities had great knowledge, great opportunities of coming into accord with the Lord's Kingdom, and yet through lack of faith to fail utterly--to fail more miserably as respects pleasing God than did such heathen cities as Sodom and Tyre and Sidon. We saw, nevertheless, that the full number of the elect Church or Kingdom class would be found in God's due time, and that then will commence the great Judgment Day of the world,

in which it will be tolerable for all, under the righteous judgment of the great King, but more tolerable for such as Sodom and Gomorrah than for those who have had the greater privileges and knowledge and misused them.

(7) We found, in the case of Simon and the woman that was a sinner, that some who occupy important positions in the nominal church may be much further from the Kingdom of God as respects their hearts than are some others who have outwardly been living a less correct life, and that some of the latter, reforming, may become more zealous toward the Lord and more acceptable with him, and hence more eligible to the Kingdom.

(8) The parable of the sower showed us the importance of having our hearts in a correct attitude toward God, not full of worldly ambitions and cares, which as "thorns" would choke the very best seed, but freed from these that we should be ready to receive "the good seed of the Kingdom" into our hearts, and to be exercised thereby into seeking first the Kingdom of God.

(9) We saw various parables of the Kingdom, illustrating to us the Church's present experiences, while waiting for the completion of the elect number and the full inauguration then of the Kingdom glory and power to bless the world. We saw the true Christians represented by the "wheat," the outgrowth of pure doctrine, the good seed of the Kingdom. We saw false Christians represented by the "tares," and the false doctrines which produce such, which were sown by the Adversary. We saw the growth of the nominal church represented as being very great, but as resulting in inviting into it the fowl--"every unclean and hateful bird." We saw that the spiritual food provided for the Lord's household had been corrupted by the "woman" everywhere predominant throughout the Scriptures, the wine-cup of whose abominations have made drunk all nations.--Rev. 18:2,3.

(10) We have seen that the sending forth of the twelve apostles was with the same message, the same Gospel of the Kingdom, that the Master declared, and that similarly whoever is sent out of the Lord to-day as a servant of the truth has the same message, the Gospel of the Kingdom, under which, when it is established, God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

(11) The lesson of Herodias and her wicked ambition and sinful course, in which Herod shared, taught us that earthly ambitions lead downward and sinward, away from God and into degradation, but that the ambition set before the Church, viz., to be God's Kingdom, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, is the lawful ambition which leads upward and is elevating in its every influence, and purifying as respects our hearts and lives.

(12) Finally, in the feeding of the multitude, we see illustrated our Lord's compassion for the people, which compassion during the Millennial Kingdom will

have fullest sway, when the bread of life shall be broken to all of the hungry, and when all shall be privileged to share in the blessings which the Lord's Kingdom will bring, and that then those who have followed him in the present time shall be associated with him in the work of blessing the multitude under the glorious Kingdom conditions.

We may well pray from the heart, in the language of our Golden Text, Lord, "Thy Kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

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R2645 : page 174

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

WHEN PERSECUTED, FLEE.

Question.--How should we understand and apply Matt. 10:23--"When they persecute you in this city, flee ye to another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come"?

Answer.--These instructions were given primarily to the twelve Apostles, and doubtless were understood by them to mean that their mission was not to stay long in a place, but that as persecution arose, and the people were unwilling to hear their message, they were to go to other cities and villages, full of the conviction that the time for their special testimony of the Kingdom at hand was limited, and that they would not more than have accomplished their proclamation in all the cities of Israel before the Son of Man would be presented as King, and the testing of the nation reach its climax. This climax was reached when, at the end of his three and a half years' ministry, our Lord rode to them on the ass, as their King, and failing to be received (in harmony with the prophecy) declared their house henceforth left desolate.--Luke 13:35.

But while this was the primary signification of the Lord's words, we believe that like most of his teachings to Israel after the flesh it had a still larger meaning than was then due to be understood--an application to the parallel closing of this Gospel age. As there was a "harvest" in the end of the Jewish age, in which natural Israel was tested, so in the end of this

R2645 : page 175

age there is a "harvest" in which spiritual Israel will be tested. And as there was a proclamation of Jesus in

the flesh, as King, so there must be correspondingly a proclamation of Jesus, the new creature, as King of Glory. And as in that "harvest" some were sent forth with the harvest message, and it was to reach all the Israelites within the borders of the promised land, so now we understand that in the present harvest the message is going forth, "behold the bridegroom," and the further announcement to Zion, "Thy God reigneth." (Matt. 25:6; Isa. 52:7.) This harvest message is also to be understood as limited in time, and the bearers of it are not to dally, but to exercise diligence, realizing that the time is short, and that they shall have time and no more to go over all the cities of spiritual Israel, before the grand consummation shall be reached, and the Son of Man shall have completed the first part of his work, the collection of his saints, the "Jewels," the "Little Flock," and thus the Kingdom be set up in power.

OF WHOM AND FOR WHOM DO WE SPEAK?

Question.--When in the WATCH TOWER and DAWNS and Old Theology Tracts we read "we believe," "our views," etc., are we to understand that a Church or Society or creed so teaches? If not, how shall we understand such expressions?

Answer.--No; we speak for no party or sect or creed or confession, but merely for ourself,--the Editor. Long ago we adopted the plural pronoun in referring to our personal views as being much more modest than the frequent use of "I said," "I think," "I expect," "I believe," "I find," etc. And this custom is followed in the ablest newspapers and journals of our land.

Of course, incidentally, we voice the sentiments of many of our readers when voicing our own; because they and we recognize the Bible as a divine revelation, the only standard of truth, and endeavor to keep close to its letter and spirit. But "we" will neither bind others to "our" convictions nor permit any to bind "us" to theirs. The only fixed creed we recognize is the simple and fundamental one--that God sent his Son, who died for our sins; and that through faith in this, and obedience to him, to the extent of our ability, we shall be saved. All who so confess are "Christians" and are to be treated as "brethren." They should be assisted to grow in knowledge and grace, but should be accorded fullest liberty,--"The liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." Neither directly nor indirectly has anyone a right to make a creed for them nor to otherwise speak for them and then imply their "disloyalty" and "heresy" if they attempt to resent misrepresentations.

WATCH TOWER readers are supposed to be, and urged to be, the Lord's freemen, and at the same time

the Lord's bond-servants; and to call no man master; because one alone is their Master and Lord--Jesus. This liberty, however, does not hinder them from appreciating one another as "brethren"--

"Whose kind designs to serve and please
Through all their actions run."

Each is free to love and esteem each other for their work's sake, and to seek to note how the Master is pleased to use one and another in serving "the body of Christ." Each free one, loyal to the Lord, is pleased to recognize as special servants of "the body" those whom the Lord specially uses. Those who are not free with the liberty wherewith Christ makes free, are enslaved to decisions of men and to customs and theories, and are not at liberty to follow the leadings of divine providence and the testimonies of the divine Word.

WHEN WILL SATAN BE BOUND?

Question.--In the DAWNS you have intimated that the binding of Satan in the end of this age will be accomplished by the increase of general intelligence,-- light, etc. Is this the only sense in which you consider that he will be bound?

Answer.--By no means. The binding of Satan with the great chain, and the putting of him into the abyss mentioned in Rev. 20:1-3, is all figurative; but the figures are all meaningful. To us they signify a complete restraint of Satan and all his powers of evil. The great chain represents restraint. The word abyss, in our common version rendered "bottomless pit," represents oblivion. The seal upon it represents divine care that none shall interfere with God's arrangement, but that it shall all be carried out strictly in accordance with the divine prearrangement. Our suggestion respecting the influence of the increased light of the present time is that a preliminary restraint of evil

R2646 : page 175

results from turning on the light of present truth, which makes the evil the more manifest and the less able to deceive. But this is not all, by any means. The thought is that the great King, who is now about to take full control of the world, has full power to bind, to restrain Satan and every evil power and influence, that nothing may hurt or injure that which is good throughout the Millennial Age, as has been the case during the present age, when the Kingdom of heaven (the Church in its incipient state) suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force, misusing the members of the body of Christ, even as they misused also the Head of the body--our Lord.

Whether Satan and his associates, the fallen angels, will remain associated with this earth we do not know, but it is quite sufficient for us to have the Lord's assurance that they will no longer be prince and powers of the air, able to misrepresent and deceive mankind, as at present. Some have surmised that Satan and his angels would be deported during the Millennial period, but while there is no Scripture that we are aware of which would settle this point, our view is to the contrary of this. We believe that they will not be deported but remain, powerless to deceive. Our reason for so supposing is two-fold:

(1) This earth has been the scene of their original transgressions and subsequent misdeeds, and it would seem proper that they should witness the marvelous transformation which will ensue after the Prince of Light, the Prince of Peace, Emmanuel, shall assume the reins of power, and bring blessings to all the families of the earth.

(2) The Scriptures assure us that the work of the glorified Church will not only be to give trial to or "judge the world" of mankind during the Millennial

R2646 : page 176

age, but that it will include also the judgment or trial of these fallen angels: and if both mankind and the angels are to be judged, during the same period, it would seem entirely reasonable that both should be associated with the earth and its atmosphere.--1 Cor. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

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page 176

FAITHFUL CO-LABORERS HEARD FROM.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I praise God for the new life that has come to our Church here lately. I conclude it is the food in Vol. v. of the DAWN and the helpful articles in the WATCH TOWER as much as the "Volunteer" letters that have awakened us to new energy. The work of our dear brethren is indeed a powerful stimulant and has enlivened me. I enjoy the honor God has bestowed on me in permitting me to lay down my life in service for the brethren in Babylon.

I feel like a full-sized man while standing before a church door handing out the "glad tidings" to my fellow men. It is such an honorable business to be an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone seems polite and nearly always thank us for the books. When occasionally they refuse them, I believe it is because they think we are selling them. The books appear too expensive to give away. They have asked

me a number of times who pays for the literature. I simply answer, "The Tract Society."

How few recognize that the "glad tidings" are like a beautiful air whose accompaniment (full of deep, rich bass solos, baritone minors, bursts of wild, thrilling, harmonic chords and countless thrilling rivulets of counter melody) is the Old Testament. Before Jesus came there was no connected tune in the accompaniment. There were grand sounds of rich chords, occasional weird musical phrases and counter melodies. It took Jesus, the Lamb of God, the spotless friend of mankind to bring to light the charming tune, the entrancing air, by simply making it more prominent than the accompaniment. Imagine us listening to the orchestra of God's universe, listening to this anthem of the ages! It seems, sometimes, almost frightful in the grandeur and sublimity of its awe-inspiring greatness.

Dear brother, I appreciate your unselfish devotion in laying down your life for us--for me. I was ignorant of God in almost everything until, through the DAWNS, you divided the word of truth in its proper dispensations, massing Scripture on the various points of importance, until I saw a plan threading its way through the Bible. My life is new now, it has been changed; the love for God's business has weaned my heart away from the fleeting phantoms of the world--its pleasures. How small they now look beside the radiant beauty of pureness and truth!

To realize day by day that our trials of patience, love, our humility and all the graces of the spirit, is a discipline or training that God is imposing on us in order that we may be transformed in heart into the likeness and character of our blessed Redeemer, is what gives me peace and contentment with such things as I have, and it also makes the trials easier to "endure." "Blessed is that man who endures temptations." I used to wonder why you "harped" (Rev. 14:2) on these things year after year. Now I know why;--that when my ears got open enough to hear the instruction, I could profit by it.

Dear brother, I have learned valuable lessons from your mode of work and I want you to know how thoroughly I am in sympathy with all you do. You have helped me out of darkness, and it makes me all the more appreciative of your work because I know you do it, not for the reward of praise from us, but from your faithfulness and love of our Redeemer and God. I rejoice to know there are true hearts on the earth, that God has transformed human minds. Praise his holy name!

Yours in loving service,
F. A. HALL,--Indiana.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Words would fail to express how thankful I feel to our dear Lord for sending me the message of "present truth" and revealing unto me the great reward that awaits those who earnestly

seek both to know and to do his will.

It is now about 3-1/2 years since I began to study MILLENNIAL DAWN and to me these few years have been of more real importance than all the other 22 years of my life put together. When I look back and see how the Lord has been leading me, and how often he has delivered me from the snares of the adversary, I cannot help feeling glad. At first Satan tried to ensnare me by telling me that the sacrifice was too great-- more than I ever could hope to fulfil, but after counting the cost I resolved to trust our Master for it all, and he has not disappointed me. Praise his name!

Our meetings here for the last 12 months have been very helpful to the study of the Word, and all testify to receiving great blessings from them, except a few who went out from us when the truth began to get strong. We have also had occasional visits from Bro. Hemery and Bro. Houston, which have been highly appreciated. I have been thinking of trying to colporteur DAWN here when the mild weather begins. I tried it for a month some time ago and met with a measure of success. It seems to be a little in my line; I am entirely free from worldly cares, and have a fair business experience, being in the grocery trade here. Bro. Anderson and I had thought of trying it together. With much love to all the saints in Allegheny, I remain, Yours in our Master's service,

WILLIAM CRAWFORD,--Scotland.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I must write you my thanks and gratitude for many things. The TOWERS are always full of good things for the children of the "household." For several weeks past I have been in doubt over an important point, and several times was ready to write you for instructions, but when last TOWER came in there it all was, just as if you had written for my special case. Surely God's blessing is with you and on us through you as his agent. My way has not always been clear and I sometimes find it hard to determine the right course, but it is my prayer that I may meet such chastisements as will keep me in the straight path. The last TOWER hit me quite hard, but I very much appreciated it for it served to show me my way.

I revert with special pleasure to our meeting at De Funiak. Very sincerely your friend,

ELSTON LUTTRELL,--Alabama.

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page 177

SEMI-MONTHLY
VOL. XXI. JUNE 15, 1900. No. 12.

CONTENTS.

Views From the Watch Tower.....179
 Thoughtful Words of an Able Man.....179
 The Anomalies of Orthodoxy.....179
 Methodism and Higher Criticism.....180
 Educated White Savages.....181
 Keep Yourselves in the Love of God.....182
 Jesus Walking on the Sea.....184
 I Am the Bread of Life.....186
 Lord, Help Me! Matt. 15:25.....190
 Revised Price List of Bibles, Etc.....192
 Special Items: The Volunteer Work.....178
 Attention Watch Tower Readers!.....178

page 178

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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
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 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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THE VOLUNTEER TOWERS.

The friends of the truth in every direction are joining heartily
 in circulation of this special issue of the WATCH TOWER. They
 evidently consider, as we do, that it should be regarded as a
 sharp sickle of truth for gathering the ripe "wheat."

We have already printed over half a million copies of it, a
 good share of these being already in the hands of the people.
 We are proceeding with the work, and hope to make the total
 at least a million. We regret that we cannot as yet supply foreign
 orders except from Great Britain on account of freight rates.
 We are having an edition printed in London for Great Britain.

Do not waste any, nor let any lie idle; but send us your requests
 for all you can use judiciously--amongst intelligent readers.

R2653 : page 178

ATTENTION WATCH TOWER READERS!

We have learned recently of some readers of this journal who have not read the MILLENNIAL DAWN volumes entire. This is a great mistake. None can rightly understand or appreciate the precious truths presented herein unless he first have a clearly outlined view of the great divine plan of the ages: and hence we urge upon all that they begin this study at once.

All on our list are supplied the DAWNS at wholesale rates (to assist in their wide circulation through loaning, etc.) and any too poor to pay even this small sum will be supplied gratis for their own reading if they will let us know, requesting under this offer. For prices and descriptions, etc., see next column.

In view of the fact that our "earthen vessels" are so leaky we all need to replenish our stock of grace and truth continually; and hence we advise repeated readings of the DAWNS. When reading them you are really reading the Bible; for they are merely an arranged and systematized Bible. It is for this reason that like the Bible they do not grow old to the truth-hungry.

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R2646 : page 179

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

THOUGHTFUL WORDS OF AN ABLE MAN.

AN EXCHANGE quotes epigrammatic statements from various addresses delivered before the "Ecumenical Mission Conference" held recently in New York City, and among them all none impressed us so much as the following by Mr. Benjamin Harrison, ex-President of the United States:--

"The natural man lives to be ministered unto-- he lays his imposts upon others. He buys slaves that they may fan him to sleep, bring him the jewelled cup, dance before him, and die in the arena for his sport. Into such a world there came a King, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." The rough winds fanned his sleep; he drank of the mountain brook and made not the water wine for himself; would not use his power to stay his own hunger, but had compassion on the multitude. He called them he had bought with a great price no more servants but friends. He entered the bloody arena alone, and, dying, broke all chains and brought life and immortality to light."

THE ANOMALIES OF "ORTHODOXY."

The "Ecumenical Conference" on Missions recently

in session in New York City, considering ways and means for preaching the gospel to Brahmins, Buddhists, Confucians, Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics--in its very name ignoring Romanism as anti-Christian, since its missions were not recognized or included under the comprehensive term Ecumenical --was of course "orthodox." At the same time there was in session in the city of Boston another and quite different convention or Religious Congress, which being under the lead of the famous "orthodox" preacher, Heber Newton, supported by many other notable reverend gentlemen and Doctors of Divinity also "orthodox," must be considered equally as "orthodox" a conference as the one which met in New York City. Yet note the wide difference in these applications of the term "orthodox;" for the Boston Convention accepted and heard all religions--Christian, anti-Christian, Buddhist, Brahmin and Confucian on a common level.

As a matter of fact this word orthodox, which signifies "correct or sound doctrine," is claimed by everybody; for no one could conscientiously hold to anything he considered unsound or incorrect. But in applying the term to others is the difficulty: how for instance can a Methodist agree that Presbyterian doctrine of foreordination and predestination is correct or "orthodox" and still refuse to accept it? Or how can a Presbyterian agree that Methodist doctrine is "orthodox" when it differs so radically from his own? And how can "Disciples" and "Baptists" recognize as "orthodox" or correct and sound other doctrines which ignore water immersion, which Baptists and Disciples strenuously claim is absolutely essential to a membership in the Church of Christ, and to the salvation which they claim is provided only for the Church?

The fact is that the various sects were much more consistent when they each denied that the other was "orthodox" and each claimed that itself alone was the "orthodox," the correct and doctrinally sound church.

What brought about this change? We answer, two things conspired to produce the present inconsistent condition.

(1) Religious doctrinal convictions have softened, tho the professions continue as hard and stout as ever. Instead of conviction has come uncertainty, doubt, skepticism and the general feeling that "nobody knows --we may be right, you may be right or all may be wrong."

R2647 : page 180

(2) Not knowing who is right we will simply stick to our own church [not to Christ's one, true Church "whose names are written in heaven"] as being as good as any other man-made church, and merely recognize all others claiming the name of Christ and

having influence, wealth and numbers as being also "orthodox," correct also--for all we know to the contrary. But in preventing any advanced thought being known as "orthodox" all are agreed--they have already sufficient confusion unavoidably covered by that term: unavoidably, because to deny the term "orthodox" to any popular system would be to invite it to denounce yours as "unorthodox," and thus to raise a doctrinal discussion which neither cares to risk before the people, lest the weaknesses and fallacies of all be disclosed to those now "at ease in Zion," dozing, if not sound asleep, on all such subjects.

This is the meaning of the general opposition of all denominations to what we are presenting from the Scriptures as present truth: they see that it is a positive doctrine and that those who receive it have convictions: they see, too, that these appeal to the Bible and apply its statements in a manner that brings order out of the hitherto confusion and babel of the sects: they perceive, too, that it is reasonable (which they know none of the others are) and they each individually and all collectively fear that if heard upon its merits it would sweep all theories before it into oblivion. It is therefore "Self-preservation, the first law of nature" which incites the so-called "orthodox" against the glad tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. For just the same reasons the various sects and parties of the Jews, however diverse, united against the true Light as God revealed it in the close of the Jewish age.

We of course claim that the WATCH TOWER presentations are orthodox, correct, sound doctrinally--otherwise we would not promulgate them. And we go farther and deny that the various inconsistent, unreasonable and unscriptural doctrines of Babylon are orthodox. We claim that altho almost all the creeds of Christendom contain some grains of truth, they contain much more error, which quite beclouds and nullifies their elements of truth.

Nevertheless, we claim that our standard of "orthodoxy" is not narrow when applied to Christian people, tho it is so exclusive as respects all the creeds of Christendom. It is just as broad as the Bible will permit: and who that acknowledges its authority has a right to ask for more or to accept less?

Our standard of orthodoxy as applied not to sects but to Christians, personally, recognizes as correct and sound in doctrine all who acknowledge the following points. (1) That he is by nature a member of the fallen, condemned race and hence a child of wrath even as others, and justly under the divine sentence of condemnation. (2) That Christ died for the ungodly, for Adam and all his condemned race; and hence God can now be just in justifying him and all who believe in Jesus. (3) That his justification is the basis of his call to full consecration in self-sacrifice,

and that he has thus devoted his all to the Lord, in exchange for the share in the Millennial Kingdom which the Lord has promised to all such "overcomers." --Rev. 2:26; 3:12,21.

All the above described class are properly recognized as "orthodox" and "brethren," however they may differ on minor details in the correct knowledge of which they may be expected to grow under the Lord's guidance;--building one another up in [the details of] their most holy faith, as revealed in the Word of the Lord, which, as they come more and more to understand it, will make them wiser and wiser respecting the good and acceptable and perfect will of God,--unto salvation,--until salvation actual, the "crown of life," with glory, honor and immortality, shall be the grand outcome of the finished race.

Who knows any fault to find with this Bible standard of "orthodoxy"? No one! But this is the chief ground of objection to it in the eyes of churchianity: it antagonizes and would speedily destroy not only one but all sects: hence all oppose it:--the far-seeing preachers leading their ever-confiding flocks into the battle against the Lord and his truth,--in which through temporary success they eventually are the sad losers.

METHODISM AND HIGHER CRITICISM.

It was expected that the General M.E. Conference would be asked to take some stand for or against "higher criticism;" but so far we have seen no mention of it. The expectation was based upon the protest made by a few students against "Higher Criticism," Evolution, etc., being taught at the M.E. Boston Theological Seminary. The students resigned, intending to go to other M.E. colleges presumed to be sound on the Scriptures; but to their surprise they found a solid denominational front against them, which conspired so successfully that they were refused admittance to any. This means that infidelity to the Bible, under the name of "higher criticism," is being impressed upon every M.E. minister now issuing from these seminaries. And it means that the greatest power of Methodism, its ministry, scattered all over the land, is to be exerted to the gradual undermining of the faith of Methodists. And, "like priest like people," it means that Methodism will soon be fighting God's Word stealthily, covertly, from the inside--inside

R2647 : page 181

the house of its professed friends. However, this will only awaken some of the Lord's true saints in that house and show them that it is high time for them

to come out from Babylon--and from its confusion of false doctrines.

Zion's Herald publishes the results of an investigation respecting the number of "conversions" made by two hundred M.E. ministers, educated in the Boston Seminary since Higher Criticism and Evolution began to be taught there fifteen years ago. The results are reported with great satisfaction as giving evidence that Methodism is prospering exceedingly under the diet which repudiates the doctrine of the ransom and makes void the Word of God. These two hundred ministers report 6,023 "conversions" during the six months preceding March 1, 1900. The argument drawn from this is that M.E. prosperity lies in that direction, and that the sooner the old fogy believers in the Bible and the Cross wake up and abandon these the more rapidly will Methodism prosper. Hence it was taken as beyond question that the General Conference would certainly not raise its voice to interrupt successful procedure.

But to what were these 6,023 persons "converted"? To Methodism! Possibly a very few of them may have been converted to the Lord. Yet when one remembers that nearly all such so-called converts are children of from eight to fifteen years it seems amusing to credit their "conversion" to either truth or error or to call them "conversions" at all.

Principle seems to be disappearing in respect to religious matters. Churchianity of all denominations seems to be getting to be a business governed by "rules of trade" and "laws of supply and demand." What do the people want? What will draw the crowd, add to the church list and treasury? Evidently these are the queries which cause preachers most of their anxious thoughts rather than--What message does the Lord's Word give me for his people? What is the Truth and how can I best make it plain to the Lord's sheep?

But then again, how could we expect these wise "higher critics" to lay much emphasis on the words of our Lord and the apostles and prophets when they have concluded themselves to be wiser than they--claiming that our Lord and the apostles made numerous and grievous mistakes in quoting from Moses, David, Isaiah and other prophets, words which these modern wise men declare were never uttered by these prophets. The conclusion is that if the Lord and the apostles erred in these matters they were not infallibly inspired respecting others: and if they, the "higher critics," could correct them on these points they could give them general instruction, and are surely more competent authorities themselves.

Alas for the poor sheep! How many may be expected to follow the pernicious ways of these false shepherds! None too extravagant is the prophetic declaration, "A thousand shall fall at thy side"--only

the sanctified in Christ Jesus, copies of God's dear Son, will be able to stand complete in him. These will be the "very elect," and it will not be possible for them to be deceived and ensnared; for God will give his messengers a charge [a message] for them [present truth] and thus these "feet" of the body of Christ shall be upheld that they stumble not.--Psa. 91:1,7,11,12.

EDUCATED WHITE SAVAGES.

That education is valuable no one will dispute, nor is it to be denied that it frequently puts a refined polish upon the actions and words of men and women who are therefore known as gentle-men and gentle-women. It is a mistake, however, to confound this kind of surface polishing with the "begetting of the spirit," "a new heart." The one is a gilding of the surface manners, the other a transformation of the entire being affecting the sentiment as well as the conduct.

As a painful lesson on this subject, proving that fine education may leave men still savage at heart and only needing opportunity to develop it, we quote below an article from the Literary Digest. It relates specially to college bred men of two nations, both of which combine religious and secular education--Protestant Germany and Roman Catholic Belgium: the representatives of the former probably were three-fourths Protestants and one-fourth Catholics and of the

R2648 : page 181

latter all Catholics, corresponding to the populations of those countries. Both claim to be "Christian nations," kingdoms of God, and their coins declare that their rulers reign "by the grace of God." We are glad that we hope for a very much better Kingdom for which all the more we pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." The article follows:--

"THE WHITE MAN'S SAVAGERY IN AFRICA.

"While it is customary to speak of the African natives as 'savages,' and to deplore the cruelty of the Sultan of Turkey, who permits the slave trade to flourish between his dominions and the east coast of Africa, late revelations prove that men of more civilized nationalities can be quite as cruel. The Brussels Petit Bleu relates the following:

"The rise of the Bundja tribes against the Kongo authorities was caused by Belgian tyranny. Hundreds of men died with Lothaire and other Kongo agents in

defense of the cruel practices there. The agent Moray says: 'The rebellion of the Mongalla region is due solely to the cruelty with which the natives are treated. Rubber is the booty of the white invader now. If, in

R2648 : page 182

a village of 100 male inhabitants able to work, only 50 appear with the required amount of rubber, soldiers are sent to kill the other fifty. The 'loyal' natives are used to fight against the 'disloyal,' and as all are man-eaters, it is easy to reward the loyalists by promises of feasts on the corpses of the slain.

"The following statement which appears in the continental papers speaks for itself.

"CONGO STATE, DISTRICT BENGALA: Before me, Agent of the Antwerp Trading Society, appeared at Mandika, the sergeants Massamboko and Mulanda, and the privates Mutuana and Pongo, all of the Station of Mandika, who swore as follows:

"'White Man! We have returned from the war. We marched thirty hours' distance with the white man Imela (Van Eyken). He ordered us to enter the villages, to see if the inhabitants had gathered enough rubber. If they had not, we were to kill them. In one village we told him we had fulfilled his orders. He told us we had not done enough. He told us to cut up the men, placing the pieces on poles; the bodies of the women and children we were to put in a big scaffold in the shape of a cross. Returning through N'Dobe we found all the natives treated like that. We swear that this is true. Follow marks and agent's name: Moray.'

"According to other reports hundreds of natives have had their hands chopped off because they did not furnish the required quantity of rubber. Similar cruelties are reported from the French Sudan. Several high officials formerly in the German employ have also been punished as offenders of this kind. The Dutch papers remark that the French, English and Spaniards have a great advantage in the patriotic discipline of their newspapers, for while the Dutch and German papers will report an outrage of their countrymen immediately, Frenchmen and Englishmen will exercise patriotic prudence."

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R2648 : page 182

"KEEP YOURSELVES IN THE LOVE OF GOD."

--JUDE 21.--

WE CANNOT KEEP ourselves in this love unless we have gotten into it. And that all

men do not possess it, or are not in this condition of heart, is not only manifested to our senses through the experiences of life, but testified to by our Lord Jesus, who said to some of the holiness people of his day, "I know that ye have not the love of God in you."-- John 5:42.

We are to distinguish then between natural love and the love of God. All mankind has some share at least of natural love--self-love, love for family, love of friends. Our Lord, speaking of this kind of love, implies that it is not the love of God, saying, "If ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also do even the same." (Luke 6:32.) The love of God, therefore, is a different kind of love to that which is common to the natural man, and we need to be directed into it, and to grow or develop in it, as the Apostle testifies, saying, "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God." (2 Thess. 3:5.) We are directed into this love through the divine Word which brings to our attention the peculiarity of God's love as distinguished from that of the natural fallen man. While love in the natural man is more or less selfish, even in our very best exercise of it, on behalf of friends, God commendeth his love toward us as being of a superior kind, in that while we were yet sinners, aliens, strangers, enemies through wicked works, under his gracious, loving plan Christ died for us. This kind of unmerited, sacrificing love is wholly different from anything that is known to fallen humanity. As our Lord Jesus said, the greatest love amongst men would be that a man should lay down his life for his friends, but to lay down his life for his enemies is certainly a much higher type of love,--unselfish, gracious, heavenly.--John 15:13; Rom. 5:7.

The first blessing that comes to us, as the eyes of our understanding open and we come to some knowledge of the divine character and love, is that we perceive or discern or come to realize this higher type of love--the love of God. As the Apostle says, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he [Christ] laid down his life for us." "Herein was manifested the love of God toward us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him."--1 John 3:16; 4:9.

It is after we have thus perceived the love of God that it begins to operate upon us, if we are in a favorable condition--if our hearts are good ground, prepared under divine providence for this knowledge. Of such the Apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us"--draws us, awakens a reciprocating love in our hearts, so that in turn we love God. Not that we first loved God, but that his love attracted and developed ours. (1 John 4:19.) The effect of this love upon the good-ground heart is that very shortly it decides that it could do nothing less than love similarly in return, and thus be willing to lay down life

itself in God's service. It esteems that this would be but a reasonable service, a reasonable recompense for divine favors.

The Apostle Paul sums up this transformation from selfishness to the love of God in a few words, saying, "We ourselves also were at one time foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another; but when the goodness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared he saved us [delivered

R2648 : page 183

us from this evil condition of heart], not on account of works of righteousness which we had done, but according to his own mercy, he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior."--Titus 3:3-6.--See Diaglott.

This newness of spirit, this new mind, this mind in accord with the love of God, the Apostle assures us is not received except by those who receive the holy spirit. Those who merely take the step of justification may to some extent experience a reformation of life, so that instead of living an openly evil course they will seek to live at least moral lives. But none can expect to receive the begetting of the holy spirit of love, and thus to become possessed of "the love of God," a self-sacrificing love, unless he takes the step of consecration to the Lord, which brings him into the condition in which he may indeed have the holy spirit, the spirit of divine love, shed abroad in his heart. Let none then hope to obtain the love of God in any other way than the way which God has provided. Undoubtedly in the Millennial age it will be made possible for the natural man to come into "the love of God" through a process of restitution; as he shall more and more attain to the perfection of human nature in that time he may to that extent more and more become possessed of the love of God until, when finally perfected, he may possess this love of God in full measure,--because humanity, in its perfect condition, is a fleshly image of the invisible God. But now, while we still have these mortal bodies that are imperfect, and while restitution has not commenced, there is only the one way of attaining the love of God --by obedience to the call of this age, to present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through Jesus our Lord.

The new creature is to grow and to be more and more filled with the holy spirit--more and more filled with the love of God; hence we may expect that there will be differences of attainment in this matter, and we should know what to look for as evidences of our growth in grace and of our attainment of this love of God. The Apostle John declares, "This is [proof of

our possession of] the love of God, that we keep his commandments, and do not find them grievous." (1 John 5:3.) He who keeps the Lord's commandments, but who finds them grievous, has thus an evidence that he is not in heart-harmony with them, that he has not made a full consecration of himself to the Lord--the obedience of such an one would be no proof whatever of the possession of "the love of God." But whoever of the Lord's people is so in harmony with him that they delight to do his will, have in this an evidence that the love of God is dwelling in them

R2649 : page 183

richly and abounding. This is the same thought which the Apostle again expresses, saying, "Whosoever keepeth his word [loves the word of God, and takes pleasure not in turning, twisting and endeavoring to avoid the force of that Word, but who keepeth or cherisheth it, loveth it, and seeketh to conform thereto] in him verily is the love of God perfected."--1 John 2:5.

This reminds us of our dear Redeemer, in whom verily the love of the Father was perfected, and who is represented by the Prophet as saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart." (Psalm 40:8.) And our Lord marked out the same spirit, as being essential to those who would be his disciples, saying, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." (John 15:10.) There is no suggestion in any of these or in other Scriptures that mere outward formalistic obedience and piety count anything with the Lord. The Lord "seeketh such to worship him as worship him in spirit and in truth"--such as have the spirit of righteousness, love for righteousness, love for truth, love for all the qualities of the divine character, and a desire to conform thereto in thought, word and deed.

Nor are we to make the mistake that some have made, of supposing that the commandments referred to by our Lord are the Ten Commandments upon which hung the covenant which God made with the Jews. We are not Jews, and hence have nothing whatever to do with their covenant, given through Moses, its mediator, at Sinai, nor with the Law upon which it was based. We are Christians, and have to do with a better covenant, sealed with the precious blood of Christ our Mediator, and based upon a still higher law than the Decalogue--a law which instead of saying, "Thou shalt not" do this, "Thou shalt not" do that, is positive, and declares what we shall do, saying, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is a higher law, of which our Law-giver, Jesus, said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye

love," and of which the Apostle said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The Apostle John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love."--1 John 4:8,16.

Altho the first evidence of the possession of "the love of God" is a love for God, nevertheless the Scriptures distinctly point out to us that an additional requirement is specified, viz., love for the brethren--for those who have the spirit of God, especially, but in a general way at least a sympathetic love for all mankind. Thus the Apostle says, "If we love one another, [it is an evidence that] God dwelleth in us, and [that]

R2649 : page 184

his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12.) The same Apostle emphasizes this same point, saying, "Whosoever hath this world's goods [interests, affairs], and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17.) The intimation is that such a lack of love and sympathy, and such a restraint of assistance from a brother in need, would imply that the love of God either did not at all dwell in such an one, or that it was but slightly developed--far from being perfected.

Nor does this love merely exercise itself toward the brethren in matters of temporal necessities; rather, it affects all the affairs of life, leading the one who enjoys it to "walk in love," "forbearing one another in love." (Eph. 5:2; 4:2.) And even were it necessary to speak an unpalatable truth, the spirit of the Lord, "the love of God," will dictate the speaking of the truth in love, which the Apostle assures us is essential to our growth in Christ.--Eph. 4:15.

Knowledge is valuable, but only incidentally; of itself the Apostle assures us knowledge would be inclined to puff us up, make us vain and boastful, and thus quite out of harmony with the spirit of God, the spirit of love, meekness, gentleness. Knowledge might make us merely tinkling cymbals giving out a sound, but possessing no real merit in the Lord's sight. But knowledge, when it serves its proper purpose, brings us to the appreciation of "the love [that is] of God" and to a realization of the wisdom of copying his character, that we should seek so far as possible to be like our Father which is in heaven, copies of his dear Son, our Lord. The Apostle brings this position clearly to our attention when he says, "That ye being rooted and grounded in love may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know [appreciate] the love of Christ... and be filled with all the fulness of God.--Eph. 3:17-19.

Undoubtedly love is the principal thing to be studied, to be appreciated, to be copied and practiced in our lives. We trust that a large proportion of the

WATCH TOWER readers have already become partakers of this "love of God," and that all such are seeking to have it perfected in them, and to be rooted and grounded in it. We have the Apostle's assurance that only those who take this standpoint can make permanent and thorough progress in grace and knowledge.

Those who have entered the school of Christ, and who refuse to progress in it toward perfection, may assuredly expect that sooner or later their knowledge of the divine plan will slip from them; while those who do make progress in this proper direction may expect that the lengths and breadths of the divine plan will continue opening before them, and that their growth in knowledge will keep pace with their growth in love.

Finally, in harmony with our text, let us remember that this is not a matter that God attends to, but a matter which requires our own attention. God has made all the provisions whereby we may know of his love, and may be constrained by it, and may be accepted into it, but it devolves upon us to keep ourselves in the love of God: and we can only thus keep ourselves in his love by seeking to practice in the daily affairs of life the principles of his love: permitting the love of God to constrain us daily to sacrifice ourselves in the Lord's service, for his honor and for the spread of his truth; permitting the love of the brethren to so fill our hearts that, as the Apostle expresses it, we may be glad to "lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16); permitting a sympathetic love for mankind in general, the "groaning creation," in all of its trials and difficulties, to exercise our hearts so that we shall more and more feel kindly and generously toward all with whom we have contact and to make us helpful to them as we have opportunity; permitting this love even to extend to the brute creation under our care, so that we will not be negligent of their interests; all this seems essential to our keeping ourselves in this love of God. Let us more and more practice, and thus become more and more perfected in this love, which is the spirit of our Father, the spirit of our Lord, and the spirit of all who are truly members of the body of Christ.

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R2649 : page 184

JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA.

MATT. 14:22-33.--JULY 1.

"Of a truth thou art the Son of God."

OUR LAST LESSON, respecting the feeding of above five thousand persons with five barley loaves and two small fish, and the twelve haversacks of

fragments gathered, and the illustration this afforded of divine ability to care for the Lord's people, and at the same time the propriety of frugality on their part, was followed that same night by another miracle and another lesson. After the multitudes had been fed, toward the close of the day, they evidently were loth to leave the company of one so able and willing to care for their necessities, and probably it was to expedite their dispersion that our Lord urged the apostles to start in their boat for Capernaum.

Our Lord, after dispersing the multitude, sought the solitude of the mountain in prayer. Tho he sometimes prayed with his disciples in their hearing, so that

R2649 : page 185

they recorded the words of his prayer, it is evident that he was not content with merely these opportunities, but frequently sought the Father alone, as he has counseled his disciples to do, saying, "Enter into thy closet [private apartment] and pray to thy Father in secret." (Matt. 6:6.) All Christians of experience have realized the value of such secret personal communion with the heavenly Father, nor are we surprised that our Lord Jesus felt the need of a similar communion. His knowledge of the Father, and his fellowship with him before the world was made, so far from satisfying him and rendering prayer unnecessary, rather stimulated his desire for further fellowship and communion, especially as he was alone in the world--even his beloved disciples, not having yet been begotten of the spirit (John 7:39), could not enter into fellowship with him in respect to spiritual things, nor appreciate the trials which came to him as a perfect man, in a way in which they do not come to fallen humanity. He needed such fellowship with the heavenly Father for the refreshment of his own zeal, for the keeping warm of his own love and devotion, which was the basis of his consecration and his daily sacrificing of himself as a man, even unto death.

There is no intimation given that our Lord spent much time at prayer, morning and evening, yet we may

R2650 : page 185

reasonably suppose that he never neglected to seek the Father's face; but these brief seasons of worship and prayer daily were evidently supplemented by occasions like the one mentioned in this lesson, in which our Lord spent, apparently, considerable of the night in prayer and communion with the Father. There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people. The duties of life, pressing upon us daily, are not to be neglected; each is to feel, as our Lord expressed it, "I must be about my Father's business," and this would imply, ordinarily, short prayers, which our Lord commended, saying,

"When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be ye not therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." (Matt. 6:7,8.) And the example of a prayer, given his disciples, is brief. Nevertheless, in proportion as we feel the importance of the great work in which, by the Lord's favor, we are privileged to be co-laborers with him, our hearts should be and will be drawn to seasons of spiritual communion;--not necessarily a prayer in the sense of making requests of the Father, for much of such seasons will doubtless be devoted to thanksgiving for the mercies and favors already experienced, and for the gracious promises upon which we base our faith for the future, and communion with the Lord, in the sense of pondering his will respecting us, and how we may most acceptably serve and please him.

While our Lord was thus holding communion with the Father, the apostles rowing the boat were having difficulty to make headway, a strong head-wind having arisen, which made the lake very rough, boisterous, billowy. John, who was one of those in the boat, tells us that they had only gotten about twenty-five or thirty furlongs (two and a half to three miles) from the shore, in the several hours they had been rowing. This was what is termed the fourth watch of the night, viz., between three and six o'clock in the morning. While thus rowing hard, worn and sleepy, they saw the figure of a man near them, walking on the water, and apparently intending to pass their boat. (Mark 6:48-50.) Some of them cried out in fear, thinking that they had seen a supernatural being, and that it foreboded some calamity, but it was Jesus who spoke to them, and set at rest their fears.

The boldness of Peter's faith was then most strikingly illustrated by his request that the Lord should bid him walk on the water; and having received the permission, his faith was so strong that he did walk for a few steps, until seemingly appalled by his own temerity and the boisterousness of the water, he began to sink, and cried to the Lord for help, which he received through touching the Lord's hand. If the miracle of the loaves attested the superhuman authority of our Lord, so likewise did this manifestation of his power attest the same; and if the former illustrated his power to protect his people from want and to supply all their necessities, this last manifested that divine power is unlimited and able to preserve his people in all the storms and difficulties and trials of life.

This is a good lesson for us to apply individually, realizing, as we all must, that our Lord has supernaturally fed us with spiritual food, and that during the darkness of the night-time which precedes the Millennial dawn and sunlight there will be storms and difficulties arising which would overwhelm us without the

Lord's aid. We are to remember that not only the natural winds and waves obey his power and command, but that all the storms and billows of trouble and persecution which may impede and weary us are amenable to his control. The more we are able to realize this, the more of joy and peace we will experience, because the stronger will be our faith in him who is able to succor us and who has promised eventually to do so, and that meantime all things shall be overruled for our highest welfare, if we abide in him.

But the boat and the twelve toiling rowers, and the storm and darkness of the night, all picture still more perfectly the experiences of the Lord's people as a whole--not the experiences of a sectarian church, but the experiences of the one true Church, of which the Lord is the Head, the "Church of the First-born, whose

R2650 : page 186

names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) This true Church has indeed had a stormy time since parting with her Lord who ascended to the Father. The darkness came down upon them--darkness of error and superstition; and the great Adversary, through the Antichrist and many less antichrists, has aroused all through this Gospel age a great storm against the Lord's faithful few. The difficulties of their position have caused them to bend every effort to make progress against such fearful opposition, of which one of the apostles declares, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood [merely], but against principalities, and against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits in high positions." (Eph. 6:12.) This battle against adverse influences has continued throughout the night-time of this Gospel age, and yet the Church has not reached the harbor nor has the storm abated.

As our Lord came to the disciples in the midst of the storm, in the fourth watch of the night (that is, in the early morning), so his second coming in the Millennial dawn is to the Church and to "help her," rescue her from her toil and weariness and peril, as the Prophet says, "The Lord shall help her early in the morning." (Psa. 46:5.) And as the manner of our Lord's coming to his disciples was different from that they had expected, so the manner of his second advent differs from what has been expected, and Peter would seem to represent a class living now, in the end of the age, who being fully convinced of the Lord's presence are privileged to walk to him by faith. But as Peter's faith was unequal to the occasion, except as the Lord came to his rescue, so all of the faithful now will need the Master's hand stretched to their relief, otherwise they would sink in discouragement, because of the lack of faith.

Is there not a good lesson here for all who have been faithfully laboring in self-control, and in the Lord's

service, to bring all their thoughts and words and doings into full accord with the will of God in Christ, and who experience from the world and the flesh and the Adversary serious opposition as the Lord's people? The lesson here, in harmony with its presentations elsewhere in the Scriptures, is that little progress can be made by the Lord's people until the Master himself shall join them; and that then their blessedness and privileges will be proportioned to the measure of their faith. How strongly this speaks to us, then, of continued faithfulness and of growth in faith, not in ourselves but in the Lord, and of his ultimate deliverance of all who put their trust in him.

In John's account we learn that as soon as the Lord and Peter got into the boat, immediately the wind and storm ceased and the ship was at the harbor. So it will be with the Lord's people, the "little flock," so soon as their faith has been fully tested at the Lord's second presence, he will join their number, and immediately the trials and storms, difficulties and oppositions will be at an end, and the desired haven of heavenly condition will have been reached, the Kingdom will have come. Courage, then, dear brother-mariners on the sea of experience, seeking to make your calling and election sure! Let us note carefully the Master's words to Peter as especially applicable to ourselves, viz., that all that will hinder us from walking out to meet the Lord is lack of faith. "O thou of little faith: wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Let us learn to trust the Lord, not only in the matters which pertain to his Church and all of its interests and affairs, but also in all of the matters and interests of ourselves and families. The lessons will be profitable to us, and prepare us for larger measures of divine favor, and for the joys of the Kingdom. And all this faith is based upon a clear realization of our Golden Text, viz., that our Lord Jesus is truly the Son of God. If the Son of God, he is true, and if he is true then all the exceeding great and precious promises which he left for us may be relied upon, built upon, anchored into; and such reliance in them will give us the faith requisite for the overcoming of all the difficulties and obstacles of life, that we may come off more than conquerors through him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood.

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R2651 : page 186

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."

--JOHN 6:22-40.--JULY 8.--

SOME OF THE MULTITUDE who dined on the five loaves and two fish were evidently very

deeply impressed with the miracle, and inspired with great respect for Jesus. A number of them (we cannot suppose very many) concluded that they would follow this great Teacher, possessed of such wonderful powers, feeling assured that becoming his disciples would at least safeguard them from want; and this, to a people of their kind and under those conditions, was evidently quite an inducement. However, when they found the Lord on the other side the lake, at Capernaum, and expressed to him their interest, and how it had led them to follow him, he told them plainly that theirs was a selfish or mercenary interest, and not the kind that he desired to cultivate, namely, an interest in the truth.

Taking advantage of the situation, our Lord gave, not only to these but also to his disciples and to us through them, a most valuable lesson on the proper

R2651 : page 187

things to be sought after; pointing out that the chief aim and desire and object of life should not be the meat that perisheth, earthly food, earthly comforts, earthly pleasures, which at very most can be but transitory, but that on the contrary the chief aim of all should be to attain life eternal, beyond the present dying condition. He points out that God's provision for his creatures is not merely earthly food for the sustenance of our natural bodies for a little time, but much more important, a spiritual nourishment, of which, if we partake, we shall attain eternal life.

He would have them see that the miracle which he had performed, and whose blessing they had shared, was merely an illustration of a greater gift, of a more valuable bread of life, that he, the Son of God, was alone able to give them--and the same is true of us and of all. By way of assuring them that he was as able to provide the bread of eternal life as he had shown himself able to provide the natural food, he declared himself to be the Son of God; and that the heavenly Father had sealed him, marked him, granted him the evidences and proofs of sonship in the powers conferred upon him. The seal was the holy spirit, the holy power of God, which acting upon our Lord Jesus enabled him to turn the water into wine and to increase the broken barley loaves and two little fish so as to feed the multitude. These powers were the evidences or outward manifestations to men that God's holy spirit was with him, the mark or seal of his relationship to God as an honored representative, a Son. On the strength of these evidences, the witnesses having the right condition of heart should have been prepared to heed our Lord's testimony, as a message from the Father.

The discourse was not without its effect: the hearers felt the force of the suggestion that the important food to be sought after was that which would give the life eternal, and as Jews they had before their minds the

further thought that God had made a covenant of works with their nation, with promises of eternal life attached thereto--the Mosaic Law Covenant. Hence their inquiry, What works shall we do that would be pleasing to God, and that thereby we might have eternal life? Give us whatever message you have that will help us in this matter.

Our Lord's answer may at first seem to us a peculiar one, in that he declares that to believe on him would be a "work"--the work most acceptable before God--the only work that could possibly make them acceptable to God. What is meant by this we will consider further along. His hearers evidently understood exactly what he meant, viz., that the thing most pleasing in God's sight would be that they should acknowledge him as the Son of God, the Messiah, coming into the world according to divine promise, to establish the Kingdom of God, and to begin the blessing of all the families of the earth. But now they asked a sign of his Messiahship, instead of realizing that they had already seen the sign or signet or seal of God upon the Lord Jesus, as manifested not only in his spirit of love, kindness, generosity, goodness, purity and truth, as well as in his doctrines, but additionally that they had seen outward manifestations and evidences of the divine power upon him, as shown, for instance, in the miracle of the day before. This was because they were hard-hearted, as the Scriptures elsewhere express the matter (Mark 3:5; John 12:40), that is to say, they were in a faithless attitude, not readily impressionable, but rather inclined to be skeptical: hence these signs or evidences of the seal of God upon Jesus were not sufficient for them.

We can readily see, however, that if sign upon sign had been given, the same "evil heart of unbelief" could reject ten signs as well as it could reject one. Just so it was in the case of Pharaoh: he was really more impressed with the first sign given by Moses than by the succeeding ones, each of which being received in an improper spirit tended to make his heart the harder, until the last. Just so it is with some today in respect to the Lord's promises. They incline to ask, Did the Apostle say this, that is contrary to my prejudices? And if convinced of the fact they would want to know whether any other apostle had said it, and thirdly, whether the Lord himself had said it, and fourthly, whether any of the prophets had said it,--seeking not so much to believe as for an excuse for disbelieving. Such persons usually, if they had all of these evidences, would be no more convinced by the multiplicity of testimony. On the contrary, he who really believes the Bible to be God's Word believes its every authentic testimony, whether by the Lord or an apostle or prophet, and whether stated once or many times reiterated.

The workings of skepticism in the minds of our Lord's auditors is evidenced by their statement. In

substance they said, "We cannot acknowledge that your miracle was so great or so wonderful as necessarily to imply that you are the Son of God, for we remember that Moses exercised a power something of this kind; in fact, he provided bread enough for our forefathers, the whole nation of Israel, for quite a long time in the wilderness, and that without any loaves and fish to begin with,--we refer to the manna."

Our Lord's response is that the manna was not produced by Moses, that he had nothing whatever to do with sending it; that it came directly as a provision of the heavenly Father, Moses not being even an agent in the matter. And then our Lord pointed out that the manna given in the wilderness was typical of the true Manna, the true bread of eternal life--himself and the truth he

R2651 : page 188

proclaimed--which he now desired them to receive at his hands.

They did not yet get the thought that he referred to himself, but rather were getting a crude and natural thought, that as God had given manna from heaven that sustained their fathers in the wilderness, so now this great Teacher, Jesus, was telling them of a still higher class of manna, the partaking of which would yield eternal life, and hence they exclaimed, "Lord, evermore give us this bread!" Our Lord then explained the figure or parable, declaring, in the language of our Golden Text, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

It is evident that in the words "cometh to me" our Lord did not mean to approach him as his hearers had done, coming across the lake. The expression "cometh to me" must be understood, therefore, as coming to the Lord with hunger and thirst for righteousness, with a desire for the life eternal, and hence for the bread of life by which it might be attained. All who would thus come to Jesus, in this proper attitude of heart, would find him to be indeed a satisfying portion. Likewise the expression, "He that believeth on me shall never thirst," must be understood to mean more than merely believing that such a person lived, for it is written that "devils also believe and tremble:" to "believe," therefore, must be understood to signify accepting the Lord, not merely intellectually, but with the heart, as it is written, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness" [to a change of heart which aspires to righteousness]. He who thus believes in the Lord from the heart, recognizing him as the Son of God, through whom are to be fulfilled all the exceeding great and precious promises of the divine Word, receives such a refreshment, such a slaking of thirst, such a satisfaction, as will never end so long as he maintains this faith. (Rom. 10:10.) Such find the divine provision

in Christ so abundant that they could not ask for more, and exclaim,--"It satisfies my longings, as nothing else could do."

And now we see the meaning of our Lord's words of verse 29, "This is the work of God [the work which God would be pleased with], that we believe on him whom he hath sent." There is a work connected with believing;--not a work with our hands, but a work with our heads and our hearts: and no work that we could do with our hands would be as acceptable in the Lord's sight as this. Indeed, when we realize that in our fallen and imperfect condition it is impossible for us to do anything perfectly, when we remember also that God is perfect, that all his work is perfect, and that he cannot therefore be in sympathy with imperfection, or any degree of sin, we can readily see that the very best works we could offer him aside from faith would be unacceptable.

But God has proposed to do a great work for us-- he has done that great work in that he has provided the Redeemer, through whom the ransom-price has been paid for our race: and now God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Hence, while no work that we can do could be accepted of the Lord so long as we are under condemnation, yet he can, by his own provision, accept our faith in Christ,

R2652 : page 188

and justify us through that faith: this, our first work possible, is therefore what God calls for. He will accept no other work, except it is preceded by this one and based upon this one. O that all could realize the importance of faith in the Lord's sight! "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and the more faith we exercise the more do we please him: not credulity, not a belief of something which God has not said; not a belief in our own imaginings or those of other men; but a belief in what God has said, and a firm, confident trust therein: this is acceptable with God, and becomes to all who exercise it the ground or base of justification, that "being justified by faith we might have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."--Rom. 5:1.

The Lord did not here discuss the further step to the high calling of this Gospel age; hence we will not discuss it now. He is dealing merely with our first necessary step in approaching God,--justification. The thing necessary, in order to justification, is the acceptance of Christ as the Bread of Life--which must be preceded by the realization that we have no life in ourselves, death having passed upon all of our race through father Adam's transgression; and that the Lord Jesus was made flesh in order that he might meet the penalty that was upon father Adam, and thus upon the race; and that now, therefore, whoever accepts this free grace of God in Christ, whoever appropriates to himself the

merit of Christ's sacrifice, is thereby eating, partaking of the great benefits and blessings provided by God in the Anointed one, who gave his life for the life of the world, a ransom price. Whoever mentally accepts this fact, and feeds upon it in his heart, is represented as feeding upon the flesh of the Son of Man--partaking of the human rights, privileges and blessings of restitution [or in this age justification] provided in him.

Our Lord pointed out to his hearers the fact that their slowness to receive him, and the slowness of the people of Israel in general, was not an evidence that he was not the Messiah, but rather was an evidence that they were not in a condition to receive the Messiah. And further, that it was not God's purpose that he should attract the whole Jewish people, but merely that he should draw to himself, by the gracious words which should proceed out of his mouth, and by the miracles

R2652 : page 189

or evidences of power of the Lord in him, such as the Father had "given" him--such as were pleasing to the Father, such as were ready to receive a further blessing through this channel which the Father had provided. And he assured them that while not expecting all to be thus drawn to him, nevertheless all who would be drawn thus of the Father he would most gladly welcome, because he was not in the world on a mission of his own merely, but to fulfil the Father's purposes,--with which he was in full harmony.

In the two verses following, our Lord seems to distinguish between the two classes of saved ones, verse 39 referring to the elect class of this Gospel age, and verse 40 to the general blessing upon mankind to follow this age, during the Millennium,--and to the opportunity that will then be afforded to every creature to be blessed with this great gift of eternal life, purchased by our Lord at such high cost as his own life.

The elect are frequently, as here, spoken of as specially given to Jesus, while the whole of mankind are referred to as his because bought with his own precious blood. The Father draws to the Son during this age a special class, and gives such a class to him to be companions, joint-heirs in his Millennial Kingdom--these are sometimes called his "brethren," as when it is said that Jesus was "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29); and again, they are designated his bride and joint-heir, in contradistinction to the saved of the world of mankind, who will be recognized as the children of Christ, and of whom he will be the "Everlasting Father."--Rev. 21:9; 22:17; Rom. 8:17; Isa. 9:6.

Our Lord declares it to be the Father's will that all whom he has "given" him shall be saved, shall be raised up--not one of this class shall be lost. Who, then, are these thus sure of salvation? We answer that the Apostle Paul adds a word of explanation along this

line, informing us of the class whom the Father has elected and predestinated: they are such as receive the Lord Jesus now by faith, and who hearing the invitation of this Gospel age, the "high calling," are so impressed with it that they lay aside every weight and run with patience the race set before them in the gospel;-- and so doing, under divine providence and direction they are molded and fashioned as respects their characters so that they become "copies of God's dear Son."
--Rom. 8:29.--Diaglott.

The heavenly Father fixed the marks and conditions of his predestination of this class, not so much in respect to all who shall hear the good tidings (altho he has to do with sending the message); not so much in respect to who all shall be drawn by the message of his grace in Christ (tho he has to do with the drawing, and in the present time is drawing only a particular class); not so much with reference to the call that goes forth to all who accept Jesus, inviting them to run the race of self-sacrifice in his footsteps (tho he is interested in this call, and supervises the affairs of those who accept this call, causing that all things shall work together for their good); but especially he has predestinated in respect to the number who shall constitute the Bride of Christ, and to the character of all who shall be in that company: that it shall be composed of such and such only as shall during this Gospel age, while in the school of Christ, learn thoroughly the lessons of faith and obedience, developing characters of like pattern to that so gloriously manifested in Jesus, whom the Father sent forth to be not only our Redeemer, but also our Pattern.

It is the Father's will that every one who thus obeys the leadings of divine providence, and attains to the likeness of the Lord Jesus in his heart, his will, his intention (not perfection of the flesh), shall everyone of them be saved in this great salvation, and be sharers with Jesus in the "first resurrection," and in the glory, honor and immortality to which it leads. Not one of these shall be lost; every one of them shall be raised up to that glorious station at the appointed time--"the last day," the seventh of the great week of thousand-year days,--the Millennial day. And as the Prophet declares, it will be early in that day, for "God shall help her [Zion] and that right early [in the morning]."

The 40th verse does not refer to those whom the Father specially gives to the Son to be companions and joint-heirs in the Kingdom, and whom he draws through his providences during this age: it refers to the remainder of mankind whose ransom price our Lord Jesus has paid, and who, according to the Father's program, our Lord Jesus himself is to draw unto himself, during the Millennial age; as it is written, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." But even as the Father's drawing is not a compulsory drawing, so likewise the drawing of the Son will not be compulsory. But since we may assume that the majority of those who now resist

the Father's drawing do so because of blindness, ignorance, etc., because the prince of this world is now reigning and deceiving, we may reasonably suppose that when our dear Redeemer's Millennial Kingdom shall have been established, and when Satan, the prince of this world, has been "bound" (Rev. 20:2), and when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth,-- then the drawing influence upon the world of mankind exerted by the Redeemer himself and by the Church, his body, associated with him in glory, will be a drawing which will yield much larger results, so that many will yield to it and come to the Lord truly and heartily, and receive of the blessings which God has provided in him;--all except those who wilfully love sin and refuse the terms of the Kingdom, faith and obedience.

Of this class our Lord declares (verse 40), that it is

R2652 : page 190

his Father's will that all such shall see the Son (their blinded eyes being opened in that Millennial day, as the Lord has promised through the prophets.--Zech. 12:10.) Their eyes of understanding being then opened, they will be able to appreciate, as they cannot now appreciate, the Lord and the covenant of eternal life which he offers to all who obey him. They will not thus see him, however, until the god of this world, who now blinds the eyes of their understanding, shall be bound for the thousand years, and his baneful influence offset with the light of the knowledge of God which will then shine out to the world from the great Sun of Righteousness, --the Lord and the glorified Church, his body.

It is God's will that all who shall accept Christ then shall have everlasting life too; and that they shall be raised up by the Lord Jesus to perfection also,--tho theirs will be an earthly, and not like the others a heavenly, perfection; and their raising up will also be "at the last day," but not at its beginning as with the "elect" of the "first resurrection." The overcomers of this Gospel age, the body of Christ, will be perfected in his likeness in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and then subsequently, throughout that age, the work of raising up the world of mankind out of sin and depravity and degradation will go gradually and grandly forward, until by the close of the Millennial age all the willing and obedient shall have eaten to their fill of the bread from heaven and shall be fully raised up, out of sin and death, to life eternal--in the image and likeness of God as was Adam before sin, but with characters perfected and tested in righteousness by their Millennial experiences.

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R2653 : page 190

"LORD, HELP ME!"--MATT. 15:25.

--MARK 7:24-30.--JULY 15.--

AFTER OUR LORD'S discourse on the bread from heaven (we know not how long after) he and his disciples went westward to the border of Phoenicia. There, entering into a house with the evident design of secluding himself from general notice, and possibly to gain quiet and rest, the Lord was quickly discovered by a Syro-Phoenician mother, whose daughter was possessed of a demon, and who availed herself of this opportunity to importune the Lord for her daughter's deliverance. The fame of Jesus and his miracles, in the healing of the sick, etc., had evidently extended throughout that region, yet it must also have been known that Jesus was a Jew, and that his miracles and favors were confined to his own race.

We can readily see that there were numerous obstacles to the woman's faith, and the strength of faith which surmounted them compels admiration.

(1) She was a foreigner, a heathen, for whom God had manifested no favors, "without God and having no hope in the world." (Eph. 2:12.) Hence, coming to Jesus she not only had to overcome the prejudices of her own heathen ideas and instruction from infancy, but had also to overcome everything akin to pride and the fear of being despised and rejected as one unworthy of the favor she sought.

(2) As a poor and uneducated woman she would naturally have great diffidence in approaching a learned man, especially one so notable as this great Prophet of Israel, of whom no doubt she had heard much.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, her love for her daughter, and her confidence in Jesus, were so great that she sought him out; and after the manner of that time and place, in a loud voice and probably with weeping, "cried" to the Lord for compassion and assistance, in her trouble, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David: my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She met with a rebuff at the very start, for according to Matthew's account (15:23) our Lord ignored her entirely, not answering her a word. To many this would have been sufficient to have discouraged faith, and sent them away weeping; but not so with this woman: she kept up her cries and importunities. She was confident that the Lord had the power to assist her, and had not yet refused to do so, and hence her faith continued to cling.

The disciples seem to have been annoyed with her cries, which probably kept up for some time, and Jesus and the disciples had evidently left the house in which they were lodging and proceeded on their journey, the woman still following and crying out for assistance. The disciples came and besought him, saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered and

said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Our Lord's answer to the disciples would seem to indicate that the meaning of the apostles' words was that he should grant her request and send her away; and his answer shows why he delayed so doing. The blessings he had to give were for God's covenanted people, the typical seed of Abraham, and this woman was not of that nation to which God had granted much favor every way; she was of a heathen nation, with whom God had not entered into any covenant relationship whatever, and for whom as yet he had done nothing. Our Lord explained this to the disciples, and in the hearing of the woman, not merely for their benefit and hers, but also, we may presume, for our admonition.

Altho our Lord would seem to have been resisting

R2653 : page 191

the woman and unwilling to grant her favor, we consider it not unreasonable to suppose that he thoroughly understood the case from the beginning, and that he adopted the method he did to draw out her faith, preparatory to the giving of the blessing desired.

And herein we have a lesson respecting persistency in entreating the Lord for relief from the power of the devil, however exercised, whether in our friends or in ourselves. As the woman knew that the case was a hopeless one as respected relief from any other quarter, so we know to hope for relief from the Adversary only through the Lord's interposition. Like this woman, therefore, our faith should be equal to the emergency, and should persistently hold on to the Lord for the blessing which, with a greater knowledge than she, we may be sure he will be pleased to grant in his own due time and way. "Shall not the Lord avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, tho he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7.) If in our case the Lord shall not see best to grant a prompt response to our prayer, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One" (Matt. 6:13), we may be sure that it is not from lack of interest in our welfare, for has he not manifested his interest by redeeming us, and by calling us to joint-heirship in the heavenly Kingdom? If then the response shall not come in the way or at the time we had inclined to hope, let faith still hold her anchorage in the divine goodness and power, and in the exceeding great and precious promises, and let us remember that according to these the time, at very farthest, will not be long, until the Millennial Kingdom, when the great Adversary shall be bound, and deliverance full and complete from his power shall be granted, not only to ourselves and those immediately dependent, but also to all of the "groaning creation" now under his baneful influence.

The hearing of the reason why she had been ignored,

so far from discouraging the poor woman, seemingly convinced her the more that Jesus had the power to help her, and, quite probably in front of him, she prostrated herself at his feet, after the custom of the East, so expressive of humility, dependence and entreaty, accompanying this with the plea, "Lord, help me!" (Matt. 15:23-25.)

When finally our Lord addressed the poor woman prostrate at his feet, importuning his assistance, his words were again a rebuff, calculated to dishearten one of little faith, but correspondingly to strengthen a great faith. His answer to her was not one of disdain and contempt, nor of indifference to her woe; for indeed we well know that our dear Lord had no such feelings toward any. It implied interest and sympathy, but explained to her a reason why she was not a proper subject, namely, that as the children of a household would be provided for first, before the dogs, so it was proper that the Lord's covenant people, the Jews, should be ministered unto, healed, taught and blessed, first,-- before these blessings should in any manner or degree be extended to the Gentiles, who in comparison were as the dogs of the household. And, by the way, we should notice here that altho dogs amongst the Jews were spoken of frequently with great disrespect, as for instance, in Rev. 29:15, "Without are dogs," etc., referring to the wild dogs which roamed the country and were pests, yet the Jews were in the habit of having house dogs which were esteemed and petted by the family, and the word that is here used by our Lord, and also by the woman, signifies these house dogs or little dogs, pet dogs, and not the objectionable kind.

The woman triumphed over the obstacle of the Lord's argument, and with wonderful keenness and humility she acknowledged that she was not one of the children who had a right to the Father's blessing, but was merely one of the dogs under the table, desiring a stray crumb of divine favor. Then our Lord, appreciating such great faith and earnestness, said, "For this saying go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter," and that the woman's faith was of the proper kind was demonstrated by the fact that she believed the Lord's word, ceased her importunings, and went to her home, to find the matter even as Jesus had said.

How different is our case in many respects from that of this poor woman! So far from resisting us the Lord has graciously called us to a knowledge of himself and of his gracious plan, and we who were once aliens and strangers and foreigners have not only been redeemed with the precious blood, but upon making a covenant with the Lord have been adopted into his family, have been privileged to surround his table, and he has set before us as "meat in due season," in great abundance, all the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. We need not to importune for these; they are ours for the taking. We simply need by faith to accept them and to use them. And if the poor woman

of this narrative could exercise such faith in the Lord, and could get so great a blessing, it evidences to our

R2654 : page 191

minds what is abundantly stated elsewhere in Scripture, that nothing that we have or could offer to the Lord would be more acceptable in his sight than faith--faith in him, in his power, in his love and in his promises. Whoever will not exercise faith in these things cannot grow in knowledge of the Lord, cannot make development, cannot be overcomers, gaining the desired victory, for, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," and "Without faith it is impossible to please God."--1 John 5:4; Heb. 11:6.

There is little that any of us possess that we could reasonably hope would be acceptable to God outside those mercies which he has bestowed upon us through Christ--faith, trust in God, is one of those heart-qualities which we can bring to the Lord, that he will not despise; honesty of heart is another; humility, realizing our utter dependence upon him, and confessing it, is another. These various sentiments were expressed by the woman in the narrative, by her actions and by her words, and as these brought to her divine favor, even before it was due to come to the Gentiles, much more should our humility, faith and candor prevail and make us endeavor to do that which is pleasing to God, who has already accepted us in the Beloved, and with whom he is well-pleased in proportion to the measure of our accepting through the Lord all the exceeding riches of his grace, which he has promised to them that love, reverence, trust and obey him.

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page 192

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