

page 113

SEMI-MONTHLY.
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CONTENTS.

Patience as an Element of Character.....115
 The Hour of Temptation Upon the
 Whole World.....117
 Trials of the Passover Season.....120
 Poem: "So As By Fire"120
 "He that Liveth and was Dead".....121
 "He Poured Out His Soul Unto
 Death"121
 "The First-Fruits of Them That
 Slept".....124
 "Behold, I am Alive Forever More"125
 Bishop Ryle's Millennial Creed.....128

page 114

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REMEMBER the memorial of "Christ our Passover" on its
anniversary, the night of April 2nd. "As often [yearly] as ye
do this, do it in remembrance of me,"--"The Lamb of God
who taketh away the sin of the world."

Those who precede the supper and follow it by special
watching and prayer will surely be specially blessed.
ALTHO the mail-thief who has for three years past been

stealing letters at the Allegheny postoffice has been caught, we still advise that all remittances be sent us in the form of postal-notes or bank-drafts. To send money unregistered is to tempt men to steal.

THE EDITOR will attend a One-Day Convention at Wheeling, W. Va., on Sunday, March 24. Friends residing near W. will be cordially welcomed by the Wheeling Church; and are requested to introduce themselves by name and postoffice address to the Editor. The morning session will be held at W. C.T.U. Hall, 1229 Market st. The afternoon session will be publicly announced for Odd Fellows' Hall, cor. 12th and Chapline streets.

WE HAVE plenty of the Missionary Envelopes now. Post-paid 25 cents per hundred. \$2.00 per thousand.

MARRIED SISTERS will favor us, if when writing they always use the same initials. If one time they sign their own and another time their husbands' initials it is confusing.

REGARDING YOUR WELCOME LETTERS.

Friends writing to us either on doctrinal questions or business matters will please remember to make each letter complete in itself. Do not trust to our remembering the contents of previous letters; for where so many are involved this is impossible.

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R2790 : page 115

PATIENCE AS AN ELEMENT OF CHARACTER.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience I will also keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try them that dwell upon the earth."--Rev. 3:10.

WE WILL not here discuss this verse from the standpoint of its application to the Philadelphia epoch of the Church's history, but will content ourselves with examining the principles implied in its statement, believing, as we do, that the Lord's dealings with his Church throughout this Gospel age follow the same lines, are in harmony with the same principles. Whatever condition, therefore, would be acceptable and pleasing to the Lord as respected the Philadelphia epoch of the Church's history would be acceptable and pleasing to him in respect to ourselves and all others of his people during this age.

Special stress, we see, is laid upon patience-- "the word of my patience," or, the patience which my word inculcates. Examining the word critically we find that two quite distinct words in the Greek are translated by our English word patience in the New Testament; the one is makrothunia (Heb. 6:12; James 5:10; Acts 26:3): this is the word which in

a general way corresponds to the common thought of patience, as we speak of it connected with every-day affairs of our lives; it means merely long-suffering, and, indeed, makrothunia is generally so translated throughout the New Testament. (Rom. 2:4; 9:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Pet. 3:15,

R2791 : page 115

etc.) But this is not the word used in our text, nor the word generally translated patience throughout the New Testament, viz., hupomonee.

This word, hupomonee, has a much deeper and fuller significance than attaches to our English word patience. It signifies rather constancy,--the thought being an endurance of evil in a cheerful, willing, patient manner. It represents, therefore, an element of character, and not merely a temporary condition or restraint of feeling or action. For instance, a worldly man might have a great deal of patience in connection with the prosecution of his business;--he might be very attentive to his customers, very obliging, very painstaking, and show no dissatisfaction in connection with the inconsiderateness of his customers; and "patience," in its ordinary sense, might be ascribed to his conduct. But the word in our text rendered patience signifies such a development of heart and character as manifests itself in an endurance of wrong or affliction with contentment, without rebellion of will, with full acquiescence in the divine wisdom and love, which, while permitting present evils, has promised to overthrow them in God's due time. We believe it will be profitable for us to examine carefully this element of Christian character, of which our Lord speaks in such high commendation, that recognizing it clearly, we, as his followers, may attain to it more completely, and thus have his more abundant approval.

Since our text mentions this patient endurance as being the Lord's "word" or teaching, let us glance backward to the Gospel narrative, and note the Lord's use of the word in his teaching. Twice it is recorded as a part of his utterance. In Luke 8:15, in the parable of the sower, we read: "That [sown] on the good ground are they which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience [with cheerful endurance, constancy]." The thought here is that in order to be of the fruit-bearing class which the Lord will approve and accept to his Kingdom, it is necessary to do more than to receive the word of his testimony, even tho we receive it with joy--for that class in the parable is represented by the stony ground, which at first gave

R2791 : page 116

evidence of great fruitfulness and vigor, but which,

when the sun of persecution arose, withered, because of lack of depth of soil. That stony, shallow soil represents, the Lord explains, a class of hearers who rejoice greatly in the truth, but do not endure, such as cannot withstand persecution or opposition, but wither under it, become discouraged. Such cannot be of the Kingdom class, all of whom must be overcomers.

In this parable our Lord shows us that patient endurance, constancy, is the final test, following after the readiness of preparation to receive the seed; following after the seed has been received and has sprouted; following after love and hope and joy and faith have caused it to spring forth and to give fruitage. Patient endurance, then, is necessary, in order that the grain may be developed and thoroughly ripened, and made fit for the garner. Ah! how important patient endurance seems to be, in the light of this our Lord's word--cheerful endurance; for we cannot suppose that he who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart would be pleased with his children, even if he saw them enduring much for his sake, if they endured in an impatient or dissatisfied or unhappy frame of mind. They would not, in that event, be copies of God's dear Son, our Lord, whose sentiment is expressed in the words, "I delight to do thy will, O God!" All of the Royal Priesthood are sacrificers, as was the Chief Priest, our Redeemer and example, who offered up himself: we, as the under priests, have also presented our bodies living sacrifices, and are to lay down our lives for the brethren--in the service of the truth. And God, who accepts these sacrifices through the merit of Christ, informs us that he appreciates or loves the cheerful giver, those who perform their sacrifices of a willing heart, cheerfully. And this thought, be it noted, is in the Greek word we are considering. It is cheerful endurance, patient endurance, that is commended.

The other instance in which our Lord used the word during his ministry is recorded in Luke 21:19. He had just been telling his followers what they must expect as the result of being his disciples during the present time, when sin abounds, and when Satan is the prince of this world--they must expect tribulation, opposition from various quarters; but he assures them that they would nevertheless be fully and completely under divine care and protection, even tho the persecutions would be permitted to reach and to affect them. Then follow the words, "In your patience [patient endurance, cheerful constancy] possess ye your souls."

Our faith and trust in the Lord and his gracious promises for the future life are to be so strong that they will more than counter-balance the oppositions of the world, of false brethren, and of Satan's blinded servants;--so much so that these persecutions will be recognized and rejoiced in as the agencies of divine

providence in chiseling, shaping and polishing us as the living stones for the glorious Temple which God is constructing. And viewing our trials from this standpoint we can indeed possess our souls, our lives, and enjoy them, even amidst tribulation, with cheerful endurance, constancy. Yea, we may realize that the soul, the real being, to which God has given the exceeding great and precious promises of the future, cannot be injured by the persecutions of the flesh, nor by anything that men can do to us, so long as we are faithful to the Lord, accepting the persecutions with cheerful constancy, as the ministrations permitted of his providence for our ultimate good.

THE NECESSITY FOR PATIENT ENDURANCE.

Here the question properly arises, Why is this so? In what sense is such endurance necessary? We answer that it is one of the conditions which God has attached to the call to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, and the wisdom of this is manifest when we consider the work to which we are called--the work of blessing all the families of the earth, as God's Millennial Kingdom, under and in joint-heirship with our Lord. That will be a great work, and it is eminently proper that the Lord should demand that those whom he would account worthy of it shall not only appreciate his goodness and his character, and prefer these to sin and iniquity, but that they should demonstrate their thorough loyalty to these principles to the extent of a joyful willingness to suffer on behalf of right, to endure patiently. A transitory endurance of one or two or three brief trials would not prove the person to have established character for righteousness; but a patient, cheerful endurance even unto death, would prove and demonstrate such a character.

We might illustrate this with the diamond. Suppose that we were able to make diamonds out of some plastic material, so that they would have the full diamond measure of brilliancy; and suppose that they became hard, but not so intensely hard as the diamond, would they have the value of the diamond? By no means. And so with the Christian; if we should suppose him possessed of every grace of character that could possibly belong to the sons of God except this one of firmness, of endurance, he would not be fit to be numbered amongst the Lord's jewels. Hence the Lord's demand is that the quality of firmness, cheerful endurance of whatever his providence may permit, shall be a characteristic of all those who will be fit for the Kingdom.

This importance of endurance in the Christian

character is fully borne out by the Apostle Paul's use of the word; for on more than one occasion he ranks it as above and beyond Love, which we have seen is the "mark" of character for which we are to run,-- the mark of the prize. For instance, in writing to Titus (2:2), enumerating the characteristics of the advanced Christian, the Apostle uses the following order: "Vigilant, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity [love], in patience [patient, cheerful endurance]." Tho we have all the other qualities, this final test of patient, cheerful endurance must be passed before we could be accepted of the Lord as members of the "very elect."

Again, in writing to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:10) respecting himself, the Apostle again puts this quality of patient endurance in the place beyond Love saying, "Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, love, patient endurance."

It may be asked, How can this quality rank higher than love, if love is the fulfilling of the Law, and the mark of the prize of our high calling? We reply, that patient endurance does not merely come in at the close of our race, but is requisite all the way along the race course. We need this cheerful endurance of the earliest trials in the Christian way, and as we speed along in our race for the mark the spirit of cheerful endurance should be growing stronger and stronger at every step of the journey. It is with us at the first quarter mark, and at the second quarter mark, and at the third quarter mark, and still with us at the fourth quarter mark, the mark of the prize, perfect love. And when we have reached this mark of the race in which we love not only our friends, but our enemies, it is required of us that we shall stand up to the mark faithfully, cheerfully, patiently enduring the tests which the Lord will even then see proper to let come upon us. Hence it is that the Apostle exhorts us, "Having done all, stand"--endure. Having reached the "mark," "Let patient endurance have her perfect work," or "perfect her work." Let patient endurance demonstrate, not only that you have the character, the qualifications of love, demanded in the race for the prize, but also that you have it as an element of character, deep-rooted, immutable, so that

R2792 : page 117

you can endure oppositions cheerfully.

Ah yes! we can see now a reason for the Lord's arrangement that we should have our trial as the Master had his, under an evil environment--that we might not only have the qualities of character, but have them rooted, grounded, established, and that all this should be demonstrated and proven by our cheerful

endurance of whatever divine providence shall see best to permit to befall us.

INSPIRED APPLICATIONS OF PATIENT-ENDURANCE.

Everything that will enable us to see the importance of this quality of patient, cheerful endurance will be helpful to us. Therefore let us notice some other instances in which this word is used in the New Testament. The Apostle Paul says, "But ye have need of patience [cheerful endurance, constancy] that after ye have done the will of God [reached the mark] ye might receive the promise." (Heb. 10:36.) Here, again, we see that it is not merely to do the will of God that is the test, but, that after having attained to that point, that mark of character in our hearts, in our wills (if only partially in the flesh) we should, by patient endurance, establish God's righteous will as the law of our hearts, the rule of life under all circumstances and conditions. Then, and not till then, will we be in the heart condition of fitness for the Kingdom. The Apostle James (1:3) says: "The trying of your faith worketh patience [patient endurance];" that is to say, if our faith stands the trial it will work this character of patient endurance; of course, on the other hand, if we do not attain to patient endurance, it will mean that our faith has not stood the test satisfactorily, that we are not fit for the Kingdom.

Thus we see clearly that a great mistake has been made amongst Christian people in general in supposing that religion is merely a thing that is to be gotten as an answer to prayer, or by going to a mourners' bench, or standing up for prayer, or in response to some human or divine appeal--as one would get a dollar and put it into his pocket. On the contrary, repentance of sin and acceptance of Christ, in faith unto justification, is only the beginning and not the end of the Christian way. The next step is consecration, and this also, is far from the end; it is merely starting in the school of Christ, having our names enrolled as those who desire to be pupils, and to be taught of God to cultivate the fruits and graces of the spirit. All these things are necessary, but much more is necessary; we must go on and on, not only to the attainment of the faith and the love, but also to the demonstration of character as expressed in his word, patient endurance.

The Apostle Paul exhorts, "Let us run with patience [cheerful constancy, patient endurance] the race set before us in the Gospel." (Heb. 12:1.) As already observed, the race must be run with this constancy if we would reach the "mark," and after reaching the mark the position can only be maintained by the grace of constancy, patient endurance, that having

done all, we may stand.

THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION ABOUT TO COME UPON
THE WHOLE WORLD.

We are not to understand our Lord's words to mean that he kept those of his people designated as

R2792 : page 118

the Church at Philadelphia from all trials and temptations: quite to the contrary, we may be sure that trials and temptations have been the portion of the Lord's people throughout the entire age. As the Apostle Peter said to some in his day, "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trials which shall try you, as tho some strange [new] thing happened unto you." (1 Pet. 4:12.) Trials must be the portion of all who would be "overcomers." How else could they overcome if they had no trials to overcome? The Church represented as belonging to the Philadelphia period had these common or general trials; but the Lord proposed to spare them from certain special trials that were about to come upon the whole world. We are not of the Philadelphia epoch, but of the Laodicean epoch, which goes into these trials, and to our understanding this "hour of temptation," which is to try all people of the world, is already here, we are already in it, and it forms part of the testing of our endurance.

But tho our Lord does not preserve the Laodicean stage of his saints from going into the trouble, we may be sure that those who keep the word of his patience now will have his keeping power, as promised to the Laodicean saints: "I stand at the door and knock; whoever hears my voice and opens to me I will come in and sup with him and he with me." This is the special reward of those who are running the race with patient endurance in the present time, in the Laodicean period; while it was not our privilege to escape the hour of temptation, it is our privilege to have a counter-balancing special blessing as a result of living in the time of our Lord's parousia (presence). We may have his fellowship, his instruction, his dispensing of spiritual food which is now "meat in due season," in a manner and to a degree which none of the faithful of past periods enjoyed these. But as we might expect, this greatest favor is correspondingly offset by the subtilty and severity of the trials of this hour of temptation coming upon the whole world.

If ever patient endurance was necessary it is necessary now; if ever it was true, "In patience possess ye your souls," it is so now. Those running the race acceptably, and possessing this patient endurance, will

be able "to stand in this evil day," and no others will be able to stand; for, as the Apostle says, the fiery trials of this day shall try every man's work of what sort it is.--1 Cor. 3:13.

The hour of temptation seems to bear specially upon and test this point of patient endurance, and throughout the civilized world we find this quality of patient endurance becoming more and more scarce. Whether we can compare conditions of today with those of fifty years ago, or forty, or thirty, or twenty, or ten years ago, according to our experience in the matter, we will see that willingness to endure at all is growing more and more scarce. Nobody wishes to endure anything--for righteousness' sake, for Christ's sake or for anybody else's sake, and if endurance even be necessary it is generally with very much of impatience, very much more of complaint, etc., than formerly. And this general tendency of the civilized world to non-endurance and impatience, necessarily has its bearing and influence upon all who are seeking to walk in the narrow way, going against the current of public sentiment and custom; the stronger that current the greater their difficulty, and only by divine grace can progress be made.

This necessary divine grace is granted to us through a knowledge of the divine plan, and is withheld from those who are not walking close to the Lord in the footsteps of Jesus. It is for this reason that we see a growing disposition toward impatience, non-endurance, amongst the professed followers of Christ.

It is at the bottom of the mob violence which in Europe is kept down by military force, but which in this country is manifesting itself in repeated instances of lynching, etc., which proclaims with loud voice impatience as the growing sentiment. The same wrong condition is illustrated in the recently inaugurated attack upon illegal liquor selling in the State of Kansas, in which those who love righteousness and hate iniquity have participated, not discerning the instructions of the Lord's Word respecting patient endurance of evil, until his time shall come for the rectification of the same;--by the establishment of the Kingdom, the binding of Satan, and the subjugation of all evil.

Indeed, we may expect the growth of this spirit in Christendom--the feeling that in the past they have been too patient, not sufficiently aggressive--the feeling that if they had taken matters into their own hands long ago the world might have been converted ere this. But those who have kept the Lord's word of patient endurance, and who have sought from him the needed wisdom from on high, that is first pure, then peaceable, easy of entreatment, full of mercy and good works, and patient endurance, have learned that he has a due time in which his purposes shall all be accomplished; and learning this has assisted them in cultivating patient endurance as their Lord endured

the opposition of evil, its malignity, its spite, its falsehoods, its persecution--enduring all this cheerfully, patiently, as unto the Lord--realizing that it is the program which the Lord has not only permitted, but permitted for wise purposes in connection with the call and preparation of the "little flock" who shall be joint-heirs with Christ, their Lord, in the Kingdom.

R2792 : page 119

The Apostle counsels us respecting this hour of temptation into which we have just entered. Its besetments and trials will be various, and some of them will be subtle; so deceptive that all who are not thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth will be carried away from the sure foundation (the ransom) by the false arguments and sophistries of those whom Satan is now permitted to use as his agents in trying all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Amongst these, no testing seems much more subtle than that of Christian Science, which, backed by the Adversary's power, is enabled to promise its perverts that if they will affirm an untruth and stick to it they shall have the reward of relief from certain pains and ailments, and those who have not learned to patiently endure whatever the Lord's providence shall permit, will be ready to accept almost any relief which the Adversary may bring to their attention. And as they learn to deceive themselves in respect to pain and sickness

R2793 : page 119

and gradually to pervert words from their real meaning, they finally become so confused in their minds that truth appears to them to be falsehood, and falsehood appears to them to be shining truth, on every subject involved.

They are led into this partly through curiosity. It seems so strange to hear anyone say, "There is no death, all is life! there is no pain, all is health! there is no evil, all is good!" They say to themselves, Altho we know that these are inconsistent statements yet we are curious to know how people reason them out,-- what is their philosophy? This is just what the Adversary desires--to attract their attention, that step by step he may then lead them from one falsity to another, until the whole brain and conscience are subverted; rewarding them with physical relief--small recompense! They have accepted darkness for light, and light thereafter will appear to them darkness. Why? How? Because, first, they are unwilling to patiently endure, and because, secondly, they would not receive the truth, so far as they saw it, with a proper constancy. They would not receive the truth in the love of it, and hence were ready to exchange

that which they valued too lightly, either in the quest of curious information, or for the sake of physical healing of troubles which, if endured joyfully, might have worked for them great blessing.

The hour of trial is not coming alike upon all; for all Christendom is not upon the same plane of development, mental, moral, physical, spiritual. The trial, as it is coming upon Christendom in general, is pictured by the Apostle in his letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:1-5). He here delineates certain characteristics of this hour of temptation, otherwise called the great "time of trouble" coming upon the world; and from his prophetic delineation we see that selfishness will be at the bottom of the matter, and that impatience will be its weapon. The Apostle says, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; men shall be lovers of their own selves; covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers [enticers to strife], incontinent [not under restraint, impetuous], fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors [cannot be trusted, would sell out their best friends for selfish considerations], heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

In his letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 2:9-12) the Apostle gives some further intimations respecting the peculiar trials of this hour of temptations, which has come upon the whole world, but which has not yet reached its intensity, and which probably will not reach that intensity in all respects for some years, but which is already working, and sifting, separating,-- because the judgment begins with the house of God. He says, speaking of Satan as the prime mover in the evils of this present time, and especially active in this hour of temptation with which this age shall close, that his effort will be "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish." Then he explains to us the reason why it will be so, saying, "Because they received not the truth in the love of it, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

God's promise is the foundation upon which all that we hope for, either of character or coming glory, is built. Let us prize this truth so that we will not compromise it in any sense or in any degree; let us not only hold the truth in the letter but in the spirit;-- in the love of it, because it is true, as well as because it is beautiful and grand. Holding it thus we will be careful that no one shall twist it for us or pervert it, and equally careful that we do not handle the word

of God deceitfully ourselves, to the blinding of our own eyes of understanding, and thus to our own hindrance. And let us ever remember the importance of patient endurance, that we may not only cultivate the Christian graces, and practise them, but that we may take joyfully the trials, persecutions or difficulties which our Lord may see proper to permit to come upon us for our testing and for the development of this character which he explains to us is of paramount importance, and without which perfect love could neither be attained nor maintained.

R2793 : page 120

SPECIAL TRIALS OF THE PASSOVER SEASON.

Years ago we called attention to the fact that as the Passover season brought to our dear Lord the sorrows and trials of Gethsemane and Calvary, and was a time of sifting and testing for Judas and Peter and all the Lord's followers, it would appear to be a time even yet in which our Adversary, Satan, is granted special license to test and prove the Lord's people. And as we get farther and farther into "the hour of temptation which shall try all them that dwell upon the earth," we expect these testings to be specially upon "the house of God"--the consecrated.

Through the mails we learn of the struggles and tears and prayers of many,--some because of their own weaknesses and frailties, and some because of the frailties of others, and some because of earthly burdens which they can neither overcome nor cast fully upon the Lord. But while sympathizing with these and counselling them as best we can, we remember the Master's words, "Blessed are those who weep now, for they shall rejoice," and our heart is specially solicitous for those whose letters give evidence that they are in temptation, but realize it not;--those who are being swallowed up of ambition or business or other "cares of this life and deceitfulness of riches"--spiritual or temporal; and with those specially, whose love for the truth seems to grow cooler instead of hotter each year, and who see less and feel less than they did years ago. We say to ourself, these are like the apostles,--sleeping while they should be watching and praying, and the hour of trial will find them unprepared; while some who are weeping and striving are more like our Savior at Gethsemane, and like him will be strengthened for the hour of trial.

Nor can we pray the Lord not to permit these trials of faith and patient endurance; for we recognize that the "very elect" must be a tried people, because of the very object of their election,--that they may be joint-heirs with Christ in the long-promised

Kingdom that is to judge and bless the world during the Millennium. As the Apostle says, these "fiery trials must try you." It is a matter of must, of necessity, as respects all who would be graduated from the present school of Christ to a share in his glorious Kingdom,--that they must pass the examination.

Ah, if we could but keep this thought before us continually, how it would nerve us to will and to do the Lord's good pleasure--enduring faithfully and cheerfully whatever our loving Master sees best to permit, knowing that thus he is working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. From this standpoint

"How light our trials then will seem!
How short our pilgrim way!
The life of earth a fitful dream,
Dispelled by dawning day!

"Then peace, my heart! and hush my tongue!
Be calm, my troubled breast!
Each passing hour prepares thee more
For everlasting rest."

Let us each, dear brethren, be very solicitous for ourselves and for each other; and counting the prize set before us in the gospel as superior to all else, as the Apostle says, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Let us so love all the Lord's children that their welfare will be our chief concern, and this will mean our own spiritual health. Yet we must not permit our love even for the brethren to hinder our confidence in the Lord's love and wisdom in respect to his terms in the choice of his Bride;--even tho the siftings should take from us some, whose fellowship we dearly cherish.

"Why should an anxious load
Press down thy weary mind?
Haste to thy Heavenly Father's throne
And sweet refreshment find."

R2794 : page 120

"SO AS BY FIRE."

"I sometimes feel so passionate a yearning
For spiritual perfection here below,
This vigorous frame with healthful fervor burning,
Seems my determined foe.

"So actively it makes a stern resistance,
So cruelly it sometimes wages war

Against the higher spiritual existence,
Which I am striving for.

"It interrupts my soul's intense devotions;
Some hope it strangles at its very birth
With a swift rush of violent emotions
Which link me to the earth.

"It is as if two mortal foes contended
Within my bosom in a deadly strife;
One for the loftier aims Jesus intended,
One for the "Mammon" life.

"And yet I know this very war within me,
Which brings out all my will-power and control;
This very conflict yet through Christ shall win me
The loved and longed-for goal.

"And when in the immortal ranks enlisted,
Sometimes I wonder if we shall not find
That not for deeds alone, but also what's resisted,
Our places were assigned." --Selected.

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R2794 : page 121

"HE THAT LIVETH AND WAS DEAD."

--LUKE 24:1-12.--APRIL 7.--

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become
the first-fruits of them that slept."--1 Cor. 15:20.

ON NO Christian doctrine does there seem to
be a greater confusion in all denominations
than on the subject of this lesson--the resurrection
of the dead--the resurrection of our Lord. Nevertheless,
as with one voice, all Christendom unites in
declaring that our Lord's resurrection was an indispensable
necessity to our salvation, in this agreeing
perfectly with the plain statement of the Apostle, "If
Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and
your faith is also vain;...ye are yet in your sins.
Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are
perished." (1 Cor. 15:13-18.) How strange that
a subject of so vast importance as this should be so
obscure! How strange that, recognizing its importance,
thinking minds should treat it so lightly, and
be willing to accept theories respecting it, the absurdity
of which are manifest to all upon the mere statement
of them!

For instance, it is the generally accepted theory
that only the body dies--that the soul, the real, intelligent
person or being, does not die, but merely is
liberated to a higher condition of life the moment the

body dies. Now, if we apply this theory to our Lord's death and resurrection how absurd it appears, and how absurd all the various theories would be that are built upon it: (1) If merely our Lord's body died, and if our Lord himself were released thereby and became instantly more alive than ever before, wherein would be the consistency of the claim that without his resurrection he had perished, and all hopes built upon him and his work had perished? It would be unreasonable to make such statements if the premises assumed were correct. (2) It is the claim of the majority of Christian people that our Lord Jesus was the Heavenly Father, Jehovah, and that he merely assumed to be, and took the title of the Son, when in reality he was as much the Father as he was the Son --that he was really both.

Those who hold this view are forced thereby to suppose that the Lord himself never died, else the universe would have been without a Master for a time; and to be consistent this same error must needs claim that the whole work of Christ Jesus was a farce, a pretence, that Jesus really was the Heavenly Father all the time, and wore a body of flesh just as we do a suit of clothes; that he caused this body of flesh to pretend to pray to himself, and pretend to agonize with strong cryings and tears to the Father, really himself; that he let the body of flesh go on to the cross and pretend its groans and its crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" that he let the body be buried, and pretended for the time to be unconscious, while really he was experiencing none of these things that appeared, but was as omniscient and omnipotent as ever; that by and by he revived the body and took up the flesh and bones, etc., into heaven as an everlasting evidence of the deception he had performed upon mankind; taking a body of flesh into spiritual conditions, where it would be totally out of place and inappropriate to the environment.

All this theorizing, so common amongst Christian people, is absurd in the extreme, totally contrary to the teachings of our Lord's Word, as well as repugnant to reason and common sense. This entire illogical theory is built upon and made necessary by two fundamental errors; first, a failure to see the sense in which the Father and the Son are one--that they are not one in person, but in harmony, in spirit, in will, as the glorified Church also must eventually be One with the Father and with the Son, as our Lord's own lips declared, "That they all might be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Secondly, the theory that the dead are not dead, but more alive than ever before. Can any one dispute that if the dead are not dead there are no dead ones, and to speak of a resurrection of dead ones would be an absurdity?

But when we take the Scriptural account the

whole subject becomes clear and plain. Jesus was the honored Son of God--"the only begotten of the Father"--"the beginning of the creation of God." To him had been given, while he was in glory with the Father, the privilege of becoming man's Redeemer, and he had accepted the service gladly: "for the joy that was set before him," he left the condition of glory, was made flesh, endured the cross, despising the shame, and ultimately received the exaltation to the divine nature, and joint-heirship through his resurrection. The taking of human nature was necessary, because it was a man that had sinned, and as by a man came death, by a man also must the resurrection of the dead be secured. (1 Cor. 15:21.) Only the sacrifice of a perfect life could redeem the original sinner, Adam, and his children, who shared his penalty. This was the necessity for our Lord's earthly existence and for his death, as the Apostle explains. --Heb. 2:14.

"HE Poured OUT HIS SOUL UNTO DEATH."

--ISAIAH 53:12.--

Those who claim that our Lord himself did not die, but that merely his flesh died, are totally unable to answer or harmonize the Scriptural declarations on this subject, which are most pointedly to the effect

R2794 : page 122

that "he poured out his soul unto death;" "he made his soul an offering for sin." It was Adam's soul (being, existence) that came under the sentence of death through disobedience. It was not merely a sin of his body, but, as the Scriptures declare, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." It was Adam's soul that needed to be redeemed, and not merely his body, because if the soul were redeemed God could give it a new body as it pleased him. God's proposition is not to give back, atom for atom, the same bodies that moulder into dust. On the contrary, it matters little what becomes of these mortal bodies, for it was not these that were redeemed, nor these that are to be restored. It was the soul that needed redemption; it was the soul that was redeemed; it was the soul of our Lord Jesus that was given as a ransom price for the soul of Adam; and the result is that the souls of Adam and his posterity are all guaranteed a resurrection.

This central thought of the resurrection is wholly overlooked by Christian people in general, who leave the soul out of the question,--out of redemption and out of the resurrection, whereas it is the all-important. It is because the Apostle Paul recognized this matter so clearly that he stated himself so positively on this

subject in his great chapter on the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15. He recognized that it was Christ's soul that died--that his very existence had ceased in death; that not merely his body, but himself, was absolutely dead three days, and this is our Lord's own statement, "I am he that liveth and was dead." He does not say, I am he who lived always and who never died, but whose body died for the brief space of a few hours. It was because Christ's soul (being) was dead that the Apostle could declare that unless his soul, being, were made alive again by a resurrection there could be no hope in him as a Savior and a Life-giver --there could be no hope of his ever exalting his Church to joint-heirship with him in his Kingdom nor of his and their blessing all the families of the earth during a Millennial reign of righteousness--if he were dead, extinct, if he had not risen from the dead.

R2795 : page 122

The Apostle Peter also marks this point well, that it was the soul of Christ that was dead--that went to hades, the grave, the state or condition of death. Note how the Apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, quoted from the inspired prophet David, the words, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Heb. sheol, Gr., hades, English, the state or condition of death]." Peter informs us that the prophet spoke not of his own soul, but of Christ's soul, that it was not left in hades--that, on the contrary, it was raised up from the dead on the third day. (Acts 2:27,30-33.) Whoever sees that it was our Lord's soul that went into the state of death can see abundant evidence for all the stress which the apostles in their writings lay upon the fact of his resurrection. If Christ be risen it is an evidence of divine favor, and divine favor is an evidence of his perfection--that he did the work of sacrifice which he undertook, and in a manner acceptable to the Father; and these things being true, it follows that his exaltation to the Father's right hand of power means that we have in this a full assurance of faith that all the exceeding great and precious promises of God to the world and to the Church, centered in him, shall have a fulfilment in due time.

As an illustration of the confusion which generally prevails on this subject by reason of false premises above criticised, note the following statement by a leading commentator, discussing this subject, and published widely in comments on this lesson. He says: "The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof that he is the Son of God. If he could not conquer death and come back from heaven he could not prove that at first he came from heaven!" Such is the ridiculous position into which ordinarily intelligent men are led through building upon false theories.

The Scriptures nowhere intimate that our Lord

Jesus did or could raise himself from the dead. If it were merely his body that had died, and if he were more alive than ever, of course he could just as easily quicken his own body that had died as he could quicken the body of Lazarus, and it be no more of a miracle, and no more of a proof. But if, as the Scriptures declare, it was his soul that died then he was wholly dead, and could have no power whatever to resuscitate himself. To this the Scriptures agree, declaring in so many words that "God the Father raised him from the dead." (Gal. 1:1.) Nor is this an exceptional statement of the matter. It is the united testimony of the Scriptures, in proof of which note the following: Acts 2:24,32; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30,34; 17:31; Rom. 4:24; 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:21.

Our Lord's figurative statement, "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up," is not to be understood as in conflict with the above literal testimony. "He spake of the temple of his body"--"which temple ye are"--the Church. (John 2:21; 1 Cor. 3:16.) Our Lord was living in the end of the fifth (thousand-year) day, and on the seventh (thousand-year) day "early in the morning," the Church, which is his body, is to be delivered by him from the power of death, and thus be made sharer in "his resurrection"--the first resurrection.--Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:4,5.

Neither are we to understand our Lord's words,

R2795 : page 123

"I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18), as meaning that he could have any power whatever during the interim of death. Rather, we are to understand this in harmony with the many plain statements of the apostles under the inspiration of the holy spirit, to mean that our Lord had authority or commission from the Father to make the declaration that tho he would lay down his life he would receive it again--this authority, assurance to this effect, I have received it from my Father. So understood, the whole matter is clear. So understood, the doctrine of the resurrection becomes next in importance to the doctrine of the ransom, and really a part and parcel of it; for as we have already seen, for our Lord to have died and not to have risen from the dead would have meant no hope for those whom he had promised to deliver, and whom the Father had promised he should have authority to deliver from the power of death by a resurrection through judgments.--John 5:28-30.

"IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF DEATH."--ACTS 2:24.

It was not possible, because he had kept the divine law perfectly, and thus, according to divine arrangement and promise, he had accomplished two things:

(1) The giving of the ransom price for the human family;
(2) the attestation of his own fidelity and his worthiness of high exaltation to the divine nature and glory

--"that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father." (John 5:23.) The same justice which had operated for four thousand years against Adam and his race because of transgression was now operative on behalf of Jesus for his deliverance from death, into which he had voluntarily gone as man's redemption price.

When we come to see matters from the divine standpoint and arrangement we can well rejoice that the Father's character is unchangeable, and our Lord's resurrection becomes an evidence, or, as the Apostle says, an "assurance," of the carrying out of every feature of the divine plan, all of which centered in him and was made dependent upon his faithfulness even unto death, even the death of the cross. (Acts 17:31.)

Now we know that he is the antitypical Seed of Abraham, approved of God, through whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed. Now we know that the Church of this Gospel age is called to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, just as Rebecca was called to be the wife of the typical Isaac, and to be his joint-heir in the Kingdom and joint-participator with him in the carrying out of the promises and oath of God made to Abraham. "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" --that in this seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.--Gal. 3:29.

Coming to the narrative of our Lord's resurrection from the standpoint above set forth, realizing that all of our hopes of life eternal are dependent upon it, we come to it with much more and much deeper interest than we could approach it from any other standpoint or theory. And we are to remember that the disciples and followers of Jesus were Jews, and that the heathen philosophies had not yet made great inroads upon the people, to mislead them into thinking that the dead were not dead. As a people they believed the dead were dead, and placed their hopes in a resurrection. Thus it was when Jesus comforted Martha and Mary respecting their brother; he said not to them, Your brother is alive, but, "Thy brother shall rise again," clearly implying that he was not alive then in any sense of the word. Their answer was in accord with this: "I know that he shall rise again at the last day"--in the end of this age, in the great Millennial age of resurrection, lasting a thousand years. But Jesus, being the one who possesses the resurrection power, even then suspended temporarily

the power of death, restoring Lazarus again, and thus illustrating the resurrection power which will be used in much fuller measure and degree, and generally, when the due time shall come, and "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth."

Similar were the views on this subject held by the apostles and others. They believed that whether or not Jesus was the Messiah, as they previously supposed, but as had seemed to be disproved by his ignominious death at the hands of his enemies, nevertheless he was a holy man, and they trusted that in due time under the divine arrangement, according to the promise to Abraham, he, as well as all the dead, would rise again. Great must have been their surprise when they learned through the angel messengers who sat at the tomb that the Lord was risen, was no longer dead.

The women, whose office it was to complete the work of embalming the body of Jesus, went very early in the morning of the first day of the week, "while it was yet dark," to perform their loving service. Our Lord was crucified on Friday, the sixth day of the week, and buried probably about four o'clock. This left no opportunity to complete the embalming arrangements, because, as Jews under the Law, they were obliged to keep the seventh day (Saturday) as a rest day, and in it do no work of any kind; but the seventh day closed at sundown, and we may presume that immediately the preparation of spices began, and that all arrangements were completed, and that they were on their way to the sepulchre

R2795 : page 124

as early as possible. We may assume that it was not the custom to embalm all the dead. Evidently Lazarus had not been so embalmed in death. (John 11:30.) And since the embalming process was only partly perfected on the evening of the burial, the women were in haste, as soon as the Sabbath was over, to complete their service, not realizing how unnecessary were their labors--not thinking for a moment of the Lord's resurrection. No doubt it was in order to better inculcate this lesson, and to prepare them for seeing Jesus, that the angels appeared and drew their attention to the fact that Jesus had foretold his crucifixion, and also his resurrection on the third day.

Infidelity has objected that the accounts of our Lord's resurrection given by the four Evangelists are not exactly alike; but we answer that this is another evidence that there was no collusion amongst the apostles in respect to their statements of the Lord's words and doings, and these subsequent scenes. Their testimony, therefore, should be considered really stronger than if they had word for word declared the

same thing. The fact is that each tells the story from his own standpoint, and, like any matter, it may be viewed from different standpoints, and the facts, related in somewhat different language and order, need not be understood to conflict. Rather, we are to understand that all the various things declared took place, and to do our best to find the order in which they occurred.

Nor is it unusual to find differences of opinion respecting many things in the testimonies of unimpeachable witnesses; for instance, there is a dispute to this day as to what hour the battle of Waterloo occurred, altho tens of thousands of men took part in it. "Two armies beheld the battle of Waterloo, but who can tell when it began? At ten o'clock, said the Duke of Wellington. At half past eleven, said General Alava, who rode beside him. At twelve, according to Napoleon and Druet; and at one, according to General Ney." We do not think of impeaching the credibility of any of these witnesses. Rather, we are to suppose that they all may have been correct in that the battle began in some places sooner than in others. Some would regard the battle as beginning with the first skirmish, and others probably ignore those skirmishes and speak of the time when the armies fully met in the clash of battle. We are to use similar reasonable judgment in considering the testimony of such unimpeachable witnesses as were the apostles--men who not only hazarded their lives, but sacrificed all of their earthly interests in the service of him whom they declare to us arose from the dead on the third day.

We might remark incidentally that the terms, "on the third day," and three days and nights, according to Jewish usage, would properly be applied to portions of three twenty-four-hour periods, and did not imply three full days and three nights. That the apostles so understood their own words is evident, for they made no effort to harmonize the statements, as they surely would have done had there been any conflict between them. Some earnest people, failing to realize this fully, have written books endeavoring to prove that our Lord was crucified on Thursday afternoon, but they seemingly overlook the fact that even then they could not count three full days and three full nights, and that unless they accepted the view that a part of three days is what is meant they would be forced to suppose that our Lord was crucified on Wednesday afternoon, in order to have the three full days, and in that event it would not be true that our Lord arose "on the third day," but on the fourth day. Furthermore, unless it be conceded that our Lord was crucified on Friday, the sixth day, too late to complete the embalming which would be hindered by the seventh day, no excuse could be

found for the women coming early on the first day of the week with the spices to complete the embalming. If our Lord had been crucified on Thursday afternoon there would have been all day Friday in which they could have completed the work of embalming.

Dr. Abbott points out that the Christian observance of Sunday is of itself a strong testimony in support of our Lord's resurrection. He says: "A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was changed, not by any express command in the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the Church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival that on which he arose."

"THE FIRST-FRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEPT."

Our Golden Text calls attention to the fact that our Lord in his resurrection became the first-fruits of them that slept--the first-born from the dead. After God gave the promise to Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed, it was the custom of Israelites to speak of their dead as not dead, not extinct, but as asleep--waiting for resuscitation, resurrection. They realized that such a resurrection was unquestionably implied, tho not actually stated, in the promise made to Abraham. For how could all the families of the earth be blessed until the ransom price was paid, a resurrection provided for, that the curse of death might be rolled back from off the race? Again, as our Lord declares, the intention of God to resurrect the dead was shown in his declaration to

R2796 : page 125

Moses at the bush, that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, etc., for if they were dead, extinct, without hope of a resurrection, God would never speak of them in this manner. (Mark 12:26,27.) Israel in general, therefore, had come to speak of the dead as asleep, waiting for Messiah and the work that he should do, which would culminate in resurrection; hence the common use of the words sleep and slept in the Old Testament when referring to the deceased. The Apostle informs us that some endured torture for their faithfulness to the Lord, in hope of a better resurrection--a more favorable condition, when the resurrection time should come.--Heb. 11:35.

Our Lord also used this expression, "sleep," in respect to the dead, declaring that Lazarus slept, and that he went to awaken him out of sleep. (John 11:11.) Practically the whole world of mankind has gone

down into this sleep, and it is called a sleep, instead of being called death, extinction, because in the divine plan, through the redemption, a provision has been made that "all that are in their graves shall come forth" at the word of their Redeemer, in the morning of the Millennial age. The "little flock" of "overcomers" who pass their judgment or trial now satisfactorily, come forth to life and joint-heirship in the Kingdom; the great mass of mankind, blinded by the Adversary, to a greater or less extent, will come forth, subsequently, to enlightenment,--when Satan shall be bound, to deceive them no more,--that they may have an opportunity of coming into harmony with God and forming characters in accord with the laws of his Kingdom, and so doing that they may have life everlasting.

Our Lord was the first-fruits of them that slept --none preceded him; hence the awakening of Lazarus and of the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Nain were not full and complete resurrections. Had they been such our Lord's resurrection would not have been the first--he would not have been "the First-born from the dead." His being born from the dead signifies that he was lifted fully and completely out of death conditions to the perfection of life, which was not the case with the others--they were merely awakened and left in the dead state with the remainder of the human family. The Church of Christ, his body, is to share with him in "his resurrection," "the first resurrection," a complete and instantaneous lifting out of the state of death into the perfection and completeness of glory, honor and immortality, which God has provided for them who follow in the footsteps of Jesus, his joint-heirs. These are all called the "first-fruits unto God of his creatures." (James 1:18.) The after-fruits of God's great plan will be developed during the Millennial age, yet there shall not enter into the approved condition any who will not use the means then within their grasp.

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R2796 : page 125

"BEHOLD, I AM ALIVE FOREVER MORE."--REV. 1:18.

--JOHN 20:11-18.--APRIL 14.--

NOT only was it necessary that Christ should rise from the dead and become alive forevermore in order to accomplish the great work planned of God and foretold in the prophets, and secured by his own sacrifice, but it was necessary also that indubitable proofs of his resurrection should be given to his disciples, for themselves and for us through them. The necessity for this lay in the fact that in

the divine plan this Gospel age was marked out to be a Faith age--for the selection of a special little flock, able, like father Abraham, to walk by faith and not by sight. But faith, in order to be faith, and not merely credulity, must needs have some reasonable foundation upon which to build its superstructure; and it was to provide this foundation for faith that our Lord remained with his followers for forty days after his resurrection, before ascending to the Father, --as the Evangelist declares, "He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God."--Acts 1:3.

The disciples realized that great events were transpiring, tho how great and momentous was their character, they but slightly comprehended. They knew that their hopes as respects an earthly Kingdom, and their Master as an earthly Lord, had failed. They had vague, indefinite hope that all that he had said to them would in some manner have a fulfilment, but how or when or where, was beyond their conception. They knew not that a change of dispensation was occurring;--that the rejection of Israel after the flesh, and the calling of a new Israel after the spirit, was commenced; and that they themselves were amongst the first thus privileged to pass from the relationship of servants of God to that of sons.--
John 1:12.

As yet they knew nothing about spiritual things, not having been begotten of the holy spirit to sonship and the knowledge of things to come, Jesus not yet having been glorified, and it being impossible for the holy spirit of adoption to come upon them until after his sacrifice for sins had been presented in the

R2797 : page 126

Most Holy, and accepted of the Father. They knew not that the new Kingdom was to be a spiritual one, and that Christ, its Head, must pass from fleshly conditions to spiritual conditions in this resurrection, even as he had foretold, saying, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God." They had much to learn, but they had a great Teacher, and, as we shall see, his arrangements for their instruction were specially adapted to their conditions as natural men, to give them such foundation of knowledge and experience as would subsequently be helpful to them when they should be begotten of the holy spirit at Pentecost.

The Apostle informs us that Christ was "put to death in flesh and quickened (made alive) in spirit" (we give a literal translation). The Apostle's words being true, those who declare that our Lord arose from the dead a fleshly being at the time of his ascension are grossly in error. Indeed, it is evident that

they have misconceived the entire subject of the atonement, for if our Lord, as the man Christ Jesus, gave himself a ransom, he could not be restored to manhood in a resurrection, without annulling the ransom --taking back the price he had paid for our sins. The Scriptural thought is that as man had sinned, and been sentenced to death, it was necessary that the Redeemer should become a man and should give his manhood as the ransom-price for Adam and his race; and the Scriptural declaration is not that this ransom price was taken back, but that God raised him from the dead a new creature of a new nature,--not in flesh, not in human nature, but in spirit, a spirit being. --1 Pet. 3:18.

The Apostle Paul agrees with Peter's testimony, that Jesus was quickened in spirit, saying that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4); and again, the same Apostle, describing the first resurrection, in 1 Cor. 15:42-45, says: "Thus also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural [animal] body, it is raised a spiritual body." The Apostle elsewhere declares that the Church's highest ambition is to be a partaker in this first resurrection, which he denominates "his resurrection," the Christ-resurrection, the resurrection to spirit conditions, which came first to our Lord Jesus, and in which all of his body, his Bride, is to have a share.--Phil. 3:10; Rev. 20:6.

There can be no question that the Apostle, in this description of the first resurrection, means us to understand his words just as they read--whoever interpolates and adds to the Word of God, and declares that it was sown a natural (animal) body and raised a natural (animal) body, and subsequently changed to a spiritual body, wrests the Scriptures to his own injury, to the darkening of his own understanding of the divine plan. In the same connection the Apostle declares that that body which thou sowest is not quickened, but in the resurrection God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, to every seed his own body--in the resurrection, not after it. (1 Cor. 15:35-38.) If the Church belongs to the spiritual seed, to which is to be given the spiritual body in the resurrection, then unquestionably the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, belongs to the same spiritual seed, and accordingly God gave him a spiritual body in his resurrection. Likewise, in a succeeding verse, the Apostle declares that our Lord at his resurrection became the second Adam, and then contrasting this second Adam with the first, he says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul [an animal or earthly being]; the last Adam was made a quickening [life-giving]

spirit [being]."--1 Cor. 15:38-45.

The lessons to be learned by the Lord's immediate followers would necessarily be much more difficult to them than to us; because we have been begotten of the holy spirit, and are thereby enabled to appreciate spiritual things. To meet the exigency it was necessary that our Lord, the spirit being, should be present with them for forty days,--invisible, as spirit beings are always invisible to men, unless through the operation of a miracle. It was necessary for them to know of his resurrection in order that they should have faith in his message, and act accordingly, as he desired; yet, had he appeared to them in the glory of his spirit being, opening their eyes to see the supernatural splendor as he showed himself in vision to John on the isle of Patmos, his face as lightning, his arms and his feet shining like molten brass in the furnace --the effect would have been to terrorize them, and their natural minds would have been unable to link such manifestations with their Lord, recently crucified; neither would he have had opportunity, under such conditions, to have given them instructions, for they could not have received them by reason of terror.

It was necessary therefore, that our Lord, a spirit being, should manifest himself, as he had in the long past manifested himself to Abraham and Sarah, and as angels, under divine commission, had done on sundry occasions--as a man. (Gen. 18:1.) He must lead their minds step by step, and their thoughts link by link, from the cross and the tomb to an appreciation of his present exaltation as a spirit being, respecting which he himself explained to them, contrasting it with his previous condition, "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." And this leading of their minds must be such as would gradually force upon them the conviction that he was "changed," that he was no longer a man, and no longer subject to human conditions, as before his death. Having this thought in mind, we will have no difficulty whatever in seeing how our Lord inculcated these instructions during the forty days in his various interviews with his followers.

Mary Magdalene was honored in being the first to whom our Lord revealed himself. Scholars are generally coming to the opinion that it is a mistake to suppose that Mary Magdalene had ever been an

R2797 : page 127

unchaste woman--a mistake to identify her with the woman in Galilee in the house of the Pharisee, who washed our Lord's feet with her tears and dried them with her hair, and of whom the account says, "She was a sinner." The name Magdalene is now supposed to signify that this Mary was of or from Magdala,

a town on the sea of Galilee. However, according to the Scriptural account, Mary Magdalene was a miracle of grace, for it is distinctly stated (Luke 8:2) that she had been obsessed of evil spirits, seven of them, whom the Lord cast out. Many think that she was a woman of wealth, and the evidences are that she greatly appreciated her benefactor, and esteemed it a privilege to follow him whithersoever he went. Not only had she come from Galilee to Judea, but she was near the cross at the time of his death, and the first at the tomb on the morning of the resurrection--"while it was yet dark." Such love and devotion commend themselves to every sincere heart, and are surely worthy of emulation on the part of those who receive at the Lord's hands spiritual favors, forgiveness, reconciliation, the spirit of a sound mind, new hopes and aspirations, etc.

To harmonize the various accounts we must suppose that the women charged with the work of embalming our Lord's body lived in various parts of the city, and did not all arrive at the same hour. Mary Magdalene arrived first, and finding the tomb empty hastened and first found Peter and afterward John, both of whom at once ran to the sepulchre, Mary probably returning more slowly to the same place, arriving there after they and the other women had gone. It was at this second visit that the Lord revealed himself to her. She had been weeping and then stooped down in order to see through the low doorway, as tho to reassure herself that it was empty, and then saw for the first time two angels in white, who inquired respecting her sorrow. The angels had doubtless been there when she was there before, but she had not seen them, because not of their choosing to "appear:" indeed, the Scriptures assure us, saying, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation"? And again, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."

Doubtless holy angels had in charge not only our Lord's body, but also the interests of his bereaved followers; and now, and on other occasions, some of these appeared--appeared, because they could not be seen without appearing, without a miracle--appeared as "young men," tho they were not men, but angels; not flesh, but spirit beings--assuming fleshly bodies for a time, that they might render the service necessary. In Luke 24:4 these same angels appearing as men are said to have been clothed in shining garments--so that they might not be understood to be men, but might at once be recognized as heavenly messengers. On the contrary, when our risen Lord as a "quickening spirit" similarly "appeared" in the flesh, in order to come closer to his followers, he did not appear in shining garments, but in ordinary apparel, assumed for the purpose,

and in order that he might have the better opportunity for giving the instructions which his followers needed.

R2798 : page 127

The words of the angels to Mary would be calculated to assuage her grief, for they manifested no grief, and by their question implied that she had no ground for it. At this juncture something drew Mary's attention, and turning around she discovered another person near her, evidently in ordinary garments, whom she presumed to be a servant of Joseph of Arimathea, the owner of the garden--his gardener. She considered herself a trespasser to some extent, and assuming that our Lord's body was not wanted longer in the rich man's tomb she inquired where he had been taken, that she might take the proper steps to care for his reinterment. Then Jesus (for it was he who had "appeared" in the form of a gardener) spoke her name: "Mary!" At once she recognized the voice, and crying, "Master, Teacher!" she fell at his feet, grasping them as tho fearful that somehow, if she let go, she might never get the opportunity of touching his blessed person again. Our Lord's words to her, "Touch me not, but go, tell my brethren," would more properly be translated, Cling not to me, etc.--for I have not yet ascended to my Father; I will be here a while yet, before I ascend, but your great opportunity for clinging to me and trusting in me will be after I have presented to the Father, and he has accepted, the great atonement for sins which I have just accomplished at Calvary. Mary's touch could do our Lord no harm, for others touched him subsequently, as the record shows; but our Lord would lead Mary's mind away from a mere clinging in the flesh,--to the higher relationship and intimacy of heart and of spirit, which would now be possible, not only for her, but for all his followers, not only then but ever since. In a spiritual way the Lord's people may be exhorted not only to "look unto Jesus," the Author and Finisher of our faith, but also to "cling to Jesus," and by faith to place our hands in his that he may lead us all through our pilgrim journey, in the narrow way until he shall bring us to himself, when we, like him, shall be changed, in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, and be like him, spirit beings, and see him as he is;--not as he was, before his resurrection, nor as he "appeared" during the forty days after it.--1 John 3:2.

Our Lord gave Mary a message, a service to perform, and so it is with all who love the Lord and seek him and find him: they are not to merely enjoy him selfishly, but are given a commission in his service for the brethren. This seems as true today as ever. And by the way, this is the second instance in which our

Lord ever addressed his disciples as "brethren," with all that that word implies of fellowship and of all being children of the one Father. (Matt. 12:48.) Now he emphasized this relationship by referring to the Father as his Father, and their Father, his God and their God. How close this brings our Lord to us in fellowship and relationship, not by pulling him down, but by realizing him as highly exalted, far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named; it lifts us up, and by faith enables us to consider ourselves, as the Lord considers us, "brethren," prospective joint-heirs with him, who by and by shall be like him, our elder brother, sharing, through his grace and assistance, in his resurrection, and participating as joint-heirs in his "Kingdom"--

R2798 : page 128

if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."--Rom. 8:17.

Mary departed with her glad message and was undoubtedly much happier in the delivery of it than if she had been permitted to remain clinging to the Lord; enjoying her knowledge somewhat selfishly. To find her Lord alive when she had supposed him dead meant to Mary a joy such as the Apostle Peter expressed when he said, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." We may well suppose from our own experience in such matters, that every time Mary told the good tidings to others and made their hearts rejoice also, it brought her a fresh increase of joy. The Master similarly sends all who recognize him as "he that liveth and was dead, and is alive forevermore," to go forth and tell others of the glorious fact that we have a living Savior, whose love and interest extends to every interest and affair of our lives, and who not only is full of sympathy and compassion, but is able also to succor those who are tempted, who are in trial, who are in distress of any kind;--one who is able to bring us off conquerors, to give us strength to endure hardness, and who by and by will receive to himself all the faithful.

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R2798 : page 128

BISHOP RYLE'S MILLENNIAL CREED.

"FIRST. I believe that the world will never be completely converted to Christianity, by any existing agency, before the end of this dispensation.

In spite of all that can be done by ministers, members and churches, the wheat and the tares will grow together until the harvest; and when the end comes, it will find the earth in much the same state that it was when the flood came in the days of Noah.--Matt. 13:24-30; Luke 17:20-36; Matt. 24:37-47.

"Second. I believe that the wide-spread unbelief, indifference, formalism and wickedness which are to be seen throughout Christendom, are only what we are taught to expect in God's Word. Troublous times, departures from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, love waxing cold, are things distinctly predicted. So far from making me doubt the truth of Christianity, they help to confirm my faith. Melancholy and sorrowful as the sight is, if I did not see it I should think the Bible was not true.--Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-6,13.

"Third. I believe that the grand purpose of the present dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect people, and not to convert all mankind. It does not surprise me at all to hear that the heathen are not all converted when missionaries preach, and that believers are but a little flock in any congregation in my own land. It is precisely the state of things I expected to find. The Gospel is to be preached 'for a witness,' and then shall the end come. This is the dispensation of election, and not of universal conversion.--Acts 15:14-19; Matt. 24:14; Romans 8:20-24,28,29.

"Fourth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the great event which will wind up the present dispensation, and for which we ought daily to long and pray. 'Thy Kingdom come,' 'Come, Lord Jesus,' should be our daily prayer. We look backward, if we have faith, to Christ dying on the cross, and we ought to look forward, no less, if we have hope, to Christ coming again.--John 14:3; 2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Peter 3:12; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 11:26.

"Fifth. I believe that the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is to be a literal, personal coming: that as he went away in the clouds of heaven, before the eyes of his disciples, so, in like manner, will he return.--Acts 1:11; 1 Thess. 4:14-18.

[As his going was known only to his faithful followers, so only such will have the eye of faith and that enlightenment which will permit them to discern the second presence of the Lord, while all others will continue about the ordinary vocations of life, ignorant of the fact that they are living "in the days of the Son of Man,"--eating, drinking, planting, building, and knowing not of his parousia, his presence. Then, too, he went away quietly, unostentatiously, as well as unknown to the world, and the manner of his coming will be similar--he shall come in like manner.

"Now the Lord is that spirit," and tho we, the Church, shall see him, it will be "as he is," and not as

he was. At first we will see him with the eye of faith through the prophetic word of promise only, but the promise is that we also in due time shall be "changed" --to spirit beings. Then "we shall see him as he is; for we shall be like him." (1 John 3:2.)--EDITOR.]

"Sixth. I believe that, after our Lord Jesus Christ comes again, the earth will be renewed and the curse removed; the devil shall be bound, the godly shall be rewarded, the wicked shall be punished; and that before he comes there shall be neither resurrection, judgment or millennium; and that not till after he comes shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.--Acts 3:20-26; Isa. 25:6-9; Rev. 1:5-8; 20:1-6; Isa. 65:17 to end.

"Seventh. I believe that the Jews shall ultimately be regathered, as a separate nation, restored to their own land, and converted to the faith of Christ.--Jer. 3:10,11; 13:10; Rom. 11:25,26; 2 Cor. 3:15,16.

"Eighth. I believe that the literal sense of the Old Testament prophecies has been far too much neglected in the present day, and far too much neglected by the churches; and that, under the mistaken system of spiritualizing and accommodating Bible language, Christians have too often completely missed the meaning.--Luke 24:25,26.

"I believe, finally, that it is for the safety, happiness and comfort of all true Christians to expect as little as possible from churches or governments under

R2799 : page 128

the present dispensation; to hold themselves ready for tremendous convulsions, and changes of all things established, and to expect their good things only from Christ's second advent."

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page 129

SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXII. APRIL 15, 1901. No. 8.
CONTENTS.

Views From the Watch Tower.....	131
Jews Looking Towards Christianity.....	133
Communing with the Lord.....	134
Word from the British Branch.....	137
As Seeing Him Who is Invisible.....	138
"Whosoever Sins Ye Remit they are Remitted".....	139
"Be Not Faithless, but Believing".....	140
Interesting Questions Considered.....	141
Not the Lord of the Dead.....	142

Words of Cheer and Encouragement.....142
Items: Volunteer Work for 1901, Etc.....130

page 130

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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity
or adversity, are unable to pay for the TOWER will be supplied FREE, if
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the paper. We are not only willing, but anxious, that all such be on our
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SILENT SERMONS TO VISITORS.

Notice the statement above--"To Us the Scriptures Clearly
Teach." We have this printed on fine card board, rounded
corners, size 11 x 14 inches, with silk cord. This should hang
prominently in all of your homes. We have also imported a
new silver text card with motto for 1901, and one of another
style. We propose supplying the three securely packed in a
tube, postpaid for 15 cents.

VOLUNTEER WORK FOR 1901.

Remarks respecting the new tract "Food for Thinking
Christians," No. 52, are favorable: all of our readers seem to consider
it well calculated to awaken interest wherever it may be
read. We are getting ready large editions for the "Volunteer"
service on Sundays, near Protestant churches and are now ready
for your orders; many are already received. We will fill these in
part soon, and you may order further as needed.

It is time now to prepare by choosing a "captain" and enlisting as many volunteers as may be able and willing to serve. Let your "captain" report to us the names of volunteers, the numbers of churches, the average attendance at these, and his estimate of the quantity of the booklets needed, and the addresses to which they are preferred to be sent.

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R2799 : page 131

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

MISAPPREHENSIONS CORRECTED.

SOME misunderstood an item in our March 1 View, namely, that we commended the course of the Boers and Filipinos and condemned Socialism. Nothing of the kind was meant.

(1) THE UNITED STATES AND THE FILIPINOS.

The Filipinos would have been much wiser to have thrown themselves upon the mercy and justice of the United States and, expressing thanks for deliverance from Spanish misrule, to have asked for civil and religious liberty under the protection of this great Republic. But their ignorant failure to take this course did not make it right to ignore their aspirations for liberty, and to treat them as enemies on this account. Rather they should have had from the very start distinct assurances and guarantees of as much liberty as they could show capacity for;--eventually full freedom. But the right policy was offset by land-hunger, commercialism and the spirit of empire building, willing to spend thousands of lives and millions of money for its gratification. This we condemn as being contrary to the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, and as sure to bring its own reward in due time.

(2) THE BRITISH AND THE BOERS.

Others thought that we commended the Boers, because we rebuked the British Ministry's lust for empire extension that would give British capitalists the control of Boer gold and diamond fields, at, however, a far greater cost of British lives and money than they expected. No one is deceived by the claim that the war was precipitated by Mr. Chamberlain's desire to free the Boer slaves and correct the Boer morals: everybody knows that he had plenty of room to work along those lines at home, where thousands of white children are still the wage-slaves of commercial selfishness, and need deliverance and schooling and moral

training. Neither are sensible people deceived by the plea that the war was precipitated by love of liberty and the desire to give the ballot to the assorted white foreigners, called Uitlanders. This was the pretext by which the statesman who engineered the war for commercialism and empire deluded the British masses and got their support. Indeed, the claim that Britain forced the war by insistence, that her own sons, known as "Uitlanders," should be allowed to expatriate themselves as British and swear allegiance and support to the Boer republics, is laughable. The Boers well knew that such an oath to such men who openly avowed their hostility would be meaningless--that at the very time they were ready to take the oath of allegiance these men were conspiring for a revolution. In refusing the franchise under such circumstances to such persons, they did what every Briton would have done if in their stead.

We by no means commend the Boers! We deprecate their low ideas of civilization, their practice of slavery of the native blacks, and their lack of liberality; --their narrowness and selfishness. But two wrongs do not make one right; and in our opinion the Boers should have been permitted to possess their land, and gradually improve its government as their ideas enlarged. It is but very few years since Britain took the step of giving the ballot, even under limitations, to her own sons. We love and respect British character far more than that of the Boers; and we refuse to believe that the British masses would have sanctioned this land-stealing war in South Africa, had they not been blinded and deceived by their trusted political and financial leaders. Our appreciation of the

R2799 : page 132

Britons does not mean a love for their rulers, but for the people who more than once have shown their sturdy love of principle to the extent of compelling their rulers to adopt at home the very liberal government which they now enjoy as a consequence. But as the "god of this world" is using Doctors of Divinity to blind many to the divine plan and its justice and love, so he uses Doctors of Finance and Doctors of Politics to blind noble and liberty-loving nations to the rights and liberties of others. Thank God, the liberty of "the prince of this world" will soon be curtailed, that he shall "deceive the peoples no more."-- Rev. 20:3.

However, it is not and has never been our wish to dabble in worldly politics. We are citizens of another country, even a heavenly, and have our Lord's Word for it that none of the earthly kingdoms are his; but that they all are under the domination of "the prince of this world"--"the god of this world;" Satan, who will continue to blind and deceive the

masses until our Master, according to promise, takes the Kingdom and restrains Satan. (Rev. 20:3.) Then the blinding influences being removed and the true light shining, all men shall see clearly, and all the worthy will rejoice.

Our object, in these occasional Views from the Tower, of Babylon's matters and affairs, is to have all those who belong to the "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9) see how widely astray are all the kingdoms of this world, even tho they call themselves "Christian nations" --"Christendom." We who are in harmony with the Lord and his righteousness must realize that the entire social structure is out of joint, else we could not so honestly and earnestly pray, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven,"--knowing that the coming of God's Kingdom means the utter wreck of earthly kingdoms, in a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation.

Whoever sees no fault in present arrangements and conditions, but approves them, is not very fit for the Kingdom, nor to be made one of the rulers under the new regime. On the other hand, however, we do not understand it to be the duty of the Lord's consecrated people ("the saints") to tirade and fight against the world, but to submit to its ordinances, except when conscience would be violated (1 Pet. 2:13), waiting patiently for the Lord's promised Kingdom as the only hope. Such are to realize that the worldly are blinded, and not to expect any to see the truth except such as have been specially blessed of the Lord and called to joint-heirship with Christ in the Kingdom, on condition that now they shall suffer with him for righteousness' sake.

(3) SOCIALISTIC PRINCIPLES APPROVED.

Some supposed us to be antagonistic to Socialism. Quite to the contrary; we are very sympathetic toward its aims, and merely object that they are wholly impracticable under present conditions. Unquestionably the new age will see many of the ideas of the Single-Taxers and Socialists, modified, in successful operation, under the auspices and backed by the power of the Heavenly King and his Kingdom, then in full control, and Satan bound.

But we warn any of the saints against building their hopes upon any relief which Socialism now promises. That anchor and its cable are of sand, and will crumble into direct anarchy as soon as put to the test. Our faith and anchor, on the contrary, are sure--faith in the promises of God. This faith anchorage fastened in the divine power will endure every strain. In proportion as any look to earthly sources for the deliverance of the "groaning creation" (Rom. 8:19-23) they are turning their backs on the heavenly Deliverer.

And in proportion as we trust in the deliverance that is to be brought about by the second advent of Christ and the glorification of his elect "little flock," to be the Kings and priests of God's Kingdom, in that same degree we must rest all our confidence in it.

True, if all the princes of earth, including the financial, the "captains of industry," were to combine to establish Socialism, its temporary success would seem to be assured; but no sane man dreams of such conditions. And if established all will admit that it would be but an experiment, with the strong probabilities, all would admit (with the certainty, we would claim), that it would frequently contend with anarchy and have a continual fight. With the spirit of selfishness entrenched in the hearts of the individuals, could we suppose that the endeavor to live collectively on the opposite basis of love would be very successful?

Socialism can only succeed to a limited degree at present--to the extent that it benefits the intellectual and wealthy as well as the poor. Any attempt to carry it further will precipitate anarchy. Present aggregations of capital and industry are favorable to Socialism--governmental control, by the people and for the people. The masses seeing this will ere long attempt to grasp the throttle, expecting capitalists to submit to save their lives. But they are mistaken. Money and brains and selfishness are a strong combination, self-confident, resourceful, powerful. The result, as the Scriptures foretell, will not be Socialism but anarchy, humbling to the pride of the rich and the poor, the reformer and the demagogue. But that extremity will be the Lord's opportunity, and on the ashes of human avarice and pride and boastfulness and self-confidence will be erected the strong equitable government

R2800 : page 133

of Messiah for which we watch and pray,
"Thy Kingdom come."

We commend to the interested a fresh reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV., The Day of Vengeance, in which we discuss this subject at considerable length.

JEWES LOOKING TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY.

We have published several articles of late showing that Jewish teachers are gradually turning from a hatred of Jesus (as the originator of what they consider a false religious system) to an admiration of him as one of their race, whose teachings have benefited the world and influenced it for justice and mercy more than any other. Below, however, we give a few of the words of a prominent German Jew, B. Levita, recently published in the Preussische Jahrbuecher (Berlin),

in which he advocates (merely nominal) Christianity as the only real relief for the Jews from the social ostracism under which they grieve.

After recounting that the Jew is now refused admission to many clubs and associations and rejected from offices in the Prussian army, he proceeds to point out that Jews are neither more nor less religious and conscientious than these nominal Christians; because both are formalists, but the forms and ceremonies of the Jews are sad, doleful, and relate mostly to the remote past--the exodus from Egypt, etc., and are national rather than personal,--while the nominal Christians practice rites and ceremonies which, however little they really believe them, are consoling or happyfying; personal and cheering, rather than saddening. For instance, infant christening (for males and females) is a bright, sunny occasion, the reverse of the bloody circumcision of Jewish male infants; and nominal Christian marriage and death services and social functions are all bright and attractive and consoling as compared to Jewish customs. He argues that it is these links between Israel and the past that hinder his social progress, and that as people of little belief or no belief can and do associate under the name Christian, so may the Jew, who may equally maintain his unbelief or partial belief, become a Christian and share the amenities of life without prejudice. A free translation of the conclusion of his plea may be summarized as follows:--

"It is our religion alone that keeps us apart from the rest of the German people; yet we reject reform upon a Christian basis. We may say that we are no longer Jews,--yet we cannot become Christians. We can not believe in the divinity of Christ. But do the progressive German Protestants, with their higher criticism, believe in it? No; yet they hold fast to the old forms. The same ministers who teach from the pulpit an undogmatic Christianity are compelled to pray to the Holy Trinity before the altar and confess their faith in the 'Son of God.' This cast-iron 'I believe' is still there, and we can not, will not, pronounce the formula, for we can not believe. A mere formula, a piece of paper, divides us from our most enlightened Christian German brothers.

"But what shall we do? Are we to found a new Jewish-Christian sect in which Christ is recognized as man only? That would only separate us again, and we are tired, so very tired, of separation. Back into Jewdom we will not go; into the German nation we can not go. The terrible cry of our forefathers is still fulfilled in us: 'His blood be upon us and our children.'

"Our children! Why should we transmit the curse to them? Why should they suffer for a cause which is no longer anything to us? I have it! If we find in Christianity the true religion with the exception

of a single doctrine that has lost its force, then we must not educate our children as Jews. The piece of paper which hinders us does not exist for our children. Let them take part in the great spiritual battle which is being fought out in the ranks of Christianity. Ours was the prophet who destroyed the law and taught eternal love. Let the wandering Jew die. Let our children become Christians."

* * *

How evident it is that when, shortly now, God shall turn away Israel's blindness they will be in as ready a condition to receive the truth as nominal Christendom will be;--yes, more ready. But not yet. The idea of worshipping Jew Jesus as Jehovah is preposterous to him, and so arouses his contempt that he is unready to even listen to the truth--esteeming that this is the very basis of all Christianity. Hence the above suggestion of Levita is merely that, for the sake of their children's social future, they join the masses in mere outward profession of things they could not conscientiously consider for a moment.

The "great gulf fixed" still remains, and will remain unbridged until the special work of this Gospel age (to which Israel as a nation was blinded by divine decree) has been accomplished;--until spiritual Israel, the elect bride of Christ, has been "sealed" and "garnered." Then the individual blessings of the new age (the Millennium) will begin, and Israel will be first to receive the blessing of the "latter rain." "I will pour upon the house of David the spirit of grace and supplication [in the midst of "Jacob's trouble"] and they shall look [with the eye of faith, as we do now] upon him whom they have pierced. And they shall all mourn because of him, as one mourneth for his only son." Then and thus they shall all be saved from their blindness and be granted full opportunity of obtaining everlasting salvation through the Crucified One, then being installed as the King of Glory. --Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:25-32.

Let us never lose sight of the fact that not until "the times of the gentiles" expire, and not until

R2800 : page 134

"the fulness from the Gentiles" have come into the Church and been glorified, can the individual blessings of the Millennium be expected; and then to the Jew first. Whatever of Millennial work precedes that time is general, pertaining to the nations and systems;--preparations for their overthrow and for the establishment of Messiah's Kingdom upon the ruins of present day systems.

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COMMUNING WITH THE LORD.

LUKE 24:13-35.--APRIL 21.

"Did not our hearts burn within us
while he talked with us by the way!"

"A LITTLE talk with Jesus, how it cheers our lonely way!" writes the poet, and who that is a Christian has failed of this experience? And fortunate are those who early learn, that while we should greatly appreciate our privilege of talking with the Lord, in prayer, we are to recognize that it is not this that brings the full blessing; but our attentive hearing, understanding and appreciating what he says to us;--the Word of Truth. Our hearts burn while he talks and we listen, more than when we talk even to him.

Toward evening of the day of our Lord's resurrection, two of his followers, one of them apparently Simon Peter (vs. 34), the other Cleopas, passed along the country road leading from Jerusalem to Emmaus, about eight miles distant, evidently the home of Cleopas who would entertain Peter, whose home was in Galilee. Like all the followers of Jesus they had been greatly exercised and perturbed by the remarkable events connected with our Lord's last visit, in connection with the Passover--his triumphal entry into Jerusalem; the cleansing of the Temple; the routing of his ecclesiastical foes in debate; his remarkable teachings during those few days; his arrest, trial and crucifixion. The excitement of their hearts made other business for the time impossible, and they spent the day in Jerusalem probably without knowing just why, except that they desired to be in touch with fellow believers. They shared with all the Lord's friends in the considerable excitement, resulting from the reports given by the sisters who went to embalm our Lord's body, that the tomb was empty and that they had seen angels who said that Jesus was alive again.

Full of the subject so close to their hearts, they were discussing in animated conversation the likelihood and unlikelihood of the reports they had heard, and in general the Messianic hopes of themselves and their nation, which they had trusted would have been amply fulfilled by Jesus, whose death seemed to throw all of their expectations into confusion. It was at this juncture that Jesus was drawing near them, disguised in a body of flesh and ordinary clothing--with a face different from what they had previously recognized, yet nevertheless gentle, soothing, sympathetic. He inquired the occasion of their discussion, which seemed to be respecting some sad subject. This kindly interest

was not resented as an intrusion, but rather their burdened hearts rejoiced to find a sympathetic ear to which their perplexities could be related. How much of human nature there is in all this! How favorable is a time of adversity and perplexity in which to approach those whom we desire to assist; but how necessary it is that we should learn of the Master how to approach with such sympathy in word and act as to gain the hearts of those whom we would serve and bless. Love is the secret of gentleness, of sympathy, of all real heart-helpfulness. In order to be more useful in life, the Lord's people need to become more and more filled with his spirit of love;--copies of God's dear Son.

It was no deception on our Lord's part to inquire what things they were sad about, altho he knew everything

R2801 : page 134

better than they. It is sometimes the part of wisdom not to tell all that we know, if we can the better help others by inquiring of them. In this instance we can see the wisdom of our Lord's course, for the minds of the two travelers were lifted from any points of disputation and drawn to a general review of the circumstances of the preceding days, and this furnished the best foundation for our Lord's exposition of the meaning of and the reason for the things which perplexed them.

Jesus did not reply to their surprised expression that he must be a newcomer in the city not to have heard of the wonderful things that had recently transpired. He let them proceed to declare their faith in him and how they viewed the situation. The portion of their conversation recorded implies clearly that however much their confidence might have been shaken respecting our Lord's Messiahship, and their hopes, that it would have been he that would have redeemed (delivered) Israel from the Roman yoke and exalted her as God's agency, the seed of Abraham, for blessing all the families of the earth, they still believed in him as a great Teacher, a prophet--"mighty in deed and word before God and all the people." This was a good confession, all that could have been asked, and quite sufficient for our Lord to use in rebuilding their confidence in himself, in his Messiahship--on a surer, a better, a more positive foundation.

R2801 : page 135

While it was expedient for him to start the matter by questioning them, it would not have been wisdom to have continued thus to any great length; for he had the message, they needed the instruction: we, as his followers, may learn a lesson from his course in this also. As soon as he had their minds in the channel to receive the lessons he would give them, he began to

open unto them the Scriptures concerning himself--to expound them, to show their true meaning and fulfilment. We here see the proper course of the teacher illustrated by the great Teacher himself. As he went to the Scriptures and brought forth from them evidences of divine foreknowledge and prediction respecting the things that were transpiring before their eyes, so we, if we attempt to teach others, should not be content with offering our views, our opinions, our conjectures, but should search the Scriptures and be able, from that source to give to every man a reason for the hopes that are within us--that his hopes, as well as ours, may be built up, not upon the theories of men, but upon the inspired teachings of God's Word. Higher critics, Evolutionists, etc., never follow the method which our Lord Jesus here emphasized as the proper one: on the contrary, denying any special inspiration of Moses and the prophets, they ignore them, and offer instead, as of superior value, their own conjectures. Let us not only ignore such teachers as blind guides, attempting to mislead the Lord's flock, but let us also, to whatever extent we have opportunity to teach others, see that we follow not in their footsteps, but in those of our dear Redeemer. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word there is no light in them." (Isa. 8:20.) And those who follow such teachers as have "no light" are sure to get further and further into darkness.

We are not informed what features of the Law and the Prophets our Lord enunciated; but we can surmise that he pointed out to them in Moses' writings various features of the Law which pointed to himself as the paschal Lamb, whose death must take place before the first-born and all Israel could be delivered from the bondage of sin, and from the great task-master, prefigured by Pharaoh, and be led ultimately into the Canaan of promise. We can surmise that he recalled to them Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, the typical seed of promise, and how this represented the actual death of Messiah, the antitypical seed, the Son of God. We may presume that he called their attention to various of the psalms, which prophetically spoke, not only of the glories of his reign, but also of his sufferings and his death, and his subsequent exaltation to the right hand of the majesty of God. No doubt he called their attention also to the utterances of Daniel the Prophet, respecting Messiah's being cut off in death, but not for himself. Undoubtedly he reminded them of the words of Isaiah, that Messiah should be led as a lamb to the slaughter, be despised and rejected of men, and how, nevertheless, in due time God would set him as his King upon his holy hill, Zion.

Spellbound with this wonderful exposition of the divine Word, his listeners drank it in, realizing its truth by the manner in which it harmonized the various testimonies of God's Word--nor did they think for a

moment of inquiring of their teacher whether or not he had an ordination from the scribes and Pharisees, with a license to preach. They perceived that he had a divine ordination, and this was fully attested by his ability to make clear to them what other teachers could not make clear.

The eight miles of the journey seemed all too short, as they reached their home, and they were loath to part with the wonderful teacher, whom they supposed they had fallen in with by accident, never dreaming to what extent divine providence was guiding their affairs. It was drawing toward evening, and the stranger was bidding them adieu, as tho intent upon a further journey; and indeed, he surely would have gone from them had they not been sufficiently appreciative of what they had already heard to constrain him earnestly to remain with them and partake of their hospitalities. So it is with all of us, as the Lord's disciples whom he is instructing, after we have been taught of him. If our hearts fail to burn with responsive love and zeal and appreciation, the blessing will pass from us and we will fail to reach the climax of joy in a full recognition of who our Teacher has been. While the Lord draws nigh to us with his grace and truth, without solicitation, he passes us by unless his message is appreciated so that we shall constrain him, urge him to abide with us, to continue the conversation--unless we shall proffer him in turn our hospitalities, our temporal things, in endeavoring to make some slight recompense for the spiritual favors showered upon us.

Our Lord accepted their urgent invitation and remained; supper was prepared, and recognizing their new acquaintance as a great teacher or prophet they requested that he should return thanks for their evening meal. It was while he was thus asking a blessing upon it and upon them that the eyes of their understanding were opened--it dawned upon them that their guest was no other than Jesus himself! Perhaps the language used in the blessing was such as they had heard him use before, or perhaps in some other way their understanding was opened.

Having accomplished his purpose, our Lord vanished from their sight. Thus, in addition to the instruction impressed upon their minds, he showed them by this vanishing that he was no longer the man

R2801 : page 136

Christ Jesus--that he was "changed"--that the resurrected Jesus was a spirit being, who could come and go like the wind, as he had explained to Nicodemus (John 3:8), appearing and disappearing, as he had never done previously, but as angels had frequently done. Moreover, they realized from this illustration that our Lord could appear in any kind of a body, and with any kind of clothing, as might best serve his

purposes. They did not know him by the marks in his hands and his feet, nor by the seamless robe; for he had not appeared to them in these, but in another form, as an ordinary traveler whose features they did not recognize. Had he borne the prints of the nails in his hands and his feet they surely would have noticed them during their long walk; just as Mary would surely have noticed them when she grasped our Lord by the feet. But they had an explanation of the whole matter now; they understood why this stranger had been able to present the divine word with such clearness and force and beauty as to cause their hearts to burn with fresh love and zeal and hope. They were glad.

Let us pause here to note some of the conditions which evidently led up to this blessing, that we may apply the same to ourselves, realizing that our Lord operates very generally along the lines of fixed principles, and that if we would be the recipients of his special favor and instruction, and have our hearts burn with the spirit of his truth, we should expect such experiences along somewhat similar lines to those observed in connection with the two who went to Emmaus. We remark, first, that this is an illustration of our Lord's promise that where two or three are together in his name--considering him, his word, his promises, his blessings--there he will be in the midst, and a blessing shall result. This may be in a country road, in the home circle, or in the more general gatherings of the Lord's people for worship, prayer and study of the truth. How this reminds us of the injunction, "Forget not the assembling of yourselves--and so much the more as ye see the day drawing on." Who has not noticed the blessing that comes to those who remember these promises of the Lord's Word, and who act upon them? Who has not noticed in his own experience, as well as in that of others, the danger of neglecting these admonitions--the danger of doubts, fears, indifference, coldness, worldliness? It is undoubtedly true today, as much as or more than ever, that we need such fellowship, and it is to such who seek it that the Lord reveals himself.

Let us mark again the word of the Prophet, "They that feared the Lord spake often together; and the Lord hearkened and heard it," and noted it in the book of remembrance. Let us remember, too, that it is declared of such, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels." (Mal. 3:16-18.) We are not saying that others will not be the Lord's, nor does the Lord say so; but we may be well assured that those

R2802 : page 136

who have opportunities for meeting together and speaking together, and who fail to use the opportunities, are manifesting a lack of interest in our great salvation; and that such are very likely to lose the remainder of

their interest, and failing of the Lord's instruction given to such, that they may fail also to be amongst the "jewels" whom he will gather. If on the contrary one feels little interest in the heavenly things, little disposed to discuss the features of the divine plan and its promises, and happy only when conversing on worldly matters, business, etc., it is an unfavorable sign. The Lord is not likely to approach such and open their understanding respecting the Scriptures, as he surely is pleased to do to those who are hungering and thirsting after truth.

Many are so situated that they are unable to gratify the desires of their hearts in respect to assembling frequently with others of like precious faith, to talk over the good things of the Lord's Word of promise; but the isolated should not feel disappointed that the Lord's Word says that he will meet with the twos and threes, and does not promise the same to the solitary. They should rather look about them to see what provision the Lord has made whereby at least two can meet and discuss his Word together. We suggest, dear friends, that the Master has made special arrangements for all of his people in this respect in our day; for all, the world over, who so desire may have such a meeting at least twice a month, through the regular visits of the WATCH TOWER--and he that hath no money has the same opportunities as others (as will be seen by the terms on the second page of each issue). We believe this is a divine provision for the necessities of many, and we urge that all avail themselves of this as well as of every other privilege the Lord may grant for fellowship, for communion in spiritual things. The written message is not different from the spoken one.

The Editor of this journal, through its columns, is pleased to meet with those of the Lord's people who desire fellowship and communion respecting the Lord's Word; and the reading of expositions of the Scriptures in the WATCH TOWER differs nothing from hearing the utterance of the same words by any living person who might meet with you. We claim no infallibility for our presentations, nor do we simply offer our opinions and conjectures, after the manner of the scribes and Pharisees; but rather after the manner of the great Teacher, we seek to present to the minds of those interested the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and to voice the testimony of Jesus and the apostles, and to show the harmony of the Scriptures.

R2802 : page 137

As soon as the Emmaus brethren recognized their guest, and he vanished, they understood well the meaning of the joy, the refreshment and the burning zeal in their hearts which his expositions of the truth had inspired. They had thus a confirmation of the words of the angels to the sisters in the morning, that Jesus

was risen. The news was too good to be kept, even until the next morning. They must and did start immediately for the city, altho it was a journey of at least eight miles. How different their feelings as they set out in return from those when they left the brethren at Jerusalem, their hearts sad and their minds full of questionings! Now they were full of joy; for they saw that our Lord's crucifixion, so far from being the end of their hopes, was really the foundation for them; that as our Lord explained, "Thus it behooved Messiah to suffer before he would enter into his glory"--that unless he had suffered--died--the race would not have been purchased at the hands of Justice, and the condemnation of death would still rest upon it and make any permanent blessing impossible; but now, the redemption price having been paid, the way was open, first for the reconciliation of the Royal Priesthood who should be joint-heirs with Jesus as the Seed of Abraham, and subsequently, in God's due time, would follow the times of restitution of all things, the blessing of all the families of the earth.

Some such thoughts as these engaged them as they returned to Jerusalem, and arriving at the upper room found the eleven (except Thomas--the term "eleven" being used in a general sense, and not a particular sense, as referring to the apostles in general and not to the exact number) with others of the company assembled. Then there was general rejoicing in the information that Jesus had revealed himself to Peter, as they related their joyful experiences, and how the Lord had been known to them in the breaking of the bread and the asking of the blessing. Doubtless it was this experience that led subsequently to the custom of the disciples having a meal in common on every first day of the week, at which they again in imagination recognized the Lord present in their midst, blessing the bread and opening the eyes of their understanding. Thus each first day of the week they called to mind how he opened unto them the Scriptures and sought to keep the eyes of their understanding open and to grow in grace, in knowledge and in love.

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R2804 : page 137

WORD FROM THE BRITISH BRANCH.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--There is nothing special to narrate at present, but I shall drop you a line on general principles. The 13 cases came on Friday about 6 P.M. By Saturday evening at 10, they were all opened and the contents properly stowed away, thanks to the fact that they were so far as possible

packed in parcels, and thanks also to two brethren who came in to help--one on each evening.

The outlook for DAWNS is good this year, and if the 5,000 last ordered are sent via Baltimore I think they will not be here much in advance of the time they are needed. The lot just received came in the nick of time, so far as cloth and leatherette are concerned. I think we will not at present go very deep into the matter of Volunteer work by secular hands, as a more excellent way seems to be available; i.e., moving the Colporteurs into some of the territory where at present we have no readers, and thus getting Volunteer as well as Colporteur work done there. They all do Volunteering on Sundays, so it will be no new thing to them.

The Church in E. London had their annual business meeting last Tuesday. They unanimously requested me to serve as pastor for the coming year (from March 1), and at my request as unanimously requested Bros. Bull (A. C.), Guard and Lightfoot to serve as assistants.

Some time ago you gave it as your opinion that the twentieth century would not have advanced far without showing some great "sign." I reckon you hit it pretty close, if the Morgan-Rockefeller-Hill Trust be taken as a "sign." The papers in England talk about Mr. Morgan "syndicating the world." What do you think of Isa. 5:8 in this connection? If the parable be taken as a representation of "Christendom," which was foreshadowed by the first "house of Israel" (v. 7), we see that God gave Christendom the advantage of the "choicest vine" (Christ, John 15), and when he looked for justice and righteousness as the fruits (Gal. 5:22), behold oppression and a cry. The combine seems to be losing no time in seeking to acquire control of the world's interests in various lines (Mr. Morgan is coming to Germany this month to combine his crowd with the German steel combine), "that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth," and may make great profits out of it. But verse 10 should be a warning to them, and a comfort to God's people, for one bath equals only eight gallons, and one ephah is but a tenth of a homer. "Great will be the fall thereof" in anarchy, I presume.

Spoke last evening on Matt. 6:33, showing that the Lord here puts God and the things of this world as possible "masters" of his disciples. We cannot serve both, "therefore I say unto you," etc. If we serve the things of this world, as the nations do (cares of this life, etc.), God's word will be unfruitful in us; but if we serve God, seeking first his Kingdom and righteousness (if we seek and find his righteousness, we shall also find his Kingdom, 2 Pet. 1:5-15), all these things shall be added to us, and in fact shall be OUR servants, instead of we in bondage to them.

Notwithstanding the course of this world being

opposed to those who seek God's righteousness, the Father will overrule in the affairs of his people that

R2804 : page 138

those who seek first his Kingdom, etc., shall not be deprived of the necessaries for an honest living. Godliness has "the promise of the life that now is," etc. Showed how some misunderstand this passage to authorize an idle waiting for the necessaries of life to fall down on them, because they take the wrong thought from the Lord's reference to birds and lilies. It is true that birds do not sow or reap, and that lilies do not toil or spin, but also true that birds do not know how to sow and reap, nor do the lilies know how to spin. But the birds get their food in God's appointed way for them, and the lilies get their glory in God's appointed way for them. So man must get his food in God's appointed way for him, and any Christian who seeks to get it in another way is "disorderly." (2 Thes. 3:7-11.)

R2805 : page 138

The idea was to show that this passage does not authorize begging or idle waiting for the Lord's people to supply one's needs. Would you think these views correct?

Hope you are as well as usual. We are in fair health, and rejoicing in the Lord. With love to all, in which Sister H. joins,

Yours faithfully in Christ,

E. C. HENNINGES. [Manager British Branch.]

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R2802 : page 138

AS SEEING HIM WHO IS INVISIBLE.

--JOHN 20:19-29.--APRIL 28.--

"Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

AS THE news of our Lord's resurrection spread amongst his disciples it naturally drew them together seeking for fresh evidence respecting it. Then arose the fear that the spite of the priests, etc., which had seemingly been satisfied in the crucifixion of Jesus, would now extend to his disciples; and no doubt this thought was emphasized by the recollection that the Lord, speaking of his own sufferings and experiences, warned the disciples that they would be cast into prison and suffer persecution for his sake. No wonder, then, that when they met in the upper room that first Sunday night, the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, and we may safely conclude that this means that they were

barred, bolted, locked in some manner.

Scarcely had the two from Emmaus finished their account of how Jesus had appeared to them on the way and at Emmaus, when suddenly they were all terrified at seeing a stranger standing in their midst. It was Jesus, and this was his third manifestation on this day of his resurrection (counting that of Matt. 28:9 and John 20:14 as the same; and that of Luke 24:15 and 34 as the same). He came into their midst, not by opening the doors, as some have suggested, but strictly as the narrative reads, "the doors being shut." The security which was felt from having the doors fastened, caused the disciples to feel the more terror, when they beheld a stranger with them, but Jesus quickly assuaged their fears, saying, "Peace be unto you!" and then showed them his hands and his side, that they might note the marks of his crucifixion and the spear-wound, that thus they might identify him with the crucified one. This evidence, added to what they had already heard, was convincing to all who were present, and they were glad. No doubt our Lord's previous manifestations were intended to lead up to this general presentation. He had stimulated and cultivated the faith, not only of the ones to whom he had appeared, but also of the entire company, through them, by the method adopted.

Women seem to be able to exercise faith more readily than men; hence our Lord appeared first to Mary, and through her prepared the hearts of the others, as we have seen. It requires the masculine mind rather longer as a rule to reach the position of implicit faith; he calls for more evidences, more proofs, and our Lord was not unwilling to give these. However, had this appearance in the upper room in the evening been the first manifestation and information respecting our Lord's resurrection, we can readily suppose that it would not have produced the faith and joy it did produce. Wonder, astonishment and "reasonings" required the entire day for their exercise, and by the time our Lord showed his hands and his side this culmination of evidence was convincing.

After the disciples believed, Jesus again used the words, "Peace be unto you," but now as believers the words had to them a new meaning; they began indeed to find a peace for their troubled hearts which they had not known for some time. Since they realized their Master to be again alive they could afford to have peace, for they had learned to have confidence in him and in his love, and intuitively realized that all things would work together for good to them, under his care, tho as yet they knew not how. And so it is still. It is only those who realize in Jesus their Redeemer and Lord, who died and who rose on their behalf, and who have given themselves to him to be his disciples--only such can really receive of his peace--"the peace of God which passeth all understanding" ruling in their hearts.

So today, as well as then, and even more abundantly under the holy spirit's guidance, they can realize that they are not their own, and that all things are under divine supervision, working for their highest welfare.

"My peace I give unto you," were our Lord's

R2803 : page 139

words on the night of his betrayal, at the supper, and "Peace be unto you," were his words when first he met the disciples together after his resurrection. He is indeed the Prince of Peace, and the grace of peace which he gives to his faithful disciples is a blessing beyond all measure, such as the world can neither give nor take away; but this peace is based upon certain conditions of the heart: first, faith, trust in God; secondly, obedience, on our part, endeavoring to do those things which are pleasing in God's sight. To such and such only comes the heavenly peace, and in proportion as either the faith is lost or the obedience lacking, the peace flies away. Whoever, therefore, believes himself to be a child of God, trusting in Jesus and consecrated to the Lord's service, and seeking to walk in his footsteps, should expect the Lord's peace to rule in his heart, giving him rest, no matter what his circumstances or conditions in life; and if any of this class are without the peace let them look to it and repair the difficulty, for they are lacking either in faith or in obedience, and with the revival of these the dove of peace will surely return. Another lesson here is, that however much strife and contention his message, the Truth, stirs up among men, our Lord himself was always peaceably disposed and a peacemaker as respects others; and so all of his disciples are to be. "Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God." Whatever of strife may come in contact with the Lord's people it is not to be of their production or cultivation; and even when they speak the truth, which will necessarily cause strife, they are directed to "speak the truth in love," in meekness, in gentleness, and with long-suffering and patience, and not in strife.

Then, saying to his disciples, "As the Father commissioned me so I commission you," our Lord breathed upon them, adding, "Receive ye the holy spirit." The Father's commission to the Christ, the Royal Priesthood, was all addressed to the Head, the Chief Priest, we having no standing with the Father except through him, and no other commission than his for our service. Our Lord's words imply that we as his disciples are to be engaged in the same work that he is engaged in. He did not finish the work completely, but merely finished one part of it--the part which he was to perform in the flesh, the redemption. Another great part of the work is to be accomplished at his second advent in power and great glory; viz., the blessing of all the families of the earth with a knowledge of divine grace and

an opportunity for returning into full fellowship with the Father and to eternal life. His commission covered this entire work, as represented in the promise of God to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," and our Lord explained to the two brethren on the way to Emmaus that it behooved him to suffer for the sins of the world before he should enter into his glory, and ultimately begin the work of their blessing, because he could not have the power or the authority to bless until first he redeemed from the sentence of death.

And this is the commission which our Lord and Head has in turn committed to his followers. We are sent on the same mission, and hence it is declared that we are to suffer with him in the present life--to "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ"--and then to share with him in his glory in the blessing of all the families of the earth. How grand a commission! What a great privilege to be invited to walk in his steps--of trial and suffering now, and of glory, honor and immortality by and by! Whoever appreciates this privilege will show his appreciation, not only in words, but in deeds, in truth, by laying aside every weight, and the easily-besetting sin, and running with patience the race set before us in the Gospel.

The breathing upon them was evidently symbolical; an illustration of his words, "Receive ye the holy spirit," by which, when, fifty days later, they would receive the Pentecostal blessing and adoption of sons, they might know that while the holy spirit is of the Father it is nevertheless by the Son. And so the apostles understood it, as Peter subsequently explained.-- Acts 2:33.

"WHOSOEVER SINS YE REMIT THEY ARE REMITTED."

We are not to understand that either the Father or the Son gave over to the apostles or to others the power of remitting sins. We see, indeed, that sins could not be remitted by power, but only by the satisfaction of Justice, and that hence it was necessary for Jesus to die for our sins, and to rise for our justification, before those sins could in any sense of the word be remitted. The most that could possibly be understood from our Lord's words is that he would so supervise the words and writings of the apostles that in every instance they would lay down such directions respecting sins and their forgiveness as would be in full accord with the divine arrangement--that thus they might act as mouthpieces of God explaining to men the nature of sin and the terms of its forgiveness. This view we know is fully borne out by the facts in the case. The apostles did define sin and the terms of forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, etc., in a manner entirely satisfactory, in a manner in which our Lord himself never explained these things; because he left this work

for his apostles to accomplish in his name and under the guidance of the holy spirit.

This commission is grossly misunderstood and misapplied by Catholics, who claim for the pope, the bishops and the lower clergy of their institution the right, the power, the authority, to forgive sins,--to determine

R2803 : page 140

what penalties shall be inflicted, and to offer release from such penalties on certain conditions of their own making. It is in support of this claim, and as an adjunct to it, that Papacy has established "the sacrifice of the mass," by which it claims that all of its priesthood can so consecrate flour and wine and water as to make of these the actual flesh and blood of Christ, which then being broken they claim is Christ sacrificed afresh, as the basis or authority for their forgiveness of sins.

We claim, on the contrary, that all of the Royal Priesthood (under Christ, the Chief Priest, and under the directions given them through the chosen apostles), are fully empowered to declare to the world the terms upon which sins will be covered, cancelled, remitted,--and consequently the terms without which there is no remission. The right to do this comes, not through any power or authority enjoyed by the under-priesthood now, but as a result of the information which they receive of the holy spirit, through the inspired utterances of the apostles. By these means "we have the mind of Christ," and know clearly the terms upon which he is willing to receive sinners; viz., upon repentance, and faith in him, and consecration to his service. Any and all of the Royal Priesthood are privileged to tell this good message to whoever may have an ear to hear it;--but we are instructed of the Lord not to expect that many will have the hearing ear now, but to know that the present is rather the time when only the few specially blessed of the Lord will be able to understand and appreciate this grace of God by faith.

"BE NOT FAITHLESS, BUT BELIEVING."

One of "the eleven," Thomas, was not with them on the evening mentioned. This would imply that he had disbelieved the stories told by the sisters respecting the message of the angels and the Lord's manifestation to Mary. He evidently thought them laboring under some delusion and excitement, which he ought to discountenance, and he therefore did not meet with the others to confer respecting their newly begotten hopes; they might enjoy such ephemeral hopes if they chose, but as for him, he could not do it. Having seen the crucifixion and the wound in the side, he could believe

nothing else than that the Lord was still dead. And even when the apostles met him the next day, and told him how Jesus was in their midst and showed them his hands and his side, Thomas still disbelieved, and told them that he would not even trust to the sight of his eyes, which might be deceived. On his part he would want also an opportunity to feel the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into the spear-hole in the Lord's side. If he could have such evidence he could believe, but not otherwise.

Our Lord's followers today, as then, differ constitutionally to a considerable extent. Some find it easier to exercise faith than do others. It was right that Thomas should take care not to be deceived in the matter, but it was wrong that he should be so deficient in faith as to stand out stoutly in disbelieving when he had his evidence from so many of the brethren whose honesty he could not doubt. However, the Lord is very patient and long-suffering toward us all, and so he was with Thomas to the extent of granting him the very evidence which he had said would be satisfactory.

A whole week passed without any manifestation of the Lord to any of the disciples; however, the next first-day of the week (Sunday, "the eighth day," the Jewish method of counting including both days) found the Lord's followers gathered in hope of some further reports, evidences, etc., connected with his resurrection, when Jesus again "appeared," and we may well suppose them full of interest and suppressed excitement not unmixed with disappointment, and fear that they might see him no more. But all this was a part of the lesson they needed;--for meantime they must have reasoned out that a great "change" had come to our Lord, that he was no longer a man as before, but a spirit being, who exercised the powers of angels in respect to his appearing and disappearing,--coming and going invisibly "like the wind." Thomas meantime, altho still sceptical, had become sufficiently interested to want to be present, to want to receive any proofs or evidences that could be adduced by which he would know that his dear Lord was now alive again. As before, Jesus came into their midst, the doors being shut, and again gave the word, "Peace." How beautiful and how blessed it would be if the Lord's people whenever they come together, to meet each other and to meet Jesus in spirit, would greet each other with

R2804 : page 140

this salutation from the heart,--"Peace be unto you!" Uttered in the right spirit it should imply that their hearts were in a peaceable condition, seeking each other's peace and welfare and to avoid strife. This meek and quiet spirit would have a quieting and pacifying effect to a considerable degree upon any others present in such a meeting who had less of this holy

spirit. The spirit of peace is contagious amongst the Lord's people, even as the spirit of anger is contagious in the flesh. "My peace I give unto you," said our Lord; and hence whoever has not this spirit ruling in his heart lacks an important evidence of discipleship. The Apostle classes the contentious with those who are disobedient to the truth (Rom. 2:8); yet allowance is to be made for weakness of the flesh in this as in other respects; and to "contend earnestly" for the truth (in a spirit of love) is commended. (Jude 3.) Whatever our natural dispositions may be, the indwelling of the Lord's

R2804 : page 141

spirit is sure to be manifest in "the peaceable fruits of righteousness."--Heb. 12:11.

Immediately our Lord addressed Thomas, thus indicating his thorough knowledge of his doubts and fears; he invited him to come forward and have the very evidences which he had declared would be necessary. We presume that Thomas did as he said, altho the account does not mention it; it is implied in his prompt confession of his faith in the words, "My Lord and my God!" We are not to suppose that by this expression Thomas meant that he recognized the risen Jesus as being the Heavenly Father, as some would suggest: on the contrary, we are to remember that amongst the Jews the word "god" signified mighty one, and was sometimes applied to angels, and sometimes to great, influential men, as well as to the All-mighty One, Jehovah. God, mighty one, was an appropriate title to apply to our Lord Jesus; but in no event should Thomas' words be understood either to be wiser or truer in any sense than our Lord's own expression of a few days previous, when he said, "I have not yet ascended to...my Father and your Father; my God and your God." As the angels were elohim, mighty ones or gods, to mankind, so Jesus, God's beloved Son, was properly recognized by his disciples as being far more than man, as being a mighty one, a god; and Jesus, in turn, recognized the Father as his God as well as ours. With this view all is reasonable, consistent and harmonious. With any other view of the subject there is confusion.

Our Lord did not reprove Thomas for his hard-headed determination to have indubitable proofs before he would believe; but he did tell him of a more excellent way,--that while it is good to believe upon the basis of physical sight and physical touch, there is a still higher attainment of faith than that, which is able to see things that cannot be seen with the natural eye, and to feel things which cannot be felt with the natural touch. He would have Thomas and us all realize this well; so that we might the more cultivate this spiritual sensibility: not that he would have us credulous and ready to believe without evidence or testimony, but so

filled with true faith and confidence in the Father's mighty power, and in Christ's own promises, that we would be ready to believe certain things upon the evidence of others, yea, to expect those things.

And this has been the condition of acceptance with the Lord throughout this Gospel age. We have not seen Jesus except with the eyes of our understanding; we have not heard his voice except as we have heard with the ears of our hearts; yet this is the more blessed faith;--the kind more appreciated by the Lord himself than the kind which would be satisfied with nothing but a tangible demonstration. A time is coming in which God will give to the whole world of mankind tangible evidences respecting all the features of the divine plan. Faith will then be swallowed up in sight, but when that time shall have come the rewards of faith which are now held out will no longer be open. Other rewards will be given, rewards of obedience; but they will not be so great as the rewards of faith.

Now, while it is dark, before the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in his beams, to scatter all the doubts and fears and hindrances, the Lord puts a premium upon faith, and only those who can and do exercise it may and do have certain rewards, privileges, opportunities and blessings. Of the Gospel-age-little-flock it is written, "We walk by faith and not by sight." We endure, "as seeing him who is invisible;" we run for a crown and a throne which we may see only with the eye of faith; we obey the voice of him who speaketh from heaven, but whose voice now is the still small voice, which only the few who exercise faith can hear, appreciate and understand. By and by the time will come when this voice shall shake the earth and cause the knowledge of the Lord to fill the whole earth. Obedience then will be proper and bring a blessing; but obedience now, even unto sacrifice of earthly interests in following the footsteps of him who set us an example, brings the greater blessings--the blessings which pertain not only to the life which now is, but also to that which is to come,--the blessings of glory, honor and immortality.

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R2805 : page 141

INTERESTING QUESTIONS CONSIDERED.

EARTHLY TREASURES VS. HEAVENLY TREASURES.

Question.--Since I find that the approaching time of trouble will mean anarchy and the destruction of all values, I feel little disposed to put forth energy for more than life's necessities. Is this right or wrong?

Answer.--In reply, we are sending you a TOWER of April 15, 1896, which contains some interesting items.

It is our opinion that the disorders prevailing during the time of anarchy will render title to property null and void, so far as transfer or sale will be concerned. Nevertheless, it would not be unreasonable to expect that a home of modest appearance would as likely be respected as anything. Rents and mortgages, we think, would be of little account as a reliance for income. Similarly, insurance will probably be of little value; the mutual societies failing first when the "hard times" come, and thus assisting in bringing the anarchy. People who are learning to depend on such assistance will be the more despondent and desperate when this reliance fails.

R2805 : page 142

But all this, while it should properly hinder us from having the world's spirit of land and money hunger, should not hinder us from reasonable energy in our business; for surely, even if money would lose all value at that time, there is still opportunity for using it wisely in the Lord's service in the interim, and should we not thus to some extent be conforming our course to the Master's words, when he admonished that we lay up treasures in heaven, where it will be safe?

NOT THE GOD OF THE DEAD.

Question.--If the dead are dead, and an awakening, a reanimation, is necessary to future consciousness, in what way should we understand our Lord's comments on God's words to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob"--"Not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him?"--Luke 20:37,38.

Answer.--This is to be understood from the standpoint mentioned by the Apostle when he tells us that the believers should not sorrow for their dead friends, as do others, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us also believe that those who sleep in Jesus will God bring [from the dead] by him." While the original sentence was not that man should sleep, in Jesus or otherwise, but that he should utterly die, lose all life and all rights to life, yet God shows us that it was his plan from the very beginning to provide a Redeemer, and that in the redemption sacrifice the ransom would be paid and mankind be released from the original sentence. It was in view of this plan that God spoke to all the faithful of the times past respecting his purposes. Thus it was that he said to Moses that he was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--the God who had made promises to these that would surely be fulfilled, promises which declared that in them and

their seed all the families of the earth would be blessed, promises, therefore, which implied their awakening from the dead, and which implied, therefore, that from the divine standpoint they were not extinct, not annihilated, but merely resting in death until the due time should come, mentioned by Job, when he says, "O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave until thy wrath be overpast; then thou shalt call and I will answer thee, for thou wilt have a desire unto the work of thy hands." (Job 14:13,15.) The "wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness" now, and has been so revealed ever since father Adam's transgression. It is revealed and may be seen in all the sickness and pain and trouble and dying, and just as the Apostle says, makes of the world in general a "groaning creation, travailing in pain together, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God"--waiting for the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom, under Christ the Head and the Church his brethren, his bride, his body.

Our Lord was answering the Sadducees, who deny that there will be any resurrection of the dead, and he offered this testimony in proof, not that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not dead, but in proof that there would be a resurrection for them, which would have been an impossibility had they become, as the Sadducees claimed, extinct. Our Lord, in other words, tells us that all those who are in harmony with him are not, in his estimation, dead, in the full sense of the word dead, but merely for the time being sleeping and waiting until the morning. As the prophet declares, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning" --the resurrection morning. Had it not been his plan to have a resurrection, God would not have referred to Abraham and others in such a manner as he did.

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R2805 : page 142

WORDS OF CHEER AND ENCOURAGEMENT.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--We have to report for "Volunteer" work for 1900 as follows:--

Churches.	TOWERS distributed.	Under direction of
53	8,000	Bro. W. T. Thorn.
317	28,672	Bro. A. M. Graham.

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Total 370	36,672

We still have about 1,000 TOWERS which we will distribute during the present month.

We are all prepared for a new campaign. At a

meeting held Sunday p.m. Brother A. M. Graham was chosen "Captain" for 1901, with instructions to make requisition for necessary ammunition. I send you a copy of the New Volunteer roll-call of 43 names --21 brethren, 22 sisters. We think the above report a good basis; we will certainly need as many as 36,000 as there is little doubt of our being able to accomplish as much as last campaign, as shown above. We did more last year than in the previous one, covering more territory and giving out more TOWERS. We have reached every suburb within 10 miles, and in some directions going 14 miles out. It is 20 miles from extremes of this territory (Boston). The enthusiasm and zeal was inspiring; there was no grumbling and no shirking. Our last day's work was done with the thermometer at 3§ above zero, some of the friends traveling 16 miles to get to the field.

The fact that this work is "doing with our might what our hands find to do" has stimulated the zeal of us all. No other service has ever seemed so fruitful in blessings to the Lord's flock. It was grand to note the tact and skill some of the Volunteers learned to use in managing the "rams" and "goats" in the Babylonish flock, who made trouble occasionally. Generally the "soft answer turned away wrath." We received many a "God bless you," and met many who had read and enjoyed the DAWNS. We found our Brothers Sherwood

R2805 : page 143

and Jones in the Babylonish camp. Both withdrew-- Brother Jones becoming a Volunteer. On one occasion a Bible class teacher came out and asked for TOWERS to give to his class, saying, "I want every one of my scholars to have one of those papers." Again, on another occasion, the Pastor of a church came out and asked to see the TOWER, and after looking it over said, "Stand right there on the steps; I will be glad to have my people read that paper." There is scarcely a week that we do not meet some one who read that TOWER and was blessed in the reading. It has been a blessed work, every way and no doubt the present healthy spiritual condition of the Church here may be considerably attributed to this work--its influence is sanctifying.

Our yearly meeting on Jan. 2 was a love feast, and gave evidence of spiritual growth on the part of all. All hailed the news of another tract for distribution with joy and responded to the call heartily. During the past year Brother and Sister Black and Sister Mason, and quite recently Sister Mower, have entered the Colporteur service, and we still pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into the field. The past year has been one of spiritual growth and blessing under our dear Lord's leading, for which we praise him and gather fresh courage and confidence for new battles, and we trust, new victories--both within our hearts and

without, as he may be pleased to send. Dear Brother,
pray for us. Your brother in Christ,
ALEX. M. GRAHAM,--Massachusetts.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I write to express, as well as I may in words, my thanks and love to you for this grand message of helpfulness to the Church in the April 1 WATCH TOWER, on Rev. 3:10. It came to us in the "nick of time," and O, how it has cheered and strengthened our souls. It is a companion piece to "Pressing Toward the Mark," and I wish we had the two articles in pamphlet form together. I have been

R2806 : page 143

thanking our heavenly Father and you over and over again (nor do I consider it a vain repetition) for those helpful, solicitous words. I am so rejoiced to believe that the Lord is directing your mind to the upbuilding of the "little flock," and we are getting in each issue of the TOWER just what each individual case requires. I read with pleasure and profit often those hymns in "Zion's Glad Songs."

We are still having severe trials in a business way, and also on account of the Truth, but we have plucked from the orchards God's precious promises, hope, love and patience and, as a result, thank God, are still pressing on toward the mark of love, the perfection of character which is most pleasing to our Lord. My prayer for all the saints is that nothing shall hinder or separate us from the love of God, but that we may come off more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.

With much love from Brother Raymond, myself and the brethren here, I remain, yours in the one Faith,
MRS. G. B. RAYMOND,--New York.

page 143

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Many, many thanks for your very kind letter of encouragement to me last October. I am the one of whom Brother Henniges wrote, telling you of my dismissal from the Farnsfield Wesleyan School, Notts., because of my loyalty to King Jesus. There was not one other thing they could find against me, and they admitted I was the very best schoolmaster that had ever been there, but my religion they would not have. My testimonial from the chairman of the managers says, "His moral character is without reproach."

I have not yet heard of another situation, but I am glad that this has happened to me, for I take it that it is a "Witness of the Spirit that I am a child of God."

Is not that so?

With care, and God giving us (my wife and myself) a comparative measure of health and strength, we have been enabled to save a few pounds, and thus I have been enabled to go into the Harvest Field, "Gathering Sheaves for Jesus," [colporteur] and doing whatever I can for the dear Master who has done so much for me.

My work so far, with regard to the sale of the DAWNS, has not been very successful, but I am "content with what it is my Father's pleasure to bestow," and thus "gladly all surrender to the Lord."

My dear wife is also trying to do the same, but she is not as firmly grounded as I am, and therefore, dear Brother, pray for us, that I may stand firm, and that I may help her along the pathway. I find the work very profitable as regards growing in love for the groaning creation, in the same sense that God so loved the world. I hate the sin, but love the blinded ones for whom Christ died, and would gladly do anything that lies in my power for their benefit, my enemies as well. Praise the Lord, it is my enemies that are keeping the fire under the sacrifice, and therefore I cannot be angry with them for it.

There is a great apathy amongst the people for religion, and they would much rather talk upon any subject than Christ. Several people have refused to listen to me on the DAWNS, because of the free WATCH TOWERS which we have been distributing at the doors of the different places of worship on Sunday mornings, but on the other hand there are instances where they have been the means of selling DAWNS. Last Thursday I had the grand opportunity of witnessing for the Master to two ministers of the Gospel, one a Baptist and the other a Mission minister. The former said he had not any time for reading them, but the latter after some little talk took a book--Vol. I., and I pray the Master may open his eyes to the glorious light. My whole time is now devoted to gathering the "wheat" from the "tares." I am glad to be doing this work, and prefer it to teaching in school, if I can only make a simple living. L.1 per week in the Saviour's army is more to me than double the amount in secular work.

Dear brother, I must tell you of the kindness I have received from several of the brethren on this side the water. Our Brother and Sister Smedley of East Kirkby, Notts., said to us before leaving the district, that "so long as Tom and Mary Smedley had a home" we could share it with them; and since I have been here (300 miles away), I have received a letter from them asking whether I needed any financial assistance.

Again on New Year's day there was a convention at Manchester (I was the speaker in the morning, taking for my subject 2 Tim. 2:15), and when I was coming away, Brother Hodge, with whom I was staying, said that if ever I was short of money I must let him

know and he would gladly give me some, as he only

page 144

holds what he has as a steward. I just mention this to let you see the spirit that pervades the whole family.

Dear Brother, altho we have never seen you, yet we love you and all the dear brethren. You are daily mentioned in our prayers, that the Master may strengthen you and be with you.

Yours in our Redeemer and King,
JAMES HODSON,--England.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL AND ASSOCIATES:--My visit to the "Bible House" has been a blessing to me. It has let me into an experience that adds a significance to life. If I know myself I have made a full surrender of myself and of the powers of my being to God in every sense of the word, and I do hope I shall be kept faithful to my present attitude. I am ignorant, but I have realized this,--that full consecration to God brings the blessing, and won't you remember me in your prayers for all the dear brethren and sisters that I may be kept and that my life may be spent in God's service? I had despaired of ever coming to a knowledge of the truth; but surely if you have come to a satisfactory understanding of the Bible why may not I? I feel that I have hope of becoming grounded in the truth, but it is this experience--this realization of full consecration to God and of my acceptance in the Beloved--that I am most anxious to maintain.

Excuse my writing, I can scarcely write for attending to my flowing tears of joy. Oh, what an experience has come to me! I ask myself, will it last? For if it does I shall indeed be a changed man and my life will be a changed life.

I am so glad I went down and found such a devoted company of brethren and sisters. I have the card "To-Day" hung up by my desk; I am committing it to memory, and want it to be the rule of my daily life. I wish I was nearer the Bible House so that I could get strength from Christian fellowship. It was like a heaven to me being amongst the brothers and sisters there. I had no idea there was such a work being carried on.

I have been greatly exercised long--indeed all my life with varying interest--but especially for some years back, over questions which I realize it is for my highest welfare to have settled. I hope my visit to the "Bible House" will lead to this end; I shall spare no effort to accomplish it. While amongst you an influence took hold of me that I believe will have a lasting effect upon my life. Last night while reading "Tabernacle Shadows" and looking up a reference in 1 Peter, I read

the epistle through, and felt that it was all for me. There is a oneness of spirit between me and the Bible now, that seems to make doubt of its authority impossible. Evidence of the divinity of the Bible comes, I believe, through the spirit of God upon the heart, and not through the intellect from outside testimony. By my visit to Allegheny I have been led to consecrate myself and all my interests to God, and I do hope I shall be a faithful follower of the leadings of the spirit.

As you know, my visit in its inception was purely a business one, and came about in rather a strange manner. I had no idea I was going amongst such a devoted and deeply interested people, among whom there is such brotherly love as of one family and one spirit.

Surely God will keep me from this time on and forever if I only continue to trust, and not fall into my own way, and my own desire that my life shall be so and so; but be willing from moment to moment to accept my task and my burden and rejoice that I am counted worthy to suffer--to suffer for what shall I say? --for God? for Christ? for the truth? I don't know what to say for fear I may say wrong, and this is for lack of a knowledge of the truth. But I don't want to wait till I read anything before beginning to live and experience what I found your people living and experiencing. Your brother in the spirit,

L. SHUTTLEWORTH,--New York.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--Enclosed please find "Pilgrim" Report for past 15 days, with nine WATCH TOWER subscriptions. The audiences at Hayne have been unusually large and appreciative.

Nearly four years ago, while en route to Hayne from the preceding appointment, it was necessary to lie over at Selma an hour or two, while waiting for a train. During this time I distributed "Do You Know?" tracts amongst the business houses of that town (as I had done before, and have done frequently since, while waiting for trains); Brother Hare, proprietor of a drug store, receiving one, and becoming interested, sent for DAWN, and reading it, became deeply interested. He then presented the work to Brother Homer, who also became deeply interested, and later he presented it to another brother, who also became very much interested. By one tract these three brethren are now TOWER subscribers, and two or three others are becoming interested.

This circumstance encourages me to continue the work of Tract distribution in the future--to "Sow the seed beside all waters."

With much Christian love to yourself and other dear friends in office and home, I remain your brother and servant in the Lord,

FRANK DRAPER,--North Carolina.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--We have been reading the DAWNS and TOWERS for over five years and have never written to thank you, but we can assure you they have been appreciated, and have established us in the precious faith. We thank God continually for being so good to us in sending us such help for the study of his Word. It was but a few months after we started in the Christian way that the dear Lord sent them to us. We have been so glad that we got no further into Babylon. We joined the Methodist church on probation, but when we got the truth we saw we were in the wrong place and quietly dropped out.

We tried to convince some of the brothers and sisters of the truth of this glorious doctrine, but only one seemed to have "ears to hear" the good tidings, and he seems to have a hard time to overcome his love for popularity, and until lately has made but slow progress; but thank God, he is beginning to see more plainly now. We attended the Chicago convention, and what a wonderful feast it was to us to see so many of like precious faith, and feel the hearty shake of their hands, and hear the words of love and wisdom proceed out of their mouths. And now may the dear Lord grant you wisdom day by day to carry on the good work he has intrusted to you. Pray for us that we may endure to the end. Yours in the love of Christ,

MR. & MRS. J. W. BELL,--Michigan.

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