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YEARLY RECKONINGS--SPIRITUAL ACCOUNTS.

"Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward: they can not be reckoned up in order unto thee; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."--Psalm 40:5.

BUSINESS MEN are at great expense to secure accuracy in their accounts. Millions of dollars are spent every year in details of bookkeeping, an important part of which is to enable proprietors to know definitely upon which items of their business there is a profit, and upon which there is a loss,--to the intent that the profitable branches may be increased, and the unprofitable ones corrected. This is admittedly a wise procedure.

If the case be such with those who are seeking temporal wealth and its honors, how much more careful accounting should be attempted in connection with spiritual matters! The Lord's people are not merely seeking for wealth, which will last for a few years, and then must be parted with--at the tomb, if not sooner;--they are seeking for the riches which perish not, and which thieves do not break into and steal. More than this, with the heavenly riches they are assuredly

seeking also heavenly honors and glories-- even joint-heirship with the King of kings and Lord of lords, in the Millennial Kingdom, and in the glorious opportunities which it will bring in connection with the promised blessing of all the families of the earth.

The general settlement day with the world is at the close of the old year, and the beginning of a new one, but with the Church an equally appropriate occasion, or, indeed, a still more appropriate one, comes with the annual remembrancer of our Lord's death as our Passover Lamb--and of our participation with him in his sacrifice; and in the Easter celebration of his resurrection, and of our figurative rising with him to walk in newness of life--in prospect of the actual resurrection in which, if faithful, we shall be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, to be like our glorious Redeemer, to see him as he is, and to share his glory.

Let us see how our spiritual accounts stand for the year past--since last we broke together the emblems of our Redeemer's sacrifice and of our own participation with him. Let us note whether or not the year's experiences have brought us nearer to the Lord, or have in any measure separated us from the warmth of his love and fellowship, and from fellowship with fellow members of his body. Every year should find us nearer to the Lord, not only in the purposes of our hearts, but in the conduct of our lives,--nearer to the perfect standard. We should be making progress, growing in all the graces of the spirit, and growing also in our knowledge and appreciation of the Lord and of his wonderful plan.

We trust that each reader, as he takes a conscientious view of the situation, whichever way he feels that the balance stands (favorable or unfavorable, as compared with a year ago), can nevertheless thank God that by his grace we are what we are, and where we are;--still his, with hearts striving for things of the spirit, and not for things of the flesh. If any have slipped to some extent backward, let such thank the Lord that matters are not worse than they are, that they have not wholly let go of his hand, and relinquished their share in the exceeding great and precious promises of his Word. Let them thank God that this day of reckoning and reviewing of accounts finds them desirous of being on the Lord's side, and making a better record during the year before us. Let us look together at our text, and see if we cannot join heartily with the Prophet in the sentiment expressed. He divides the subject into two parts. (1) Thankfulness to God for his wonderful work of grace already done or accomplished; and (2) for his thoughts, his plans, his purposes, toward us, which are not yet accomplished, and which we have grasped by his promises, with our arms of faith.

Looking back at the things that God already has done for us, we see that the Prophet has defined some of these, saying, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet

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upon a rock, and established my goings." (Verse 2.) If we can apply this heartily to ourselves, what a cause it is for thankfulness. As we look about us, and see the whole world lying in the Wicked One, without God and having no real hope,--merely vague impressions--and when we look back and see how the Lord has delivered us from the horrible pit of condemnation and sin, how he has had mercy upon us and delivered us, and established our feet of faith upon the rock foundation, Christ and his redemptive work, well may we give thanks, and tell his mercies all abroad. Looking back we may see that happy day that fixed our choice upon our Savior and our God, as being the time from which our goings have been established,--our course no longer vacillating. It was there that we obtained a fixed purpose, a ballast which has hindered us from being upset when tossed, hither and thither, by the varying winds of philosophy and human speculation. Praise God for this which he already has done for us! No wonder, as the Prophet

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proceeds to say, we realize that "He has put a new song into our mouth,--even praise unto our God." The new song is not one of doubt or of fear, nor concerning anguish of sinners; but a song of God's Justice and Mercy and Love,--reasonable and harmonious in its every cadence. Thank God! It has brought a new life to us; a new pleasure in life, as well as new aspirations and new hopes for others as well as for ourselves. We can never thank the Lord enough for the blessings which we have already received at his hands,--for the things which he has already done for us.

And yet the things that we already enjoy of the Lord's favor we are assured are but a foretaste of the blessings yet in reservation for them that love him --blessings which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to see or appreciate, but which God hath lovingly declared, and which we grasp by faith, seeing through a glass only obscurely, as yet, the glory, honor and immortality promised to the faithful. What we now have are not realities so much as promises and hopes. Present experiences being but the beginning of our comfort, we agree with the Prophet, that the number of God's favors cannot be reckoned, computed. We are exceedingly his debtors; we can never discharge

the obligation. But then we are his children; he is pleased to give us these things, and his request in return is that we shall act toward him in such a manner as will betoken our gratitude, and that we are indeed his offspring, begotten of his spirit.

Let us proceed in our calculation of present assets, and in our balancing of the year; and let us not be content simply with generalities in the balance. Let us retrospectively scrutinize the privileges and mercies enjoyed during the year, and the use we made of them and the blessings we derived. Let us carefully note which features of our daily course have been most helpful to us, and which have to any extent retarded our spiritual progress, hindered our fellowship with the Lord, prevented our running with patience or with best results the race set before us in the Gospel. These items will necessarily vary with each individual--for no two are alike in temperament or environment. Each in his counting should weigh the advantages derived from fellowship and communion with the Lord in prayer; and should determine whether or not this feature of his spiritual interests could be advantageously expanded during the beginning year.

Each should consider, also not merely how much time he had spent in talking to the Lord, but also how much time he had spent in listening to the Lord's voice--in searching the Scriptures; in seeking to know the divine mind, the divine plan, as it pertains to himself individually and to the Church and to the world. Included in this matter of listening to the Lord's voice, he should reckon the helps to Bible study provided by the Lord through the brethren, the members of the family, the members of the one body of Christ;--remembering the statement of the Apostle, that God himself had set the various members in the body as it hath pleased him; and that he set these members for the very purpose of blessing one another, edifying the Church, building it up in the most holy faith. True, we are to consider that the Apostle were set first, foremost, and hence, that their teachings are paramount; and that all other teachings are to be submitted to the test of harmony with the testimonies of the apostles and the prophets.

If any, on reckoning up, shall find that they have not made such good progress as they had hoped, or perhaps apparently less progress in the narrow way, than some others about them, let them consider to what extent this failure to progress was due to a failure to use the divinely appointed means for growth in grace and knowledge and love;--namely, the Word and the brotherhood. If the progress has not been so great as could be hoped, let another point be examined: see whether or not you have been as active as was possible in serving the truth. Consider that you have consecrated your entire life to the Lord,

and that by his direction it is to be laid down, sacrificed, yielded up in the interest of his brethren, the Church. Consider, count, reckon, whether or not you have been faithful in this matter of laying down your life during the past year--faithful in serving the Church, the body of Christ, to the best of your ability. Remember that it is a part of the Lord's provision, that he who watereth shall himself be watered, that he who serves the truth to others may appropriate to himself the more abundantly at the Lord's table of grace and truth.

EXAMPLES OF PROPER COUNTING, VALUATION, ETC.

In our counting let us take some hints and suggestions from the inspired apostles; let us note how they counted matters and things--which matters they set down to the profit account, and which to the loss account. Hearken to the Apostle Paul's words: "Neither count I my [earthly] life dear [precious, valuable] unto me." (Acts 20:24.) Again, "I count all things [earthly] but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. 3:8.) Paul's estimation was not merely that the future glories were worthy of some loss in the present time, but that even the knowledge of Christ (including the knowledge of God's grace toward us through him, and the knowledge and consequent opportunities of running the race for the great prize)--was alone worth

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the price; he estimated that the loss of all things, in order to obtain this knowledge (and its opportunities), would be a great bargain. Let us thank God if we have this good asset--a knowledge of Christ,--a knowledge of his character, and a deep appreciation of it, a knowledge of the plan which centers in him--no matter what it has cost us of earthly good; if we have this knowledge, if to us he is precious, we are rich today, thank God! The same Apostle proceeds to say that already he had suffered the loss of all things and did "count them but dung," that he might "win Christ, and be found in him"--a member of his body.

A further suggestion as to how to count is found in the Apostle James' words, "Count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith worketh patience," etc. (James 1:2.) No doubt, as each looks back for a year, we see that there were numerous snares and temptations in our pathway. Over some, no doubt, we gained victories, readily; others perhaps we conquered with a severer struggle; and still others perhaps were only partial victories,--they were partially reverses, partially victories

for our enemy.

What did these temptations bring us? What has been their value? One value, as the Apostle suggests, is the lesson of forbearance. They proved to us that we are still in the schooling time, in the testing time;--to demonstrate our loyalty to the Lord, and our worthiness, through his merit, to a share in his Kingdom. All wish frequently, no doubt, that the testings were all over, and that we were accepted to a place amongst the overcomers; but patience and faith and trust are to do a refining work in our hearts, making us mellow, willing and obedient to the Lord. Let the good work go on. Let us rejoice if our trials have brought us lessons of any kind that are profitable to us,--that have tended to make us stronger in character, more firm for truth and righteousness, more aware of our own weaknesses, and more on guard against the same. Even those conflicts which have resulted in only partial victories have possibly been to our advantage. Surely so, in proportion as we contended earnestly against our weaknesses or against the besetments of the Adversary. Even on points in which there may have been absolute failure, the result may be a strengthening of character, a crystallization of determination for greater zeal in that direction again; and a humility of heart before the Lord in prayer, which has caused us to remember the throne of grace afresh, and that thither we may flee in every moment of temptation and find the succor which we need.

The Apostle Paul summed up his account, and balanced it, as follows: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"--the faithful. (Rom. 8:18.) In our reckoning, in our account for the year, let us similarly reckon the things which we have suffered, whether they be few or many, small or great--whatever we suffered for Christ's sake, for righteousness' sake, for the truth's sake,--let us rejoice therein, and endeavor for the coming year, to be so much more faithful in all these respects, that it may be our high privilege of suffering something further for the name of Christ, for his cause, and for his brethren.

As we reckon the profit and loss sides of the account for the year, let us be thankful that amongst the shortcomings which all may have to deplore none of us find one item of evil which the Apostle mentions; viz., none of us "count the blood of the covenant, wherewith we were sanctified, an unholy [ordinary] thing." Thank God, we still appreciate the precious blood of Christ; we still appreciate the fact that we are accepted, not in any merit or worthiness of our own, but in him who loved us and who bought us with his own precious blood. Oh, how much we have to be thankful for in this one feature of our experience,

even if, as we look back, we find that there have been vacillations or slips or slidings in the pathway! How much we may thank the Lord, that by his grace we still are what we are, and still have the opportunity of persevering and running with renewed zeal and patience the race set before us,--looking unto Jesus for our example.

HOW THE LORD IS ACCOUNTING RESPECTING US.

Finally, in our account of matters, let us take courage from the Lord's statement respecting how he counts things, and let us count accordingly. The Apostle said himself, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." (I Tim. 1:12.) Ah,

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yes, what a blessed satisfaction it is to us to know that while the Lord knows of our every word and every deed he is pleased to count us something different, even from our words and our deeds--something better! Our words do not always represent the full sentiments of our hearts; our conduct does not come up to the standard: after the words have been spoken and after the deeds have been done--perhaps to the very best of our ability--we realize that they have come short of the glory of God, and short of our own ideals, desires and efforts. How consoling it is to us, then, to know that our imperfect work shall be acceptable through Christ to God; that the Lord counts us according to our intentions, according to our wills. Praise his name! We would have no hope of coming up to any standard of perfection which he would approve, were it not for his gracious arrangement by which our imperfections are covered by our Redeemer's perfection and sacrifice, and our works accepted according to the intentions and desires of our hearts.

The Apostle rejoiced that by the Lord's counting him according to his intentions, and not according to his deeds, he was counted worthy a place in the ministry. Let us similarly rejoice, and let us remember that the word "ministry" signifies service, and the word "minister" signifies servant. Let us remember that all of the Royal Priesthood, all of the truly consecrated Church of God, are ministers, servants of God and of each other. The Lord has put us all into the ministry; and there is a ministry, a service of kindness and of love toward the Lord, in honoring his name and declaring his righteousness; and a ministry toward the brethren, in opening the eyes of their understanding and enabling them to

appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Lord's character. A share in this ministry belongs to each one of us, and it is a great privilege. It is a ministry, or service which, if neglected,

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or in proportion as neglected, brings us corresponding loss in spiritual progress and character. Let us count this privilege a valuable asset, to carry over into the new year, to be used with greater diligence than ever in the service of our King.

The Apostle, in writing to the Church at Thessalonica (2 Thes. 1:5), says, "That ye may be counted worthy of the Kingdom for which ye also suffer." Ah, yes; this is more of the Lord's counting. We are not worthy of the Kingdom of God. No human being is worthy; but the Lord purposes to count his faithful ones worthy. He will do this through the merit of his own great atonement-sacrifice which permits the acceptance of our wills, our intentions, as instead of the perfect works of righteousness. Thank God for this generous accounting! Let it encourage us, and let us remember the Apostle's statement that those who will be counted of our Lord thus fit for the Kingdom, will be such as suffer something for it. Let us then strive in a reasonable, rational manner, according to the divine Word and plan, to suffer for the Kingdom's sake.

We are not to seek suffering in a foolish way, by doing foolish things. We have no such example in our Lord's case, nor in the case of the apostles. It is not even necessary that we should suffer martyrdom or physical persecution. Possibly the extent of our sufferings may be the wounding of our feelings, when--"The workers of iniquity...whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words, that they may shoot in secret at the innocent." (Psa. 64:3.) Perhaps our sufferings, even, will be still less than this, as the Apostle explains (Heb. 10:33-35): "Partly whilst ye were made a gazingstock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." Let us resolve to carry this good asset over into the new year, rejoicing that we have been privileged thus far to suffer some little for the Lord's sake and for the sake of the truth, and in companionship with the brethren; heeding the Apostle's words, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward." God wishes us to trust him according to his promises, and will reward such faith.

We conclude this exhortation to spiritual accounting, by calling attention to the Apostle's words: "We pray always for you--that God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure

of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." (2 Thess. 1:11.) This is our prayer for you, beloved in the Lord; and we trust also that this is your prayer for us. What more could we ask than that the Lord would count us worthy of the great high-calling of this Gospel age,--to joint-heirship with his Son in the Kingdom? We have his assurance respecting the terms on which he will count us worthy. We realize that the terms are very reasonable indeed, and that what we do sacrifice in conforming to those terms would be really only as loss and dross to us, so long as we were filled with a proper zeal for the Lord and his cause. And now notice the Apostle's words, that these good things which our heavenly Father has called us to receive--to prove ourselves worthy of receiving, according to his gracious terms in Christ --are not things which he offers us grudgingly, but things which he is well pleased to bestow. There was a time, perhaps, with each of us, when, under misinterpretations of the Lord's Word, we supposed that coldly and heartlessly, our Heavenly Father preferred not to give many blessings, and would give them to but few, and to them in a grudging manner, because impelled thereto by Jesus; and that for the great majority he had determined, beforehand, that they should be delivered over to devils for an eternity of misery. Thank God for a clearer opening of the eyes of our understanding, by which now we may know him as our Father, and appreciate to some extent his wonderful plan!

And, as respects our own share, let us settle it in our hearts that these gracious things to which we are called are "all the good pleasure of his goodness." Let us start into the new year with good courage, remembering that if God loved us while we were yet sinners, strangers, aliens, foreigners, much more does he now love us since we have come into relationship with him through Jesus Christ our Lord;--since we are seeking to walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit; since we are seeking to be copies of his dear Son, our Lord; since we have been begotten by his holy spirit. Truly, faith may confidently exclaim, "All things are ours, for we are Christ's and Christ is God's!"

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CONTRASTING EXPERIENCES OF THE SAINTS.

--ACTS 12:1-9.--MAY 11.--

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."--Psalm 34:7.

HEROD, was a family name. There were several kings over Israel by this name; (1) Herod the Great, who flourished about the time of our Lord's birth, and who murdered the babes of Bethlehem. (2) Herod Archelaus, son and successor to Herod the Great--deposed A.D. 6. (3) Herod Antipas, another son of Herod the Great, the murderer of John the Baptist, who subsequently, with his men of war, set at naught and mocked Jesus, just prior to his crucifixion--deposed A.D. 40. (4) Herod Agrippa I., grandson of Herod the Great, mentioned in the present lesson as the murderer of the Apostle James. (5) Herod Agrippa II., the last of the Herods, before whom the Apostle Paul defended himself.--Acts 26:28.

The Herod of our lesson (Agrippa I.) was given his kingdom by Claudius Caesar, Emperor of Rome, whom he saved from a violent death. History says of him, "He curried favor with the Jews in every way: he hung in the Temple, as a votive offering, the gold chain which the Emperor Caligula had given him; he lived in Jerusalem, and punctiliously observed the traditions of the fathers, and secured the fervent loyalty of the Pharisees. At the Feast of Tabernacles, A.D. 41, he took the reader's stand, and read the whole Book of Deuteronomy aloud, bursting into

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tears, as if quite overcome, when he reached the words, 'Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, who is not thy brother.' He feared that because he had Edomite blood in his veins he might incur the hatred his grandfather, Herod the Great, had borne, and took this way to gain the political favor of the Jews, who cried out, 'Do not weep, Agrippa; thou art our brother.'" Within a month after the events of this lesson he was a corpse. His tragic end at Caesarea, whither he had gone to a magnificent festival, in honor of Claudius Caesar, is thus summed up by Geike, from Josephus' account:--

"A vast multitude assembled to see the festival and games, and before these the king, in all the pride of high state, appeared in robes inwrought with silver threads. The time chosen was daybreak, so that the kindling sun shining on his grand mantle lighted it into dazzling splendor. Presently some of his flatterers, always at hand beside a king, raised the cry, echoing a reminiscence of the days of Caligula, 'Deign to be gracious to us, thou divine one! Hitherto we have honored thee as a man; henceforth we own thee as more than mortal!' Instead of rebuking such lying servility he drank in this adulation with high pleasure. Next moment a great pain racked his bowels. Conscience-stricken at this blasphemous folly, the poor wretch felt that the wrath

of God had struck him down, and the cry arose from him in his agony, 'See, your god must now give up life, and hasten into the arms of corruption!' In the Acts (12:23) we are told that he 'was eaten of worms.'"

Knowing thus much about the man, Herod, enables us to understand why he made his attack upon

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the Church. Altho not a descendant of Jacob, but of Esau, he had espoused the religion prevalent in his kingdom, and was seeking favor with the Jews by his zeal for Judaism,--which meant, of course, his zeal and energy correspondingly against Christianity. As we have already seen, the Jews had begun a work of persecution against the Church, but were hindered by their own troubles with Caligula Caesar; but the latter was now dead, and the persecuting tendencies of misdirected fervor could again be exercised. The Lord, of course, was not subject to these conditions, and could have miraculously prevented the persecutions recorded. But, as the lesson shows, he permitted the evil to triumph in part and restrained it in part.

The Apostle James, whose death is here recorded, in few words, was a matter of fact one of the most noble and notable of the apostles. He was one of the three who usually accompanied our Lord in the most confidential capacity;--with his brother John, and Peter, he was with the Lord in the Mount of Transfiguration. In the same company he was present at the awakening of Jairus' daughter. In the same company he was one of the inner circle of the Lord's friends in the trying hour in the Garden of Gethsemane. It was he and his brother whom our Lord surnamed Boanerges--"sons of thunder"--probably because of their eloquence and forcefulness of speech. It was he and his brother whose mother entreated the Lord that they might sit "the one on his right hand and the other on his left, in the Kingdom," and who, when questioned by our Lord, declared their willingness to share in his work and suffering, even unto death. They were both faithful, James being amongst the earliest of the martyrs for the cause, and John living to a life of old age,--being probably the last survivor of the apostles. Altho the record of James' ministry is brief in the extreme, it contains nothing that gives the slightest suggestion of anything except zeal and faithfulness to the Lord and to his cause. This James, who died early in the Christian era, should not be confounded with the other James, the author of the Epistle of James--known as "James the Less," the son of Alpheus (Cleopas--Mark 3:18)--husband of Mary, supposed to have been second cousin to our Lord, and for this reason, according

to Jewish custom, styled "the Lord's brother."--Gal. 1:19.

When Herod saw what satisfaction it gave his subjects, and especially their leaders, the Pharisees, that he should thus persecute the Christians, he proceeded to take Peter also. The implication is that James and Peter were two of the foremost amongst the apostles in the Church at this time. The expression, "When he had apprehended him," implies that some delay occurred between the order for his arrest and the time of his imprisonment. He was delivered to four quaternions of soldiers. A quaternion consisted of four soldiers to guard a prisoner, two of them being chained to him, one on each side, by the wrists; the other two doing sentinel duty, one at the door of the cell and the other in an outer court. The four quaternions were in the nature of relief guards, so that each quaternion would have charge of the Apostle for six hours of the twenty-four.

It was at the season of Easter, or, more properly, the Passover--"the days of unleavened bread." The time of his arrest was too close to this religious festival to make it proper for such a public execution as Herod had determined upon. He would reserve his show of zeal for the Jews' religion until this festival was at an end. Meantime, the infant Church at Jerusalem was evidently sadly perplexed by the trend of affairs--at a loss to know how to interpret the Lord's providences. Doubtless they held their memorial of the Redeemer's death at this time, as we now do, and their hearts were sadly stricken with a realization of the fact that the Lord's faithful must all drink of his cup--of ignominy and death. Altho a considerable number of Jews had accepted Jesus, as we saw in a previous lesson, apparently the majority of the believers were scattered abroad, but few of them residing in Jerusalem. These few it seems met in little groups, in private houses, for prayer and praise, for study of the Lord's Word and for building one another up in the most holy faith; and such a meeting was in progress during this eventful Passover week. We are informed that the burden of their prayer was for Peter.

Well instructed by the apostles, we may be sure that they strove not to ask amiss; and that they copied the Master's petition, at least in so far as the expression, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." We have no record that the Church met in prayer for James, tho quite possibly it did; neither are we bound to suppose that if they had not met and prayed

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for Peter, Herod would have succeeded in killing him also. It is sufficient for us that we remember that God has plans of his own, irrespective of the

plans and prayers of his people, and that all of his good purposes will be accomplished; but it is well that we should note also his good pleasure that his people should come so fully into accord with him and his plans that they would neither be surprised nor disappointed in their fulfilment.

Probably James' death was accomplished suddenly, while, as we have seen, Peter was held over in bonds. This gave the Church time to consider how much she had already lost, and how much she might lose further were not the Lord to interpose for her protection. No doubt they reasoned that they had already sustained a great loss; and no doubt Peter's life and his service seemed much more precious to them since the loss of James. In any event, the Lord's people were getting a blessing through their experiences and through their prayers. Peter also was getting a valuable experience; and doubtless the Lord was overruling in the matter so that a great blessing and stimulus to the faith of all, would ensue through Peter's release.

Peter, his heart filled with the peace of God which passeth all understanding, was enabled to sleep peacefully in the prison, notwithstanding the unfavorable conditions in which he was placed, and his expectancy that on the morrow he would be called before the king and publicly executed. What a blessing is this rest of heart, this ability to entrust to the Lord all of life's affairs! It is written, "He giveth his beloved sleep." (Psa. 127:2.) We cannot say that the Lord's people are never troubled with insomnia, sleeplessness, but we can say that many, previously troubled with the cares of this life, exciting to nervousness, have by the Lord's grace been enabled so to cast all their care upon him that it has in great measure controlled their nerves and brought back to them the ability to enjoy sweet refreshing rest in sleep. Nothing is more favorable to this peace of heart than a full consecration to the Lord--"all to his wisdom resigned:" it entitles to a full confidence in the divine promises,--through faith in the divine wisdom, love and power, which has guaranteed that all things shall work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

Peter was aroused from his sleep, loosed from his chains, bidden to arise and fasten the girdle usually relaxed in slumber, to put on his sandals,--wrap himself in his outer cloak and follow the messenger, the light of whose glory filled the prison cell. The doors opened before them; they passed the sentinel unobserved, and Peter was led from the castle of Antonia into the city proper. There the heavenly messenger left him. There is a simplicity to this narrative which, even on the surface, commends it as truthful. Were it a fiction doubtless the author would have stated matters altogether differently. He

would have represented the angel as doing homage to the apostle, or delivering to him some complimentary message from the Lord, or lifting him up or putting on his sandals and fastening them for him, or assisting in girding him or putting on his mantle. He would have had him give Peter certain directions at the time of leaving, etc. But this simple account merely represents the angel as doing for Peter what he could not do for himself, and no more, and leaving him without a word as soon as he had brought him properly into the city.

The record shows that Peter was so surprised with what had transpired that he for a time fancied himself in a dream, in a trance,--expecting that he would awaken shortly to realize himself still bound; but the cool morning air, between three and six o'clock, and being left alone, brought him to his senses and convinced him that he was actually at liberty. He knew well the usual meeting place, and thither he bent his steps. It was the home of Mary, mother of John Mark--cousin of Barnabas, (so "sister's son" should read in Col. 4:10.) John was his Hebrew name and Marcus his Latin name. It was this Mark who was the Evangelist, the author of the Book of Mark,--the same who accompanied Barnabas and Paul on their first missionary journey.

Altho the hour was an unusual one, the inmates of the house were awake, the prayer-meeting was still going on at the very time when the Lord was answering the petition. Peter's knock on the outer door was responded to by the little maid-servant of the family, Rhoda (Rose), who, child-like, discerning the voice of Peter (for it was customary to make inquiries before opening the door) was so surprised and delighted that she neglected to open the door before running back to give word to the assembled disciples.

The fact that the praying ones were amazed, astonished, and could scarcely believe that it was Peter who had come, does not prove that they had not faith in their own prayers. Rather, we may say that their faith in prayer was well attested by their continuance in it all night, and to such an hour in the morning, and that they were not asleep at the time Peter knocked; but, knowing something regarding the prison and the appointment of four quaternions of soldiers, they would reasonably expect that whatever answer might come to their prayers would not be a

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release of Peter under such circumstances, but might rather be some interference at the time of the trial, something to change the mind of the king, who would be the judge in this case, and thus to bring about Peter's release. But "God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform," and not infrequently

his ways are not as our ways, and sometimes we learn valuable lessons under just such circumstances. Doubtless the faith of some was shaken considerably by the death of the Apostle James; doubtless they queried concerning the lack of the manifestation of divine favor and interference for the protection of the Apostle and for his preservation as a helper in the Church. But if they were thus tempted and tried, and their faith sorely tested for a while, they had now, in Peter's experience, a valuable lesson on the other side--an illustration of God's power to intervene when he will and how he will on his people's behalf.

Here again, in this contrast between the experiences of James and those of Peter, we have something that would be entirely contrary to the manner or thought of a forger attempting to write such an account from his imagination. It would not occur to him to have so marked a manifestation of divine providential care in the case of Peter, and to leave James' case with apparently no evidences of divine

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protection. And this calls to our mind the fact that divine providence seems frequently to operate along these lines--contrasting between the experiences of different members of the body of Christ, and sometimes instituting contrasts in our own individual experiences as Christians. In some of life's events we can see the Lord's protecting and guiding care most markedly, while in others it would seem absolutely lacking. The lesson it should bring to us is one of full faith in the Lord, and of full submission to all his providences. Indeed, we are to note that in the majority of cases our experiences are far more like that of James than like this experience of Peter's. The miracles which we can trace in our own experience are certainly few and far between. Whatever we have had, or whatever the apostles or others have had in this direction, which serves to demonstrate to us God's supervision of his own affairs, is evidently intended to give us strength and courage, whereby we can walk fearlessly and courageously in the dark, for, as the Apostle says, under divine providence we generally are called upon to "walk by faith, not by sight."--2 Cor. 5:7.

"IT IS HIS ANGEL!"

"Are they [angels] not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them [unto those] who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:10.) Knowing the Apostle Peter to be one of the heirs of salvation, and never for a moment considering the possibility of his escape from prison, the brethren queried if their visitor might not be Peter's angel as his representative,

come in answer to their prayers, to give them consolation. Soon, however, they realized that it was Peter himself, and afterward learned of his miraculous deliverance by the angel.

Verse 17 implies that when the brethren realized that it was actually Peter who stood before them they were excited with joy, and would probably have created quite a commotion had not the Apostle beckoned to them with his hand that they should be quiet. Then calmly explaining to them his providential deliverance, and sending a message to James ("the Less") "the Lord's brother" or second cousin and to all the brethren, he at once left the place--left Jerusalem. When Peter and John were delivered from prison it was by the Lord's instruction that they went back to the Temple and continued to proclaim; but now, in the absence of any instruction from the Lord to the contrary, the Apostle wisely understood that his proper course, in co-operation with the Lord's providences, was that he should flee, that he should not put himself unnecessarily into danger, nor attempt to wage a warfare with the representative of the Roman government, trusting to further miraculous deliverances.

We know some who would have been inclined, in Peter's place, to have made a great hurrah about the escape, and to have boasted that prison-walls and Roman soldiers were powerless against the Lord; and who, perhaps, would have gone the length of daring the king to arrest them again. But we believe such a course would not have been the will of the Lord, and that Peter evidently took the proper course. This suggestion may be valuable to some of the Lord's people. This is the time in which "the prince of this world" is permitted to maintain his general control; and we are to expect miraculous deliverances to be the exception rather than the rule, and are to act accordingly;--so far as lieth in us, preserving the peace, living peaceably with all men. Peter's conduct in not daring the king was not a manifestation of lack of confidence in divine power, but it was in obedience to the Master's words, "When they shall persecute you in one city flee ye to another." The persecution had reached him personally; he had been delivered from it, and now was his time to flee to another place, where doubtless, the Lord had other work for him to do. Let us be prompt in following a similar course in proportion as our circumstances correspond. When the persecution gets too severe, cry to the Lord for help, and if he opens a door of deliverance flee to another place or condition, where, with equal boldness and courage and faith you will, as before, lift high the royal banner.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT.

It is comparatively easy for us to associate our Golden Text with Peter and his deliverance, and with ourselves in instances of peculiar assistance from the Lord in our affairs, temporal or spiritual; but it is much more difficult for us to associate it with the experiences of the Apostle James and with our own experiences, in which disasters, difficulties and fiery trials are permitted to come upon us. Such experiences are doubtless sent of the Lord for the development and testing of our faith. The Lord's providential care was none the less in the case of James, and we may be sure that nothing happened to him contrary to divine intention and permission; and so with ourselves; we may be sure, not only that the Lord knoweth them that are his, but sure also that "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints," and that he "will not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but will with the temptation provide also a way of escape." In James' case the "escape" was final and decisive, in Peter's it was temporary.

Our trials and difficulties are not, therefore, to be esteemed as the results of divine carelessness in respect to our interests, but as the outworkings of divine providence for our good. Those who are able to view the matter from this standpoint are thus enabled to learn some of the very best and most helpful of life's lessons, and are thereby prepared for the glorious things coming; whereas those who allow faith to falter in times of trial, and who will walk with the Lord and have confidence in him only when they are the recipients of miraculous favors, are correspondingly weak, and correspondingly unprepared for the Kingdom. And as these lessons are necessary to the individual, so they are necessary also to the Church as a whole, as in the case of James and the Church in our lesson. So far as James was concerned, it could matter little to him which way the Lord effected his "escape" if, in the Lord's wisdom, he had finished his course, perfected his character and stood the test. As for the Church, it could learn an important lesson; viz., that God, while pleased to use the Apostles and various agencies in the prosecution of his work, was not at all dependent upon them, but that one or all of them could be dropped out, and yet the Lord be thoroughly competent to manage his own work and to accomplish all the gracious promises of his Word.

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"THY WILL BE DONE!"

My Lord, thy will not mine be done:
Whatever path thy love shall choose for me,

Through desert sands, or if beside the sea,--
Thy will be done!

Oh, may thy will in me be done!
Should "harvest" labor be for me thy will,
Or if I may but suffer and be still,--
Thy will be done!

My Father, let thy will be done:
If sweet the Cup thou pourest for me to drink,
I'll praise thee; but, if bitter, I'll not shrink,--
Thy will be done!

Forever may thy will be done:
I would not choose, I leave it all with thee,--
The pilgrimage, if short or long it be,--
Thy will be done!
--G. W. Seibert.

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THE EARLY CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES.

--ACTS 13:1-12.--MAY 18, 1902.--

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations."--Matt. 28:19.

OUR GOLDEN TEXT is aptly illustrated in this lesson. Our Lord's commission* was not, as some have supposed, a command to convert the world, nor is there any suggestion anywhere in the Scriptures that the preaching of the gospel was with such an end in view. Quite to the contrary, every intimation of our Lord's parables illustrating the subject, and all of the words of the apostles, were to the effect that at the end of the age, at the second coming of Christ, he would not find faith predominating in the earth; he would not find God's will done on earth as in heaven; but he would find merely a little flock, selected from the world through the preaching of the truth. These would be made meet to be the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and joint-heir with him in the glorious Kingdom then to be established for the purpose of binding Satan, restraining evil, and causing truth and righteousness to fill the earth and bless all the nations.--Luke 18:8; 12:32; Rev. 20:1-3.

The commission meant merely--You are no longer restricted to the Jews in preaching this Gospel of the Kingdom; you may now deliver it to all the world, every nation, so that "he that hath an ear" may hear--to the intent that a little flock, the elect, spiritual Israel, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar

*The word "therefore" in this text, is omitted by the oldest Greek MS., the Sinaitic, and also by the Alexandrine.

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people, may be selected from all nations for future service in the Kingdom. In accord with this, our Lord's instruction, as related by Luke, says, "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." (Luke 24:47.) And again, as recorded in Acts 1:8, he said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The apostles evidently did not at first comprehend the scope of the Master's commission. They were ready enough to begin at Jerusalem; ready also, as we have seen, to extend the work throughout Judea; ready also when the Lord's providence so led, to preach to the Samaritans; but it required very special instructions for Peter to preach to the Gentiles also. As the Gospel was not intended to convert all of the Jews, but only to take from them a remnant while the rest were left blinded for a time, so, likewise, it was intended to take from amongst the Gentiles also only a remnant, so that the entire company of the elect of this age is properly termed "a little flock," to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom,--which Kingdom, it is also the Father's good pleasure, shall bless all the families of the earth.

Antioch was the first church of believers, so far as we know, outside of Palestine--the first church amongst the Gentiles. Its members were probably chiefly Jews, and these chiefly foreign born. The Jews residing abroad doubtless appreciated the fact that amongst their Gentile neighbors were some of noble character, not less worthy of divine favor than were the Jews; and these doubtless would, on this account, the more quickly fall into line with the Lord's instruction and leading respecting the gospel --that it was thenceforth not for Jews exclusively, but for people of all nationalities who were in heart-readiness to receive it.

A previous lesson showed us Barnabas and Paul meeting with the brethren at Antioch, for a considerable time, in the worship of the Lord and in the study of his Word. The result of these studies was to develop the Church as a whole, and to bring it to the point of considering and praying about means for the service of the truth--the spread of the Gospel. There were a number of prophets (public orators) and teachers in the Church, and evidently they began to think of how they might be used to the glory of God and to the blessing of others, as they themselves had been

blessed by the truth. This is always the case with those who receive the truth into good and honest hearts. Properly enough, they desire to feed thereon themselves and to grow strong in the Lord, but just so surely as the truth is received, with its spirit, it gives a strength and a desire to use that strength. This is as true today as it was then: the consecration which the truth brings is identical with our begetting of the spirit; and the energy for service corresponds to the quickening of the spirit.

We see a distinction drawn in our lesson between prophets and teachers. The Greek word rendered "prophet" signifies a "forth-teller." It might be understood to mean one who tells in advance, or foretells, or prophesies coming events; but in its general use in the New Testament the word seems to indicate one who tells forth, in the sense of proclaiming, giving public utterance to, or standing up before the people in declaration of the Lord's message. The distinction between prophets and teachers, as here used, seems to be that the former were persons of natural talent and ability for teaching the truth in a public manner, in orderly discourse, etc., while the teachers would be those possessing talent as instructors, but not necessarily in a public, or oratorical

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manner. The same distinctions are true today amongst the Lord's people; comparatively few have the qualifications for public speaking--for presenting an address in an orderly manner, that will be truly helpful to the hearers. Some others, who have not ability as public discourses, have talent for presenting the truth in a less public manner, as in Bible studies, etc.

It is for the Lord to supply the talents as he may deem best, and it is for each individual and the Church as a whole to utilize the talents of which they find themselves possessed. Little companies of the Lord's people are not to determine that they must have public preaching, and then endeavor to have it, good or bad. Rather, they are to seek to know the mind of the Lord on the subject, and to have such meetings as the Lord's providence may make possible and proper. If there be one or two or more brethren in the congregation who have the ability to teach--to conduct the services of the Church, and to draw out the brethren in questions and answers as a Bible class, in a Bible study, giving their own opinions with the others, the Church should seek to use such brethren in its services as they may consent. And if there be in the number one or more with talent for a public or connected presentation, in the nature of a discourse, let them also, if they will, be put into service. The object of the Church should, in every

case, be to develop, to use, to exercise, all of its different members: each according to his ability and development, spiritual and natural.

It would be specially unfortunate if any companies of the Lord's people whom he had brought into the light of present truth should become ensnared with the wrong views and wrong practices of the nominal church systems, so as to consider public preaching (prophesying) the only proper and satisfactory service. Rather, let us remember to look for the various members whom the Lord shall set in the body and endeavor to use all of them. (I Cor. 12.) We will find that he sets many more teachers than prophets, orators; and we will find that our blessing, as little companies of his people, will be greater in proportion as we note the Lord's providences and fall in line with them. We trust that the new Bibles will prove very helpful in this respect--in enabling many to teach--to lead meetings--to draw out the thoughts of the brethren--to present before their minds the Word of the Lord and the true understanding of the same. The Topical Index will be found very helpful too we trust.

The Church at Antioch evidently had an over-supply of teachers, as compared to its own requirements; but having the proper spirit in the matter, desiring to accomplish as large results in the Lord's service as possible, the brethren had no thought of crushing out or holding down any who manifested ability for the Lord's service. On the contrary, they began to look about them for larger fields of usefulness. They were uncertain regarding the course they should pursue, and hence looked to the Lord as the real Head and guide in the Church's affairs. They served and they fasted, and we may be sure that they prayed also; and as a result they came to the conclusion to send forth two of their number--Barnabas and Paul--as representatives of the whole in mission work. We are not informed in what manner the Lord directed them to this. It is possible that it was after the same manner that we today, under similar circumstances, considering such a case, would say--We believe, after studying the Scriptures and praying, and seeking to know the mind of the Lord, that it would be his will that such ones of our number should go out for a public service of the truth. We believe that we are guided to this conclusion, not by any wrong spirit of pride or fond ambition to have the name of sending out missionaries, nor with any mercenary motive,--but that we are actuated by the spirit of the truth, the spirit of Christ, the holy spirit, in this determination,--that our motives are sincere. We believe that we have the Lord's mind on the subject; we believe that it is the Lord's will that we as a congregation should send forth these two as representatives of our number, to carry the light to others.

In this manner, or in some manner, the conviction came strongly to the entire Church at Antioch that this was its duty and its privilege. It is worthy of note, too, that it sought out its very best for this service --thus letting the spirit of self-sacrifice prevail. They still had Simeon Niger and Lucius and Menaen, talented brethren, and the latter one of considerable worldly standing and influence, tho evidently an aged man--foster-brother to Herod Antipas. But none of these remaining were the equals of Paul and Barnabas. This liberal disposition on the part of the Church is worthy of praise, and we are sure brought to it a large measure of the Lord's blessing. Not that we should be reckless of the interests of the home congregation in serving others, so as to leave ourselves destitute; but in making our sacrifices to the Lord and his service we are to seek to give of the best we have. No doubt the Lord blessed the Church correspondingly, and made up to them the loss sustained in the giving of these two brethren to the mission work. No doubt the other members of the congregation were all the more energized, stimulated, brought forward in activity, and made the more useful.

The proper course decided upon, the congregation fasted and prayed and laid their hands on Paul and Barnabas, and sent them on their missionary tour with their blessing and God-speed. In our practical time some of us may be inclined to pay too little heed to incidentals of this kind; there might be today too much disposition amongst us to take a vote on what we believed to be the Lord's will, and to shake hands with the brethren, and say "Goodbye," without the fasting and praying and imposition of hands. We would be inclined to ask, What good would these things do? What purpose would they serve? They would do good to all; they would serve to impress upon all--the missionaries starting and the brethren remaining--the importance of the Lord's service, and the fact that those who remained were having a share with those who went. The laying on of hands would probably be done by the congregation, through the other representatives or Elders. But this proceeding did not signify, as is generally understood today, an "Ordination;" for the Apostle Paul and Barnabas had been recognized in the Church at Antioch for a considerable time as amongst their principal prophets and teachers. It would not signify authority to preach, as Ordination

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sometimes means today amongst Christians of various sects and parties. It simply meant that--We, the congregation, by this laying on of hands of our representative Elders, are sending forth these two men, Paul and Barnabas, on a missionary tour; and

that they go, not only as the representatives of the Lord, and as representatives of themselves, but also as representatives of the Church of the Lord at Antioch, and as such we hold ourselves responsible for their maintenance. We will supply them the needful assistance, and thus will be co-laborers with them,-- sharers in their labors, sympathizers with them in their difficulties and trials, helpers of them in their necessities, and partakers with them also in whatever results shall come to the Lord's praise through their efforts. Accordingly, we find that after this missionary tour the two brethren returned to Antioch, and made report. It would appear that subsequently the Apostle Paul, at least, travelled without any such dependence upon the Church at Antioch, --without any such praying and laying on of hands, and without any subsequent reports of results of labors, --tho still in love and in sympathy with them, so far as we may judge.

The nature of the praying offered in connection with the sending forth of the missionaries we can readily imagine;--they were, doubtless, prayers for the Lord's blessing upon them, for their guidance, for their support and strengthening, and that their journey might be profitable and to the Lord's praise. But why the fasting? says one. What advantage could accrue from fasting at such a time? We answer that the Lord and the apostles and prophets have all set us an example in the matter of fasting. It is claimed, no doubt with truth, that many people overeat, and that restraints in the matter of diet would be profitable to them physically and mentally and morally, without any reference whatever to its being a sacrifice or oblation unto the Lord. No doubt this is true, yet it is for each person to decide for himself as to what would be the proper amount and kind of food for him--best calculated to help him in spiritual matters, that his time and talent and influence may count as largely as possible for the Lord's praise and for his own spiritual progress. We remind our readers again that there are other appetites besides those for food and drink which may properly be considered in connection with this matter of fasting--all the various desires of the flesh need restraining, and such self-restraint and the bringing of our minds, our thoughts, our words, our conduct and our food under such restraints as will be most beneficial to us as new creatures in Christ, is the very essence and spirit of true fasting, and such fasting will surely bring a blessing and permit a closer approach to the Lord and a keener realization of his love and favor.

Luke, the narrator, keeps prominently before us the fact that these two missionaries were not sent forth regardless of the Lord's will, but by the holy spirit--however the Lord's mind may have been ascertained. We believe that it was ascertained by

a vote of the Church; that the Church, having come into the attitude of harmony with God, through prayer, fasting, consecration, etc., was possessed of the holy spirit, and that to such a degree that their action would properly be considered the action of the holy spirit through them.

The missionaries went from Antioch, a distance of eighteen miles, to the seaport town of Seleucia, where they took ship for the nearest large city in the Island of Cyprus. It was probably as good a place to begin as any, and had the advantage of being the home country of Barnabas, who would be familiar with the dialect of the people, their customs, etc.

John Mark, the writer of the Gospel by Mark, cousin of Barnabas, and son of one of the Marys at Jerusalem (Acts 12:12,25), is noted as being their minister, attendant servant, and this, together with the fact that he was not sent out by the Church as a missionary with the others, shows us clearly that while all brethren are to be very highly esteemed as brethren this does not signify that they have all one office or one work. It is the same lesson which the apostle inculcates in I Cor. 12, saying, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." The eye serves the hand in some respects; the hand serves the eye in other respects; the foot serves both in still other respects, and both hand and eye serve the foot.

The lesson here is that each of us should seek to find the position in which the Lord is pleased to have us and to use us, and finding this we are to exercise ourselves therein as best we are able;--continuing, if the will of God be such, to abide in that condition and service forever, and thankful for the privilege of serving the body of Christ in any capacity. In the Lord's providence, however, those who serve faithfully in the humbler positions of service are very apt to be advanced to some still greater and more important service. Nevertheless, it is not for us to cultivate ambitions, with their accompanying spirit of envy; but to say rather,

"Content whatever lot I see

Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

If the Lord opens before us more important doors of service, and we are sure that the opening is of him, we are to go forward rejoicing in his service in any capacity, and confident of a blessing in return.

Altho these brethren, Paul and Barnabas, fully appreciated the fact that Gentiles might now have access to the blessings of the Gospel, nevertheless, in every place they entered into the synagogues of the Jews; because the Jews who already believed Moses and the prophets, and who already expected Messiah, would necessarily be in a much better attitude of

mind to receive their message, than would be the Gentiles, who had no knowledge of such matters, and who, therefore, would have to approach the subject more gradually, and would require more instruction. Indeed, we may suppose that the larger proportion of converts made between the time of our Lord's resurrection and the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, were made amongst the Jews, and that comparatively few Gentiles accepted Christ up to that time. Even tho the door was open for them, still we are to remember that only those who had the hearing ear could hear the message; that only those with the anointed sight could see and appreciate the open door.

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Similarly, now, in the end of this Gospel age, the work is chiefly with Christians--it is a harvest work. As Paul and Barnabas went chiefly to the synagogues, so we today are to go chiefly to the churches. As they found in the synagogues a few ready to receive their message, so we today find a few in the churches who are prepared to receive the truth as it is now shining in the Lord's Word. The majority, now as then, are deeply immersed in formalism, and draw nigh to the Lord with their lips when their hearts are far from him, set upon the cares of this life, or filled with endeavors to attain riches, or fame or something. We today are at a disadvantage in that the sects of Christendom and their synagogues are determinedly shut against the Gospel of the Kingdom; whereas, in the apostle's day there was access and an opportunity, at least, for the presentation of the truth. Now, even our attempt to speak to the sheep, through the printed page, on the outside of their synagogues would be resisted;--if the laws of the world would permit it there would be no opportunity for even handing a tract or a paper to our dear brethren, whom we long to help into the glorious light of present truth, which has done so much for us.

The missionary tour consumed probably considerable time, as the three went from village to village, preaching Christ, until they reached the city of Paphos, at the far end of the island. We are not to suppose they made many converts. What they did do was to witness to the truth;--here and there finding an "Israelite indeed" who would have an "ear" and receive a blessing. At Paphos they found Sergius Paulus, a man of good judgment, the governor of the island, procurator or representative of the Roman Senate. He had a hearing ear even before the apostles got there, and the Adversary, noting this, was at work upon him through one of his servants, Elymas, a sorcerer or magician, who had already ingratiated himself with the proconsul and gained considerable influence, and was esteemed his friend. We

are not to wonder that a man of sound judgment, as the proconsul is represented to have been, should be so interested in the magician and his doings. We are to remember, on the contrary, that similarly there are some men of ability today who are to some extent under the influence of the same Adversary and his bewitching agents--spirit mediums. Besides, the magicians in olden times were a compound or mixture of scientists and miracle workers, and usually very bright men.

When the proconsul heard something respecting the teachings of Paul and Barnabas he sent for them, desiring to know more. Then came a conflict between the powers of light and the powers of darkness, between the truth and the error. There is no harmony between the two, there can be no partnership; they are opponents at every point; and so in this case, as soon as the magician discovered that the proconsul was coming under the influence of the truth, he used his every power to dissuade him, to turn him from the doctrines--doubtless by misrepresentation, which is one of the Adversary's most common methods;

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perhaps also by slander, back-biting, evil speaking, which are works of the flesh and of the devil, but never works of the Lord or prompted by his spirit.

This furnished the occasion for a remarkable manifestation of divine power through the Apostle Paul, who denounced the magician, and pronounced upon him, in the name of the Lord, a curse, that is, a blight--blindness for a time. We are not to understand that such power and authority belong to us, or the Lord's people in general; nor did it belong even to Barnabas. Paul was chosen of the Lord to be an apostle--to take the place of Judas--and the power of discerning spirits and of restraining them was accordingly his. It was appropriate that some such manifestation of divine power should be given at the beginning of this age, not only for the establishment of the truth then, and thus the establishment of the believers of that time, but also for the establishment and information of all the household of faith from then until now.

The Apostle upbraided the magician by a plain statement of his case--that he was full of cunning and deceit and villainy; that the spirit operating in him was not the spirit of God but the spirit of the Adversary of God, and that therefore he was an enemy of all that was right and true, and seeking to pervert the right ways of the Lord; and that as a punishment the hand of the Lord (not the hand of Paul)--the judgment of the Lord--was upon him; and that he would become so blind that he could not even see the light of the sun for a time. The blindness came

upon him gradually, first a mistiness, which subsequently settled into complete darkness.

We are not to think of the apostle as pronouncing this sentence in any harsh attitude of mind. We believe, on the contrary, that he was full of sympathetic interest and kindly desire for the wrong doer, hoping that the result of his experiences would be profitable to him. Doubtless Paul remembered his own case, and what blessing had come to him when he was smitten with blindness, and doubtless he hoped for the magician a similar recognition of the Lord and similarly the opening of the eyes of his understanding, as well as of his natural eyes.

This manifestation of the Lord's power was convincing to the deputy (proconsul)--not that this incident converted him, but that having already heard the teachings, and being in the process of comparing these, in his judgment contrasting them with his previous views, and with the presentation of Elymas, he was enabled, by this incident, to reach the right conclusion; and to decide his matters on the Lord's side.

It would be difficult to find an exact parallel to this in our experiences. The nearest approach probably would be when the truth comes in conflict with the error, when the sword of the spirit, wielded by some of the Lord's simple followers, proves mighty in the overthrow of error; when the light of present truth, and the clearness with which it is presented, and the beauty in which it can be seen and appreciated, is contrasted with the error, the result is either that the truth is seen in its beauty, or the erring one opposing it becomes more densely blinded than before. But only for a season, let us hope; the time is near at hand when the great Deliverer, in his Millennial Kingdom, shall not only restrain the great Adversary, but spoil all of his house, overthrowing all the works of evil, and opening the blinded eyes and permitting all to see out of the obscurity of sin and darkness and misconception and prejudice.

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LETTERS OF INTEREST.

Dear Brother Russell:--

All that I can do is to thank you very sincerely for your kindness to me during the last three years in sending me copies of all the good things which you have been giving to the world.

Looking back over the past, I do not see how I could have gotten along without them.

For 45 years, including boyhood, I could find no

"Bible Story" that satisfied me: whichever way I turned I found an incomplete gospel. I was so constituted that I could believe nothing that was not complete and rational,--fitted to my intellectual capacity.

I believed that God's words of guidance and admonition if for me would be that which I could understand. Many cardinal errors as preached and understood by many, called from me only indignant denials. I said, If it were for me I could understand it, and not be dodging around obstacles to my reason, in a vain effort to hold on and believe.

You can imagine my eager and glad surprise when the 1st Vol. of "Millennial Dawn" came into my hands. I could take it up and read it 10 minutes or an hour at a time with the greatest satisfaction. It was a never failing satisfaction, very unlike any other book I ever read. I had read the Bible a great deal--and as I followed you along,--so calmly and dispassionately --each deduction so built up by quotations from the Bible, most of them being "old friends" of mine, and as I saw that you built nothing except on the "solid rock" the Word of God, I said, At last! At last I do understand!

And so with great joy and comfort I am still following on--feasting on the truth day by day. I shall be 72 years old on the 14th day of January, 1902.

I am yours gratefully,

F. B. Browne,--California.

Dear Brother Russell:--Thank you very much for your welcome letter of the 4th.

I had a good letter from a sister, who says of herself something very encouraging to me--that she read a little in the DAWNS for seven years before she became really interested. About a year or more ago, she and her husband left the Methodist Church in which both held prominent positions, and have been alone in the truth in their town since then, though she says others are partially interested.

How very true is the suggestion in our last Sunday's lesson about our life here being to our Lord's life on earth as 1 to 100! I can easily see myself 99-hundredths dead as compared with a perfect human being; and yet how Christ hath sweetened the scrap of life I possess, so that it is full of blessing despite its enveloping and pressing and constant limitations. Such a poor little scrap as to be quite despicable in the eyes of worldly health and healthy mental quickness and strength, yet how far I am from being willing to exchange with any one else! Once in a while I realize how my old friends stand aloof and former acquaintances have forgotten me, and feel like protesting with a bit of indignation, Why, I'm not dead! And then I recollect that I am dead, with Christ, and that hence

am privileged to live with Christ, as I look up and give thanks to be in Him. And I often think of even Emerson's words "No man ever yet stated his griefs as lightly as he might;" so if he could say that, it is much more true of the little flock. Who can so easily afford to lose earthly friends as we who have tasted of the heavenly friendship! And besides, our loss is but temporary, maybe only in appearance now. The Lord is able and willing and glad to be our all, in all, and fills our needs better than everything else could do.

Your Sister in Christ,
Alice L. Darlington,--Pennsylvania.

Dear Brother Russell: I have been reading the "Dawns" and "Towers" for over three years, and have never written to thank you; but I can assure you they have been appreciated, and have established us in the precious faith. I am a widow and advanced in years; have been a member of the Baptist Church for twenty-five years, but am now excluded, with fourteen others for advocating the "Millennial Dawn" doctrines. Dear brethren I am so glad that God has given me "ears to hear" the good tidings of great joy. I have been loaning my "Watch Towers" to all that had ears to hear that I could supply.

Yours truly,
Mrs. J. E. Cox,--Tennessee.

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REDUCED WHOLESALE RATES ON

New and Old Silver Texts and Tablets.

Boldly Stamped in Silver on Light or Dark Ground, with Cord for Hanging.

These Silver Texts and Tablets are of choice designs and excellent finish. As Decorations for the Home they are tasteful and very praise-inspiring. They constantly remind us of the better things and assist us in "overcoming the world and its spirit."

These texts are often hung in pairs, and as text thus answers to text, the power of each to suggest helpful and inspiring thoughts is markedly increased.

As single texts are more likely to receive damage in the mails than are quantities, we recommend that friends send their orders together, when practicable to do so. Besides the advantage already mentioned, postage expenses are decreased by this method.

Extra postage on single texts will be as stated in the list, but on orders amounting to 50c. the extra postage will be 10c.; on \$1.00 lots the extra postage

will be 10c.; on lots valued above \$1.00 add extra postage at the rate of 16c. to the \$1.00.

The 15c. texts are offered at 2 for 25c., Postage extra 8c.; the 8c. texts at 2 for 15c., Postage extra 5c.; the 3c. texts at 2 for 5c., Postage extra 2c. Order by number and letter; do not write out the text. Please name your second choice, peradventure your first be out of stock. All orders will be filled as accurately as possible.

As limited space does not permit us to describe all the beautiful mottoes that we have in stock, we propose to make up EXTRA VALUE PACKAGES, Postpaid for \$1.16, which we feel sure will commend themselves to our friends, for they would contain more than you could include in a package of your own assortment at this price.

These texts occupy valuable space and are more or less a care, but the desirability of having such reminders of the grace of God in the homes seems to indicate that we should keep a stock on hand; and this we will do, not looking for profit in handling them, but seeking the spiritual welfare of the Lord's flock.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY, BIBLE HOUSE, ALLEGHENY, PA.

For prices of these texts in Great Britain, please apply to the Society's British Branch, 131 Green St., Forest Gate, London.

No. 1. NEW TABLETS 16 x 10.
VERY BRIGHT. 25c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 8c.
a Walk in Love, as Christ also hath loved us.
b As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.
c He that overcometh shall inherit all things.
d The Beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety.

No. 3. MOTTO FOR HOMES 16 x 10.
DISTINCT LETTERING. 25c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 8c.
Christ is the Head of this House, the Unseen Guest
at every meal, the Silent Listener to every Conversation.

No. 3a. SAME WORDS AS IN NO. 3 10-1/2 x 8-1/2.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.

No. 5. CONFIDENCE AND STRENGTH 13 x 8.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ?
b In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.
c Rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him.

No. 7. SCRIPTURE SCREENS 18-1/4 x 8-1/4.
THREE-FOLD, TO STAND ON MANTEL. 25c. EACH. POSTAGE 8c.
a Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to-day and forever.
Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He careth for you.
b Consider how great things the Lord hath done for you.
I have called thee by thy name, thou art Mine.

No. 8. THE CHRISTIAN'S DESIRE 11-1/2 x 8-1/2.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
LORD JESUS make Thyself to me
A living bright reality!
More present to FAITH'S vision keen

Than any outward object seen--
More dear, more intimately nigh,
Than e'en the sweetest earthly tie.

No. 9. RULES FOR TODAY 11-1/2 x 8-1/2.
SAME STYLE AS NO. 8. 15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.

No. 10. CAMEO SERIES A 12-3/4 x 8-1/4.
RAISED CAMEO TEXTS. 15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Serve Him with all your heart.
b My God shall supply all your need.

No. 11. CAMEO SERIES B 8-1/2 x 6.
8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.
a Kept by the power of God.
b The Lord Bless thee and Keep thee.
c The Love of Christ constraineth us.
d My grace is sufficient for thee.

No. 13. LARGE SHIELDS 12-1/2 x 9-1/2.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of My Hands.
b As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.
c Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.
d Mine eyes shall see the King in His Beauty.
e The Beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety.
f When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble.

No. 14. PRECIOUS WORDS 8-1/4 x 10-1/4.
BOLD LETTERING, WITH FLOWERS IN COLORS.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Justified freely by His Grace.
b He will abundantly pardon.
c Able to keep you from falling.
d Christ hath redeemed us.
e Jesus Himself drew near.
f We dwell in Him and He in us.

No. 15. SMALL TABLETS 13 x 8.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.
b Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.
c Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.
d All things work together for good to them that love God.

No. 16. ROYAL BANNERS 8 x 9-1/2.
10c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 4c.
a In all thy ways acknowledge Him.
b He knoweth the way that I take.
c I will trust and not be afraid.
d My Grace is sufficient for thee.

No. 17. GOSPEL TRUTHS 13 x 8.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.
b Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to thee.

c Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.
d Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.
e Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, I will give you rest.
f The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

No. 18. 12-1/2 x 6-1/4.
15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a God hath given to us Eternal Life.
b My Grace is sufficient for thee.
c The Lord will go before you.
d He knoweth the way that I take.
e Bear ye one another's burdens.
f He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God.

No. 19. EMMANUEL 13 x 6-1/2.
LARGE LETTERS. 15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Mighty to Save.
b He faileth not.
c Jesus Only.
d Praise the Lord.
e God Bless our Home.
f Lovest thou Me?
g Abide with Me.

No. 20. KING'S MESSAGES 10-3/4 x 6-1/2.
UNIQUE DESIGN. 10c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 4c.
a Abide in Me.
b Mighty to Save.
c He Faileth Not.
d God is Love.
e He leadeth me.
f Jesus only.

No. 21. STRENGTH AND COMFORT 9-1/2 x 7.
LARGE LETTERS, HANDSOME SCROLL AND FLORAL BORDER.
10c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 4c.
a God Himself is with us.
b He careth for you.
c Ye belong to Christ.
d Trust in the Living God.
e Kept by the power of God.
f The Lord is my Shepherd.

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No. 22. JEWELS A 17-1/2 x 12.
LIGHT BACKGROUND, LARGE LETTERING, ELEGANT.
25c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 8c.
a As thy Days so shall thy Strength be.
b The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil.
c I can do all things through Christ.
d The Lord knoweth them that are His.

No. 24. JEWELS B 12 x 8-7/8.
SIMILAR TO No. 22. 15c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 5c.
a Kept by the power of God.

- b The Lord is my helper.
- c God Himself is with us.
- d Our sufficiency is of God.

No. 25. REDEMPTION 10-1/4 x 7-3/4.
LIGHT GROUND. BRIGHT DESIGNS. 8c. EACH. POSTAGE, 3c.
a The Gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ.
b Behold, now is the day of Salvation.
c Jesus Christ...Who gave Himself for me.
d We have redemption through His Blood.

No. 26. SHEPHERD'S CARE 8-1/2 x 5-3/4.
APPROPRIATE FOR THE YOUNG.
5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
a Lead me in Thy truth and teach me.
b He shall gather the Lambs with His arm.
c Suffer the little children to come unto Me.
d Commit thy way unto the Lord.

No. 27. LIFE ABUNDANT 8-1/2 x 5-3/4.
SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST.
5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
a Jesus said: If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink.
b Jesus said: Lo, I am with you alway.
c Jesus said: Have faith in God.
d Jesus said: I am come that they might have life.

No. 28. FANS 10 x 6-1/2.
STRIKING AND ARTISTIC.
10c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 4c.
a Be not weary in well-doing.
b God hath power to help.
c My peace I give unto you.
d Very great are His mercies.

No. 29. HELPFUL WORDS 12 x 4-1/2.
CUT-OUT DESIGNS. 8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.
a MIGHTY TO SAVE. He giveth power to the faint.
b HE FAILETH NOT. He shall save His people.
c FOLLOW HIS STEPS. His way is perfect.
d REST IN THE LORD. Be quiet, fear not.
e REJOICE IN HIM. My heart shall rejoice.
f GOD IS FAITHFUL. We trust in the living God.

No. 30. SURE CONFIDENCE 10 x 5-1/4.
8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.
a The Lord shall be thy confidence.
b Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of.
c His children shall have a place of refuge.
d Trust in the Lord with all thine heart.
e Certainly, I will be with thee.
f Let not your heart be troubled.

No. 31. TODAY POEM 6-3/4 x 5.
8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.

No. 32. WHEN TO TRUST 6-3/4 x 5.
VERSE CARDS. 12 CHOICE MOTTOES.
8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.

MY TIMES ARE IN THY HAND

He knows and loves and cares.

Nothing this truth can dim:

He gives His very best to those

Who leave the choice to Him.

K.

No. 33. GARLANDS 8-1/2 x 4-3/4.
WITH DECORATED BORDER. 8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.

a Not I, but Christ.

b By Faith ye Stand.

c God is my Salvation.

d What would Jesus do?

e He careth for you.

f Emmanuel, God with us.

No. 34. VERY CHOICE FANS 9 x 4-3/4.
CHOICE, ENGRAVED BORDER. 8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.
4 CHOICE MOTTOES.

No. 35. WORDS OF LOVE 13 x 5.
EXCELLENT VALUE.

8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.

a The Lord Himself is my keeper.

b Serve the Lord with gladness.

c Christ in you the hope of glory.

d Fear not, I will help thee.

No. 36. SMALL FANS 7-3/4 x 4-1/2.
SUITABLE FOR VASES. 5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
SIX CHOICE MOTTOES.

No. 37. WONDROUS WORDS 8-1/2 x 6-1/2.
8c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 3c.

a The Lord shall guide thee continually.

b The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety.

c His children shall have a place of refuge.

d Saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

No. 38. HELPS BY THE WAY 7 x 5.
5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.

a Wait on the Lord and keep His way.

b In all thy ways acknowledge Him.

c The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous.

d Teach me thy way, O Lord.

e I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

f Commit thy way unto the Lord.

No. 39. MEDIUM SHIELDS 6 x 8-1/2.
5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.

a Your life is hid with Christ, etc.

b It is God that girdeth me, etc.

c Shew me Thy way, O Lord, etc.

d Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.

e I am the Way, etc.
f Casting all your care upon Him, etc.

No. 40. GLEANINGS 7-3/4 x 5.
5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
a I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.
b My refuge is in God.
c Fear not...The Lord will be with thee.
d Cast thy burden upon the Lord.
e The Lord knoweth them that are His.
f Fear not...He will not fail thee.

No. 41. GOOD TIDINGS 9 x 3-1/2.
LARGE, PLAIN LETTERS. 5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
TWELVE CHOICE MOTTOES.

No. 42. GRACIOUS PROMISES 7 x 5.
FLORAL DESIGN. 5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
SIX CHOICE MOTTOES.

No. 43. SHINING LIGHT 6-1/2 x 4-3/4.
SILVER BACKGROUND. 5c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 2c.
a Watch and pray.
b Christ died for us.
c God is Love.
d Seek ye the Lord.
e He is our Peace.
f Thy Will be done.

No. 44. SUNBEAMS 5-1/2 x 8-1/2.
3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
a All for Jesus. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by Faith.
b As thy days so shall thy strength be.
c The Almighty shall be thy defence.
d Ye are My witnesses, said the Lord.
e Do all to the glory of God.
f Thou art mine.

No. 45. GOLDEN WORDS 6 x 4.
STAMPED IN GOLD. FLORAL. EIGHT CHOICE MOTTOES.
3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
The Lord will bless His people with Peace.

No. 46. NEW RUSTIC SERIES 5-3/4 x 4.
3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
a The Eternal God is thy refuge.
b The Lord is my Defence.
c Lord teach us to pray.
d Lo! I am with thee alway.
e Walk as children of light.
f God knoweth your hearts.

No. 47. FRUITFUL SERVICE 5 x 5.
3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
a Bring forth fruit unto God.
b God is a refuge for us.

- c The Lord is my portion.
- d From Me is thy fruit found.
- e Abide in My love.
- f Christ hath made us free.

No. 48. GEMS 5-1/4 x 4.
 LANDSCAPES. 3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
 TWELVE CHOICE MOTTOES.

No. 49. RUBIES 6-1/2 x 3-3/4.
 SIX CHOICE MOTTOES.
 3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
 GOD FIRST That in all things He might have the Pre-eminence.

No. 50. GOSPEL GEMS 6-1/2 x 3-3/4.
 3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
 a Whosoever will, let him taste the water of Life freely.
 b Whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he.
 c He that believeth on the Son hath Everlasting Life.
 d By Grace are ye saved through faith.
 e The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him.
 f We have redemption through His blood.

No. 51. SCROLLS 5-1/2 x 4.
 3c. EACH. POSTAGE EXTRA, 1c.
 a Ye belong to Christ.
 b God is Faithful.
 c My Refuge is in God.
 d He careth for you.
 e What would Jesus do?
 f Thou God seest me.

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SEMI-MONTHLY.
 VOL. XXIII. MAY 15, 1902. No. 10.

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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.
BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

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

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--131 GREEN ST., FOREST GATE, LONDON.

PRICE, \$1.00 (4S.) A YEAR IN ADVANCE, 5c (2-1/2d.) A COPY.
MONEY MAY BE SENT BY EXPRESS, BANK DRAFT, POSTAL ORDER, OR REGISTERED.
FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES BY FOREIGN MONEY ORDERS, ONLY. SPECIAL
TERMS TO THE LORD'S POOR, AS FOLLOWS:--

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

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ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL MATTER AT ALLEGHENY, PA., POST OFFICE.

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DAWNS AND TRACTS IN QUANTITIES.

The Postoffice ruling interfering with what we claim are our
legal rights in respect to mailing our paper-bound editions of
the MILLENNIAL DAWN at newspaper rates, as for years past, has
led some of the friends to join together, and by giving a united
order for one hundred DAWNS to get them by freight. We commend
this plan, and will supply them thus to WATCH TOWER
subscribers for \$10.00 per hundred, any assortment.

Remember, that our subscribers under our new arrangement
can send to a friend, post-paid, any volume of DAWN in cloth
binding, for 25c. No other similar books are supplied at such
prices--nor, indeed, at any price; and the book in cloth cover
will make a more favorable impression than in a paper cover.
Tracts may be ordered in the same box if convenient;--free.

VOLUNTEER ARRANGEMENTS.

By this time nearly all who have responded to our call are
supplied with the new "ammunition;" use up first any old
ammunition you may have on hand, but expect no more of it.

We find that some have not understood our object in sending
out two kinds this time. It is not the thought to give each person
the two papers, but the very reverse. As people usually
leave churches in family groups, the distribution of one paper

to each is apt to put two alike into many homes; our desire is that, if possible, they shall be different.

Our suggestion therefore is, that the captains see to it that each bundle (consisting of equal quantities of February 15 and March 15 WATCH TOWERS) is thoroughly reassorted so that the two papers can be handed out alternately. Let each "volunteer" see to this and assist also. We have plenty now; order all you can use judiciously.

Again we urge that in the distribution you do not go inside the churches, nor stand upon their steps;--if possible not even on the public pavement in their front. It is better rather, where possible, to stand 100 feet or more away from their exits.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

SCIENCE FALSELY SO CALLED.

WE ARE GLAD to note that the Richmond Christian Advocate is not yet ready to repudiate God's Word and accept the theory of evolution.

We agree that scientists who deal in millions and billions of years evidently forget the meaning of the word "science." We clip from its issue of March 6 the following:--

"THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

"We had hoped that after the repeated failures to find the missing link in the chain of evolution the advocates of that theory would be less bold and positive in their assertions. True science is always cautious in its statements. Its teachings are supposed to be based on determinate and well-ascertained facts. Otherwise it ceases to be science and becomes mere speculation. These remarks have been suggested by the following extract from the Chicago Inter-Ocean:

"The International Congress of Zoology, in session at Cambridge, England, during the current week, was remarkable for a fascinating paper by Professor Haeckel on the world's present knowledge of the descent of man. He did not hesitate to declare that science has now established the absolute certainty that man has descended through various stages of evolution from the lowest form of animal life during a period estimated at 1,000,000,000 years. This knowledge, which must now be accepted as the crowning achievement of science during the nineteenth century, was won through recent discoveries of fossil remains in Java, Madagascar, and Australia, and is made still more complete evidence by available proof of discoveries wherewith Darwin's

name is most commonly associated.'

"Professor Haeckel is known to be a Darwin of the Darwinites. Indeed, in some of his views upon his pet theory he has gone far beyond Darwin himself. Why does he seek for proofs of the doctrine of evolution in such remote and widely-separated regions as Java, Madagascar, and Australia, instead of the original centers of population? Besides, Professor Haeckel must have known that the evidences he adduces from certain fossil remains in Madagascar and Australia have been demonstrated to be utterly unreliable. What particular find he refers to in Java we do not know; but take it for granted that it is worthless as the rest. The fact is, the evolutionists have been so pushed to find that 'missing link,' without which their whole system falls to the ground as incomplete and insupportable, that they have been ready to snatch at anything which would seem in the remotest manner to connect the broken series.

"The Professor evidently intends to allow himself ample time to work out his progressive developments from a protoplasm to an ape, and from an ape to a man. He assumes a round billion of years. We say assumes it, for every one must see that it is sheer assumption. Why not say five billions instead? There is no geological table by which he could fix the time at one billion of years. When science thus goes out of the domain of exact truth, we have a right to question its statements and its calculations. We don't know where Professor Haeckel got his arithmetic, and he does not know himself. When he declares, and does not 'hesitate' to declare, that 'science has now established the absolute certainty that man has descended through various stages of evolution from the lowest form of animal life during a period estimated at one billion of years,' we demand proof; but the proof is not forthcoming. The declaration is about as satisfactory and sensible as the silly reply that Aaron made to Moses when the latter questioned him about the golden calf. He said: 'I cast the gold in the fire, and there came out this calf.' So the evolutionists would have us believe that all these wonderful things in nature just 'came out' of themselves entirely apart from divine agency.

"Which is the more rational theory, that all things were made by Him 'who is before all things and by whom all things consist,' or that things just evolved of their own free will and accord? Which is worthier of our credence,

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that 'God made man in His own image and after His own likeness,' or that man developed out of an animal of the Simian species?

"Evolutionists admit that man is the final product of the series. If so, why is it that the fossil remains of the animal connecting man with his ancestral ape cannot be found? It would be the latest fossil, and should be most easily found. O, where is the living link, if the fossil cannot

be found? Echo answers, Where?"

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?

The Presbyterian, of Philadelphia, attacks the Evolution and Higher Criticism errors of our time in good style, as follows:--

"There has arisen a class of preachers, who are proclaiming a social gospel, a scientific gospel, a literary gospel, a reformatory gospel. The cry appears to be, Anything to get rid of the Old Gospel, which 'the orthodox religion' upholds and preaches. All kinds of political reforms are initiated; critical theories in theology are ventilated; the newest industrial formations are given currency; and the thought and effort are centered upon the material, intellectual, and moral improvement of earth. It is no wonder that in the enthusiasm kindled over these and other efforts for human amelioration, there is considerable diversion from 'the orthodox religion;' but it has

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a staying and conquering power, and it will always have myriads in this and the oncoming ages to heed its teachings as a message from God and His Son, Jesus Christ. It would be a magnificent thing if all would turn away from the siren voices which lure away from the Old Gospel of salvation through personal repentance of sin, faith in Christ as the only Redeemer of mankind, and holy living, or through a renovated soul and life by the transforming grace of the Holy Ghost; but where any prefer to pass it by as of no account at such a time as this, the responsibility rests with them, not with those who press it upon the mind and heart of old and young. A conceited age may think it has a different message than that which the Son of God has given it, but the Christian religion, which has done so much for all classes and conditions in the past, will ever vindicate its right to exist, and will work out the purposes for which God gave it until latest periods."

REJECTED FOR UNBELIEF.

The New York Times tells (April 15) of an examination of a theological student, Mr. Noll, before a Presbytery, as follows:--

He was being examined on a chapter from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, where the Apostle speaks about Adam. The examiner asked Mr. Noll what he thought about Adam, and he said he did not think Adam was a historical character, but rather a myth. The ministers, or at least many of the older ones, began to move uneasily in their seats.

"What!" said one of them, "Then you must have come to the conclusion that St. Paul did not know what he was talking about."

It was here the trouble began, but this was not the only point of doctrine on which the candidate had shown himself "unsound." When he was examined on the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah he boldly asserted that the prophetic sayings there referred to the Hebrew people, not to Christ, as a majority of the ministers would have it.

He was rejected by a majority vote after considerable discussion; but the account says further that the Rev. Dr. Gregg of the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church was a visitor at the meeting, and remarked: "This young man would have been received with a hurrah in the Brooklyn Presbytery. We do things differently there."

How evident it is to every observing mind that "the faith once delivered unto the saints" is becoming more and more scarce in Babylon;--and properly it is becoming more and more precious to those who have it to the extent that they are able to "give to them that ask it a reason for the hope that is within them." Harken to the inspired advice, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong!" --I Cor. 16:13.

"THE EXTINCTION OF ADAM."

Exchanges of April 29th, report the matter further as follows:--

"The Elizabeth, N.J., Presbytery yesterday granted a license to preach to one of the applicants who had expressed his disbelief in the story of Adam and Eve, although he still adhered to his conviction that the story was merely 'allegorical.' He will be ordained for foreign mission duty.

"With the sanction of so eminent a religious body to sustain us we may now all freely admit that we no longer consider Adam and Eve our first parents, but regard them as wholly mythical personages. This will be a sad loss to literature and art, but it will relieve the human race from a sense of long-standing injustice."

AGNOSTICISM IN JEWISH PULPITS, TOO.

Baltimore, Md., April 13.--Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago, delivered a lecture at the Har Sinai Temple here today, which took the breath of most of his listeners, despite the fact that it is the most liberal congregation in the city. In his sermon Dr. Hirsch said:

"Think of God as you may, so long as you have the proper conception of man you are in harmony with Judaism. Even if Moses never existed, if the ten commandments

did not come from Sinai--and I don't believe they did--Judaism still lives.

"The Bible is literature; it is mythology. It did not come from heaven in a mechanical way. A new Bible has come forth, strangely different from what our fathers loved. The old idea is a God who holds in one hand a club and in the other a stick of candy. This God was man. He has been dethroned. Our soul needs a God who is superior to man."

Yes, truly a great falling away from the faith is in progress amongst all nationalities--especially among the "wise" and "learned." This poor Rabbi is no more to be blamed than Christian ministers who are taking the same position. No wonder, then, that leading ministers join in dedicating Jewish synagogues and Rabbis in dedicating Christian churches. It is only a "ceremony" anyway--to impress and please the common people.

Evidently, however, the secret of nearly all the rebellion against the Bible is the result of a lack of knowledge of God and his plan and his Book. How thankful we should be for the opening of the eyes of our understanding, which alone keeps us firm and secure when all around is shaking! Well did the Lord foretell the blindness coming upon the "learned" and worldly-wise and of the blinded followers of the blind leaders. "My people are destroyed [dumbfounded] for lack of knowledge."--Hos. 4:6; Isa. 29:14.

THE MEANING OF EUROPE'S GREAT ARMIES.

The brother who sends the below clipping remarks:
"How truly this bears out the statements of Millennial Dawn, vol. IV., respecting the "Lord's great army!"

If you look at the map of Europe you will see in Russia a Czar with a million armed men that he can use as he pleases. A million rifles, or five million, if reserves are called upon, the Czar can aim this way or that as a child aims its bow and arrow. In Germany a vigorous young man, controlled partially by custom, common sense and the fear of the Social-Democratic party, has another million of armed men to play with. In Italy, in Austria, in Spain, you find monarchical figureheads directing huge bodies of armed men. If you look superficially at these great armies, you will say that they are a permanent menace to liberty. You will say to yourself: "How can kings be destroyed when such power is in their control?"

As a matter of fact, the greatest DANGER TO KINGS lies in the work that is done by these great standing armies. Apparently, they mean security for the monarchical idea. In reality, they mean education of the people, the spreading of radicalism, and rebellion against the claims of birth and money.

The German army system captures the yellow-haired peasant of Wurtemberg. He is dull of speech, slow in thought,

kind-hearted, simple, reconciled to his own inferiority, ready to pull off his felt hat at the sight of livery worn by the servant of the great. This peasant is taken to Berlin or Frankfort. If he is slow at drill he is slapped in the face, kicked, ridiculed. He is compelled to hold himself for hours in a certain rigid position. He learns that he is entirely at the mercy of a whipper snapper in a lieutenant's uniform. He bitterly hates his own degradation and those responsible for it. During his hours of rest he meets and talks with another soldier, perhaps the orderly on duty at the officer's casino, who drags the lieutenant to a narrow lounge behind the curtains when the lieutenant is too drunk to stand up. Or he meets the young soldier from the city, the intelligent Jew with five hundred years of independent thinking behind him, or the non-commissioned officer, who sticks in the army because he takes pleasure in making socialists out of country recruits.

That humble peasant arrived from Wurtemberg believing himself of less importance than the dog of a country nobleman,

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and looking upon the German Emperor as the abstract equal and the concrete superior of Providence itself. At the end of his five army years the German peasant is transformed sometimes into a man of force, oftener into one with a supply of revolutionary catch phrases that make him dangerous because he has not brains enough to assimilate them.

Millions of such simple-minded peasants are changing into radicals and socialists all over Europe. The far-reaching arm of enforced military service leaves no quiet, peaceful, title-fearing corner in any of the empires. Every young man as he reaches maturity has the veneration for rank kicked out of him, and the knowledge of HOW TO FIGHT kicked into him. This is a serious thing for the kings. It means their ultimate undoing.

Already they are finding this out in Belgium, where the King is afraid of his own troupes, knowing that their sympathies are with the striking men and women in the streets, and not with him, or his preposterous pretensions, or his spending of public money on ballet dancers in the Paris opera. --N.Y. Journal.

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THE GOSPEL OF FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

--ACTS 13:43-52.--MAY 25.--

"Through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."--Acts 13:38.

PAUL AND HIS COMPANY, passing through the Island of Cyprus to the city of Paphos,

at its southern end, did not tarry there. Its climate is miasmatic, and this is presumed to have been the reason for a hasty departure for the high lands of Asia Minor--Galatia, etc. The Apostle is presumed to have referred to his own semi-invalid condition at this time when later, in writing the Epistle to the Galatians, he said, "Through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel to you at first." (Gal. 4:13,14.) Galatia was the name of a district or state in which were located a number of cities and churches mentioned in the account of Paul's missionary tours--Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and Antioch on the borders of Galatia, in the state of Pisidia. The Antioch of this lesson should not be confounded with the larger city, Antioch of Syria.

In our last lesson we noticed Mark as the companion and servant of the two missionaries, but he discontinued his service at Paphos and returned to Jerusalem; hardships or discouragements or home-sickness, we know not what, evidently, for the time quenched his zeal as a servant of the Lord and of the truth,--assuredly much to Mark's disadvantage. Whatever the cause, evidently the Apostle Paul considered it quite insufficient; so that on another occasion, when Barnabas suggested Mark's accompanying them similarly, the Apostle declined--which he evidently would not have done had Mark's desertion been fully justified by considerations of health or necessity. It was a labor of love, however; no salaries were attached, and if Mark chose to discontinue his sacrifice it was his own business, and he was the loser.

So it is today, the Lord leaves his people free from restraints; free from threats; free from compulsion; to the intent that they may present their bodies living sacrifices day by day. Now, as then, whoever grows cold may discontinue his sacrificing, but himself will be the loser. We want to keep distinctly before our minds that while God condemns sin, and while his people have no liberty in this respect, but are obligated to do their best to withstand sin, it is different in the matter of sacrifice. The Lord is calling for free-will offerings, and whatever is not given with a hearty good-will, yea, with an earnest desire, with zeal, may as well be kept;--but the rewards promised to those who imitate the spirit of the Master and his devotion will be lost also.

There is an element of encouragement, however, in Mark's experience. Later on he evidently became quite a thorough and devoted soldier of the cross, was again accepted to the Lord's service, and we find that the Apostle Paul made acknowledgment of appreciation of his faithfulness. (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11.) Mark's recovery of lost ground and his reinstatement by the Lord in his service should be an encouragement for any who similarly have grown cold

and lax as respects their devotion and sacrifice, and who have been consequently dropped out of active service of the truth. The Lord is very merciful to us in our weaknesses and imperfections, and as he restored Mark, undoubtedly he is willing also to restore all who will similarly learn a lesson from their failures, and who earnestly desire and strive for re-instatement and the privileges of service.

The first stop made in Asia Minor was at Antioch of Pisidia. The usual custom was followed, of going first to the Jews--to their synagogue. The missionaries were recognized as strangers and also as men of talent, and after the regular services of the synagogue had been introduced by the reading of the usual lesson from the Law, they were invited to address the assembled people--Jews by birth, and Jewish proselytes from the Gentiles. The Apostle Paul was the speaker, and made a telling address. He recognized the fact that his hearers had faith in God's promises regarding the coming Kingdom: he did not need, therefore, to emphasize the Kingdom feature in this discourse. Rather, his hearers needed to see that there could be no Kingdom and no permanent blessing of all the families of the earth, such as was implied in the promises made to Abraham, unless in some manner divine forgiveness of the world's sins could first be secured.

The trend of his discourse, therefore, was to show how God had established a (typical) kingdom in the past, which had never reached the grand stage essential to the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promises, and that the thing necessary and lacking was a redemption of the world and the forgiveness of sins. Then he presented to their attention Jesus as the Messiah,--not merely a crucified Messiah, but also a risen one who, because of his death for the sins of the world, was able to save unto the uttermost all that should come unto God through him. Having put the matter squarely before them, the Apostle, in the words of our Golden Text, offered his hearers forgiveness of sins as the very essence of the Gospel.

Forgiveness of sin is still the essence of the Gospel, altho mankind now, as then, are generally loth to accept it thus,--it disappoints them by condemning them, and showing up the fact that all are sinners;--that there is none righteous, no, not one;--that all need just such a redemption as God has provided

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in the sacrifice of Christ. It disappoints also in that it shows a necessity for repudiation of sin in the heart, and, so far as possible, resisting it in all the conduct of life. Few are prepared for this--few have an ear to hear this message. The majority are ready

to say, Preach unto us smooth things! Praise us for our religious fervor! Point out to us how much superior we are, not only to the heathen world, but to the masses of those who are about us! Tell us that we are God's people, and that he could not get along without us! Do not tell us that we are sinners, and under condemnation as others; and that all who would come unto God through Jesus Christ must come by the same strait and narrow gate of faith, and repudiation of sin, and heart-consecration!

The discourse had its effect,--a two-fold effect. The honest hearted, realizing the truth regarding God's perfection and their own imperfection, realized their need of just such a Savior as the Apostle had preached: these were specially drawn to the missionaries, who, recognizing their right attitude of heart, assured them that they were already in God's grace or favor; and that now the message of salvation through Jesus was an additional unfolding and development of the same favor that had already been extended to the Jews; and that they should continue in the grace of God,--continue to let God lead and guide them in his way,--continue to be the recipients of his mercies and blessings, which now were multiplied to them through Christ Jesus, and the atonement work he had accomplished. Others were much less prepared for the Apostle's words, and rather inclined to be envious of the attention bestowed upon the missionaries and their teachings,--which meant corresponding disregard for the usual leaders of the meeting and for the doctrines previously set forth, which the new views were calculated to supersede entirely.

So we find it today also: the essence of the Gospel preaching of today, as eighteen centuries ago, must be man's sinful and condemned condition, and his need of redemption, reconciliation and recovery from sin and its wages, death. This is the Gospel, which is falling into disuse in the pulpits of churchianity, in response to the itching ears of the majority, the "tares," and their call for the preaching of smooth things.

Additionally, it is proper now to emphasize the Gospel of the Kingdom, which the Lord and the apostles made so prominent; and to show that the little flock, the elect of this age, are to constitute the Kingdom--which, in the coming age, is to rule and bless the world, by restraining Satan and every evil device, and causing the knowledge of the Lord to abound. Now, as then, the larger unfolding of the truth, the divine plan of salvation, is interesting to some--to the honest-hearted; and repulsive to some--the vain-glorious, the sectarian, the proud, the self-satisfied. Now, as then, when we are appealed to by those who have an ear to hear present truth, they should be encouraged to "continue in the grace of

God." They should not be told that their ignorance of present truth implies that they have none of the grace of God, but that because they have received

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of his grace into good and honest hearts it is the will of God that they should continue therein and grow and increase and abound;--that to this intent he is sending forth present truth to his people in every quarter, that the true wheat may be ripened and gathered to his garner.

News of the new religion--supplemental to the Jewish--spread throughout the little city in which Judaism had evidently gained a good foothold and great respect;--so that the whole city gathered on the next Sabbath to hear the message of the missionaries --probably the majority coming merely out of curiosity, to see the difference between the doctrines of these and of the regular Jewish teachers. "The whole city" may be understood hyperbolically, as signifying a large concourse; or that all classes and conditions of citizens were well represented. The gathering of such a multitude could not be held, probably, in the synagogue, but we may presume, in the yard or court surrounding it, or both. Such attention to two strangers and their new doctrine, which threatened an overthrow of Judaism, naturally awakened a spirit of jealousy in those whose interest was much in forms and ceremonies, honor amongst men and denominational pride, and, as a result, they contradicted Paul's statements with blasphemy. Not that they blasphemed God's name, but that they slandered or blasphemed the Apostle and Barnabas --speaking evil of them; we may surmise, misrepresenting their motives, their characters, etc. This is the usual course of those who fight against the truth, and it is so today. The truth cannot be gainsaid; it is irresistible; but it can be misrepresented; it can be denied; the presentations of it can be distorted, and its messengers can be slandered, vilified. The Adversary seems to adopt this method on every occasion. It is the method now in vogue. Those who oppose present truth will not dare to meet it openly in public discussion before the people, but they will distort and misrepresent it, and say all manner of evil against its advocates and will persecute those who favor it.

The missionaries were not discouraged by the opposition, but were rather made the more courageous, and brought to the point where they explained to their vilifiers, plainly, the true state of the case: that they were rejecting God's favor, God's plan, against themselves--to their own injury, to their own loss. They pointed out that God, in his mercy, had long favored Israel, and that

in sending the message of Messiah to them first he was still favoring them; but that according to his direction it was their duty to proceed, and to tell the Gospel to whoever had ears to hear--to the Jew first, but also to the Gentiles. They pointed out that the lamp of truth which God had now lighted was not to be to the Jews exclusively, as had been his previous favors, but, as the Prophet had already declared, was to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles"--salvation unto the ends of the earth.--(Luke 2:32; Isa. 42:6; 52:10.)

This feature of the Gospel specially aroused the opposition of such Jews as were in the wrong condition of heart, but was proportionately attractive to the few who were in the right attitude. So it is today: the message which is now due to Christendom is--More Light! It shows that the lamp of God's Word of promise, which at the beginning of this age

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was permitted to bless both Jews and Gentiles in proportion as the eyes of their understanding were opened to see it, is shortly now to give place to a greater light; that whereas the Word of God has been a lamp to the feet and a lantern to the footsteps of his faithful for over eighteen centuries, God's purpose now, shortly, is that this lamp shall become unnecessary, because "the Sun of Righteousness shall rise," and the whole world shall be flooded with the light of the knowledge of the goodness of God.--Mal. 4:2.

Those of God's people who are in the right attitude of heart will be gladdened by this expansion and unfolding of the truth: no feelings of jealousy will be theirs. But the majority, full of sectarian theories and plans and selfish sentiments, and blinded largely by false theology and by misrepresentations of the Word of God are violently opposed to any thought of God's general goodness being extended to every creature,--not only those who have not yet gone to the prison-house of death, but also to the fifty thousand millions who have already gone down into the silence of death, in ignorance of the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. But all the faithful, all the honest-hearted, will ultimately rejoice at the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of God's plan, to be consummated during the Millennium by the glorified Christ, Head and body.

Many of the Gentiles were glad as they heard of God's favor being broader than they had previously supposed--some, we may infer, were merely pleased that something had been shown up that was broader than the Jewish teachings, but some others, we are assured, believed in the true sense of the word--accepting

Christ as their Redeemer and as their Law-giver. And so today also we see two classes among those who favor the present truth: some who hail it with joy and gratefully worship and serve the Lord more fervently than ever; and some who are merely glad to find that there is no Scriptural ground for the popular theory of an eternal torment for the vast majority of mankind; but are not specially drawn or constrained by divine love and mercy.

The more the truth spread the more angry became its opponents, the Jewish leaders; and what they could not oppose with argument or logic they did oppose successfully with prejudice and superstition, arousing these baser sentiments by misrepresentation. They secured thus the co-operation of some of the most honorable and notable people of the city, to such an extent that the missionaries were obliged to depart from them. The Adversary's methods are the same today in this respect also, that by misrepresentation he secures for his agents, often unwillingly, some who are noble and honorable people. This teaches us two lessons: First, to be careful ourselves --to be on guard against the Adversary's methods, if we are honorable and well-intentioned; to see to it that we are not inveigled into opposing the truth while supposing that we are doing God service. It teaches us also to have respect for those who are our opponents, and who give evidence of sincerity, even in their persecution. Some of the best friends of present truth today were once its bitter enemies, revilers and persecutors. We are hoping for many more recruits for the truth from this class of people. Their opposition is the result of misapprehension of the facts; they are blinded by the Adversary. Some may not get proper sight of the matter until the Kingdom binds Satan and opens their eyes; but others we may hope are the King's own and will be helped in time for them to make their calling and election sure in the Kingdom "little flock."

AS MANY AS WERE ORDAINED TO ETERNAL LIFE,
BELIEVED.

The word "ordained," here, may properly be translated disposed; and thus we get the thought that as many of those who heard the gospel and its offer of everlasting life, and were disposed to accept the terms, became believers--obedient to the faith. So it is still. The truth, wherever it goes, finds some who like it and some who dislike it; some who appreciate the doctrines and rewards which it presents, and some who prefer the pleasures of sin or the affairs and rewards of the world. It is the time for each one who has heard to take his choice. Soon the number of the elect will be complete, and then the work of the elect will begin--the blessing of mankind.

We assume that the expression, "shook off the dust of their feet" is a figurative one, as we would use it today, meaning that we took our departure. Our departure, under such circumstances, would be a witness against those who rejected our message and those who persecuted us--a witness which they would remember in coming time. Yet the departure of the missionaries was not in anger, for we are assured that they were filled with joy and with the holy spirit --rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, and to have their names cast out as evil;--rejoicing also that they had, by the Lord's grace, accomplished something in the service. The expression, however, included more than merely the missionaries: it included those who remained as well as those who went. All were rejoicing. The truth and its spirit are constant causes for joy of heart to those who have them. On the contrary, the persecuting spirit, the jealous spirit, is always the unhappy one. Let us see that our rejoicing is of the same kind--in the Lord, in the truth, in the service, notwithstanding persecutions, trials and difficulties.

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GOOD FRIDAY AND THE MASS.

IN OUR ISSUE of February 15 we referred to Good Friday as representing to Roman Catholics the "great Mass day." One of our readers, formerly a Roman Catholic, calls our attention to the fact that on this one day the Mass service is less used than on any other day of all the year, and wants to have our explanation. We reply that the word Mass signifies "oblation," "offering"; and that the Roman Catholic Church does specially set apart Good Friday as the day of all the year for celebrating the great "oblation" "offering" or "Mass" which our Lord Jesus gave for us at Calvary. However, it is customary among Catholics to reserve this word Mass as the special name for what they term "the unbloody

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sacrifice," which their priests perform repeatedly, daily, for the cancelation of sins of the people.

The original bloody "offering," "oblation" or Mass at Calvary, Catholics recognize as the basis of atonement--canceling original sin and making possible the sinners acceptance with God. "The sacrifice of the Mass" offered by priests, repeats the original

"oblation," Mass or "offering," for divine appeasement, in connection with subsequent, personal sins.

We quote from Deharbe's Roman Catholic Catechism, pages 263, 265, 288, as follows:--

"The Sacrifice of the Mass was instituted by Jesus Christ, when at the Last Supper he offered himself up under the appearances of bread and wine to his Heavenly Father, and commanded his Apostles thenceforth to celebrate this his sacrifice.

"The Mass is the perpetual Sacrifice of the New Law, in which Christ our Lord offers himself, by the hands of the priest, in an unbloody manner, under the appearances of bread and wine to his Heavenly Father, as he once offered himself on the cross in a bloody manner. The sacrifice of the Mass is essentially the same Sacrifice as that of the cross; the only difference is in the manner of offering. Because, in both it is the same High-Priest who offers, and the same Victim who is offered--namely, Jesus Christ our Lord; and because in the Sacrifice of the Mass the oblation [synonym for Mass] which Christ made of himself on the cross, for us, to the Father, is commemorated and continued....By it we obtain from the Divine mercy, (1) Graces of contrition and repentance for the forgiveness of sins; and (2) Remission of temporal punishment deserved for sins....The temporal punishment due to our sins is that punishment which we have to suffer here on earth or in Purgatory."

The difference between the Romanist and the Protestant view then is, chiefly, that the latter would claim that there was but one offering "oblation" or "Mass" for the sins of the whole world, and that its sacrifice was finished at Calvary; and that the Lord's Supper merely commemorates this; while the former claim that the sacrificing of the "oblation" "offering" [or Mass] is to be continuously repeated, in an unbloody form.

In the same article Z.W.T., page 64, we say, "Every Roman Catholic who makes the slightest claim to faithfulness to his church is expected to be present and participate in the services of Good Friday, whether he attends Mass at any other time of the year or not." We regret this error. Instead of saying Good Friday we should have said Easter-time--that is, Passover-time--which begins on Palm Sunday and continues two weeks--till Low Sunday. The Council of Lateran (A.D. 1215) commanded that all the "faithful" must receive communion at least once a year, and that within the Easter-time. Altho the distinctions are quite small, and in our opinion nothing of importance is involved, we suggest that any who think otherwise have our full consent to the cutting off of said page, 64, so as not to loosen the front page, before handing out any of those papers.

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ENDURING HARDNESS AS GOOD SOLDIERS.

--ACTS 14:8-19.--JUNE 1.--

"Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."--2 Tim. 2:3.

LEAVING Antioch of Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium, about 100 miles distant. There also they preached the Word faithfully, and there also opposition was aroused and persecution threatened; "and when there was an assault made, both of the Gentiles and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use them despitefully and to stone them, they were aware of it, and fled unto Lystra." They did not allow fear to hinder them from the preaching of the gospel with courage, boldness; neither did they fear threats; but when the persecution took a positive form they delayed no longer, but fled. Why did they not wait, and expect the Lord to grant them some miraculous deliverance? Why did they not challenge their opponents to see whether the power of God or the power of Satan was the stronger? We answer, Because they were better instructed respecting the divine will. They were following the instructions of the Lord. He did not say to them, Be fearful of persecution, withhold your message, and put your light under a bushel; but the reverse. He did not say, Flee in fear, when there is no danger; but he did say, "When they persecute you in one city flee ye to another."

Arriving at Lystra, the preaching of the gospel was begun afresh, as courageously as tho there had been no previous opposition. Amongst the auditors was a cripple, presumably a Jew or a proselyte, who manifested much interest in the Apostle's words. Paul, perceiving this, and that the man had faith, stopped in his preaching and called out to him, "Stand upright on thy feet!"--a thing he had never done. He had the necessary faith and obeyed the Apostle's command; and thus a miracle resulted, evidently to the astonishment of the entire congregation. The effect upon the people was electrical, and they shouted in their own dialect, "The gods have come down to visit us!"

The city of Lystra figured as the scene of a mythological event, the tradition being that Jupiter and Mercury, two of the gods of mythology, having once come to their city in the form of men, had been everywhere refused lodgings until they came to the lowly hut of a poor man who entertained them to the extent of his ability. They rewarded him by turning his hut into a gorgeous temple, and punished the others of the city with a flood. These traditions were very old, but were perpetuated by a statue of Jupiter at the gate of the city, as its protecting god.

It is easy to discern how a comparatively ignorant and superstitious people might jump to the conclusion that the visit of Paul and Barnabas was a repetition of this visit of Jupiter and Mercury, handed down to them through tradition. They called Paul, Mercury, because in their tradition, Mercury was the orator, the speaker; and they called Barnabas, Jupiter, and forthwith the priest of Jupiter prepared to offer a sacrifice of oxen before the statue of Jupiter, at the gate of their city, in honor of the supposed gods present with them as men, in the persons of Barnabas and Paul.

The missionaries were probably preaching, or conversing and explaining quietly, to the more interested ones, when they heard of the commotion in the city, and of the sacrifice which was about to be offered. They did not for a moment think of taking advantage of the superstition of the people to make of themselves some great ones, nor did they attempt

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to turn the event to a service of the truth by claiming that God was Jupiter, and that Jesus was Mercury, and that they represented them. On the contrary, most earnestly and simply they entreated the people to desist; explaining to them that they were nothing but imperfect men like themselves, "of like passions," and that their mission was the very reverse of what they supposed, and that Jupiter and Mercury and their fabled deeds were only products of imagination, ignorance and superstition. They ran in amongst the people while they, full of excitement, were preparing for the sacrifice, and with difficulty, even then, amid protests of their own nothingness, did they restrain the people from sacrificing in their honor. Noble men they were, and their faithfulness to the Lord and to the truth attested the wisdom of the divine choice in sending them on this missionary errand.

We may draw a lesson from the incident, helpful to all of the Lord's people who are to any extent his ambassadors, representatives, teachers of the truth. The truth itself, especially in the light of our day, is so wonderful, so brilliant, that it naturally reflects some of its brilliancy upon those who represent it, causing men to marvel, and to say, as of old, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?" In some instances it might lead to an undue deference, to an ascription of undue honor, and to a subserviency which it would not be proper for the Lord's ambassadors to receive, and which they should as promptly and as thoroughly repudiate and refuse as did Paul and Barnabas refuse the honors which the Lystrians were about to bestow upon them. From the worldly standpoint this would be an unwise course. Those who will

accept flattery and adulation and honor more than is due, are likely to be prospered in this course to some extent by the Adversary, and apt to find that the worldly spirit likes to worship worldly heroes, Jupiters, Elijahs, etc. The only wise course for the Lord's servants is, therefore, the one followed by these missionaries of our lesson--to repudiate the entire matter; to confess that they are men of like passions with others; to hold up the light of God's Word, and behind it to hide and ignore themselves entirely. Not alone will this be profitable as respects the finding and development of the true children of God whom he is now gathering out of the world, but it will be profitable also for the Lord's ambassadors; for in this way they will grow in the Lord's grace and likeness; of which humility was a prominent trait. Thus they will best abide in his love, and ultimately attain to the still greater exaltation which God has

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promised to all of his children who are faithful and humble under present conditions.

The Apostle, in pointing out to the Lystrians that their ideas were vanities, well knew that this could not bring him the favor of his hearers; for it is not human nature to appreciate being told of our follies. To have worked his way into their good graces he would have needed to tell them a lie--that they were very wise, and that their course was a very proper one, etc. He, therefore, in his endeavor to be candid, and to serve the truth, risked their disappointment and displeasure; and he was undoubtedly keen enough to know this in advance, and what result to expect. Nevertheless, as God's mouthpiece, he shunned not to declare the whole message, whatever its results might be as regarded himself and his work. Here are good lessons for all of the Lord's people. It requires comparatively little courage to be a soldier of the cross and faithful to the truth amongst those of like precious faith and obedience; but it requires great courage to resist improper honor of men when we know in advance that this resistance will not only deprive us of their honor and friendship, but make us ignoble in their sight, and turn them into enemies. True soldiers of the cross still have the same trial, and it still requires hardness--a hardening campaign of experience in the Lord's service--to endure these things and come off joyful in the Lord. The babes in Christ, the weak, the untried, those who have not passed through trials and experiences and development of character, are not hardened, and could not stand such experiences. Hence it is that the apostle advises the Church that even proper exaltation to a service in the Church should not be accorded to a novice, lest he should be puffed up and thus be injured

himself, as well as become injurious to others. (I Tim. 3:6.) It requires time and seasoning to know how to either rightly accept and appreciate the honors of the brethren or others along proper lines, or to decline honors and dignities along improper lines.

The Apostle pointed out to his hearers that in times past God had been permitting all the nations to walk in their own ways. He had interfered particularly in the affairs of only the one nation, Israel; all the others had been permitted to take their own course, except in so far as they might be crossing some feature of the divine plan. Thus the Prophet expressed the matter to Israel, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." (Amos 3:2.) The reference to "time past," implies the change of dispensation which had just occurred in connection with the death of Jesus and the cutting off of Israel from any special favor, and the throwing open of the gospel call to all who had ears to hear;--to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Now God was sending a message of instruction to all the nations, that they should turn from such vanities and should recognize the only living and true God, and his Son who had redeemed the world, and whom he had ordained should in due time become its King and ruler, to put down sin and death, and bless with his reign of righteousness all the families of the earth. The Apostle points out that altho God had left the nations without the instructions of the Law Covenant the Prophecies, he had given them some indications of his care in making provision for their necessities,--causing the sun to shine and the rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, upon the evil and the good.

The sudden change of public sentiment, the result of the Apostle's explanations and plain statements of the truth, led the Lystrians to look at the missionaries with very different eyes, now that they were, according to their own declarations, common men like themselves. We may even suppose that they felt rather mean about their own superstition, which had so quickly aroused them to do reverence to men who repudiated it and acknowledged their unworthiness of it. It was while the populace was in this spirit that certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium came thither, explaining to them that the missionaries were

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impostors, working upon the credulity of the people, "turning the world upside down," raising questions about theology, and disturbing the minds of the people. The populace was ready for just such leading in the reverse direction, and disposed to feel somehow that if these men were not really Jupiter and Mercury they were pretenders and falsifiers who had deceived them and should be put to death. As a result, Paul

was stoned, and dragged outside the city, and left for dead.

How erratic is the natural mind, in its condition of ignorance and superstition! How easily the priest of Jupiter could lead the ignorant in one wrong course, to make gods of men,--and how readily he could lead them again in an opposite direction! But altho the greatest of all the apostles, and one of the most remarkable orators and logicians the world has ever known, was in their midst, how few, comparatively, he could and did influence in the right direction --for the truth and for righteousness, in obedience to God. The world is in many respects the same world that it was then, altho civilization and general intelligence have done considerable to lift it out of that abject benightedness which leads to idol worship,--altho Mohammedanism, Confucianism, churchianity and a certain kind of Christianity, have put a veneer of respectability and reason and common sense upon the world, yet under this veneer the masses are still in a very unsatisfactory condition--disposed to be humbugged; disposed to appreciate those who would be boastful and pretend to be great; disposed to worship that which demands worship, rather than that which is worthy of it; disposed to misunderstand God and his plan, and to consider these from a devilish standpoint, rather than to appreciate the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the love of God,--rather than to understand that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways, and God's plans than man's conceptions.

But God was not through with the Apostle Paul; he was not stoned because of God's indifference, nor because of his lack of power to protect his servant. On the contrary, quite probably the Lord was teaching the Apostle some great lesson, valuable both to himself and to the Church, for whom he was a general minister,--and to whom even today he ministers in the matter of these experiences. Quite probably the Apostle, while being stoned, remembered afresh the death of Stephen, to which he had consented; and quite probably, too, the result was a fresh realization of his own unworthiness to be so prominent a representative of the Lord and of his truth,--a humbling of his heart before the Lord, profitable to him and to the Church also.

Had the incident of the sacrificing not been thus followed by some trying experiences, who knows but that the Apostle might have felt a little of self-gratulation, such as would be natural to any man who, having honors thrust upon him, had voluntarily renounced them. He might have been disposed to glory in his strength of character; but his experiences led him in an opposite direction--as he himself subsequently wrote, "I will glory in tribulation." All of the Lord's faithful ones can learn good lessons here;

can learn to trust to the Lord's providences in all of their affairs;--not only in those which seem to go favorably, but in those also which apparently are working disadvantage and disaster. The Lord said concerning Paul, when declaring that he was a chosen vessel for his service, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." From this lesson we may draw the inference that when the Lord's servants are permitted to suffer for his name's sake (not for wrong-doing, not for anger, malice, hatred, strife, evil-speaking, etc., but for his sake) it is an attestation of the Lord's favor, in the acceptance of his sacrifice--as in the type, Abel's sacrifice was accepted with fire.

As the disciples stood about the prostrate form of Paul, supposing, as the others had, that he was dead, he rose up and returned to the city. We are not to suppose that all of the citizens joined in the mob which stoned him, tho we are to suppose that there must have been a general sympathy on the part of the majority, else such mob violence would not have been possible. It is quite probable, therefore, that the Apostle's return to the city was in a very quiet manner, so as not to unduly re-arouse the passions of the mob. The spirit of bravado which impels some people seems to have been absent in the case of these missionaries. They had the true courage and endured hardness as good soldiers in the way which the Lord approved; but we never see them tantalizing the people by boastful manner or words. They, and not others who misinterpret the divine will by an opposite course, should be our patterns, our examples, in such matters.

Their entire public preaching at Lystra was at an end, and the next day the missionaries went to Derbe, a distance of 35 miles--which implies that the Lord wrought a wonderful miracle in Paul, in that, after receiving so severe treatment, a stoning unto apparent death, he was able on the next day to continue his journey. The Lord sometimes works marvelously for his people, as in this instance; at other times he leaves them to the general vicissitudes of life as other men.

We are not informed that the Apostle made special prayer for his recovery, but are reminded of Timothy, who was one of the converts at Lystra, and to whom the Apostle, years afterward, wrote in his epistle that he should use some natural means "for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities"--without a suggestion of miraculous intervention, other than whatever the Lord might be pleased to give voluntarily without special request. And so it should be with us. We should use natural means for the reasonable

not denying or ignoring the divine power, but accepting the divine providence in all of our affairs; rejoicing if, in the Lord's providence, our health and strength and opportunities for service are preserved to us; rejoicing also if they suffer impairment, especially if the impairment come in connection with the service of the truth; rejoicing, if the will of God be such, if we are quickly and miraculously healed, and rejoicing equally if, in the Lord's providence, we use natural means for the alleviation of our often infirmities, as the Apostle directed in the case of Timothy. The child of God, is to recognize that all of his affairs are in the Lord's hands and under his direction. In the meantime he is to seek to use his every talent and opportunity to the best of his judgment, according to the

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spirit of a sound mind, remembering that the Lord's will concerning us is that we should learn not to walk by sight, finding everything going favorable to us; but that we should learn rather to walk by faith, tho this necessitates that at times things should go unfavorably and that we should be without any special manifestations of divine protection or relief.

No particulars are given regarding the ministry of the truth at Derbe. We may presume that it was without special incident. Having gone thus far, instead of proceeding and returning homeward by the nearer route, via Tarsus, Paul's home city, the missionaries determined to retrace their steps,--their motive in so doing apparently being their realization that the little groups of believers at Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia would by this time need some encouragement and establishment in the truth;--that because of the fierce opposition in these places there would probably be more or less contention and trouble, and questions arising which the new converts would not be competent to solve.

This was pastoral work; and in the homeward journey there is no intimation that the missionaries attempted further missionary work. They had no expectation whatever of converting all the people at these cities; they understood the plan of God too well to have any such expectations as modern mission workers seem to have. They knew very well that the mission of the gospel was, not to convert the world, but to choose or select out of the world a special people. (Acts 15:14.) They had witnessed the truth to these people, and had confidence that the Lord was behind them, and that such as had the hearing ear and the understanding heart (the only one, therefore, worthy of the truth) had already been reached by them, or would be reached through those who had already been enlightened. They accordingly contented themselves with the work of upbuilding the little

flock,--encouraging them to make their calling and election sure to a place in the Millennial Kingdom which, in God's due time, in the age to come, shall be glorified, empowered, and then be used of the Lord in the world's blessing, the world's conversion, the world's uplift.

The brethren of these various places were, doubtless, surprised that if the gospel was of God its servants, its ministers, should be so at the mercy of the forces of evil; and this may have tended to shake their confidence considerably, because the natural expectation would be that God would protect his servants. The Apostle explained this to the believers-- that tribulations are necessary for the perfecting of the saints, for the trial of faith, for the testing and the preparation of those who would be joint-heirs with Christ in the Kingdom; and that after the permission of evil shall thus have served its purpose during this gospel age--the purpose of keeping the little flock separate from the world and polishing and refining of them for the Kingdom--then the time will come when Satan shall be bound,--when the righteous shall be persecuted no more, but reign as joint-heirs in Christ's Kingdom.

Concerning the return of the apostles to these cities where they had previously been persecuted, an able writer suggests: "Precautions of secrecy they doubtless took, and cheerfully faced the degrading necessity of guarded movements, and of entering cities perhaps in disguise, perhaps only at late nightfall and early dawn. The Christians had early to learn those secret trysts and midnight gatherings and private watchwords by which alone they could elude the fury of their enemies." The missionaries returned, without further incident, to the Church whose special representatives on this journey they had been, and made their report to the Church at Antioch in Syria.

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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER CELEBRATED.

THE MEMORIAL celebration appears to have been quite general this year. More and more it comes to be a distinguishing sign of those who trust in the ransom;--as was evidently the divine intention. And why not? Why should those who "count the blood of the Covenant common [ordinary]" specially celebrate its shedding? Why should those who believe that our Lord was sinful flesh expect any greater results from his death than from the death of other men of the

sinner race--knowing that Divine Justice cannot look upon any sin with allowance? Why, either, should those who deny that our Lord was "made flesh," and who, on the contrary, claim that he was a spirit being who merely used the flesh as a cloak, who deny that the spirit being died, and claim that only the "cloak of flesh" died,--why should they feel any special interest in commemorating such a farcical proceeding as the crucifixion of the "cloak"?--Why should they attribute any merit to that, or anticipate any virtue from it?

Only those who see, as we do, that our Lord was wholly and solely for the time "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," and who realize that he was not as other men, not contaminated with sin and the sinner race, but "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners," can see how he could be, and as the Scriptures declare was, a ransom-sacrifice, a corresponding price for the sins of the whole world;--that as the world was in Adam when he sinned and shared his sentence, so Adam being redeemed,--bought back from under the curse by Jesus, his substitute,--the benefits of that atonement must extend beyond Adam to all his posterity; insuring to all a possibility of return to divine favor under the Millennial Kingdom soon to be established for that purpose, by the Redeemer.

In this doctrine of the ransom we have the firm foundation of all our hopes. (1) Its necessity lay in God's Justice and unchangeableness.

(2) It evidenced his love toward those he had justly sentenced to death: so that, if ever tempted to doubt the Lord's love and care for us as his people, we can with the Apostle go back to the ransom and reason ourselves right again, saying, If God so loved us as to give his Son for us while we were yet sinners, much more will he love us and grant us all things needful,--now that we are justified by faith in his blood; yea, and begotten and sanctified by the holy spirit.

(3) As its merits have already led to the call and

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acceptance of the "elect," it implies that ultimately all of the dead world shall be awakened, granted hearing ears and thus the opportunity of coming back into harmony with their Creator, during the Millennium of his grace;--"the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."--Acts 3:19-23.

(4) Naturally enough those who do not believe in the ransom do not believe in the promised restitution either. The ransom of something lost, forfeited, implies that it was valuable, and the promise of its

restitution signifies the same; and both these words ransom and restitution contradict and are in violent conflict with all evolutionary ideas--respecting Adam's original imperfection--that he was so low that he could not fall and did not need to be redeemed from a fall, and that restitution to his original condition would be a sad calamity instead of a blessing.

To those who appreciate the divine plan of the ages the ransom and its memorial are sure to become more and more precious as the few remaining years of their pilgrimage roll around: each year will see them the more zealous to "do this" in remembrance of the death of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world;--which is the propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins (the Church's), and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.--I Cor. 5:7; 11:23-26; Jno. 1:29; I Jno. 2:2.

The occasion was surely a very enjoyable one to all who participated in a right spirit. It could not be otherwise. If any true believer sought a blessing in commemorating, and failed to obtain it, let him inquire within, and find that it was because he had not first "purged out the old leaven;"--because envy, malice, hatred, evil-speaking or evil-surmising--works of the flesh and the devil--still had a place in his heart, which should, instead, have been filled with the Lord's spirit of love,--gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness;--the love which is not puffed up, envieth not, thinketh no evil and is full of mercy and good works. If any find themselves to have missed the real communion, by reason of such "defilements" let them purge their hearts with the water of truth, the Word of God, and let them celebrate four weeks later--on May 18th, as was arranged for the typical Israelite who because of defilements was hindered

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from keeping the feast at its appointed season.-- Num. 9:10,11.

The occasion was a very enjoyable one in Allegheny; --solemnity commingled with joy as we thought of our dear Redeemer's sufferings and ignominious death on our behalf; yet rejoiced in its blessed results already experienced by us and in prospect for the world. In few and simple words we recounted the meaning of the ordinance--in type and antitype. We viewed the unleavened bread, which symbolized to us our Lord's humanity, given as our ransom, that we by partaking of his merits might have justification and life imputed to us by the Father,--so fully as to permit us to be reckoned in with our Lord as members of the one loaf, the one body, and to be broken with him, sharing his sacrifice that in due time we may participate in the feeding of the whole world

with this bread of life. We considered "the cup" similarly, as our Lord's consecrated blood (sacrificed life) sealing the New Covenant for the world of mankind. We partook of it thus, and also as joint-participants with him--pledged to be dead with him that we may also live and reign with him.--I Cor. 10:16,17; Rom. 6:8.

About 335 were present at the Memorial service, and fully 300 of the number partook of the emblems with every evidence of intelligent sincerity;--witnessing to each other our faith in the Lord and his work for us, and our devotion to him and his even unto death, at any sacrifice;--his grace assisting, according to his promise. Endeavoring to preserve the blessed communion with our Lord we consented to forego usual greetings and conversation at the end of the service, and after singing, "What a friend we have in Jesus" we went silently to our homes,--full of holy joy and thankfulness. Twelve, prevented by illness, from being with us, were served subsequently by friends on their way home.

THE CELEBRATION ELSEWHERE AS REPORTED.

Some of the reports expected are a little slow in reaching us, but those received are encouraging. We give you a very few of these for your joy and encouragement, --believing that like ourself our readers generally esteem the interest manifested at the Memorial season a good index to the spiritual health of the Church.

The fellow-members of the Lord's body everywhere were remembered in prayers by the Allegheny congregation; and letters received show that this appreciation of the oneness and fellowship of the Church was general. One hundred and seventy-five reports received up to this writing, show an average participation of 27. The average last year was twelve and the previous year 10. This is very encouraging, to us all, surely. The general tone of the reports too indicates fervency of spirit. We can, of course, give but a few extracts.

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Dear Brother Russell:

I am sure you will rejoice with us in that this year in Washington 50 (38 white and 12 colored) persons celebrated the Memorial Supper and partook of the emblems of sacrifice, as against twenty-six last year, our company having nearly doubled in numbers. The services were conducted by Bro. Thomson and were most impressive throughout. We were mindful of the friends elsewhere and united in prayer on their behalf, especially remembering the laborers in the Watch Tower office--yourself in particular. As time goes on we feel the greater need of coming together.

So thoroughly do the friends here appreciate this means of grace that very rarely is one absent from a meeting.

Praying the Lord's grace to be with you, I remain,
Your brother on the altar of sacrifice,
J. A. B.--Washington City.

Dear Brother Russell:

Five brothers and sisters whose trust is in the merit of the precious blood met at our home last evening at 7:30 and partook of the emblems of our Redeemer's broken body and shed blood. The Lord's blessing was with us; a blessed unity of the spirit prevailed; our prayers ascended to the throne of grace for a greater filling with the Lord's spirit for ourselves and all the family of God.

We do feel that it is a great favor to be counted worthy to have a share in the sufferings of our Lord and Redeemer. Four others who met with us on previous anniversaries were detained this year on account of sickness and other causes.

Assuring you of our continued love toward, and prayer for, you and all the office helpers, I remain,
Yours in the love and service of Christ,
F. H. R.--Catskill, N.Y.

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My Dear Pastor in Christ:

This has been a blessed day of sacred communion with the Master and his "brethren." From the first of the morning testimony meeting till the last hymn was sung at night was a continuous season of profound spiritual blessings and favors, such as we believe few if any of the friends have ever experienced before in this city. About sixty-five were in attendance at the morning service; and how refreshing it was to listen to the earnest, fervent words from various lips as they testified to the goodness and love of the Heavenly Father as conveyed to us through Christ in his gracious providences!

During the afternoon a baptism service was performed, preceded by an able discourse on Consecration, showing how the water immersion beautifully symbolizes this, --our becoming dead with Christ,--sacrificing the old nature, our wills, our all; and henceforth to arise and walk in newness of life,--the life that is "hid with Christ in God." This was a very impressive service--twenty-one being immersed, thus witnessing to others that they are wholly and completely Christ's, to do the Father's good pleasure, even unto death. Eighty-six were present at this service.

The Memorial Supper, commemorating our dear Redeemer's great sacrifice,--his broken body and shed blood, and the sublime honor and privilege granted us to share

in his sacrificial suffering and death, was partaken of by seventy-two of the Lord's chosen ones. A feeling of absolute harmony and love prevailed. As the speaker portrayed our Lord's great sacrifice begun at the time of his baptism and completed on the cross, at Calvary, all seemed to realize very fully how great was the price given to ransom us from sin and death.

With full and grateful hearts we gave thanks to God for the gift of his dear Son, and for his glorious invitation to become joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him.

Having partaken of the emblems we sang a hymn (No. 23) which seemed to voice the predominating sentiment or spirit of the meeting most appropriately.

The friends in various parts of the earth were remembered, and we trust that all realized clearly the near and dear presence of our Redeemer and King, Jesus the Anointed One.

With much Christian love, I am truly yours in the patient waiting for the Kingdom.

H. C. R.--New York City.

Dear Brother Russell:

Eighteen of the friends met at our hall this evening to celebrate the memorial of our Lord's death. We had a very impressive service; and I think we all had the same experience as that of one brother who said: "I understand the meaning of the service better than ever before." Six of the friends from this place symbolized their death with Christ by baptism this afternoon. We feel rejoiced in these evidences that the Lord is blessing our efforts to spread the truth, and feel more determined than ever to spend and be spent in His service.

With Christian love,

Yours in Him,

C. P. B.--Lynn, Mass.

Dear Brother Russell:

The church in and near New Brighton celebrated the Lord's Supper last evening at the home of Brother Garver. The participants were only eight. Although few in number each one seemed animated with the same spirit, and all felt like saying with Paul "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." The occasion was one of solemnity and blessedness, long to be remembered.

Yours in our dear Redeemer,

B. C. R.--New Brighton, Pa.

Dear Friends:

There were just twelve at the Memorial Supper last evening. Several were hindered on account of sickness. Bro. Gaylord gave a good talk in the afternoon on the Memorial and Baptism.

All seemed greatly interested and refreshed in spirit.

Yours in our Blessed Redeemer,
F. L. H.--Denver, Colo.

Dear Brother Russell:

Once more we have been permitted to commemorate our Redeemer's death. Twelve of us met together at the home of Bro. Watson, and we shall long remember the hour we spent together in sweet communion with our Lord and Savior in spirit. There was a beautiful spirit of harmony and of brotherly love, that could have come from no other source but from our Master's presence. One brother spoke very feelingly on the subject of the ransom, after which we all joined our voices in singing that beautiful hymn, No. 122, then an opportunity was given for each one to express a thought, and every one spoke a few words. There were a few precious moments of hearts drawn together in loving sympathy, as we heard the experiences, the hopes and the joys of our brethren in the pilgrim way.

A brother spoke on the "bread" as the food upon which the "new man" feeds and gathers strength, and grows. After the unleavened bread had been partaken of by each, another brother spoke briefly on the wine as the symbol of the life-blood poured out for us, and not for us only but for the whole human family. Then we partook of the "cup." After a prayer and thanksgiving we sang No. 259 and immediately went to our several homes. It was, by far, the most blessed meeting we have yet enjoyed, and we sincerely hope that the dear ones in Christ everywhere have been likewise blessed.

Your brother in Christ,
E. G. P.--Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Dear Brother Russell:

We had the best celebration of the Memorial Supper spiritually that was ever held here. In the afternoon we studied the text, "Watch and pray, etc.," and in the evening endeavored to learn a lesson on the oneness of the body of Christ, and that the disciple is not above his Master. Fifteen was the number of the partakers. The meeting was held at my house. In Christian love and fellowship,

Yours,
S. K.--Port Clinton, O.

Dear Brother Russell:

It is with thankfulness that I send the report of the Memorial Supper, as observed by the class at Cincinnati, O. There were thirty-seven present, and all partook of the symbols, in memory of the great antitypical Passover Lamb, slain for all that die in Adam.

Among the number present were eleven who had never partaken of the memorial with us before. They all expressed themselves as filled with joy and love at the clear exposition of the subject, and most of them confessed that they had never seen the true meaning of it before. It was indeed a season of rejoicing for the class here.

With love toward all in the "Tower" office and all God's children, I am,

Yours in the love of Christ,
E. F. R.--Ohio.

Dear Brother Russell:

Our little band of five (two brethren, three sisters), met last evening at the appointed hour, to remember the anniversary of our dear Lord's death. We had a very blessed occasion and humbly asked our dear Father that all of his dear "sheep," everywhere, would be blessed also. Each one of our little band is intensely desirous that this shall be the most faithful year in our consecrated life, and that our dear Father will continue to polish and prune us, that we may bear more fruit, and hope to be completely broken with Christ. "Brethren, pray for us!"

Your brethren in the one glorious hope, the Church at Carbon Hill.

W. H. W.--Carbon Hill, Ills.

Dear Brother Russell:

The Cleveland church met last night to commemorate our dear Lord's great sacrifice for us. Bro. Hess led the meeting and we spent an hour before the evening service in prayer and testimony. Many pledged themselves afresh to follow in His footsteps, and we remembered all the dear ones of like precious faith. Forty-nine participated in the Supper, and we indeed had sweet moments, which were rich in blessing. We closed with hymn No. 276 and retired silently.

Yours with much Christian love,
F. S.--Cleveland, O.

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My dear Brother Russell:

I was deputed to inform you, in accordance with the desire expressed in the "Tower" for such information, that the Church at Portsmouth, Va., observed the annual Memorial

of our dear Savior's death last evening.

There were present eight persons, including myself, who are trusting in the blood of our dear Redeemer and who have consecrated unto the death the old man with all his hopes, desires and ambitions. There was a feeling of deep solemnity; but holy joy pervaded each heart, and confession was made of and sorrow expressed for all short-comings in the past, and a renewal of our Consecration vows, with the fixed purpose and determination on the part of each one to continue striving for the Mark of the Prize of our High Calling, by the help of our now present Lord and King.

Your brother in the Blessed Hope,
W. W. M.--Portsmouth, Va.

Dear Brother Russell:

The Church of Boston and vicinity observed the annual memorial of the Lord's Supper in the usual manner last evening, at our regular place of worship, one hundred and thirty-eight adults being present and participating.

In the afternoon a baptismal service was held at People's Temple, at which thirty-two friends symbolized their consecration by water baptism.

Yours in the blessed hope,
H. L. A.--Mass.

Dear Brother Russell:

Our Memorial meeting was a most solemn one in which fifty-one participated.

To say that our hearts were full of praise and thankfulness hardly expresses our feelings. The deep solemnity of the occasion seemed to impress each one as we symbolically renewed our vows of consecration to our dear Lord--all present seemed to realize the position and the necessity of continuing the race more and more earnestly as the time is so short and also the great necessity of a oneness of heart and mind seemed to pervade the whole assembly.

Yours in our Master's service,
E. S.--Toronto, Canada.

Dear Brother Russell:

It was the privilege of the church at Detroit to assemble last evening, and partake of the emblems which symbolize our participation in the death--sacrifice of our dear Lord and Master. Seventeen were present.

As some members living at a distance were delayed, we listened to the testimony of several who have been consecrated sons of God for many years. While the individual experiences varied, yet the result was the same in all--the

submerging of the will in the will of God, that He might be all in all.

As there were four present who had never before partaken of the Memorial with us, our leader spoke at some length regarding the significance of the bread and wine. He showed, that all believers who partake of these symbols in sincerity of heart, are benefited, but that to us there is a fuller, deeper significance than the world can ever understand: that in the "cup of blessing" we participate in the blood of the anointed one and that we are a part of the loaf broken and given to the world that they may be fed, in the next age.

That in partaking of these emblems, we declare the Lord's death till he come in kingdom power, and to ourselves renew our covenant to be buried with Him, that we may be with Him in the resurrection of the first-born, and share with Him in His glory and power.

The thought that we share in our Lord's sacrifice, not merely that we may win the prize to be won by the overcomers, but that as a part of the seed of Abraham we may share in the work of "blessing all the families of earth" in the next age, gives a broader and grander aspect to our sacrifice, and helps us in our daily struggle to overcome the old fleshy nature, that the new and Christlike character may take its place, and that all God's purpose may be fulfilled.

May God bless and preserve you and your co-laborers in spreading the "glad tidings" abroad.

With much love from the members of our Church here, I remain,

Sincerely in Him,
F. C. S.--Detroit, Mich.

Dear Brother Russell:

We wish to inform you of the precious season enjoyed at the Memorial Supper here for the first time as a church. There were eight present and all partook of the emblems of Christ's body and blood. One, an earnest seeker for truth, came a distance of fifty or more miles.

This sister had read Vol. I., and came on purpose to get more light and help. Tonight after reading and searching the Scriptures she made this remark, "I would have gone round the world to have heard what I have heard tonight." And as we closed our reading for the night, she had her Bible open and read for her testimony the 103d Psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul," etc.

With deep gratitude, we remain,
Yours in the glorious hope,
H. E. F.--Ithaca, N.Y.

Dear Brother Russell:

The friends of truth here observed the Lord's Memorial.

We were blessed spiritually, and I think all felt the importance of the occasion, and that it was good to be there. Twenty-nine partook of the elements representing our Lord's broken body and shed blood. Having the pleasure of several brethren and sisters from adjoining towns, our numbers were increased above our usual attendance.

The Church here unites in expressing their Christian love to you. We all pray that our Heavenly Father may strengthen and keep you, enabling you to give to His loved ones the "meat in due season."

Your brother in the glorious hope,
C. H. A.--Baltimore, Md.

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THE NEW BIBLES THOROUGHLY APPRECIATED.

ALTHOUGH we have not yet been able to fill all the orders for the new Bibles--sending them out as rapidly as the binders can furnish them--nevertheless, we have heard from quite a number who have received them that they give great satisfaction.

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We cannot do better perhaps than give you extracts from a few of these letters as follows:--

Dear Brother Russell:--I have received that beautiful Bible. I am in ecstasies about it. I am profoundly grateful to our Father, yourself and all those connected with its making and perfecting. It is indeed a wonder. I did not expect half as much when I first read of the work you were going to undertake. It is a great blessing indeed to all interested in present truth, and who are fighting the good fight of faith, and urging on toward the mark of the High Calling.

Yours in love, fellowship and service,
W. H. P.--Toronto, Can.

Dear Brother Russell:

The wide margin Bibles for the Washington congregation sent in lot to my address were received this morning and some of them I have already delivered. Those who have seen them are perfectly delighted and say they would not take many times the price for them. It would do you good to hear the satisfactory remarks concerning these remarkable Bibles--the only ones of the kind in existence--and to note the beaming face and glad light in the eyes of the beholder. If I were tendered twenty-five dollars for mine I should not entertain for a moment the thought of parting

with it if I could not secure another, altho I had already marked one of my Bibles in this way from the copy at the Watch Tower office. I have found that Bible more helpful in Bible study than all the other helps combined, hence know from experience how helpful this Bible will be to students of the Word. The Topical Index is an entirely new feature, and a happy surprise. It alone is worth the price of the book. I can in a sense realize the stupendous undertaking to prepare this work. We all owe you a debt of

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gratitude for your solicitude on our behalf. I am sure the Lord will bless your effort and amply reward you. But you always declare that He already has rewarded you, and that you are striving to render some return for his goodness. To him be the praise in using you so admirably to the furthering of his cause. Brother, I cannot thank you sufficiently for this treasure. I prize it above everything I have. May the Lord continue to direct your mind and heart in this blessed service, and may your joy be full as you seek to know and do his will. My prayers are with you and for you as I know yours are ascending on my behalf. Continue to remember me at the throne of grace that my faith fail not. We are having splendid meetings with an average attendance of about twenty-five, and the Tower office force is always remembered in our prayers.

Your brother in the love and service of the truth,
J. A. B.--Washington, D.C.

Dear Brother Russell:

In behalf of Sr. Black and self, I wish to thank you for the new Bibles. Our hearts were strangely touched as we examined with considerable care the different features of the work; and we trust it will prove a new incentive to faithfulness. The value of the work is far beyond our sanguine anticipations.

The literature is being read here with a good deal of appreciation and our work does not seem to meet with much opposition. What proportion of the results will be reaped early is in the hands of the Chief Reaper.

We realize an ever-increasing joy in the privilege of engaging in this feature of Harvest work. All join in gratitude for your faithful service and in prayers for God's abundant blessing on every feature of the work now drawing so near to its close.

Your brother in the One Hope,
W. W. Black.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

My new Bible has arrived and I feel that my heartiest appreciation of your services in providing for us such a

treasure is but a very small return for your kindness. The whole arrangement of the work is so neat, compact, comprehensive and first-class that it seems as tho no improvement could be made in the book. To have the help of such a volume adds greatly to the pleasure of study and research. The material of the Towers and Dawns is available now in a moment's time and this fact will be greatly appreciated by those of us who have not been in the truth for any great length of time.

May the Lord use this book for the upbuilding of His Church in the truth, is my prayer.

Your sister in the truth,
L. S. W.--Ontario.

My Dear Brother Russell:

I today received my copy of the Bible, for which I have been looking, and praying. I have had time only for a general examination of it, but that examination has filled my heart with gratitude and praise to God for his wonderful help in the study of his Word. I could but fall upon my knees and express that gratitude to him for such a book, and to implore the life-giving power of his ever blessed spirit to shine upon it and our hearts as we descend to a deeper level of the great mine of golden truth. It impresses my heart very deeply, that he has restored my sight, for six months ago had the same book been put into my hands I could not have read a word, but now thank his dear name, I can feast on the good things there, and aid others to a like feast. Praise our great, loving and merciful Heavenly Father! And I feel that our thanks are due you for the great treasure you have (by the blessing of God) put into our hands.

Yours in the love of the truth,
W. F. E.--Maine.

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We felt sure in advance that all the dear friends of the truth would appreciate having just such a copy of our Father's Word, and are glad that we were not mistaken. The publishers were astounded when they learned that the edition of 5,000 had been nearly all subscribed for in advance. It is now the turn of those who receive them to feel amazed that so splendid a book could be produced for the money. We are glad indeed to know of your appreciation of our efforts in your behalf; and now we trust that a systematic use of the new Bible will be instituted as quickly as possible amongst the friends.

We trust that all of you will promptly acquaint yourselves with the various new features of this new Bible; and for a complete explanation we refer you to

a description which follows its title page, under the heading, "Special Features of This Edition--Berean Bible Study Helps." Therein we offer some suggestions respecting Bible-study meetings. The regular leaders everywhere will have no difficulty in understanding the suggestions, and we believe that they will be found so helpful that speedily such meetings will be a part of the regular order amongst the friends in general. Indeed where there is no experienced leader, there should be no difficulty in conducting not only an interesting but a profitable and instructive service. If you cannot have a large meeting, remember the Lord's special promise to the twos and threes gathering in his name--claim the promise by fulfilling your part of it. "Forget not the assembling of yourselves together," as the Lord, through the Apostle enjoins,--and "so much the more as you see the day approaching."--Heb. 10:25.

The custom of the nominal church systems, to have one member of the congregation do all the preaching, all the teaching, is one that has done much injury, in that it has given rise to a division of the church into classes--clergy and laity;--additionally it has laid too much work upon the few called the clergy to permit of their attention to things of this present life, providing things honest in the sight of all men; and by taking away from the majority of the Lord's people their responsibility and share in the ministry it has deprived them of a great blessing, and hindered their growth in grace and their development as servants of the truth.

We are not opposing the preaching of the gospel by those who have the talent for it; but our thought is that the Lord never intended the meetings of his people to be all of the preaching kind. It was not so in the early church as the Apostle explains (I Cor. 12; I Thess. 5:11.) An effort should be made to develop whatever talent there is in any little company --to incite and draw out thought and expression respecting the divine plan as presented in the Word. Let those who have ability to preach do so in moderation; let them also help others to various shares in the service of the truth. As each seeks to grow in grace and to assist others, the Lord will open further and wider doors of opportunity--perhaps in near-by towns or in other quarters of the same city. The harvest is great and the laborers are few, and it should be the constant effort of all who are faithful to the Lord and to the cause, not only to serve one another, but to help one another into the service. We pray the Lord that the new Bible may be greatly blessed of him in this way--in helping many to engage in the ministry of the truth as leaders of Berean Bible classes.

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