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BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

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Those of the interested who, by reason of old age, or other infirmity  
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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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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

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The date of the celebration this year will be Friday evening,  
April 10th--after 6 o'clock. We mention the date thus  
early for the benefit of the brethren afar off.

THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT.

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Please notice again the new terms mentioned in our issue of Dec. 15, '02. The price of the book in cloth remains the same, but we give a year's subscription to the WATCH TOWER with it without extra charge. This is the same identical book which the publishers have been selling for 20 years at \$4 each. Indeed, we have none of our own edition yet: we had about 500 copies on hand when the plates were purchased and presented to us. You will see, then, why we cannot deviate from the liberal terms made;--the order for the Diaglott must always be accompanied by \$1.50, whether you accept the offer of TOWER subscription free or not.

STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE."

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We fear we did this valuable work an injustice in describing it as inferior to "Young's Analytical Concordance." Use of a copy during the past year has greatly attached us to it. We can supply them at the following established prices (and give 3 cloth vols. of DAWN postpaid as a premium): In cloth binding, \$6; in half leather binding, \$8, express prepaid.

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GOD'S SUPERVISION OF HIS SAINTS.

"The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Though he stumble, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand."--Psalm 37:23,24.

CALVINISM has its good features as well as its bad ones. Its institution meant the reaction of noble Christian minds against a false doctrine. The fact that these reactionists went to an extreme should not condemn them utterly, nor nullify the good features of their teachings. It is customary for the pendulum of thought to swing from one extreme to another, passing the central point of absolute truth. Indeed, we have every reason to believe that this is a part of the Adversary's method in blinding the minds of those who are seeking truth. He would lead as far away from absolute truth as possible, either in one direction or the other in every reaction or reform; therefore, he seems to have taken an interest to the extent of helping the reformers to an opposite extreme.

During the "dark ages" the central thought of our text was lost sight of--the thought of God's care for each and for all of his consecrated people. The thought inculcated and generally held was to the contrary of this; viz., that the average man, even though a consecrated believer, is too insignificant for divine attention; that God had given over to the care of the

Pope and the clergy the souls of his people. To so great an extent did this teaching prevail that the people subject thereto did not think of Jehovah as their shepherd; nor even of Jesus as his appointed representative shepherd; and did not think of approaching these in prayer, nor of having their divine oversight and direction in their affairs. On the contrary, if they had sins to be repented of, they were to go to the priest, make confession, and secure absolution. Had they requests to make, they were to ask the priest; or in prayer to approach some dead saint, requesting his mediation with some of the dead apostles or with Mary, the mother of Jesus, that they, in turn, might mediate with the Son of Jesus, that he, in turn, might mediate with the Father, and that thus they might be brought to the attention of Jehovah and possibly get some fragmentary blessing as a crumb from the table.

The reaction of Reformation times was against all this sort of thing, and the central teaching of Calvinism was that God has a direct interest in all those who, through the merit of Jesus, become his children through faith and consecration. It is difficult to estimate how great has been the blessing that has come to the Lord's people through the revival of this doctrine of the primitive Church. We must ever feel grateful to John Calvin and his coadjutors for the service they rendered to the household of faith in this particular,--even though we must, at the same time, thoroughly repudiate that feature of their teachings which passed to the extreme of declaring that as God had foreknown an elect Church, the special and happy object of his care during this Gospel age, and to be exalted ultimately to the heavenly state, he had, on the other hand, predetermined the torture of all the remainder of the race, and had made ample provision therefor. God permitted (we may even say, used) Calvin and his associates in the presentation of an important truth, while at the same time he permitted them to attach to it this awful, blasphemous, God-dishonoring teaching respecting the non-elect. We thank God that, in his providence, we live in the time when it is due that his gracious purposes toward the non-elect should be clearly seen, and his character freed from the evil aspersions of such a theory.

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Papacy's conception of the insignificance of man, even though a good man in the Lord's sight, is much nearer to the view of the natural, worldly man, than is the thought that all the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord. The natural man finds it difficult to believe in a God at all; as he looks about the universe his first thought of its immensity and intricacies, and of the greatness of the one who created all these things is speedily offset by the suggestion that

possibly there is no God;--possibly there are "laws of nature" which form themselves and which operate themselves, and under which all things are and shall ever be. He is encouraged in this line of doubt by the views of some, known as Scientists, Evolutionists and Higher Critics. Though none of these have the temerity to declare point-blank that there is no God but nature, they, almost without exception, show that this is the leaning of their minds, the tendency of their thought. They have not yet discovered any form of life which has not in some sense or degree been transmitted from some other living thing. They are looking for this, however--earnestly looking for it and expecting it, and quite ready, if they can find it, to claim that all life, all being, is the result of a law of evolution, and needed no interference by a Creator, even at the beginning. From this standpoint, and especially backed up by the high authorities of our day, scientific and religious, the natural man feels skeptical about a God at all, and concludes that if there is a God he is so concerned and occupied in his own personal affairs and in the affairs of other beings in other worlds, that the hundreds of millions upon this planet are in his sight and estimation but as so many mites would be in man's estimation. These are little inclined to think that all the steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord.

As Calvin's day was a time of reaction from a wrong thought toward a right one in this particular, so, today marks another crisis. We are living in the time of reaction against the right thought on this subject, and in favor of the wrong thought. In early times in all the theological seminaries, as well as in the great colleges and universities of Christendom, the teachings were distinctly adverse to the sentiment of our text, and at very most allow that mankind as a whole is possibly under some kind of divine supervision and care; though the sentiment seems to be that God knows and cares much less for the poor groaning creation than did its theologians, publicists and reformers.

There is a reason for all this, to be sure. The wheels in the divine plan are so large, and the hands on the divine clock move so slowly that the natural man perceives no movement--fails to realize that God is working all things according to the counsel of his own will. Lacking the instruction of the divine Word, worldly wisdom sees not the purpose of the permission of "the present evil world;" nor how the lessons and experiences which it is giving to all mankind will eventually work out a great blessing, as part of man's needed instruction; to be followed by his instruction in righteousness in the Millennial age, soon to be ushered in. Worldly wisdom sees not the object for which the Church is now called out from amongst the world and shaped and fitted and polished, by trials and difficulties

and contact with evil, for the glorious work of the future,--of blessing all the families of the earth. And not seeing these things,--not seeing the object of the permission of evil, not seeing why God has delayed the binding of Satan, the overthrow of his power and the release of the bonds of superstition and blindness with which he has enslaved the masses, it concludes that God is indifferent, and that all the provisions and arrangements for social uplift depend upon the wisdom and the benevolence of men.

How thankful should be our hearts, as we realize the divine favor which has rescued us from this blindness which is upon the world, and particularly upon the great and worldly-wise of Christendom! The knowledge granted us of the plan of the ages saves us, not only from the bondage of priestcraft and superstition of the "dark ages," but it saves us also from the evolutionary unbelief which is now sweeping over Christendom, and robbing all who have not the light of the present truth of their joy in the Lord, their peace, their confidence, their trust in him.

We thank God for the ability to grasp this blessed promise of our text (and scores of others of similar import) and to rejoice in them, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might; saying, "If God be for us who can be against us [to any avail]?" If God so loved us while we were yet sinners, much more does he love us now that we are his people. (Rom. 5:8,9.) He who has begun a good work in us is both able and willing to complete it unto the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. 1:6.) Since we are the Lord's, and have these various assurances of his Word, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called [ones] according to his purpose."--Rom. 8:28.

Let us not, however, apply our text carelessly; let us note carefully that it does not apply to all mankind, but to the "good." The thought here is evidently in harmony with the statements elsewhere, to the effect that God's care is over the righteous, as when we read, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." (Psa. 1:6.) "The Lord knoweth them that are his." (2 Tim. 2:19.)

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Looking about us in the world we inquire:  
Who, then, are the righteous? who are so good as to be properly called God's people? Harkening for direction from the Word of the Lord we hear the answer, "There is none good, save one, that is God;" and, "There is none righteous, no, not one." These testimonies of the Word fully correspond to our own findings; for in ourselves, as well as in others, we find imperfection,--unrighteousness. But how can these testimonies of the Scripture be reconciled?

--that there are none righteous, none good of all the Adamic race, and yet that God declares that all the steps of a good man, all the ways of the righteous, are under his supervision? We answer that the Scriptures explain how these statements are in full accord; that there is a class of people in the world who, at one time,

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were children of wrath even as others, but who have been reconciled to God through the death of his Son, their ransom. These have come into accord with God in the spirit of their minds, in their hearts;-- their wills are in accord with the divine will. Their deficiencies, which are still known to themselves, and some of them sadly apparent to their neighbors also, are not deficiencies of the will, of the heart, of the intention; and the terms of the New Covenant being applied to these in advance of the world, their blemishes are reckoned as covered in and by the merit of their Redeemer's sacrifice. Thus God declares that he can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus--of him who trusts in Jesus, and through Jesus, accepts forgiveness of sins and full reconciliation to God's will, so that he desires to sin no longer. These are the "righteous"; these are "his"; these are the "good" of our text. Oh, blessed class! Oh, happy people! A peculiar people, prospectively a Royal Priesthood unto God--the "elect" Church.

If we call attention to the fact that none others than these righteous, good people are under the divine supervision, and guaranteed that all things shall work for their good, our object is not to discourage others; but to rightly inform them of their position, and to remove from their minds any false hopes and delusions they may have been entertaining--to the intent that by proper acceptance of God's favor in the ransom, and a full consecration to him, they may at once attain to this position of reconciliation, and relationship of sonship, and become heirs of this and all similar promises.

Who has not noticed that people who would not admit that they are God's children, who are not believers in the redemption, and not consecrated to the Lord, will in times of trouble go to the Lord in prayer, and take from his Word and apply to themselves such promises as this of our text? Yet this is all wrong if they are still "children of wrath." And if they have seen the open doorway by which they might approach God and attain to membership in his family, and if they have disdained these and neglected them, what effrontery it is on their part to approach the Lord in time of trouble! and how great is their credulity when they delude themselves into thinking that any of these promises would be applicable to them! We are not seeking to

hinder any from coming to the Lord in a proper manner in their seasons of distress; but we are wishing to be understood that sorrow, even sorrow for sins, is not repentance; and that sorrow and trouble do not constitute doors of access to divine favor, and that then, as ever, no man cometh unto the Father but by the Son--"through faith in his blood." We would encourage any who, passing through trying experiences, and feeling the need of a Savior and a great one, come to God in faith and in consecration, and thus put themselves under his protecting care; but even then we would advise them that it had been better had they come to the Lord before the trouble; --better had they calmly, deliberately, dispassionately, thought over his goodness and greatness, and their own insufficiency and need, and the reasonableness of their consecration and the privilege of accepting God's favor in Christ, and coming thus under his exceeding great and precious promises to them that love him.

Some may here inquire: What constitutes justifying faith? We answer: It is a faith in God, based upon and in harmony with all that he has revealed. Abraham believed God and was justified by his faith; yet his faith was far less comprehensive than the faith which justifies God's people today; because, in the meantime, God has unfolded and expanded his revelation. Abraham's faith took in all that God had promised; viz., the blessing of the whole world of mankind through his posterity; and his faith evidently grasped the thought that this implied a resurrection of the dead, not one which would concern his posterity only, but which would embrace also the families of the earth which had already passed into death. He could not do more than believe this, and in some respects it was a severer test of faith than is our larger faith of today. For he could not see how God could be just and yet be the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus; while we, standing on this side of the great ransom sacrifice, can see the *modus operandi*. Justifying faith today, however, must believe the record which God has given us of his Son. It is not sufficient that we recognize Jesus as one of the noble men of our race, nor even that we should recognize him as the chiefest member of it. God's revelation is more than this, and, hence, our faith must be more. We

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must grasp by faith that he was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate" from the sinner race;--that he left the glory which he had with the Father, and took the place and condition of the first perfect man, in order that he might redeem him and all of his race which had come under his condemnation to death. We must believe further, that our Lord Jesus gave himself a ransom for all. We must believe, further,

that this was a satisfactory ransom, or purchase price for the world--that it sufficed as an offset for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world. We must believe that the Father evidenced or testified to this perfect obedience, in that he raised him from the dead; that he ascended up on high, appearing in the presence of God on our behalf, making mediation for our iniquities, through the merit of his sacrifice; and that we are accepted in the Beloved, whom God has highly exalted, and given a name, authority and power above every name; and that he is Lord of all; we must accept him as our Lord, our Master, and must, to the extent of our ability, seek to walk in his ways--not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

But after we have attained this position, and after the promise of our text, and all like promises, are ours, it requires time and a continual application of faith, in order to rightly appreciate God's promises, and to appropriate them to ourselves; and this is Scripturally called "growing in grace and knowledge." We grow in knowledge as we take note of the promises of God, and by faith apply them to ourselves, and seek to discern in our lives the fulfilment of those promises; we grow in grace simultaneously, for unless each item of knowledge be received into a good and honest heart, and bring forth its measure of obedience and righteousness (grace) we will not be prepared for the next step of knowledge, and would be thus stopped, or possibly turned back. And as a loss of knowledge would mean a measurable loss of grace, so also a loss of grace would mean a corresponding loss of knowledge; --going into darkness, the promises of the Lord's Word becoming more and more dim and obscured, in proportion as our goodness or grace would be lost in worldliness or sin.

The Christian, as a disciple of the Lord, as a pupil in the school of Christ, is being fitted for a place in the Millennial Kingdom--for a share in its glory, honor and immortality. It is required of such pupils that they shall give diligence to learn to appropriate the instructions of their teacher, else they will not be prepared for the glorious things to which they are called--they will fail to make their calling and their election sure. Hence, we see the necessity for the frequent admonitions of the Scripture, that the Lord's people shall be awake;--not of those who slumber; not of those who are idle; not of those who are overcharged with the cares of this life; but that they be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Their service toward the Lord is primarily the bringing of themselves into as close harmony with the Lord's will, and into as close likeness to the divine pattern as possible; and secondly, it is that by precept and example they may help others of the called ones in the same narrow way.

There is danger that some may misunderstand the meaning of our text, and suppose it to teach that



every incident in the life of God's people is what and as he intended it to be;--that God arbitrarily interferes in the affairs of his people, sets aside their free agency, and forces them to take this step or the other as mere machines. This is a serious mistake. No such thought is contained in the words. God has shown us his good pleasure in such matters; for, although he could have made us like wagons or wheelbarrows, to be pulled or pushed regardless of any ambition of our own, he did not so make us, and seeketh not such to be his children--the recipients of his favors. On the contrary, he made man a free moral agent--in this respect a copy of his Creator, free to will as he may please. Although we are not always free to do as we may please, we are always free to will as we may please, and, as already seen, in the present time the Lord is dealing with his people according to their wills. And if God respects the will of the natural man, much more would he respect the will of the new creature in Christ Jesus, begotten of the holy spirit.

Our text presupposes that in the class described the human will has been transformed;--that the divine will has been accepted as instead of the human; and that the child of God is seeking to walk in the ways of righteousness, in which he has already started; and the proper thought to be gathered is that thus seeking to walk in the Lord's ways, God will not permit his imperfections of judgment to work him any injury, but will supervise his affairs; will overrule so that every step he may take, although it be taken of his own will, his own volition--his consecrated will, however --shall be overruled for his good; for his development as a new creature in Christ. If he shall err in judgment, and bring upon himself the consequences of his error, the Lord's wisdom and power are such that he can fulfil all the provisions of this promise, and make even his blunders and weaknesses to so react as to strengthen his character and establish him in righteousness, developing in him by these and other experiences the fruits and graces of the spirit, which will eventually fit and prepare him for joint-heirship in the Kingdom.

Another Scripture gives us a suggestion respecting

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our part in the ordering of our steps. It represents the Lord's people as praying, in harmony with the Lord's provision, saying, "Order my steps in thy Word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." (Psa. 119:133.) This is the proper course for the Lord's people; to seek to walk carefully, circumspectly; to take heed to the instructions of the Lord's Word, so that thus their mistakes, their blunders, may be fewer and fewer, as they grow in grace and

grow in knowledge of the Lord. But meantime, in connection with all of the weaknesses and imperfections incident to our imperfect bodies, we all have need of special comfort and consolation which the Lord has provided us in our text. It is the source of weakness in many of the Lord's people that they do not properly grasp by faith this and similar promises; for only in proportion as they have this faith and grasp these promises can they be buoyed up by this, and be encouraged to press along the line for the mark. This means faith toward God, and we readily admit that the "babes" in Christ cannot exercise as much faith in respect to these promises and experiences as can those who are further advanced; and yet we see continually that it is not years alone that tell in Christian development; that the growth of the Christian in grace and knowledge depends chiefly upon his faith, his love, his zeal.

"According to thy Word,"--should not be misunderstood to mean that God orders the affairs of his people, only in the way of commands and advice given them in his Word. Ah! had this been true, how many now rejoicing in the light of the Lord's favor might have become outcasts long ago! How many have failed to take heed to the directions of the Word, whose steps, nevertheless, the Lord has ordered or directed;--according to his Word;--according to his promise! When the wrong path was taken, and the Word neglected, and the privileges of Christian brotherhood neglected, and thus the way made ready for a complete separation from the Lord and the truth,--then, perhaps, the Lord ordered the way, according to his Word, in sending disappointments, financial or social, or sickness of body corresponding to the sickness of the heart;--and thus, perhaps, he brought back his wandering sheep, "according to his Word," making experiences and trials work out for his highest good.

Thus, in his Word the Lord promises the crown of life to the zealous soldiers of the cross, and assures us that the careless shall under divine providence have their steps so ordered that they shall receive "stripes," chastisements, to awaken and rescue them; --so that they may be "saved so as by fire," and come up through great tribulation,--even after they have failed to gain the "abundant entrance" of the Kingdom class. Let us rejoice in thus having our way committed to the Lord; but let us take earnest heed to our own steps also, that we may walk in the footsteps of our Master in the narrow way, and thus also inherit with him the glories promised.

Likewise we should expect the Lord's guidance of our temporal affairs and particularly in respect to our service of the truth. We should not only give heed to the Word and its spirit, but additionally we should keep watch for the leadings of divine grace;--opening

or closing doors of opportunity, and thus leading us, if faithful and obedient, not only into all truth, but also into fuller liberties and opportunities for serving it to others.

We must not overlook the latter part of our text --the assurance that though the child of God may stumble at times in the way, these will never mean to him an utter fall, because his hand is still held by the Lord! What a comforting thought is here! How well calculated it is to deliver the Lord's people from utter despondency in respect to themselves and each other! The all-important thoughts to be kept in mind are, Am I still the Lord's? Am I still trusting in the precious blood? Am I still consecrated to the Lord and his righteous way? If these can be answered in the affirmative we can still realize that we are God's children, and that our hands are still in his; that the spirit of begetting and adoption, which began in us the new life, has not perished; and that it is God's will that we should recover ourselves as quickly as possible from any stumbling, and looking well at the difficulties and trials which led us into it, we should fortify our characters against those difficulties as respects the future, and thus go on really stronger, because of our difficulties, and yet all the while realizing that our recovery from the difficulty was not of our own strength, but because of our trust in the arm of the Lord, to which we are still holding.

The Scriptures which speak of the natural branches of the olive tree, and also the ingrafted branches of the wild olive, continuing to be branches only so long as they continue in the relationship of faith (Rom. 11:17-21), are not to be ignored; neither should we forget our Lord's words, when likening his followers to the branches in a vine; saying, "I am the Vine; ye are the Branches;" he, nevertheless, pointed out that "every branch in me" that bears not fruit, the Father, the husbandman, taketh it away-- it becomes refuse, never to be re-ingrafted but destroyed.

These and other Scriptures most emphatically teach the possibility, not of our stumbling as of accident, and being separated from the Lord, but of the

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possibility of our being separated from him through wilful disobedience and neglect of his Word and of the opportunities he has afforded us. He will not let us go so long as we are striving to walk in his way; but will order our steps so that they shall bring to us the best blessing possible, and will recover us and help us in our stumblings, because we are seeking and delighting to walk in his way. But if we lose this spirit, and become of a contrary one, if we fight against God, --if we resist the leadings and guidance which he has

provided in his Word and by his spirit, and if we seek to walk contrary to him, he will also walk contrary to us, and he will let go our hand; our stumbling then would mean our fall--we would be utterly cast down, and that beyond recovery, in the Second Death.

We do not, however, address those who are wilfully resisting the Lord and seeking to walk after the flesh and not after the spirit. We address those who are seeking the old paths; seeking to walk in the footsteps of Jesus; seeking to know and to do the Father's will, and whose discouragements are the result, not of wilful wrong, but of the weaknesses of the flesh against which they are continually striving. These the Lord would have us encourage, and draw to their attention the precious promises of his Word, and his assurances that "as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that reverence him."

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#### REFORMATION COSTING SACRIFICE.

--ACTS 19:11-20.--MARCH 8.--

"The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified."

EPHESUS was in many respects the scene of the Apostle Paul's most successful work. He spent about three years there altogether, accompanied by Timothy, Erastus, Titus and, possibly, others. The influence of his work, either directly or indirectly, extended to other cities round about. It is supposed that it was during this stay at Ephesus that congregations were started in the nearby places, mentioned in Revelation as "the seven churches of Asia" (Minor). Our last lesson showed the Apostle beginning his work at Ephesus in the synagogue. He continued to present the truth until opposition to it became quite marked, and certain of the Jewish adherents began to speak evil of the teachings and of the believers. Then the Apostle and those who believed, unwilling to continue a condition of strife, discontinued their attendance at the synagogue, and began a separate meeting, apparently in a rented public hall, called "The School of Tyrannus," because, according to the custom of that time, it was used by him for this purpose in the forenoons.

The Apostle probably labored at his trade during the forenoon, and daily, during the afternoon, preached the message to such as had hearing ears, not only in the public hall, but also by visiting those whom he had reason to expect would be amenable to the gospel. We are supposing a continuance of his usual manner of life,

described in his first letter to the Thessalonians (2:9), "Ye remember our labor and toil, working day and night." The Apostle did not belong to a paid ministry. He had a message to deliver, which he appreciated so highly that he was glad of an opportunity to spend his life in its promulgation--using for other purposes only so much of time and energy as were necessary to procure life's necessities,--waiting for the great reward which the Lord has promised to all faithful servants of his cause. The Lord's ambassadors today can take no better pattern than his, if seeking with him divine favor now, and glory, honor and immortality by and by.

Satan's arts, employed in all parts of the world from the earliest dawn of history, have been in the nature of wonder-workings, magic, etc. The Scriptures call our attention particularly to the magicians of Egypt, to the soothsayers of Babylon, and in this lesson show us that the same practises, the same

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wily arts of the Adversary, were general throughout the Roman Empire, and especially in the wealthy city of Ephesus. The Lord performed through the Apostle Paul, while at Ephesus, many marvelous healings of the sick, and other miracles, as well as the casting out of the evil spirits referred to in vs. 11 and 12,--doubtless as an offset to the blinding influence of witchcraft, magic, black art, etc. We may reason that the manifestation of divine power here was necessary to the establishment of the Church, and to the general influence of the gospel in that region--as an offset to the blinding influences of Satan's agents and power. The Ephesians were evidently so bound by these arts of the Adversary that an exhibition of him as the real father of them was almost indispensable. Besides, the miracles wrought by Paul served as an endorsement of him as an apostle; an endorsement of his message of Jesus, the Redeemer; of a resurrection as a means of rescue from death, the wages of sin; of a Millennial Kingdom as the means, or channel through which that rescue would come; and of the calling out of the Church as the body of Christ, to constitute that Kingdom, when, in due time, complete and glorified.

Perceiving the Apostle's power to be greater than

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their own, certain of the magicians essayed to use the name of Jesus as a charm or magic word, just as they were in the habit of using other magic words in their incantations. The effort of some of these, sons of one of the principal priests, resulted disastrously to them, and beneficially to many others. Addressing the one possessed of an evil spirit, they demanded that the evil

spirit leave the vexed one, "in the name of Jesus whom Paul preacheth," as distinguished from others of the same name, for the name was at that time a common one. The demon not only did not obey the command, but using the possessed one, and exercising through him demoniacal strength, the seven men were wounded and put to flight, losing, at least, their outer garments.

This matter becoming widely known, was a convincing argument to those who had long had confidence in such wonder-workers, and proved to them that the Apostle's teachings were correct--that the black arts were of Satan, while the Apostle's miracles were of divine power. The resulting increase of interest in the truth shows us clearly that the people were previously duped and unable to discern the true message of God from the spurious teachings of Satan. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4.) We may safely conclude that the same general principle prevails throughout the whole heathen world today, and to a considerable extent, also, amongst Christian people--that the alienation of many, and their opposition to God and his message through the truth are probably to be accredited more to ignorance than to evil preferences. How blessed is the assurance that ere long the Lord's power shall be exercised not only a little, as in the case under consideration at Ephesus, but universally, to the complete binding of Satan that he may deceive the nations no more until the thousand years of Christ's reign have accomplished their designed work of opening all the blind eyes, and permitting all who will to come back into full fellowship with God. --Rev. 20:2,3.

The statement of vs. 18 is capable of two constructions: we might consider it as referring to those who practised magic, and understand it to signify that they confessed certain deceptions connected with their practises, and showed their deeds,--how certain tricks had been performed; or, (and we think preferably) the words may be understood to mean that many believers confessed the truth, and publicly showed it in the reform of their conduct. The latter view is supported by the statement of vs. 19, which seemingly refers to the whole number of believers, declaring that "not a few of them that practised curious arts brought their books together, and burned them in the sight of all."--R.V.

Satan's method of enslaving mankind seems to have been, from the first, largely through superstition. Gross superstition and darkness still dominate the great mass of mankind, and even where the blessed light of the gospel lamp has gone, reproofing the darkness, and setting forth the true way of life and blessing, the Adversary has been enabled to follow, and

more or less to attach superstitious rites and ceremonies, to the gross delusion of many known as civilized. We cannot doubt that the Adversary is connected with many performances done in the name of Christian religion and with many of the miracles wrought by "holy nails," "bones," etc., etc., and is generally effective in holding the deluded ones back from the study of the Lord's Word, and an understanding of the great plan of salvation therein so clearly set forth.

The readiness of the Adversary to use now any and every means available to hinder the light of truth, or to turn aside those who have already discerned it, is very manifest. Almost without exception, all the various persons and systems performing the "many wonderful works" (Matt. 7:22) of today, directly or indirectly antagonize the truth;--the ransom itself, the substitution of the life of our Redeemer for the life of the world, is generally ignored, if not totally denied by them. We are inclined to think that much of the mind-healing and hypnotism, coming rapidly into popularity, are merely adaptations of our old enemy to the new conditions of our day.

We have every reason to believe that the Adversary would be willing to use the black arts today, as in times past, in proportion as conditions would be favorable; and incantation, by repeating certain seemingly meaningless words, is still practised by some; also the making of peculiar stews and broths, which are supposed to have magical powers, affecting love, hatred, etc., and the wearing of charms, the making of the sign of the cross in the presence of danger, etc., to protect from evil.

Such mispractices and misbeliefs assuredly have the effect of holding their victims in the bonds of superstition, hindering them from the proper exercise of the true faith in the almighty power of God, by filling their minds with errors and superstitions. Even brethren who have received present truth are not exempt from the Adversary's besetments along this line. A number have written us regarding their deliverance from the snares of spiritism, and one came very nearly being entangled in the black art. He wrote us in substance, thus:--

"Dear Brother Russell:--You will rejoice with me, I am sure, that our heavenly Father has been pleased to give

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me a special and remarkable gift of healing in connection with one disease--every case that I have treated since I received the gift has resulted in a cure. It requires but a few moments in each case, the repeating of a few words. I make no charge for the service, as I am glad of the privilege of doing good in any manner to my fellow-creatures."

We responded to this, that were glad to know of

the Lord using any of his people in any manner; nevertheless, we felt curious to know what were the words used in this simple and effectual operation, and, hence, inquired for the formula. The reply came that the formula of words, etc., necessary to the performance of the cure could not be communicated from one man to another, but only from a woman to a man, and from a man to a woman--a peculiar restriction, to say the least, to apply to anything good. Upon giving the name of a lady to whom the formula could be sent, we received it, and found that it was simply magic,--the using of a few meaningless words in connection with a piece of string.

We wrote the brother at once, that we believed the cures he had been performing were not of the Lord, but of the evil One, and advised that he discontinue them. He responded, thanking us, and assuring us that it had never occurred to him that a work of healing could be accomplished by any other than divine power, but that in the light of our suggestions he saw to the contrary, and would use it no more. However, the fame of his cures already performed brought him many applications from others in the same distress, who were indignant when he refused to go to their relief for either love or money; and upon his explaining that he believed the power he had used was of Satan they declared that they did not care, so long as the relief could be had. To what lengths the Adversary may carry his delusions in this day and by up-to-date methods, we cannot surely know; but our expectation certainly is that his delusions will be numerous, and of the kind that would "deceive, if it were possible, the very elect," as our Lord foretold.

The sincerity of some of the converts at Ephesus was manifested by the public burning of the books in which were recorded the various magic words, and receipts, by which incantations could be made, affecting and counteracting various of the ills of life. All books at that time were precious, as they were made of skins instead of paper, and pen-printed instead of printed by type; but these books were specially high-priced because each possessor of a copy was interested in restricting the information and, hence, unwilling to permit the copying of his book. Viewed from this standpoint, the number of books would not necessarily be very great to amount to the considerable figure specified--50,000 pieces of silver--about \$8,500, a piece of silver representing about 17 cents of our money. But, if we remember that each piece of silver represented a day's wages, it might be considered equivalent to at least \$1, in our day, and thus the total value of the books would be \$50,000.

This considerable sum was freely sacrificed to the Lord and to the truth;--not that the Lord accepts as sacrifices any evil thing, such as those books were, but



that the destruction of the books, representing a considerable value, represented also a sacrificing condition of heart. The books had a commercial value, and could have been sent to some other city and sold for a large sum, but this would have been spreading the evil which they were recognized as representing, and we note with pleasure that they who gave up the books were unwilling to sell them, and thus risk injuring others, nor did the Apostle suggest that the books might be sold and the money turned into useful channels in the service of the gospel. The Lord's people are never to do evil that good may follow. We are reminded of a liquor dealer, who pursued a different course;--concluding that his business was dishonoring to the Lord's cause and injurious to his fellowmen, he determined to abandon it; but instead of destroying the liquor by emptying it into the sewers, he sold it. We may be sure that he failed to get the great blessing which evidently came upon the more proper disposal of the evil things, narrated in this lesson.

The Lord is not poor; all the gold and silver are his, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. It is not necessary, therefore, to his cause that we shall put into it anything that in any sense or degree represents evil. In our opinion those who burned the books on "black art" were not only more blessed themselves, but they more honored the Lord and more advanced his cause, by such heroic treatment, than if they had sold the books and put the money into the treasury of the Lord. Everything throughout the Scriptures seems to teach that the Lord specially loves and appreciates those who are thorough-going, not only in their zeal for righteousness and truth, but also in their opposition to that which is unrighteous and erroneous.

We believe that the same principle applies to the sale of books which inculcate Satan's lies, and we recommend that if the Lord's people have books of this kind, black with false doctrines, misrepresenting the divine character and plan, they would do far better to burn them, to put them where they will not endanger others, than to sell them and to give the proceeds to the Lord's work.

With such a spirit prevailing amongst the believers --such a willingness to give up things contrary to the Lord, and that at a cost to themselves, involving,

no doubt, a change of occupation, we cannot wonder at the statement of the last verse of the lesson, that "so the word of the Lord Jesus grew mightily and prevailed" over the evil influences opposing it. So it will surely be with the Lord's people today; where the proper zeal for the Lord and for righteousness are in the

hearts of his people, the effect will be telling upon all with whom they come in contact.

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### THE RIOT AT EPHESUS.

--ACTS 19:29-40.--MARCH 15.--

"The Lord preserveth the faithful."--Psalm 31:23.

WHEN Paul had spent nearly three years at Ephesus he purposed going again to Jerusalem, but before doing so would visit the churches of Macedonia--Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica and Corinth. He sent two of his helpers, Erastus and Timothy, in advance. (2 Tim. 4:20; 1 Cor. 4:17-19.) It was this visit to Corinth that he evidently referred to in his epistle to them. (1 Cor. 16:1-4.) He proposed taking contributions from them to the poor in Jerusalem --not as seeking a gift, but as seeking evidence of their love for the Lord, in their desire to be helpful to the brethren at Jerusalem, who were chiefly poor, and greatly disadvantaged by their loyalty to the truth. Apparently also the Apostle was planning a later tour, which would include Rome--little suspecting that he would be sent to Rome as a prisoner.

About this time occurred the riot described in this lesson, which probably would have determined the Apostle to leave Ephesus, if he had not already purposed so doing. The Lord permitted persecutions to drive him out of every place--thus seemingly indicating the proper time for terminating his ministry at each point. The account says, "There arose no small stir about that way." Very evidently the "way" of the Lord's people differed decidedly from the ways of others, not as concerned their future hopes only, but also regarding their course in the present life. All things become new to those who receive the new mind of Christ; and although their "way" may seem to the unbelieving to be a narrow and troublesome one, to themselves it is the way of peace and joy and blessing and harmony with God, and, ultimately, the way of life eternal. And the way is the same to this day, as concerns those who are faithfully walking close to the Lord and to the teachings of his Word. The difficulty with many is that they have gotten out of the way--so that nominal church ways are, alas! too much like the ways of the world, with very similar hopes, aspirations and endeavors.

In Ephesus there were trades-unions or guilds, and Demetrius, the leader of the riot, belonged to the guild of the silversmiths--probably its president, or chief. There is a stone now in the British Museum

which was found at Ephesus, on which is engraved an inscription concerning a certain Demetrius. It is said to belong to about the date of this lesson, between A.D. 50 and 60. The name occurs again in 3 John 12, where the Apostle mentions the person as a Christian of good report. Quite possibly the reference is to the person who led this riot, and who may afterwards have become an active Christian, as he was at this time an active opposer of Christianity, and a supporter of Diana;--even as Paul, the zealous persecutor of the Church, became its zealous servant. The probability that this was the same Demetrius is strengthened by the tradition that the Apostle John with Mary the mother of Jesus afterward made Ephesus their home.

Demetrius called together not only the men of his own craft, but those also of allied crafts. The finest of the shrines, or miniature temples of Diana, were made in silver, but others were made of inferior metals and of marble, and the cheapest of terra cotta. These shrines were manufactured of various sizes and in great quantities; not only for the people of Ephesus, but for export to various other cities and provinces where Diana was worshiped. The business was a profitable one, as Demetrius acknowledged; and it was upon the selfish instincts of the workmen engaged in this business that he based his strongest appeal,--that this Paul was turning away much people from the worship of Diana, not only in Ephesus but in the surrounding cities and provinces. His reasoning was that if the people lost their respect for Diana and her temple, they would no longer purchase the shrines, and that the falling off in demand would mean loss for all engaged in the shrine business.

The argument of Demetrius inflamed the selfish sentiments of the allied crafts of shrine-makers--they became full of wrath, increasingly as the argument went on, and as they seemed to realize the ultimate discredit of Diana and ruin of their own business interests. They began to shout in a frenzied manner, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" doubtless inflaming themselves and others more and more with every shout, until a large mob collected, which they led toward the theater, or Coliseum, variously estimated to hold between twenty-five and fifty thousand people. As they went they seized two of Paul's companions, taking them along, as though intent upon bringing charges against them, and having them summarily

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dealt with. Paul, full of courage, would not have been willing to allow his companions to endure the brunt of this difficulty alone, but would have gone to them and endeavored to secure the attention of the mob and to reason with them; but leading men of the city, who were his friends, cautioned him, in the interests of

peace, not to do this.

The uproar and excitement were intense, the majority not knowing certainly why they were there, but being in full sympathy with the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" they surmised that some insult or opposition to their religion had occurred. It was for this reason that when Alexander, motioning to them for silence, endeavored to make a defense, the people, though they recognized him merely as a Jew, and not as a Christian, clamored so as to make it impossible for him to speak, realizing that all Jews were opposed to their goddess and her worship. The senselessness of their proceeding is clearly manifest in the fact that they kept up a meaningless shout for two hours! It is worthy of note here, that in proportion as people approach the proper conceptions of the divine character and plan and receive of the spirit of the Lord, in that same proportion they have greater soundness of mind. Consequently, we see that amongst Christians some who have made little growth in grace and knowledge are content to spend hours in shouting or talking about that which has comparatively little meaning; but in proportion as any grow in grace and knowledge they become partakers of the spirit of a sound mind, and correspondingly unwilling to waste either consecrated time or energy senselessly, unreasoningly. In other words, rejecting the wisdom of this world, and accepting the wisdom from above, they are as a result the more reasonable.

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By this time the town clerk (or recorder or mayor, as we might term him) arrived, and quieted the people, and made them an address consisting of four arguments. First, he appealed to their patriotic sentiments; that they were citizens of a great city, and that people far and near recognized Ephesus as temple-keeper for Diana, and suggested that since this was so well established as a fact they ought to do nothing rashly, for there could be no necessity for haste. Whatever might happen to Diana and Ephesus there certainly was no immediate danger. That temple of Diana was indeed a wonderful structure. Respecting its history says: "The crowning glory of Ephesus was the great temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world. It glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbor, and it was said that the sun saw nothing in his course more magnificent than Diana's temple. Made of the purest marble, it was 425 feet long, 220 broad. Its columns of Parian marble were 60 feet high, and 36 of them were magnificently carved. The hall was adorned with the most wonderful statuary and paintings."

The town clerk's second argument was that the men whom they had brought with them by violence,

and against whom they seemed incensed, were not bad men--they had not been trying to rob Diana's temple, nor had they blasphemed the goddess herself. Very evidently the prominent men of the city, without accepting the gospel preached by the Apostle, had received favorable impressions of it, and realized that their teachings did not develop bad citizens, but that they were, on the contrary, amongst the most honorable, peaceable, law-abiding, of the city. His words give us another thought; viz., that the Apostle, in his preaching, did not specially attack the errors of heathendom--idolatry, etc., but that merely denying all other gods, he preached the one true God and his message of mercy, the gospel--the better "way." There is a lesson in this for the Lord's people to this day--"Go thou, and preach the gospel." Let others, if they will, smash the images and attack the various vices in and out of the nominal church systems. In preaching the gospel we shall have quite a sufficiency to do, so long as this present age continues.

The town clerk's third argument was that this was a quarrel of Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, and not a quarrel of the public in general; and that if any injustice had been perpetrated there was a proper channel of redress--the courts of law, attorneys, etc.

The fourth argument was that if this were not a dispute merely between Demetrius and his class and the propagators of Christianity--if the assembly had any other matter on which to charge them, they should bring them at the proper time, and in the lawful manner, when regular assemblages were had for the trying of cases. (Dr. Hovy remarks, "An inscription found in this very theater in which the words were uttered, illustrated their technical sense of the word 'lawful'. It provides that a certain silver image of Athene shall be brought and set at every (regular) assemblage, above the bench.") The town clerk pursued this last argument, pointing out that the meeting was nothing short of a riot, and that if it were reported to the Roman authorities and an inquiry made of him, it would reflect to the discredit of the city that such a turmoil had occurred without reason. His intimation was that there might be danger of the city losing a privilege which it had long enjoyed--of being a "free city." His speech shows clearly that even amongst the unbelievers of that time there were men of reasonably sound judgment.

Alas, that there are even today so many of the same disposition as Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen!

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The principal opponents of present truth are professed ministers of the gospel; and so far as we are able to discern, their opposition is inspired by the same selfish spirit which incited Demetrius and his associates

--their craft is in danger--their salaries are endangered  
--respect for them and their teachings on the part  
of the people is endangered. It will not at all surprise  
us if ultimately their opposition to the truth shall lead  
to something analogous to this riot at Ephesus. Then  
we shall expect that they, like Demetrius, will not set  
forth the real secret of their opposition, but base it on the  
broader grounds of hostility of the truth to the great system  
of errors, misnamed "Orthodoxy," chiefly built by  
Antichrist, and known in the Scriptures as "Babylon."

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#### THE ONENESS OF THE DIVINE FAMILY.

"I pray for them...which thou hast given me; for they are thine.  
And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified  
in them."--Jno. 17:9,10.

THERE is a touching pathos in this prayer of our  
Lord for his disciples as he was about to leave  
them, which draws us very near to his loving  
heart; especially when he adds, "Neither pray I for  
these alone [then present with him], but for them  
also which shall believe on me through their word;  
that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me,  
and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that  
the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And  
the glory which thou gavest me I have given them,  
that they may be one, even as we are one--I in them  
and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one,  
and that the world may know that thou hast sent me  
and hast loved them as thou hast loved me."--  
Verses 20-23.

As we come to consider this beautiful expression  
of the Lord's sentiments with reference to the Church,  
we catch a glimpse of the glory of the blessed oneness  
of the divine family. It is a oneness of purpose, a  
oneness of confidence, a oneness of sympathy, a oneness  
of love a oneness of honor, and a oneness of  
mutual possession. This oneness our Lord described  
as already existing between himself and the Father,  
but so far as his disciples are concerned it was and  
still is only prospective; and its full accomplishment  
is the ideal goal toward which we are taught to  
aspire.

But let us study this exemplified oneness more  
closely that we may be enabled the more fully to enter  
into it. In the first place we notice that the one purpose  
which is common to both the Father and the Son  
is the Father's purpose, which was gradually revealed  
to the Son in due time and order, whose it also became  
by adoption. Since Jesus himself said, "Of  
that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels

which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" only (Mark 13:32), it is manifest that the revelation of that plan to him was a gradual one; and that he was led into the knowledge of its various features as they became due to be worked out through his instrumentality. Thus he was allowed to grow in knowledge; and thus, too, he was spared the sad spectacle of subsequent trouble which also lay along the pathway of the divine plan. Thus, while he joyfully worked out the grand plan of creation (John 1:3; Prov. 8:22-31), he probably knew nothing of God's purpose for the subsequent permission of evil and the necessity for the great work of redemption. Before he came to that test of faith in God his confidence in his almighty power, wisdom and love had been firmly established by the experiences of the past. For centuries he had seen his mighty works, marked his wondrous wisdom and experienced his tender love. Could he doubt him, then, when another feature of his plan made manifest the great work of redemption and restitution, and gave to him the privilege of undertaking this work also, for the joy that the Father set before him? No; doubtless he did not at first realize the depths of humiliation and sorrow through which he must pass; but, step by step, along the painful way of humiliation and suffering, his faith in the Father, founded upon his previous experimental knowledge, sustained him, as it is written--"By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." --Isa. 53:11.

We next notice between the Father and the Son a beautiful oneness of confidence. The Son trusted the Father fully--at first, because it was easy and natural. Created in the likeness of God, trust in the Being who brought him into existence was spontaneous, and experience served but to develop and establish it. And the Father trusted the Son fully--first, because he recognized in him the inherent principles of righteousness and truth and filial loyalty which he himself had given him; and, as the course of time and experience developed and the more firmly established his Son in righteousness, his confidence in him became firmly established. And so strong was the Father's confidence in the subsequent fidelity of his beloved Son, that he did not hesitate to declare the results of his faithfulness thousands of years before he even began the work of redemption. He even declared all the special features of the work, by the mouth of his holy prophets at various intervals for

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four thousand years before he began the work. And still he declares that the work shall in due time be gloriously accomplished. How wonderful and how beautiful is this mutual confidence!

We further notice a oneness of sympathy between the Father and the Son. The Son glories in the Father's plan, saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God." He delighted in it because he discovered therein the worthy features of his Father's glorious character; and though his faith may have been temporarily tested by the permission of evil, his knowledge of God's character and resources, and of the depth of his wisdom did not permit him to doubt, but held him still in loving trust in his infinite goodness and grace, and, therefore, in readiness to acquiesce fully in the measures proposed for the final triumph of righteousness and truth.

And the Father was likewise in loving sympathy with the Son, not permitting him to be tried above what he was able to bear; and not leaving him to bear any trial alone, but always granting him the light of his countenance and a joyful sense of admiring approval (John 11:42; Matt. 3:17), except when, for our sakes, he permitted him for a moment to feel that he was forsaken; when, in the anguish of his soul, he cried out at this unusual experience, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now, mark the oneness of love manifested. In every act we have already noted we have seen it expressed. It was mutual love that delighted to manifest and express mutual confidence, that gloried in the same loving and benevolent purposes, that sympathized fully with each other's thoughts and feelings, and that delighted in the close and blessed relationship of Father and Son. The Father did not treat the Son as a servant and hide his purposes from him; but delighted to take him into his confidence in so far as his wisdom and prudence dictated--i.e., as the truth became meat in due season to him. And, in turn, the Son did not serve the Father as a hireling, but as a son with a common interest. The Father declared, "This is my beloved Son;" and the Son said, "I delight to do thy will."

How blessed the fellowship! It was a fellowship of joy and a fellowship of suffering--of joy in a common anticipation of the future glory; and of suffering in mutual participation of the preliminary trials to secure that end. The Son suffered in his humiliation and his dying agony; and the Father suffered in giving his only begotten Son--an intensity of suffering which the loving, yearning hearts of devoted parents can best imagine and appreciate.

There was further a recognized oneness of possessions clearly expressed by our Lord, who declared, "All things that the Father hath are mine." (John 16:15.) And the Apostle says, God hath appointed the Son the "heir of all things," and hath "set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in



this world, but also in that which is to come."--Heb. 1:1,2; Eph. 1:20,21.

And, lastly, we notice a oneness of honor. In honor each seems to prefer the other. The Father says: Let all men honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. (John 5:23.) God has made him the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and exalted him to his own right hand, to the chief seat of power in his kingdom, giving him all power in heaven and in earth.--Heb. 1:2,3; Matt. 28:18.

In the work of creation he has set him forth in great prominence and glory, saying, "Without him was not anything made that was made." In the work of redemption and restitution God has set him forth so prominently that his name is the theme on every tongue, almost to the eclipse of the Father's own glory, who of necessity is himself greater than the Son (1 Cor. 15:27), and to whom the glory pre-eminently belongs, as the Son also declares, saying, "My Father is greater than I;" and again, "I can of mine own self do nothing;" "the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."--John 5:30; 14:10,28.

The Son's corresponding anxiety to glorify the Father is most marked in the instance when, realizing that he was approaching the dreadful hour of his dying agony he exclaimed, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name"--even at this cost to me. (John 12:27,28.) Again we hear him say, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." (John 17:1.) And when the great work of redemption and restitution is accomplished, we see him delivering up the Kingdom to God, the Father, and subjecting himself to his further direction, that Jehovah himself may be universally recognized as all in all. (1 Cor. 15:24,28.) And we, like him, may surely trust that his purposes for the ages to follow will but the further express and emphasize the same lines of his glorious character--his justice, his wisdom, his love and his power.

Glorious oneness! who could suggest an improvement to its wondrous beauty and completeness? But the wonder and joy increase when we learn that it is also our privilege to come into this same blessed oneness with God. What! we inquire--the very same oneness as above described? Yes; undoubtedly it is

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our privilege to enter into the very same relationship and privileges and blessings. To this end consider the exceeding great and precious promises and see that it is ours to have the same oneness with God--of purpose, of confidence, of sympathy, of love, of

honor and of possession.

The same plan of God is presented to and adopted by us, and we also are invited to become coworkers with God in carrying it out (2 Cor. 6:1); and in so doing we are counted in with Christ Jesus as filling up the measure of the sufferings of the anointed body necessary to the accomplishment of that plan. Our heavenly Father also similarly manifests his confidence in us--in the loyalty of our hearts toward him and in the sincerity of our consecration to him--even though he recognizes our inherent weaknesses and our inability to carry out fully our own determinations. But, notwithstanding this, so great is his confidence in our sincerity and integrity of heart, that, on our profession of faith and consecration, he fully accepts us as his sons and heirs, supplementing our weaknesses and shortcomings with the all-sufficient merit of our Redeemer, in whom we humbly trust. And not only so, but as sons, honored and beloved, he makes known to us, also, his secret counsels, which others cannot know (Matt. 13:11), and invites us to confide in him as children, and to speak to him freely of all that concerns us, in full assurance of his loving interest, even in our smallest affairs. (Psa. 103:13,14.) And then he commits a portion of his great work to us. He gives us certain talents, certain portions of his goods, and tells us to invest them for him according to our best judgment as to the profitableness of the results, not dictating all the minutiae of the management as to hireling servants, but merely submitting to us the general principles which should govern us. Thus, for instance, he gives us his plan as to the work in hand, with such general directions as, not to cast our pearls before swine; to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves; to give meat in due season; to do good to all men as we have opportunity, but especially to the household of faith; and to observe the times and seasons, and the character of the work in each--seed-sowing in the spring, and reaping in the harvest time; etc., etc. Thus with general directions he sends us forth--not like machines, to do a monotonous treadmill service, but as intelligent beings, to use our brains as well as our hands and feet. So he counsels us to "study" to show ourselves workmen approved, and to consider and think, and not to be "as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle." (Psa. 32:9.) Then, according to our zeal and faithfulness, not only in the use of our hands, but also of our brains, in the Lord's service, his confidence in us increases and we are entrusted with more and more of his goods and given a corresponding sense of our heavenly Father's approval. And the mutual confidence and fellowship of purpose and work, draw our hearts closer and closer to the heart of the Eternal, and the joyful realization of sonship and mutual interest

and confidence and sympathy fills our hearts.

We are also assured of the same love from our heavenly Father which he exercises toward our Lord Jesus. The statement seems almost startling; but yet, hearken to our Lord's prayer--"I pray for them ...that they may be one...that they may be made perfect in one...that the world may know that thou hast...loved them as thou hast loved me." (John 17:20-23.) In amazement we inquire, How can this be? Our Lord Jesus was always in perfect harmony with the Father; a son who gloriously reflected his likeness; but it has not been so with us: we were sinners and had nothing in us worthy of love. Yes, but we have been washed and cleansed, and, however imperfect our earthen vessels may still be, our hearts are perfect in his sight who is able to read the heart. And, as he sees us with a perfect heart--a perfect purpose and intention--striving to overcome the weaknesses and disabilities of our imperfect flesh, and with painful, yet determined, effort to do his will, and humbly trusting in the provisions which he has made for our redemption from the fall, God recognizes in us that which is worthy of his love. And so our Lord Jesus gives us clearly to understand that the Father loves us, even as he loved the Son.

And not only is this equality of the Father's love for us as for Christ Jesus thus declared, but it is also manifested; for we are called to be joint-heirs with his Son, and partakers of his glory; and even as all things are his, they are also said to be ours.--Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23.

While such is the oneness between the heavenly Father and all his anointed sons, it is blessed also to mark the same oneness between Christ Jesus and his anointed brethren. The Lord Jesus does not selfishly grasp all the glory and seek to retain it for himself, but the rather with admiration he contemplates their acquired worthiness and says, They "are mine and I am glorified in them" (John 17:10); and he would have them all bound up together with himself in the Father's love. He would also have them with him, beholding and sharing the glory which the Father

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had given him from the foundation of the world--the glory of his mighty creative works, with all the other evidences of his Father's love.--John 17:22-24.

Thus all the divine family are bound together in one bond of love and fellowship and confidence and sympathy and harmony and common interest; and the honor and glory of one are the honor and glory of all. The Lord's prayer abounds with petitions for this oneness. Mark the expression (verse 21)--"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee" [thy spirit or disposition and purposes

and aim being common to us all]. Hence, he would have us adopt the same Father's spirit, aim and purpose, and devote all our powers with zeal and faithfulness to the accomplishment of the Father's will. Amen, so let it be.

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LETTERS FOR THE EDITOR SHOULD BE SENT TO ALLEGHENY, PA., U.S.A.  
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 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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THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

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The date of the celebration this year will be Friday evening, April 10th--after 6 o'clock. We mention the date thus early for the benefit of the brethren afar off.

THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT.

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The new rates on the Diaglott brought an extraordinary demand and has quite exhausted our stock, before the new editions are ready. Have patience and we will have plenty for all.

VOLUNTEER AMMUNITION FOR 1903.

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We are preparing two million tracts for this year's work: paper is already ordered and we will be ready to ship the tracts we hope by April. Let the captains get ready the forces and notify us during March the amounts they will be able to use advantageously.

"STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE."

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We fear we did this valuable work an injustice in describing it as inferior to "Young's Analytical Concordance." Use of a copy during the past year has greatly attached us to it. We can supply them at the following established prices (and give 3 cloth vols. of DAWN postpaid as a premium): In cloth binding, \$6; in half leather binding, \$8, express prepaid.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

ANCIENT TABLETS AGREE WITH THE BIBLE.

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IN view of the fact that most lecturers on the Babylonian excavations are endeavoring to prove that their findings date back thousands of years before the flood, and hence are in total disagreement with the Bible narrative, the following testimony to their corroboration of Scripture is the more appreciated. Excavators seem prone to "magnify their

office" and to make their services and findings more wonderful than they really are.

"Dr. Albert T. Clay, curator of the Babylonian department in the museum of the University of Pennsylvania, lectured in Widener hall yesterday on 'The Old Testament in the Light of Recent Excavations.'

"'Accounts of the creation and deluge,' he said, 'have been deciphered from early Babylonian monuments. No direct account has been found referring to the fall of mankind, although engraved rocks representing a man and woman sitting under a tree, with a serpent near by, have been found, which undoubtedly refer to it.'

"The lecturer went on to show that the events recorded in the Bible had taken place contrary to what had been contended by critics of the Old Testament in the past few years. He presented a photograph of an engraved rock referring to the deluge and translated it. Although the period of time which elapsed while Noah was in the ark did not exactly correspond to the number of days given in the Bible, yet the historical significance of the event was corroborated. Dr. Clay presented many such photographs, all of which had been excavated in Babylonia, and are now in the museum. The translations of these were parallel accounts to passages found in the Bible.

"He further said: 'This work is yet in its infancy. Research has not yet come to a limit. The lowest excavations show civilization in advanced stages and there is every reason to believe that future excavations will bring to light the majority, if not all, the history recorded in the Old Testament.'"--Philadelphia Times.

#### A STATESMAN'S VIEW OF EUROPE'S FUTURE.

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A Philadelphia Ledger correspondent writing of the eminent correspondent of the Times, M. de Blowitz, deceased, says:--

"Blowitz believed that his own forecast of events was more accurate than that of any living statesman. He not only placed himself on an intellectual level with Bismarck, but he spoke of himself as belonging to the same rank. I am not at all sure that he was not right, and that if his early lot had been cast in high places Blowitz would not have been a greater man than Bismarck. He had his faults and vanities, but he was a man of extraordinary capacity.

"His opinions about the future of Europe are interesting, because his predictions were so often fulfilled, and his views, therefore, on the subject are worth consideration. As far back as ten years ago de Blowitz held that in the course of a generation Europe would be a congerie of bankrupt states; that

all the national debts in Europe would be repudiated, with the exception of Britain's, and that vast social changes, involving bloody wars and reigns of terror, would come to pass in many countries. He took a pessimistic view of the future of Britain, though he admired the qualities of persistence and freedom, which form part of the British character.

"He believed that the twentieth century would be a century of struggle, and that in Germany and Russia especially the development of the industrial idea would lead to the evolution of new surfaces of society, just as the iceberg which has changed its centre of gravity presents a new profile to the spectator. If these predictions had been made today no great power of discrimination would be credited to the prophet. To have formed such views ten years ago

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implies the possession of great analytic power, coupled with imaginative faculty."

\* \* \*

This is interesting, as showing how the wisdom of this world corroborates the forecast of prophecy--the revelations of the divine Word. "We have a more sure word of prophecy, unto which we do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn."--2 Pet. 1:19.

#### CHRISTIAN SOLDIERSHIP.

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We are pleased to credit the following article to a secular journal--the Atlanta Constitution:--

"Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."-- 2 Tim. 2:3.

"The service of Christ resembles no other so much as that of a soldier. There are few life-callings among men that demand such absolute self-surrender from the recruit as that of the soldier..."

"In the decision to be a soldier one subordinates all other considerations--those of self-will, family supremacy and the varied opportunities of the freeman.

It is to go under a vow of complete, unquestioning obedience to the orders of superiors. It is to abandon home for the camp, to forego the right of first serving the interests of father and mother, wife and children, business or friends. It means the entire suppression of every selfish interest for the advancement of the supreme cause one has contracted voluntarily to serve, to follow and for which, if need be, to die.

"It seems hard to some minds to compare the service of Christ with that of a good soldier. Nine-tenths

of those who call themselves Christians refuse to give their service that significance, and mutiny outright when called upon to act upon that principle.

The weakness of the church universal as the leader of morals and life culture in the world is due to the fact that most Christian men and women serve Christ as independent camp followers. They are unattached, or uncommanded, or disobedient to the duty of discipline, and do as they please rather than as they are obligated by the commands and principles of Christ.

"Goethe said that 'earnestness is eternity,' and the spirit of God is the spirit of earnestness. He who is informed and inflamed by that spirit will be filled to overflowing with zeal, courage, daring, fortitude and the faith of conquest. In the fervor and forcefulness of these feelings he will serve his Master, as the soldiers of Alexander followed unquestioning where he led; as the soldiers of Leonidas, who died rather than retreat; as the soldiers of Napoleon, who believed him invincible always; and as the soldiers of Lee, who felt that he could not lead them wrongly or to defeat.

"If Christ possessed in this world today an army of men and women one-hundredth part the figures of official Christendom, who would follow him--who would labor, fight and endure as do the soldiers of our American armies--he could not long be kept from his world-wide conquest.

"But he has few real soldiers in his service. Most of his followers are pensioners, pleading always that he will do something for them--ease their pains, disperse their enemies, smooth their paths, increase their fortunes and bed them in places of plenty and comfort. They are a hungry and a helpless host.

"One would expect naturally to find in the pulpits stalwart captains of the army of our Lord. And yet how few are they who do not look more closely to their hire than to their opportunities to endure hardness? They are eager for rich and easy pastorates, they dwell in luxuries and preach as those who make pleasant music on a lute. Transfer them to posts of poverty, scant rations, hard service among the poor and the sick, and they become broken-hearted over their lot as soldiers!

"The true soldier does not debate his cause. He is rightly supposed to have settled upon its justice and righteousness before he enlisted to serve it. Thereafter he avouches it and defies contradiction of it. He is ready to spend all and be all spent in its defense. He does not fight for the rations that are doled to him, but for the great principles and great purposes of the cause to which he is committed....

"No man should deceive himself in a matter so plain and serious as the service of Christ. If he doesn't mean to abandon himself to the commands and demands of his Master, he ought to be honest



enough not to offer a hypocritical profession and a

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treacherous or abortive promise of service. The causes of Christ on earth need men who are strong in will, courageous of heart and hardened to self-sacrifice, sufferings and the perils of conflict and death. None other can do the work that is needed to pull down the strongholds of sin, rout the enemies of righteousness and set forward in hostile territories the standards of the Kingdom of Christ.

"It is glorious to serve Christ in honesty and in fulness of fidelity. There is an ineffable joy in being on the right side, in knowing that one's service is toward victory and that beyond the field of blood and the valley of shadows is an abundant entrance into the joys and peace of the triumphant King of kings. For that hope none should shrink from the harness of battle, none quail before the rage of the enemy, and none tremble before the certainty of hunger, thirst, nakedness, wounds or death!"

#### THE EVOLUTIONISTS' TREND.

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The Western Recorder tersely expresses the truth, thus:--

"When a man starts on the line of evolution and higher criticism he gives up more and more, and he has no logical stopping-place till he has given up everything. The frantic efforts of those who start on this line to hold to 'what is vital,' while giving up more and more, are pitiful. Their claiming that 'after all we have this or that much left' is simply whistling to keep their courage up. They have surrendered everything, and have left themselves at the mercy of the enemy. As George Adam Smith says, it is left only for the critics to fix the indemnity, and to take all they want, and everybody ought to have learned that they want everything. With them 'progress' means to deny more and more. And their work will not be done as long as any belief is left."

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#### THE EDITOR'S VISIT TO EUROPE.

For several years the Editor has been promising the friends abroad that as soon as the sixth volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN series would be ready for the press he would comply with their many urgent invitations for a visit. From present appearances he hopes, by April, to have the manuscript of Vol. VI. in the hands of the compositors, with also a sufficiency of

WATCH TOWER matter to last during the four issues of the period of his proposed absence.

Not only does he anticipate joy in meeting many already known through correspondence, and new friends in Great Britain, but additionally it is his thought that a considerable extension of the service of the truth may be possible in Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Sweden, Norway and other European countries. He will make brief visits to these various countries, conferring with the friends, and ascertaining, so far as he can, the advantages and opportunities of the present time.

Announcements for TWO-DAY CONVENTIONS for the trip are as follows:--

London, England.....April 25,26.

Stockholm, Sweden.....May 2,3.

Glasgow, Scotland.....May 9,10.

Liverpool, England.....May 16,17.

Thun, Switzerland.....May 23,24.

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"WHATSOEVER HE SAITH UNTO YOU, DO IT."

--JOHN 2:5.--

THESE were the words of our Lord's mother to the servants, at the marriage in Cana, about the time of the beginning of our Lord's ministry-- our Lord, his mother and his disciples being guests at the wedding. There was a shortage of wine, it will be remembered, and Mary evidently expected our Lord to exercise his power in some manner: although just why she should expect this is not evident, because we are distinctly informed that the miracle of turning water into wine was the beginning of Jesus' miracles. (Vs. 11.) And, by the way, this distinct statement by the Apostle John, gives emphatic contradiction to the apocryphal legends which accredit to our Lord various miracles, etc., previous to this time.

How suitable are Mary's words to all of the Lord's people: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it!" How important that all should learn the lesson that it is not merely the hearing of the gospel which brings blessing to the heart; but obedience to the glad tidings! Of course, it is necessary that we should believe the Master before we could be ready to obey him; yet the expression, "Whatsoever he shall say unto you, do it!" includes a faith in the Lord on the part of all those who are obedient. The Christian cannot do better than adopt these words as one of the mottoes of his life,--Whatsoever my Lord saith unto me, I will do it.

We are not to hear and to obey every voice, but,

as our Lord himself said, "My sheep hear my voice, ...and they follow me." (Jno. 10:27.) There are many voices in the world (1 Cor. 14:11), some calling in one direction and some in another. The world calls us, the flesh calls us, the Adversary calls us, and the Master calls us. The Christian may readily enough discern the voices of the world and the flesh, and should be on his guard against their seductive influence. But he may have more difficulty in discerning between the voice of the Adversary and the voice of the Good Shepherd; because, the Adversary's method is to simulate, or counterfeit, the voice of the Shepherd. His usual methods of deception are through false teachings backed by human organizations; the whole being made to appear as a message of light through messengers of light. (See 2 Cor. 11:13,14.) Christians need to be specially on guard on this point; many are hearing and adopting the voice of the Pope, others the voices of Presbyteries, Conferences and Councils, which hinder them from hearing and obeying the voice of the Shepherd. They have need to remember that the proper course is to "take heed that ye refuse not him which speaketh from heaven"--"Whatsoever he shall say unto you, do it."

Hearken to his words! "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." (Jno. 13:34.) "If ye love me keep my commandments." "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." (Jno. 14:21.) "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (Matt. 10:37-40.) He speaks again and says, "Blessed are the meek, the merciful, the humble-minded, the peacemakers, the pure in heart and those hungering and thirsting for righteousness and enduring persecution for righteousness' sake"--"Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you and say all manner of evil

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against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven."

He saith to us again,--"Ye are the salt of the earth and the light of the world;" "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."--Matt. 5.

From heaven, he continued to speak to us through

the Apostles to the same effect:--"Present your bodies living sacrifices to God, holy, acceptable, your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) "Love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous." (1 Pet. 3:8.) "Laying aside every weight, run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith." "Laying aside all malice, and all guile and hypocrisies, and envies and all evil-speaking, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby." And "giving all diligence add to your faith fortitude; and to fortitude knowledge; and to knowledge moderation; and to moderation patience, God-likeness, brotherly-kindness, love."--1 Pet. 2:1; 2 Pet. 1:5.

We have heard his words. They impress us as being the very essence of wisdom and righteousness. We know that he is faithful who has promised that if we do these things we shall never fall, but be granted an abundant entrance into his everlasting Kingdom. We have taken the first step of belief; we have taken the second step of response, and have agreed to do these things; the important question with each one of us, therefore, must be--Am I obedient to him from heaven who speaketh? Am I doing whatsoever he says? To whatever extent any shall find shortcomings on the line of obedience to the Shepherd's voice, to the extent of ability let him beware and arouse himself, promptly, energetically to do these things; for the Father also saith, "This is my beloved Son: hear him!"--Luke 9:35.

Returning to the narrative: We note our Lord's command to the servants to "fill the water-pots with water." Remembering the statement of the prophet,

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corroborated by our Lord's own words "without a parable spake he not unto them," we are inclined to surmise that this, his first miracle, contains some spiritual lesson for us. Endeavoring to draw such a lesson from this miracle, in harmony with the general testimony of the Word, we reason thus: The water-pots symbolize the Lord's people; their number, six, might indicate that it refers to the Lord's people in the present time of evil, because the number six is a symbol for imperfection and evil condition, as seven is the symbol for completeness and perfection. Thus six days of the week are set apart for labor, while the seventh is set apart for rest and refreshment: likewise the six thousand years of the world's history are permitted by the Lord to be evil, through man's disobedience and fall; while in the seventh thousand God proposes to bring in his Millennial Kingdom--his reign of everlasting righteousness.

The water with which the water-pots were commanded to be filled, is in Scripture the symbol for the

truth, the "water of life"; not merely the word of truth, but the word accompanied by and infused with the spirit of the truth--it is with this that the Master commands that we shall be filled. In the symbolic miracle the servants obeyed; not doubtfully or slothfully did they fill them half full, but, as it is recorded, "They filled them up to the brim." So it should be with us; having heard the Master's word, "Be ye filled with the spirit," we should draw abundantly from the fountain of grace and truth, nor cease until we are filled with the spirit "to the brim"--completely. And if we so do the Master's commands, what may we expect as a result? We may expect, as illustrated in the symbolic miracle, that the water will ultimately be changed into wine--the symbol for unalloyed pleasure, heavenly joys.

In the symbol the miracle of change from water into wine came only to those vessels which were filled to the brim with water; so, likewise, the Lord has promised a still greater change to his faithful followers who receive the treasure of divine truth, and its spirit into their "earthen vessels," and who are filled with it. They shall be "changed" in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, under the sounding of the seventh trumpet; they shall be changed from the human nature to the divine nature; from earthly conditions to heavenly conditions: this greater miracle, yet to be accomplished by our Lord, was well symbolized in the change of the water into wine--the joys of the Kingdom, the joys of the new nature. The Lord's consecrated people are symbolized not only by the water-pots and by the servants who fill them, but also they are symbolized by the bride at the marriage, just as the bridegroom is also the one who commands that the vessels be filled with the water. The governor of the symbolic feast who pronounced the new wine to be of the very finest quality, aptly symbolizes the heavenly Father who is the great Governor of the great feast associated with the union of the heavenly Bridegroom with his Bride, and the excellence of the wine represents fitly the joys of the Lord with which we shall be filled at our "change." Already we share to some extent in the blessings of this union; already we know something of the joys of our Lord; already we taste not only of the cup of his sufferings, but also "have tasted that the Lord is gracious." Already we partake of the wine on the lees, and the fat things full of marrow (Isa. 25:6); but our present

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joys are but foretastes of the coming realities--the best of the wine comes at the end of the feast, when our heavenly Bridegroom shall have changed us to his own image and likeness that we may share his glory.

Oh, how important that we remember the words,

"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it!" 'Tis but a little time since we heard his voice directing us how our dearth of joy and happiness might be overcome, and how, instead of impurities and filth of the flesh, we might be filled with the truth, its spirit and its joy, and subsequently have the whole instantly "changed" to the perfection of joy,--into the divine nature. How are we heeding the Master's words? To what extent have we gotten filled with the truth and its spirit? He will give ample opportunity to each of us to be filled, and if any, therefore, is only partly filled, it will be because of a lack of the proper spirit of obedience. Our vessels may not all be of the same size; as with those in the symbol which apparently varied in size, holding from two to three firkins apiece, so our capacities, opportunities, etc., may vary; but, to fulfil the Master's requirement, each must be filled full,--no more, no less,--if we would experience the desired "change."

While this lesson evidently applies merely to the hearing of the Lord's voice by the Church, during this Gospel age, the principle holds good also for the Millennial Age. Now, the vast majority of the world do not hear the Lord's message of grace, and, consequently, are not responsible; but by and by all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and all the sin- and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened; and the Lord shall be recognized as the great Teacher, and all shall hear his voice. This is set forth by the Apostle Peter (Acts 3:22,23); after picturing the great Prophet (teacher), Christ the Head and the Church his body, whom God is raising up during this Gospel age, and fitting for the great work of the Millennial age, he declares, "Him shall ye hear [obey] in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear [obey] that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" --in the Second Death.

If the responsibility of those who will hear during the Millennial age is thus prefigured, and declared, so as to leave no doubt that "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" shall be visited upon all who shall then refuse to obey, what shall we say would be the result of a refusal now to obey on the part of those who hear the Master's voice during the Gospel age? We will not say positively that there is no hope for such; but we see little room for hope for such as, hearing the voice and recognizing it, make no effort to obey it. On the contrary, we hear the Apostle saying, "If we sin wilfully after we have received a knowledge of the truth" [heard the Lord's voice], after we have tasted of the good Word of God and been made partakers of the holy spirit, and [experienced in our justification] the powers of the age to come, there remaineth no longer a share for us in the great sacrifice for sin; but only

a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which would devour us as adversaries who had despised the mercy and grace of God.--Heb. 4:6; 6:4,5; 10:26-31.

Hearken to the Apostle's words again, "See that ye refuse not him from heaven who speaketh." (Heb. 12:25.)

"We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."..."How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." (Heb. 2:1,2.) So far as we may judge, the hearing of the Word of the Lord in every case brings with it responsibilities; and becomes "a savor of life unto life or of death unto death." We do not say that those who are partially negligent--who fail to fill their "earthen vessels" to the brim with the truth and its spirit--will be esteemed to have despised the words of the great Teacher; on the contrary, the fact that they are seeking at all to be filled with the truth and its spirit is an evidence that they have respect to the Lord's Word, and do not reject nor refuse "him that speaketh from heaven." But their failure to give diligence to be filled with the truth and its spirit will mean their loss of the great prize, the fulness of joy in the "change." These are they who neglecting to use their opportunities zealously, neglecting to be filled full with the spirit of the truth, are correspondingly partially filled with the spirit of the world, and not accounted "overcomers" of the world. These are they who will "come up out of great tribulation," washing their robes in the blood of the Lamb. (Rev. 7:9,13-15.) Losing the great prize because of a deficiency of zeal, these will, nevertheless, get a great blessing because they did not refuse "him from heaven that speaketh."

We must remember, however, that the hearing of the natural ear is not the only hearing to which the Scriptures refer. Hence, the expression, "He that hath an ear let him hear;" and again, "Ears have they, but they hear not;" and again, our Lord's words respecting the multitudes, "To them that are without, these things are spoken in parables, that hearing they might hear, and not understand." Our responsibility is not, therefore, marked by the opportunities of the outward ear. Many have heard with the outward ear who have never heard in the responsible sense of the Scriptures, in the sense that all

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eventually must hear;--in the sense of understanding, appreciating the message. The responsibility as to how we hear, and how we reject, is upon those who have an understanding of the Lord's grace. "Blessed are your ears for they hear, and your eyes for they see." But the blessing can only come to such as

"refuse not him from heaven that speaketh." Let us all, therefore, who have heard the Master's voice, strive to remember his Word, as we have considered it foregoing: and let each of us seek to live as nearly as possible according to that Word. "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

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THE NEW LIFE IN CHRIST.

--EPH. 2:1-10.--MARCH 22.--

Golden Text--"By grace are ye saved through faith."--Eph. 2:8.

IT WAS from his Roman prison that the Apostle Paul wrote the Epistle to the Ephesians, one of the most beautiful of all his letters to the churches; full of deep spiritual instruction. Its keynote is "in Christ," this expression, or its equivalents, occurring at least twenty times in this Epistle. As the first chapter points out that the Church is chosen in Christ Jesus, so our lesson shows that we have life in Christ alone; and, subsequently, the Epistle shows that all of God's blessings and favors toward his people are solely upon consideration that they are in Christ Jesus --members of the body of Christ, members of the New Creation. None can get clear-cut, distinct appreciation of the Apostle's meaning except those who clearly differentiate between the Church and the world, and discern their different hopes, built upon different promises; and perceive that in God's plan only the Church is being dealt with at the present time--that the world's hope is future, and very different from that of the Church, now being called as the body of Christ, "members in particular."

Our lesson opens with a dark picture, delineating the condition of the whole world through the fall; a condition of sin and worldliness under the power of Satan; in disobedience to God, under divine sentence of death, which has already operated to the extent of corruption in matters moral, mental and physical. The whole world, although creatures of God, and thus in a general sense his offspring, or children, ceased to be children of his favor, and became "children of wrath," through sin. The Apostle points out to the Ephesians that this had once been their wretched and terrible condition in common with the rest of mankind. How true is the picture even today! But let it be remembered that this is not merely the picture of the villains and outlaws of the world, but a picture of the world as a whole, including its very best representatives. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All are "children of wrath"; all are more or less under the



power and control of the great Adversary; all are more or less controlled by the spirit of disobedience common to the whole world of mankind.

The only exceptions to this rule are the few who, like those addressed at Ephesus, have escaped this bondage, this corruption, this death state, this condition of alienation from God;--and surely these are few today, as they were in all but a "little flock" in the days of the Lord and at the time the Apostle wrote these words.

But the Apostle passes on to note what a great change came to the saints at Ephesus, on their acceptance of the Gospel; and how glad we are that a similar change has come to all who have become the Lord's saints, from that day to the present time! The experience of passing from death to life is the same in every instance, although the circumstances connected with the transformation may vary considerably. The steps of grace by which the Lord delivered us from being children of wrath and under power of the Adversary are set forth by the Apostle in the succeeding verses. Let us trace these steps, and note to what extent we have taken them, and to what extent our experiences correspond to those which the Apostle delineates.

Our recovery did not begin with something in ourselves, --good resolutions, good works, etc. We did not improve ourselves, and thus commend ourselves to God: on the contrary, God was the prime mover in our release and recovery. He was inspired to give us aid by the benevolence of his character, for he is "rich in mercy." He is rich in all of his attributes, rich in wisdom, rich in justice, rich in power, rich in love; but it is with the attribute of love and its corresponding benevolence, or mercy that the Apostle is here dealing. How necessary it is for us to get this thought of God's richness of mercy well rooted and grounded in our hearts--that we may never doubt his generosity, his kindness, his sympathy, his mercy toward all those who desire and seek to know and to do his will! We need great faith in our heavenly Father, and it is only as we come to a clear knowledge of his glorious plan through the Word that we can exercise such a confidence in his love and mercy. The Adversary evidently desires that we should misunderstand our Creator, and, hence, has in every way possible sought to misrepresent his character and his plan;--and so successfully has he done so that at this very moment 999

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out of every 1000 of those who profess his name are moved by fear of an eternity of torture, rather than by love for him and appreciation of his love for them.

The Apostle assures us that God had great love for us, even when we were dead in sins--when we were corrupt. It is difficult for us to think of God's greatness,

purity and splendor of character, and of man's fallen condition--his corruption, mental, moral and physical--and then to understand how the holy Jehovah could have love for his fallen creatures. We may be sure that it was not the love of affection, such as he has for us now, as his sons, newly begotten of the spirit, but merely the love of sympathy. He beheld our miserable condition, and realized that an offer of release from our corruption, and of return to holiness and harmony with himself, would be joyfully appreciated and accepted by some--let us hope, by many;--and it was, undoubtedly, in view of such a response to his goodness and mercy that our Creator opened up for the world of mankind "a new way of life," in and through the Lord Jesus and his redemptive work.

But although this sympathetic love was toward the whole world, it has not yet been made generally known--it has not yet been practically exercised toward the world, but only toward a comparatively small proportion of the whole. Here and there the message has been sent to a special class--to those who have "an ear to hear"--the remainder being left for the present, to be dealt with later. (Isa. 35:5.) It is to those who had the "ear to hear", and who hearing, have responded and laid hold upon the grace of God in Christ, that the Apostle is now writing. He calls attention to the blessing of such an experience. He does not here differentiate between those who have taken merely the first step of faith and obedience unto justification, and those who have gone on and taken also the second step of full consecration to the Lord, "even unto death"; but addresses the latter class only--those who, having made a full consecration to the Lord of their justified selves, have been begotten of the spirit, quickened and energized by that spirit as members of the body of Christ. The Apostle here interjects in parenthesis (2:5) a reminder that all this blessing has come to us, not of our worthiness, nor of our work, but by divine "grace are ye saved"; we reached this position in the new life, this reckonedly saved position, by faith;--delivered from the sentence of sin, saved from the darkness and delusion of the Adversary,\* saved from the wrath of God, and brought, instead, into his loving favor. Oh, how great is the salvation which accompanies a complete conversion and full consecration to the Lord! What a wonderful change it brings to us, in thought, in word and in act! And yet this is only the beginning of our salvation, or what the Apostle elsewhere speaks of as being "saved by hope." (Rom. 8:24.) While thus saved by grace now, we are still waiting for a further salvation, by grace--"for the grace [salvation] that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"--the First Resurrection.

All that, by the Lord's grace, we shall ultimately have through the "change" of the resurrection as members

of the body of Christ--all the heavenly things, including full fellowship and communion with the Father and with our Lord--are reckoned as having their beginning in the present life. He, therefore, who knows not such a beginning of the new life, and its holy spirit now, has no reason whatever to believe that he has been begotten of the holy spirit--that he is a new creature in Christ. These new creatures are reckoned as having been raised up out of the state of sin and death into a new condition of life, and love of righteousness. Symbolically, they are ushered into the Holy of the Tabernacle, where they have the light of the Golden Lampstand, and partake of the spiritual Shewbread, and may offer the spiritual Incense to God, and have fellowship with him "in Christ Jesus"--as members of the Ecclesia, "the Church which is his body." This is a figurative resurrection from the dead--a figure and earnest of the real resurrection from the dead which shall come to each of these if they prove loyal to God and faithful to their covenant as members of the body of Christ--to be dead with their Head, that they may also live with him, through participation in his resurrection. --Rom. 6:5,8.

Counting the new life as beginning now--counting ourselves as members of the New Creation, which by and by is to be glorified, we ask ourselves with the Apostle, What great thing must God work, then, in us and for us, eventually, if present foretastes of his goodness and grace are so superlatively grand? The Apostle answers such a query (vs. 7) assuring us that "in the ages to come God will show forth the exceeding riches of his grace through [in] his kindness toward us [who are] in Christ Jesus." He does not attempt to tell us what these riches will amount to. He would have us see that God is rich in mercy, rich in grace,

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\*The Apostle was a firm believer in a personal devil, and a Bible study of his teachings on this subject would be profitable to many of the Lord's people in the present time, when, through Christian Science and other deceptive teachings, the very existence of the Adversary is being denied, and thus many are the more exposed to his wiles and deceptions. Note the following references to Satan by the Apostles: Acts 13:10; 26:18; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 7:5; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 1:20; 3:6,7; 5:15; 2 Tim. 2:26. Our Lord also frequently referred to the Adversary: Matt. 4:10; 12:26; 25:41; Mark 4:15; 8:33; Luke 10:18; 22:31; John 8:44; 14:30.

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and rich in every other grand and estimable quality, and he would have us trust that so rich a Father will

do for his adopted children "exceeding abundantly more than we could ask or think." Indeed, he assures us elsewhere that it is impossible for him to explain or for us to comprehend "the riches of our inheritance." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that loved him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit."--1 Cor. 2:9,10; Eph. 3:19.

Nevertheless, the revelation by his spirit is only an approximate one. We cannot clearly discern those unseen things, we cannot comprehend them with our finite natural minds. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" but with the new mind we can, even though but vaguely, grasp the thought of our Heavenly Father's riches of grace and love, and can draw analogies from the things of this present life, and thus gain some idea of the glorious things which await us. As we see our heavenly Father's provision for the natural man,--a little lower than the angels,--as we look at the beautiful flowers of earth, and taste of its delicious fruits, it is but another step for the consecrated heart to realize that the rich Father who planned so beneficently for his human sons, and who permits so many of these blessings to come to mankind, even in its fallen condition, is no less rich in love and mercy toward his spiritual sons, and will make abundant provision for them also. And that as he has provided harmonies of music for the natural ear, and pleasant odors and flavors and scenes for the senses of the natural man, so, only on a more exalted plane, there will be gratifications for all the high qualities of heart and of mind for the New Creation;--there will be what will correspond to the present beauties of nature, but higher and grander, for those who shall gain the new nature. There will be that which will correspond to the flowers and the birds, the fields and the trees, the mountains and the valleys. There will be that which will correspond to the most delightful gratifications of the eye, the ear, the nose and the mouth, and to the most pleasurable thrills of the heart. Thus does faith, based upon a knowledge of the riches of grace and love in our heavenly Father, enable the new creature to see the things invisible and to rejoice in the wonderful things only partially disclosed at the present time.

From this exalted position and favor and fellowship with God, associated in the heavenlies in Christ, we are enabled by faith to rejoice in those promises of our Father's Word, which assure us that we shall be permitted to cooperate with him in the great work of the next age, the Millennial Age, in showing forth his praises, in lifting up so many as will of the world of mankind out of their present fallen condition,--up to full restitution of that which was lost in Adam and redeemed by Christ.

We notice (vss. 8-10) how carefully the Apostle

seeks to guard us against the thought that any of these blessings have come to us on account of our own merit. He reiterates, "By grace are ye saved through faith." And if by grace, no longer of works, as he elsewhere points out. (Rom. 11:6.) If of works it would not be of grace. As members of the fallen race we were incapable of doing any work which our holy God could accept--we were dead, corrupted, foul, under condemnation as children of wrath, when he had mercy upon us, and opened up the way of life. Our present standing, therefore, as new creatures, is not the result of anything that the old creature did, or could have done. It is not of ourselves; it is a gift of God. This lesson must be thoroughly appreciated, else we will be continually in danger of falling. The grace is not of ourselves, certainly, and we may say also that although we exercised some faith at the beginning (else we could never have come to him at all, to accept his favors), yet the faith by which we were enabled to accomplish our consecration even unto death, and thus to become new creatures in Christ, was not of ourselves--we had no such faith when God laid hold upon us. He developed in us that faith by the revelations of his love, through his promises, through his Word.

If our present standing were the result of our own efforts or "works," there would probably be some room for boasting;--it would imply that we were not so fallen that we could not have lifted ourselves out of the miry clay of sin,--on the line of the Evolution Theory. But such theories are not recognized in the divine Word and must not be recognized by any who would maintain their standing as new creatures in Christ. On the contrary, so far from considering the New Creature as an evolution of the old creature, the Apostle would have us understand distinctly that it is a new and separate creation. We were created in Christ Jesus, God's workmanship--prepared for good works, but not by good works.

The Apostle assures us that God foreordained that this New Creation should progress in good works. To become new creatures in Christ we gladly surrendered our all to the Lord, that we might know his will and do it; and having accepted us in Christ, he informs us that it is his good pleasure that our entire life should be renewed, that we should discard entirely from our hearts, our minds, our wills, everything sinful, everything unholy, and that so far as possible our mortal bodies should be brought into subjection to our new minds, and that we should walk in newness of life, even on this side the veil--thus giving evidence of our

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sincerity, developing character and becoming meet "for the inheritance of the saints in light," in glory. Whoever is not disposed to walk in the Lord's ways of holiness

and opposition to sin, and in cultivation of the mind, the spirit of the Lord, the holy spirit, surely deceives himself, if he thinks he has passed from death unto life, and that he is a new creature in Christ Jesus.

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REVIEW LESSON.

--MARCH 29.--

Golden Text.--"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!"--Matt. 28:20.

REVIEWING the lessons of the quarter, showing the missionary labors of the Apostle, and introducing to us a number of his colaborers, our principal thoughts may well be that the same gospel is still being preached--Jesus and the resurrection; --that the privilege of being ministers of this gospel, and colaborers with our Lord, is still open to us; that the rewards of such ministry may still be won by us; indeed, it is well that we get the thought that every member of the Church glorified will have been an active member of the Church militant--warring against the Adversary and his works, and influence. Whether our warfare be of the more public kind or of the more private sort, there must be warfare, and more than this, there must be progress and victory, else we can never be accepted of the Lord as "overcomers."

Another thought should be borne in mind by us all; viz., that while we have gifts differing one from the other, and are, therefore, able to contribute to the Lord's cause relatively larger or smaller amounts of energy or service or wealth, the Lord in making his estimate will take knowledge of the spirit which actuated us, rather than of the results secured by our efforts; so that of some small talent it may be said, as it was said of the poor widow who cast in the two mites into the Lord's treasury,--that the smaller gift was more appreciated by the Lord than some of the larger ones. In view of this, let us see to it, not only that we do with our might what our hands find to do, but also that our every sacrifice and gift to the Lord and his cause is so full of love and devotion that the Lord will surely approve it; as done from love for him and his, and not from vainglory.

The Golden Text of this lesson contains a precious thought,--that the Lord has been with his representatives in all their labors of love and self-denial, throughout the entire age, noting their efforts, assisting, encouraging, sustaining them, and surely watering and refreshing all who are making his service their special

object in life,--ministering his grace to others, watering and feeding them. And if this has been true in the past, all through the age, how specially true we may realize it to be now, in the end of the age, in the time of harvest, in the time of our Lord's second presence! How we may realize that he is with us, in sympathy, in cooperation, in assistance, in sustaining grace,--able and willing to make all of our experiences profitable to us, and to use us abundantly in showing forth the praises of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light!

Let these thoughts quicken us to fresh and greater energies, and to an appreciation of the fact that the things of this present time are but transitory (both its joys and its sorrows); and that the ambitions and hopes of the world are not worthy of comparison with these noble and laudable ambitions to serve and to please our Master, and to have his rewards--the chief of which will be fellowship with himself in glory, and the privilege of being colaborers with him in the blessing of the world,--the grand fulfilment of the heavenly Father's gracious plans for the world of mankind.

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ABLE TO COMPREHEND WITH ALL SAINTS.

"PROCRASTINATION is the thief of time," is an old proverb and a true one: and time lost means opportunities lost, and the advantages and privileges which went with the opportunities, also lost. If Christian people (all the truly consecrated) could get the proper view of the divine plan, and could see clearly, with the eyes of their understanding, the great work which God is now doing amongst mankind, and could see their privileges in connection therewith, life would become much more real, much more earnest, to them than it is. We do not mention the world in general, but recognize it as having no hearing and no sight for divine things now;--being blinded by the god of this world, and deafened by the babel and clamor, which he induces and perpetuates for this purpose. Thank God for the gracious promises of the Word: that in the new dispensation, under Christ's Millennial Kingdom, all the blind eyes shall be opened, and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped. (Isa. 35:5.) But, seeing that the world is blind and deaf, we pause not to attempt a miracle with its children; but follow the Lord's injunction, and speak, so far as possible, only

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to those who have ears. "He that hath an ear, let him hear."

Those who have heard in any measure,--who have seen to any extent,--who have tasted to any degree, that the Lord is graciously extending his favor toward all those who come unto him through the Redeemer, and who have thus come into the household of faith,--are privileged far beyond the masses of our race who are still aliens and strangers and foreigners to God. But one difficulty is, that through false doctrines instigated by the Adversary, believers have gained so wrong a conception of the divine plan, and of the divine character formulating that plan, that they not only do not love God with all their heart, but, on the contrary, they desire to have as little to do with him as possible;--as little as will secure their everlasting escape from an eternity of torture, which they have been taught to believe he has prepared for the great mass of his creatures.

We cannot blame people, who view God and his plan from this false standpoint, if they take comparatively little interest in studying the Bible, which they believe is the revelation of these horrible preparations, --predetermined before the world was made. Our first effort in approaching the average Christian professor should be to anoint the eyes of his understanding with "the oil of joy," by briefly explaining to him the way of the Lord more perfectly. It is well to begin where God begins, and where the apostles begin the story of salvation; viz., with the cross of Christ. It is well to impress, first of all, that as a race we are all under condemnation through original sin, and that there is no escape for any, except through the Redeemer whom God has provided. Next, it is well to show just what the penalty is, that it is not eternal suffering,--torment; but eternal death, a death from which there could be no recovery,--annihilation. Next, it will be in order to show God's compassion in providing the Savior, who paid for us the very penalty against us--that in his flesh he "suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3:18): that he did not suffer eternal torment, but the very penalty against us; viz., eternal death. Next, it will be in order to show that although the flesh of Christ was thus given up eternally, as man's ransom price, God nevertheless raised him from the dead, giving him a new life, a new being,--making him a "new creature;" and that accordingly he is no longer a man in the flesh, but is again a spirit being, now of the divine nature, far above angels, principalities and powers.--Eph. 1:21; 1 Pet. 3:22.

Next in order it will be proper to show how the death of Christ could effect all mankind;--that it was because Jesus took the place of father Adam, and thus redeemed his life;--and because the whole race was condemned in Adam, therefore his personal redemption would imply, legally and justly, that the penalty was sufficient for the sins of the whole world condemned



in him,--and not condemned on their own account. Next in order we should show that the object in this purchase of the world, was, and still is, that every member of Adam's race might have an opportunity, as Adam had, of showing the Lord his willingness to be obedient to him and to his laws, and thus to obtain at his hand the great gift of everlasting existence. To Adam only this will be really a second chance, as his race has had no chance yet;--being born in sin and under its penalty of death.

By this time your hearer should be ready to see that the trial which God proposes to give mankind is not such a trial as comes to a felon, a convict, before a criminal court,--to determine whether he is guilty or not guilty; for, on the contrary, in the case of mankind God already has determined that "all are guilty," that "there is none righteous, no not one." It is because such a trial would be a useless mockery, that nothing of the kind is proposed by the Lord, though this is the unreasonable thought common among his people. Seeing that we are hopeless as respects clearing ourselves, God has by his own plan and arrangement already paid the penalty for every man, --through the sacrifice of his Son. Hence, the whole world of mankind, when put on trial for life everlasting, will not stand trial as convicts, but as redeemed freed-men whose release from the original death sentence has been fully paid by the ransom-sacrifice of Christ. Their trial will be to determine their choice of lasting life or death--on God's terms--as Adam made choice in his trial;--to determine which they would choose after gaining a knowledge of sin and its penalty, everlasting death,--and a knowledge of righteousness and the reward of righteousness, life everlasting; --their choice being indicated by their obedience or disobedience to the divine mandates.

Whoever follows the plan thus far, is prepared to see that God has not yet given to mankind in general the great trial, or opportunity secured for all by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus,--for testing their worthiness or unworthiness of life everlasting. All who are not grossly blinded by error and prejudice can see that a full, fair opportunity for judging between right and wrong, and for choosing the right and rejecting the wrong, has not yet come to the world as a whole. They can see that ignorance, prejudice and superstition are blinding the world still; and looking back along the aisles of history they can see that such blindness has been in the world for centuries;--since before the redemption price of the world was paid.

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If your hearer be of an inquiring mind he will now be questioning when or how a full knowledge and opportunity, or trial will, or could be extended to mankind;

and this will be the favorable opportunity for reminding him of the Apostle's words, "God hath appointed a day [still future] in the which he will judge the world [not condemn the world, for the world is condemned already, for which reason Christ died for the ungodly;--but he will judge the world in the sense of granting all a trial] in righteousness [under righteous, favorable, just, reasonable conditions] by that man whom he hath ordained [the great Messiah, the Royal Priest, whose reign is to bring blessing and uplift to whomsoever will of all the families of the earth]." (Acts 17:31.) It is of these times of blessing and restitution that the Apostle Peter declares that all the holy prophets since the world began have spoken. (Acts 3:19-21.) And no wonder, since they spoke as oracles of God; for God has had this very purpose from the foundation of the world;--knowing in advance the course that sin would take, and the course which man would take under the delusions of sin, because of experience.

#### BEGINNINGS OF COMPREHENSION.

As the mental eyes and ears of the believer begin to take in this fulness of God's provision for his creatures, his former fears begin to subside; and he begins to get a realizing sense of the goodness and love of God, as never before. But still he will have queries. He will want to know when this day of which the Apostle speaks will begin;--the day of the world's judgment, or trial in righteousness, under favorable conditions. He will want to know why it did not begin immediately after our Lord's death and resurrection, --if it waited for and was dependent upon his atoning work. This will be the proper opportunity for opening before the eyes of his understanding another department of our heavenly Father's gracious plan; --showing him what is so clearly set forth in the Scriptures; viz., that the Father has purposed an elect and select Church to be as a Bride joined to Christ, her Lord and Redeemer and Bridegroom;--as a special illustration of divine mercy and goodness, sharing his glory, honor and immortality;--"changed" to the divine nature in the first resurrection.

He now will begin to understand faintly what the Apostle meant when he declared, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared [in reservation] for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." (1 Cor. 2:9,10.) He will begin to appreciate the fact that when we enter the Lord's family and become members of the household of faith, we are only on the threshold, of knowledge and appreciation, and have need of progress and growth. He will begin to understand the force of the Apostle's words when he said, speaking to Christians,

and not to worldly people, "I bow my knees unto the Father,...that he would grant you... that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:14-19.) As again he says, "I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of

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you in my prayers, that the...Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."--Eph. 1:16-18.

It requires time for heart and head so to expand as to take in a glimpse of such a wonderful blessing as this which God has provided for the "elect." But whoever gets even a faint glimpse of the greatness of God's favor toward the Church, will not be surprised that in the divine plan so liberal an allowance as nearly nineteen centuries was made for the calling and chastisement and perfecting of the saints for the great and glorious work to which they, as joint-heirs with Messiah, are called. Neither will they think strange, the fiery trials which try all of these whom the Lord our God calls, and accepts as probationary members of the elect Kingdom class. They will perceive, readily enough, that if it was expedient, yea, necessary, that our Lord Jesus, with all of his experience in the heavenly courts, must "learn obedience by the things which he suffered," and prove his loyalty to the Father by faithfulness even unto death, much more must his followers --whose previous history was that of sinners-- be tried and thoroughly tested in respect to their loyalty to the Lord.

From this standpoint, the experiences of Christians take on a totally new meaning; and those who have made consecration of themselves to the Lord realize that they are running for a mark, and for a prize; --no longer are their steps so unsteady, no longer are their hearts so faint and so careless, no longer do the world's baubles prove so enticing and ensnaring. God is thus working in them through the Word of his grace, through its exceeding great and precious promises. Through these he works in them to will to be faithful to him; and then to do;--conform their lives to the requirements of his Word. The same truth becomes also a power, a strength of God, in them, enabling them more and more to do those things which they should--the things pleasing in God's sight.

In this view, all is clear and plain; not only do we

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see that God permits evil in the world that the world may learn certain lessons of bitter experience, as to the natural rewards of evil doing, but we see also a ministry of evil in respect to the saints--in their testing and polishing and refining; making them ready, and proving them worthy, as overcomers, to inherit the wonderful things which God has in reservation for the faithful. This will be, to the intelligent believer, a full explanation of why God has not yet undertaken the blessing of the world;--of why the promises, made through the prophets, of a coming time when the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, and the curse be rolled away, have not yet been fulfilled. They can see that it is the rolling away of this curse, the wiping away of all tears, the bringing of blessings to mankind, that is the very work for which God has commissioned his glorified Son, and for joint-heirship in which he is selecting the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

From such a vantage point of view, the most sluggish intellect will catch wonderful and refreshing glimpses of glory and blessing that are to follow, as soon as the present "ministry of evil" shall have accomplished its work. Looking into the future they begin to realize something of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the divine plan, and they will be ready to exclaim, "Oh, if God's plan is so great that it has required such a broad foundation, such great preparation, in the person of our Lord, and in the persons of his people who will be joint-heirs with him in the Kingdom, how very great must be the blessing that shall be ministered to the world through these, when the appointed time shall come!"

At first, the thoughts of the blessing coming to the poor groaning creation, and of the glories coming to the faithful and loyal and suffering saints, will overwhelm your auditor; and he can see and think of nothing else, for a while, than the stupendous grace of God manifested in this wonderful plan of human salvation. But, by and by, he will begin to think of himself, and what part he is privileged to have under the divine arrangement; and, as he sees a possibility of joint-heirship with the Lord amongst the faithful overcomers, he will find that all the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word, and the new hopes inspired thereby, will be an energy and a power in his soul which he never before knew;--a purifying energy, a sanctifying power. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Instinctively he will begin to heed the Apostle's exhortation, to "lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us; and to run with patience the race that is set before us in the Gospel."-- Heb. 12:1.

Soon after, various exhortations of the Word will have a new and a deeper meaning to him. As for instance, when he reads the Apostle's exhortation, "Let

us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord" (2 Cor. 7:1), his words, his thoughts, his actions, his clothing, his personal appearance, will all come under inspection from a new standpoint;--he is no longer a condemned sinner, but a justified and sanctified son of God;--his representative;--his ambassador. It will be a new thought to him, to some extent, that cleansing the flesh is a part of the sanctifying work; and that a cleansing of the spirit or mind or thoughts or intentions, is equally necessary,--in order to the attainment of a condition of heart pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. And although he will never attain the perfection in the flesh, because of inherited blemishes, he will, nevertheless, assuredly make considerable progress in this direction; and not to see some progress should be a cause of disappointment, and should lead to self-examination at the mercy-seat. (Heb. 4:16.) He will hear, moreover, the Apostle Peter's exhortation to the same class, saying, "Add to your faith virtue [fortitude]; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge self-control; and to self-control patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things be in you and abound they make you that ye shall be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ...For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."--2 Pet. 1:5-8,11.

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#### LIFE AND DEATH.

So he died for his faith; that is fine--  
More than most of us do.  
But stay, can you add to that line  
That he lived for it, too?

In his death he bore witness at last  
As a martyr to truth;  
Did his life do the same in the past,  
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die; men have died  
For a wish or a whim--  
From bravado or passion or pride--  
Was it harder for him?

But to live--every day to live out  
All the truth that he dreamt,  
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,  
And the world with contempt;--

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,  
Never turning aside?  
Then we'll talk of the life that he led--  
Never mind how he died. --Ernest Crosby.

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LETTERS OF INTEREST.

DEAR MR. RUSSELL--

My sister and I are forwarding our subscriptions for the WATCH TOWER for the ensuing year. You must get many letters of the sort that I am going to write to you, but you can never tire of hearing how our loving Father uses you for emancipating and feeding burdened and hungry souls such as we were before we read your books. We daily bless God for raising you up to be such an unspeakable blessing to us. The feast spread before us and the light shed upon God's Word almost overwhelms us at times. If you had known us two years ago! We were brought up with the doctrine of eternal misery of some sort for the vast majority, and only a few to be saved, drilled into us. We never really accepted it complacently, and in consequence we were in bondage for the struggling masses,--but I am sure you must understand all that we went through. For years we prayed that God would reveal himself in love to us but did not understand in the least how he would do it; and now he has; and how fully only those who have read and love your books know. We love the TOWERS and look for them.

We both do what we can to spread the glorious gospel of the love of God, but are most surprised to find that professedly Christian, consecrated people will not search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so, and have simply repudiated the subject. We cannot understand it. We have been used of the Lord for ordinary professors of religion and for people of the world, and have found some of them really hungry. We understand our Lord's words now, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Yours in our Redeemer and Lord,  
(MRS.) E. NEWTON,--England.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Greetings to you in the Lord! My heart is filled with joy over the remarkable attention the Truth has drawn in the Carnegie Hall meetings, and what a joy it must be to you to be the instrument in the Lord's hands to convey the wonderful message to "whosoever hath an ear." May God's blessings continue to rest on you richly and abound, and on your noble coworkers in the Allegheny Church.

Just a few words about the class here. I think it is

because the Lord has been opening my eyes more and more each month and filling my heart with heavenly blessings that I am able to see the wonderful growth of the others in our class. The spirit of love and unselfishness is growing very rapidly, for which we greatly rejoice in the Lord. We meet every Sunday afternoon for Bible study, and Sunday night we use our new Bibles and DAWNS and TOWERS. Wednesday evening we have a prayer and testimony meeting, and the last Friday evening of each month we meet for a song service and a general good talk along the lines of the truth.

There are quite a few getting interested and we feel quite encouraged. One of these was a very worldly man, and a chance (?) sentence or two of mine one day in the

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shop raised a question in his mind which I was only too glad to answer. The seed seemed to light on good soil, and I gave him the first volume to read, then the second and third. Of course profanity had to go, and then tobacco and so on, and he is really making remarkable progress. Your brother in the Lord,

C. B. SHULL,--Ohio.

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DEAR FRIENDS:--

Our Volunteer report is tardy, but the churches have comparatively few in attendance until the weather begins to be unfavorable at the Beaches, at which time also the tourists begin to reach here, making it more favorable to await.

We received 14,000 TOWERS for distribution, only 400 of which are on hand; these remaining ones we will see are properly disposed of.

Our Volunteers have manifested more love and zeal, I think, than in the past, and feel they were disappointed to find the work completed for this time. We meet more opposition than ever in the past. One minister came out the church and said he would see to it that there were laws passed which would stop this distribution of literature. When he left his church his farewell sermon was against this truth. In private, this same man said he thought he would do God a service to take the lives of such people who held such devilish doctrines.

We served about 110 churches in L\_\_\_\_\_ A\_\_\_\_\_ and about 21 churches in surrounding towns. The friends at P\_\_\_\_\_ served their churches alone this year.

We thank you all for your share in this work, your labor of love, and are grateful for the privilege we have in service, and trust we may receive more ammunition for future work.

Sincerely yours in Him,

ROBT. NAIRN,--California.

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DEAR BRETHREN:--

I received box of tracts some time ago with joy. It gives me joy to read the report in the TOWER at the last of the year--to know of the tons of glad tidings going forth in search of wheat grains. I have filled out and mailed all the addressed wrappers you sent me for India and other foreign countries, without the loss of one. I have, by the Lord's help, mailed over forty-seven thousand tracts since March 26, 1901, including the India and foreign mail, besides about twelve thousand before that date, while I was not so deeply interested. As I am appointed by the community of this place and the Post Office Department to hold the office of postmaster, the Lord, I think, has opened a way for me to work. I wish to use it, so long as it will be opened, for the good work, as I fear soon we will not be permitted to distribute the glad tidings. The Lord said, "Work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work."

Your unworthy servant in the Lord,  
J. L. FREED,--Pennsylvania.

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