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Volume VI. will have over 700 pages and is hoped for in December. Those who have already paid for it at old prices need not send additionally.

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"HALLELUJAH! WHAT A SAVIOR!"

CHRIST, THE INSTRUCTOR, JUSTIFIER, SANCTIFIER AND DELIVERER OF HIS PEOPLE.

"Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, [justification], and sanctification, and redemption [deliverance]."
--1 Cor. 1:30.--

CHRIST OUR WISDOM.

SINCE God's dealings with his creatures recognize their wills, the first step in his dealings with them, therefore, is to give them knowledge, or "wisdom," as it is translated in the above Scripture. It is for this reason that preaching was the first command of the Gospel age. To the worldly minded the preaching of forgiveness on account of faith in the crucified Jesus did not seem the wise course. To them it would have seemed better for God to have commanded something to be done by them. But, as Paul says-- "It pleased God to save those who believe by [knowledge imparted through what the worldly consider] the foolishness of this preaching."--1 Cor. 1:21.

The first gift of God to our redeemed race, therefore, was knowledge.

(1) Knowledge of the greatness and absolute justice of the God with whom we have to do. This knowledge was prepared for by the Mosaic Law, which was a "schoolmaster," or pedagogue, to lead men to Christ.

And Christ, by his obedience to that law, magnified the Law and showed its honorableness, its worthiness; and thus honored God, the author of that Law, and showed his character.

(2) Knowledge of his own weakness, of his fallen, sinful and helpless condition, was also needful to man, that he might appreciate his need of a Savior such as God's plan had provided for him.

(3) Knowledge of how the entire race of Adam fell from divine favor and from mental, moral and physical perfection, through him, was also necessary. Without this knowledge we could not have seen how God could be just in accepting the one life, of Christ, as the ransom price for the life of the whole world.

(4) Without knowledge as to what is the penalty for sin--that "the wages of sin is death"--we never should have been able to understand how the death of our Redeemer paid the penalty against Adam and all in him.

(5) Knowledge, in these various respects, was, therefore, absolutely necessary to us, as without it we could have had no proper faith, and could not have availed ourselves of God's provision of justification, sanctification and deliverance through Christ.

Most heartily, therefore, we thank God for knowledge or wisdom concerning his plan. And we see that this wisdom came to us through Christ; because, had it not been for the plan of salvation of which he and his cross are the center, it would have been useless to give the knowledge, useless to preach, because there would have been no salvation to offer.

CHRIST OUR JUSTIFICATION.

That Christ is made unto us righteousness or justification implies,--

(1) That we are unjust, or unrighteous in the sight of God, and unworthy of his favor.

(2) That, in view of our unworthiness, God had in some manner arranged that Christ's righteousness should stand good for "us," and thus give "us" a standing before God which we could not otherwise have because of our imperfections--our unrighteousness.

(3) This scripture does not imply that Christ's righteousness covers every sinner, so that God now views every sinner as though he were righteous, and treats all as his children. No, it refers merely to a special class of sinners--sinners who, having come to a knowledge of sin and righteousness, and having learned the undesirableness of sin, have repented of sin, and

sought to flee from it and to come into harmony with God. This is the particular class referred to in this scripture--"who of God is made unto us justification," or righteousness.

(4) How God has arranged or caused Christ to be our "righteousness," or justification, is not here explained; but what we know of divine law and character assures us that the principle of Justice, the very foundation of divine government, must somehow have been fully satisfied in all of its claims. And other scriptures fully substantiate this conclusion. They assert that God so arranged as to have the price of man's sin paid for him; and that the price paid was an exact equivalent, a ransom or corresponding price, offsetting in every particular the original sin and just penalty, death, as it came upon the original sinner and through him by heredity upon all men. (Rom. 5:12,18-20.) He tells us that this plan of salvation was adopted because by it "God might be [or continue] just, and [yet be] the justifier of him [any sinner] that believeth in Jesus"--that comes unto God under the terms of the New Covenant, of which Christ Jesus is the mediator, having sealed it, or made it a covenant, by his own precious blood.--Heb. 13:20,21; 10:29.

(5) While the benefits of this gracious arrangement are only for "us," for "believers," for those who come unto God by Christ--under the provisions of the New Covenant--these benefits are, nevertheless, made applicable to all; for God's special provision for the whole world of sinners is that all shall "come to a knowledge of the truth," that they may, if then they will accept the conditions of God's covenant, be everlastingly saved. A knowledge and a rejection of error--of false doctrines which misrepresent the divine character even though they be mixed with a little misconstrued truth--will not constitute grounds for condemnation; but a knowledge of the truth and a rejection of it will bring condemnation to the Second Death. The Greek text states this much more emphatically than our common English translation. It says, "come to an accurate knowledge of the truth."--1 Tim. 2:4.

(6) The provision made was sufficient for all men. Our Lord gave himself [in death] a ransom--a corresponding price--for all; he was a "propitiation [or sufficient satisfaction] for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:2.) As a consequence, he is both able and willing "to save unto the uttermost [i.e., to save from sin, and from divine disfavor, and from death, and all these everlastingly] all that come unto God by him." (Heb. 7:25.) And inasmuch as God's provision is so broad, that all shall come to an exact knowledge of the truth respecting these provisions of divine mercy under the terms of the New Covenant;--inasmuch as the provision is that all the sin and prejudice-blinded eyes shall be opened, and that the devil, who

for long centuries has deceived men with his misrepresentations of the truth, is to be bound for a thousand years, so that he can deceive the nations no more; and that then a highway of holiness shall be cast up in which the most stupid cannot err or be deceived; and in view of all this provision God declares that all men will be saved from the guilt and penalty incurred through Adam's sentence. Because, when all of these blessed arrangements have been carried into effect, there will be no reason for a solitary member of the human family remaining a stranger and alien from God's family except by his own choice or preference for unrighteousness, and that with an accurate knowledge that all unrighteousness is sin. Such as, of their own preference, knowingly choose sin, when the way and means of becoming servants of God are clearly understood by them, are wilful sinners on their own account, and will receive the Second-Death sentence as the wages of their own opposition to God's righteous arrangements.

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The world's salvation will be complete the moment all have come to an accurate knowledge of the truth concerning God's great plan of salvation; because then they will know that by accepting Christ and the New Covenant which God offers to all through Christ, they may have life everlasting--salvation to the uttermost. Whether they will hear (heed) or whether they will forbear (refuse to heed) will not alter the fact that all will thus have been saved from Adamic sin and death --will have had a full salvation tendered to them. Thus, the living God will be the Savior of all men--especially or everlastingly, however, the Savior of only those who accept his grace and become "his people" under the New Covenant.--1 Tim. 4:10.

(7) It is only to "us" that Christ is made justification or righteousness. Though all men are to be saved in the sense of being brought to the knowledge and opportunity of salvation, none have Christ as their justification, the covering of their imperfections, imputing his righteousness to them, except "us"--the household of faith. "Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious." (1 Pet. 2:7.) He of God is made unto us justification, righteousness, covering and cleansing from the unintentional weaknesses and shortcomings of the present, as well as from the original sin and its sentence. Who is he who condemns us? Will that Anointed One who died; and still more who has been raised, who also is at the right hand of God, and who intercedes on our behalf? Nay, he has been made our justification; it is the merit of his great sacrifice that speaks our justification.--Rom. 8:34.

Justification signifies to make right, or whole, or

just. And from the word "whole" comes the word "(w)holiness," signifying soundness, or perfection, or righteousness. None of the fallen race are either actually or reckonedly whole, sound, perfect or just by nature. "There is none righteous [just, sound, holy], no, not one; all have sinned." But all who come unto God by Christ, whom he has accepted as the justification or righteousness of all who accept the New Covenant, are from that moment accepted and treated as sound, perfect, holy. Although we are actually unholy or imperfect, we are made "partakers of God's holiness;" first, reckonedly, in Christ, and, second, more and more actually by the eradication of our sinful tendencies and the development of the fruits and graces of the Spirit, through chastisements, experience, etc. (Heb. 12:10.) God not only begins on the basis of holiness, imputing to us Christ's merit to cover our demerits, but he continues on the same line, and ever urges us to "be holy [to strive after actual soundness and perfection], even as he is holy." (1 Pet. 1:15,16.) And he promises the faithful strivers that they shall ultimately attain absolute holiness, soundness, perfection --in the resurrection, when they shall be made actually like Christ, as now their wills are copies of his. For "without holiness [thus attained] no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. 12:14.) Hence, "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure"--seeking to be as much like him as possible now, and by and by to be fully in his image. --1 John 3:3,2.

Justified persons and no others are Christians, in the proper use of that term.

CHRIST OUR SANCTIFICATION.

The term "Sanctification," used in this text, means, set apart, consecrated, devoted to, or marked out for a holy use or purpose.

Christ by God is made unto us sanctification. That is to say, God through Christ sets apart or marks out for a special share in his great plan "us"--the Church.

Many make the serious error of supposing that God is sanctifying the world,--sanctifying sinners. As a consequence of this error, many are seeking to copy Christ's example, and thus be sanctified before God, while they repudiate the doctrine of the ransom, or justification by faith. They confound sanctification and justification in their minds, and suppose that if they consecrate or sanctify or set apart their lives to God's service and to deeds of kindness they are thereby justified.

This is a serious error. Justification is entirely separate and distinct from sanctification; and no one can be sanctified in God's sight, and in the Scriptural sense, unless he has first been justified or cleansed from all sin.

Consecrating a person or thing to God's service does not cleanse that person or thing. On the contrary, God always refuses to accept anything imperfect or unclean. This is distinctly and repeatedly shown in the typical arrangements of the Law given to typical Israel. The priests were obliged to wash themselves and put on new, clean linen garments before consecration to their office and work as God's typically set apart, or sanctified, priesthood. Their cleansing and new clothing represented justification, the appropriation of Christ's righteousness instead of the filthy rags of their own unrighteousness, as members of the fallen race.

The seal or mark of their consecration was a totally different one, and followed the cleansing ceremony, as consecration should in every case follow justification. The sign or mark of consecration or sanctification was the anointing with the holy oil, which symbolized the holy Spirit.

The anointing oil or symbol of consecration was poured upon the head of the High Priest only, but the under-priests were represented in the members of his body, even as Christ is the Head over the Church which is his body, and all together constitute the Royal Priesthood. So the holy Spirit given without measure to our Lord and Head applied to us (his body) through him. The Father gave the Spirit to the Son only: all of the anointing oil was poured upon the Head. At Pentecost it ran down from the head to the body, and has continued with the body ever since, and whoever comes into the "body" comes thereby under the consecrating influence--the spirit of holiness, the spirit of God, the spirit of Christ, the spirit of the Truth.-- Acts 2:4.

But in consecrating the typical priests the blood was not ignored. It was put upon all, upon the tip of the right ear, upon the thumb of the right hand and upon the great toe of the right foot, thus showing that the hearing of faith, the work of faith and the walk of faith must all be touched and made holy by an appreciation of the precious blood of atonement--the blood of Christ--the blood of the New Covenant. And then the garments of all the priests--their clean linen garments --were sprinkled with a mixture of the blood and the oil, implying that both justification through the blood and sanctification through the possession of the spirit of holiness are necessary in our consecration.

To what end or service are God's people, the Royal Priesthood, consecrated or set apart?

Some would be inclined to answer: To live without

sin, to practice the graces of the spirit, to wear

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plain clothing and in general to live a rather gloomy life now, hoping for greater liberty and pleasure hereafter.

We reply, This is the common but mistaken view. True, God's people do seek to avoid sin; but that is not the object of their consecration. Before consecration, they learned the exceeding sinfulness and undesirableness of sin, and saw Christ Jesus as their sin-bearer and cleanser. Consequently, they had fled from sin before consecration. When consecrated they will still loathe and abhor sin, and that more and more as they grow in grace and in knowledge; but we repeat that to seek to live free from sin is not a proper definition of consecration or sanctification.

It is true also that all of the consecrated will seek to put on the graces of Christ's spirit and example; but neither is this the object of our call to consecration under the Gospel high-calling.

It is true, also, that our consecration may lead to plainness of dress, and bring upon us sufferings for righteousness' sake, in this present evil world (age); but, we repeat, these are not the objects of our consecration. They are merely incidental results.

The object of God in calling out the Gospel Church, and providing for the consecration or sanctification of its members, is a grand and worthy one; and when once clearly seen by the eye of faith it makes all the incidentals which it will cost, such as self-denials in dress, loss of friends and companionships, and even persecution for the Truth's sake, etc., to be esteemed but light afflictions, not worthy to be compared to the glorious object of our consecration, which is that we may become "partakers of the divine nature" and "joint-heirs with Christ," and together with him bless the world during its day of judgment--the Millennium --as we will show.

God in his wisdom and foreknowledge knew that sin would enter this world and bring its blight,--sorrow, pain and death. He foresaw that after their experience with sin, some of his creatures would be, not only willing, but anxious, to forsake sin and return to his fellowship and love and the blessing of life everlasting. It was in view of this foreknowledge that God formed his plan for human salvation.

In that plan Christ Jesus our Lord had first place, first honor. As he was the beginning of the creation of God, so he was the chief of all God's creatures thus far brought into being. But God purposed a new creation--the creation of a new order of beings different and higher than men, angels and archangels --higher than all others, and of his own divine essence or nature. The worthiness of any one accepted to that

great honor should be recognized not only by God himself, but by all of his intelligent creatures. Hence God, who knew well the character of his first-begotten Son (our Lord Jesus), decided to prove or test his well-beloved Son in a manner that would prove to all of his intelligent creatures, what they all now recognize in the new song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive

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power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing."--Rev. 5:12.

But the exaltation of our Lord, who already was the chief of all creation, was even less remarkable than another feature of the divine plan, foreordained before the foundation of the world (1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:4); namely, that he would make to some of his human creatures (of the race sentenced as unworthy of any future life, but redeemed from that sentence by Christ's sacrifice) an offer of joint-heirship and companionship with his beloved Son, in the order of the new creation (of the divine nature), of which he has made the worthy Lamb the head and chief, next to himself.--1 Cor. 15:27.

This offer is not made to all of the redeemed race, but to many--"Many are called." The called are only those who in this age are justified by faith in Christ's atoning sacrifice. Unbelievers and scoffers are called to repentance and faith; but none are called to this high calling of participation in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4) until they have forsaken sin and laid hold upon Christ as their Redeemer.

If the worthiness of the Lamb was necessary to be shown, the worthiness of those whom he redeemed to be his joint-heirs (called also the bride, the Lamb's wife) would also need to be shown, proved, manifested before angels as well as before men, that God's ways may be seen to be just and equitable.

It is for this reason that God calls upon those whom he does call, to consecrate themselves to him--not in dress or word merely, but in everything. It is not a consecration to preach merely, although all the consecrated will delight to use every opportunity in telling to others the good tidings of God's love. It is not a consecration to temperance reform, social reform, political reform, or any other work of reform, although we may and should feel a deep interest in anything that would benefit the fallen race. But our devotion should be as that of a maid to her mistress, or of soldiers to their officers, or, better yet, as that of a dutiful child toward a beloved parent--swift to hear, quick to obey, not planning or seeking our own wills, but the will of our Father in heaven. Just such an attitude is implied in the words sanctified, or consecrated to God. It takes hold of the will, and therefore rules the entire being, except where uncontrollable weaknesses

or insurmountable obstacles hinder. And since our call and acceptance are based upon the New Covenant, which accepts a perfect will on the part of those

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trusting in the precious blood, and does not demand perfection of deeds, it follows that all of us, no matter how degraded by the fall, may be acceptable to God in the Beloved, and make their calling and election sure.

Nor is this arrangement of the New Covenant (by which those in Christ whose wills and efforts are right toward God are not held responsible for the full letter of God's law, but for the observance of its spirit or meaning, to the extent that they have knowledge, opportunity and ability) a violation of Justice, as some have assumed. God's law was designed for perfect creatures, and not for fallen ones; but under the New Covenant in Christ, God has adapted his law to the condition of the fallen ones without interfering with that law itself or even with its spirit. The perfect law, dealing with the perfect man, demanded a full consecration of his will to the wisdom and will of his Creator, and an obedience to that Creator's Word to the extent of his ability. But since man was created "upright" (and not fallen), in the moral image and likeness of God (and not born in sin and shapen in iniquity), it follows that his perfect will, operating through a perfect body and under favorable conditions, could have rendered perfect obedience; and hence nothing less could be acceptable to God.

How just, how reasonable and how favorable is God's arrangement for us! Yet he assures us that, while he has made all the arrangements favorable for us, he must insist on our wills being just right,--we must be pure in heart, and in this respect exact copies of his Beloved Son, our Lord. (Rom. 8:29--Diaglott.) Of those who learn of and accept God's grace in Christ, in the forgiveness of sins under the New Covenant, all of whom are called to this high calling of joint-heirship with Christ in the divine nature and its honors, only a few will make their calling and election sure (or complete), because the testings of their wills and faith are so exacting--so crucial.

Nor should either of these God-declared facts surprise us: it is not strange, but reasonable, that God should test severely, yea, with "fiery trials" (1 Pet. 4:12), the faith and love of those invited to so high a station. If they be not loyal and trustful to the last degree, they surely are "not fit for the Kingdom," its responsibilities and its divine honors. Nor should it surprise us to be informed by God's Word that only a "few," a "little flock," will gain the prize to which many are called and for which many consecrate. Few are willing to "endure" a great fight of afflictions;

partly while being made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly as companions of those who are so abused for Christ's sake and his Truth's sake.--Heb. 10:32,33.

In a word, the trial of the justified and consecrated consists in the presenting to them of opportunities to serve God and his cause in this present time, when, because of sin abounding, whosoever will live godly and hold up the light will suffer persecution. Those whose consecration is complete and of the proper kind will rejoice in their privilege of serving God and his cause, and will count it all joy to be accounted worthy to suffer in such a cause, and thus to attest to God the sincerity of their love and of their consecration to him. Such consecrated ones, pure in heart (in will or intention), realizing the object of present trials, glory in tribulations brought upon them by faithfulness to Christ and his Word, realizing that their experiences are similar to those of the Master, and that thus they have evidence that they are walking in the footsteps of him who said, "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you. Ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."--1 John 3:13; John 15:18,19; Rev. 2:10.

Furthermore, they glory in tribulations because they realize that the Lord will be near them while they endure faithfully, and that he will not permit them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with every temptation provide some way of escape; because they realize the necessity of forming character, and that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope--a hope that maketh not ashamed; and because they realize that all these favorable results of tribulation follow, on account of a genuine consecration in which the love of God has been shed abroad in the heart, displacing the spirit of the world, the spirit of selfishness.--1 Cor. 10:13; Rom. 5:3,5.

"He that committeth sin [wilfully] is of the devil." "Whosoever is begotten of God...cannot sin [wilfully]." (1 John 3:3-10; 5:18.) And we have seen that all of those acceptable to God in Christ were obliged to come unto him under the New Covenant, whose first condition is faith in Christ; and whose second condition is an entire consecration of their wills to God's will and service. Hence, any wilful sin would mean that they had repudiated the New Covenant and were no longer recognized as begotten of the Truth, but under the influence of sin, and hence begotten of the devil--his children.

If any justified and consecrated child of God commit sin it will be, at most, only partially wilful--

largely of weakness or deception. He may feel his shame and weep bitterly, as did Peter; but all such

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penitence would but prove that his sin was not of the wilful kind that would make him as "of the devil."
No: so long as the seed of the Truth, and of his consecration, remains in him, he cannot sin (wilfully).

But if any trespass under deception or weakness, and not wilfully, he has an advocate with the Father,-- "Jesus Christ the [absolutely] righteous" one, whose merit is applicable for all unwilful errors of such as abide under the shadow of the New Covenant. If he confess his sin, God is just to forgive him--because Christ died. (1 John 1:7,9; 2:1.) But if we should say that we have no sin, no imperfection, we deceive ourselves, make God a liar, and disown the Advocate whom God provided; for we are weak through the fall, and liable to deception and error at the hands of the world, the flesh, and the devil.--1 John 1:8,10.

Having seen what Sanctification is, its object or result and its present cost, we note that Christ by God is made unto us Sanctification--in that we could have no such call and could experience no such work of grace, under the divine plan, except for Christ and the work he did for us;--justifying us before the Law of God, sealing for us the New Covenant and making us fit for this call to "glory, honor and immortality."

CHRIST OUR REDEMPTION, OR DELIVERANCE.

Many readers confound the words redemption and redeem, found in the New Testament, whereas they refer to different features of the work of Christ. The word redeem in its every use in the New Testament signifies to acquire by the payment of a price, while the word redemption in its every New Testament use signifies the deliverance or setting free of that which was acquired by the payment of a price. "We were redeemed [purchased] with the precious blood [the sacrificed life, the death] of Christ." We wait for "the redemption [the deliverance] of our body" (the Church) from present imperfections and death. We wait for "the redemption [deliverance] of the purchased possession.--1 Pet. 1:18,19; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14.

In Christ is our redemption, or deliverance; for so God has ordained. He who redeemed, or bought us with the sacrifice of his own life, gives us, as our Prophet or Teacher, wisdom by his Gospel, to see our fallen state and himself as our helper; as our Priest, he first justifies us and then sanctifies or consecrates us,

as his under priesthood; and, finally, as King, he will fully deliver the faithful from the dominion of sin and death, to the glory, honor and immortality of the divine nature;--for "God will raise up [from the dead] us also, by Jesus." If faithful to our call and covenant, even unto death, we shall at the second coming of our Redeemer, receive "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God [His Word and Providence] through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."--Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4,5; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:14.

"Hallelujah! What a Savior!"

Truly he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.--Heb. 7:25.

WHOM GOD DID PREDESTINATE.

In the light of the foregoing, now read a hitherto obscure passage of Scripture: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate must be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover [the class] whom he did predestinate [must be copies of his Son], them he also called [or invited to that honor through the gospel]; and whom he called, them he also [previously] justified [because he could not consistently call to honor and glory those who were under his own sentence of death as sinners]; and whom he justified them he also [previously] honored [by sending to them the gospel message]."--Rom. 8:28-30.

Thus the Apostle continues his argument concerning the favor of God toward the Church, asserting that God had a purpose to fulfil, and that the call of the Church is in accordance with that purpose. (Peter declares the same thing.--1 Pet. 1:2.) And he asserts that all of God's dealings and arrangements correspond with that purpose, and cooperate for its accomplishment. God's predestination was, (1) that he would have a class of beings of the divine nature; (2) that each one of that class must have a fixed character, like that of his ever-faithful, Beloved Son. To get such a class, the Apostle reasons and declares, God must call or invite some (just as we see he is doing), because "no man taketh this honor to himself." (Heb. 5:4.) But whom would God call or invite? None were worthy; all had gone out of the way; none were righteous, no not one. Hence it was necessary that God provide for the justification of those he would call. But

he could justify only such as believed in Jesus; and how could they believe on him of whom they had not heard, and without a preacher sent of God? (Rom. 10:14.) Hence it was necessary that these be honored with the Gospel message in this age, in advance of its general revealing to every creature during the Millennial age.--Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:6; 1 Cor. 15:1.

True, many more were called than will be acceptable --many more than will acquire the likeness of the Beloved Son; and many were justified who did not,

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after believing, consecrate themselves, and whose justification consequently lapsed; and many were honored with a hearing of the Gospel who, after hearing a little of it, rejected the message of mercy and favor. But all the preaching, justifying and calling of this Gospel age has been to the intent that the foreknown class of the predestinated character might be selected and made joint-heirs with Christ.--See also 2 Tim. 1:8-10.

"What shall we [who have been so highly favored by God, and for whose successful running of the race every necessary arrangement and provision has been made] say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" And in view of this let each say,--"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows [fulfil my covenant of consecration] unto the Lord, now, in the presence of all his people." (This will mean, as in our Lord's case, faithfulness dying daily, 1 Cor. 15:31--even unto death, but)--"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his holy ones." --Psa. 116:12-15.

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THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE.

--1 KINGS 8:1-11,62,63.--DECEMBER 13.--

Golden Text: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord."--Psa. 122:1.

VERY INTERESTING is the story of the great Temple of God purposed and largely prepared for by King David and built by King Solomon the wise. It was commenced in the fifth year of Solomon's reign and finished in the twelfth. The story of its cost seems fabulous, the gold and silver employed in its construction being estimated at from \$1,000,000,000 to \$2,500,000,000. We are inclined to think the smaller estimate nearer

to the truth, or that the ancient standard of values, a talent, possibly, experienced a change of values, as for instance was the case in the English pound sterling, which originally meant a pound of silver in value but subsequently a quarter of a pound of silver, and to-day, by reason of the change of standard from silver to gold, it has a still different meaning not at all connected with silver. Similarly the Jewish talent may have experienced changes of value in the long centuries of its use. However, regardless of the aggregated value of the gold, silver, brass, precious stones, constituting the Temple, we have every reason to conclude that it was a wonderful structure for its day--one of which King Solomon in all his glory and wisdom, and the people of Israel with him, had good reason to rejoice and not feel ashamed.

The context shows that King Hiram of Phoenicia not only contributed largely to the Temple as a friendly gift, but also supplied skilled workmen under Solomon's pay, who in various ways assisted in the preparation of the brazen columns for the porch, utensils for the court, etc. etc. Thirty thousand Israelites were drafted to serve in the Temple construction one month out of each quarter. Besides these there would appear to have been 150,000 laborers, apparently foreigners, hired from outside (1 Kings 5:13-16; 9:21,22), or they may have been aliens residing in the land of Palestine--Canaanites. The overseers would appear to have been 550 chiefs and 3,300 subordinates, of whom 250 were Israelites, and 3,600 Canaanites. (2 Chron. 2:17; 8:10.) This preponderance of the Canaanites amongst the overseers seems to imply that the laborers were Canaanites, and also reminds us that "the Canaanite was still in the land." The fact that the Canaanites, strangers from the Commonwealth of Israel, were the chief laborers in the construction of the great Temple, seems to have been typical of the fact that aliens, strangers, foreigners, and enemies of the Truth have the larger share in the work of preparing the antitypical Temple. Their hammering, their chiseling, their melting and casting, under divine providence, serve to make ready the living stones and the glorious pillars for the spiritual house. Verily they know not what they do. Their work is greater, better, than they comprehend, as the glories of eternity will demonstrate.

The lesson opens with the Temple's construction finished, and the chiefs of Israel gathered with King Solomon at Jerusalem for its dedication, at the time we call October, corresponding to the Jewish New Year feast, held in connection with the great day of atonement. The Atonement Day was probably past, the sacrifices of atonement having been made in the Tabernacle and the blessing of

the Lord, as usual, dispensed upon the people for the new year. While they were thus legally cleansed, reconciled to God typically, was the most appropriate time for the dedication of the Temple, which represented the spiritual hopes and aims of the nation.

The Ark, representing typically the divine covenant with Abraham, the fulfilment of which centered in the Christ, must be transferred from the Tabernacle to the Temple, that thus the latter might supersede the former as the meeting place between God and his covenant people. The thousands of sacrifices offered during the procession of the King and priests and the celebrities of the nation, besides evidencing their devotion to God and their willingness to sacrifice, had a typical significance as representing the consecration even unto death of the whole company thus engaged in transferring the emblem of their faith and hope. In some respects, therefore, the King and the chiefs of the nation represented typically our Lord Jesus and the overcomers, and the chief priests and under priests represented the same from another standpoint. The

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procession was the meeting place between the sacrificing emblems of the present age and the typical representation of the kingdom glories and honors of the next age. The Lord's people to-day seem to be following this type. The Great King, antitypical of Solomon, has about finished the Temple construction and has sent forth the invitation of the heads, the chiefs of spiritual Israel, to attend and share in the great dedication. These chiefs are not the great of this world, but the Lord's very elect. From the four quarters of the spiritual heavens they are gathering, the procession has already commenced; but as the Temple was not complete until the Ark, its most important part, was placed in position, so the glorious Temple will not really be finished until every member of the body of Christ has been changed from the Tabernacle condition to the Temple or permanent condition in the first resurrection.

The declaration that there was nothing in the Ark save the tables of stone on which was inscribed the Law, seems at first to be in conflict with the Apostle's statement in Heb. 9:4, where he mentions also the golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. We are to remember, however, that this description related to the Tabernacle and not to the Temple. The golden bowl of manna which did not corrupt was a type of illustration of the immortality or incorruptibility which the Lord has provided for the Royal Priesthood, and the budded rod was a

reminder that the blessing and fruitfulness and privilege of service belong to the antitypical Levite, but as types both of these will end in the present dispensation. They met with the Tabernacle conditions; they will not be needed in the future conditions of glory, honor, and immortality represented by the Temple, because there the glorious things typified by these will have been fully entered into by the overcomers of the Church. But the law will still be an integral part of the divine covenant. As the Apostle explains the fulfilling of the law is love, and love never faileth. It will always be the divine requirement and essential to participation in any of the blessings connected with the divine favor represented in the Ark of the covenant.

While the priests proceeded with their work of placing the Ark, the Levites, "arrayed in white linen, having psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the [brazen] altar, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets. It came to pass that the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voices with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord saying, 'For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever,' that then the house [Temple] was filled with the cloud"--the peculiar pillar of cloud which symbolized the Lord's presence through the wilderness journey, and subsequently in connection with the Tabernacle, and now in the Temple, for the first time rested upon it. This, which outwardly had the appearance of a cloud in the sanctuary on the mercy seat, represented an extreme brightness--so great that the priests could no longer remain in the Holy.

But meantime the King explained to the people the significance of the Temple, that it was the house of God and built under divine direction, given to himself and to his father David. Then standing near the altar of the court, spreading forth his hands toward heaven, he prayed a most beautiful prayer, and one which we recognize as prophetically directed, and as teaching us the purpose and object of the great antitypical Temple constructed by the antitypical Solomon. The literal Temple was to be the place toward which all the Israelites should look as God's dwelling place, the center of his power, authority, forgiveness and blessing and help in every time of need. So in due time, when the spiritual Temple shall have been constructed and dedicated and filled with divine power, it will be the center toward which all who would approach God shall look for help and assistance and blessing and forgiveness, toward which they shall make their prayers, and in which they shall realize the manifestation

of divine power and blessing on their behalf.

After Solomon's dedicatory prayer was finished, the Lord openly manifested his favor toward the King and all the people by accepting their sacrifices with fire from heaven, as we read: "When Solomon had made an end of praying the fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of Jehovah filled the house [the Temple]....And when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down and the glory of the Lord was upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, 'for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever'"--probably joining with the Levites in singing Psalm 136.

It is noteworthy that the Levites and the people did not sing of divine wrath never ending, but of divine mercy forever. This, however, according to the strict significance of the Hebrew word, does not mean "without an end," but "to an end",--that is to say, that divine mercy shall be exercised to its completeness, to its fulfillment, until every creature shall have been brought to a knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and to an opportunity of knowing him and of benefiting by the great promise made to Abraham and symbolized in the Ark of the covenant, through which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Similarly in the last book of the Bible we read of the song of Moses and the Lamb, sung by the antitypical priests, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways thou King of saints. Who shall not reverence thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy: for all peoples shall come and worship before thee, because thy judgments [righteous dealings] are made manifest." (Rev. 15:3,4.) This is the song which none but

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the overcomers can truly appreciate and sing at the present time, but by and by--when the glory of the Lord shall have filled the Temple--the peoples, the multitudes, shall learn that song, shall learn of the divine mercy, and as a prophecy it shall be fulfilled and all peoples shall bow to the Lord to confess his goodness and his love and to enjoy at the hands of the antitypical Solomon (the Christ), as prophet, priest and king of the new dispensation, the opportunity of full reconciliation to God and full return to the perfect conditions of mind and of body, and to life everlasting, lost by Adam's disobedience, and brought back by the great Redeemer for as many as will receive it upon God's terms.

Naturally and properly our chief interest centers

in the antitypical Temple, the antitypical Solomon, the antitypical priests and antitypical people. There is a sense in which every member of the New Creation may be said to be individually a temple of the holy Spirit now, a sense in which every individual should build up his own faith and character from the divine promises and by compliance with the divine requirements, but this is not the larger antitypical view of the Temple. In its antitypical sense Solomon's Temple certainly represented the glorified Christ, head and body, built up of living stones, as the Apostle Peter explains. Under the supervision of the anointed the work of gathering the various stones for the Temple has been in progress throughout the Gospel age. As not any and every stone was taken for Solomon's Temple, but only those of specific dimensions and peculiar pattern, in accordance with the plan, so it is with the antitypical, the living, stones. Only a certain class are approached at all, and only those which being cut out are first roughly quarried out and found suitable in character and dimensions are tooled at all, and only those which under the tool yield proper results and become conformed to the intended pattern will ultimately find their place in the glorious Temple which our Lord as the great master-builder is constructing. As before intimated, this accounts for the fact that various agents, even Satan himself, may be used of the Lord as servants for the chiseling and polishing and fitting and preparing of these living stones for their future glorious position. Viewed in this light what a satisfaction may come from the trials and difficulties which all the Lord's people are sure to experience, and without some of which they would be justified in fearing that they are not sons but bastards. (Heb. 12:8.) Only those who have some such insight into the divine program can ever reach that position to which the Apostle Paul attained, who claimed that he could also rejoice in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope, which will not be put to shame, but which will be rewarded eventually in the glorious joint-heirship in the kingdom promised by our Lord to his faithful.

To our understanding of the teaching of Scripture, the fact that the materials for Solomon's Temple were prepared before its construction began, and were so perfectly fitted that no iron tool needed to be used in the construction, indicates that the antitype, this Gospel age, has seen the preparation of the various living stones, which when ready were marked of the Lord to their positions in the Temple, and fell asleep in Jesus until the time for the first resurrection, the time for the construction of the Temple. To our understanding we are now living

in that time and have been in it since 1878. The living stones of the past have been brought together and the Temple is merely waiting for the few living stones which are still under process of trial and disciplining, chiseling and polishing. The resurrection

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"change" coming to each of these in turn places him with the fellow-members of the grand Temple of the Lord. The picture of the bringing of the Ark would seem to be another illustration of the same lesson--the bringing of the members of the body of Christ from the Tabernacle or earthly condition to the heavenly or Temple condition. Soon the Ark will be in place, and priests and Levites and people are generally learning to sing of the Lord's mighty love and that his mercy endureth to completeness--to the full limit to which mercy could be of service, benefit or advantage, to the completion, when every ear shall have heard, every eye shall have seen and every heart shall have shown appreciation, shall have come to a knowledge of the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Let us, as day after day rolls by, remember our threefold relationship then to this Temple: (1) We are still in process of preparation as living stones. (2) As members of the Royal Priesthood carrying the Ark we are marching from the Tabernacle into the Temple condition; some of our number have already entered in and some are still on the way. (3) As the Lord's people the time has come for us to know, to sing with the spirit and understanding, the new song of divine mercy, justice, love and truth. Let us be faithful in each of these respects, fulfilling our parts, and ere long our course will be ended and the glory of the Lord will fill the Temple. It will be after this that the people will take up the refrain,--for his mercy endureth forever--to completeness.

Our Golden Text is in line with the foregoing. Those who hear the invitation to become members of the house of God, the house of sons, the antitypical Temple, and who receive the invitation into good and honest hearts, are indeed made glad, "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound." We couple with this a similar expression by the same poet prophet, who declares, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Not in earthly houses, not in earthly temples, do we hope to dwell forever; but those who become members, living stones in the spiritual house, the heavenly Temple now under construction, will indeed dwell in the house of the Lord forever. For them to go out would mean the destruction of the house, for of it they will be members in particular; as the Lord declares they will be pillars in the house of the Lord,

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and the ministers of his grace and truth to all the people. This text will be true also of the world during the Millennial age. All mankind will then be invited to approach the Lord in worship, to approach the spiritual Temple, the Christ, and through the Christ to approach the Father; and all who shall hear that message and who shall obey it will be glad indeed, even as the message brought by the angels at the birth of Jesus intimated that eventually the tidings of great joy shall be unto all people.

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A GREATER THAN SOLOMON.

--1 KINGS 10:1-10.--DECEMBER 20.--

Golden Text: "When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice."--Prov. 29:2.

BY THE TIME Solomon had reached his fortieth year, under the blessing of wisdom which he craved of the Lord, he had made the kingdom of Israel famous throughout the then civilized world. His kingdom connected with Egypt on the south, with the desert on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the north and west, except that small portion known as Phoenicia, whose king, Hiram, had made a league with Solomon and assisted him greatly in the materials and workmen for the temple. Solomon's ships and those of Hiram were known to all the nations of that time as far east as Judea and as far northwest as Britain. The account of the wealth which flowed to him is astounding. His table dishes were made of gold, a thousand shields for his mighty men were of gold, and other things in proportion were magnificent in the largest degree. The brilliancy of his mind found expression not only in financial channels, but his army was equipped on a scale of equal magnificence. Fourteen hundred chariots were imported, and thousands of horses for these and for a cavalry detachment for his army. Literary matters were not neglected; he wrote many sonnets and spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his fame in respect to these matters had extended to all parts of the world.

Our lesson deals specially with the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon's court. She herself declares that she had heard of his fame and had come to see him with her own eyes, and that notwithstanding her great expectations she found that

not one-half of his greatness had been told her. The distance she came is estimated at 1,500 miles, and as the means for traveling was by camels, and their average speed twenty miles per day, it is estimated that the journey to Jerusalem and back to her home consumed five months; besides whatever time she spent at Solomon's court. Unquestionably it would be much less inconvenient to-day to journey around the earth than it was for the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon.

Tradition tells us that the Queen sent her ambassadors with a letter to King Solomon before she went herself. With them she sent 500 youths dressed as maidens, with instructions that they were to behave accordingly in the presence of Solomon. She sent also a thousand costly rugs inwrought with gold and silver, and a crown composed of finest pearls and gold hyacinths; also camel-loads of musk, amber, aloes and other precious products of South Arabia. She added a closed casket containing an unperforated pearl, a diamond intricately pierced and a crystal goblet. A letter accompanied these gifts as follows: "As a true prophet thou wilt no doubt be able to distinguish the youths from the maidens and divine the contents of the enclosed casket, to pierce the pearl and thread the diamond and to fill the goblet with water that has not dropped from the clouds nor gushed forth from the earth."

The legend declares that when this embassy reached Jerusalem King Solomon told the bearers the contents of the letter before they presented it, and made light of their mighty problems. He caused the thousand slaves to wash their hands and faces and from the manner in which they applied the water detected their sex. He directed a fiery young horse to be ridden through the camp at the top of speed, and on its return caused its copious perspiration to be collected in a goblet. The pearl he pierced by some process known to him. The threading of the diamond with its crooked perforation puzzled him for a moment, but at length he inserted a small worm, which wound its way through, leaving a silken thread behind it. He dismissed the ambassadors without receiving their presents. When the emissaries reached the Queen of Sheba, their reports of these matters determined her to visit King Solomon in person. The account of her visit and her astonishment are recorded in this lesson.

We are not informed as to the character of her questions, many of which quite probably were in the nature of conundrums, after the custom of that time. Everything connected with this story, however, assures us that Solomon was truly a wonderful man, that his mental powers were great and active. Nothing illustrates this better than the useful

and expensive water works and arrangements which he provided for the capital city. So far as is known these were the first of the kind in the world and very much resembled the superior arrangements of our day. The fact that, although constructed 2,500 years ago, they have recently been partially put into operation again, indicates clearly the solidity of their construction. Truly we see that the Lord's promise to the King was abundantly fulfilled, that he was wiser and richer than all others of his day and subsequently. The Queen was attracted specially by the sumptuous and methodical arrangements of the King's palace, his provision for the ministers of the realm, their uniform, etc., and the grand stairway which led up to the Temple. The expression "There was no more spirit in her," corresponds very

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closely to an expression of our day--it took her breath away.

Our Lord indicated what otherwise would not have been quite apparent--namely, that Solomon's wisdom and glory, prosperity and peace, were typical; that the antitype of the Solomon is the Christ. Our Lord spoke as never man spoke, the people marveled at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth, and his fame during the three and one-half years of his ministry spread abroad;--yet so far from being recognized by his own people he was crucified as an enemy of their nation and an enemy of God. Referring to the matter he says, "The Queen of Sheba shall rise up in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater than Solomon is here."--Matt. 12:42.

By these words the Lord indicated his approval of the desire for wisdom evinced by the Queen. Indeed this is the spirit of the Scriptures--growth in knowledge, grace and love, knowledge being essential to the development of character. Here we have set before us a lesson which our Lord taught in the words, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"--blessed are they who hunger and thirst for wisdom, for knowledge, for understanding of the good and true, knowing that they shall be blessed of the Lord and shall find that which they seek. The Lord's words were a reproof for his own nation and indicated that they were careless, indifferent respecting the Truth. It is still more important for us of to-day to notice that the same spirit of

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indifference prevails in nominal spiritual Israel. As the slightest suggestion of the heavenly wisdom manifested in our Lord's words and deeds should have kindled enthusiasm and zeal in nominal Israel, which would have hungered and thirsted for the Truth and by seeking would have found the Truth, so likewise to-day what confidence we have respecting the Lord and his character and plan should awaken every spiritual Israelite and lead him to seek the great fountain of wisdom.

And as at the first advent the "Israelites indeed" were attracted to the Lord and learned of him, so in spiritual Israel those who are Israelites indeed are attracted to the Lord and are taught of him to-day; but as the Israelites at the Lord's first advent were few in number as compared with the professing nation, so the Spiritual Israelites of to-day are few in number compared to the millions of nominal Christendom. But as it was not until after Solomon had built the great Temple of God at Jerusalem that his fame was spread abroad and his greatness manifested, so with the antitype Christ; not until he, the antitypical Solomon, has erected the great Temple of God, which is the Church--not until it shall have been filled with the divine glory as the New Creation--not until the new Jerusalem shall shine resplendently with the riches of divine grace and the brilliancy of the Lord's polished jewels, will the fame of Emmanuel reach to the uttermost parts of the earth. Then, as the Scriptures declare, "Many peoples shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Israel; he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."-- Isa. 2:2,3.

All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. The whole world shall have its eyes opened to behold the riches of divine grace and wisdom embodied in Christ, head and body, reigning in the New Jerusalem for the blessing and uplifting of the entire race of Adam--whosoever wills. The knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the face of the great deep, and there shall be no need to say every man to his neighbor and every man to his brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least even unto the greatest. (Isa. 11:9; Jer. 31:34.) The wisdom of the great King, the antitype of Solomon, will be exercised on behalf of not merely the one nation of Israel but on behalf of all those who shall come into covenant relationship with the heavenly Father, typified by this people which entered into a covenant with the Lord, and which because of that covenant was the object of his mercy and care. In Revelation a little glimpse of the New Jerusalem

is given and of the greater than Solomon who will be the light of it, and we are told that the nations shall walk in the light of it and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it.--Rev. 21:22,24.

The Queen's astonishment at what she found, and her declaration that the half had not been told her, reminds us of the Scriptural declaration respecting the greater than Solomon and the wonderful kingdom glories in reservation for his faithful. We read: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath in reservation for them that love him." Now we know in part and see as through an obscure glass, but then we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known, and be like our Lord and share his glories.--1 Cor. 2:9; 13:12.

The Queen's exulting remarks at the conclusion of her visit were, "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighteth in thee to set thee on the throne of Israel; because the Lord loved Israel forever, therefore made he thee King to do judgment and justice."

The greater than Solomon, in harmony with the divine arrangement, has prepared to have his faithful servants of the present time with him to share his glory and his Kingdom, and the blessings of that time will be specially theirs. Happy those men who will be in his presence, who will see him as he is and be like him, and be the recipients of his favors. O blessed thought! O words with heavenly wisdom fraught!

And although the blessings of the Millennial

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kingdom will come first and chiefly to the Church of this Gospel age, which will be associated with the Lord in the kingdom glory and sit at meat with him and participate in his honors and be blessed by his presence and wisdom, yet indeed a great blessing will remain for the world. As the Queen expressed it of the typical King, that God's blessing upon Israel was manifested in choosing him for King, so God's blessing to the world of mankind will be manifested in the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, which is to bless all the families of the earth and to grant them an opportunity of coming back to covenant relationship with God, and thus eventually, if they will be obedient to his judgments and justice, back to all that was lost in Adam, with superadded favors and mercies.

By faith some of us have heard of the Lord's fame in advance of the establishment of his Kingdom; by faith some of us have come from afar and

offered him our treasures, laying our all at his feet; by faith these have been accepted of him, and instead he has given us exceeding great and precious promises and hopes far outweighing and outvaluing the little all that we gave to him.

Although Solomon's wisdom and greatness and riches and honor as the king typified the greatness of the Christ in the Millennial kingdom, his subsequent manifestation of weakness, causing the decay of his greatness, is not to be esteemed as typical, for of the antitype it is declared that of the greatness of his kingdom there shall be no end. Nor is this type alone in this particular. Similarly David was a type in some particulars; so was Moses a type in some particulars and not in others; so was Adam a figure of him who was to come, yet not a figure in his transgression and condemnation. Our Golden Text can only have a partial application to any kingdom of man during "this present evil world," of which Satan has attempted control as the prince thereof. Owing to the inherent weakness of our race even its best specimens are far from absolute righteousness, and consequently no government of the present time, no government under imperfect men, can fulfill the predictions of our Golden Text. This is implied throughout the entire Scripture, in which the Lord promises that he will establish his kingdom amongst men, and that under Emmanuel's government all the families of the earth shall be blessed. It is for this reason that the Lord's people still pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as in heaven;" it is for this reason that the Apostle declares that the "whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now"--waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

The sons of God, the little flock with their Head the Lord Jesus, will by and by constitute the righteous who will be in authority, in power, in governmental control of the world by divine arrangement, based upon the great atonement sacrifice. Of that time and of that great ruler, head and body, it is written, "In his day shall the righteous flourish." In his day Satan shall be bound a thousand years to deceive people no more, and all the influences of righteousness and truth shall be let loose, that the world may be flooded with the light and knowledge of the glory of God. Under those blessed conditions whosoever will may take of the water of life freely and live forever.

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DEAR MR. RUSSELL:--

I received Millennial Dawn from a dear sister who is a Colporteur, and I have received so much light and am just rejoicing in the Lord so much that I feel constrained to write and thank you. Thanks cannot express my gratitude to you. Oh, the joy I have got in the Lord! I realize how highly favored of the Lord I am that I am counted worthy to share in his sufferings and to follow in his footsteps. It is going eight years since I became the Lord's, but I never got any farther than justification until I got the Dawn and "Shadows," and the Lord has brought me rapidly into the light. I felt I must write you, for I know it is right you should enjoy the fruit of your labor. If you knew how much darkness I have been in during the past years as a Christian you would know much better how I feel toward you. You are a spiritual father to me. From you, under God, I have got my greatest blessing.

I am, your sister in Christ,
MAGGIE OLIVER,--Scotland.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

It was my privilege to have an interesting conversation with an Adventist preacher a few months ago. The brother referred to, being at our home on business, I handed him several "Old Theology Tracts." The next day he called again, and the conversation which took place was in substance as follows:

He said to me: "My dear brother, I have come to your house this afternoon to try, if possible, to rid you of the terrible errors which the tracts you gave me yesterday support."

I replied that I certainly appreciated the brotherly intention, but assured the visitor that his attempt would be fruitless.

"Well," said he, "you will at least talk with me upon the subject."

"Certainly," I replied; "but since I have been in the Truth but a few months, and since I am your junior by many years, and not wishing to seem disrespectful, I ask one 'handicap.'"

On being asked what it was, I told him that I preferred him, instead of attacking my views, to question me concerning them and allow me to give a reason for the hope within me. He readily acquiesced, stipulating that all views must have a "Thus saith the Lord."

He then asked me concerning our erroneous (?)

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idea of future probation. I read Acts 3:20; Jno. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:5,6; 4:10; Heb. 2:9; etc., and he tried to refute these testimonies by argument and a feeble attempt at quoting Scripture. Then taking his own standpoint I quoted Isa. 65:17-20, and asked him how sinners (according to his belief) could be in the new heavens and earth.

"My dear brother," he replied, "when you reach the 20th verse you should know that God goes away back in his dates hundreds of years."

I replied, "There is one thing sadly lacking in your argument--namely, your stipulated 'Thus saith the Lord.'"

After a painful pause, he said, "I simply cannot quote Scripture today, and my ideas do not seem as clear as usual. I hoped to convince you of your

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error, but I see you are too well established in it to be moved."

(Oh, how I thanked our heavenly Father for the encouragement thus brought to my heart!)

I asked him if he had ever read the Divine Plan of the Ages. He replied that he had done so, and that its author crossed the Bible, human reason and common sense, besides crossing his own arguments.

"If that is so," I replied, "I want to know it. Here is the book. Please show me his first error."

He nervously turned the pages of the book and said, "I don't seem to see any place now." I urged him to hunt, or, if he was very busy, to take the book home, and when he found such a place to show it me. After a few more spasmodic attempts he turned to me with a distressed look and said he was not familiar enough with the work to really find such places. After begging his pardon if anything in my manner was not becoming to my youth, I urged him to either become sufficiently acquainted with the book to warrant such assertions, or else be very cautious about bringing such accusations. He left me very soon, and despite the fact that he insisted to our neighbors that I was possessed of the devil, I rejoiced in the privilege of thus serving our Master. I truly realized that the brother's defeat was not occasioned by his inferiority as a student, for I am sure that he was recognized, and doubtless justly too, as a Bible scholar; and I realized then my own insufficiency, but perceived that God allowed the Truth to triumph, to encourage me at that time. This fills my heart with joy, and I can indeed say with the Apostle, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

Yours in him,

W. H. B.--Rhode Island.

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MY DEAR PASTOR:--

The great wave of spiritual power and joy which it was our privilege to experience during your visit here last spring will long remain in our memories. The blessing of the Lord attending all the proceedings was manifest, and much beyond the little faith mingled with fears as to the result. Truly the Lord is good, and we have felt his goodness, and the hearts of all the dear saints here are verily overflowing with gladness since hearing the joyful tidings proclaimed, and the Truth so lovingly and charitably presented to their minds.

We are very hopeful of good results. Certainly many are less prejudiced after hearing for themselves the unadulterated Word of Life.

Oh, for the word of God, so pure,
Sweet and refreshing to the mind;
A constant draught from heavenly springs
Within the Scriptures we can find.

Free from adulterating creeds
The soul true progress then can make;
When strengthened by the Word of Truth,
Man's faith in God no foe can shake.

The lessons I was permitted to learn during your stay,--"beholding your order and steadfastness in Christ"--I trust will greatly instruct me to be more qualified for the responsible position as leader of such an honorable cause in the service of him "Whose I am and whom I (desire to ever) serve."

The present commences a new epoch in our Christian history, which, by the Lord's help, will chronicle a larger sphere of influence, a more faithful declaration of the Present Truth, deeper spirituality of life, and fitness for the high honor of being joint heirs in the great future assigned for the faithful. It is the earnest desire of all our hearts, particularly that of my dear wife and self, that you may ever realize the needed supply of the holy Spirit to use you in "confirming the churches," and to be spared in furnishing the Lord's Table (through the Watch Tower and the remaining volumes of Dawn) that his people may continue being nourished "with the finest of the Wheat." With kind remembrances,

Yours in the Redeemer's service,
JAMES HAY,--England.

MY DEAR SIR AND BROTHER:

I do not wish to burden you with much writing, but I know how you must be interested in the human family or you would not devote so much time and labor for their good. I only wish that I could devote my time in the same way.

I meet with a great many traveling salesmen in my business, and it has been my pleasure to get some of them interested in God's Word and its real value to us. One of them was an infidel, or, if not altogether one, he was at least an unbeliever of the Word of God--and by insisting on a promise from him to read the 'Plan of the Ages' if I would loan it to him, I succeeded in getting him to read; and now he is much interested in it, and, using his own words to illustrate his feeling, "It makes me glad to the ground."

Another traveling man has become very much interested and has already distributed quite a number of tracts which I gave him.

Yours very truly,
J. D. HENDERSON,--Iowa.

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SEMI-MONTHLY.
VOL. XXIV. DECEMBER 15, 1903. No. 24

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

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS AND REMITTANCES

--ADDRESS TO--

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

--OR TO--

BRITISH BRANCH--24 EVERS HOLT ST., LONDON, N.W.

GERMAN BRANCH--MIRKER STR., 45, ELBERFELD.

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

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

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

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VOL. VI. NOT A SPECIAL TOWER ISSUE.

Owing to the postal ruling which deprived us of the
privilege of mailing paper-bound DAWNS at second-class
rates, as special issues of the WATCH TOWER, we cannot
send Vol. VI. to our WATCH TOWER subscribers in the
same manner as formerly. There will be no paper bound
edition issued, and all subscribers who want the sixth volume
should remit at the rate of 30c per copy for cloth-bound
books. This price covers postage.

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VOL. V. IN GERMAN.

This translation is in good stock, and orders will have
prompt attention.

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MOTTOES IN GERMAN.

We can fill orders for German mottoes. A packet of
three large and two small mottoes of pretty design will be
sent for \$1.00, postpaid.

"WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT HELL?"

We can supply this effective booklet in the Swedish language at 10c per copy, \$1.00 per doz., postpaid.

The English and German booklets still remain at the price of 50c per doz., postpaid.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

HUMILITY AT A DISCOUNT WITH CLERGY.

THE louder a man boasts of himself and the more domineering over others he becomes the more will he be revered. This is true in all religious circles to-day amongst the "clergy." It was so, too, in St. Paul's day. He pointed it out to the Corinthians, saying, in substance: The more a religious teacher brow-beats you and the more he exacts from you of money and reverence, the more you will esteem him. (2 Cor. 11:20.) This still seems to be the trend of unbalanced human nature. It is exemplified in every church organization except the true one, where alone meekness, gentleness and patience are recognized as the proper adornments of Christ's representatives.

As an extreme example note the following proclamation of John Alex. Dowie to his deluded followers, clipped from his own publication:

"The time has come when the world shall no longer make money out of Zion investments, for Zion can now invest more profitably in Zion industries, through Zion's own Financial Institutions. Therefore I say to you, are you loyal to Zion when you are backing up worldly institutions outside when Zion needs your resources and your strength and can use these to God's glory, and to your increased prosperity? I say to you, and I say to Zion everywhere, that you will have to recognize fully the tremendous fact that I was within my rights and only fulfilling my Divinely imposed and positive duty when I issued the Command of September 21st. After due time given for the prayerful consideration of that Command, every man or woman throughout the world who says, 'I will not obey,' is asked to send in his or her resignation. If you will not obey, then I will know that you are outside of Zion. My responsibility as your leader, under God, will cease; for you will have found another leader, or be a 'wandering star'!...I do not want you in Zion. You are a curse to Zion and the quicker you get out the better off Zion will be."

HEBREW, INFIDEL, PREACHER.

Felix Adler, rabbi and D.D., has been discoursing on prayer to New Yorkers. He said,--

"Prayer also gives vent to that instinct in the human heart to worship God. But here, too, in regard to worship, I cannot sympathize with the kind of worship of which we do so much nowadays--characterized by the posture in praying --by kneeling. When a congregation falls on its knees I recoil. I find it repugnant to my whole nature.

"Prayer is said to have the effect of putting before us a divine model. But the idea of God, when it rises in the mind, fills it with a kind of nebulous light, but doesn't present the clear outlines of a model.

"I think men are really better and abler examples for behavior and serve us better as models than deity--such men, for instance, as Socrates, Brutus and Lincoln. They furnish definite models, not a vague notion of perfection; they do us good. Let us have moral heroes, human exemplars."

* * *

Mark how vain Evolutionists speedily become. Pluming themselves on their humility in acknowledging protoplasm, jellyfish and monkeys as their progenitors, they pride themselves on having attained so high a dignity that it causes a shudder to see others bow to him whom they acknowledge as their Creator.

As for Mr. Adler's preference for a human rather than a divine model, let us remember that he rejects the human model provided by Jehovah--"the man Christ Jesus." Let us remember, too, that the horrible "doctrines of devils" promulgated by Satan (through Heathen, Jewish and Christian "Doctors of Divinity") so misrepresent the plan and character of God as to make any half-decent man a "model" of justice in comparison.

Thank God that Satan is soon to be "bound," that he may deceive the nations (peoples) no more. Then Felix Adler's eyes and all the other blind eyes shall be opened, and they shall see the glorious character of the great Creator. Then Felix Adler and all others will bow the knee: as it is written, "Unto me every knee shall bow." If he bow willingly and adoringly he may then go up the "highway of holiness" to everlasting life under the guidance of the wonderful teachers of the Millennium. If he refuse to bow his heart he, with all such, will "perish" in the Second Death.

REV. DR. DIX WARNS THE GREEDY RICH.

In the pulpit of the richest church in America

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Dr. Dix preached a Thanksgiving Day discourse of which the following is an extract:

"The account between God and man is still open, our debt to Him still unpaid. True, there is ample material whereof to bring a thank offering to Almighty God.

"Peace is within our borders. The horrible nightmare of the past winter induced by the coal strike no longer makes heads sick and hearts faint. The spirit of anarchy has done no more murder in high places. The state is secure from foreign assaults and domestic disaffection. For these and countless other instances of the Divine favor and goodness we do give thanks."

Then the eloquent preacher drew the other side of the picture and surprised his hearers with these words:

"Still, shadows fall, and under them we add intercession to thanksgiving. What casts some of those shadows? Class alienation. The insolence of wealth and the angry discontent of the poor, the growth of riotous living, the misuse of money and its reckless squandering on pleasure and pride; education without religion; the steady breaking up of homes by divorce and remarriage; the appearance of vast systems of religious imposture and their success in making converts; the spirit of gambling in every place where it can be practiced.

"Others are the cold-blooded assaults on private property by those who attack corporations and drag them down to bankruptcy in order to enrich themselves; the insecurity of life through contempt of the law, and the freedom of assassins, whether sane or insane, to wreck their will upon their innocent victims; the steady decline of womanhood from its old ideals and its deterioration through copying the ways and invading the sphere of men. These are some of the things that cast a shadow on the years. No one sees how they are to be stopped, and no one who thinks it over from a Christian standpoint can doubt that if they are not stopped the harvest will be frightful beyond telling."

HIGHER CRITICS CONTRADICT EACH OTHER.

Rev. Sheraton of Wycliffe College, Canada, recently, defending the Pentateuch, said:

"One good reason for rejecting the radical theory of the higher critics is that their criticisms have been nothing less than a series of speculations since their inception, each one contradicting all those that preceded it. Originally the crude objection was made that Moses could not have written the Pentateuch, because of the illiterate character of the age in which he lived. Discoveries in Bible lands, however, make it abundantly plain that there was a regular mania for writing and recording in ancient Egypt; and that tablets

were erected and correspondence took place in

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Canaan before the Exodus. Moreover, recent research makes it evident that such an accurate knowledge was had by the sacred writer of the geography, arts, social and religious customs of Egypt, that no one but an eye-witness could have so described the conditions. No one living at a remote age could have drawn upon his imagination for the facts.

"It was objected at a later date, in 1866, that the body of laws in the middle books were placed there after the Babylonian exile; and this was a portion that the critics had hitherto declared to be the oldest. No unanimity was shown on their part. Objection was also made to the diversity of style appearing in Deuteronomy and by a process of vivisection thirty-six verses in that book were actually attributed to 32 authors. Almost all great literary works have been attacked in the same way, and in just as plausible a manner. Homer's authorship of the Iliad and Caesar's production of Commentaries were disputed for years because of the diversity of style. Sir Walter Besant, who finished a novel commenced by a dead friend, said no one had ever pointed out the place where he took up the work. The critics were captious and magnified differences, as the result of their restless analyses was fruitless, tedious and repulsive.--Toronto News."

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WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY.

--ANNUAL REPORT.--DEC. 1ST, 1902, TO DEC. 1ST, 1903.--

"ONWARD, Christian Soldiers," seems to be our Great Captain's command to our Society--in its every department. When recording the year's results each December we have been amazed at "what God hath wrought," so great results from so imperfect instrumentalities. We are continually reminded of the feeding of the five thousand on five barley loaves and two small fishes, and the twelve baskets full of fragments left over. Each yearly report we have feared would be our best; not seeing how the following year could be a favorable. And just so is this year's report: Excellent, splendid, better than we could have surmised. The Lord be praised! We do not see how 1904 can equal or surpass 1903, but past experiences lead us to expect greater and still greater blessings from the great Chief Reaper in his service.

One of the encouraging features of the work is, that

the newly interested seem to grasp the Truth quickly, thoroughly, and with a self-consuming zeal which stimulates afresh those who have been longer in the way. As an instance we mention a young woman of less than twenty years who, during the Eaton-Russell Debates in October, fully consecrated her life to the Lord, set about a systematic study of the Dawn volumes, and so on, resolutely sacrificing the comforts of an elegant home, became a Colporteur, and began to carry the water of life to others fainting by the way. She realized herself to be an "eleventh hour" laborer, and besought the Lord for privileges and blessing in the vineyard. The language of her heart was expressed in the words of the hymn:

"The hour is come to do and dare,
To win a heavenly prize."

Did she succeed, you ask? Surely; where faith and zeal go hand in hand to the Lord for service he rarely if ever rejects them; guidance, direction, alone was needed,

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and we were privileged to supply it. As a result that sister is circulating from fourteen to forty volumes of Millennial Dawn daily--delivering from 200 to 600 sermons daily, reckoning each chapter a sermon.

Some seem to get a worldly view of this matter of Colportering, and think of it as unworthy the time and service of the well-to-do and educated;--well enough for those who have no other business or trade, or who have no capital wherewith to engage in "something better." The contrary view is the proper one, namely, that this in God's esteem is one of the most honorable services rendered in his name to the household of faith. As the "Pilgrim" brethren do the service of Elders, so the "Colporteurs" and "Volunteers" are doing the service of Deacons and Deaconesses. And the more education, refinement and natural ability are brought to the service, the greater number of talents invested, the greater are the possibilities of grand results to the glory of our King and the assistance of his "brethren." Those who feel that their talents are too many or too valuable to be used in the Lord's service, but not too valuable to be used in law or medicine or merchandising or other money-winning employment, do not properly value the privilege of laboring in the Vineyard --do not rightly value the great rewards promised to those who forsake all to have the privilege of Kingdom service and self-denial now, and of Kingdom glory by and by.

True, many long for such service, but are so handicapped by earthly obligations that they cannot do as they would--cannot engage in colportering--should not so engage. We doubt not that with these the Lord, who knoweth the heart, reckons to their credit all the self-sacrifices of this sort they would be glad to make if the conditions favored. But such will be active along some other lines of service for the Truth and the Brethren. Faithfulness

in all possible ways will doubtless bring them eventually new doors of opportunity.

While increase of interest is to be noted all along the line, we accord first place to the Colporteur branch of the service. The figures given in the summary following will no doubt astonish all of our readers, the total sales of Dawns being nearly three times last year's total. These were nearly all in cloth binding, too, whereas last year the majority were in paper covers. The cloth binding is much better appreciated, better cared for and displayed; and thus does more good.

We have one hundred and forty-three Colporteurs at work now, with many additions promised as soon as they can arrange their affairs. They are a noble band, laboring not for the meat that perisheth merely, but specially for the present and the prospective joys of the Lord.

Many of the great men in history, who won fame and renown as statesmen, soldiers, authors and scientists, or gained a world-wide reputation in commercial life, laid the foundation of their greatness, perhaps gained that knowledge of men and human nature which is such a factor in great minds, by acting as canvassing agents. Napoleon Bonaparte, when a poor lieutenant, took the agency for a work entitled "L'Histoire de la Revolution." In the foyer of the great Palace of the Louvre can be seen to-day the Emperor's canvassing outfit, with the long list of subscribers he secured. George Washington, when young, canvassed around Alexandria, Va., and sold over two hundred copies of a work entitled "Bydell's American Savage." Mark Twain was a book agent. Longfellow sold books by subscription. Jay Gould, when starting in life, was a canvasser. Daniel Webster paid his second term's tuition at Dartmouth by handling "De Tocqueville's America," in Merrimac County, New Hampshire. Gen. U. S. Grant canvassed for Irving's "Columbus." James G. Blaine began life as a canvasser for a "Life of Henry Clay." Bismarck, when at Heidelberg, spent a vacation in canvassing for one of Blumenbach's handbooks. None of these, however, labored thus for the King of kings. None of these carried to their fellow creatures so precious a gospel. None of these invited saints in the name of the Lord to prepare for a share in the throne with their Redeemer, or sought thus by faithfulness to make their own calling and election sure by attesting their loving devotion to the Lord and his cause, to the sacrifice of some earthly privileges;--esteemed in comparison as but "loss and dross."

ZION'S WATCH TOWER CIRCULATION INCREASING.

While the work has increased greatly during the past year and the Watch Tower's regular issues are now over 20,000, this, although very gratifying, seems less important to us, as we believe it is less important in the Lord's esteem than the evident increase in deep spirituality witnessed in so many ways--by the letters we receive, by the

energy displayed, etc. We remark, by the way, that we continually receive evidences that there are thousands of interested Dawn readers who are not on the Tower list. Surely this ought not to be so. We should be in constant touch with all who are of like precious faith. Generally the reason given is scarcity of money. We know not how to tell these dear brethren and sisters that they are as welcome to the Watch Tower as to the air they breathe; but they must request it, even as they must inhale the air. Those who do not like to ask for it as "the Lord's poor," may, if they prefer, ask it on credit year after year, and if never able to send the money they may at any time so inform us and have the debt cancelled. What can we say more than this? We merely add that we are inconvenienced by those whose renewals (whatever their kind) come to the office before January 1st each year.

We are expecting great things for the next few years in the spread of the Truth. We expect that the regular issues of the Watch Tower will be 40,000 copies (representing 80,000 readers) before 1908. We want the cooperation of all of the Lord's people to this end. As the editor can do a part in this not open to others, so others can do a part which is not open to the editor. Let us continue to co-labor, hoping by and by unitedly to hear the Chief Reaper say, "Well done! good, faithful servants. Enter into the joys of your Lord."

THE VOLUNTEER WORK.

If space permitted we would enjoy giving details respecting this great work--explaining the practical methods adopted, by which in some large cities practically every house was visited--especially in Boston, Washington, Pittsburg and Allegheny, and their suburbs, for ten miles or more in every direction. Over three millions of tracts were thus used; besides the ordinary circulation of about two millions of other assorted tracts. Great as this work is, and far beyond all other tract distribution in the world, it can be more than doubled next year, if the

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friends in all other cities can arouse the same zeal displayed by some of those mentioned. For instance, at Washington practically the entire church, of about sixty engaged in the work. The trouble there was that with so many hands this much enjoyed service was too quickly accomplished. We are preparing "ammunition" for next year, and hope to be ready to supply orders in April. Let all prepare carefully and prayerfully for the opportunities of 1904. Remember that much depends on the selection of earnest-hearted and wise-headed captains and lieutenants, as well as on the zeal of the Church. Surely those who know no better way to use their time or to render service to the Truth, should be careful how they disregard this grand opportunity. The tracts are provided free;

and the more of respectability, education and good address anyone can put into the service, the greater is likely to be the favorable impression to read and consider these messages from our King to nominal "Christendom" to select the "wheat" class.

THE TOWER-DAWN A SUCCESS.

The special issue of Dawn I. in Watch Tower form has been well received. Its price (5c per copy, including postage) is so cheap that it permits many to send it to their friends. One brother has sent about 300 to his friends and is still sending us large lists. A fund has been provided, by means of which this edition may be sent to every English-speaking minister and missionary in the world. We already have the lists, and about 50,000 have been sent out.

The cheapness of this edition and also of the handsome cloth-bound edition makes unnecessary the old paper-bound edition, which will be discontinued soon as present stock is exhausted.

OUR CORRESPONDENCE BIBLE SCHOOL.

Letters come to us from all parts of the world making inquiries on the lines of Bible study and for assistance in applying the teachings of the Word to the affairs of daily life;--as well as business correspondence. We take pleasure in replying to these as lengthily as the questions seem to demand--frequently referring the inquirers to the more convenient and elaborate treatises of Dawn and the Watch Tower. We rejoice in such opportunities for service, and trust that any of the Lord's children who so desire will freely appeal to us for willing assistance along these lines.

Letters and cards received from Dec. 1, 1902, to
Dec. 1, 1903.....41,079
Letters and cards sent out from Dec. 1, 1902, to
Dec. 1, 1903.....37,810

THE PILGRIM SERVICE INCREASED.

The Lord's guidance in regard to the "Pilgrim" service is continually in evidence; not only in the words of appreciation coming constantly from those who have been blessed, but also in the evidences showing an increasing zeal and spirituality in their wake. This is not merely the result of the excellent discourses delivered by the "Pilgrims," but also, and, in large part, a result of the exercise of energy necessary to the making of the arrangements for the "Pilgrim" and for the meetings. The activity and comminglings incident to the preparations, bring a blessing, according to the divine promise that he who assists in watering others gets watered also himself.

Elsewhere we ask for brief postal card answers to

questions useful to us in connection with this service, from those desiring visits during the year 1904. Please respond promptly.

During the past year 25 persons took part in this "Pilgrim" work; 2,647 parlor meetings and 1,702 public meetings were held;--total 4,349. The distance traversed in connection with these services (the editor's trip to Europe included) was 154,214 miles. The expense was \$7,956--a very modest amount for so extensive services. The One Day and Annual Conventions are also reckoned in account; but not the convention expenses, which are borne by the inviting churches.

CONVENTIONS OF THE YEAR.

These we have reason to believe were appreciated and profitable. The One Day Conventions are chiefly for the benefit of those "brethren" yet in Babylon, who are hungering for and seeking Present Truth; the General Conventions are chiefly for those already fairly established in it. Both are proving so helpful that we consider it the Lord's will that they be continued, as per regular announcements.

THE SOCIETY'S FOREIGN MISSIONS.

"Darkness covers the earth [civilized] and gross darkness the heathen." Our Society is making no effort to reach those in grossest darkness, believing that to be the work designed of the Lord for the Millennium. We have more than enough to do in dispelling the darkness prevalent in Christendom. For these are our labors and prayers, as were those of the Apostles.--Eph. 1:13.

The British Branch is well established, though by no means self-sustaining yet. A splendid work is in progress everywhere in Great Britain, and it is extending and broadening and deepening. Evidently, the Lord has "much people" in those islands. (Acts 18:10.) The editor was much refreshed by the manifestations of love and zeal everywhere encountered during his brief Pilgrim trip thither last Spring. Indeed, we know that all Watch Tower readers shared this through our reports, as was abundantly testified by your letters to us subsequently. A separate report of the British Branch is subjoined.

Work is commenced at Copenhagen and Stockholm for the benefit of our Scandinavian brethren;--to put into their hands the Present Truth and to co-operate with those who have already been blessed with the opening of the eyes of their understanding. We hope to have more to report in the way of works a year from now.

The German Branch has opened under fairly prosperous conditions, yet not what we had hoped for. The oneness of the "body" and of the "harvest" work does not seem to be sufficiently appreciated by the German brethren. It is proposed, however, to continue the mission during 1904, giving the field a fair trial and looking to the

Lord for guidance as to whether or not there are more favorable fields for the use of consecrated time and money. Meantime Brother Koetitz has succeeded Brother Henninges as the Society's representative at Elberfeld, and the latter has passed to a new field, as below.

The work in French and Italian now centered at Yverdon, Switzerland, is being given a push, and promises well for the time. We are spending considerable money for free reading matter to be scattered all over Germany,

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Switzerland, France and Italy, as the Lord may stir up the hearts of his people to co-operate in the "harvest" work. We will do some witnessing. The Lord will use the Truth to gather the "wheat" and permit Satan to sift it clean. Experience seems to teach that the principal crop of ripe "wheat" will be gathered in Great Britain and America, where freedom has more or less prepared the way for the Truth amongst all nationalities. We must "harvest" while it is called day and where the wheat principally is.

THE AUSTRALIAN MISSION.

Little has yet been accomplished in Australia, yet everything we are able to learn about it seems to imply that it should be ripe for the sickle of Truth. Its population is chiefly British and we believe intelligent and liberal-minded. Its claims appealed to us as being in line with the leadings of the Lord, and accordingly Brother Henninges has been dispatched thither to open a Melbourne Branch or Mission.

Brother Henninges has had a large experience in Allegheny, and later in London, and is, we believe, every way competent to push the work there. He will doubtless make it a success if the conditions are as favorable as we hope--if the Lord has "much people" there. Although this is in the nature of an experiment, we have already shipped nearly eight tons of literature there--chiefly Dawns--so great is our confidence.

We bespeak for all the dear "Yoke-fellows" (Phil. 4:3) in foreign fields, as well as in the home Pilgrim service and in the Colporteur service afar and near, the prayers and co-operation of all who recognize the one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one harvest work, and who see that the time for co-operation is short. Yea, as we see how few there are loyal to the Truth, and how many are their opponents, "within and without," let it draw us the closer to all whom the Lord has counted worthy to receive the Truth and worthy to permit to remain in its light. Let us pray for one another and in every way assist one another to "stand" and to "fight a good fight." Love of the brethren is classed in Scripture as one of the evidences of the new life--with what propriety each who has this love can judge.

Our continued prayers ascend daily, for all the dear co-laborers and for all the Lord's true sheep--known to us as well as unknown. Brethren, pray for us. Under the Lord's providence our position in this "harvest" work specially draws the fire of the great enemy and his blind and misdirected servants. It is a comfort to us to know of your Christian love and prayers in behalf of the editor and his faithful co-laborers. And amongst these do not forget the 32 loyal office helpers at Allegheny.

THE FINANCIAL END.

With the opening of wider ranges of labor and influence the Lord sent an increase of the necessary means;-- our money receipts for the past year will surprise you.

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This is another evidence that the Lord's hand is guiding the "harvest" work;--grace sufficient to endure added trials; and money sufficient for the increased expenses, and that without either direct or indirect appeals for money. The Truth stirred the willing-hearted to do what they could, and the Lord gave the increase. We dare scarcely hope for as large opportunities or as ample means for next year, but we leave all in the Lord's hand and will seek to do with our might according to the opportunities and means the Lord will supply. All who have participated in the results summarized below, either through active service of the Truth or by money contributions in its aid, or both (and this includes almost every Watch Tower subscriber), may well join us in giving thanks to the Lord for the showing.

It will be noticed that while the work more than doubled the expenses did not double. We believe it to be a part of our stewardship to see that not one dollar of these consecrated funds is wasted. The dear co-laborers join heartily in this spirit. None here receives wages--merely expenses--and all rejoice to keep these at the lowest notch, and each feels that he cannot do too much for our King and his "brethren." We are entirely safe in saying that no such work was ever before done, nor at so relatively small a cost. But then neither was such a gospel ever before proclaimed. "What manner of persons ought we to be?"

SUMMARY OF THE YEAR.

Receipts.

Surplus on hand Dec. 1, 1903.....	\$ 3,938.11
From Good Hopes and all other sources.....	39,526.08

Total.....	\$43,464.19

Expenditures.

For "Pilgrim" expenses.....\$ 7,956.65
 For publishing matter circulated free,--
 tracts, etc..... 21,678.02
 For expenses, postage, etc., on same..... 5,026.49
 For loss on Dawns incidental to rise in cost and
 our desire to keep retail price low and give
 Colporteurs every opportunity..... 2,014.71
 For Foreign Mission accounts, on which there
 may be partial returns later on..... 5,694.21

 \$42,370.08
 Surplus remaining.....\$ 1,094.11

SUMMARY OF LITERATURE CIRCULATED FREE.

Old Theology Tracts sent out, 5,487,700, representing
 81,211,600 tract pages,--various languages.
 Sample copies of Zion's Watch Tower, 198,590.

BOOKS AND BOOKLETS SOLD AT COST OR LESS.

Millennial Dawns, all volumes and languages.....210,961
 Sundry booklets..... 63,057

MISCELLANEOUS.

Letters and cards received..... 41,079
 Letters and cards sent out..... 37,810
 "Pilgrims," regular and special, 25. Visits, 1,411;
 Public meetings, 1,702; Parlor meetings, 2,647; Miles
 traveled, 154,214.

* * *

Praising God for past mercies, let us begin the service
 of the New Year with a renewal of our consecration
 vows; and with the thought that we are a year nearer to
 the glorious "change" and "well done" for which we hope.
 "Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed."

REPORT OF BRITISH BRANCH.

We give below Brother Hemery's Letter and Report.
 We all rejoice that the British Branch prospers, and hope

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that in another year there will be something to report respecting
 the "harvest" work in the lands afar.

Lest there should be some misunderstanding, we note
 the fact that the Financial Report takes no account of
 the cost of the tons of tracts sent from Allegheny, but
 merely of its circulation. We propose having the reports

next year include cost of paper, printing, etc.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

We are gratified in being able to send a report showing increase in the various branches of the work. The sale of Dawns has advanced upon last year's figures by 3,000, while that of the lesser booklets also shows an increase. But notable progress is shown in the account of tract circulation--we have sent out 1,033,000 free tracts and Towers. Of this number 700,000 represent the Volunteer matter; the new method of distribution lending itself to more extended opportunities of service than the previous one did. But while much has been done, much more remains. The increases plainly indicate further possibilities, telling us that "The fields are white unto the harvest." We pray the "Lord of the Harvest that he will send more laborers into His vineyard."

We believe your visit to us in the Springtime has, in the Lord's providence, done much to give a general impetus to the work in this part of the field. The brethren were stimulated to further assurance and zeal, and many new friends were made. Indeed, in view of the possibilities in these countries, it would appear that your early return is desirable. You will be glad to know that the work prospers in Ireland: the friends in Dublin especially were enthused by your visit there, and have, since then, sold a good many Dawns. The change of the British depot to its present address--brought about in harmony with your thought that this locality would be more desirable --already promises much advantage.

It has been our pleasure to have a Pilgrim visit from Brother Henniges this fall. He reports that the meetings have been well attended, and the usual good interest maintained. We are sorry to have to say "good-bye" to him and Sr. Henniges, though we are glad the work in Australia is to be helped forward by them. We are grateful to the Lord for all His favors to us--for the privilege of knowing His Truth, and for that of serving each other. We thank Him for all that He has done, and are hopeful concerning that which remains. Continue to pray for us here, as we do for you, that His purposes may be worked out in us and that we may all be good "laborers" in the vineyard.

Your fellow-servant, in the Lord,
J. HEMERY.

EXPENDITURES.

	L.	s.	d.
Deficit from last year.....	542	18	8
Postage, Rent, Labor, Gas and sundry expenses.....	105	1	5
"Pilgrim" work expenses.....	86	4	9

	734	4	10
Tract fund receipts from Great Britain.....	411	2	0
Deficit.....	323	2	10

Dawns sold, chiefly by colporteurs.....	20,590
Booklets sold, chiefly by colporteurs.....	3,851
Tracts circulated free, chiefly by "Volunteer" method.....	1,033,700
These represented in pages.....	18,368,600
Letters and cards received.....	4,649
Letters and cards sent out.....	9,842

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CHRISTMAS REVIEW

--READING LESSON, PSALM 103.--DECEMBER 27.--

THE lessons of the last quarter, dealing with Saul, David and Solomon, are fresh in our memories. Saul's great but wasted opportunities have impressed us with the thought that we also have great opportunities, and need to be on guard lest these should be wasted. Saul's opportunities were of an earthly kind, in connection with an earthly kingdom; ours relate to the everlasting glorious Kingdom. His mistake was in failure to give his heart entirely to the Lord. Instead of doing this he sought to serve the Lord but to maintain a will of his own. Seeing how great was his mistake impresses upon us the importance of making our consecration full, complete, and then seeing to it that, by the Lord's assistance, we faithfully carry out the provisions of that consecration.

In David, Saul's successor, we have a man after God's own heart--not in respect to all the affairs of his life, but in respect to his heart, his intentions, his holiness of will, of purpose. Seeing what God appreciated in David helps us to understand the better what he appreciates in all those who would please him. Not that we could hope to please God of ourselves,--but having accepted his grace in our hearts, having come under the robe of the Redeemer's imputed righteousness, and having realized ourselves accepted in the Beloved, then it must be the desire of our hearts to attain as nearly as possible to the divine standard in thought, word and deed. By so doing we are making our calling and election sure, for the Lord seeks only those to be his servants who worship him in spirit and in truth. He accepts us under Christ's merit because we have declared that we desire to be like Christ and to fulfil the Father's will. Our acceptance is with the view of giving us an opportunity to demonstrate the truthfulness of our assertions--to fulfil the covenant of self-sacrifice in obedience to the principles of righteousness. Failures surely will from time to time mark our very best endeavors, but so surely as we are of the David class, the beloved of the Lord, so surely our failures will cause us regret and pain, and lead us to the Lord to

entreat his forgiveness in the name and merit of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

David's warfare with the enemies of the Lord, and with the enemies of the Kingdom and Law which the

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Lord had established in Israel, were continued through David's career, and these very properly represent the warfare which all the Lord's beloved ones must endure faithfully if they would abide in his favor. Loyalty to the principles of the divine government is of prime importance; the royal banner must be lifted high; our lives must be risked and be given in defence of the divine character and teachings if we would be counted worthy of the Kingdom of glory, if we would belong to the house of David, the beloved, which the Lord has promised shall be established forever--the house of Christ, the house of sons.

We review Solomon's peaceful reign and note how its opening years were typical of the blessings of the noontide of the Millennial Kingdom. The glories and wisdom and wealth of Solomon were but trifles in comparison to the wisdom, honor and riches which God has promised to those who love him. Respecting the faithful overcomers, we remember it is declared that they shall know even as they are known by God, that they shall share the glory, honor and immortality of their glorious Head and Master.

We remember, too, the typical temple, and its construction from materials previously prepared during the Levitic reign, and how this prefigured our preparation as living stones for the glorious temple of the future, in which God shall make his presence known to all the families of the earth for their blessing and uplifting, and for the joy of all those who shall respond to the blessed influences of the Millennial Kingdom. The thought of the preparation of these stones causes us much comfort and joy respecting the trials and difficulties of this present time, as we realize that they are working out for us and in us preparation for the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which will be ours if we are faithful when we shall be brought together in glory as the spiritual temple of the Lord.

This review is perhaps as appropriate a lesson for the closing Sunday of the year as any, especially when we remember that all of these glories and blessings and privileges are ours because of the great redemptive work accomplished by him whose entrance upon the work is celebrated by Christmas day. Although we cannot agree that this is the proper day for celebrating the birth of our dear Redeemer, but must insist that it was about October first, nevertheless since he did not intimate his desire that we should celebrate his birthday it is quite immaterial upon what day that event, of so great importance to all, is celebrated. Upon this day, so generally

celebrated, we may properly enough join with all whose hearts are in the attitude of love and appreciation toward God and toward the Savior.

The habit of giving little remembrances one to another at this time of year seems to us specially appropriate. God is the great giver of every good and perfect gift. He is continually giving and we are continually receiving from him; but amongst all his gifts the one of greatest importance to us is the gift of his Son to be our Redeemer. While, therefore, thanking the Lord for this great gift and for the great plan which centered in it, it is appropriate that we cultivate in our hearts the spirit of liberality, generosity, and that we allow this spirit to exercise itself to some extent--according to our conditions and circumstances--toward those with whom we have contact, especially to the members of our own households. We recommend that every little gift on this occasion should, so far as possible, represent or be accompanied by some little remembrancer of the great gift--something to draw the mind of the recipient to the fact that the great gift of God in Christ is and should be in the minds of all who give or who receive the trifling exchanges of the season.

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THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS.

--LUKE 2:40-52.--JANUARY 3.--

FOR the first six months of the new year the International Lessons turn again to the New Testament, beginning appropriately enough with the childhood of Jesus.

The more we think of it the more marvellous it seems that the Gospel narratives record so many of the particulars of our dear Redeemer's ministry--miracles, teachings, etc.--yet never once descend to the discussion of commonplace events, nor of our Lord's sayings or doings other than those directly connected with his ministry. This is one of the strongest internal evidences that these books were written under divine supervision. Our experience with the writings of men in all ages assures us that it would be almost impossible for four men to write biographies of one person, such as these four Gospels are, without entering into social features and events. Our Lord's mother is barely mentioned, and this only where her life touched particularly with that of Jesus. Her husband, Joseph, was probably dead at the time our Lord's ministry began, yet no mention is made of this fact either.

Respecting our Lord's life, previous to his consecration at thirty years of age, we know scarcely anything. The four Gospels merely bring to our attention

his miraculous birth, Herod's jealous fury, and the escape of the child before the massacre of the innocents, followed by the little incident of our lesson, which occurred in his twelfth year, and the declaration that he increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. How brief the record, yet how suggestive!

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It would have been no part of the Gospel to have explained the details of his life as a boy, as a young man, etc. It might, indeed, have satisfied the curiosity of some to have told us whether he was a farmer or a fisherman or a carpenter, matters about which people seem inclined to dispute. Undoubtedly the Lord's way in this matter was the better one. Our minds are more drawn to the important features of the Lord's work by reason of the brevity of the sketch given us of his earthly life and interests.

The important thing for us to know is simply stated, namely, that he was the beginning of the creation of God--the first born of every creature; that in his preexistent condition he had glory with the Father before the world was, and was the Father's instrument in the creation of angels, principalities and powers and men, everything that was made. (John 1.) The necessary particulars are also given us respecting the transference of this great spirit being to earthly human conditions--that he might become man and redeem man, the world; that he might be born under the Law and thus redeem those who were under the Law, the Jews. Let us then thank God heartily for the simplicity of the narrative, and for the fact that no item necessary to our comfort and peace and joy has been omitted therefrom, and that no needless items pertaining merely to earthly things have been permitted to intrude themselves and thus to dim in any measure the glorious record of the great love wherewith the Father loved us and the great redemption effected thereby.

Coming more particularly to the appointed lesson: We see that the boy Jesus, although miraculously begotten, not of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but by the holy Spirit, was permitted to grow after the ordinary manner, gradually getting stronger physically and mentally, being filled more and more with wisdom, and giving evidence that God's favor was upon him. Quite probably Joseph, his foster father, was a carpenter, and if so the boy Jesus unquestionably, like other boys, would have more or less association in the carpenter shop, its tools, etc. It has been wondered by some that our Lord never referred to carpenter tools or work in any of his teachings or parables, and this has been urged as an objection to the thought that he was reared in contact with such work and tools. It matters not, so far as we can see. Our Lord addressed,

not classes, but the masses; and quite probably the majority of the people at the time knew little about the carpenter's trade, tools, etc., even less than in our day. Hence it was not necessary or appropriate that our Lord should use as figures and parables that which would not be common to the experiences of all or nearly all of his hearers.

In verse 41 Joseph is evidently referred to as one of his parents. This is not in conflict, however, with the previous statements of the same writer, to the effect that Jesus was begotten, not by Joseph, but by the holy Spirit. (Luke 1:30-35.) We would consider it proper enough today that any child should speak of his foster-father or stepfather as father without explaining the particulars of the relationship, and likewise it would be proper for the friends to speak of both father and mother as the parents of the child, as in this verse under consideration and previous verses.--Vs. 27.

The narrative passes over the twelve years of Jesus' earthly life to tell of the incident of his tarrying behind after having been with his parents at the Passover Feast. The religious Jews from all parts of the country went to Jerusalem upon these feast occasions according to the directions of the Law, and naturally enough close relatives traveled in each other's company considerably. Thus it was that in the large concourse returning from Jerusalem after the feast a whole day elapsed before the boy Jesus was missed by those who properly had guardianship over him. Although admonished by the angel Gabriel that Jesus would in due time be greatly honored of God, and that he was born differently from others of the human family, nevertheless neither Mary nor Joseph seemed to have caught any considerable view of the greatness of the one whom they called their son Jesus. The prophecies spoken respecting him, like all the prophecies of olden times, were more or less vague, and could not be comprehended except by the aid of the holy Spirit, which had not yet been given. His mother Mary, however, we are told, kept all these things pondering in her heart, wondering what would be the consummation-- little dreaming, we may be sure, how great her son must ultimately be made, according to the divine arrangement.

The story of the boy of twelve amongst the Doctors of the Law, discussing the various types of the Law and what these probably signified, and what would be expected to be their antitypes, furnish us a very interesting picture, especially when we remember that the one who was asking the questions was the one who ultimately would give correct answers to those questions in his own experiences. We are not to assume that this precocious boy of twelve was unduly bold or forward; we are not to presume that he undertook to teach the Doctors of the Law. He was not yet anointed to preach, and was therefore not yet qualified.

The narrative is that he was found hearing the doctors and asking them questions, and not attempting to teach them. There is a good suggestion here--especially for such as are not permitted to teach, by reason of sex or insufficient years--namely, that even a child

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can ask questions, and in asking the questions may suggest wonderful and powerful answers.

We may reasonably assume that Jesus had previously, after the manner of the Jewish boys, attended the synagogue worship at his home, and that hearing there the Law and the prophets, the Scriptures of the Old Testament, read Sabbath after Sabbath, and having a perfect memory and an active mind, because not blemished by sin and the fall, the various questions of the Law and the various declarations of the prophets would greatly interest him--especially as he realized that he had left the Father and had come into the world to do a redemptive work.

The Doctors of the Law doubtless remarked that they had never had such pointed questions asked them respecting the Law and the prophets, even by wise men of their day and by each other; hence they evidently noticed the precocity of this boy. As he asked questions which apparently showed that some of their interpretations were faulty and inconsistent, they in turn considered it not beneath themselves to ply the boy with questions. Doubtless they thought that after his questions had confounded them their questions would likewise confound the boy, but, according to verse 47, so far from confounding him they got their questions answered in such a manner as amazed them. Nevertheless we are to remember that our Lord Jesus could not have himself understood the full meaning of the Law shadows and the prophecies at that time--nor until after his anointing with the holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:14.) This little item gives us a suggestion respecting the ability of mind that would belong to a perfect boy. It gives us a suggestion respecting what we may expect of the ancient worthies when they shall be resurrected to human perfection, and the same suggestion also of what we may expect of the perfection of the Church in the glorious condition promised in the First Resurrection.

It was natural enough that after missing the boy for four days his mother should upbraid him somewhat, and, taking Jesus' answer in its simplicity, we must suppose that he had been so absorbed with the opportunities and studies that the time had passed without his appreciating the trouble and inconvenience he was causing to others.

"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" must have seemed strange enough even from so remarkable a boy. His parents did not fully

comprehend the meaning of the words, but Mary set these apart with the other peculiar things to treasure up, hoping ultimately to see something that would fully justify the words, as she did afterwards see. After making this protest respecting his desire to be engaged in the heavenly Father's mission, studying his Word and teachings, and realizing that his sentiments were not understood or appreciated, and that really he was still properly under subjection to his parents, Jesus said no more, but went quietly with them to Nazareth and doubtless to his accustomed vocation.

Our Lord could not begin his ministry because he was under the Law and bound by its every restriction. We note, however, his promptness to engage in his heavenly Father's business at the very earliest moment, as we read, "Now when Jesus began to be about thirty years of age he came to Jordan to be baptized." We who are not under the restraints of the Law Covenant but, on the contrary, are under grace, are not thus limited as to the time we may present our bodies living sacrifices upon the Lord's altar to be used in his service; hence we rejoice the more if we can find that at an early date we can give our hearts and our all to him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood.

It was not the babe of Bethlehem that was to bless the world, nor the boy of Nazareth, nor the young man of Capernaum, but it was to be a full-grown man, a mature one, whose sacrifice would offset the sin of Adam, redeem him and his posterity and satisfy the demands of divine justice against the condemned race. So, then, while interested in everything pertaining to the divine character and plan, while interested to know how Jesus grew in stature and in wisdom as he approached the maturity of manhood at thirty years, while interested to know about his miraculous birth, our chief interest in all of these things is that they established our faith in him as the man Christ Jesus-- that he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and therefore able to make the atonement sacrifice--to give his own life a ransom, a corresponding price for the life of Adam, and thus for the life of the whole race of Adam, in his loins at the time of his transgression and thus sharers with him in his condemnation.

We do well, therefore, to dwell less upon the birth and infancy of Jesus and more and more to grasp the precious themes set before us in the Gospel, of which the cross is the great point or center of interest. Similarly we regard all the followers of the Lord--not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. True, we are glad to know of some that even before their consecration and baptism of the Spirit were noble minded, virtuous and irreproachable, and we have a measure of regret when we hear of some who had

a contrary disposition to this; nevertheless our interest centers around the fact that they did turn from sin, did become the Lord's followers and that they have been begotten of his holy Spirit. In this we rejoice.

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Thus we know each other according to the Spirit as New Creatures in the Lord, and thus we know our Lord as the New Creature, as the Apostle suggests, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, henceforth know we him so no more." Our special interest centers in our Lord from the moment of his anointing of the Spirit until he completed the work there begun three and one-half years later on the cross, crying, "It is finished." Our interest still holds beyond that point in the resurrection of our Lord from the dead, and the evidence thus given us that the begetting of the Spirit at his baptism became the birth of the Spirit at his resurrection, and that he was thus the first born from the dead, born of the Spirit to spirit conditions. Then our hope is to follow in his steps, and thus realize the promise that if we suffer with him we shall also be glorified together and share his Kingdom and his nature in glory.

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REQUESTS FOR PILGRIM VISITS, 1904.

THE following information is very important in connection with arrangements for "Pilgrim" services. There is no charge for these services, nor for the traveling expenses; nor are collections ever to be taken up. We expect that all friends of the Truth will be glad to entertain the "Pilgrims," during their brief stays, with "such things as ye have;" but where circumstances do not permit this, the "Pilgrims" are prepared to pay their way. If you desire to be remembered by us when we lay out the routes for these "Pilgrims," please answer the following questions--on a postal card or on separate paper from your letter. You need not repeat the questions, but merely number the answers, thus: No. 1--Yes (or No). No. 2--Twice a week--Sunday and Wednesday (or whatever may be the truth). No. 9--Sunday at 3 p.m. at Bible House, 610 Arch Street; Wednesday 8 p.m., same place (or whatever may be the facts of your case). And thus with each question.

If you cannot answer all the questions reply to as many as possible. Neglect to send in such requests will be understood to mean that the "Pilgrim" visits of 1903 were not appreciated, and that you think it undesirable to have them continued so far as possible

in 1904. Requests of 1903 hold good until Jan. 31, '04. "Pilgrim" routes are laid out sometimes several months ahead and cannot well be altered; hence the necessity for our having full information and in time.

ANSWER AS MANY AS POSSIBLE OF THESE QUERIES.

- (1) Are regular meetings now held in your vicinity?
- (2) How frequently?
- (3) What is the present average attendance?
- (4) Is request for Pilgrim visits the publicly expressed wish of those who usually attend meetings?
- (5) Will suitable places be secured for parlor meetings?
- (6) Can suitable room for a public meeting be secured?
- (7) At what date are leaders or elders chosen?
- (8) Give full name and address of regularly elected elders,--that arrangements for Pilgrim visits may be committed to them.
- (9) Give addresses of meeting-places and hours.
- (10) To whom should the Pilgrim be referred for entertainment?
- (11) If no regularly chosen elders, give at least one address in full, beside your own.
- (12) Give your own name and address in full (state if colored) and any other information likely to be useful.
- (13) If not on the railroad give name of proper station and your distance from it, and the direction. State also if a conveyance would meet the Pilgrim at station and return him to it.

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"JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE PROMISED ELIJAH."

--MATT. 3:1-12.--JANUARY 10.--

Golden Text:--"Repent ye: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

IN the first three verses of our lesson are summarized the mission and work of John, our Lord's cousin, respecting whom the Master said, "Verily I say unto you, there hath not arisen a greater prophet than John the Baptist: and yet I say unto you that the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he." John's mission was to announce that Kingdom, but it was not his privilege to become a member of it. He was the friend of the Bridegroom, as he expressed it. He heard his voice communing with the prospective betrothed, and he rejoiced as his friend, but not as a member of the betrothed class--the bride, the church of this spirit dispensation, the least one of whom enjoys a higher privilege and station than did this noble prophet: because even hereunto

were they called and he called not.

John from his birth was specially prepared to be a servant of the Lord in the capacity he filled, and on reaching the age of maturity he, being fully consecrated, at once began the service. He was six months older than our Lord, and hence began his ministry that much sooner. Abstaining from earthly comforts, he subsisted on the plainest of food, and was attired merely with a camel's hair girdle about his loins. His entire time and attention were thus left free for the mission before him.

We do not advocate that all the Lord's people follow the example of John the Baptist in respect to their food and raiment, but we do believe that a good lesson of simplicity, consecration and zeal may be drawn from his course. We do believe that our Lord's faithful followers might copy John's example to the extent of avoiding the

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extremes of social custom, not only in their clothing but also in their food. We advocate "things decent" and "things honest," as the Apostle expresses the matter--a simplicity of diet and wardrobe. Those who have consecrated their time and energy and influence to the Lord, and to the service of the Truth, will do well for their spiritual interests to be on guard against the fashions and follies of this world in these matters; and whether they eat or drink, or whatsoever they do or wear, that all may be done to the glory of the Lord--with a view to their own greatest usefulness in the divine service and in the service of the household of faith.

John's mission was heaven-directed, and exactly at the right time to introduce the Lord Jesus to the Jewish nation, which had been waiting for him for centuries to fulfil in and through their nation the promise made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Under divine guidance the affairs of Israel were, outwardly at least, more prosperous than they had been for centuries, and they were as a nation hoping that this return of God's favor might culminate in the sending of the promised King for the exaltation of their nation, and through its establishment in power the blessing of Israelitish rule in the name of the Lord should be extended to all the families of the earth. We are told that amongst the Jews "all men were in expectation of the Messiah."--Luke 3:15.

No wonder then that so striking a figure as John the Baptist made an impression when he announced that God's Kingdom was soon to be established, and that he had been sent as an advance minister to proclaim it and to sanctify the hosts of Israel, that they might be prepared to be the hosts of the Messiah in the fulfillment of the long-expected promise to Abraham. By a new method those who accepted John's teaching were required to mark their reformation of life, namely, by an immersion of water, which symbolized their putting away of sin,

their return to full covenant relationship with God, already established through Moses, the mediator of the Law Covenant. All who did this with true sincerity of heart, and not merely an outward form, undoubtedly were Israelites indeed, of the very kind that the Lord would be pleased to accept and own and bless under the spirit dispensation soon to be inaugurated.

And thus we find that not only many of the disciples of Jesus were previously disciples of John, but also that many of those who received Jesus had previously received John. Nevertheless the majority of those baptized by John evidently had not been touched to the heart by his preaching, but merely nominally repented and instituted some slight reform.

The movement became a popular one, and drew to it many who loved publicity and notoriety, and who are always foremost in the promise of godliness but are without its power, therefore without the sincerity, without the heart interest. John recognized the hypocrisy of many of the leading Pharisees and Sadducees who came to his baptism, and by some prophetic power was enabled to read their hearts in a manner which would be improper for us to do. This prophetic insight not only permitted John to call these false ones a brood of vipers, but permitted him also to intimate to them the great day of wrath that was soon to come upon that nation; "wrath to the uttermost," as the Apostle Paul speaks of it (1 Thess. 2:16)--the wrath of God which entirely swallowed up the nation and left the land almost desolate, scattering the people amongst all the nations. John would not baptize these until they showed by outward conduct a change of life, a change of heart and not merely a changed profession. He realized that this class in particular was stumbling over the promise made to Abraham, because they were his natural children without having Abraham's faith. John inspiredly warned them to the contrary, that God was quite able to establish his Kingdom in due time and to ignore them entirely.

Verse 10 is a further part of his prophecy, declaring that fruitage was necessary on their part, and that any who did not bear the fruitage required would be cut off from divine favor and cast into the fiery trouble with which the Jewish age ended.

Prophetically John realized that his mission was merely a preparatory one, and that somehow--how he could not understand--the coming one would have the power to immerse the faithful in the holy Spirit, in holy power, and the unfaithful with a baptism of fire, of trouble. Again he likened the ministry of Christ to that nation as that of a reaper who, with a winnowing fan, would separate the true wheat from the chaff, gathering the wheat to the garner of the Gospel age at Pentecost and in due time thereafter permit the fires--confusion, anarchy and the Roman legions--to entirely consume the chaff of that people in an unquenchable fire, a trouble that would not be extinguished, that the Lord would not help

them out of, but that would utterly destroy their national polity.

ELIJAH THE ARCHETYPE.

Elijah the Tishbite, who in the days of King Ahab was used of the Lord to produce a reformation in Israel by which the priests of Baal and their power over the people were overthrown, was declared to be a type or likeness of a greater reformer who would precede Messiah to announce him and to make ready for his reign. Our lesson (verse 3) declares that John the Baptist was an antitype to Elijah. We see that he did do a work of reformation amongst the Lord's people at the first advent, the work of introducing the Messiah. Moreover, we remember that the disciples asked Jesus respecting this very prophecy saying, If you are the Messiah what answer should we give to the Jews who say that Elias (Greek for Elijah) must first come? Our Lord's answer was that Elias had already come (John the Baptist, the antitype of Elijah), and that the Jews knew him not, recognized him not, but had done to him whatsoever they pleased--imprisoning him and ultimately beheading him in prison. Our Lord further added "likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them." "Then the disciples understood that he spoke unto them of John the Baptist."--Matt. 17:10-13.

As it was a surprise to the disciples that John, the Lord's forerunner and the antitypical Elijah, should be put to death, so likewise it was a surprise to them that the Master himself, instead of reigning, should be crucified. It took them some little time to understand that the Lord's coming as Messiah had two phases--one in humiliation, a suffering ending in death and apparent defeat, the other to follow later in power and great glory, to reign, to uplift, to bless Israel and all nations, thus fulfilling on the richest possible scale all the precious promises through all the holy prophets since the world began. It was appropriate

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also that the Lord should explain that there should be a second coming of Elijah--an antitypical Elijah on a still higher plane, of as much larger proportions than John the Baptist as the second coming of Messiah will be grander and more glorious than his first coming.

John the Baptist himself understood that he was not fulfilling all the features of the antitypical Elijah--he evidently understood that there would be still a larger fulfilment by an archetype. This is evidenced from his own words when asked, Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. (John 1:21.) Our Lord's words explained the matter, showing that he was the antitypical Elijah in a certain measure, to a certain extent, to that the nation of Israel. Jesus said "This is Elias if ye will receive it." That is to say, to those who recognized his message and who obeyed

it and who became the Lord's disciples, to these John fulfilled the work of Elijah (Matt. 11:14.)* Likewise Jesus is already the Christ, the Messiah, the King, to those few who have ears to hear and hearts to receive the message--the household of faith, the Church; but as John was not the Elijah promised to the world in general, so Jesus was not yet come as the Messiah. This coming of Jesus to the world as the world's King, to take unto himself his great power and reign, is the grand event toward which all prophecy points, and before that event takes place the antitypical Elijah of still larger proportions than John the Baptist must bear a witness and message to the world.

As we have already pointed out, Christ, the Messiah of the divine plan, includes not only Jesus glorified, the Captain of our salvation, the High Priest of our profession, Head over the Royal Priesthood, the glorious Church, but it includes also the Church which is his body, the under priests, the faithful which shall sit with him in his throne, be like him and share his glory and his divine nature. And as the anointed Christ of glory is a composite one of many members under one glorious Head (Eph. 1:18), so the antitypical Elijah is a multitudinous one. Jesus in the flesh was the Head of this great Elijah, bearing witness to and preparing the way for the coming of the great Messiah and Deliverer in due time. The Church, the body of the Christ in the flesh all down through this Gospel age, has been the body of the antitypical Elijah bearing witness all down through these centuries to all the families of the earth that God is to set up a Kingdom, and urging preparation therefor, urging a repentance from sin and reformation toward God, and being used of God as the instrumentality for the anointing of the most holy ones. Soon this work of the Church, of announcing the Kingdom and calling upon men everywhere to repent and reform, will be at an end, and the Kingdom will be introduced with power and great glory. Soon the work of baptizing the anointed ones and witnessing to their relationship to God will be at an end. Soon this antitypical Elijah, like John, will be restrained from further proclamation--and ultimately be cut off. Soon thereafter the Kingdom will be revealed. The faithful overcomers, as the wheat gathered from the sowing of this Gospel message of the Kingdom, will be gathered into the Kingdom, glorified with their Lord and Head, and soon thereafter the Kingdom itself will be manifested--"revealed in flaming fire"--in judgments, in troubles, distress of nations, etc. Soon the Messiah, Head and body, in glory, will so overrule in the affairs of men, that the nations of earth shall be broken to shivers as potters' vessels; and soon thereafter, on the ruins of the present reign of sin and selfishness under Satan, who shall be fully brought to naught and bound for a thousand years, all the blessed influences of righteousness, justice, truth and love will be set at liberty amongst the people, that the whole world may be blessed according to the divine promise. --Gal. 3:16,29.

That the Church is the true antitype of Elijah is beyond question to those who have an understanding of the divine plan. As the Christ is composed of many members, and as the man of sin is a system of many members, so the antitypical Elijah is composed of many members. The three years and a half of no rain under the prophesying of Elijah the Tishbite are shown in Revelation to have their larger fulfillment in connection with the great Elijah archetype, the Church in the flesh. Those three and one-half years, a time, times and a half-time, or forty-two months or 1260 days, represent just that many years in the archetype, namely, the 1260 years that the true Church was persecuted and in a wilderness condition because of the power of papacy, which, in Revelation, is likened to the woman Jezebel who persecuted Elijah.-- Rev. 12:14.

*Millennial Dawn, chap. 8, Vol. II.

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"IN THE WINEPRESS ALONE."

In the dusk of the sorrowful hours,
The time of our trouble and tears,
With frost at the heart of the flowers,
And blight on the bloom of the years,--
Like the mother voice, tenderly hushing
The sound of the sob and the moan,
We hear, when the anguish is crushing,
"He trod the winepress alone."

And, therefore, he knows to the uttermost
The pangs that the mortal can bear:
No mortal has pain that the Master
Refuses to heal or to share.
And the cries that ascend to the Loving,
Who bruised Him for us to atone,
Are hushed at the gentle reproving,--
"He trod the winepress alone."

How sudden so e'er the disaster,
Or heavy the hand that may smite,
We are yet in the grace of the Master,
We are never out of his sight.
Though the winnowing winds of temptation
May forth from all quarters be blown,
We are sure of the coming salvation--
The Lord will remember his own!

From him, in the night of his trial,
Both heaven and earth fled away;

His boldest had only denial,
His dearest had only dismay.
With a cloud o'er the face of the Father,
He entered the anguish unknown;
But we, though our sorrows may gather,
Shall never endure them alone.

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