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

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KEY TO THE BEREAN LESSONS.

The friends everywhere are growing in their appreciation of these studies. Rightly conducted they are entertaining as well as profitable. We remind all once more of the meaning of the abbreviations used: Z'05 refers to the WATCH TOWER of 1905, mentioning page, column and paragraph (par.). The first six letters of the alphabet refer to the six volumes of Dawn or Studies; T for Tabernacle Shadows; H for the hell booklet; S for Spiritism pamphlet.

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"THE PASSOVER MUST BE KILLED."

--LUKE 22:7--

THE TERM PASSOVER amongst the Jews was frequently applied as the name of a festival week, otherwise called the Feast of Passover, beginning on the fifteenth day of Nisan. But we must not confound this with the frequent references to the Passover found in the Scriptures when the word feast is not used, which generally referred to the lamb that was killed, the Passover. For instance, we read, "Then

came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed." Again, our Lord sent disciples to inquire of a friend, "Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" Again we read, "And they made ready the Passover." When our Lord sat down with the disciples to eat of the lamb he said, "With desire I desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you I will no more eat thereof until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God." --Luke 22:7,11,13,15,16.

While the Jews still apparently think more of the Passover week than of the Passover lamb, we, on the contrary, and in harmony with the example of our Lord and the apostles, have special respect for the lamb, which typified the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and under whose blood of sprinkling we who now believe--namely, the "Church of the First-Born"--are passed over or spared in advance of the world.

God's arrangements for the Jews were typical and full of valuable lessons for us who belong to antitypical or Spiritual Israel. In the type the Lord provided for two great religious occasions amongst his people, the one at the beginning of the secular year and the other at the beginning of the religious year. The religious year began in the spring, counting from the first new moon after the vernal equinox, approximately April 1st, but varying because of the difference between lunar and solar time. It was in connection with this, the beginning of their religious year, that the Lord appointed the Passover--the killing and eating of the Passover lamb on the 14th day, to be followed by a Passover week of unleavened bread. The civil year with the Jews began six months later, in the seventh month, approximately October 1; and it was in connection with this civil year that the Atonement Day sacrifices were appointed, in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths, in which the Israelites called to mind their wilderness journey on leaving Egypt en route for Canaan.

These two great religious celebrations pictured the same lesson from different standpoints: the first emphasized more particularly the passing over of the first-born, who subsequently were represented in the tribe of Levi, at whose head stood the priesthood. Although the type seems to carry forward and to picture the deliverance of all Israel through this priestly tribe, to which Moses belonged, yet specifically, particularly, in detail, it dealt merely with the deliverance, the blessing, of the priestly tribe, the first-born. The other type, in the seventh month, more particularly pictures the atonement for the sins of the whole world, the forgiveness and reconciliation of all mankind who desire to be reconciled to God: nevertheless, in connection with this Atonement Day sacrifice, the special favor of God to the Church is also represented as preceding the blessing

coming upon the world, reconciliation for the Church's sins being represented in the first sacrifice of the Day of Atonement, while the sacrifice for the sins of the world in general was represented in the second offering.

"CHRIST OUR PASSOVER"

There is a force and meaning in the Apostle's expression, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," which is not generally appreciated. (I Cor. 5:7.) Our Lord is not the world's Passover, but the Church's Passover. All Israel prefigured or represented the world of mankind, and the bondage of the whole people represented all mankind under the bondage of sin and death, the great taskmaster in the type being Pharaoh,

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in the antitype being Satan. Deliverance is desired for all, and the Lord's arrangement is ultimately to deliver all. The Apostle so explains when he writes, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

But the Apostle divides the groaning ones into two classes, saying, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now"--"waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." (Rom. 8:19,21,22.) His reference here is to the world of mankind whose deliverance from the bondage of Satan and the power of sin and death will only come through the manifestation of the glorified Church, the Christ in glory and power, as God's Kingdom ruling the world. The Apostle also mentions the Church of the First-Born in her present condition, saying, "But ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body." Both classes have an experience of groaning, both classes have an experience of waiting, but they wait for different things. The latter, the Church of the First-Born, waits for her deliverance as the body of Christ through a share in the First Resurrection. According to the divine promise, the former, the world, waits until the Church class shall have been perfected, glorified, empowered, and shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father for the blessing of all the families of the earth, for the uplifting of all who desire divine favor on divine terms.

Look now at the type: notice that it is not all Israel that is in danger from the destroying angel, but only the first-born. Only the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. Hence it was only the first-born of the Israelites that were spared or passed over. These first-born ones, protected by the blood of the lamb, the Lord declared to be specially his; and, with a view to

marking them out and keeping them as a special, peculiar people, an exchange was made whereby the first-born of all the tribes were exchanged by the Lord for the one tribe of Levi, which he accepted as specially his and which in the type represents the household of faith. Out of this household of faith, in turn, a priestly family was selected, which typified Christ our High Priest and the Church his body, the under priesthood, the Royal Priesthood. So, then, those who perceive the matter clearly see that the Passover has to do only with the household of faith. It is in full accord with this that the Lord's Supper, which antitypes the eating of the lamb, is not offered to the world, but is strictly and exclusively an institution for the household of faith.

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

Seeing in the type the slain lamb, its blood sprinkled upon the posts and lintels of the home and its flesh eaten with bitter herbs, we apply this in the antitype and see Christ the antitypical Lamb, see that his blood sprinkled upon our hearts cleanses them from a consciousness of evil and gives us an assurance of our being PASSED OVER, of our being spared, of our being granted life through his blood. This sprinkling represents our justification by faith; and the subsequent eating of the lamb with bitter herbs is represented in the antitype by our consecration, our partaking of Christ, our participation with him in his sufferings and self-denials --also represented by the bitter herbs, which

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give zest to our appetite and encourage us to partake more and more abundantly of the Lamb. All who believe the testimony, all who trust in the precious blood, are passed over, and, more than this, are expecting a general deliverance of the whole people, of all who love God, who desire to do him reverence and service. So many as thus believe realize themselves pilgrims and strangers under present conditions, looking for a better country, even the heavenly Canaan. All this was represented in typical Israel, for while eating the lamb on that night of Passover they stood staff in hand, girded for a journey. Likewise the Lord's faithful today should realize themselves pilgrims and strangers, having no continuing city, but setting their affections on things above.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

All Christian people to some extent discern what we have above stated to be the basis or foundation for the commemoration of our Lord's death, usually designated the Lord's Supper, the Communion, the Eucharist, and by WATCH TOWER readers usually known as the

Memorial. The difficulty seems to be that the majority of Christian people are not sufficiently critical and persistent in their study of the Word, and that for this reason their faith and hope--not only upon this subject but upon all religious subjects--are more or less confused, indefinite. To us the ministry appear to be considerably to blame in that they have not sufficiently taught the Word of the Lord but too frequently the traditions of men, indeed preaching chiefly to the world and comparatively little to the Church of the First Born--the passed-over ones, passed from death unto life, adopted into God's family as sons.

This indistinctness of view respecting our Lord's sacrifice as our Passover Lamb slain for us is well represented by the confusion of thought respecting the appropriate times for commemorating our Lord's death.

As we look throughout Christendom we find Protestants generally observing the celebration, observing the Memorial, not upon its anniversary but as irrespective of it, as though they had no knowledge of the relationship between the typical Passover and the antitypical one which our Lord enjoined upon us to celebrate.

Some, therefore, have Communion every four months, some every three months, some monthly, some weekly, all except the latter considering it a matter of convenience and expediency, and not observing this special and appropriate annual observance. Our brethren of the Christian denomination, otherwise styled Disciples, hold tenaciously to a weekly observance, because they read in the book of Acts of weekly meetings of the Lord's people in commemoration of his resurrection, at which they had "breaking of bread." Not seeing the

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principles involved they have too hastily concluded that a communion service would be the only proper breaking of bread amongst the Lord's people.

On the contrary, we see that as the early Church remembered that our Lord after his resurrection made himself known on several occasions in connection with breaking of bread--as at Emmaus and again in the upper room--they were glad to meet together on the first day of the week as a fresh reminder of the joys of that resurrection day which meant so much to them and to us all. There is no suggestion anywhere that these were anything more than ordinary meals or love-feasts, such as we often have at the conclusion of a general convention. There is no intimation that in so doing the early Church thought they were keeping the Passover the first day of the week, because Christ our Passover was slain and because we have been passed over by the mercy of God through faith in his blood of sprinkling. There is no intimation that they considered this the Lord's Supper--there is no suggestion anywhere of the cup, which was an equally important feature with

the bread in the Lord's Memorial Supper.

ONE ERROR LED TO ANOTHER

The beginning of this carelessness respecting the annual celebration of our Lord's Memorial is easily traced. The early Church observed the matter annually, and this annual celebration is still preserved in the older Christian churches, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Episcopal, etc., all of which celebrate Good Friday, as the memorial of this slaying of Christ our Passover. But to them the whole matter has lost much of its vital importance. The sacrifice of the mass--a gross error introduced somewhere about the third century --has drawn to itself the special interest which still should center in the annual Memorial and the great sacrifice which it commemorates. In the sacrifice of the mass it is held that the priest officiating, by the pronouncing of three sacred Latin words, works a miracle upon the bread and wine, by which they are transformed and become actually the flesh and blood of Jesus. Thus the officiating priest claims to make a fresh sacrifice of Christ, and as a priest to offer a fresh atonement for the particular individual sins represented in the mass, sinners for whom the mass is performed. Thus the hearts of mankind have been turned away from the one atonement sacrifice for sins, by which all believers were passed over once and forever, and have their gaze attracted to the priest and the mass and the blessings and the holy water, etc., etc. No wonder the Lord in his Word refers to this as the "Desolating Abomination" set up in his Church, his Temple. --Dan. 11:31. MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. III, Chaps. III, IV.

As the Protestants received their earliest conceptions of religious matters from Roman Catholicism, with which they were originally identified, it is not surprising that many of the errors of that system clung to them, and blinded the eyes of their understanding as respects the deep import of many of the spiritual teachings of God's Word. And this is true of the subject we are now discussing as well as of others. What we all should desire would be to have our minds freed from the errors of the "dark ages," that we might see clearly the teaching of our Lord and the apostles, Moses and the prophets, the inspired instructors of the Church.

WHEN THE HOUR WAS COME

The entire Scriptural narrative pertaining to the Passover and pertaining to the Lord's Supper, which was instituted as a substitute for it, by which his disciples might commemorate him as the antitype, all indicate particularity of time--that it must be celebrated, in the evening, not in the morning, not at noon nor in the afternoon, the common custom of various denominations

of Christians. Our Lord and his disciples did not sit down to the Passover until even--the beginning of the fourteenth day of Nisan. And so all who recognize themselves as members of the household of faith, as members of the Church of the First-born, should be careful in following the Master's guidance in this matter as well as in others. There is a blessing and meaning in it. It was the same night in which he celebrated, the one in which he was betrayed, that he took bread and brake and gave unto his disciples. We are still in that night, and the eating of that bread and the drinking of that cup are still in progress amongst the Lord's disciples.

Our Lord, of course, was equally particular respecting the fourteenth day of the month as the proper time for the celebration--that all Israel might celebrate appropriately on the same day. But as for the proper beginning of the dating there was evidently less particularity. The Jewish method of reckoning, based upon the phases of the moon, was necessarily different from ours, and it was therefore very much less easy to determine an exact beginning for their month. Especially was this the case when the spring equinox had a bearing upon the matter, and when, as was the case with the Jews, another type demands that the Passover should come at the time of the harvest. All who have knowledge on the subject will admit that it would be practically impossible to fix dates for the beginning of the Jewish year by lunar time, in harmony with the harvest season, without there being room for dispute and difference of opinion. From our Lord's standpoint all that was settled for the people by the decision of the Scribes, whose business it was to fix a date as the beginning of the new year, and the fourteenth day of that year became the established date for the Memorial. In other words, whether the Scribes fixed a date earlier or a date later would not have particularly mattered; the object was to have a uniform date and to recognize the fourteenth day of the first month at even.

So the matter remains today. We do not understand that any stress or hair-splitting is necessary in the ascertainment of the particular counting of the first day of the first month, Jewish time, but that there is appropriateness associated with a general commemoration upon the same day after sundown, a concensus of judgment as to which day shall be observed as the fourteenth of Nisan being all that is necessary and proper.

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In our issue of January 15 we have pointed out that this is one of the years in which the definite fixing of the first day of Nisan, the first day of the new moon after the spring equinox, seems to be difficult. We attach no importance to this, however, and have recommended the keeping of the Memorial on Sunday night,

April 8. This is in harmony with the Jewish observance, and tallies with the fact that the full of the moon occurs on April 9, corresponding to Nisan 15. The important features to be remembered are: (1) that it be in the spring of the year, approximately at the Passover season; (2) that the date be uniformly observed; (3) that it be observed in the evening, to correspond with the original institution in Egypt and with our Lord's subsequent Memorial institution.

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ASSEMBLE 7.30 P.M., APRIL 8

In harmony with the foregoing the congregation at Allegheny, Pa., hopes to meet at the time indicated (see last page) to commemorate the death of Christ, our Passover slain for us. We hope to hear later on that little companies all over the world celebrated at the same time. We meet not as Jews to remember the deliverance from Pharaoh and Egyptian bondage, but as antitypical Israelites seeking to escape the power of Satan and the dominion of sin. We meet not to eat literal lamb and bitter herbs and to commemorate the passing over in Egypt, but as Spiritual Israelites to recognize and commemorate the death of the Lamb of God as our Passover --to feast upon him, upon the truths which he gave us--to appropriate to ourselves the life rights which he gave up on our behalf.

More than this, as explained by our Lord, we not only will use the unleavened bread to represent the purity of his flesh broken for us, and the fruit of the vine to represent his blood shed for us, but also in the light of the Apostle's explanation we perceive that it is a part of our privilege to be broken with Christ as a part of the same larger loaf, and to have fellowship in his cup of suffering and death as a part of the larger cup. From this double standpoint we view our relationship to the Lord, first as those whom he passes over, and secondly as those who join with him in the sacrifice, that we may have share also with him by and by in the great work of leading forth from bondage to sin and Satan all who will accept of the divine favor and liberty as the sons of God! How wonderfully grand is the privilege thus accorded us! No wonder the Apostle said,--

"LET US KEEP THE FEAST"

Our feasting upon this bread which came down from heaven and which was broken for us is not merely for the special occasion of our assembling annually. Rather that annual assembling which our Lord enjoins represents our experiences throughout the entire night of his absence, until he shall establish his Kingdom in the morning. It is for us to keep the feast, not merely

in this special and commemorative manner once a year, but day by day, hour by hour, to feed upon the Lamb of God, to by faith realize and appropriate to ourselves his virtues and merits, and to grow in grace and knowledge and love and all the fruits and graces of the Spirit. Indeed, we remember the Master's words to be in the nature of a command, "As often as ye do this, do it in remembrance of me." There is no doubt in our minds now as to what we do in this annual celebration of our Lord's death--we are keeping the feast because we have come to realize that Christ was slain for us as our Passover Lamb. Evidently no other time would be so appropriate as the anniversary. Whether that be reckoned by sun time or moon time, according to the days of the week or according to the days of the month, it is unquestionably an annual celebration; and as oft as we do it, every year as we do it, every year as the anniversary occurs, we do it not in remembrance of the type, but in remembrance of the grand antitype, Jesus, our Redeemer.

We trust that the coming celebration will be one very full of interest and profit to all. We urge that none overlook the privilege, and assure all who participate with honest intention of heart, as recognizing the Lord and the cleansing power of his sacrifice and the consecration which we have made to him, that a special blessing will surely result from the keeping of this feast, from the memorializing of the great central fact upon which the entire plan of God for this age and for the next is built.

We urge that the dear friends remember that this Memorial may best be celebrated in little groups, and not by having various companies of the Lord's people assemble together as in a convention. The Lord and his twelve apostles met alone, and this was after the pattern of the Jewish custom, each family alone. So each little group of the Lord's people is a family, a brotherhood. If unleavened bread cannot be procured, soda biscuits are easily obtainable, and they are unleavened bread--that is, bread made without yeast. If grape juice be not obtainable raisins may be stewed, and thus fruit of the vine may be obtained: or, if any consider it preferable, wine may be used. Just what our Lord used is not possible for us to determine: for our own part we prefer the unfermented fruit of the vine, lest the taste of fermented liquor should arouse a dormant appetite for strong drink and thus prove a snare to some who might partake. As we meet we trust that each little company in prayer will remember all others of the Lord's dear people everywhere, asking the Lord for more and more of his Spirit in all of our hearts, which will enable us all the more acceptably and the more completely to partake of his cup of suffering, of sacrifice, of death, and to be broken with him as members of the one life, the one Church, which is his body.

For the convenience of those desiring to symbolize their consecration to the Lord by baptism, such a service will be held in Bible House Chapel, Allegheny, on Sunday, April 8th, at 10 o'clock a.m. No doubt arrangements for baptism will be made by all the little congregations of the Lord's people everywhere, and those desiring the service as preceding their joining in the Memorial service of the evening here should communicate their desires, if possible, in advance.

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BEREAN BIBLE STUDY FOR APRIL.

--FOR EXPLANATION SEE PREFACE OF WATCH TOWER BIBLES AND WATCH TOWER, MARCH 1, 1905.--

STUDIES IN PRAYER

31. What is the relation between fasting and prayer? Z.'96-194 (2nd col.) and 195; Z.'05-334 (1st col. par. 4, to 2nd col. par. 3).
32. What is the value of secret prayer? F.686, par. 3.
33. What are the special advantages of family prayer? F.687, par. 1.
34. What is the value of prayer in the Church? F.687, par. 2.
35. Are promiscuous public prayers authorized? Z.'96-196.
36. What is the necessity for prayer in opening and closing meetings for the study of the Word of God? F.688, par. 1.
37. What are some good suggestions respecting prayer and testimony meetings? F.314, par. 5; F.319, par. 1, to 322.
38. Is it proper to pray for baptisms of the Holy Spirit? E.229, par. 1, to 235; F.445, par. 1.
39. May the consecrated pray for physical healing? Z.'01-212 (1st and 2nd cols.); F.636, par. 1, and 637, par. 1; F.644, par. 1, to 654; Z.'96-164 (1st col. par. 3) to 165 (1st col. par. 1); Z.'05-202 (1st col. par. 4, to 2nd col. par. 3); Z.'05-351 (1st col. par. 4).
40. What is our privilege with respect to the healing of soul-sickness? Psa. 103:2-5; F.145 to 149, par. 2.
41. How should we regard modern faith-healing, miracles, etc.? F.638, par. 2, to 641, par. 1.
42. How do we explain Jas. 5:14-16? Z.'96-167 (1st col. par. 6, and 2nd col. par. 1); F.637, par. 2, and 638, par. 1.
43. What lessons should we learn from our Lord's example in prayer? Z.'00-184 (2nd col. par. 2) and 185 (1st col. par. 1); Z.'05-136 (1st col. par. 2).
44. What was the nature of our Lord's petition in John 17:15-26? Z.'05-136 (2nd col.) to 140.

45. What is the import of "the model prayer" our Lord taught his disciples? Matt. 6:9-13; Z.'96-161, 162; Z.'04-118 (1st col. par. 2) to 121 (2nd col. par. 1); Z.'98-29 to 31.

46. What should be the special nature of our petitions? Z.'04-24 (1st col. par. 2, 3); F.685, par. 1, to 686, par. 1; E.242, 243.

47. Why must we watch as well as pray? Mark 14:38; Z.'00-268 (1st col. par. 2, 3); Z.'03-118, 119; Z.'01-80 (1st and 2nd cols.).

48. What is meant by "the spirit of prayer"? Z.'01-80 (2nd col., next to last sentence).

49. How do we understand that "the spirit maketh intercession for us," etc.,--Rom. 8:26,27? E.311-315.

50. What has been suggested as a probable and special occasion for prayer in the Millennial Age? D.640, par. 2, and 641; F.701, par. 2.

"IN DUE TIME."

In thy due time, our heavenly Father, shall be known
Thy gracious plan, which now is hid
Except unto thy saints alone.
O glorious day, when thine All-wisdom, justice, power and
love,
The whole creation shall approve!

In his due time, O blessed Jesus, thou shalt see
The travail of thy soul, and shalt
Be satisfied eternally;
Thine agony on Calvary, the price that thou didst give,
Shall cause the dead again to live!

In God's due time, O pilgrim on the "narrow way,"
Thy painful journey ended, darkest
Night shall turn to brightest day;
Thine every trial, then, thine every tear, shall prove a gem
To beautify thy diadem!

In his due time, O weary, groaning, sin-cursed Earth,
The Lord will wipe away your tears,
And bring the promised "second birth,"
And there shall be no pain, nor any death in that blest day
When sin and sorrow pass away!

In his due time angelic choirs shall sing again
In grander strain that heavenly message,
"Peace on earth, good will toward men!"
And every knee shall bow, and every loving heart confess
The Christ who comes to reign and bless!

--G. W. SEIBERT.

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"TAKE HEED LEST YE BE DEVOURED."

"Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."--Gal. 5:13-15.

WHERE the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. This is illustrated in the world's history most remarkably. It was because the Jews had the instruction of the Law and more or less of its spirit that for centuries they were known as an unconquerable people. That is to say, they were conquered time and again, but were so dominated by the spirit of liberty that they made trouble for their conquerors and larger neighbors continually.

Similarly, though to a larger extent, the same has been true of Christianity: wherever the Word of God has gone the effect has been stimulation of the love of liberty in the same proportion. When during the "dark ages" the Word of God was "clothed in sackcloth," and false teachings of men took its place, the spirit of liberty slumbered and the world had a measure of peace and a general serfdom of the people. With the Reformation movement came the love of liberty afresh. The latest illustration along these lines is to be seen in Russia.

We do not mean to say that Christ and his apostles taught war, and discontent and strife,--neither did Moses and the Law. Quite to the contrary; love, peace, brotherly kindness, gentleness, patience, meekness,

--these were the teachings of our Lord and his servants. The influences which proceeded from the Word were of two kinds: Some, with the enlightenment and liberty, received also the divine instruction and sought to cultivate the fruits of the Spirit; others receiving the spirit of liberty through the knowledge received not the spirit of the truth, but engrafted the knowledge upon the selfish stalk of the fallen nature and were more discontented because of their increased intelligence.

EFFECT OF TRUTH ON THE CHURCH

There is a Church nominal which is really part and parcel with the world, glossed with a little knowledge of the divine Word and plan and with some small endeavor to heed divine instruction; but the real Church includes only those who have turned from sin and accepted

Christ with a full consecration of thought, word and deed. What effect has the truth upon these? We answer that even these "new creatures" find that the knowledge they receive and the spirit of liberty which comes to them through that knowledge have one effect upon their flesh and another effect upon their wills, their hearts. With their hearts they desire to serve the law of God, to live peaceably with all, to cultivate all the fruits and graces of the Spirit of Christ and to deal gently, lovingly, not only with the fellow-members of the body of Christ, the Church, but also to deal gently with the world. But they have, some more and some less, difficulty in contending with their own flesh and permitting the new mind to dominate it in word and in deed.

What Christian does not know from more or less experience the meaning of the words of our text, "If ye bite and devour one another"? If the hearts of God's people, their wills, their intentions, could be appealed to, separate and distinct from the weakness and bias of their flesh, there would be no doubt at all that every one of them would agree perfectly in his desire to live peaceably with his brethren and to glorify God by his meek and quiet disposition, his gentleness, brotherly kindness. But we cannot have it thus, for the new will is in the old body that is sadly warped and twisted by selfishness, and it must "fight a good fight" against the flesh, and must conquer at least to the extent of loving, striving for the right, the gentle,

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the good, however imperfectly it may attain to it.

The truth seems to take hold on the stronger characters rather than on the weaker ones. These have in their flesh more of the firmness, grittiness and the combativeness than have many others who are too pliable and wishy-washy to be acceptable to the Lord as members of the "little flock" of overcomers. Thus we see that the very quality which makes us acceptable to the Lord and which is one qualification of the overcoming position is a serious disadvantage in some respects, when a number of these of like strong character come together as a Church. Even a diamond surrounded by mud would cut nothing, would scratch nothing; but place a dozen diamonds together, and the more you get rid of the mud element the more gritting, scouring and cutting there is likely to be. So it is with the Lord's jewels--the more they come together the more they get wakened up, the more opportunities there will be for friction, and the greater necessity there will be that they all be thoroughly imbedded and covered with the holy Spirit, which, like oil, is smooth and unctuous and tends to prevent friction.

TRIALS TEND TO INCREASE

On the one hand we may see that as the Lord's people grow in grace and in knowledge and in the fruits and graces of the Spirit, there should be less danger of friction in the Church; but on the other hand let us remember that polished diamonds do more scratching than rough ones. Let us remember, too, that in our earliest experiences in the Truth we were somewhat like babes--we knew not enough to quarrel and dispute with each other respecting the lessons we were learning. As each grows, therefore, in knowledge and appreciation of the Truth he must likewise grow in the spirit of the Truth, or else his growth in knowledge will mean that he will be that much more of a trial to his dear brethren than when he was a babe in knowledge.

From this standpoint it should not surprise us if in the light of our day on every subject, especially on the Word, there would be more room for friction year by year, and the greater need for our remembrance of our 1906 text, "Be patient, brethren." The context shows us that these words were intended to be especially applicable in the end of the age. The time of trouble is accurately described--the conflict between the rich and the poor, which is coming about on the lines of increased knowledge in connection with the selfishness of the fallen nature. Then comes the exhortation, "Grudge not one against another, brethren; the Judge standeth at the door," "Be patient, brethren, the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

The lesson here is in full accord with the text we are discussing. We need patience; we need to remember that it is not in order for us to nurse grudges or hard feelings of any kind, especially against those who like ourselves are striving to walk in the narrow way and to attain joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom. Rather we should be willing to sacrifice something of our own rights and liberties and privileges in the interest of others. This does not signify that we should sit quietly and hear the truth misrepresented when we have the right and the opportunity to defend it. We should contend earnestly for the truth against the error, but we should not contend against the brethren. If there be any who deny the foundations of our Christian faith, the ransom, the Lord through the apostles has left us no room to doubt how firmly we should take a stand in respect to any kind of fellowship with them. (I Cor. 5:11.) But there are a thousand and one occasions of friction amongst the brethren where no principle of truth is at stake; and these we are to be willing and glad to waive in the interest of harmony and peace and fellowship. This, however, need not mean that we should not present our understanding of the truth on proper occasions, but we need not insist upon them nor force them upon others if they cannot see them as we do.

In our text the Apostle seems to imply that such

a condition might arise even amongst the Lord's people that some would not only be wounded to the extent of being "bitten" by the harshness and slander of others, but that the tendency to retaliate more or less in kind would arise, and that it would mean a general

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conflict unworthy of God's children and more nearly resembling a fight among dogs.

"Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another," urges the Apostle. What if in our appreciation of the liberty that is ours, and of which we know through the Gospel, we should reach the point where we would be so contentious for our liberties, great and small, that we would consume some brother for whom Christ died! What if in injuring another the spirit of strife should so react upon us as to poison our own spiritual lives and we also should be consumed--lost as respects the gracious things to which the Lord has invited us and for which we have been running in the race! Let the Apostle's words ring in our hearts, "Lest ye be consumed one of another."

With this thought before our minds let us more and more put on the armor of God to fight against our own fleshly weaknesses and to fight for our dear brethren, assisting them by example and by precept to war a good warfare also against the world, the flesh and the adversary.

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SABBATH OBLIGATIONS AND PRIVILEGES.

--MATTHEW 12:1-14.--APRIL 8.--

Golden Text:--"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."--Exodus 20:8

FEW seem to get the proper thought respecting the Sabbath. Some consider themselves as Jews under the Mosaic Law: others go to an opposite extreme, and, declaring that we are not under the Law but under grace, repudiate the Sabbath entirely. What we believe to be the correct view is the intermediate one between these two extremes, as we shall endeavor to set forth.

God adopted the Jewish nation--all the children of Abraham, through Jacob--as his special possession in the world. With them he made the Law Covenant through Moses at Sinai--to them he sent his messengers, the prophets, and, finally, his Son. With them and with no other nation it was his agreement that by the keeping of the Law they would abide in his favor and have divine blessing upon flocks and herds, land and people, instead of sickness, pain,

drouth and dearth. To no other nation was the Law of Sinai given, with no other nation was that Covenant made-- as it is written, "You only have I known [recognized] of all the families of the earth."--Amos 3:2.

When the Jews rejected Jesus, and when Jesus made an end of the Law Covenant on the cross, it did not imply that that Law was then extended to the other nations of the world as some seem to imagine: quite to the contrary. Nor did the Law Covenant extend to the Church--the followers of Christ selected from the Jewish nation and other nations-- for we read, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:4.) Whoever sees this point clearly has the foundation for correct views respecting the Sabbath and every other feature of the Law; those who cannot see this will remain in confusion.

"KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD"

Accordingly it is not for us to demand of the nations of Europe and America that they shall enforce the Jewish Sabbath or any other Sabbath. True, the civilized world is called "Christendom"--Christ's Kingdom; but this is a misnomer. The kingdoms of earth are still under the dominion of the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4); they are kingdoms of this world and not kingdoms of God. True, God is aware of their existence and permits them for a time, but he has never attempted authority over them nor made himself responsible for the imperfect governments which they represent--they are not his kingdoms. When the God of heaven shall set up his Kingdom in the hands of the glorified Messiah, Head and body, during the Millennial age, its conditions and arrangements will be greatly in contrast with those of the kingdoms of this world. God, therefore, is not commanding the nations of the world to observe the Sabbath day, etc., etc.; whatever they do in this line is of their own volition, without command, for they are not under the Mosaic Law, and no other law has been given them.

Christian believers, followers of Jesus since he made an end of the Law Covenant, nailing it to the cross (Col. 2:14), are not under the Law Covenant but, as the Apostle declares, "We are not under the Law but under grace." (Rom. 6:14.) Our relationship to God is of the same character as that which prevailed before Sinai's Law Covenant was effected at the hands of Moses over Israel--after the same order as that enjoyed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--grace under the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant: we are the real seed of promise. (Gal. 3:29.) Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob prosper without a law? Yes! Much more can Spiritual Israel prosper under the same conditions, because we now have much advantage everyway through our special relationship by faith to the great Redeemer, and to the exceeding great and precious promises which centre in him, and which apply to all those adopted by him as members of his body--members of his Bride class.

"WHOM THE SON MAKES FREE"

Some are inclined to feel alarmed at the very thought of being free from a law covenant based upon obedience to a law. Such should be comforted with the thought that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were approved to the Lord without the Law. Their faith in God constituted an obligation to do the divine will to the extent of their knowledge and ability; and the same is true of us, for the Scriptures assure us that, as children of God and adopted into his family, made partakers of his Spirit, our rule of action must henceforth be love, and that to us love is the fulfilling of the law. That is to say, if we receive the spirit of adoption into God's family it implies that we possess the spirit of love, because God is love; and this love for God as it develops signifies love for all that are in accord with him, and a love like his in respect to all of his creation--a sympathetic love. Such a love permits us to be and to do in harmony with the divine will to the extent of our ability; and the Lord, who is dealing

with us according to our intentions and endeavors, and who is covering our unwilling weaknesses and imperfections, counts this service of the heart and intention as a perfect keeping of the divine law. Thus the Apostle says: "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." (Rom. 8:4.) However short we may come of the full spirit of the divine law, we are counted as fulfillers of it so long as our daily walk is in that direction to the extent of our ability.

From this standpoint we see that God is no longer dealing with Israel, nor has he adopted the other nations as his. Rather he is forming a new nation, gathering its citizens out of every nation, kindred, people and tongue. This new nation is the Church, of whom the Apostle says, "Ye are a Royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." (1 Pet. 2:9.) Presently this nation will be completed, and be ushered into glory, honor and immortality, to rule and bless and uplift all the families of the earth. God's dealings, instructions, tests, etc., are upon this new nation--yea, as we have seen, he has placed no law upon us except the law of love--for God and for our neighbor. Before our adoption into this holy nation we accepted its law of love, and recognized selfishness as part of the works of darkness; and in the school of Christ we have been learning more and more the full meaning of the word love in its application to God and to our fellowmen. These lessons still continue, but must reach a certain completion or fruition before we can be accounted worthy of transference to the heavenly and eternal state as members of this Kingdom.

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LORD

Have we then no relationship to the Law given to natural Israel, as expressed in the ten commandments, etc.? No, we are free from the Law--thank God! Nevertheless, we may derive a great blessing through an examination of that Law from which we are free, because we recognize that it was just and holy and good--that it was not set aside because the Law was imperfect, but because man was imperfect and unable to keep that Law and to gain life thereunder. Looking, then, at that perfect Law, we should seek to get, not merely its outward form and letter, but especially its inner meaning, its spirit, to determine just what it did signify. Then, having ascertained its significance, we as New Creatures--while not depending upon it for our life, but recognizing that the precious blood of the Lamb of God has compensated for all of our unwilling weaknesses and deficiencies and imperfections--we should strive, nevertheless, to conform our lives to all the blessed thoughts we can gather respecting the spirit of the Law.

We should do this, not thereby to merit salvation, but that having obtained the salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and having gone further and been begotten of the holy Spirit to a new life, a new nature, we no longer seek to justify ourselves by the Law, because justified by the blood of Christ. We now seek as New Creatures to please our heavenly Father, and rejoice to find anything in the Law given to natural Israel that would furnish us clearer conceptions of the divine will, that for love to God we might do with our might everything in our power.

Accordingly, as we look at the Decalogue we say, "Yes, those laws are perfect," and the more closely we examine them the more do we grasp the depth of their signification. As, for instance, in the first and second of these commandments we see prohibited not merely the making of images and the worshipping of the same, but equally prohibited the having of any object of worship aside from God --wife or children or mammon or self, etc. Applying this to the fourth commandment respecting the Sabbath, Spiritual Israelites will realize that they are not under bondage to a day, but will nevertheless desire to know what was the Spirit or intent or object of this command, and to be in harmony, in accord, with all its spirit. The Israelites, as today's lesson shows, got merely the outward form of these three commandments, but wholly missed its real purport; and similarly, many Christians today merely take the Jewish view of the command and entirely overlook its real import.

"WE WHO BELIEVE DO ENTER INTO REST"--A SABBATH

The Apostle refers to the real meaning of this Sabbath rest of faith into which we Spiritual Israelites enter so soon as we accept the Lord Jesus as our Redeemer, the expiator of our guilt--our Life-Giver. As soon as we begin to believe we begin to enter into this rest, and thenceforth, if we are faithful to the Lord and abide in his love, our Sabbath never ends--"We which believe do enter into rest."-- Heb. 4:3.

Our lesson of faith should continue throughout all the days of the week, and thus Spiritual Israel keeps Sabbath every day--resting in the finished work of Christ, resting from our own works, from all endeavor to justify ourselves through the Law. Was not our Lord's ministry a perpetual Sabbath? and may not all of the Lord's people today so rest in the Lord by faith, and so continually seek to work the works of him that hath sent us as his ambassadors to the world, that every day with us should be a Sabbath day? Thus all the labor of life is sanctified to us. Whether we eat or drink, scrub or dig, write or talk, sleep or wake, we are to do all to the glory of God--to do all as unto him, and in all of our doings to maintain the Sabbath rest in our hearts--rest in divine love and care, which applies to us through our relationship to Christ Jesus our Lord.

PROPRIETY OF SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

The question comes, then, Should the Lord's people who see the true rest and who are enjoying it--should they observe the Sabbaths or Sundays appointed by the civil laws of Christendom? We answer, Yes! for three reasons:

(1) It is the divine command that we should obey all the ordinances of human law that do not conflict with our conscience as Christians; and clearly nothing in the human law on this subject could violate our conscience.

(2) Surely if others can afford to rest from their labor one day in seven the Lord's people can afford to do so as well, and indeed to better advantage than the world, because through our better knowledge of God and his Word we can make wiser and better use of the time thus taken from worldly affairs.

(3) Spiritual Israelites are greatly advantaged by the fact that the world, nominal Christendom, has made a mistake in the matter, and is under the impression that the Jewish law obligates the keeping of one day in seven as a religious

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rest day. Thus all things work together for good to them that love God--even the world's mistakes and ignorance.

Not only should Spiritual Israelites rejoice to have the privilege of one day in seven for a special rest from physical labor and for special engagement in spiritual works, pleasures and refreshments, but additionally they should realize that the world is watching them, and that their influence for good would be greatly interfered with by their violation of this civil law, which the world supposes to be backed by divine command. Our advice, therefore, to all true Spiritual Israelites is that they be as strict or more strict in their observance of Sunday as a Sabbath of rest than are their neighbors--that all works except those of necessity or mercy be avoided, that this precious day be considered a boon from the Lord, a great privilege and opportunity for growth in grace and knowledge and love. Let our homes be the most

quiet of all in civilized lands on the appointed day of rest, let no sounds of labor or of worldly pleasure be heard in our habitations, but let our joys of hope and love and faith abound, and let our happy hearts manifest themselves in cheerful words and tones and looks, that thus our moderation as well as our joy in the Lord may be manifest to all with whom we have to do, that they may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus and learned of him.

(Acts 4:13.) To those of our neighbors and friends with whom we are very intimate we might explain that from our standpoint every day is a Sabbath day of rest in faith--that though upon some days it is necessary we should labor also for the meat that perisheth, our hearts are resting still in the great Lord of the Sabbath and his finished work.

This would not signify that we of today should attempt an observance of the outward forms of the Jewish Law, according to all that is proper and required of the Jew. For instance, no doubt it would be a violation of the fourth commandment to operate a street-car line; and if the Jewish Law were in force upon us it would be absolutely wrong and sinful for any of us to ride in a street-car, much less to operate the same. But since we are not under the Law but under grace, and since Sunday riding is not prohibited by the civil law nor regarded as evil by our

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fellows, there is no reason why in this and in similar matters we may not enjoy reasonably and with profit the conveniences of transportation on the Sabbath.

THE PHARISAICAL SABBATH

Our lesson applies to a time when the Jewish Law was still in force, and shows us that even then the right, the true, the proper interpretation of the fourth commandment was much more in accord with our observation of it than with the extreme observances accorded today by the Jewish teachers. The difference between then and now would be that the Jews under the Law were forbidden to do work of an earthly kind on the Sabbath, while we are not forbidden, except as earthly laws may limit without a commandment, and that we may delight to abstain from temporal labors that we may the more fully enjoy our spiritual privileges.

Our lesson pictures to us Jesus and his disciples in a public pathway across a wheat-field (in old English called a corn-field). The wheat was ripe or nearly so, and the disciples, feeling hungry, had plucked a few of the heads and rubbed them in their hands to remove the chaff for the eating of the wheat. The Pharisees, appreciating the shell rather than the meat of the divine Law, were very particular for outward observances of it, while entirely overlooking and neglecting its real sentiment or spirit. Here they thought they saw an opportunity for showing off their religious devotion by calling attention to the disciples of Jesus as being law-breakers, and to Jesus himself as being little better, in

that he as their teacher had not reproved them. We see frequently this same spirit in our day: Some today would be scrupulously careful not to ride in a street-car on the Sabbath who would think nothing of allowing their minds to rove not only after the worldly things but worse, to dwell upon evil subjects, or perhaps meditate how they could take advantage of their neighbor the day following. This is hypocrisy, one of the worst sins from the divine standpoint.

It is really amusing how the Jews, while neglecting the real essence and spirit of the Law toward God and man, exaggerated that Law as respects the trifling and unessential matters. For instance, the ruling of the Rabbis was that catching a flea on one's person was hunting, and therefore prohibited on the Sabbath; that rubbing the grain in both hands and blowing away the chaff constituted winnowing and threshing, and violated the rest of the Sabbath. Our Lord did not accept the reproof, but, on the contrary, pointed out that his disciples not only had his approval in their course but that they were fully justified by the course of others whom the Pharisees recognized. Our Lord's illustration of what constituted necessity and mercy was drawn from the Bible narrative of David's eating the shew-bread, lawful only for the priests to eat, because of the necessities of his position, his hunger. Also the labor performed every Sabbath in the Jewish Temple, in connection with the worship there, by the priests and Levites. Our Lord held logically that these approved matters showed the proper principle governing the Sabbath. He did not claim that reaping, threshing and winnowing on the Sabbath day would be justifiable; his argument was that no such interpretation should be put upon the Law as would make the satisfying of hunger, as the apostles did, a crime, a violation of the Sabbath commandment.

"LORD ALSO OF THE SABBATH"

But after convincing them from the Scriptures that their position was untenable, our Lord asserted to them his authority as an interpreter of the Law, saying, "I say unto you, One greater than the Temple is here." If it was right for the Levites to perform the Temple services on the Sabbath, Jesus was greater than the Temple in that he was the Son of God, the mouthpiece of God, and his disciples might therefore rest secure in anything done in his service and with his approval. What a personality our Lord must have possessed that he could make such a statement before his enemies without its being challenged! We are convinced that he not only spake as never man spake, but that his appearance must have been superior to that of members of the fallen race.

Mark his statement again (v. 8)--"The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." As the Lord of the Sabbath,

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as the great Teacher, he had not indeed the right to abolish

this feature of the Law except by fulfilling it, "nailing it to the cross"; but as the Lord of the Sabbath he was the proper Teacher to set forth its real significance to the Jew. Our Lord called the attention of his critics to the testimony of God through the prophet, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." (Hosea 6:6.) Our Lord declares that if they had given heed to this direction their thoughts would have been more merciful, more in line with the divine sentiment, and this would have hindered them from condemning the disciples, who the Lord declared were entirely guiltless of any violation of the Sabbath day commandment.

Similarly we may say today that the great lack of many critics and fault-finders is their lack of mercy, lack of love. Love is the fulfilling of the Law, and whoever has most of it will come nearest to the standard. The possession of love is always indicated by mercy--toward our friends, toward our brethren, toward the world, toward our enemies. Proceeding to the Synagogue the same question was raised--the predominance of Love above any law was manifested. A man there had a withered hand, and the Pharisees, seeking to prove Jesus and to catch him, inquired whether or not it would be right to heal on the Sabbath day. They fain would condemn him on some score; his defense of his disciples was complete--would he now commit himself to a matter of healing on the Sabbath?

Our Lord's answer was along the lines of the prophecy he had just quoted, namely, that mercy was higher in God's estimation than sacrifice, and he proceeded to show mercy to the afflicted man. First, however, he showed them from their own course in life that they were inconsistent: that if they owned but one sheep and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day it would be rescued--not for love of the sheep but for fear of the loss of its value. Our Lord inquired, "How much then is a man of more value than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day." This question, as to the superior value of a man over a beast, is one that the world seems to find difficult to answer, but one which should be quickly answered by the Lord's people of spiritual Israel. The Lord set the value of a man when by the grace of God he gave himself a ransom for man. Those who receive of his Spirit should more and more count it a privilege to do anything they can for the relief of their fellow man in matters temporal or spiritual.

The Pharisees were answered at every point, and, less popular in Galilee than in Judea anyway, they felt that their influence before the people had been lessened by their conflict with the Lord, the great Teacher. So when Jesus had healed the withered hand by word they went out of the synagogue angry, to take counsel against him how they might destroy him. They were rabid sectarians, fully convinced of their own importance. They felt that anything that discredited them must be injurious to the Lord and to his cause, that they were the orthodox body, and that they would be fully justified in murdering anyone whose words and conduct so overmatched them as to hinder their influence from spreading more and more over all the people of

Israel. A similar spirit prevails today, we aver, amongst many who are outwardly very zealous for religion. They are so deficient in mercy, love, so bound by the sectarian systems with which they are identified, that they would be willing to persecute as thoroughly as opportunity would permit any of the members of the Master's body whose presentations of the Truth today would seem to diminish their honor and standing before the world. Let us, dear friends, remember the Master's word, and understanding and appreciating our relationship to the Lord, let us be obedient to the very spirit of it.

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RESURRECTION POWER IN JESUS.

--LUKE 7:1-17.--APRIL 15.--

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life."--John 11:25

RESURRECTION power resided in our Lord Jesus because in the divine plan it was he who was to redeem the world by the sacrifice of himself and consequently to restore it. This included not merely an awakening from death, but also such vitalization as would overcome the dying processes of disease and ultimately bring the revived one up, up, to the full perfection of being originally enjoyed by our first parents in Eden but forfeited because of disobedience under the sentence, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4.) This is the most important feature of all the plan of God revealed to us, and if we discern it clearly it assists us in the understanding of every other feature of that plan. We must see that death is the absence of life, the loss of life--that it is a penalty upon our race because we are judged unworthy of life.

All references to a future life imply a redemption from the curse or sentence which came upon us because of the original sin. The cancellation of the debt or sentence, however, does not revive or restore mankind, but it does remove the legal barrier to man's restitution to all that was lost.

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Hence it is that our Savior's work is to follow. First, it is to be a redemptive work: the redemption was accomplished at his first advent--though he has used this Gospel age as the period in which to accept also some of the redeemed ones as his members, his Bride, his Church, under him as their Head, to be his associates in the great work of restitution which belongs to the next age.

Second, restitution is to be our Lord's work at his second advent, when his Church, his members, will have been selected, polished, prepared, glorified and associated with

him in glory, honor and immortality. Then the full work of the redemption will be granted to the world of mankind --not by raising them from the dead to absolute perfection in an instant, but by first awakening them from the sleep of death, and then, under the disciplines and instructions of the Millennial age, lifting them gradually in harmony with their own wills and cooperation, step by step, out of sin and death conditions into life eternal, as they may respond to

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these mercies and opportunities. The disobedient, being counted unworthy of life eternal, will be cut off in the Second Death.

JESUS, THE LIFE-GIVER

The words of our Golden Text, although specially applicable to our Lord in the future, at the beginning of his Millennial reign, when he will abolish death by lifting mankind out of its power, out of the great prison-house and out of the weaknesses that are associated with the fallen condition, nevertheless were applicable also in some degree at the first advent. True, our Lord's own sacrifice was not finished until he died at Calvary, and the sacrifices of the members of his body would not be finished for centuries; but when our Lord at thirty years of age made a full consecration of himself to do the Father's will, to lay down his life, etc., that divine plan which he there undertook to carry out included all these subsequent features--the completion of his own sacrifice and that of his completed body, of the Church.

That our heavenly Father so regarded his sacrifice was evidenced by the impartation of the holy Spirit, which anointing upon him constituted him the Messiah, the Christ, and the hope of the Church, which is his body, as well as ultimately the hope of all things. Hence, since our Lord had never abrogated that covenant of consecration, sacrifice, since he was still in line with his Covenant, and since the Father still so recognized him, it was proper for him to think and act and speak from that standpoint, which not only looked down to the end of his own course with faith, but also looked down to the end of this Gospel age with confidence, and to the end of the Millennial age with assurance that all the good purposes of God would finally be accomplished in and through him. From this standpoint, therefore, he said, "I am the resurrection and the life." He knew that the sacrificial work he had undertaken would secure to him the privilege of being the Life-Giver to the world, and that in the exercise of that right he would raise up not only from the tomb, but completely out of death conditions up to perfection, all who would come unto the Father through him--all who would have the right desire of heart to return to loving obedience to the Creator.

OUR LORD'S MIRACLES ILLUSTRATIVE

Our Lord's miracles were performed with a view to proving him to be the Life-Giver, not merely as having the right or privilege of giving life but as having pleasure in so doing. From this standpoint our Lord's miracles were small illustrations on a limited scale of that much grander work which he, with and through his glorified Church, will accomplish for mankind during his Millennial reign, when all the blind eyes shall be opened and all the deaf ears shall be unstopped, and all the mentally, morally and physically lame shall be healed, and all the dead in trespasses and sins will be revived and, through obedience, gradually obtain full restitution of all things lost, as promised through the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.-- Acts 3:19-23.

Our present lesson follows the Sermon on the Mount-- the thought evidently in the minds of Matthew and Luke in thus arranging matters being to show that he who had given the wonderful teachings on the mount was fully attested by the miraculous powers shown to reside in him. He had returned to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, the home city of Peter and others, and now the home city of Jesus, since he had been spurned and rejected at Nazareth. We remember that on a previous occasion at Capernaum he had healed many, and cannot doubt that his fame had reached all classes. A centurion, captain of the Roman guard, with a company of soldiers, resided here, and a much-prized servant having been taken sick the centurion was anxious to have Jesus cure him. That he was a man of humble mind, as well as full of faith and benevolence, is clearly shown by the narrative. Indeed, so far as we remember, all three of the centurions mentioned in the New Testament were evidently reverential: this one, the one who put Jesus to death and who subsequently declared, "Surely this man was the Son of God," and the centurion Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.--Matt. 27:54; Acts 10:1.

THE NOBLE CENTURION

The centurion of our lesson was both wise and humble. He realized that as a Gentile he could have no special claim upon this Jewish Prophet and the work he was doing for the Israelites, and hence he secured the cooperation of some of the elders of the city--not the elders of the Synagogue, but the chief men of the city--to present to Jesus on his behalf a request for the healing of his servant. A man of less humble mind would doubtless have thought of the dignity of his own position, and would have ignored the distinctions which the Jews and the Scriptures both fix, the "middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile excluding the latter from the divine mercies of the former. He was like the Syro-phenician woman who desired a crumb from the children's table without claiming to be one of the children.

The elders, his representatives, besought Jesus on his behalf, testifying that although he was not a Jew he was a noble character, a lover of Israel; he had built them a synagogue for their worship, in which he himself could not

engage because a Gentile. Had he taken any other position, had he ignored the fact that he was not one of the "children," doubtless it would have been necessary for our Lord to have impressed this lesson before granting the request; but since all this was conceded in the request our Lord promptly acceded thereto. A lesson for each of us in this connection would be humility of mind in approaching the Lord on any subject, which would make us ready for his favors and blessings. We, too, should concede that we have nothing of right or of merit to demand, that we should approach the Lord from the standpoint of unworthy suppliants, seekers of grace and mercy, not justice, at his hands.

Then the centurion bethought him of the fact that, being a Gentile, according to Jewish custom it would be an impropriety for a Jew to enter his house, that a certain measure of defilement would be implied. Doubtless, too, he thought of himself as a sinner, and that here was a representative of the Almighty, whose power he acknowledged. His feelings, doubtless, were akin to those of Peter when the latter cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."-- Luke 5:8.

The centurion reasoned that if the Lord could exercise the power when present he could also exercise the power of healing though absent, and possibly he had heard of the healing of the son of the nobleman of his own city, Capernaum,

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when Jesus was at Cana and merely spoke the word. For these reasons the centurion at once sent a messenger to Jesus, explaining his own disinclination to incommode the Master, his unworthiness to have him under his roof, and his complete faith that a word from him would be sufficient. He explains this faith in the Lord's word by the illustration that he himself had been given a certain amount of authority by which he could tell his servants to go and to come, and that, recognizing Jesus as the Lord's anointed, he was sure that he had control over the influences of nature as his servants, so that he could bid the disease go from the servant and he should be well.

MARVELLOUS FAITH OF AN ALIEN

Jesus took him at his word and went no further, but he expressed his astonishment at the amount of the man's faith, saying to the multitude with him, "I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." Only in one other place do we read that Jesus "marvelled," and that was at the instance of the unbelief of the people of Nazareth. (Mark 6:6.) The people so long favored, so greatly blessed, so richly fed with divine promises and instructed by divine providences, lacked the faith that might have been expected of them, while the Gentiles, unfavored, were possessed of faith in many respects remarkable. No wonder our Lord contrasted the people of Capernaum with the heathens of Sodom and Gomorrah. No wonder that he declared that if the mighty works done in

Capernaum had been done in Sodom and Gomorrah they would have remained--would never have been destroyed--would have repented in sackcloth and ashes.

How glad we are that the Scriptures assure us that it is the divine plan to give all the heathen peoples--yea, and all the Jews--the favorable, gracious opportunities of the Millennial age whereby to rise out of sin and death conditions and to restore to the obedient the life conditions lost through sin, redeemed by the precious blood. Are we not sometimes surprised today, likewise, to find that some prominent in religious affairs seem to have less faith in the Lord

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in his goodness, in his power, in his wisdom, in his love, than have some who are of the world? What surprises there may be in this respect by and by when the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth and the eyes of understanding of all mankind shall be opened to appreciate the knowledge of the glory of God. How many who were not God's people shall then become his people; and how many who now have much advantage every way, and who have forms of godliness without the power, may then be seen to be inferior to some who now appear to be their inferiors.

Soon afterward (R.V.) our Lord, the disciples and quite a multitude of followers were approaching the little city of Nain, when forth from the gateway of the city came a funeral procession, a widowed mother and mourning friends, pall-bearers, and a bier or litter on which lay a dead young man, the widow's only son. Our Lord was touched with compassion as he saw the widow's tears, and he said to her, "Weep not," and, approaching, the pall-bearers stood still and Jesus touched the bier and said, "Young man, I say unto thee arise." The dead man stood up and began to speak. In a manufactured story it would be considered the proper thing to suppose that the widow fell at the Lord's feet, praised him in a loud voice, and that the whole multitude would join in acclaiming him; but in the simple narrative of our lesson, "there came a fear upon all" --a realization that God was very near to them as represented in the power of Jesus.

The very thought of the imminence of God is very sure to bring awe to mankind as they realize the holiness, the absolute perfection of the Almighty and their own blemishes and imperfections in contrast. The multitude glorified God, not with loud hosannas, but with a reverential appreciation of the fact that a great Prophet, a great Teacher, was in their midst, and that God was thus with him, saying, "God hath visited his people." The Jews at that time looked back to God's special dealings with their fathers, in which miracles attested the Lord's favor. They remembered also the promise that a Prophet like unto Moses would be raised up to them with still greater power than Moses. They expected to some extent what Peter refers to in Acts 3:19-21, that "times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord"--that the Lord Jehovah would manifest his favor toward his

people in reviving them, blessing them, sending them times of restitution spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets.

PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING.

Their anticipations were quite correct: Jesus was the great Prophet, the representative of the Father and of his favor. And yet how long the test of faith! How long the period necessary for the raising up of the members of the body of Christ, and until the heavenly Father's plan should thus be fully developed and the times of restitution fully ushered in at the second advent of the Lord. Our Redeemer's work of healing and of awakening from the sleep of death were merely premonitions or foreshadowings or illustrations of the great universal blessings coming to mankind through the merit of his obedience even unto death as our sin offering. No wonder the message of Jesus and his work spread over all parts of the country.

A greater work was being accomplished by our Lord's miracles than was apparent at the time. We are inclined to be surprised that only about "five hundred brethren" were gathered during the Lord's ministry--that only that number were counted worthy of the name brethren and of the privilege of meeting our Lord after his resurrection during the forty days. However, we may reasonably suppose that under the new dispensation, under the ministries of the apostles from Pentecost onward, a large fruitage was found to our Lord's ministry. For instance, we would think it very probable that this widow of Nain and her son would ultimately become followers of Jesus, and that others in that multitude who witnessed the miracle and who were in proper condition of heart would therein find a sufficiency for a foundation to their faith in the Messiah. We cannot doubt either that after "the middle wall of partition" had been broken down, and Cornelius the first Gentile convert had been brought into faith-fellowship, this centurion, whose servant was healed and who manifested every way so noble a character, would be one who would be specially susceptible to the message of grace and truth. One lesson we may learn from this is that we must not at once look for the full fruitage to our own efforts in the Lord's service. We must be content to labor and to wait, and must realize that the Lord himself is behind his Word, his message, making the selections of those whom he esteems worthy of joint-heirship in his Kingdom. Another thought would be that there may be worldly persons who may now come to some knowledge of the Truth and yet not be blessed fully by it--who will by and by, under the trials and difficulties of the time of trouble, or later on during the Millennial age, be profited through our ministries of the Truth and our present endeavors to glorify the Lord in our bodies and spirits which are his.

Let us then scatter the good seed everywhere as we have opportunity, for we know not which shall prosper, this or that. Sometimes that upon which we bestowed the greatest zeal and effort proves fruitless, and sometimes that from

which we expected the least proves very fruitful. Let us remember that the Lord will reward us according to our zeal or efforts, and not according to results; and indeed the

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chief results he seeks are in ourselves, in the development of the graces of his Spirit, which will manifest themselves in so many ways in connection with our love for him, for his message, for the brethren, yea, for the whole world of mankind, even for our enemies.

"QUICKEN YOUR MORTAL BODIES"

Our Lord's ministries of healing lasted but a few years and reached comparatively few of the Jewish people, but since he ascended he has been carrying on a work of healing on a still higher plane--through his disciples whom he acknowledges as "members of his body." (1 Cor. 21:27.) Operating through these, many eyes of understanding have been opened, many deaf ears have been unstopped, many morally halt and lame have been cured, and many have been raised from the dead in the sense that the Apostle refers to when he says, "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" and again, "If ye be risen with Christ seek those things which are above;" and again, "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."--Eph. 2:1; Col. 3:1; Rom. 8:11.

If we are inclined to marvel that the Jews rejected Jesus after seeing his mighty works, what might be said of us if for any reason we become doubters or unfaithful to him who has so clearly spoken to us from heaven, by whose stripes we have been healed and who have realized him to be indeed the resurrection and the life? Whoever, therefore, has experienced this quickening to newness of life, this begetting of the Spirit, has come under so clear a demonstration of the divine power and goodness and wisdom and love operating through Jesus as to be without excuse "if they fall away." Hence the Apostle tells us that it would be "impossible to renew them again unto repentance." (Heb. 6:6.) He tells us that in their case such a falling away would be a wilful act, not one of ignorance or weakness, and that to thus fall away would imply the same attitude of heart which the Jews entertained toward our Lord when he was with them--that it would be virtually crucifying the Lord afresh and putting him to an open shame.--Heb. 6:6.

But, dearly beloved, to use the Apostle's thought, we have more confidence in each other than to surmise such an unworthy ending to our call, such an unworthy response to the mercies and favors which we enjoy at the hands of him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Let us be faithful, let us remember that the resurrection work begun in us as New Creatures is the one which is to be completed by the grace of God in the First Resurrection,

when in a moment of change we shall be like our Lord, see him as he is and share his glory.

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A VOICE FROM OVER THE SEA.

--FROM OUR SOCIETY'S LONDON REPRESENTATIVE--

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:

I have noticed that which seems to be a pointed corroboration of the parallel which you gave in the TOWER a little while back when you showed that the culmination of the "time of trouble" might be expected in 1915, since the Gentile powers have a lease which runs to the end of 1914. I refer to the first dispensation and its culmination in the year of the flood. I think this year with all of its particularized events is intended as a forecast of the year of trouble, 1915, A.D. I will put my thoughts as briefly as possible.

Since our Lord said, "It shall be in the days of the Son of Man as it was in the days of Noah," we have his authority for a comparison of the times, and this has led to the thoughts:--

(1) That the whole of the first dispensation is a miniature

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of the permission of evil, the end of the first dispensation and the end of the permission of evil being alike in that they end in catastrophe.

(2) The race which was destroyed at the flood represented Adam's whole progeny; while the replenishing under Noah represents the new race which shall find life under the Life-giver, the Everlasting Father, our Lord and his Bride.

(3) Noah and his family, therefore, do not represent those of the human family which will be carried over from this present evil world into the Kingdom of heaven soon to be established on the earth. Rather he and his family with the ark represent the Church. Lifted up above the whole earth, saved by the flood, they will be preserved from the terror of the trouble, and "when the trouble is overpast" will come down from heaven to bless and replenish the earth.

But it is in reference to the time features that I now write. From the day when Bible chronology was seen so explicitly, accounts of time in the Scriptures have always demanded their full measure of regard; and the account of the days of the year of the flood, given so particularly, have always been regarded as of importance. But as the forty days of rain and of the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep seem so clearly to correspond with the forty years of the present harvest, one has, perhaps naturally, looked for the other periods of the flood year to follow, in type, on into the establishment of the Kingdom. But without result, for

there seems to be a complete lack of Scripture corroboration of this thought. Now, I think that way is not the correct one, and that probably we should view the matter from this standpoint:--

(4) That the first dispensation covers the entire period of evil under present ruling powers, which last until October, 1914, A.D.; and that

(5) The year of trouble so remarkably detailed is a figure of the year of trouble, 1915, A.D., and that probably the details fit exactly to the events of this year.

If the kingdoms of this world are undermined, as many Scriptures and parallels indicate will be the case, when the restraining power of God is removed little will be needed to bring about their destruction. Probably the forty days will be ample for the overthrow and utter ruin. The remaining part of the 150 will serve to let anarchy have its raging and tossing whirlpool, and, to an extent, to exhaust itself. From that time the trouble will begin to abate, partly for lack of power, and partly because the horror and desolation is being felt. The raven may signify that even yet trouble is rampant. It found no need to return to the ark, while the gentle dove soon came back. But a little later the dove brings the olive leaf: there is capitulation, the trouble is fast dying down and peace is wanted. Soon the waters are dried up, and on the "first day of the first month" of a new and blessed year and dispensation the earth is ready to be blessed by those whom God has prepared.

No doubt most of these thoughts are old to you; but I wonder if you have connected the year of the flood with the year of trouble, and if you have whether you think this is the type. A little time ago one was almost precluded from seeing the above by reason of the thought that all the trouble would be over in October, A.D., 1914. Much love to you, as ever.

Your brother in the Lord, J. HEMERY.

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SEMI-MONTHLY.

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KEY TO THE BEREAN LESSONS.

The friends everywhere are growing in their appreciation of these studies. Rightly conducted they are entertaining as well as profitable. We remind all once more of the meaning of the abbreviations used: Z'05 refers to the WATCH TOWER of 1905, mentioning page, column and paragraph (par.). The first six letters of the alphabet refer to the six volumes of Dawn or Studies; T for Tabernacle Shadows; H for the hell booklet; S for Spiritism pamphlet.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

THE "HELL CYCLE" STARTED

IN "THE WESTMINSTER," a Presbyterian journal, Philadelphia, Reverend H. H. Barstow predicts a return to "The Hell Cycle." He says:

"We ministers have easily caught the cue from the popular demand, and have fed the people the love of God and the beauty of holiness and the doctrines of sweetness and light--shall I say it?--ad nauseam."

He believes that the signs of the times indicate that "the pendulum has touched its limit in that direction; that the cycle of hell-fire--figurative, yes, but for that reason all the more awful and appalling--is due once more." Are we to understand the gentleman to mean that the preachers merely watch the popular sentiment that they may preach what will please the majority of the people? Does he mean that it was because of the popular demand which he mentions that he was preaching the love of God, the beauty of holiness, etc.? Evidently he has been preaching more of it than he believed, as is indicated by his nausea in connection with these teachings. His nausea is somewhat relieved now, and he feels a little more free to speak against the beauty of holiness and the love of God because he realizes that the "popular demand" is turning his way again and bids fair for another hell-fire cycle.

This is what we have feared for some time--that a great many preachers are merely endeavoring to find the popular demand, and are proportionately careless respecting the will and Word of the living God. They

have been telling the people of their dreams respecting politics, woman's rights, social fads, etc., and sending them off wholesale to a dreamy heaven quite contrary to the Word of God. The people are waking up to a realization of the fact that they have been fed ad nauseam something unsatisfying, and an increasingly large proportion of the intelligent, especially of the male sex, no longer attend such preaching. Reverend Barstow believes he has the secret, and that "popular demand" is moving toward a love for hell-fire for other people, and that if he gets in on the tidal wave soon enough it will score him a big success.

Perhaps the gentleman is mistaken. We believe he is, and that he will find it out before very long. In our opinion many people are getting awake, so that they begin to know the difference between dreams and realities, and are wanting something more substantial. Their craving is in line with the divine direction, "He that hath a dream let him tell a dream, but he that hath my Word let him speak my Word."--Jer. 23:28.

After calling attention to the wave of sentiment in favor of pure politics that is sweeping over the country and the general arousing of the public conscience on the subject of graft, the gentleman says:

"This is our revival, the answer to our prayers. And this is the cause and heart of it. What is true in the civic sphere is just as true in the spiritual, and the two are not to be separated. I firmly believe that the hearts and consciences of the people are ready for the preaching of judgment on sin, without dilution or reservation, given with the clear note of Christ to the Pharisees and laid hot upon life for this world and the future: 'How can ye escape the damnation of hell?' Let love glow undimmed--but let justice flame. The fear of the Lord is still the beginning of wisdom; and some will never learn wisdom unless fear be stirred. The Felixes of the home, the mart and the throne need to tremble at the message of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, and we all have them in our congregations. Let the hell-fire cycle strike once more."

So this is the revival that has come in answer to prayers--not a revival of the Lord's saints to renewed zeal in self-sacrifice on behalf of the divine Word and plan, nor a conversion of sinners to repentance and reformation of life and consecration to God, but merely the arousing of the spirit of righteous indignation against trusts and boodlers--an indignation which is usually fraught with anger, malice, hatred, strife, etc. This is what one minister at least has been preaching for, and is now rejoicing that his prayers have been heard. It is well that he states himself so exactly: on

our part we see the uncovering of rottenness in political and financial circles highly esteemed amongst men, and to us it reads that we are in the day that the Lord referred to when he said that whatsoever things were hidden would be made manifest.

This manifestation of the hidden corruption of the hearts of the respectable, the wealthy, the influential, is not, so far as we know, leading others to paths of righteousness, but rather exciting their bitterness and resentment--that others have had the advantage of greater opportunities for the accumulation of vast wealth by unscrupulous means, and chagrin on their part that the opportunity had not been their own, and the determination that if they cannot at some time in the future find a prospect for accumulating vast riches in some such manner they will be ready to wreck the interests of those who have fared better. From our standpoint this uncovering of the weaknesses of human nature means loss of confidence in the rich and influential generally, and spells eventually the hatred which ere long will fulfil the prediction, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you."--James 5:1.

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It strikes us as quite pharisaical on the part of the majority of mankind to make a great ado over the shortcomings of the rich, when in their own hearts the majority well know that the only reason they did not do likewise was that they did not have the opportunity. God forbid that we should say that there are no honest people in the world, but our experience with humanity leads us to the conclusion that the majority have their price--some higher and some lower. Experience, too, shows that those who decry cupidity in others are themselves frequently found wanting when tried in the balances. For instance, one of the most prominent of these life-insurance presidents went into office as a thorough reformer; he heartily reprobated the shortcomings of his predecessors. Do we not usually find it the same with politicians? The reformer of one election needs to be reformed at another election. The trouble is that the whole human family is weak and imperfect through the fall, and while they would do good evil is present with them, and the temptations which assail are more than their characters will stand. As for the stronger characters in the world, those moulded and fashioned by the power of divine truth, they are rarely put in such positions of honor and trust, being too much out of harmony with the world and its spirit to be chosen. Even the preachers are accused of wire-pulling in connection with their securing desirable charges and principal offices in their denominations.

Our Lord did not tolerate unrighteousness or injustice

in any sense of the word, and his most scathing criticisms were hurled against the Pharisees because of their hypocrisy, because they pretended to be better than they really were. This gives us the thought that in the Lord's estimation honesty is one of the noblest traits of character, and that it would be more pleasing in his sight for his followers to acknowledge that the whole world is imperfect through the fall, that all need the divine mercy, and to point each other forward to the glorious Kingdom of righteousness which the Lord alone can establish, than that they should self-righteously point at the few evil-doers who had good opportunities, and attempt to justify the majority of the race as though they were perfect, sinless.

Let us watch and pray against the temptations which lie in our path: let us sympathize with the exposure of everything that is sinful; but let us not glory in the righteousness of the majority, who have not been found unfaithful because they have not been tempted in any considerable measure. Let us sympathize with the stopping of wrong doings while sympathizing also with the wrong doer and with the whole world in its depravity. Let us remember that the world has not the advantage of the higher ambitions and the new nature which are possessed by the Lord's consecrated followers and let us have sympathy with them, while hoping and waiting and praying, "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

EVOLUTION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The world, perhaps, holds no other such single collection of scientific curiosities as can be found in the British Museum. Gallery after gallery, cabinet after cabinet, and mile after mile of shelving, exhibit a bewildering array of beasts, birds, fishes and moving creatures of every kind, stuffed and preserved, along with prehistoric relics, fossil forms and all the various specimens of organic life.

Here would be the place of all others for the scientific skeptic of the day to trace the lineage of which he boasts, and to demonstrate his descent from the prehistoric monkey. But, unfortunately, the men who have the greatest opportunities do not always make the best improvement of them; and a large proportion of the talk about scientific infidelity comes from men who know nothing of science. The editor of the "New York Evangelist" publishes the following article containing the testimony from Mr. Etheridge, who stood at the head of the Natural Science department of the British Museum:

"Our friend and fellow-traveller in Palestine, Prof. George E. Post, is, as our readers are aware, a man of

extensive attainments and wide and acute observation of facts and phenomena--in short, a man of science in the true sense. On the alert for whatever is worthy of study, it was a matter of course that while recently in London in quest of instruments and apparatus for the Medical College at Beirut, he should spend some portion of his time in the British Museum--that immense storehouse of all that remains to us of the arts, the learning and life-conditions of the ages. Treated with the utmost courtesy by the large circle of noted men and scholars, Dr. Post very naturally, in the course of his visits to this great centre of attraction, came in contact with Mr. Etheridge, than whom no one is more able to interpret and sum up whatever is there to be seen. Indeed, he had a special errand with him, and it thus

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fell out, in common phrase in a good sense, that the recognized British expert in all these matters was 'interviewed' by our American missionary and man of science as to his conclusions, his summing up of the bearings of the entire deposit there collected in the department of Natural History, and set in order as nowhere else in the world. And thanks to a correspondent, a former colleague of Dr. Post, we have here an account of Mr. Etheridge's conclusions. They are given only in summary, but are clear and satisfactory as to what may be learned from a full study of the remains of all pre-historic periods. Their decisive bearing on the controversies of the day will be apparent to all. It is seldom that so much that is significant and entitled to great, even conclusive weight, is embraced in the same space:

"London, Aug. 2, 1885.

"Yesterday I was in the Natural History department of the British Museum. I had business touching some fossils which I found in the Lattakia Miocene and Pliocene clay beds, and about which I wrote an article which appeared in "Nature" last year. Mr. Etheridge, F.R.S., kindly examined and named them. I was anxious to hear what a first-rate working scientist, with perhaps the largest opportunity for induction in the world, would say on Darwinian Evolution. So, after he had shown me all the wonders of the establishment, I asked him whether, after all, this was not the working out of mind and Providence. He turned to me with a clear, honest look into my eyes, and replied, "In all this great Museum there is not a particle of evidence of transmutation of species. Nine-tenths of the talk of evolutionists is sheer nonsense, not founded on observation, and wholly unsupported by fact. Men adopt a theory and then strain their facts to support it. I read in all their books, but they make no impression on my belief in

the stability of species. Moreover, the talk of the great antiquity of man is of the same value. There is no such thing as a fossil man. Men are ready to regard you as a fool if you do not go with them in all their vagaries. But this Museum is full of proofs of the utter falsity of their views."

"I have condensed very much, but you may spread this out over twenty minutes, and imagine what a comfort it was to hear it. I do not propose to surrender yet even to theistic evolution, which seems to me at best a bad name for God's creation."

Now we want to hear the verdict of bar-room scientists, saloon geologists and horse-shed philosophers, who are more anxious to establish a connection with the monkeys and baboons than with Adam, who "was the son of God."--From "The Armory."

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WHEELING AND LOUISVILLE CONVENTIONS.

THE interest in Wheeling seemed to warrant us in giving it a second One-Day Convention sooner than usual--on March 18. The topic for the public service was "Resurrection of Damnation." The forenoon discourse was given in Odd Fellows' Hall and was well attended by the interested, though not publicly announced. That discourse was published in the secular journals which many of you receive. The afternoon discourse was for the public. The services were held in Court Theater, the largest auditorium in the city; the attendance was large, and the attention and interest manifested were very gratifying indeed. The number present was estimated at 1400. At this meeting announcement was made for two chart talks on the following Sunday in a smaller auditorium. Brother A. E. Williamson filled the appointments and had excellent hearings at both sessions. Our thought is that it requires several discourses to mature the interest first aroused, and that of the thousands who hear with some degree of interest only a small number are to be expected to have the deep interest which could only be looked for in the fully consecrated of the Lord's people. The dear friends at Wheeling did nobly and feel very much encouraged.

Louisville, Ky., had its first One-Day Convention on March 25. The locally interested were ably seconded in their efforts to make the Convention a success by dear friends residing in nearby communities. Their mutual efforts under the Lord's blessing and providential guidance resulted in a great arousing of the people of that vicinity.

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At the morning session, which was not advertised, quite a goodly gathering appeared. Some excellent testimonies were given for about an hour preceding a morning discourse by Brother Russell, which has already been reported in the secular journals, seen by many of you. The afternoon meeting in McCauley's Theater was jammed to its fullest capacity, about a hundred being seated on the rear of the stage and considerable numbers standing. The police ordered the doors locked that no more should be admitted, claiming that no more could be admitted with safety. Those in a position to estimate reckoned that there were 2000 present, and that an equally large number were unable to gain admittance; to the latter, however, were distributed more than 1100 copies of the WATCH TOWER treating on the subject of hell from the Bible standpoint. The audience gave closest attention for nearly two hours, and our hope is that some of them were there started on a more rational view of the divine Word, and inspired to more loving and more reverent conceptions of the divine character.

We are not to expect that a large proportion in such audiences would be saints, permitted of the Lord to see and understand clearly all the riches of his grace, but we do have reason for believing that there were some of this class, and that they received help and impetus in a good way, and that others were helped nearer to the Lord and further from sin. We were introduced to one brother, now deeply consecrated, and a very fine man, a doctor, and were informed that only a short time ago he was practically an infidel as well as a drunkard, and that he was reclaimed through the reading of MILLENNIAL DAWN, and has been helpful in the

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bringing of many in that vicinity to the knowledge of God and of his Word. Items of this kind are very encouraging, but at all events we know that the Lord's blessing is always with his own Word, and that it will accomplish the purpose for which he sent it, and will not return unto him void. We know that this Gospel age will gather out the full number of the elect, and prepare them for the glory, honor, immortality and the great work of the Millennial age. Praise and honor and glory to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb!

THE BRIDEGROOM'S DOVE.

--CANT. 2:14--

"My Dove!" The Bridegroom speaks to whom?
Whom think'st thou, meaneth He?

Say, O my soul! canst thou presume
He thus addresseth thee?
Yes, 'tis the Bridegroom's voice of love,
Calling thee, O my soul! His dove!

The Dove is gentle, mild and meek:
Deserve I, then, the name?
I look within in vain to seek
Aught which can give a claim:
Yet, made so by redeeming love,
My soul, thou art the Bridegroom's Dove!

Methinks, my soul, that thou may'st see,
In this endearing word,
Reasons why Jesus likens thee
To this defenceless bird;
Reasons which show the Bridegroom's love
To His poor helpless, timid Dove!

The Dove hath neither claw nor sting,
Nor weapon for the fight;
She owes her safety to her wing,
Her victory to flight.
A shelter hath the Bridegroom's love
Provided for His helpless Dove!

As the poor Dove, before the Hawk,
Quick to her refuge flies,
So need I, in my daily walk,
The wings which faith supplies
To bear me where the Bridegroom's love
Places beyond all harm His Dove!

My soul, of native power bereft,
To Calvary repairs:
Immanuel is the rocky cleft
The secret of the stairs!
Since placed there by the Bridegroom's love,
What evil can befall His Dove?

My soul, now hid within a rock,
(The "Rock of Ages" called),
Amid the universal shock
Is fearless, unappalled.
A cleft therein, prepared by love,
In safety hides the Bridegroom's Dove!

O happy Dove! thus weak, thus safe;
Do I resemble her?
Then to my soul, O Lord! vouchsafe
A dove-like character.
Pure, harmless, gentle, full of love,
Make me in spirit, Lord, a Dove!

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

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"I HAVE PRAYED FOR THEE."

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."--Luke 22:31,32.

AS the Passover season approached our Lord not only said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death," and found himself pleading "with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him out of death;" but additionally he had great solicitude for his dear followers, and sought to arouse them to an appreciation of the hour of temptation into which they were entering, saying, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Not only was that the most trying time of our Lord's earthly experience, but it was also the most trying time for his apostles, and particularly for Judas and Peter. Both of these men were prominent amongst the apostles, the one as the treasurer and purchasing agent of the little group, the other as a specially bold champion of the Lord's cause, who had, as the mouthpiece of the twelve, announced their faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and who had publicly declared that although all men should forsake the Lord he would not do so. From the human standpoint it would have been surmised that any temptation that might come upon those thirteen would have been upon the weaker and less prominent ones and not upon the three most prominent.

THREE TEMPTED--VARIANT RESULTS

We may draw some valuable lessons from noting the course of the three specially tempted. Our Lord's course was the proper one, humility, fear, an appreciation of the trials leading to watchfulness and prayer. He escaped and came out of the trial stronger every way, and on the day of his public arraignment before the priests and Pilate, and when he was crucified before the multitude, he was the calmest of the calm, for the Lord had strengthened him. He is our pattern: our course should similarly be one that would not deny dangers, would not boast of our courage, strength, but would lean upon the arm of the Lord and through his grace come off conquerors.

Peter's case we remember well: A good man of strong character, he realized not his danger, and hence was not prepared for the arts of Satan, by which he was placed in so trying a position that his boasted courage fled, his wonted strength of character vanished, he denied his Lord even with profanity. What a lesson to us of human frailty, and of how we ourselves might be overtaken and ensnared by the wiles of the devil. How

much each one needs to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation--lest we succumb to temptation. How much we each need to remember the prayer the Lord gave us as an ensample, "Abandon us not in temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

That was a fateful time for Judas: If the Adversary could so juggle, deceive and mislead the true-hearted

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Peter because he was off his guard in watching and praying, what might we not expect he might be able to accomplish with Judas, whose heart was not right, who was selfish, self-seeking, ambitious, covetous? We cannot wonder that Satan's victory over Judas was soon accomplished--that he fell quickly into the snare of the Adversary, and lent his heart and energy to the betrayal of the Master for thirty pieces of silver. His case was very different from that of Peter, the loyal, the true, for the moment bewildered and off his guard and fearful. The cases of the two men are very different because, although the danger was the same, their hearts were in different conditions.

"TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES"

Is it not so with all of the Lord's followers? Is not this the secret of the differing results of temptation as they surely come to each one of us? The Judas class of today and always are those who when temptation comes receive it, entertain it, enter into the spirit of the ambition or otherwise wrong allurements, and are swallowed up by it. The Peter class is also with us ever since; and today the true-hearted, but not sufficiently watching and praying and on guard against the Adversary's allurements, are at times taken unawares, and for a moment not only dishonor the Lord but dishonor their own hearts and consciences also. The difference between these two classes is the heart condition: the Peter class do those things which they do not wish to do, or leave undone those things which they really desire to do, and their difficulty lies evidently in the weakness of their flesh, in the power of the Adversary, and in their failure to lay hold upon the help which the Lord has promised, the succor in their time of need.

The Judas class are those whose hearts are not loyal but selfish, and who therefore enter into the Adversary's scheme heartily, and are not, in their wrong course, going contrary to their own wills but in harmony therewith. The difference in God's sight is seen in that, although both Peter and Judas repented, the one was accepted back to divine favor, the other was not--the one who was merely entrapped, but who at heart was not disloyal, was restored and blessed; the other, though not without conscience, as shown by his

later remorse, was without the genuine loyalty of heart which in the Lord's sight is indispensable, and the absence of which, considering Judas' intimate acquaintance with the Lord, was inexcusable.

Our Lord's words in our text give us the assurance that, because of this difference in the hearts of the two men, he could properly be the advocate of the one before the Father but not the advocate of the other. He could stand for and represent the one who at heart was loyal to him, however weak his flesh, however careless he might be of the divine provision for his protection. He was still one of the Lord's sheep, therefore subject to the Shepherd's care. He was still one of the Lord's members, therefore subject to the oversight and interest of the Head in his welfare. He was still one of the members of the Lord's espoused virgin Church, whom he loved and for whom he gave his life, and for whom, therefore, he might properly and did make supplication as the betrothed Bridegroom.

But in the case of Judas, his heart alienated through selfishness, any appreciation for the Lord and love for him which he possessed at the beginning of the ministry had evidently died, been swallowed up of selfishness and ambition--and into that heart thus fully withdrawn from the Lord we are told Satan entered. By thus willingly withdrawing his heart and strength and consecration from the Lord and lending the same of deliberate intention to self-seeking, he became a tool of the Adversary. As our Master said, "It must needs be that offences come"--that he should be crucified--"but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh."

SIMILAR CONDITIONS TODAY

In our experience the Passover season has always been one of special danger, special besetment to the Lord's consecrated people. For some reason unknown to us the Adversary seems to be permitted to have special power at this time. We have noticed time after time that, as we approach the Passover season, Satan's activity has been manifested by some kind of an attack upon the Truth and by some kind of a special trial or test upon the Truth in connection therewith. Although we know in advance that none of the Lord's disciples true at heart will be plucked out of his hand by the Adversary, nevertheless we fancy that we can sympathize to some extent with our Lord's feelings when he exhorted the disciples to watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation.

True, Jesus knew who it was that should betray him, and was, therefore, not surprised or disconcerted in respect to Judas' course; and yet, undoubtedly, the thought that one who had eaten bread with him should "lift up his heel against him" (John 13:18), one who had been his companion, helper, familiar friend, should become his enemy (Psalm 41:9), all this must have had

a saddening effect upon our dear Master, who could assuredly sympathize with even his bitterest enemies as well as with those who, Peter-like, failed at the first to withstand the Adversary's assault but who subsequently are recovered by divine mercy and aid.

Since the body of Christ is one, and since our Lord declares that whatsoever is done to one of the least of his members is done to him, it follows that the Judas class and the Peter class all down through the Gospel age to the present moment have been betraying the Lord in proportion as they have betrayed or denied his members. We, therefore, should note the significance of his statement to Peter, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

For all of the Peter class the Lord is the Head, the Representative, the Advocate before the Father. Without his aid, without appearance for us and application to us of the merit of his own sacrifice, none of us could stand, all would be judged unworthy, unfit to have part or lot in the great blessings which the Lord has invited

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us to share with Jesus. And as the Master prayed for such, intercedes for such, makes good the unwilling imperfections of such, so should all who have his Spirit feel generously, kindly, sympathetically, speak helpfully to the Peter class. But as the Master had no such words of sympathy for Judas, the open and premeditated enemy and traitor, so likewise, whatever our sorrowful feelings for such may be, there is no room for any expression of sympathy or cooperation in their evil work: as for any of the apostles to cooperate with Judas would have meant a share in his evil deeds.

"SIFT YOU AS WHEAT"

However much sympathy we may feel with Peter and others of similar character and experience--since, however much we may rejoice with him that the Lord prayed for him so that his carelessness in the matter of watching and praying for himself did not result in his undoing and his loss of relationship to the Lord--nevertheless we should strive not to be of the Peter class, but of the class represented by our Lord himself. Let us be of the watching, praying and faithful kind, who will not be overtaken by the Adversary's temptations of the present time.

We are in the "harvest" time; the separation of the wheat from the tares is due, and, more than this, the separation of the chaff from the wheat is also due--a sifting process. While this figure may to some extent fit to the experiences of the Church in the past, we are sure that it does specially apply to the Church in the "ends of the ages"--to those who were living in the end or harvest of the Jewish age, and to those who are now

living in the end or harvest of the Gospel age. And our Lord is pleased to permit these siftings; they are necessary, apparently, that the Judas class may be entirely sifted out, and that the Peter class may be so thoroughly stirred up by the trials and difficulties and realization of their own weaknesses, and the knowledge that they would utterly fail without the Lord's sustaining grace, that these lessons may prove profitable to them, developing in them more and more of meekness, watchfulness, prayerfulness and trust in our all-powerful Head.

We remember in this connection our Lord's words which indicate that the present will be a time of trial which "will try all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth." (Rev. 3:10.) We remember the Apostle's statement also that it will be a time of fiery trial upon those who are of the true Church, saying, "Every man's work shall be tried so as by fire," and his assurance is that only the gold, silver and precious stones of faith, hope and love will abide the fiery trial.--I Cor. 3:13.

"THE FIRE OF THAT DAY"

Wherever perfect love has not been attained the "fire" of this day, the siftings of this day, will manifest it--the Lord will separate the deficient ones. This may cause us sorrow, as earthly ties are severed and fond hopes blighted; nevertheless the Lord's message to us on the subject is figuratively represented in the command which he gave to Aaron and his sons, when two of the under-priesthood perished because they offered strange fire before the Lord which he had not commanded them. (Lev. 10:1.) Moses as the Lord's mouthpiece declared that the survivors in the priesthood must make no mourning or lamentation for those whom the Lord had cut off. To have done so would have implied disloyalty to the Lord and a failure to appreciate his wisdom and justice and love in the matter.--Lev. 10:6.

How searching will be the tests which will prove our love and loyalty to the Lord and his divine arrangements is clearly intimated in our Lord's prophecy respecting our day when he said that the sifting would be of such a kind as would "deceive if it were possible the very elect." It will not be possible to deceive the very elect, because for these our glorious Head stands

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sponsor. They are his followers, they are his betrothed, they are his members; he is their Head and Representative and Ambassador; he intercedes, supplicates, prays for them, and their faith will fail not because they are his, because--however imperfect they may be as respects the flesh--at heart they are perfect, thoroughly loyal to him and to his cause, to their fellow-members.

So, then, we sound again, as we have previously done at this season of the year, the Master's words, "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Our words, like the Master's will fall on two classes--some will make light of the warning and expose themselves to danger; others will hearken to the warning of the Master's voice, and to them it will be a part of the power of God unto their preservation.

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FORGIVEN MUCH, SHE LOVED MUCH.

--LUKE 7:36-50.--APRIL 22.--

Golden Text:--"Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

THE MIRACLES at Capernaum and at Nain spread the fame of Jesus far and near in Palestine, and led a prominent Pharisee named Simon to press upon the Master an invitation for dinner. Not that Simon was a disciple and believer, but rather that as a prominent man he posed as a liberal one also, affecting that although fully content with himself and the expectations of the Pharisees he had nothing to lose nor to fear from the new and wonderful Teacher. Jesus accepted the invitation, and after the manner of the time reclined at the table with the Pharisee and the other guests. At an earlier date the Jews had been accustomed to sit upon the floor cross-legged when eating, but had changed this for the Persian custom of a sloping couch table, where the guests reclined resting upon the left arm while feeding themselves with the right hand, the feet extending back from the table portion of the couch.

Privacy in the home is still unusual in the East. Neighbors, friends, visitors, feel at liberty to come and go much as

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they please, sometimes coming in to converse with the guests while dinner is being served. Thus it was that while Jesus and others were at dinner a woman of the city, a disreputable character--possibly Mary of Magdala, but surely not Mary of Bethany, the sister of Lazarus--came into the room with a vial of very precious ointment in her hand, walked to the back of the table couch and directly to the feet of Jesus. Her intention evidently was to anoint his feet with the ointment, but ere she had succeeded in breaking the seals and unstopping the vial her pent-up feelings found expression in a gush of tears which rained upon the Master's feet--an indignity where she had intended honor. Quickly unfastening her hair she used it as a towel to dry the feet, and then, as expressive of her love and sympathy and adoration, while wiping the feet she kissed them repeatedly (for so the Greek text implies). Then, opening the alabaster vase, she poured

upon the blessed feet the sweet, odorous ointment as originally intended.

THE PHARISEE AN EVIL SURMISER

The Pharisee said nothing, but in his heart concluded that he now had proof that Jesus was not a prophet, else he would have known intuitively that the woman was a sinner, and would have repulsed her approach even to his feet, and would have denounced her and her sinful life in no measured terms. Simon, however, was measuring the Lord by his own standard, for he appreciated not the loving sympathy of Jesus' heart, and that, although he recognized the woman as a sinner, he had compassion upon her--especially in view of the evidence she gave of shame, contrition and reformation. The incident furnishes us with a blessed illustration of our Lord's sympathy for those who come unto him accepting his mercy and love and forgiveness, however unworthy they may be of his fellowship.

One thing is noteworthy: this Pharisee seems to have entertained no thought of impurity on the part of our Lord, or that there was any acquaintance between him and the sinful woman who did him honor. Evidently the Lord's face and general demeanor, etc., were such as to preclude all thought of evil on his part. So should it be with all of the Lord's followers--their words, their manner, their looks, should all witness to that high and lofty standard of character which would place them above reproach or insinuation. It may not be possible for us to manifest so high and lofty a standard as did our Lord, because he was perfect while we are imperfect; but we should aim for his standards as nearly as possible.

Jesus answered Simon's unexpressed thought with a little parable concerning two debtors, the one owing his Master five hundred pence, the other owing fifty pence. When both parties were forgiven, which debtor would appreciate the more the creditor's generosity? which would have the more love for him? The question was addressed to Pharisee Simon, who answered that he supposed the one who had been forgiven most. This off-hand answer seems to imply that Simon did not up to this moment realize the bearing of the parable upon his own case and that of the woman--that he represented the debtor owing fifty pence, the woman, the greater sinner, owing five hundred.

A sin is a sin, a violation of the divine law, whether it be in a great matter or in a lesser matter. We are not to understand that in God's sight there is any difference as to enormities of sin, but, as here illustrated, that some are more deeply involved in it than are others--ten times as deeply. The point we are to remember, however, is that all sin is a transgression of the divine law, and that no sinner can have the divine favor of eternal life; hence, whatever our degree of sin it must be gotten rid of if we would come back into harmony with God and escape the penalty of sin and obtain the gift of God, eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. From this standpoint it was as necessary for the Pharisee to

have his sins forgiven as for the woman to have hers forgiven, as neither could enter into life except as they first would be purged from sin. From God's standpoint undoubtedly Simon was in a better attitude than this sinful woman--he was nearer to God, nearer to righteousness; but since he could not attain to full righteousness and perfection in himself, but must depend upon divine mercy for the forgiveness of his sin, he was just as dependent as was the woman. As for God, it was just as easy for him to forgive the greater sins as to forgive the lesser ones, provided the required conditions were met by the sinner.

Our lesson illustrates this, and shows the attitude of those who are in condition to be approved of the Lord--to be forgiven. The parable here supposes the desire and request for forgiveness on the part of the debtors and the willingness of the Lord to cancel the debt for both. In the illustration before us we see Simon indifferent because he felt that his sin was less, the woman repentant because she felt that her sin was great. To the repentant one only could God's grace extend mercy; hence the woman was justified, her sins were forgiven, while the Pharisee, with really fewer sins, was unforgiven because he had not appealed for forgiveness nor appreciated properly his need therefor.

WITHOUT HUMILITY NO FORGIVENESS

How we see this principle illustrated all about us every day! Some of the finest, some of the noblest characters among men and women, like Simon the Pharisee, realize that they are ten-fold better than some of their neighbors who go to the Lord. They seem inclined to say within themselves, "Well, my neighbors should go and repent of their sins; surely they have need to do so. I hope that they will meet with mercy, turn over a new leaf and try to be different, as I am." These poor Pharisees know not how much they miss; they realize not that some of their more blemished neighbors and friends and acquaintances receive a forgiveness and divine blessing, while they lack these things because not sufficiently humble in heart to make the request--to come unto the Father for forgiveness through the only name given under heaven and amongst men whereby we must be saved.

We are not threatening such with eternal torment or any other dire punishment: we are merely pointing out their loss--that they fail to receive the fellowship, the forgiveness with God, the blessings and privileges which might be theirs, and from the standpoint of which they might attain to still greater favors and mercies under the high calling of this age. Surely, therefore, the loss suffered at present is great, regardless of any future retribution.

Here we see the reason why the Scriptures declare that

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not many great, not many wise, not many learned, not many noble or rich according to the course of this world, will be amongst the Lord's chosen ones and heirs of the Kingdom.

Why? Because these more favored ones, according to natural conditions, appreciate less the necessity of divine sympathy and assistance and forgiveness and help. Hence we find still that the Gospel of mercy and forgiveness appeals most directly to the sinner class, and this class it is continually lifting up out of the mire of sin and death, transforming them by the renewing of their minds, changing them from glory to glory, until some of them by the grace of God shall be heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ their Lord in the Kingdom and its glory, honor and immortality. It is not that our Lord Jesus loves less those who are more moral, more upright, more nearly by nature up to the standard of perfection. Nay! other things being equal, he certainly would love these the more.

For instance, note the Master's love for the young man who was very rich and who inquired what he should do to inherit the Kingdom. When the Lord pointed to the Law and the young man was able to say, "All these have I kept from my youth up," Jesus beholding him loved him--loved him, we may be sure, far more than he would have loved him had he been a reprobate character, a prodigal. But when it comes to the point that the moralist or man of noble character spurns divine favor and ignores his own blemishes, and when, on the other hand, the poor, the degraded, the prodigal, realizing their sins, cry out to the Lord for mercy and forgiveness, we can understand why the broken and the contrite heart is more acceptable to God and justified rather than the other. Let us, dear brethren, while rejoicing in every element of natural advantage and likeness to our Creator that may be ours, remember to be very humble, remember that we have nothing perfect, and hence that we could not commend ourselves to God; and that, in order to receive his blessing and favor, we must confess to him our sins and have his forgiveness, and that in the only channel and name in which he has provided it--Christ.

VIEWS FROM TWO STANDPOINTS

Simon had been congratulating himself that he was honoring the Master by having him to dinner because of his own honorable station in society, and that this poor woman was dishonoring him because of her inferior station and evil reputation. Our Lord reverses the picture before his mind by calling his attention to the fact that he had really neglected the usual hospitalities of the country as respects an honored guest, while the woman had made up for his lack. It was the custom of the country for a host to receive his guest with distinguished attention, to embrace him, to kiss him on the cheek when he entered, to have his head anointed with perfumed ointment and to have a servant wash his feet. Simon, as a wealthy and prominent man, knew all this, and would doubtless have followed the ordinary custom had his guest been one in high social standing; but his invitation had been of a patronizing sort. He felt that he was doing the Master an honor to bring him into his house, and that for the sake of others he would not wish that this honor

should seem too pronounced, because the followers of Jesus especially were ignorant, unlearned men and not used to the best customs of society. His own servants would occupy a higher social plane really than the disciples of Jesus, and hence he felt that he must restrain his manifestations of hospitality lest Jesus and his humble band and the public should get the impression that he really recognized Jesus, a Teacher, as his equal or his superior.

Our Lord in no unkind terms called Simon's attention to the fact that he neither gave him an anointing, nor kissed him, nor provided the washing for his feet, but that this poor woman had washed his feet with her tears, had kissed them, and had anointed them with a very precious ointment. The Master associated these facts of the moment with his parable, and declared that this was an indication of greater love which the woman bore and of her greater appreciation of his message of forgiveness and mercy. Her course intimated that she had accepted the Lord's declaration, and so now he probably formally declared to her that her sins were forgiven. To the Pharisee he explained that he, having less to be forgiven, had been less appreciative of the privilege of forgiveness, so the penitent sinner got the blessing and the much more nearly righteous Pharisee (holiness professor) failed to receive it.

"THY SINS BE FORGIVEN THEE"

What words could have been more sweet or more precious to the poor woman's ears! Surely she appreciated that declaration more than anything else our Lord could have said unto her. And so it is with all who approach the Lord as their Savior from the right standpoint. We do indeed rejoice subsequently to hear our Lord's message respecting the glory, honor and immortality which we may attain through his assistance, but the first message to every one of us must be, "Thy sins are forgiven thee"--otherwise we could have no peace, no joy, no hope of a glorious future. In other words, every other hope, every other blessing, is based upon this one--the forgiveness of our sins.

Let us make sure not only that we have thus come to the Lord recognizing our sins, manifesting our repentance for them, but let us be sure also that we have accepted the divine grace in and through the blood of Christ, and that we are trusting not in any righteousness of our own, but that we wholly lean upon the favors secured to us through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. Upon the strength of this faith we may bring our tears and our alabaster boxes of perfume of daily endeavor to serve and to please him who has done so much for us, but without our recognition of our sins and of his forgiveness we could bring nothing acceptable to him. In this connection also let us remember the Master's words to the woman in conclusion, "Go in peace,"

"THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE WHOLE"

Ah, none but the forgiven ones know the peace of God that passeth all understanding which comes into the hearts of those who hear the Master's assurance that their sins are all forgiven, covered by the robe of his righteousness. They and they alone can go in peace, and their peace will be in proportion to their faith, and their faith in proportion to their knowledge. It is to this end that the Lord gives us a full, clear and explicit explanation of what constitutes sin,

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what is the remedy for it, how that remedy has been provided, and how it is applied to us in proportion to our exercise of faith, and that our faith is manifested by our devotion.

Let us bear in mind that it was not the woman's works that saved her and brought her the Lord's favor, nor the ointment, nor the tears nor the kiss--it was the faith: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11:6.) According to our faith it shall be unto us. But let us not forget either that faith must work; that if it does not work it is a sure sign that it is dead. So surely as we have the true faith in the Lord, so surely good and honest hearts will bring forth worship, praise, honor to our Master and Redeemer. These conditions of our hearts will surely manifest themselves as did the woman's by tears, by services to the feet of the Master, by an anointing of the most precious perfume that we can bring.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF HIM"

The Prophet, speaking evidently of the living members of the body of Christ at the close of this dispensation, declares, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" There is a beauty, a grace, peculiar to our Lord, the Head; and each member of his body has some peculiar grace or quality of character-likeness to him. And so, when in the end of this age the last members of the Lord's body, the Church, announce in its due season the parousia of the Lord and that his Kingdom is at hand to be established, there is a beauty attaching to that in connection with this service, this message, in the sight of each other, in the sight of all who are of the household of faith, but not in the sight of the world, for, as the Apostle declares, "The world knoweth us not even as it knew him not."--1 John 3:1.

It is not our privilege or opportunity to anoint the Head of the body, the Lord Jesus. Simon and others of that time had that great privilege, however they used it. With us, however, the privilege still remains of anointing the feet members of the body of Christ, and day by day we are tested along this very line. To what extent do we love much the Lord and his members? Is it not in proportion to our appreciation of the divine love for us and for all mankind? If we love little we will honor little, if we love much

we will honor much.

Let us, then, avail ourselves of the privileges day by day of anointing the feet members of the body, realizing that whatsoever is done unto one of the least of these his brethren is done unto the Lord himself, and is a perfume of sweet odor to him. Let us be more gentle, more tender, more careful in our honoring and dealing with the feet members. Let us remember that they have trials and difficulties enough in their conflict with the tiresome journey of life, and that there must be no neglect of them on our part, for the opportunity of thus manifesting our love and devotion to the Lord is too great a privilege to be overlooked or slighted. Nor need we wait for opportunities to do great things: kind words and looks, a little assistance, may be the tears or the perfume as circumstances may permit.

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"THE SEED IS THE WORD OF GOD."

--MARK 4:1-20.--APRIL 29.--

OUR LORD had returned to the Sea of Galilee, where some of his earliest teachings had been given. Great multitudes were attracted to him by reason of the miracles he performed. Entering a boat he sat in the prow of it and taught the people on the shelving beach by various parables, similes, illustrations, the thing said never being the thing meant. One of these parables, constituting the basis of our lesson, is known as the parable of the Sower, though more accurately perhaps it might be described as the parable of the four kinds of soil, representing the four kinds of human hearts. The parable is introduced by the word.

"HEARKEN"--TAKE HEED

This is an implication that an important lesson is contained in the parable. Nevertheless the world gives little heed to this or other of our Lord's teachings, and even his professed followers rarely give the Master's words that deeper, attentive thought necessary to their appreciation, and only he that seeketh findeth the true meaning, the true lessons.

The parable itself is a very simple statement of a matter familiar to his hearers: A farmer sowed good seed, a portion of which fell on the pathway leading through the farm, where it was readily seen and quickly devoured by the birds. Some fell on stony ground, the soil of which was good enough but shallow, with the result that it sprang up quickly, made a good show at first, but soon withered under the heat of the sun. Other seed fell upon ground infested with the seed of thorns, and the two growing together the thorns so choked the good seed that it became unfruitful. But some of the seed fulfilled the farmer's intention and brought forth much fruit, some thirty, sixty and a hundred-fold, because

the soil was more favorable: it had been prepared by the plowing processes to receive the seed, it was deep enough to properly care for and root the seed, and it was not thorn-infested.

This picture, familiar to all farmers, was especially clear and forcible to the minds of those who heard Jesus, for several reasons: (1) The fields of that land are not fenced and the paths of travel frequently cross them. (2) The birds of Syria, including Palestine, seem to be much more numerous than elsewhere, probably on account of the climate; they are said to be one of the special pests of the farmer of that region. (3) Thorns abound there. A writer says, "There are no less than fifty genera and two hundred species of plants in Syria and Palestine furnished with thorns and prickles. There is probably no country on earth of the same extent which has so many....Thistles grow to a height of ten to fifteen feet." As for the stony ground: Palestine abounds with limestone, which renders the soil very rich, but when shallow very hot. As for the hundred-fold crop we are assured that this is not an exaggerated statement. One writer remarks

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that at Geneva in 1855 he got from the field a single ear of barley containing two hundred and seventy-six grains.

WHY TEACH IN PARABLES?

Our Lord concluded his parable with the words, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The majority of the multitude heard, wondered at his gracious words, thought of him as a wonderful teacher sent of God, but took no deeper interest. They had not the ears to hear, they were not hungry for the truth, their hearts were not prepared. There remained with the Lord not only the twelve apostles but a considerable number of disciples or followers. These now crowded about the Master to ask the interpretation of the parable. They had ears not only for the story but for the meaning, for the lesson: they desired to know the will of God that they might do it--they were consecrated to know and to do the Father's will.

The Prophet had foretold that our Lord would open his mouth in "parables" and in "dark sayings" (Psa. 78:2), and the evangelists record that thus he did, and now to those who inquired the meaning our Lord answered, "Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without [outsiders--not disciples--not consecrated] all these things are done in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted [turned to a proper course] and their sins should be forgiven them.--Mark 4:11,12.

WHY THE MYSTERY--SECRECY?

From the standpoint of ordinary Christian thought the

Master's words here are utterly unintelligible. The ordinary thought is that all not converted, all left in their sins, are destined to an eternity of torture. But if that were true how could our Savior have used the words just quoted? His words are intelligible only from the standpoint of the Plan of the Ages, which alone makes clear the divine Word as a whole or in part. When we see our Lord's mission amongst men in its true light it has two divisions: (1) Through his own faithfulness to the Father's plan and as our Redeemer he needed to pay our ransom price by tasting death for every man, suffering the Just for the unjust that we might be reconciled to God. (2) While thus laying the foundation for the blessing of the whole world, with the opportunity to escape from sin and death, our Lord began a second feature of the divine plan, namely, the selection of a Kingdom class, a Church class, which would be associated with himself in the sufferings of this present time and in the glorious work of the future--the blessing of all the families of the earth under the favorable Millennial conditions.

In harmony with this thought our Lord at the time of this parable was not only in process of laying down his life, dying daily, hourly, but also engaged in attracting to himself an elect class who would be suitable for his Bride, his Kingdom, his Church.

It was some of this Kingdom class, this elect class, that had come around him and asked the interpretation of the parable. He declared that it was his wish, his desire, to make the matter clear, very plain, to these; that it really belonged to them to know, because they were in the condition of heart that would be profited by the knowledge--because the knowledge thus imparted would be essential to their development, to their strengthening, to their guidance, to their preparation for the Kingdom--"To you it is given to know the mystery of the Kingdom." Nearly all of our Lord's parables related to the Kingdom, and all of them therefore are to be understood by the Kingdom class, the elect, the consecrated. All of this class should be earnestly desirous of an understanding of "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Their earnestness in desiring will be part of the evidence that they belong to this class, that it is proper for them to know. It is to their advantage that it should be hidden, so that they may seek and find, and that in seeking and finding they may have a greater blessing than if the entire matter were strewn upon the surface.

Our faith in the Lord and in his wonderful plan is strengthened when we find how simple his plan is, how grand, how beautiful, and yet how hidden from the world--from all except those who have the guidance of the holy Spirit and to whom it is given to know the "mystery." Some of these mysteries pertain to the present and some to the future, and the more clearly we seek the more we may find, and the more clearly we discern the stronger will be our faith and loyalty and the better will be our prospects therefore of making our calling and election sure by obedience.

"LEST THEY SHOULD BE CONVERTED"

But, says one, how would it have injured the multitude to have heard and understood a good parable, even if they were not prepared of heart to receive and act upon its message heartily? Would they not have received some blessing through a partial understanding of the divine plan? Not being perfect in knowledge or wisdom it is becoming in us to trust the Lord's love, knowledge and wisdom on this subject, and to conclude that the multitudes were really better off left in ignorance for the time. Perhaps we can see to some extent how and why this was so. (1) Even worldly wisdom has decided that "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." (2) Had the multitudes been drawn to the Lord to accept him fully as a teacher and to believe his doctrines, while their hearts were still in an unconsecrated attitude, they would not have been of the Kingdom class which the Lord is now seeking, but might have hindered certain features of the divine plan connected with our Lord's sacrifice by so protesting against his death as to have endangered an insurrection, which would have forced Pilate to defend him against the malice of the rulers.

All this is reasonable and intelligible when viewed from the standpoint of the Plan of the Ages--when we see that the election of the Church does not signify the damnation of the remainder of the world, but, on the contrary, that the elect are to be God's agents by and by for the blessing of the non-elect, and bringing all to a clear knowledge of the Lord and to opportunities for everlasting life, which would be more favorable to the temperament, disposition, etc., of the masses. Nothing is more evident than that only a very few have ears to hear and hearts to appreciate the invitation of the present time--to suffer with Christ in the narrow way in hope of the glory, honor and immortality of the future.

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HOW UNDERSTAND ALL PARABLES?

Our Lord's words, "Know ye not this parable? How, then, will ye know all parables?" may be understood to signify, It is proper for you to understand this parable, as it will prove a key valuable in the interpretation of all parables. Our Lord then proceeded to give a very particular interpretation of the parable.

(1) The "seed is the Word of God" (Luke 8:11). The different kinds of soil represent different kinds of hearts coming in contact with that Word. By the Word of God we are to understand the entire revelation which God has made to us--the Bible. This includes, as the Apostle points out, "the word spoken by angels"--God's direct messages in the past to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, etc., including the giving of the Law. These angels represented God as his mouthpieces. It includes also the messages sent through the prophets, "when holy men of old spoke and wrote as

they were moved by the holy Spirit." (2 Pet. 1:21.) And it includes the teachings of our Lord Jesus and his apostles, whom he authorized to speak in his name, as it is written, "God hath in these last times spoken unto us by his Son," and the Son declared respecting the apostles that those who heard them heard him, those who received them received him, as those who heard and received him heard and received the Father.--Heb. 1:2; Matt. 10:40.

It is well that we lay full emphasis upon this only proper seed, because much confusion has resulted from a mistake on this point, the using of improper seed, as we shall see in our next lesson. We are not limiting the seed to any particular translation of the Word of God, nor do we urge that religious writings which contain this Word are invaluable and good seed. We do urge, however, most emphatically that they are good seed only in proportion as they are thoroughly loyal to the divine Word. To whatever extent they present human philosophies instead of the divine plan and philosophy, to whatever extent they mix the human with the divine, to that extent they are not the good seed. How careful, then, the Lord's people should be respecting the seed which they receive into their own hearts from day to day, and respecting the seed of truth which they in turn seek to scatter in the good ground of other hearts.

Alas that we must confess it, but nearly all of the theology and theological works outside the Bible are so mixed as to be untrue, misleading: hence they do not bring forth the intended harvest in the heart, in the life of the individual. This is the great trouble with nominal Christendom, Churchianity, today. Traditions of men have taken the place of the Word of God; the good seed, the Gospel of the Kingdom, is a scarce article outside the Bible, and even in the Bible presentation of God's Word there are difficulties and hindrances in the shape of mistranslations and interpolations which hinder its results. In MILLENNIAL DAWN and WATCH TOWER publications we endeavor to set forth the Word of God simply and without human traditions in any measure or degree. We repeatedly, continually, persistently scatter that Word by liberal quotations and expositions of it--presenting it cleared of many misrepresentations and falsifications thereof. By the Lord's grace we trust that only the pure, unadulterated seed will ever be scattered by us in the Master's name.

THE WAYSIDE HEARTS

Our Lord elsewhere declares that the field is the world, but not all of the field or world is being planted at the present time. Vast areas of the world of mankind are already sown thickly with various human doctrines and are growing great crops after their kind. The field that the Lord is sowing first is a Jewish field, already prepared by divine instructions and disciplines. And although the middle wall of partition has since been broken down, so that there is no longer a distinction made as between Jews and Gentiles, nevertheless the portion of the Gentile field that is being sown is but

a limited one, namely, the comparatively few amongst whom the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Word of God, has been declared.

So, then, we may say that Christendom is the wheat-field in which the Lord has sown his Word. In Christendom, therefore, and not in heathendom, where the Word has never gone, we are to look for the four kinds of results brought to our attention in the parable. In Christendom some are like the wayside, or paths hard trodden by life's experiences; sometimes, by too great prosperity and unprepared to receive God's message, unappreciative of it. If such hear the message it enters not into the heart: it is to them merely a mental hearing, they take little interest in it. At first indeed they may appreciate the harmony and certain beauties and consistencies of the Truth, but it never becomes theirs, it never enters in, they are not open to its reception. Ere long the enemy comes; Satan the adversary steals away from them every element of Truth they once had seen or appreciated. The Truth is not for such, even though, being in the way, some grains fell on them.

This class of people may be found in every community, in almost every home. They are not specially to be blamed, though we may sympathize with them, regretting their inability to receive the comfort and grace of the Word of God. These hearts are not fit for the Kingdom under present conditions. What the Lord may do for them in the future-- either through trials and sufferings and disappointments in the present life, that will plow them up and make them ready for the reception of the Truth--or what he may do for them in the disciplines of the Millennial age to fit and prepare them for the Truth, are different questions. All the parable says is that while in this condition they are not acceptable, not wanted amongst the Lord's people.

THE STONY-GROUND HEARERS

We have all come across this class of hearers in Christendom; they not only see something of the beauty of God's plan but they receive it with joy, they give every evidence of bringing forth much fruit. We say to ourselves, I believe that person is a true Christian and will be one of the overcomers. But we cannot see as God sees, we know not the heart, the shallowness of the nature is not disclosed until, opposition being aroused, the sun of persecution blights and withers the results. We are inclined to feel discouraged, especially if we helped to plant the seed and had expected great results. The Lord in this parable cautions us against discouragement by assuring us that he knows in advance that considerable of the seed will fall upon stony-ground hearts, where, having little nourishment backed by

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little character, it will soon wither and bring no fruitage to maturity.

This should not signify to us that the case is a hopeless

one as respects the future. Under new conditions character will be deepened and good results will be proportionately obtained, or else, if the heart will not come under the influence of the Lord's dealings in the future, it will be utterly discarded as useless ground. If any of the Lord's people who have received the Truth find in themselves this shallowness of nature, this superficiality represented in the parable, he or she should at once appeal to the Lord for such a deepening of the soil of their hearts as would enable them to bring forth fruitage to his praise.

THE THORNY-GROUND HEARERS

The soil that brings forth great thorns is rich, and if devoted wholly to the production of wheat would bring forth large crops. So it is, our Lord explains, with some who hear the message of God respecting the Kingdom--they are good, strong, deep characters, they would make noble Christians and bring forth much fruitage to the Master's praise and to their own honor if they were fully devoted to the Lord. But alas! their talents, influence, means, time--the strength of their hearts, the strength of the soil, is absorbed in another direction--in the bringing forth of earthly projects and ambitions whose interests conflict with the interests of the Kingdom. The parable shows that where the thorns are permitted to remain the Kingdom interests will suffer. This is another way of saying that those who have heard of the Lord and love him are mistaken when they suppose they can love both the Lord and the world; it is another way of telling us that we cannot serve God and Mammon, that we cannot bring forth both thorns and wheat. Our hearts must be single, wholly given to the Lord; we must love him with all our heart, soul, strength, mind, else we cannot bring forth the fruitage which he requires of disciples.

Alas! of all the disappointing ones who hear the Gospel of the Kingdom during this age, the thorny-ground hearers have the most conspicuous place. Not much could be expected from the wayside heart, not much could be expected of the shallow hearted, but great possibilities are lost in those in whom the seed of Truth is choked by the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches--the thorns. All of the Lord's people who find these thorns mingling with the Truth in their hearts should learn from this parable the impossibility of bringing forth two crops--of being prosperous, successful and prominent and honored according to the course of this world, and also growing prosperous in the spiritual interests and in association with their Lord in the Kingdom. We cannot serve God and Mammon. The Lord seeketh not such as are double-hearted to be his joint-heirs in the Kingdom. We must love him with all our hearts in order to bring forth the proper fruitage, and eventually to hear his, "Well done, good and faithful."

THE GOOD-GROUND HEARERS

Thank God that in his providence and grace some of

our hearts have been plowed deeply by the plowshare of experience, trouble, disappointment in respect to earthly affairs and conditions. Thanks be to him, too, if the soil of our hearts is deep and able to receive and appreciate the Truth, the Word of the Kingdom. We praise him if we have learned the necessity for the establishment of his

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Kingdom and have heard the invitation and received the seed of Truth which invites us to become heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, and which makes known to us the terms and conditions of fellowship in his sufferings if we would have fellowship also in his glory to follow. Thanks be to him also if our hearts have been in the attitude to respond to these things and not infested with the double mind of business care, household work, etc.

Doubtless in the very best fields seeds of thorns and thistles may be found. O, that we may receive the good seed in such abundant measure as to choke out the thorns, as to separate us fully from the world, its spirit, its ambitions, its aims, and to sanctify us wholly to the love and service of him who hath called us from darkness into his marvellous light.

Let us, dear brethren, not only be sure that our hearts are of the good-ground sort, and be sure that we have received and are developing the good seed, the Word of the Kingdom, but let us seek also to bring forth much fruit. Seeing that some of these may bring forth thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred-fold to the Master's praise, let us determine that by the grace of God, which we know is ours and will assist us, we will be of those who bring forth fruitage an hundred-fold--to our largest possible capacity and measure of service to our King. How may we increase our faithfulness? We answer, by increasing honesty of heart, which prepares us for increased measure of the seed and which enables us to bring this forward to perfection. The harvest is nigh: let us give diligence, therefore, while still there is opportunity, that the Master may find us fruit-bearing to the very largest degree of our possibilities of nature, surroundings and opportunities.

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PASSED BEYOND THE VAIL.

ANOTHER member of the Board of Trustees of the WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, Brother William M. Wright, passed beyond the vail, into the Most Holy, we trust, on April 3rd. He was well known and dearly beloved by the friends of the Truth in various parts, but especially by the Allegheny company, with whom he has lived and met

for the past eight years. He was buried from the Bible House chapel on the 5th.

We have every reason to hope that the deceased was not only called and chosen but faithful unto death. We had distinctly the evidence that he "loved the brethren" and delighted in laying down moments and hours of his life on their behalf. He died after a brief illness which came on while he was telling the divine plan of the ages to two of his sons and some of their acquaintance who had just returned with him from our Church service at Carnegie Hall on the 1st.

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SOME INTERESTING LETTERS.

DEAR BROTHER:--Several weeks ago we were studying 1 Thess. 3, where Brother Paul was expressing his love and concern for the brethren. One brother remarked that we could draw from this that an occasional letter to you would be appreciated.

Realizing that I have been thoughtless in this matter, and out of a motive of love to you, will give you a few lines of testimony.

My rejoicing in the glad message (which I have had in the last four years) has been the most profound experience of my life. The Bible is more and more commanding my reverence by its harmony, its beauty and its majesty, which can only be seen by observing God's order in its study, and can also say as much of my dear brethren here.

We had a visitor at our public meeting last Sunday from a neighboring town, and the effect of sound doctrine on him may be of interest to you. He is a man of about thirty-six years and had been a drunkard for many years. Nine months ago he came in contact with the Truth through a brother in Christ and it appealed so forcibly to him that it allured him from his old habits. He is quite a sturdy student of the Bible now and has quite a ravenous appetite for the Truth. He is considering seriously a full surrender of himself to the Lord. His fellow-townsmen of the Babylonian frame of mind, seeing his wonderful reform, are at him on all sides to join their churches and to head a siege of the "joints," etc., but the spirit of a sound mind turns a deaf ear to these. The dear brother is running under a higher tension than the ordinary, but will not be tested beyond that which he can endure. Thank God!

Praying for you, dear brother, that our heavenly Father may continue his care over you, I am yours in Christ to the glory of God.

HUGO H. REIMER,--Colporteur.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST:--For some time I have been thinking of writing to you a brief statement concerning the Lord's dealings with me, and will do so now. I am rejoicing in the blessed hope set forth in the glorious gospel of Christ. I am truly grateful to my heavenly Father for permitting me to see and appreciate the wonderful truths which I now so clearly see, and I now especially thank you, his faithful steward, for the part you have had in opening the eyes of my understanding to these blessed truths, which so cheer and comfort me.

My parents were Methodists, and when I was converted at the age of nineteen I joined the same denomination, and some years later became a minister, preaching during five and one-half years in the North-West Kansas Conference. I was a sincere and loyal minister in that denomination until the last year of my ministry, when I began to have a clearer and more Scriptural view of the character of God's Church, and I could no longer in good faith perform all the duties required of a Methodist minister. Then I asked for and received a certificate of location from the conference, and went back to my former trade, that of carpenter, meanwhile studying the Word of the Lord and asking for more light.

Step by step the Lord has led me and given me light as I was ready to receive it, until a few years ago, in the providence of God, I was led to come to this place. Here, through the faithfulness of Brother S _____, my attention was called to the MILLENNIAL DAWN books, and I scarcely need say I have seen a great light. I now see a beautiful harmony in the entire Scriptures such as I could not see before.

I am rejoicing in the glorious prospect of the speedy beginning of the fulfilment of Dan. 2:44, and many other precious promises contained in the Word of God.

Again I sincerely thank you, dear brother, for your faithfulness as God's steward in providing "meat in due season." Your brother in Christ,

J. W. ADAMS,--California.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--I feel moved to write and express my gratitude for the new light which has been shed upon the "Path of Life" through the influence of the "Plan of the Ages" and "The Time is at Hand." The Bible is a new book to me, and although I have read it for years I can truly say that I have learned more of the wonders of God's love from the reading of those two books than in all my years of misdirected study.

I now prize the Bible as never before. Stumbling blocks have been removed. New light has come in.

I have had a wonderful experience of God's love and direction. I have always craved more light, and in prayer asked God to grant me the true light, and the manner in which the WATCH TOWER came to my notice was God's answer to the prayer for light.

In 1900, while located in G _____, as a local preacher for the Methodists, a sample copy of the TOWER came to a Mr. R _____, with whom I was living, and I read it with great interest, as it treated a subject with which I was having a great amount of trouble (the future state of the wicked). I could never accept the doctrine of eternal torment as the plan of a loving God. I wrote you for the TOWER and you sent it to me as requested, but I must truly confess that I did not give it the attention I should, but gave away some and left some without reading, for I was impressed with the idea that in reading the TOWER I was disloyal to the teachings of "my Church."

In 1902 I withdrew from the Methodists and joined the Church of Christ, for they were not creed bound, and gave one liberty to study the Bible as the only "rule and guide for our faith and practice" and the Bible only as a creed to follow. Since that time I have devoted all my time to the study of the holy Book and have never preached a sermon without being able to give God's Word as proof.

I have searched for the truth as a pearl of great price, and a few months ago the "Plan of the Ages" in WATCH TOWER form, came into my hands, and I read it with a mind freed from all sectarian prejudice, with the result of being led into more light. I have ordered

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the remainder of the series and shall continue to test them by the Word of Truth, and I have no doubt but they will lead into greater light.

I shall try to preach sound doctrine hereafter, and when my people are unable to endure it they will have to find another preacher.

I pray that God may bless you in your great work.

Yours for the Truth, R. C. SMITH,--N.Y.

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