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FRIENDS FROM NEARBY PLACES ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

BROOKLYN, N.Y., MAY 7

Morning Rally for Praise and Testimony at 10:30 o'clock in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Discourse for the Public at 3 p.m. in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Lafayette Avenue and St. Felix Street. Topic, "The Resurrection Hope."

LYNCHBURG, VA., MAY 14

Morning Rally at 10:30 o'clock. Discourse for the interested at 11 o'clock and Lecture for the Public at 3 p.m. All services to be in the Auditorium, Main Street, between 11th and 12th Streets.

BALTIMORE, MD., MAY 21

Morning Rally at 10:30 o'clock. Discourse for the interested at 11 o'clock in Lehman's Hall, 856 North Howard Street. Afternoon service for the Public at 3 o'clock in the Lyric Theatre, Mount Royal and Maryland Avenues.

BOSTON, MASS., MAY 28

BROOKLYN, N.Y., JUNE 4

"EVERYBODY'S PAPER"

This title will take the place of PEOPLES PULPIT for use in announcing Pilgrim Meetings and for the "Bible Extension Course," of which we have advised all INT. BIBLE STUDENTS CLASSES. The PEOPLES PULPIT will continue. Reply to Cardinal Gibbons will appear in it.

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BROOKLYN BETHEL HYMNS FOR MAY

After the close of the hymn the Bethel Family listens to the reading of "My Vow Unto the Lord," then joins in prayer. At the breakfast table the MANNA text is considered. Hymns for May follow: (1) 283; (2) 176; (3) 112; (4) 293; (5) 145; (6) 170; (7) 254; (8) 129; (9) 114; (10) 10; (11) 293; (12) 119; (13)

155; (14) 222; (15) 41; (16) Vow; (17) 152; (18) 332; (19) 6; (20) 279; (21) 7; (22) 62; (23) 208; (24) 35; (25) 109; (26) 117; (27) 264; (28) 67; (29) 127; (30) 165; (31) 108.

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DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD?

"He preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." (Acts 17:18.)

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked." (Acts 17:32) "If there be no resurrection of the dead,...then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain;...then is not Christ raised, and... ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."--1 Cor. 15:13-18.

WHEN we remember that the word "resurrection" is used no less than thirty-seven times in the New Testament, besides various other words of similar import; and when we remember that all the prominent creeds of Christendom declare faith in a resurrection as an integral and essential part of Scriptural doctrine and of the hope of eternal life--in view of these facts, and of the strong language of the texts above quoted, whose inspiration is conceded by all Christians, it may seem strange that we should ask any Christian the question, Do you believe in the resurrection of the dead?

Nevertheless, we have serious reason to doubt that a belief in the resurrection of the dead prevails amongst Christians to any considerable extent; and it is because we believe the resurrection to be a very important doctrine in its connection with other doctrines of Scripture (throwing light upon other doctrines), that we desire to call general attention to this subject and to invite an examination of our question in the light of facts and of Scripture; our hope being that after a careful examination of the subject many more of God's people will come to believe--consistently, logically, Scripturally--in a resurrection.

RESURRECTION RARELY CHOSEN NOW AS A SUBJECT FOR SERMONS

"Like priest, like people," is an old adage, which implies that the views of the teaching or clerical class on any subject may safely be considered an index to the views of their parishioners. It is not difficult to ascertain the views of the clergy of all denominations on the subject of the resurrection of the dead; for, although that topic is rarely chosen for discourse, except upon

Easter Sunday, it is, nevertheless, indissolubly attached to every funeral service; and these numerous occasions, we believe, amply justify us in the statement that both the clergy of all denominations and their people have little or no faith in a resurrection of the dead.

True, it is customary on every funeral occasion to read the words of the Apostle Paul, in which he sets forth the resurrection as the Christian's hope (I Cor. 15), but this seems to be a mere concession on the part of the officiating minister. He feels it to be his duty to read something on the subject, but his remarks following the reading prove most conclusively that, so far from believing that the person whose corpse is about to be buried is dead, he believes, and instructs his hearers that they should believe, that their friend and neighbor is "more alive than he ever was." Frequently, indeed, he plays directly into the hands of the "Spiritualists" and "Christian Scientists," by telling the audience that the spirit of their dead friend is with them in the room, hovering over them; and that if permitted to speak he would say to them, "Dry your tears; weep not for me; I am far better off in glory."

TO MANY DEATH HAS BECOME A DELUSION AND NOT A REALITY

Indeed, it has come to be the general belief among Christian people that death is a delusion, and not a reality; that people merely seem to die, and do not die; that they merely experience a change to a higher form of being; that so-called "Christian Scientists" are quite correct in saying, "There is no death."

Whoever holds such views does not, cannot consistently believe in "the resurrection of the dead"; because if no one is dead, how can there be a resurrection of the dead? Wherein would be the sense in speaking of a resurrection of the dead to life, if they already have life more abundantly than they possessed it before they seemingly died?

But thousands of ministers would answer us, saying, "When speaking of the resurrection, we merely mean a resurrection of the body--the bodies which we bury are all to come forth again from the grave, and the spirits which parted from them in death are to be rehabilitated in those bodies in the resurrection. This is what we mean by resurrection."

"CONSISTENCY, THOU ART A JEWEL"

Well, well! Who would have supposed such inconsistency on the part of so many learned and well-meaning men! Before taking up the Scriptural side of the question, to show that such expectations are at variance with the Scripture teaching, let us examine the proposition of these ministers in the light of its own inconsistency.

(1) They tell us that the deceased is "far better

off," in that he has gotten free from the "fetters of the

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flesh," and that now "his free spirit wings its flight to God, no longer hampered and hindered by the mortal dust." They go into ecstasies in describing the grandeur and liberty and blessedness of the one who has died, and who, by reason of getting rid of the body, has attained to life more abundant, knowledge a hundredfold, and blessings indescribable.

(2) In the same breath they quote the Scriptures referring to the resurrection and (wholly misconstruing those Scriptures) tell us that by and by, at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the same bodies of flesh that were buried will be reorganized (Dr. Talmage, in his famous resurrection sermon pictured the resurrection morning, and the entire sky darkened with the fragments of human bodies coming together from various parts of the earth, where a finger, a foot, or a hand had been lost by accident, disease or amputation); they tell us that then the spirit beings which, they say, left those bodies at death, will then return to them, as their everlasting habitations. Then, inasmuch as the resurrection is Scripturally set forth to be the grand and glorious result and consummation of our salvation, they feel compelled to go into ecstasies over their erroneous presentation of the resurrection, and to tell how glorious and grand will be the result.

They seem to overlook entirely the inconsistency of these two propositions; and they expect that their hearers will be similarly inconsistent and illogical (and apparently their expectations are fully justified, for the majority of their hearers swallow the inconsistency without difficulty); yea, many of them seem to think that the more inconsistent and unreasonable their belief may be, the more reason they have to congratulate themselves that they have a very strong faith. However, the real fact is that they have a very strong credulity. But they will have no reward for believing unreasonable things which God's Word has not taught, but has contradicted.

Who cannot see, if he will, that the man who dies fifty years old, if in dying he obtains life more abundant and knowledge a hundredfold, and a freedom to "wing his flight," etc., would be sadly disappointed by a resurrection--if it should mean to him re-imprisonment in a tenement of clay, with physical restrictions and human limitations? And then, if he had thus for centuries been a "free spirit," roaming at liberty throughout the Universe, untrammled by a body and bodily limitations, where would be the consistency on God's part of re-imprisoning such an one in a human body, whose powers and uses would be entirely forgotten during those centuries of liberty? And if to be without a body is "perfect bliss," as the funeral orators tell, how could there be anything added to perfect bliss by a resurrection

of the body, and a re-incarceration therein?

THE SCRIPTURES HOLD OUT THE ONLY HOPE, THE BLESSED HOPE, THE CONSISTENT HOPE

From the foregoing considerations, we feel that we are justified in our assumption that the vast majority of Christian people do not believe in a resurrection--neither the Scriptural kind ("a resurrection of the dead"), nor in the kind they themselves teach, namely, a resurrection of the body. With this preface to our subject, we go to the Scriptures to learn from them what is meant by "the resurrection of the dead," and in what manner and why the Scriptures speak of the resurrection as the hope, the only hope, the blessed hope, not only of the Lord's people, who are to have part in the "first resurrection," but of the world in general, who are to have an opportunity to share in the resurrection of judgment, improperly translated, "the resurrection of damnation."--John 5:29.

Whoever would believe the Scriptural doctrine of the resurrection, must also believe the Scriptural doctrine respecting death--that death is death, the cessation of life. Then, and not until then, will he be able to understand the Apostle's words in our text, "If there be no resurrection of the dead,...then they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." Nor is this statement by the Apostle an exception to or different from the teaching of the Scriptures elsewhere. Their unanimous

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testimony is that the dead are dead; that "in that very day their thoughts perish." (Psa. 146:4.) Of the dead the Scriptures further declare, "His sons come to honor and he knoweth it not; to dishonor, and he perceiveth it not of them"; "for there is neither wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave whither thou goest." --Job 14:21; Eccl. 9:10.

WHICH SHALL WE BELIEVE--GOD OR SATAN?

Here is a direct conflict between modern teachers and the inspired Word, the Scriptures claiming that the dead know not anything, the modern theologians claiming that they know everything. The Bible claims that the dead are really dead, and have really suffered according to the Divine penalty for sin pronounced against our race--"Dying thou shalt die." The opposers take up with Satan's delusive statement to Mother Eve, "Ye shall not surely die," and attempt to prove that the dead are not dead; that God's penalty against sin did not go into effect, and that death, so far from being the sentence or curse upon our race, is a blessing, a step in a general process of evolution. The two theories are as far apart as the poles, and the two teachers of these two theories, as we

have shown, are God, on the one hand, and Satan, "a liar from the beginning," on the other hand. Which shall we believe?

The entire Plan of Salvation is connected with this question. If death was not the penalty of sin, incurred through Adam, then "life and that more abundant" is not the reward and blessing of God secured through Christ by a resurrection. Satan's proposition, which has been so widely accepted by the Lord's people, and which exercises so blinding an influence upon their minds, is the reversal, in every sense of the word, of the Divine proposition--that death is the curse or penalty of sin; that Christ died to release man from this sentence or curse, and that the release comes by the resurrection of the dead, who otherwise would never have future life, as says the Apostle in our text. Satan's theory declares death a blessing which brings the fulness of life and liberty and joy, and would make of the resurrection a curse, bringing imprisonment and difficulty and restriction and pain and trouble.

THE APOSTLE PREACHED JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION

No wonder that, blinded by this deception of the Adversary, the majority of the great theologians of Christendom--and rapidly their many followers--are leaving the doctrine of the Atonement, which declares that "as by a man [Adam] came death, so also by a man [the man Christ Jesus] comes the resurrection of the dead; that as all in Adam died, even so all in Christ shall be made alive."--I Cor. 15:21,22.

If the reality of death is denied, it is no more difficult to deny the reality of sin. If it is claimed that Father Adam was not created in the image and likeness

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of God, but was created a very close image and likeness of the monkey, it follows that in that low condition of intelligence he was unfit for trial for eternal life; and it is only a further step to deny that he ever had a trial, and that he ever failed and fell from grace. And if the fall is denied, and, instead, the claim is put forward that man has really been advancing even to the present time --losing his likeness to the monkey and gaining in likeness to God, then it will be consistent also to take the next step, and declare that since man did not fall he did not need to be redeemed from the fall.

And hence, with all such reasoning upon false Scriptural basis, it appears logical to deny the oft-repeated declaration of God's Word, that our Lord Jesus is our Redeemer, and that "He is the propitiation for our sins [the Church's sins], and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world," giving for us as our Ransom or corresponding price, his own life, that he might buy

back the forfeited life of Adam.

We thus see that the leading lights of Christendom today, repudiate both of the cardinal features of the Gospel, which the Apostle preached of old: "He preached Jesus and the resurrection"--Jesus as the Redeemer of mankind from sin and its curse--death--and the resurrection as the grand result of that redemptive work, by which the blessing secured by the Ransom-sacrifice will be made applicable to and available for whosoever wills to accept eternal life upon the terms of this Age. We are reminded here of our Lord's own words respecting unbelief at the present time: he says, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find the faith on the earth?"-- Luke 18:8.

THE FIVE SENSES IN FULL ACCORD WITH THE SCRIPTURES

The Scripture declarations respecting death are in full accord with the testimony of the five senses given us as men by our Creator; and this is what we should expect, though we should be ready to admit the possibility of our senses being in error if the Divine revelation contradicted our senses. But when our senses are contradicted by a human theory, contrary to Scriptural statements, the theory should be rejected and the testimony of the senses held to be true; and when the Scriptures and our senses together unite in one testimony, it is certainly wrong to hold to a theory of human dissolution, which is contradicted by Divine revelation and by our own senses as well. And whoever thus repudiates his God-given (though sin-impaired) senses and the Divine testimony, need expect nothing else than to be led into darkness and stumbling. Today, as eighteen centuries ago, the blind are leading the blind into the ditch of unbelief and error.

"AS DIETH THE ONE, SO DIETH THE OTHER; THEY HAVE ALL ONE BREATH"

The testimony of our senses, like the testimony of God's Word, is that death means the loss of life, and not an increase of life. Watch the dying one, and note his weakening powers, mental and physical, until the spark of life becomes extinct. You have seen nothing go from him, you have heard nothing but the death-rattle; you have felt the gradual cessation of the pulse, and noted the gasping for breath; and all of your senses which you can exercise upon the subject tell you that your friend, your loved one, is dead--alive no longer. You look about you and study the subject and inquire of others, "What next?" The answer to your senses is, "The next thing is corruption; when the spark of life has gone, the corpse must be buried; 'dust to dust, ashes to ashes.'" You note the similarity between the death of your friend and loved one and the death of the brute beast, and your

senses can discern no difference between them; and the Scriptures declare, "As dieth the one, so dieth the other; they have all one [spirit of life] breath."--Eccl. 3:19.

But with a longing for a future life, implanted in your nature by our Creator, you inquire, Is there no hope; hath a man no pre-eminence above a beast? The Scriptures answer your question, assuring us that, physically speaking man "hath no pre-eminence above a beast." But the Scriptures assure us that although mankind is not possessed of any power of life beyond that of the beast, the Creator has, nevertheless, made a provision for man that he did not make for the beast; and that provision is the very thing for which we long, namely, everlasting life. The Scriptures point out to us that this provision for man's everlasting life was made by the Lord in the beginning--not by implanting a deathless quality in the man's constitution, but by providing in the life-sustaining trees of the Garden of Eden, the means of continuing his life everlastingly; nevertheless this provision was conditional, dependent upon man's obedience to his Creator.

The Scriptures point out that man's disobedience brought upon him the sentence of death, and that the execution of that sentence was effected by driving him out of the Garden and away from the life-sustaining fruit of its trees. Thus driven out, the sentence, "Dying, thou shalt die," took effect upon Father Adam gradually, and he lived out nearly to the end of the first thousand-year day. His posterity, becoming weaker and weaker as generations rolled by, are today (notwithstanding the many advancements in science, and medicine and sanitary arrangements) reduced to an average of about thirty-five years--"and if by reason of strength they be forescore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow" and they are soon "cut off from the land of the living," to go into "the land of the enemy"--into the great prison-house of death, in which it is estimated that over twenty thousand millions of our race are already--"where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." --Job 3:17-19.

"JESUS DIED, THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST"

The Scriptures answer our inquiries respecting the dead. While assuring us of the justice of the Divine sentence of death, they nevertheless declare that our Creator is a God of mercy and of pity, and that when there was no eye to pity and no arm to deliver us, his Arm brought salvation to us. The Scriptures, moreover, point out to us the Lord Jesus Christ as the Arm of Jehovah, stretched down for our relief from sin and sickness and pain and trouble and for our deliverance from the prison-house of death, and for our restoration to the liberties and privileges of sons of God.

It was in harmony with this Divine sympathy that, in due time, God sent his only begotten Son into the world for our redemption--to give for us the Ransom-price, and

ultimately to recover all who will accept of Divine mercy, from all the consequences of the fall by a resurrection from the dead. But Divine Love could not make void Divine Justice; it was necessary that God should be just, if he would be the justifier of them that believe in Jesus; hence the demands of Justice--the penalty for sin--must be paid by our Redeemer, before the work of release and restitution could begin. And here we have the best of evidence respecting what is the penalty of sin, and what is not; because, since our Lord Jesus pays for us the just penalty of sin, what he laid down for us will

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prove what was the penalty against us. What did he do for us? The Scriptures answer: He laid down his life for us; "He died for our sins"; "He died, the Just for the unjust"; "He poured out his soul unto death"; he "made his soul an offering for [our] sin," and "by his stripes we are healed."--Isa. 53:4-6,10,12.

Nothing is more evident than that our Lord Jesus did not suffer an eternity of torment as the price of our redemption; and hence, if the matter needed proof we have here the proof that eternal torment was not the penalty for our sins. On the contrary, the fact that our Lord Jesus died for our sins, and that the Heavenly Father accepted of that sacrifice of his life on our behalf, proves that it was our lives that were forfeited by sin; that the full penalty of the Divine Law against us as a race was the deprivation of life. The whole race, under sentence of death, has gone down to the great prison-house of death--the grave, sheol, hades. And so our dear Redeemer, when he gave up his life for us, went also to sheol, hades, the grave. He took our place, and suffered for us the penalty for our sins.

But as Jesus' death ransoms man from the sentence of death, so his resurrection from death became the assurance of the justification of all who accept and obey him. The Heavenly Father gave evidence that the Ransom-price was entirely satisfactory; and our Lord, who was thus obedient to the Father, was raised from the dead, and, as the Father's Agent and Representative, will soon begin the work of blessing the entire world redeemed by his precious blood.

THE PRISON-HOUSE OF DEATH TO BE OPENED AND THE PRISONERS SET FREE

The blessing of the world means the breaking open of the prison-house and the setting at liberty of the captives, who for six thousand years have been going into the prison-house of death. For this reason our Lord is called the Life-giver, because his great work will be to give back life to the world of mankind, who lost life in Adam. And since the restoration of life to mankind will mean the removal of pains and sicknesses and troubles,

which are a part of the dying process, our Redeemer is styled the Great Physician.

The prophecy which mentions the breaking open of the prison-house of death, and the setting at liberty of its captives (Isa. 42:7), was applied, and unquestionably correctly, by our Lord to himself; but he did not break open the prison-house of death, and set all the captives free by resurrection immediately upon his own resurrection. He tells us when this work will be done, saying (John 5:25-29), "The hour cometh in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and come forth"; "and they that hear [obey his voice then, Acts 3:22] shall live."

Our Lord thus passed over the interim of the Gospel Age, and pointed to the grand consummation of his work in the incoming Age, because such was the Father's prearranged Plan. The Father sent the Son, and the Son willingly undertook the work of redemption, at a time sufficiently in advance of the "Times of Restitution," or resurrection, and the general blessing of the world during the Reign of Messiah, to leave the interim of this Gospel Age for another work, namely, for selecting from the world a "little flock," a "royal priesthood," a "peculiar people," a "holy nation," to be joint-heirs with Christ Jesus their Lord in the honors of the Mediatorial Kingdom. These shall be associated with the Redeemer in the grand and glorious work of destroying the Prince of Darkness and breaking open the prison-house of death, and setting at liberty the captives of sin and ignorance and superstition; and in fulfilling generally all the provisions of the gracious promises of God made to Father Abraham, that in his Seed (Christ, and his elect Body, the Church), "all the families of the earth shall be blessed."--Gal. 3:8,16,29.

"BLESSED AND HOLY ARE THEY WHO HAVE PART IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION"

This brings us to the Scriptural proposition, that there is a first, a chief or special resurrection, and a general one later. The first or superior resurrection includes the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the entire elect "Church which is his Body"--no more, no less. "Blessed and holy are all they that have part in the First Resurrection; on such the Second Death hath no power, but they shall be kings and priests unto God and shall reign on the earth"--the Messianic Kingdom class. Those who will share in this First Resurrection will experience an instantaneous "change" from the human nature to the divine nature--the highest of the spirit natures; not human, not flesh and blood, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God."* Their trial and perfecting of heart takes place beforehand, and only the "overcomers" will receive this blessing. Some of the characteristics of their change are indicated by the Apostle as a change from weakness to power, from dishonor to

glory, from corruption to incorruption, from a natural [human] body to a spirit body.

The time for this best, or chief resurrection, is everywhere in Scripture indicated to be at the close of the Gospel Age, at a time when the entire Gospel Church will be completed. This includes the living members, whose "change" to spirit nature will be instantaneous, so that the moment of their dying as human beings will be the moment of their "change" to perfect spirit beings. Meantime, the Scriptures declare that the Lord's people who have died, like the rest of mankind, are really dead, as human beings, and know not anything; but inasmuch as God has provided for their resurrection, and inasmuch as they have been informed respecting it, and have hopes therein, therefore they are spoken of as being merely asleep--resting from their labors; waiting for "the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only," as the Apostle declares.

And, likewise the world of mankind, even though they know not of the Lord as yet, are spoken of as being "asleep in Jesus," because, as the whole world was under condemnation of death through Adam, and that without knowledge or volition on their part, at the time of the sentence, for they were then in the loins of their father, Adam, so now, since Jesus laid down his life a Ransom for all, and because they all shall be awakened from death, therefore it is proper for all those who are aware of the Divine provision for the awakening, by faith to speak of the interim figuratively as a sleep. Thus the Apostle exhorts us to trust and hope in the resurrection as respects all our dear friends who go down into the prison-house of death, and not merely as respects those who were sanctified in Christ Jesus, which would include, as a rule, only a small proportion of those for whom we would be inclined to sorrow. He says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep [all our sleeping friends], that ye sorrow not even

*Some are confused by this expression, "flesh and blood"; they fail to see that it signifies human nature; we therefore invite such to examine the use of the same phrase elsewhere, by the same New Testament writers. In so doing they will be convinced that our definition, human nature, is the correct one, the Scriptural one. See the following uses of the phrase: Matt. 16:17; John 3:5,6; 1 Cor. 15:50.

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as others, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died [a Ransom for all] and rose again [that he might be Lord and Life-giver to all] even so [let us believe as truly that] those also which sleep in Jesus [all whom he purchases with his precious blood] will God bring by him [from the prison-house of death]."

THE GENERAL RESURRECTION TO BE A RAISING UP BY JUDGMENT

But as the First Resurrection is the resurrection of the blessed and holy, of the sanctified in Christ Jesus, his Body, so the general resurrection, which is for the world, is designated as "a resurrection of judgment," mistranslated in our common version "resurrection of damnation." It is styled a "resurrection of judgment" because, while all the preparation has been made, so far as God is concerned, for granting to the world of mankind a full resurrection or restitution back to all that was first given to Adam, and lost by his disobedience, to be recovered by our Savior's precious blood, yet there are certain conditions attached to this blessing upon which it depends, namely, the conditions of the New Covenant.

God does not propose to give eternal life through Christ to any others than those who earnestly desire it, and who are in heart sympathy with the principles of righteousness which must always be the Law of the Divine Government. Hence, when the world is awakened from the sleep of death, it will not signify resurrection, but much less; for resurrection, in its full, complete, Scriptural sense, signifies a complete raising up, out of sin and out of death, to perfection of being, perfection of life.

The first work of Christ and the Church in the world, for those who have gone down into death, the prison, will be their awakening to physical conditions similar to those in which they died. The surrounding conditions of society will then be greatly improved; knowledge will have taken the place of ignorance, and the reign of righteousness and the law of love will at that time have superceded the rule of sin under the law of selfishness; and Satan will be bound, that he shall deceive the nations no more for the thousand years. Under the favorable conditions of that Mediatorial Kingdom, all mankind will be required to make progress in the knowledge of the Lord and in the bringing of their own hearts

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and lives into accord with his law of love. Whosoever then will make no effort in the right direction will be cut off from life, in the Second Death, after one hundred years of trial (Isa. 65:20), although he would then, under the changed conditions, be properly reckoned as only a lad.

But while judgment will thus pass against one who fails to make progress, and will cut short his further opportunity, the same judgment, by the same Judge, will operate favorably to all who will seek righteousness, and make progress in harmony with the laws of the Kingdom; so that year by year they will be growing mentally, physically and morally stronger--approximating gradually

the full, complete standard of perfect manhood, the image and likeness of the Creator, as first represented in Father Adam. Thus the resurrection, so far as the world is concerned, will be a gradual work; its first step an awakening from the sleep of unconsciousness and nonentity; its succeeding steps will be along the lines of judgment, the conduct of those who are on trial being either approved or disapproved; and culminating either in their sentence to the Second Death, incorrigible, and unworthy of the gift of God, eternal life--or in their perfection, and their final adjudgment of worthiness to have and enjoy the great boon of Life Eternal, under the blessed conditions which are then promised to prevail--when there shall be no more sighing, no more dying, no more crying, because there will be no more sin and none of the penalties for sin, for all the former things shall have passed away.--Rev. 21:4.

THE CONDITION OF THE DEAD SPOKEN OF AS A SLEEP

The condition of all the dead, up to the time when the resurrection work begins, is one of total unconsciousness: "There is neither wisdom, nor knowledge, nor device in the grave whither thou goest"; "His sons come to honor and he knoweth it not, to dishonor, and he perceiveth it not of them." Of each of the Patriarchs of the past it is written, "He slept with his fathers"; "He fell asleep." And so also in the New Testament we have a similar record: "Stephen fell asleep." The Apostle Paul speaks of those who saw the Lord after his resurrection and says, "He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to this present time, but some are fallen asleep." Again he speaks of some which are "fallen asleep in Christ," here distinguishing between the Church, who are in Christ,* as members of his Body, and the world of mankind in general, who "sleep in Jesus."--Eccl. 9:10; Job 14:21; I Kings 2:10; 11:43; Acts 7:60; I Cor. 15:6,18; I Thess. 4:14.

The Apostle shows that this sleep-condition will prevail, even as respects the Church, until the time of the second coming of Christ, assuring us that the living members of the Church at the time of the Lord's Second Advent will not be blessed prior to those that have fallen asleep, but contrariwise, the living "shall not prevent [hinder] them that are asleep," for the dead in Christ shall arise first; then we who are alive and remain will be blessed, and ultimately experience our "change."

"THOU SOWEST NOT THAT BODY WHICH SHALL BE"

The moment of re-awakening will seem to the awakened ones to be the next moment after their death--"for there is neither wisdom, knowledge nor device in the grave." The bodies in which the world will be awakened will be practically the same as those which died, though not

the same atoms of matter; for in the hands of our Creator one atom of dust is as good as another in this great work. Thus the Apostle says, "Thou sowest not that body which shall be." The bodies of the world, as they shall be when awakened, will be really new bodies, in the sense that they will be different atoms of matter; but they will be old bodies, in the sense that they will be duplicates of those which died and went to dust. We cannot wonder that the worldly mind, which knows not God and knows not of his power, cavils at the thought of resurrection. It will be a most stupendous work, more wonderful by far than man's original creation; it will thus be to the world of mankind, and to the angels of heaven also, the grandest exhibition ever given of Divine Omnipotence.

He who formed man in the beginning, in his own image, has the power not only to form him again of the dust of the ground, and to re-ignite the spark of life, but yet more than in these will he exhibit both his omnipotence and his Infinite wisdom in the restoration to each being of a brain like his present one, having recorded therein the events and circumstances which have transpired in the present life--just as the wax cylinder of a phonograph bears in itself the recorded

*Christ is the title of our Lord as the New Creature, and of his office; while Jesus is the name for the Redeemer, through whose sacrifice comes to all men an opportunity to share in a resurrection of the dead.

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words of the speaker, which can be reproduced at another time and place. None but an Infinite Being could claim the power thus to reproduce the very thoughts of the billions of mankind. He of whom it is said that he knows the very hairs of our heads and their number, and that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without his notice--only he could do so great and wonderful a thing; and only as we have learned to have confidence in him through the revelation of his Word could we exercise faith in such a stupendous miracle as he has promised shall be performed.

Nor need we expect that the world of mankind will all be awakened simultaneously, but rather that the first work of the Messianic Kingdom will begin with those who have not gone down to the tomb, but who are nevertheless in death, in the sense that they are not alive in the complete, full measure of freedom from the power of death. When the work of restitution shall have progressed to some extent with these, we may expect that some of those who have previously fallen asleep in death will be awakened, and share in the blessings of that glorious Day. Later, others, and still others, will arise, until eventually it will be true that, in that Day,

the Day of Christ, "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man"--shall obey the mandate, "Come forth"--and shall be brought to a knowledge of the goodness and love and mercy of God; and, if they will, ultimately to the full perfection of human nature--the earth, meanwhile, being fitted and prepared as a Paradise of God for his restored human family.

Meantime, the exhortation to all the "called" in the present Age is that we should seek to make our "calling and election sure" to a place in the Kingdom class, to a change of nature, from human to divine, and thus have a right, under the Divine arrangement, to have a part in the "first resurrection"--the chief resurrection, the resurrection to the perfection of the Divine nature with its glory, honor and immortality.

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"A THORN IN THE FLESH"

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong."--2 Cor. 12:7-10.

THIS was the language of an overcoming saint, meekly bowing to the Divine will. Noble and loyal and true and strong in character as the Apostle Paul was, he yet realized that he was a member of the fallen race, and, in common with all humanity, subject to frailties. God had called him to a most important and glorious work--that of bearing the Gospel to the Gentiles; and, for the benefit of the whole Church, to him were granted special and wonderful revelations, even above all the other honored and beloved Apostles.

He was caught away in mental vision to the third heaven--the New Dispensation, the Millennial reign of Christ--and shown things (doubtless the Plan and purpose of God, as now made manifest to us, largely through his writings, in the light of this harvest period, but) not lawful to be uttered then, because not then due to the Church. (2 Cor. 12:4.) Upon him devolved the care of all the Churches of the Gentiles, and great were the

responsibilities of his office. Though the position was a most laborious and trying one, requiring great fortitude, zeal, energy and self-denial to fill it, it was also one of great honor.

"THE MESSENGER OF SATAN TO BUFFET"

And Paul appreciated the honor of such intimate fellowship of service with the Lord, and manifested his appreciation by untiring zeal and enthusiasm. But even in this the Lord recognized a personal danger to his beloved and faithful Apostle--a danger of pride and self-exaltation, which, if it should develop, would soon unfit him for further service and rob him of his future reward. So the thorn in the flesh was permitted to come. It came, not from the hand of the Lord, though by his permission; but, as the Apostle affirms, it was "the messenger of Satan to buffet" him.

A thorn in the flesh is always a painful thing; and whatever this may have been, it was something severely trying to Paul. At first he thought only of the pain and annoyance it caused him, and of its hindrance to him in the Lord's work; it was a messenger of Satan that he was anxious to get rid of. Three times he besought the Lord for its removal. But no, it had come to stay, and the Lord mercifully made him to realize that though it was very undesirable to the flesh, it was, nevertheless, profitable to him spiritually; for otherwise he might become too much exalted.

MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE--MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS

This implication of weakness the Apostle humbly accepted. He did not resent it and begin to boast of his strength and to reproach the Lord for not exerting his power for its removal; but, on the contrary, with grace and gladness he accepted the Lord's judgment of his heart, and his estimate of his strength, and appreciated the love that thus cared for him personally, while through him he was ministering to the whole Church.

Yes, praise the Lord! he chooses his own instruments, and whets and grinds and polishes them for the more effectual service, and wields them with force and power in the service of his people; but in all the painful and laborious service he has special care, also, for the willing and faithful instrument. He will not suffer it to be tried beyond that which it is able to endure; nor will he suffer it to be exalted without some counterbalancing thorn in the flesh to preserve its equilibrium.

The answer to the Apostle's prayer, although not in accordance with his request, was a blessed consolation--"My grace [my favor] is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect [made manifest] in [your] weakness."

"MOST GLADLY WILL I GLORY IN MY INFIRMITIES"

This is also the blessed consolation of every truly submissive heart. How many of the Lord's people are

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tempest-tossed and sorely tried in these days; and, doubtless, many of them have earnestly besought the Lord to remove this or that trial or affliction; but the piercing thorn still remains for their discipline and perfecting! Let all such, like Paul, give ear to the Master's voice-- "My favor is sufficient for thee." What if other friends forsake thee, and hosts of foes seek to overwhelm thee, if thou hast my favor, my love, is not that sufficient? And what though the flesh be weak and the heart sometimes faint, my strength shall supply your lack; and while you walk in the way of my appointment your weakness shall only the more manifest the power of God working in and through you.

What sincere child of God has not realized in times of greatest need and weakness, the power of God on his behalf supplementing his weakness with strength from above? And when the task was accomplished to which the Lord had called him and for which he felt so incompetent of himself, has he not realized in the outcome the wonder-working power of God?

In view of such a gracious provision to supplement his weakness with Divine strength, the faithful Apostle meekly responded, "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." Having put forth all his own energies and faithfully used his own ability to its fullest extent as a wise steward, it was his joy to recognize the hand of the Lord working with him--by miracles and signs and with demonstrations of the spirit and of power. (Heb. 2:4; Acts 19:11; I Cor. 2:4.) These demonstrations of Divine power, supplementing Paul's faithful use of his natural abilities, were the Lord's endorsement of all he did--the manifestations of Divine approval, both to himself and to others, and, consequently, cause for great rejoicing.

TO REJOICE IN TRIBULATION NOT POSSIBLE EXCEPT
ONE IS IN FULLEST ACCORD WITH GOD

With the Apostle it is also the privilege of all God's children to have their weaknesses supplemented by Divine grace, while they meekly and faithfully use their talents in the Lord's service. And so all the faithful may rejoice in tribulations and infirmities, while God overrules the former, and supplements the latter to his praise.

But to rejoice in tribulations, to endure meekly and patiently a sore thorn in the flesh, and even to glory in such personal infirmities as make the power of Christ the more manifest, is not possible except to those whose hearts are in fullest accord with the loving purposes of

God. If the heart be influenced by pride or ambition or love of fame or wealth or any worldly craving, joy in tribulation is impossible. But if the old ambitions and desires of the flesh are kept under, and faith, love, hope and zeal are all alive and active, we shall have the consciousness of the Divine favor, and then we can rejoice in every experience.

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THE SONG OF THE VINEYARD

--MAY 21.--ISAIAH 5:1-12.--

"Let me sing to my Well-Beloved a song of my Beloved touching his vineyard."

TO THIS LESSON, as to the last, we have a Divinely-inspired key, for the words were quoted by the Great Teacher and applied by him to the Jewish nation, as indeed the Prophet himself explains. What the Prophet styles a song we might properly term a parable or story. God is represented as having planted the nation of Israel as his own vineyard. He gathered out the stones, or removed the difficulties, and planted in it the choicest vine, the richest promises--promises of the Messianic Kingdom and the blessing of Israel and all the families of the earth. He provided a watch tower for it in the Prophecies and a hedge about it in the Law and the Prophets and in all the arrangements made for that holy nation. It was proper that he should look for choice fruitage from so favorably-situated a vineyard, but the results were unsatisfactory. The fruitage was not in harmony with the promises he had planted, but wild grapes, sour, small.

This condition prevailed until the time of Jesus. Although troubles upon the nation were from time to time permitted by the Lord, the breaches were always healed and the nation was preserved. Its walls of Divine protection and guidance were maintained and its watch tower. John the Baptist was the last of the Prophets. Since his day the Lord has fulfilled to natural Israel the things mentioned in this prophecy. The hedges have been broken down. It has been laid waste. No care has been taken of it. The beasts of the field, the Gentile nations, have ravaged this vineyard and, by Divine intention, no rain of Divine blessing, comfort, encouragement and fructification have come upon the Jewish people in all these more than eighteen centuries.

THE PROPER KIND OF FRUIT

What was the proper fruitage which the Lord had a right to expect from this vineyard and why did he not find it? He tells us in this very prophecy: "For the

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vineyard of the Lord of Hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: God looked for judgment, justice, but behold oppression! He looked for righteousness, but instead, heard the cry of the oppressed." In other words, God's Covenant with Israel was that they should have the blessed privilege of being his people, and the having of his Divine favor was dependent upon their faithful observance of the Divine Law. He knew that they would not be able to keep the Law perfectly. He knew that he would not get perfect grapes, but he had a right to expect much better than he found--to expect heart endeavors, even if there were fleshly imperfections.

The demands of the Law were supreme love for the Almighty, governing every thought and word and act, and a love for the neighbor as for oneself--an unselfish love. The observance of this Law, in its spirit at least, to the extent of the ability of the flesh, was the requirement. Had there been such fruitage in Israel at the time that Jesus presented himself to them eighteen centuries ago, they would have been ready to constitute the spiritual Kingdom, which would then and there have been established, according to Divine promise. But their unreadiness led to the breaking down of their entire system. They did not have love enough toward God, nor love enough toward their fellows.

We are not to understand from this that Israel was more degenerate than the remainder of the world. The contrary of this, we believe, is true. But then the other nations had not been specially planted and specially hedged about and specially watered and specially guarded. Where more was given more was required. And when more was not found the faithful few were gathered out and the vineyard temporarily abandoned. We are glad, indeed, to note from the Scriptures that the time is coming when that same vineyard shall be restored under still

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more favorable conditions, during the Messianic reign of glory and heavenly power. But it is still in disorder.

The succeeding verses of the lesson complain of the disposition of the Israelites to take advantage of each other; and the result of this was great riches on the one hand and great poverty on the other. This Prophecy reminds us of the Great Teacher's words when he said, "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, for ye devour widows' houses"--you take possession of the property of the poor, perhaps, sometimes, in a technical, legal way. You are not filled with that love for your neighbor as

yourself which would lead you to assist the poor, the widow and the fatherless and to be generous toward all. The sin of selfishness, avarice, indicates a lack of the Spirit of the Lord and good will toward all. The majority of the Jews of our Lord Jesus' day were tinctured with such selfishness and hence were not in a condition of mind acceptable to the Lord for constituting the spiritual, the Bride class--except the few, "the remnant," mentioned by the Prophet.

The Lord indicated how he would punish the selfish. Ruin would come upon the great estates and the earth would not yield returns for the labor. Thus selfishness would have its reproof and penalty along temporal lines, as well as costing the loss of spiritual privileges.

APPLICATION TO SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

God's dealings with fleshly Israel not only represent the principles of Divine government and requirements, but also the requirements of natural Israel's service, as the Scriptures show, and they typify spiritual Israel. As natural Israel failed to be ready to accept Jesus at his first advent--except "the remnant"--so spiritual Israel, called "Christendom," will fail to be ready to receive him as the great Messiah at the establishment of his Kingdom. Note the care with which the Lord planted his Church, gathering out all the difficulties at the time of its establishment. Note the heavenly, spiritual promises, exceeding great, with which he surrounded the Church, as his vineyard. Note that it is of the Father's right-hand planting. Note the Watch Tower of Grace and Truth established by the Apostles. Note the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

In the end of this Age comes a harvest time for spiritual Israel, as in the end of the Jewish Age there was a harvest time for natural Israel. Here, as there, only "a remnant" will be found worthy of the Kingdom--the great, nominal mass will be found unworthy. And why? Because the spirit of worldliness and selfishness is the prevalent one, instead of the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of meekness, gentleness, love. Only with the few is God first. Only with the few is there a spirit of full consecration to do the Divine will. Only with the few is there love of the brethren and a willingness to lay down life one for another. (John 15:13.) Only with the few is there even business honesty, justice. Today selfishness is heaping up treasure and the results, we may be sure, will be unsatisfactory--"a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation."--Dan. 12:1.

Moreover, as the Prophet proceeds to show, the accumulation of wealth has generally an injurious effect upon the rich--idleness, music and wine and disregard of things Divine. The "remnant" now will be a sufficient number to complete the "elect." The Kingdom of glory will be established and all the families of the earth will, shortly after the time of trouble, begin to recognize the

long-promised blessing. Indeed, the "time of trouble" will be used of the Lord to humble the world--to prepare mankind to receive properly the blessings of the Kingdom.

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THE KINGDOM OF PEACE

--MAY 28.--MICAH 4:1-8.--

"Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more."

THE whole world has for a long time been boasting that civilization and Christianity have won the day, that the world has become God's Empire and that the blessings of the Millennium are ours to enjoy. Aid Conferences and Peace Councils and Peace Commissions have flared up for the moment, only to die down. The cry of "Peace, peace," has brought no peace. We are beginning to see that we have been deceiving ourselves into thinking that the nations of the earth are kingdoms of God. We are beginning to see that the Bible styles them "kingdoms of this world," kingdoms of the Gentiles, and that it tells us that "the Prince of this world, who now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," is Satan, the Usurper, "a liar from the beginning and abode not in the truth."

We see it all. The Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, for which the Master taught us to pray, has not yet come. We are glad, however, that the Divine promise assures us that it will come and explains to us that the All-Wise Creator is now, first of all, preparing for his Kingdom by gathering from amongst mankind a worthy, saintly few, to be associates of their King and Redeemer in that Kingdom of glory, by which the world is to be blessed.

But all are not yet convinced of these Bible truths. Some point to the coins of the various kingdoms, which declare that "In God we trust," and that the several emperors and kings of earth are reigning "by the grace of God" and claiming that they are of Divine appointment; while the Pope also makes the still greater claim that he is the personal representative of Messiah and his Kingdom and the only one authorized to reign over and to govern the kings of the earth.

To convince the more prejudiced nothing further should be necessary along these lines than to point out the difference between present conditions and those which the Scriptures declare will prevail when he who redeemed the world by the sacrifice of himself will take his great

power and reign as Messiah, the King of glory, to put down sin in its every form and death in its every form and to release and uplift all the willing and obedient of the families of the earth--including those who have gone down into the great prison-house of death--the grave, sheol, hades.

[Original Tower has a pie-chart divided in 2 sections. About 62% of the chart is entitled "FOR WARS PAST & PROSPECTIVE" and the remaining 38% is entitled "FOR ALL OTHER PUBLIC APPROPRIATIONS". The chart is entitled:]

RELATIVE EXPENDITURES OF THE UNITED STATES IN 1908

IN OUR FAVORED LAND

The United States of America does not lead the world in the size of its standing army and in great battleships. She has no need to do so, having no threatening Christian (?) nations to menace her. Yet even this nation, walled about by thousands of miles of ocean, is making enormous expenditures on account of war, as the above diagram well illustrates.

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[In original Tower there is a small picture entitled:]
BATTLESHIP NORTH DAKOTA \$10,000,000

[The above picture is inset in a larger picture entitled:]
What the cost of a Battleship would do in a State
THE MINNEAPOLIS JOURNAL.

One of the most modern of the battleships of the United States Navy is named the North Dakota, after one of the States. She cost \$10,000,000.

The Minneapolis Journal shows what the money expended for this battleship would have accomplished in the State for which she is named. It would have provided a \$25,000 agricultural school and experimental farm in its every county, with an endowment fund of \$175,000 for each school, the interest on which would have provided \$10,500 annually for the maintenance of each school. Additionally, it would have left \$1,000,000 of an endowment for the State Agricultural College.

The situation in Europe is still worse. Does not this preparation of the so-called Christian nations of the world to destroy one another prove to us that there is a mistake--that the term Christian has been misapplied

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to them? Nor can we say that there is no danger, for only fear could lead to such costly preparations for war.

PRAY FOR MESSIAH'S KINGDOM

The hope for humanity is the Messianic Kingdom described in this lesson. The "mountain of the Lord's house" signifies the Kingdom of God's house, his church. It will be established in the top of, or above the kingdoms of the world. It will be exalted amongst the nations and all peoples will flow to it. There will be an attraction in it for all peoples. It will lead them to climb upward. The attraction which will thus draw mankind will be the blessings of health and restitution, which the Kingdom will be prepared to grant to all peoples as they shall come into harmony with its requirements.--Acts 3:19-23.

That Kingdom will be closely identified with the Zionist movement and the Holy Land. The Kingdom itself will be spiritual, invisible to men, but its earthly agents will be visible and they will be Jewish--"Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets in the Kingdom," etc. (Matt. 8:11.) The Jews, already impulsed toward the Land of Promise, will go thither in increasing numbers, and all of the faithful of them will go in sympathy and representatively, through financial assistance. The Israelitish hopes and promises will attract that number strongly first. And gradually all the nations, learning of the grace of God, and the blessings of restitution to be bestowed, will say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us (as well as the Jews) of his ways and we will walk in his paths. For out of Zion shall go forth the Law and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." --Isa. 2:3; Mic. 4:2.

THE PEACE OF GOD ESTABLISHED

Verse 3 tells of how Messiah's judgments will be manifested, favoring most the nations which are most righteous and rebuking all unrighteousness. The effect will be that wars will cease. The metal previously used in weapons of destruction will be used in plowshares and pruning hooks. The earth shall no longer be soaked with human blood, but be tilled for the blessing of the race, with none to molest nor make afraid. The Lord's people, at the beginning of that time, are represented as saying, Let each follow his own conception of God, but Israel must follow Jehovah. And at that time he will assemble her and gather her back into her own land--"a remnant." Then

the Lord shall reign over them in Mt. Zion.

The original dominion was given to Adam, but lost through sin. Jesus, by his obedience even unto death, has become the strong Tower, the Fortress, the Protection, to all of God's people. "To him will come the first dominion" and for a thousand years he shall reign for the blessing and uplifting of all the willing and obedient.

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GOD WORKS--WE WORK

"Beloved,...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."--Phil. 2:12,13.

THE GOSPEL CHURCH has been called with a "high calling." The fact that we accept the "call" signifies that we appreciate it and consider it something very desirable. The condition upon which it is offered is the giving up of everything that we have. By our acceptance of these terms we demonstrate our appreciation of the great opportunity thus granted us. If, therefore, we recognize the call that has come to us, we may know that God is willing for us to accept that call. It is important, therefore, that we understand the conditions in order that we may make our "election sure."

The suggestion of the text is that to accomplish this end we must do some kind of work. Our salvation must be worked out. God does not purpose to take us to glory regardless of our own endeavors. True, these endeavors would not take us there; but, on the other hand, we shall not get the glorious things unless we strive for them. Hence, the exhortation is to "work," to "labor," to "strive" for the prize. But whatever may be our endeavors to keep the Divine Law, we are assured that success is not brought about merely by our own aspirations and best endeavors; but that he who called us has himself begun a good work in us which he is both able and willing to accomplish.

We are not alone, therefore, in working out our salvation. God is working in us and has already worked in us; and his promises confirm this fact with enlivening power. He works in us not only to "will," as when we made our consecration, but, the Apostle says, he works in us to "do." That is to say, it is not sufficient for us to have good intentions, but these must be brought into practical relationship with our lives and must serve for development of our characters. Thus God works in us. Thus we are co-laborers with God in the work of this present time, of building up the Church and in making our "calling and election sure."

LET US FEAR LEST WE SHOULD COME SHORT

The Apostle admonishes us to work out our own salvation with "fear." The Scriptures declare that "The fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 9:10.) Our first thought of the Almighty is, very properly, an apprehension of his greatness and our own insignificance. But as we come to know of his arrangement and Plan, this kind of fear gives place to respect and love, for he is very gracious toward all who are inclined to be in harmony with his beneficent arrangements and purposes. We find that he has made glorious plans, which are working out day by day, and that we have a share in them. Hence, this kind of fear casts out dread.

There are Christian people, however, who have not

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progressed far along the Christian way, but who are bound up in false doctrines. Of these the Scriptures say, "Their fear toward me is taught by the precepts of men." (Isa. 29:13.) Greater knowledge of God and of his character will dispel this kind of fear.

The "fear" of our text seems to be a fear of non-attainment of the glorious promises; of failure to become partakers of the divine nature. The Apostle counsels us, "Let us, therefore, fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."--Heb. 4:1.

"Let us work out our own salvation with fear and trembling" as we recognize how great and blessed are the things in reservation for us if we are faithful, and yet how we may miss this wonderful opportunity of glory, honor and immortality. Whatever is of sufficient value for us to greatly desire, is worthy of great care in respect to our attitude toward it. While the fear in this case may not indicate a literal trembling, yet it implies alarm lest we, having had the courage to undertake to run the race for the prize, should allow anything to impede our progress or, possibly, lead us to abandon the race. This course would effect our ruin. Recognizing the great prize, we should fear and tremble lest we should let it slip from us and so lose it.

OUR LORD WAS HEARD IN RESPECT TO THAT WHICH HE FEARED

The same sort of care which always attaches to fear is indicated in our Lord's case where we read that "he offered up strong crying and tears" and, as the Apostle says, "He was heard in [respect to the thing] that he feared." (Heb. 5:7.) He feared lest in some particular he had failed to carry out the will of God; lest he might have failed to do the Father's will so perfectly as to attain to glory, honor and immortality; lest his death might

be the Second Death. But he was heard in respect to that which he feared, and an angel was sent to give him assurance of his acceptability. As he never feared the Father in the sense of experiencing dread or terror, so should it be with all those who love him.

While our text says that we should "work out our own salvation," another Scripture states that the reward which we seek is, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:9.) These two texts, however, are not out of harmony. No Scripture implies that we can be independent of our Lord in the matter of working out our own salvation. The perfect work of Christ is the basis of our own work. Unless he had redeemed us we could have no basis for hope of eternal life.

Hence, our attainment of the prize of our "heavenly calling," based upon certain conditions which we are striving to meet, is not dependent upon our own perfection or anything that we could do. The basis of it is the knowledge of our own imperfection and our acceptance by the Father because of the merit of our great Advocate imputed to us.

It was God who provided for the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; and it is God who has drawn us to himself and who gives us grace to follow in the footsteps of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While with fear and trembling or, as we have shown, with great carefulness, we work out our salvation, we realize the promised grace in every time of need; and we may be confident that our best efforts toward righteousness are acceptable to God only when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.--Heb. 4:16; Eph. 2:8.

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R4797 : page 108

BLAMELESS AND HARMLESS, WITHOUT REBUKE

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life."--Phil. 2:15,16.

TO BE BLAMELESS is to be devoid of any disposition to do evil; not controlled by anger, malice, hatred, strife; but, on the contrary, to be disposed to do all the good possible to all with whom we have contact. We should be harmless, not merely so far as God would see, or so far as the brethren would see, but, so far as possible, harmless in the sight of the world, before whom we are to shine.

Blamelessness does not necessarily mean perfection. One might be blameless and yet imperfect on account

of natural weaknesses. To be blameless in the sight of God is to live so that he may see one's intentions always to be just, loving, kind. The world will speak evil of us even as they spoke evil of our Lord, and will hate us; for the darkness always hates the light. If we have the friendship of the world, we are not in accord with God. The Apostle James asks, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." (James 4:4.) But if we are friends of God, the world will seek to do us injury as evil-doers--"as deceivers, and yet true." While not "friends of the world," we must endeavor to be at peace with them, so far as lies in us.

We cannot, however, expect to please everybody. We are to be blameless in the sight of those of mankind who are recognized as having the best judgment amongst the people. Thus it was with our Lord. While the world blamed him, yet in their private councils they recognized the fact that he was harmless. Pilate, who put him to death, was honest enough to state, "What evil hath he done? I find no cause of death in this man"; "I am innocent of the blood of this just person."--Luke 23:22; Matt. 27:24.

In the text under consideration the thought of the Apostle is that whatever charges may be made against us, our course of conduct before the world should be such that only the perverse of mind will think wrongly of us; that the better minds would think justly and note that the lives of the Lord's people are indeed blameless, not blameworthy.

The disciples were dwelling in the midst of a perverse generation, their own Jewish nation, among whom they were so to conduct themselves that their lives would be a light to their fellowmen. Perverseness implies unwillingness to be guided by the Lord; crookedness seems to apply to their course of life, not always a way of open wickedness, but a crookedness, doing both right and wrong. On the one hand was an evil heart of unbelief; on the other were forms and ceremonies.

For more than eighteen hundred years these conditions have followed the Lord's people. Everywhere there is a great deal of crookedness and self-will. Many things are done which are known to be contrary to the will of the Lord. Amidst these conditions the Lord's people are to shine as lights; they are to seek to walk in the Lord's ways, that they may "show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light."

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R4797 : page 109

GIANTS IN THE EARTH

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also

in the days of the Son of Man."--Luke 17:26.

IN CONSIDERING our Lord's statement-- that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at his coming [parousia, presence], in the end of this Age--it should be noted that the Lord's presence will be unknown to the world; for this particular statement follows, that "As in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,...and knew not,...so shall also the coming [parousia, presence] of the Son of Man be."--Matt. 24:37-39.

This statement, however, does not imply that there is anything wrong in eating and drinking, etc., but rather that there will be little in an outward way to disturb man, in the crisis at the end of the Age. At the time of the flood, at the end of the First Dispensation, there was apparently nothing to indicate that anything unusual was about to happen. Evidently the Lord meant us to draw conclusions from this fact, that as calamity was inevitable then, so it will be inevitable now.

The end of the First Dispensation and that of this present Dispensation are wonderfully similar. Previous to the end of the First Dispensation a superhuman influence had entered into the world. Power from an angelic source had produced very undesirable conditions, to the extent of bringing into unauthorized existence a race who were "men of renown" and "giants" in strength. (Gen. 6:1-4.) Today we find a similar condition. Whatever portion of the spirit of truth has entered into an evilly disposed human mind evil conditions on a gigantic scale have often been produced. Where else in the whole world can we find more intellectual power than in those who have come in contact with the Spirit of the Lord, the spirit of the Truth? But when this spirit of knowledge enters into an evil heart, evil will result.

This spirit has produced men of renown, men of mental acumen, men who are able to do wonderful things. The remarkable achievements of our time, the wonderful inventions of all kinds, would not have been possible except for the fact that the Spirit of the Lord is abroad in the earth. But the general tendency of this combination--the spirit of knowledge in an evil heart--has been to produce giants, who "walk up and down" the land and are known as the Sugar Trust, the Coal Trust, etc. As the giants were in control in the days of Noah, so the giants are getting more and more control of the situation now. Just as it was then, so today the giants are liable to capture the whole world. As the flood destroyed those giants, so at this time the great cataclysm of trouble will drown all trusts and other commercial agencies which oppress mankind. We read that they will be utterly destroyed; that there will be no hope of resuscitation.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS

Question.--Since Adam was a wilful and intelligent sinner, and was individually sentenced, and since the sentence has been executed upon him and he is now under that sentence, and now has nothing and is nothing, how much of the merit of Christ will be necessary for his release from his condemned condition?

Answer.--We understand that Adam, having been tried and found guilty and sentenced to death, and having gone down into death under that sentence, has done nothing to liquidate his obligations in any sense of the word; and that it will require the full satisfaction of a ransom-price to set him free and permit him to have another trial. In a general way, this is, of course, true of the entire human family. As Adam's children, we are dealt with as a race, instead of as individuals except in the case of the Church and of the Jewish Nation under their Law.

During the Millennial Age there will be no imputation of Christ's merit to anybody, as it is now imputed to the Church. It is imputed to us for a special purpose --to enable us to offer acceptable sacrifices. In the Millennial Age no one will need the righteousness of another to make him acceptable. On the contrary, the whole world, counted in as one, will be dealt with from that standpoint; and Christ, as the great Mediator, Prophet and King, will make satisfaction to Justice for Adam and all his children, dealing with them as one. After making satisfaction to Justice, and thus purchasing the whole world of mankind, the great Mediator of the New Covenant will put it into effect, and under that New Covenant the blessing will begin with Israel; but every member of the human race will have an opportunity of coming to perfection, as heretofore shown.

To get at the real gist of the question, we will put the matter in another form and say: If Adam had been living during the Gospel Age, to our understanding, he would not have been eligible to the offer of this Gospel Age --that it would not have been consistent with the Divine arrangement to have dealt with Adam as the Lord is dealing with the Church, because he, as personally condemned, would have had nothing that he could present as a sacrifice. We, on the contrary, have something to present--"Present your bodies living sacrifices." While our bodies are blemished, we have, nevertheless, some powers, and these we are invited to present. We have bodies which we are willing to coerce into submission. This is our hope--that we may be permitted to suffer with Christ, that we may be sharers in his glory.

The Apostle says, "Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body." (I Cor. 6:20.) This seems to imply that we had something. Having recognized Christ as the center of God's Plan and as our Redeemer, we are called upon to renounce sin--glorifying God by consecrating our lives, our bodies, to his service. But if we had been the original sinner, and had been originally sentenced, we see nothing that we should have had that we could call our own that we could have given.

Question.--Should Sisters teach Sunday School classes?

Answer.--Usually Sisters are better teachers of the young than are brethren. Nothing in the Scriptures forbids their teaching such classes. The Apostle's words are: "I suffer not a woman to teach or to usurp authority over a man." His words apply specially to the Church.

As for the advisability of having Sunday Schools! We have not changed our judgment from what we have written in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. VI.

We still believe that God holds the Christian parents responsible for the spiritual education of their children, and that they get a special blessing in fulfilling his requirement. If Sunday Schools are ever advisable, we believe they would be only for orphans or worldlings, or for children already taught at home.

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INTERESTING LETTERS

DEAR PASTOR:--

I write you as an Elder of the Church to express our appreciation of your service to us as Pastor during the past year.

We hold at least five meetings each week. The Berean lesson Monday evening, TABERNACLE SHADOWS Wednesday evening, SCRIPTURE STUDIES Friday evening, a lesson on a chapter in the Bible Sunday morning, testimony meeting and lesson in SCRIPTURE STUDIES Sunday afternoon.

In all these lessons, dear Brother, you are certainly with us as Pastor. Then, we have the sermon every week and the dear old WATCH TOWER twice a month, so we do thank our Heavenly Father and our dear Lord for such a bountiful supply of the pure food, cleansed of all poisonous matter. So bountifully are we supplied with this precious food that we have no time nor desire for the things that the world loves so well.

We cannot express, dear Brother, how much we appreciate this loving arrangement that the dear Lord has provided

for us through you, as our dear Pastor; and we wish to say that our hearts abound in love to you and our prayer is that your loving zeal may continue, and that knowledge and wisdom may be supplied you to give the "meat in due season" to the end.

With unbounded love to you from each one of the dear ones here, I remain,

Your brother in the precious Faith,
J. H. WRIGHT.--ALA.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I feel it my duty to write you a few lines to say how thankful I am that, through the instrumentality of SCRIPTURE STUDIES, I have been led to abandon a life of sin and disgrace. I have found that which I needed to give me peace and joy, and, thank God, I know I shall never give it up. For several years I was separated from my family and leading a reckless life, but through his mercy I am again with my family and we are happy and contented.

I had about given up all hope of ever being anything in this life but a drunkard, when I came across STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, also other of your literature, which gave me the light I so much needed. God's Plan is surely a marvelous one, and it is so plain to those who really seek the Truth.

My prayer will ever be that God's blessing may rest upon you and your co-laborers in the "Harvest work," and especially upon the Colporteurs in their work of spreading the Truth. No one knows what good may result from placing the STUDIES even in homes where there is no interest. I believe my first reading of volume one was in the home of a family who had never read a page of it, but were talked into buying it by one of the Colporteurs. I was very much interested in it at the time, and tried to find out where the lady got it, thinking to get more literature along the same lines; but, after leaving there, I thought no more of it until God led me into the home of a Sister where I got more of the Truth, both by reading and from her explanations of points I did not understand. I am intensely interested in this glorious work, and my desire is to live nearer to God, who has done so much for me.

Yours in the Blessed Hope, JOHN HOOPER.--CANADA.

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DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

I am writing a brief letter to tell you that by his grace I am still sound in the doctrine, still abiding in the faith, and am still standing; still rejoicing and praising him for making known to me his wonderful Plan.

Each day I am more satisfied with the food of the Lord's

providing--the Bible with comments, the SCRIPTURE STUDIES and THE WATCH TOWER. These, with the DAILY MANNA and hymns and weekly sermon, are my diet and I do not need nor crave extras. I am hungry for just this and no other kind of food.

Study and prayer are developing in me more of the fruits of the spirit, more love to God and more compassion for my neighbor. I am thankful there is a growing love of righteousness for its own sake, as I begin to feel that by the Lord's grace my present development would continue along the same line if 1914 did not give evidence of all that I am expecting and believing it will. In brief, my faith in the Plan and my study of the Scriptures would continue as at present.

In so many ways, by your words and your works, you are helping me, and my heart is full of gratitude. I know the Lord is nigh unto you. May he bless you richly and keep you safe until he receives you unto himself.

Your sister in Christ, I. M. F.--PA.

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DEAR BROTHER:--

Enclosed please find five dollars, for which please send to me by mail one of your WATCH TOWER Bibles, and THE WATCH TOWER for one year.

I have all your volumes and have read them over and over and over. This is the greatest satisfaction of my life in my old days. I am now seventy-seven years old.

I remain your brother in the Lord,
N. SHEPHERD.--CAN.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:--

Owing to much literature being circulated by the opposition within our ranks some time ago, I concluded it wise to discontinue the distribution of the "Questions Answering Questions" booklet. Since then I have received many orders for these booklets from friends who are not advised of their discontinuance, and some do not understand why they are refused.

I would thank you for the publication of this letter in THE WATCH TOWER, notifying the friends of their discontinuance and of my reason for this.

Prayerful meditation upon Mark 9:38-40, leads me to the conclusion that we can be workers in the Harvest, and yet not followers of the Lord. To be followers of the Lord, we must not only be workers in the Harvest, but must also be workers according to his will. The fact that the majority of the Lord's "little ones" now disapprove of the circulation all literature other than that published by the Society, and my belief that the expression of the majority in such matters is the expression of the will of the Lord, are other reasons for

its discontinuance.

Feeling sure that all of the Lord's faithful ones will agree with me in oneness of the work, as well as oneness of hope, faith, and baptism, and trusting that all may receive a greater blessing by the discontinuance, than by the circulation of the booklet, I remain,

Yours in the Master's service, A. B. DABNEY.--VA.

DEAR BROTHER:--

Does it not seem strange that so many of the dear friends worry about the Time of Trouble? How can an event arrive before it comes? What do we know about it? Nothing, by sight, would you not say? If by sight, then when did we quit walking by faith?

How can Gentile nations continue after their lease expires? If they existed before the formal confirmation of the "lease" they were "tenants by sufferance," it would seem.

You have taught clearly enough that they will resist ejection proceedings, and this dispossession will be "the time of trouble" and the daily papers will probably not record the event!

Would it not be well for the dear friends to re-read volumes two, three and four--as I am doing with much profit?

With much Christian love, and gratitude and best wishes,
A. M. MERRELL.--OKLA.

DEAR FRIENDS:--

I have received your kind letter and the second volume of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES. Thank you. I have begun the careful study of the volumes, and find them so good! They help me to understand parts of the Scriptures that I was not able to understand. When I asked questions of those who are teachers of the Bible, they told me, "We are not expected to understand it all."

I feel that God has answered my prayer for Truth by putting your little paper into my hands by one of his servants. Some one put a paper into my buggy one day while I was in Lawrence. I had only partly read it when it disappeared, and I did not know where to get another. So I asked my heavenly Father to let me get another, and after waiting a couple of weeks, behold! another was put into my buggy. I took better care of this one.

My husband is a Lutheran. I was reared a Quaker, and all my people belonged to the Friends, but I joined the Lutheran Church with my husband. Many times have I come home from listening to a sermon on eternal torment, crying because the minister made God out such a cruel God. Now, I thank his name that I know him as a God of Love, who is able to help us and who will soon open all the blind eyes.

I am sending your books, as fast as I can read them, to my brother. He held up his hands in warning to me when I told him of them. He reminded me of what the Scriptures

say about following after false prophets. He, like many others, is afraid to investigate anything for fear of being led away from the doctrine he grew up with.

MRS. VIOLA J. S. SHIRAR.

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INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

AT WHICH BROTHER C. T. RUSSELL WILL BE PRINCIPAL SPEAKER

FRIENDS FROM NEARBY PLACES ARE CORDIALLY INVITED.

BROOKLYN, N.Y., MAY 7

Morning Rally for Praise and Testimony at 10:30 o'clock
in the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Discourse for the Public at 3
p.m. in the Brooklyn Academy of Music, Lafayette Avenue
and St. Felix Street. Topic, "The Resurrection Hope."
Visitors and friends will be cordially welcomed.

LYNCHBURG, VA., MAY 14

Morning Rally at 10:30 o'clock. Discourse for the interested
at 11 o'clock and Lecture for the Public at 3 p.m.
All services to be in the Auditorium, Main Street, between
11th and 12th Streets. Visitors and friends will be cordially
welcomed.

BALTIMORE, MD., MAY 21

Morning Rally at 10:30 o'clock. Discourse for the interested
at 11 o'clock in Lehman's Hall, 856 North Howard
Street. Afternoon service for the Public at 3 o'clock in the
Lyric Theatre, Mount Royal and Maryland Avenues.

BOSTON, MASS., MAY 28

BROOKLYN, N.Y., JUNE 4

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We thank you for interesting clippings sent in, but request that you give name and date of the publication. If you send the paper be sure to mark the articles distinctly.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE DAY HAS NOT COME! SAYS ARCHBISHOP IRELAND

The night of weeping is to give place to the morning of joy, says God's Word.

Messiah is to establish his Kingdom of Peace and compel the abolition of war, so the Bible declares, and so both Catholics and Protestants agree.

Yet both Catholics and Protestants agree that Messiah's Kingdom was set up in power and great glory more than eighteen centuries ago. Why, then, has it failed of its mission? Can either Catholics or Protestants explain?

Hear Archbishop Ireland at Peoria, Ill., on February 23, as follows:--

"Has the day come of such eminent prepotency of the principle of arbitration that a great nation, such as the United States of America, may safely turn all its swords into plow-shares and all its spears into sickles? No one will make the affirmation.

"No, the day of assured and lasting international peace has not arrived, if ever ambitions and pride of nations permit it to arrive.

"Today the nation that dismantles its ships of war and disbands its soldiers puts itself in danger of gross humiliation, if not fatal disaster. Today America is respected by its sister nations--it is respected because, also, it is feared.

"Peace America invokes, but to be the more sure of peace America must be ready at a moment's notice to summon to its defense an army and a navy to whom defeat is impossible."

THE EXPLANATION

God's Kingdom, Messiah's Kingdom, was not set up eighteen centuries or more ago. That is the mistake! It is not yet set up! The Church was not commissioned to conquer the world and to reign as and for Christ during this time. Her commission was to "make herself ready." (Rev. 19:7.) She is to be her Lord's mouthpiece in calling and instructing the elect, who, at the First Resurrection, are to be "changed" to the "divine nature," as St.

Peter declares, and then will inherit with their Redeemer his Messianic Kingdom, which will rule the world with a "rod of iron" for its blessing and uplift out of sin and selfishness.--2 Peter 1:4.

Christendom (Catholic and Protestant) has labored under the huge mistake of supposing themselves authorized to rule the world. The attempt to live by their erroneous opinions deluged the world with the blood of religious "holy wars" and cruel persecutions of each other and of the Jews.

It is time to awake to the fact that the Lord's call now to his people is to show their loyalty by faith and obedience to the Divine law of love, even unto self-sacrifice, even unto death. So the Apostle wrote, "If we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him."--Rom. 8:16,17; I Cor. 6:2,3.

The First Resurrection, like the second coming of Christ, will be invisible, except as the glory and power of the Messianic Kingdom will quickly follow. (1) A time of world-wide trouble. (2) A reign of righteousness world-wide, the cessation of wars, etc., as promised in the Prophets.

Let us no longer deceive ourselves by speaking and thinking of civilized nations as Kingdoms of God in any sense. Let us recognize them, Scripturally, as "kingdoms of this world," Gentile kingdoms, permitted to hold sway until the time of Messiah's Kingdom --and no longer. (Daniel 2:44.) Let us not expect of these kingdoms the blessings promised only under Messiah's Kingdom. Let us, on the contrary, watch and pray for the Kingdom of Heaven and prepare ourselves, and all who have the hearing ear, for our promised resurrection "change;" and let us leave all else to God. He is able and willing to work all things according to the counsel of his own will.

CHINA'S CRY FOR PITY

The intoxicating curse of China is opium. Half a century ago, China endeavored to control the situation and to exclude all foreign opium. But wealthy Englishmen were concerned, because they had large interests in India, where the poppy, from which opium is made, grows profusely.

The result was a war, in which the heathen Chinese, not having up-to-date Christian (?) cannons and ships, lost heavily. Then the British fastened themselves on the Chinese, took control of a liberal piece of territory, and made a treaty, which the conquered Chinese were forced to accept. That treaty stipulates the admission of opium into China. The Chinese cannot stop the traffic without precipitating war with the most powerful Kingdom of Christ (?) on earth, so far as naval strength goes.

Now, after years of suffering, the Chinese are becoming

civilized, or Christianized (?), to the extent of adopting cannon, rapid-fire guns, a regular army, etc. They are about to establish a Parliamentary form of Government also, and are arranging to school the rising generation in the English language. It is said that vast orders for these new school-books have been placed in the United States.

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Now China realizes that opium is her great curse; she has passed laws against the growth of the poppy and the manufacture of opium. But she finds that the imports of opium amount to 5,000,000 pounds per year. She cries out again, as in the past, that this Great Kingdom of Christ (?) (Great Britain) will have mercy upon her and cease to insist on this curse being introduced to blight China morally and physically.

A MONSTER PETITION

The young men of heathen China have started a monster petition for the cessation of opium importation. The signatures are to be 200,000, representing China's 400,000,000 people. It is to be addressed to his Majesty, King George, of Great Britain and Ireland, and Emperor of India and the Isles of the Sea and Head of the Church of England--the mightiest Kingdom of Christ (?) on earth.

The text of this appeal has already appeared in the New York Herald, February 17. It recounts that a previous appeal, of similar character, was made without avail to the King's royal grandmother in 1858, when she was the representative of this branch of Christ's Kingdom (?).

Is not all this very incongruous! very strange? What hypocrisy we have indulged in! How we all should be ashamed of it! Think of one of the chief nations of earth sending Bibles and missionaries to the heathen in one hand and rum and opium in the other! Is it any wonder that the heathen reject our two-faced overtures as best they are able? Is it any wonder that the "common people" of Great Britain are unable to take their religion seriously and are falling away from all church association--into infidelity?

It is no wonder! Let us get back to honesty and truth. Let us admit that Great Britain is one of the kingdoms of this world. Let us not charge the faults of our selfishness to God and to Christ's Kingdom. Let us stand for the best possible in worldly government and continue to pray for and to hope and wait for the Kingdom which is to come and to bring about the doing of God's will on earth as it is done in heaven, according to the prayer of our dear Redeemer and Lord.

TO SHORTEN THE COMMANDMENTS

Advices from London note that the highest counsels of the Church of England are considering the advisability of modifying and shortening the Ten Commandments-- especially the second, fourth and tenth.

Those who admit that God gave those commands must be egotistic in the extreme to attempt to correct the Almighty!

Those who disbelieve in the Divine authorship of the commands would better repudiate them entirely and make new ones to their own pleasement and properly credited to their own wisdom.

God's consecrated people, guided by his Word in the New Testament, realize that the law is just and good. But they see also that it was given to the Jew and not to the Christian "new creatures in Christ."

These latter are spirit-begotten and are under the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ--a superior Law--a Law which requires love to God supremely and love for our fellow-creatures as for ourselves. This Law of Love includes all of the requirements of the Mosaic Law and more.

If the Jew could not keep the Mosaic Law, because of the hereditary weakness of his flesh, neither can the Christian "new creature" keep his still higher law for the same reason.

But God is not judging these "new creatures" as flesh beings, but as spirit beings. They are being judged according to their minds, their hearts, their intentions. Thus "the righteousness of the Law of God is fulfilled in us, who are walking, not after the flesh, but after the spirit. --Rom. 8:1.

CHURCH UNITY CONGRESS

Early in March a "Church Unity Congress" at Los Angeles, Cal., is recorded. Its principal speaker was Bishop Johnson (Episcopalian). His address, as reported in the Los Angeles Times, is interesting, and was as follows:--

"We are addressing ourselves to a project which, until within very recent years, has been regarded as fanciful.

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We are about to confer concerning the reunion of Christendom, than which, a quarter of a century ago, no proposal was regarded as more chimerical. And yet we are doing this at the present time, conscious that the convictions of Christian men have within twenty-five years so changed that, to a large extent, they coincide with the judgment that has brought us together.

"Up until the early sixties, a fatal sense of security

seemed to have blinded the Christian world to the inadequacy of the results attending the efforts of the churches.

"Suddenly the Christian world began to realize that possibly it had attained all the success it could expect to have, or deserved to have, under existing conditions. Christendom divided, even if it be into friendly camps (which was not always the case), was not a condition favorable to the largest and best fruitage in the Christian church. Therefore, it is now demanding that at least this one adverse condition shall be changed, so that the church at large shall be able to do work worthy of Jesus Christ our Lord and of the character which he expected the church to do.

"With such a cry ringing in our ears, you and I come together today and join in this conference, which, until the present time, has been deemed impracticable. I am glad to believe that should we get the ideal of what ought to be done clearly in our own minds, we could, in God's own time, bring about such a reunion of Christian forces as would make the united churches really a tremendous power in the world for God.

"I am quite aware what this statement involves. I am prepared to say that I am, by conviction, committed to a policy which looks forward to its universal adoption, even to the obliteration of so-called denominational lines, and to a genuine effort so to re-relate Christian forces that they may, with no overlapping or friction, plan as with one mind for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of Christ in the world.

"Yes, it is a great thing that we are undertaking to do, and we, in our own time, may only be able to make our own generation believe that the conception is practicable.

"Some of our friends may say that we have not done much, and that may be true, but will it not be fine when we do appear before the Judgment Seat, should we be commended by God because we have not allowed the Christian world, in the presence of fearful social and civic problems, to fail of its duty, without some warning on impending disaster, due to our dismal and pitiable divisions?"

"We recognize that a century may pass before the end shall be attained, but if you feel as I do, my brethren, you want to be ahead of your time.

WHAT HIS IDEAL IS NOT

"In order to show what my ideal is, it has seemed well for me to show what it is not. Frankly, my ideal leaves the federation idea far in the rear, and I say it with a profound

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respect for federation. Right here in this city we have shown what federation may accomplish, and if it has done nothing else, it has made this meeting possible."

[Great applause.]

Bishop Johnson argued that, in case of federation, if

the settled policy of any affiliated church was menaced by the action of the federation, the latter would be unable to carry out its policy. He declared that the towns and hamlets of Southern California are overchurched, and that in the cities the churches are scattered about in a most unstatesmanlike manner. He argued that the uniting of forces would bring about better results at a much reduced cost and more effectively reach the people who need to be reached, but it would probably not be accepted by many of those affected by such a move.

"Of course," said the bishop, "there is something seriously wrong in this attitude, but it is the fact and we must face it. I am perfectly satisfied, however, that the churches, merely federated, will not be able to deal effectively with the problem.

"You will see that I regard sectarianism not only as productive of evil, but as being evil and vicious in itself; that is, if the spirit of the greatest of the Apostles is any indication of the Master's aim and purpose.

"It is my feeling that the time has come when we, as Christian leaders, ought to re preach the Pauline conception of the church. Of course, we will all find that there will be plenty of people in all of our congregations who are determined, at all cost, to be first, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Congregationalists, and I suppose there always will be such, but I for one am praying that the time shall come when the necessity for these names shall have passed away (applause); that the Christian world will soon have formed a platform upon which every Christian may stand without any sense of loss, and with the satisfaction of knowing that it includes every essential to salvation in the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

THE FINAL CONCEPTION

Bishop Johnson's widest conception of this United Apostolic Church is to be found in the following paragraph:--

"When a church regards herself as the enclosure for saints, rather than the refuge for those 'called to be such,' she is giving herself a character quite unlike and below that which Jesus had. If the church is the extension of the Incarnation, then she must welcome to her companionship and fold the publicans and sinners who are fascinated by her Master's message; she must so relate herself to them that she will neither suffer defilement nor have an unpleasant sense of contamination in such association, and they, on the other hand, must be led by association with her, to think of and to love noble things.

"In a word, the church is to be the physician of the spiritually sick, and halt and blind, and yet the guide of the spiritually strong, courageous and brave, and for each in his own place and time, she is to bring a message of love and peace, so that she herself will ultimately become the spotless Bride of Christ."

The speaker at great length pursued the discussion of

the subject without attempting or desiring to enter into any of the details of the ideal church. He said:

"We could most easily, while purring and smiling, enter upon a conflict to secure an intellectual victory, that would widen and not bridge the breaches."

In conclusion the Bishop stated that when every man was sure of himself in God; when there was no sense of pride and no desire for petty victory, then the thing could be accomplished.

The congress closed with a night session, at which Dr. Robert J. Burdette delivered an address on "The Church with an Alias," and Bishop W. M. Bell talked of "Christian Unity in the Foreign Field." A very large audience was present, and their delight was frequently expressed in laughter and applause.

A GERMAN ANTI-MILITARY CRITIC

Col. Gadke, a German military critic, has joined the chorus of civilization in protest against the huge waste of armies and navies. These armaments, he says, do not tend to preserve peace, but to menace peace; and, furthermore, upon the eight great nations they impose an annual expenditure of upward of \$2,000,000,000.

The argument is not new. The figures add nothing to public information. Interest in them is due almost wholly to the source from which they come. German authorities have hitherto upheld the military spirit and maintained that a standing army is a standing benefit. An opposing voice from that quarter naturally compels attention.

In the course of events, however, it is fairly certain that German public sentiment will be forced into revolt against the Kaiser's militarism. It is either that or bankruptcy.--New York World.

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THE GOOD TIDINGS ABROAD

NO. 1

TO THE FAMILY OF GOD AT BETHEL--BROOKLYN:--
AS our vessel steamed out of New York harbor
your good wishes and kind messages
of love cheered us greatly. It was a
pleasure to know that you regretted to
have us leave, even for two months, but
it was a pleasure also to know of your
brotherly love toward God's people beyond
the sea in Great Britain and Scandinavia.
We will remember to tell them of your interest

in their welfare, and of your desire that God's blessing might accompany us to the intent that our hasty visit might further spread the "good tidings" and might further deepen their knowledge and their zeal and assist them in making their calling and their election sure in the Kingdom.

We had a pleasant voyage--uneventful. The first two days the water was a little rough, and we had little difficulty in practicing Lenten self-denial. Brother Rutherford, Jr., served as our stenographer, and, under the Lord's blessing, we were enabled to get out considerable work--answers to correspondence and matter for THE WATCH TOWER and newspapers.

We landed at Plymouth (my stenographer and myself). Brother Driscoll, as representative of the Press Association, continued his journey, going direct to

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Vienna and beyond in preparation for our later coming.

The London Bible Students' Ecclesia held a general meeting the night of our arrival. It was a very happy occasion. Some excellent testimonies were given, and later we had the pleasure of a special meeting with the Elders and Deacons. As arrangements for the use of the LONDON TABERNACLE were not fully completed, Manchester was given our first Sunday in Great Britain. We arrived at Manchester Saturday evening and were met by representatives of the Bible Students there and had

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a good night's rest in preparation for Sunday, March 19.

The Hippodrome had been secured. The morning meeting was for the interested only. It was well attended, quite a number coming from surrounding places. We had a season of spiritual refreshment. A testimony meeting preceded our arrival, and our remarks, which concluded the session, were in the nature of a testimony to the grace of God on our behalf, and respecting God's blessing upon the work in general; of our constant endeavor to grow in grace, knowledge and love, and an exhortation that all of us continue so to do.

The afternoon meeting was semi-public--that is, it had not been particularly advertised. The audience was approximately a thousand. We had excellent attention. The subject was, "The Two Salvations, but no Second Chance." The evening meeting was also in the Hippodrome. The topic was, "The Judgment of the Great White Throne." The friends had evidently advertised it thoroughly, as the audience was a very intelligent one in appearance. The number was estimated at thirty-two hundred, and it is said that hundreds were turned away. The aisles were crowded in a manner not permitted by the Fire Departments in America. For two hours the immense audience gave closest attention, many of them

standing during the entire session.

REMINDERS OF APOSTOLIC DAYS

The night train took us to London, and the next evening we were en route for the Continent. We went direct to Vienna. Some Jewish friends in New York had urged this course, suggesting that Vienna, Budapest, Cracow and Lemberg were great Jewish centers, and that in these cities many would be rejoiced to hear us respecting "Zionism in Prophecy."

According to all outward appearances these Jewish meetings were complete failures, but we are not so sure that they were such in reality, and from the Divine standpoint.

A Jewish Rabbi of New York, who there tried to do us injury, continued his efforts of opposition in Austro-Hungary, and with considerable success. He evidently was grieved that we taught the people respecting the prophecies of the Bible. He cabled at considerable expense a long message of misrepresentation, warning the Jews to beware of us--that we were a missionary.

A moderate-sized hall had been secured in Vienna and it was crowded. The audience was of average intelligence and appearance; about two-thirds of them appeared anxious to hear us, and the other one-third seemed determined that no one should hear us. From the very beginning of our address, from all over the hall, they shouted and screamed and some of them appeared possessed of demons. One would have thought that we had come to deprive them all of life and liberty, whereas our motive was purely benevolent and a desire to make them more happy--to tell them of God's love, and that the wonderful prophecies to which they are heirs, will soon be fulfilled. Evidently the many and severe lessons which the poor Jews have learned under the hand of oppression and injustice have not profited them greatly. Of justice they seem to know nothing. They neither respected our rights as friends nor even as they should have done had we been foes, neither did they respect the rights of their more intelligent brethren, who were anxious to hear what we had to say, without compromising their own liberty.

We smiled upon them and motioned to them with our hands for order, but to no avail. Through our German interpreter, Brother Koetitz, we endeavored to speak a word or two to allay their fears, but to no purpose. They shouted and screamed and whistled and made Babel of the place. Several seemed anxious to get their hands upon us, but a strong cordon of the more sensible ones formed a barricade around us. We had no fear, but those who knew our opponents better seemed quite fearful for us. Finding that we could accomplish nothing, we smilingly waved our hand, indicating that we would give up the attempt, and left the platform. The same Jews opened the way before us and kept off any opponents

and guided us out of the hall into which about six hundred were crowded. A number of young Jews followed to the hotel and questioned us until midnight and asked the privilege of coming the next day.

About fifteen came the next day and questioned further respecting the Divine Plan and of the share of the Jews therein, for about two hours. They informed us that after we had left the hall on the previous night, the Jews got into a serious wrangle among themselves. (1) An atheistic, anarchistic and Zionistic class, influenced by the cablegram of Rabbi Magnus, the self-appointed head of the self-appointed society of New York, which styles itself the Jewish Kehillah. (2) An orthodox class, greatly excited, which joined with them in opposing us, believing the statement that our object was "mission," and evidently greatly in fear that we would undertake it. (3) More than half the audience, reasonable, intelligent and more civilized and sympathetic with Judaism and the Bible, but not sympathetic with the foolishness and superstition. This class was the one which was anxious to hear us. Our Jewish friends informed us that the three parties got into such a row after we left, that forty-six policemen came in and dispersed them. We presume that Rabbi Magnus and the New York Kehillah will feel very proud of their influence over the hoodlum class of their people--the anarchists. False words may prosper for a time, but eventually the falsifiers will be known and be disesteemed by all whose esteem is desirable. We arranged to have a large number of Yiddish papers circulated in the Jewish quarter of Vienna, so that those anxious to know respecting "Zionism in Prophecy" might not be hindered entirely by their insanely fearful brethren.

We had intended a Jewish meeting at Budapest, but the advance agent reported adversely. The Hungarian government, as explained by one of the nobles, has long been trying to break down the lines of Judaism, and to have the Jews become Hungarians and become dead to any national hopes and promises. Evidently they have been successful to a considerable degree. The prominent Jews showed little interest in Zionism and preferred that their more ignorant brethren should abandon all Zionistic hopes. Added to this no moderate priced hall was available in Budapest, and Brother Driscoll's financial allowances would not permit the renting of such halls as were available.

At Cracow no meeting was held because of the Governmental restrictions. It is on the border of Russia, and Russian usages prevail to a considerable degree. It would have required some resident to become responsible to the government in respect to the meeting and what should be said thereat, and no interest was manifested by the Jews or others to this extent.

At Lemberg the situation was similar, but as Brother Driscoll had about given up his endeavor, a Jew of some prominence seemed to be Providentially sent forward.

He took an active interest in the matter, signed the papers securing the government approval, etc. We had every reason to expect that the two meetings there, afternoon

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and evening, would prove very interesting to the Jews, who constitute about 28 per cent. of the entire population; but we had miscalculated. The message from America to Vienna was forwarded to Lemberg. "Pastor Russell is a missionary and the greatest possible menace to our race," seems to have been the substance of the message. As at Vienna, the Jews were of two parties--one party anxious to hear, the other determined that no one should hear. Again the opposing Jews acted like insane people--as though possessed of evil spirits. "They gnashed on us with their teeth," would pretty nearly fit the situation. We were reminded of Apostolic times. No meeting could be held. Again we smilingly yielded to the situation and bowed adieu to the audience. Some cheered us and some cheered our opponents for having gained a victory over us. We withdrew.

We had determined not to attempt to address the evening service, and had sent a written note to this effect. In it we mentioned our interest in the Jews, assuring them that we were not endeavoring to proselyte them to Christianity; but that since the disorderly element was so large we declined to even appear to thrust ourselves on their attention.

Then a special message came from the hall to inform us that there was a large and intelligent audience waiting for us and that certain Jews had provided military police to keep order, and that we must surely come and give the address. We went, but the wild, fanatical, foolish and almost insane conduct of the afternoon was repeated. Again we smilingly bowed to the audience that we would give up any attempt to address them. In the ante-rooms prominent Jews apologized, one a banker, another a lawyer and it should be mentioned that a prominent Rabbi made an endeavor during the meeting to have order. Nevertheless the friendly Jews were so fearful that something would happen to us that we were taken from the hall by a back way to a waiting automobile. Three of our friends stuck to us until we took our train, nearly an hour past midnight. They at least did show us that all Jews are not fanatics and insane. Indeed, they had become our fast friends, and the fact that

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we took the matter so patiently, kindly and without bitterness towards our enemies, made them interested in our message, and they requested reading matter--for themselves and some to circulate.

God alone knows what his providences may be in connection with these experiences. In our estimation,

however, no higher compliment could possibly be paid to human tongue. Think of it! The Church of England Mission to the Jews has had a regular station at Lemberg, we believe also in Vienna, for years, ably and expensively managed, but these have no terror for the Jews. It was the coming of an American to speak for a few hours that threw them into such paroxysms of excitement, fear, dread of some wonderful bewitching power which would attend his utterances and sweep off a large proportion of the Jews into Christianity in two hours. Poor Jews! We must acknowledge that we are unworthy of such a tribute. Quite probably, however, their excitement on the subject may lead some to a deeper investigation than if they had heard us in a decent and orderly manner, or, not desiring to hear, had properly stayed away from the meetings to which only those interested in "Zionism in Prophecy" were in any sense of the word invited.

BERLIN CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

Our next appointment was at Berlin. There we met a very interested company of believers in Present Truth, some of whom had come about two hundred miles. We addressed them for about half an hour following their testimony meeting. Then came a general luncheon. The afternoon session was adapted to both Christians and Jews, but the topic seemed to bring an audience in which the Jews predominated--in all nearly a thousand.

Messages respecting us had been forwarded from Vienna, and there was manifested great fear lest we should convert them all in one short talk. It was surprising to us for two reasons: (1) It was in Berlin, a city of modern thought, and (2) the leader of the opposition was a Dr. Loewe, a man of fine appearance. Those who did not believe in the Bible should not have attended a meeting to which they were not invited, and if they came through any misunderstanding, justice would have demanded that they withdraw with as little disturbance as possible. It furnished a fresh illustration of how even intelligent people may be swayed by false words and prejudice. Our address had not proceeded very far until the Doctor and about 120 followers arose and retired to the rear of the room, where they made demonstrations of opposition. We judged that they were Socialists and unbelievers, because their withdrawal took place as soon as we began to refer to the prophecies of the Bible.

HOW STRANGE IT SEEMS!

How strange it seems that those who disregard the promises made to Abraham, and who even question whether any such person ever existed, should pride themselves upon belonging to his family. How strange it seems to us that any who disregard the promises of the

Scriptures should take any interest in the land of Palestine --the land of promise. Surely there is more desirable land to be found in many parts of the earth and much more accessible. Surely Zionism, without a religious basis, will never amount to anything.

The remainder of the audience, approximately eight hundred, remained and gave earnest attention as we set forth the interests, both to the Jews and Christians, of Zionism from the Biblical standpoint. At the conclusion of the service several Jews came forward and requested opportunity to apologize publicly for the conduct of those who had withdrawn boisterously. They spoke in the highest terms of the address they had listened to, assured us of their appreciation, and that they were not used to hearing such words from Christians, and that their brethren who had withdrawn had surely done so under misapprehension. They inquired when we would address them again, assuring us of a great audience. When they learned that we would depart the same night, they expressed regret, but warmly urged us to come back at a future time.

On the whole, who can tell but that, even in Berlin, the results may have been better for those who heard than if no prejudiced opposition had been manifested. We will leave the results with God. If the time has come for the Jews to hearken to their prophets, and for Zionism to take on a religious aspect, then it will be so. If we are mistaken, if God's time for Zionism is not yet, nevertheless Zionism, in the broadest sense of the term, is the hope of the world as well as for Israel. Whenever it shall come to pass, the Law will go forth from Mt. Zion, the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, the glorified Church, the great Messiah, with Jesus as the Head; and the Word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem --through the Natural Seed of Abraham--through the Ancient Worthies, and so many other believing ones as will then associate themselves with that nucleus of Messiah's earthly Kingdom.

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"UNTIL THE LORD COME"

"Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God."
--1 Cor. 4:5.

THE TEACHING of the Apostle here is parallel to that of our Lord in his parable of the wheat and the tares. (Matt. 13:24-30,36-43.) When the zealous servant in the parable inquired, "Wilt thou then that we

go and gather them [the tares] up?" the Lord answered, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the Harvest; and in the time of Harvest I will say to the reapers,* Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

All through the Gospel Age the wheat and tares have grown together, and only the Lord, who could read the hearts, could distinguish between them with unerring precision. But both the Lord and the Apostle, in the above Scriptures, indicate a difference in the time of Harvest, and show that it will then be possible for the faithful saints to judge also. With this thought in view, they are told to "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come."

THE DAY OF THE LORD HAS COME

And now the day of the Lord has come: we are now living in the days of the parousia (presence) of the Son of Man--"the Lord of the Harvest," "having on his head a golden crown [Divine authority] and in his hand [in his power] a sharp sickle"--the sickle of "present truth," the clear unfolding of the "Word of God [which] is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword ...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4:12; Matt. 9:38; Rev. 14:14.) And he is sending forth such "laborers," "angels" or "messengers" into this harvest as he sent forth into the harvest of the Jewish Age, viz., his consecrated and faithful disciples, bearing the Harvest message--the now fully revealed Plan of God and its appointed times and seasons.

The Truth thus sent forth is doing its appointed work. Like a magnet, it gathers to itself all who have an affinity for it. Thrust it in wherever you will, it will invariably accomplish its work of finding the loyal and faithful. And we can readily judge, from this affinity for the magnet, who are at heart true and loyal and faithful to the Lord. "My sheep hear my voice," said the Master, "and I know them, and they follow me;...for they know my voice [they are able to recognize his voice of Truth]; and a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:27,4,5.) Again he says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."--John 12:48.

THE TRUTH IS DOING ITS SEPARATING WORK

Thus, in this last day, the Harvest of the Age, this day of the Lord's invisible presence in the world, the Truth concerning the Divine Plan, which he has been revealing since 1874, and which is now being widely testified

for the sealing of the elect, is doing its separating work; and the saints, who understand the present situation and watch with interest the progress of the harvest work, can see clearly where the lines of judgment are drawn between the faithful and the unfaithful. And often with astonishment they mark the divisions which the Truth makes when some prominent church-member, whom they had always judged to be faithful and true, manifests no affinity for the Truth, but turns from it and hugs the error more tightly than ever; or, when some other one, touched by the power of the Truth, awakes to earnest self-sacrifice in its service.

"Judge nothing before the time." How could we have judged before this time as to whose hearts were loyal and true? But now, in this day of the Lord's presence, when the magnet of Divine Truth makes manifest those who have and those who have not an affinity for it--those who refuse to recognize the voice of the "Good Shepherd," and will not follow his leading, and who flee not from the voice of strangers, but hearken to and follow them--it becomes our duty, as well as our privilege, to judge who is on the Lord's side and who is against him; for, says the Master, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." --Matt. 12:30.

"JUDGE NOTHING UNTIL THE LORD COME"

"Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come"; but then let your spiritual senses be exercised in observing and marking the heretofore hidden things which the Truth, in its effects, is bringing to light. See how it is bringing to light the hitherto covered deformities of the various creeds. Where is the intelligent Calvinist today who would not like to bury his creed sea deep, and forever hush this wrangle that has been exposing its deformity for a few years past? And where is the intelligent Arminian that is not trembling lest his turn may come next?

Everything is being dragged to the light, whether men are willing or not; for every hidden thing must be revealed. And not only the hidden things of creeds and systems of error and iniquity, but also the hidden things of individual character; "for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."--Luke 12:2,3.

Ah! it is the day of reckoning with the Church, and "the Lord hath a controversy with his people." And this controversy, this reckoning, is not merely with the Church-nominal in its great sectarian branches; but in a special sense it is with those who have escaped from the bondage of error and sectarianism, and who, because faithful to their consciences and the truths brought to

their attention, have been served by the Master with "present truth" as "meat in due season" (Luke 12:37), and who have been permitted to enter into some of the "deep things" of God's Plan.

THE CHURCH'S JUDGMENT NOW--THE WORLD'S NOT YET HERE

The world has not yet come into its judgment; its reckoning is yet future; but ours is now upon us. We, to whom the testimony of Divine Truth has been borne, before whose mental vision the whole Plan of God with all its specifications has been spread out and carefully explained, now stand on trial, yea, under the final tests of that trial, which is either to prove or disprove our worthiness to enter into the promised reward of the faithful. Many, as predicted (Psa. 91:7), are proving unworthy, and some still stand.

*"The reapers are the messengers" who bear the Truth, the indirect influence of which binds the tares. See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. III., Chap. VI.

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And among those whom we fellowship and bid Godspeed as faithful brethren in Christ, it is our duty to judge as to whether they are still faithful when the magnet of Truth makes their judgment so manifest in this day of the Lord; for it is written (2 John 10,11), "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Here is a responsibility with reference to our endorsement of another which we cannot ignore and still be faithful; and except we judge of one's course by his fidelity or infidelity to the Truth, we shall be endorsing error quite as often as Truth. It is our privilege to know the Truth and to hold it firmly and to be faithful to it to the end, and if we so abide and walk in the light we will quickly know when one has turned away from the light into darkness, and will be able to render wholesome counsel and warning to such, and to help those who still retain enough of the spirit of meekness to accept the proffered assistance.

But, if such a one still pursue the path of darkness and call it light, thus deceiving himself and others, we cannot further endorse him and be guiltless. To do so is to add our influence in some measure, at least, to the error and in opposition to the Truth, and thus we become partaker of his evil deeds.

"IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES SHALL COME"

The necessity for this careful discrimination and jealous guarding of the Truth in these last days is very manifest, both from the warnings of the Scriptures and from observation of their fulfilment. "In the last days," says the Apostle, "perilous times shall come." (2 Tim. 3:1.) Why? Because the Prince of darkness will make every possible effort to retain his power and dominion; and ignorance, error and superstition are his strongholds. He first used all his power to keep men in ignorance and to foster superstition. But now God's due time has come for knowledge to be increased (Dan. 12:4), and the Millennial dawn is breaking; and not only the Church but the world is now waking up and beginning to think.

So the policy of Satan at present is to devise plausible counterfeits of the Truth, whereby to entrap and mislead those who have been making progress in the knowledge of the Divine Plan. As, in the beginning of our Lord's ministry at his first advent, Satan's efforts were concentrated upon the one object of causing him to stumble, thereby to nip the Divine Plan in the bud; and as during the Gospel Age the consecrated members of the Body of Christ have been specially opposed and beset by him, so now his efforts are concentrated specially upon the last members of that Body, "the Feet of him," who are running the race for the prize of the high calling. It is for this cause that so many new and plausible forms of error have been brought forward within this Harvest period.

SATAN USING EVERY EFFORT TO STUMBLE THE FEET OF HIM THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE

Satan is using every effort to thwart God's Plan and to stumble the Feet. And God even more than permits this: he encourages it by sending these strong delusions of Satan among his professed followers--at the same time assuring all who at heart are faithful to his Word and to their covenant of self-sacrifice that they need fear no evil, for he will be with them and uphold them though a thousand fall at their side.

Ever since the Plan of God has been made manifest to the saints, the delusions of error have been rapidly multiplying. This was foretold by the Apostle who, referring to our Lord's second coming, said, "And then shall that wicked [the Man of Sin] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the bright-shining of his presence,* whose parousia [Christ's presence] is with+ [or accompanied by] the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they might all be condemned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."++ --2 Thess. 2:8-12.

One after another the deluded ones who have fallen into the various snares set for their feet have become active advocates of the several causes they have espoused since they departed from the Truth, and are advanced by the Adversary as teachers, angels or messengers of new light. They never seem to realize that they have gone into darkness, but imagine they have made great strides of progress in the light. This is because they have been overcome by the strong delusions of this evil day. They verily mistake the darkness for the light, the error for the Truth. But, though they be cast thus into the outer darkness of the world and of the nominal professor, thank God, we can now see that by and by the shining forth of the Sun of Righteousness in the Millennial morning shall open all the error-blinded eyes to the full and glorious Truth, though too late to assist any to win the great prize of joint-heirship in the Kingdom.

**THE STRONG DELUSIONS SHALL CAUSE THE UNWORTHY
TO BELIEVE THE UNTRUTH**

However, none are ever permitted to be thus overcome who have not in some way been unfaithful to the Truth and hence unworthy of it. Upon all such God has said he would send the strong delusion, so that they shall believe a lie. The Truth being designed for those only who are worthy of it--the elect--all others are bound to lose it. But it is impossible to deceive the "very elect." God will keep them by his mighty power because of their faithfulness and loyalty to him.

The Lord distinguishes between the nominally elect and the finally elect, and so should we. Not all who have accepted of the Redeemer's favor of justification from guilt, and have heard and accepted the high calling to joint-heirship with Christ in his Kingdom and glory, will attain that great prize. All such have entered the race as now the nominally elect, and all such are eligible to membership in the glorified Church as the finally elect; but in order to gain that prize they must fulfil the conditions specified when they entered the race--when they in Christ's name and merit made a covenant with God, to sacrifice themselves in his service. In no other way can they make their calling and election sure.

**"LET HIM THAT THINKETH HE STANDETH TAKE HEED
LEST HE FALL"**

It is this nominally elect class that is being tried now; and God is now making manifest the secret counsels of the hearts of his people. He puts us all on guard, too, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"; and telling us to take heed that no man take our crown.

*The words, "Even him," here supplied by the translators, and not in the original text, as indicated by the italics, tend to obscure the sense of this passage.

+The Greek word "kata," rendered "after" in the common version, should here be rendered "with," as the same word is rendered in Mark 1:27; 1 Cor. 2:1; Eph. 6:6.

++Greek adikia should here be rendered untruth or error because contrasted with truth.

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How great is the responsibility of our present position before God, the great Judge of all hearts! He has shown us special favor in revealing to us the wonders of his Plan and in setting before us the grand prize of our high calling. Thus far we were counted worthy of those favors and eligible to the prize of joint-heirship with Christ. How worthy have we proved ourselves since receiving this knowledge? Have we received it with meekness and humility and with a gratitude which manifests itself in active service of the Truth--in proclaiming it to others and in defending it and standing by it nobly in the midst of all the reproaches hurled against it? Have we refused to compromise the Truth to any extent to avoid its otherwise inevitable reproach?

If we are not thus jealous for the Truth we are not worthy of it, and one of the deceptions of this "evil day" will surely number us among its victims; for it is in this time of the Lord's presence that Satan is to work so mightily, with great power to deceive, with signs of success and with lying wonders of error. His various schemes will have great success, in comparison with which the success of the Truth will seem small; for with these, as with Gideon's band, it will be a time of sifting, and "who shall be able to stand?"

But let those who stand girt about with Divine Truth fear nothing; the Lord is permitting these delusions that they may serve his own wise and benevolent purposes in the separating of the worthy from the unworthy, and for the manifestation of those who are at heart loyal to him and to his Truth.

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"CONSIDER HIM LEST YE BE WEARIED"

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

TO "CONSIDER HIM" seems to be to take note of, to have in mind, to reflect upon and not to easily forget how our Lord endured various trials and oppositions of sinners against himself. In our own experiences

we have, as the Lord's followers, endured some opposition of sin and sinners against ourselves; but we have not yet resisted unto blood. We have not yet passed through the trying experiences through which he passed. When we remember that while we are poor, imperfect creatures like our neighbors, he was "holy, harmless, undefiled," then it is good to reflect that he endured patiently the opposition of sinners. When trying experiences came to him, he did not consider them as being merely from the individual with whom they originated, but as being, on the other hand, under the supervision of the Father. If, therefore, the Father permitted such experiences to come to him, he was bound to prove his loyalty by patient endurance. As he said, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"--John 18:11.

So it is with us, Spiritual Israel, "The Lord your God proveth you." (Deut. 13:3.) In proportion as we are able to take our Lord's viewpoint in our experiences in life, we may be calm. If the Father permits trying experiences for our testing, or for the testing or proving of others, in ways we may not understand, it is for us to rejoice to have his will done. The poet has beautifully expressed this thought when he says:--

"My times are in thy hands,
My God, I wish them there."

If we faithfully endure to the end, the reward will be ours. If we prove our loyalty and keep our faith that God is supervising our affairs, and that no good thing will be withhold from those who are walking uprightly, we shall some day hear his "Well done, good and faithful servant."

We know that our Lord endured physical opposition. But our English word "contradiction" properly translates the original, implying verbal contradiction of his words. As we consider our Lord's case, we see that the people opposed him, not physically, but in his words, his teachings. It was left for the high priest and Sanhedrin and soldiers to do him physical violence and put him to death; and he could have resisted them if he had so chosen.

"WHEN HE WAS REVILED, HE REVILED NOT AGAIN"

The Apostle, therefore, seems to refer to the contradiction of his words. This is implied by St. Peter, who says, "When he was reviled, he reviled not again." (I Pet. 2:23.) So when we consider the three and a half years of Christ's ministry, we find that his doctrines were disputed, and that he was slandered. The Jews said that he had a demon; that he performed his miracles by the Prince of demons; that he was a blasphemer. These contradictions and oppositions on their part might have called out from him some very just, truthful statements, respecting them. He might have given them as good as he got, and better. He might have told them that the

Devil was working with them, etc. His perfect power of language would have given him ability to more than cope with them. When they thought to entrap him in his words, he entrapped them in their words. But he reviled not. He did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. This, the Apostle shows, is the proper course.

But in the daily affairs of life, when people say all manner of evil against us, when they revile us, it is natural to the fallen flesh to think of something evil to say in return. Thus these things become tests upon us. If we yield to such a spirit, we are following the course of the enemy and not that of the Lord.

"Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" when attacked by the Adversary--whoever may be his agents and whatever may be their missiles. He cannot harm but will only increase our reputation in the Lords' sight, if we endure faithfully; and he can do

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no outward harm that God cannot overrule for the good of his cause--though that good may mean "siftings" of "chaff" and "tares" from the "wheat."

Evil speaking, backbiting and slandering are strictly forbidden to God's people as wholly contrary to his spirit of love, even if the evil thing be true. As a preventive of anything in the nature of slander, the Scriptures very carefully mark out only one way of redress of grievances. --Matt. 18:15-17.

PROFESSED CHRISTIANS OFTEN WORST SCANDALMONGERS

Many, among even advanced Christians, seem to be utterly in ignorance of this Divine ruling, and hence professed Christians are often the most pronounced scandalmongers. Yet this is one of the few special, specific commandments given by our Lord; and considered in connection with the statement, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you," the constant violation of this, our Lord's command, proves that many are not far advanced in friendship--discipleship.

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Let us look carefully at this rule, which if followed would prevent gossip, "evil speaking," "backbiting." See, as above cited, Matt. 18:15-17. Its first provision, for a conference between the principals alone, implies candor on the part of the accuser, who thinks that he has suffered. It also implies his thinking no evil of the accused. They meet as "brethren," each thinking his own course the right one, to discuss the matter; to see whether they can come to the same view. If they agree, all is well; the matter is settled; peace prevails; the threatened break

has been averted, and no one is the wiser. In the great majority of cases, a frank, open discussion between the principals will bring about harmony. But both must be equally candid and governed by the Spirit of the Lord.

Thus did our Lord guard his true disciples from the insidious sin of slander, which leads onward to other and grosser works of the flesh and the Devil, and stops growth in the Truth and its spirit of love. Let us also note that those who hear slanders and thus encourage slanderers in their course of wrongdoing, are partakers of their evil deeds; guilty partners in the violation of the Master's commands. God's true people should refuse to listen to slanders and should point the offender to the Lord's Word and the only method therein authorized. Are we wiser than God? Experience teaches that we cannot trust to our own judgments and are on safe ground only when following the voice of the Shepherd implicitly.

WE SHOULD REFUSE TO HEAR GOSSIP AND SLANDER

If any Brother or Sister brings to you an evil report of others, stop him at once, kindly but firmly. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." (Eph. 5:11.) Refuse to have any share in this violation of the Master's commands, which does great mischief in the Church. If the Brother or Sister be only a "babe" in spiritual matters, call attention to the Lord's ruling on the subject. (Matt. 18:15; I Tim. 5:19.) If the conversation is not addressed to you but merely in your hearing, promptly show your disapproval by withdrawing.

If, after having had his attention called to the Lord's command on this subject, the slanderer still persists in "evil speaking," "backbiting" and telling you his "evil-surmisings," reprove him more sharply, saying as you go, "I cannot, must not, hear you; for if I did, I would be as criminal in the matter as you are, violating the Lord's command. And even if I were to hear your story I could not believe it; for the Christian who does not respect the Lord's Word and follow his Plan for the redress of grievances, shows so little of the Lord's spirit that his word cannot be trusted. He who twists and dodges the Lord's words would not hesitate to twist and misrepresent the words and deeds of fellow-disciples." Then withdraw fellowship from such until his error has been confessed with promises of reform. If to any extent you listen to such conversation, or express "sympathy" with it or with the gossip or slanderer, you are a partner in the sin and in all its consequences; and if a "root of bitterness" is thus developed, you are more than likely to be one of those "defiled" by it.--Heb. 12:15.

Be pure: maintain a conscience void of offense toward God and men. Begin with the heart; harbor no thoughts that in any sense of the word would be evil. To make sure of this, have Christ Jesus as your pattern, well and much before your mind. When evil is obtruded

upon you, either from without or from within, lift up your heart in prayer to him for the grace promised in every time of need. Keep constantly before you the prayer, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer."--Psa. 19:14.

LET US CULTIVATE APPRECIATION OF THE PRINCIPLES OF DIVINE LAW

While seeking to follow the various specific commands of Scripture, let us seek more and more to understand and come in sympathy with the principles which underlie the Divine Law. These will enable us to judge of the right and the wrong of such of our words, thoughts and acts as may not be particularly specified in the Lord's Word. Indeed, as we come to understand and sympathize with the principles of Divine Law, to that extent we are getting the spirit of the Divine Word. Note the testimony of the Psalmist on this point, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy Word. I have not departed from thy judgments, for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."--Psa. 119:97-105.

Shun a contentious and fault-finding disposition as contrary to the spirit, or disposition of Christ--contrary to love. A certain amount of combative courage is demanded in overcoming the world, the flesh and the Devil and their various snares. This fighting disposition may become a valuable aid to ourselves and to the Master's cause if rightly and wisely directed against sin, first in ourselves and secondly in others; if used for the Lord and his people and against Satan and all his powers of darkness and superstition. This, in the Scriptures, is called fighting the good fight, and we all should be gallant soldiers in this battle for Right and Truth, lovingly defending our Captain's honor and his people's liberties.

THE POWERS OF EVIL WOULD MAKE COMBATIVENESS A CHIEF VIRTUE

But such a good use of combativeness is not pleasing to the Prince of this world, who will seek to pervert what he cannot directly use. Consequently, he attempts with some to make combativeness a chief virtue. He encourages them to fight everything and everybody; the brethren, more than the powers of darkness; nominal churchmen, more than the errors and ignorance which

blind them and make them such. Indeed, his desire is to get us to "fight against God."

Let us be on our guard on this point. Let us, first of all, judge ourselves, lest we cast a stumbling-block before others; let us fight down in our own hearts the wrong spirit which seeks to make mountains out of trifles and disposes us to be captious and contentious over non-essentials. Greater is "He that ruleth his own spirit than he that taketh a city." (Prov. 16:32.) Let us guard ourselves that our defense of the Truth be, not from motives of self-glorification, but from love for the Truth, love for the Lord, for his people, the brethren. If love be the impelling spirit, or motive, it will show itself accordingly in a loving, gentle, patient, humble course toward all the fellow-servants. Let us be "gentle toward all." Let "the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God," which is quick and powerful, do all the cutting.

Beware of all thoughts, feelings and conditions of heart directly or remotely connected with malice, envy,

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hatred, strife. Give these no place in your heart even for a moment; for they will surely do you great injury, aside from leading to the injury of others. Keep your heart, your will, your intentions and desires full of love toward God and all his creatures--the most fervent toward God, and proportionately toward all who have his spirit and walk in the way of his direction.

DO NOT TRUST TO CONSCIENCE ALONE

If conscience were a sufficient guide you would have no need of the Scriptures. The majority of people have as good as no conscience; for they are blind to the principles and laws of God given to guide conscience; and still worse off than these are those mentioned in I Tim. 4:2. Hence the imperative necessity for carefully heeding the Lord's Word, and walking circumspectly according to its light.

We are not to faint in our minds nor become discouraged, feeling that so much has been said against us that we must give up the race. On the contrary, we are to feel assured like our Lord, that nothing can befall us except with the knowledge of the Father, who is working all things for our good. It was thus our Lord was prepared for his exaltation. So we, if we are rightly exercised by our various experiences and follow as closely as possible the commands laid down for our guidance, will find that even revilings, slanders, oppositions to righteousness, will work out blessings for us, as they did for our Lord.

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But how many become weary and are in danger of

losing the prize because they fail to consider what the Lord faithfully endured of opposition! If such would consider that the Lord, who was perfect, suffered in every sense unjustly for righteousness' sake, and that their own conduct is imperfect, they would not be weary in well doing, but would learn to fight and to "endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ"; they would continue to "fight the good fight of faith."

"We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we [the Church] are, yet without sin."--Heb. 4:15.

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WHAT OUR LORD FEARED AND FROM WHAT HE WAS SAVED

"Christ...was heard in that he feared."--Heb. 5:7.

THAT which the Lord feared was not that the love or promises of God would fail. He knew that God was faithful who had promised; that God is a covenant-keeping God, and that all his conduct and dealings are founded upon the eternal principles of truth and righteousness, from which to vary in the least iota would be a moral impossibility. But the Lord also knew that the plan of human salvation was made dependent upon the obedience of the Anointed High Priest to every jot and tittle of the Law concerning him, as shown in the typical service of the Tabernacle. Not only must the sacrifice be made, but it must be offered exactly as prescribed.

If the typical high priest, Aaron, had at any time failed to conform to the directions given for the offering (see Lev. 9:16); if he had forgotten or ignored any part of the directions; or if he had substituted some of his own ideas, he would not have been allowed to sprinkle the blood of such imperfect sacrifice upon the mercy-seat; his offering would not have been accepted; he would have died, and so could never have come out and blessed the people.--Lev. 16:2,3.

Thus we see that when undertaking the great work of redemption our Lord bore in himself the issues of life and death, not only for the whole human race, but for himself as well. Figuratively speaking, he took his life into his own hands. No wonder, then, if under the weight of his responsibility, the Lord feared! The tension of the trials to which he was subjected was too great for even the perfect human nature, unaided by Divine grace. Therefore he frequently sought the place of prayer for grace to help in every time of need.

Consider the great fight of afflictions through which he passed; the subtle and deceptive temptations in the wilderness (SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. 5, pp. 110-117); the contradiction of sinners against himself, and the base ingratitude of those he came to save; consider also his poverty, his loss of friends, his labors and weariness, his homelessness, his bitter and relentless persecutions and, finally, his betrayal and dying agony! Surely the tests of endurance and of obedience to the exact requirements of the Law of sacrifice, under these circumstances, were most crucial. What carefulness it wrought in the Lord; for he feared, lest the promise having been left him of entering into the rest that remaineth and the glory to follow the Day of Atonement, he should come short of the full requirements of his Office as Priest, to render acceptable service. So also, says the Apostle (Heb. 4:1), should we fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.

"THE CUP WHICH MY FATHER HATH POURED FOR ME
SHALL I NOT DRINK IT?"

When the Lord came to the last night of his earthly life, then the question came to his mind with increased force, "Have I thus far done everything in exact accordance with the will of God? And now, in full view of the agony which it will cost, am I able to drink the bitter cup to its very dregs? Can I endure, not only the physical agony, but also the ignominy and shame and cruel mockings? And can I do it so perfectly as to be entirely acceptable to God in my own righteousness? Can I endure to see my disciples scattered and dismayed and my lifework apparently destroyed, my name and the cause of God covered with infamy, and my enemies triumphant and boastful? Can I do this so as to hear the 'well done?'"

Such was our Lord's last conflict. Doubtless the powers of darkness were busy in that awful hour, taking advantage of the circumstances and of his weakness and weariness to discourage his hope and to fill his mind with fears that, after all, he would fail, or had failed to do the work acceptably; and that a resurrection, therefore, was uncertain. No wonder that the perfect human heart sank before such considerations and that an agony of emotion brought great drops of bloody sweat! But did he yield to the discouragement and give up the struggle when the crucial test was thus upon him? No! he took those human fears to the Heavenly Father, "to him who was able to deliver him out of death," in order that his

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human will might be reinforced by Divine grace to go forward and complete his sacrifice acceptably to God; to freely submit to be led away as a lamb to the slaughter,

and, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so to open not his mouth in self-defense.--Isa. 53:7.

His prayers to the Father were not in vain: "He was heard in that he feared." Though his words were few (because no words could express the emotions of his soul) his chastened spirit was all the while making intercession for him with groanings which could not be uttered. (Rom. 8:28.) Then God sent an angel to comfort and minister unto him; to assure him still of the Divine favor, and thus to give him fresh courage, strength of mind and steadiness of nerve to endure all that was before him, even unto death.

With this assistance of Divine grace our dear Lord went forth from that moment with undaunted courage to finish the work which was given him to do. Calmly he could come now and say to his beloved, but weary and bewildered disciples, "Sleep on, now, and take your rest." The bitterness of the mental conflict was over, and the light of heaven shining into his soul had chased away the deep gloom that hung over him like a funeral pall, making him "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Yes, "he was heard in that he feared"; and the fear was all taken away; and, strong in the strength which God supplied, he felt that he was able to offer the acceptable sacrifice, to meet every jot and tittle of the requirement of the Law in doing so; and hence, that his salvation out of death, his resurrection, was assured.

"LEARNED OBEDIENCE THROUGH THE THINGS WHICH HE SUFFERED"

The fear on the Lord's part was not a sinful fear. It was a fear such as we, also, are exhorted to have--we who are striving to walk in his footsteps--lest we fail to realize the precious promises vouchsafed to us upon conditions that are positive and unalterable. (Heb. 4:1.) It was a fear begotten, not of doubt of the Father's ability and willingness to fulfil all his promises, but of a knowledge of the righteous principles which must in every case govern the Father's course of action; a fear of the inflexible Law which righteously affixed the reward of eternal life and glory to his fulfilling of his Covenant of sacrifice, or of eternal death should he fail. At the same time he began to realize that, though perfect as a human being, his heart and his flesh would fail unless reinforced by Divine grace. The Psalmist expressed this fear of the Lord and the source from which his help came, when he said, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." (Psa. 73:26.) It was a filial fear entirely compatible with his relationship to God as a recognized Son; for "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience through the things which he suffered."--Heb. 5:8.

We are glad that Jesus was not cold and stoical, but that he was full of warm, loving, tender feelings and sensibilities; and that we, consequently, can realize his

ability to sympathize with the most tender, the most delicate, the most refined, the most sensitive, more than could any other human being. He must have felt keenly the conditions under which he had placed himself, in laying down his life on our behalf; for the more perfect the organism, the more sensitive and high-strung are the feelings; the greater the capacity for joy, the greater the capacity for sorrow. Being absolutely perfect, our Lord must have been immeasurably more susceptible to the influence of pain than are others.

"OFFERED UP STRONG CRYINGS AND TEARS TO HIM
WHO WAS ABLE TO SAVE HIM"

Besides this, he knew that he had a perfect life, unforfeited, and realized that he was about to part with it. Others of the human family possess only a forfeited or condemned existence, and realize that they must part with this some time. It would, therefore, be a very different matter for our Lord to lay down his life from that of any of his followers laying down theirs. If we let one hundred per cent. represent perfect life, our Lord had the full one hundred per cent. to lay down, while we, being more than ninety-nine one-hundredths dead through trespasses and sins and condemnation could, at most, have had but one hundredth part to lay down. A cold, stoical indifference to the loss of life, based upon knowledge that it could last but a short time longer at best, would, therefore, be a very different thing from the clear knowledge which our Lord had of the experience which he had with the Father "before the world was"; and the realization that the life he was about to lay down was not forfeited through sin, but was his own voluntary sacrifice.

There can be no doubt that this thought of the extinguishment of life was an important factor in our Lord's sorrow. The Apostle clearly intimates it in the words (Heb. 5:7), "Who in the days of his flesh... offered up prayers and supplication, with strong cryings and tears, unto him who was able to save him from [out of] death, and was heard in [respect to] that he feared" --extinction. This thought brought with it another, viz., Had he done the Father's will perfectly? Could he claim, and would he receive the reward promised him--a resurrection from the dead?

Had he failed in any particular to come to the exact standard of perfection his death would have meant extinction; and although all men fear extinction, none could know the full depth and force of its meaning as could he who not only had the perfection of life, but had recollection of his previous glory with his Father before the world was. For him the very thought of extinction would bring anguish, terror of soul. This thought seems not to have come to our Lord with the same force previously. It was this, therefore, that bore down upon him now so heavily as an exceeding sorrow unto death. He saw himself about to suffer according to the Law as an

evil-doer, and the question naturally arose, was he entirely blameless, and would the Heavenly Judge thoroughly acquit him whom so many were disposed to condemn?

"COULD YE NOT WATCH WITH ME ONE HOUR?"

After praying he went to his three disciples, but found them asleep. Gently he reproved them asking, "Could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Then our Lord went away and used the same words in prayer; and again he prayed a third time, similarly. The matter was weighing upon his heart. Could he rely upon it now, that having sought to do the Father's will, having finished his course, he had done it acceptably? Could he have full assurance of faith that God would save him out of death by a resurrection?

In answer to his petition a heavenly messenger was sent to comfort him, to reassure him, to strengthen him. We are not informed what message the angel brought, but we can see that it was a message of peace; that he brought assurance, not only that the Lord's course had the Father's approval, but that he would be brought again from the dead by a resurrection. These were quite sufficient to give our Lord all the strength and courage necessary for the ordeal before him; and from that moment

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onward we find him the coolest and calmest of the notable figures brought to our attention. When approached by Judas and his band, he was the most calm and self-possessed of all; when before the chief-priest, Caiaphas, he was the same; when before Pilate, the same; when crucified, the same. He had found peace in the message that he was approved of the Father, and that all the gracious promises of glory, honor and immortality were his; and now he could pass through any ordeal, he could submit himself perfectly to his enemies.

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SIN NOT WITH YOUR TONGUE

"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me."--Psa. 39:1.

OUR general thoughts have much to do with our language, our general conversation. Whoever, therefore, possesses a proper control of his heart, will govern himself in every sense of the word. If our ways please the Lord, if our ways are ways of

righteousness, then out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak to the edification of the hearer. The ways being right, the utterances will be right. People generally love themselves and avoid saying anything bitter, unkind, about themselves. But the man who hates his neighbors will have very little difficulty in saying something bitter or unkind of them.

Though the tongue is one of the most useful members, yet it is necessary to put a bridle, a restraint, a controlling influence upon it. With the tongue we may honor our God or we may blaspheme him. When in the presence of the wicked, we need to be still more on guard than with the righteous; for with the former the tendencies and thoughts are toward evil. When with the wicked or in their presence we are in contact with a degrading influence. At such times, some of sympathetic disposition may find special difficulty in bridling their tongues; but it is better to do so than to speak of even good things to the wicked, as we would feel at liberty to do with the righteous. The Lord has suggested, "Cast not your pearls before swine,...lest they turn again and rend you."

Besides the evilly inclined of the world there is another class Scripturally called the wicked; namely, people who have a knowledge of the Lord, but who take their stand in opposition to him. Judas was of this class. So there are about us those who are in an adverse attitude. None seem to be so cynical as those who have been partakers of the Holy Spirit, but who have turned their backs upon "the Way, the Truth and the Life." Such

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seem to be more wicked than others in that they are in a more reprehensible attitude. No matter how careful we are, these will distort our words and assert that we have said something that we have not said.

The warning of the Scriptures is not against the tongue itself, but against the power we exercise against others by the use of our tongues. Probably every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil.

THE TONGUE OFTEN A POWER FOR EVIL AMONG THE LORD'S PEOPLE

As the bit in the horse's mouth will control his strength; and as the small rudder of a vessel will direct its course; so the tongue, and the pen, its representative, may influence large numbers of people for good or ill. How important, therefore, is the tongue! And how much more frequently do we find it employed as an agency for evil than for good; to pull down rather than to build up the faith; to implant seeds of discord and discontent rather than those which will produce righteousness and

peace! While this is specially true in the worldly, it is also true among God's people; and each should remember that to some extent he is a teacher, and day by day is either forwarding or hindering the cause of truth, righteousness and peace.

In the unregenerate world the tongue is a "fire" causing no end of burning of wrath, envy, hatred, strife and everything that defiles the entire body, stimulating all the fallen passions and desires. No wonder the Apostle declares that, figuratively, the tongue is set on fire of gehenna--the Second Death. Its burning tends to bring, not only its owner, but others to destruction.

As imperfect beings we may not always be perfect in word and deed. Despite our best endeavors we sometimes err in word as well as in deed; yet the perfect mastery of our words and our ways is to be sought by vigilant and faithful effort. But, nevertheless, for every idle word we must give an account in this our day of Judgment.

WE SHOULD DAILY RENDER OUR ACCOUNTS

If, in the daily scrutiny of our ways, which is the duty of every Christian, we discover that our words have in any way been dishonoring to the Lord, we should remember that, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous" (I John 2:1); and in the name of our Advocate we may approach the throne of grace. There we may explain to our Heavenly Father our realization of our error, our deep regret at our failure to honor his name and his cause by a holy walk and conversation, and humbly request that the sin be not laid to our charge; but that it may be blotted out by his gracious provision for our cleansing, through Christ, humbly acknowledging that in his precious blood is all our hope and trust.

Thus we should render up our account for every idle word; and by our words of repentance, supplemented by the merit of Christ applied by faith, shall we be acquitted. Otherwise, the idle words dishonoring to the Lord, will stand against us and condemn us, and we shall be obliged to suffer the consequences. The first consequence will be self-injury, for every evil thought or word indulged hardens the character and inclines it the more toward unrighteousness. The second consequence is that by setting a bad example to others we stir up evil in them. "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger." (Prov. 15:1.) Thus, as the result of unwise or unkind words, we may stir up about us difficulties which will become agents of retributive Justice to teach us the lesson of self-control and consideration for the feelings and opinions of others.

It is often the case that the Lord (or the Devil) is blamed for sending trials, which are simply the natural results of our own mistakes. Those who fail to locate the root of the matter (in themselves) pray in vain for

the Lord to remove miraculously what they themselves could obviate by obedience to the Word and vigorous self-discipline. "If we would judge [and correct] ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord [largely by the experiences through which our own faults put us], that we should not be condemned with the world."--I Cor. 11:31,32.

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THE TENDENCY OF FALLEN NATURE IS TO BLAME OTHERS RATHER THAN OURSELVES

But even should it be admitted that the difficulties are not directly caused by God or by the Devil ("Every man is tempted [tried] when he is drawn away by his own lusts [desires] and enticed"), the natural tendency is to blame some one else, and to think that our lack of patience, our hasty word or act, was the fault of another. How many deceive and encourage themselves with the thought, "If everybody else had as reasonable and generous a nature as I have, our family or Church gathering or community would be a veritable heaven upon earth!" Beloved, let us examine ourselves, let us be very humble lest the thoughts of self-congratulation and self-satisfaction which we may consider in our hearts, even if we do not utter them aloud, bring our condemnation.

"If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye [what merit is there in it]? (Luke 6:32,33.) It is only when we "endure grief, suffering wrongfully," that our suffering is acceptable to God as a sacrifice of sweet incense. "What glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? but if, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God; for even hereunto were ye called." (I Pet. 2:19-21.) Beloved, let us see to it that our sufferings are for righteousness' sake only, and let us not charge God or our neighbors for tribulations resulting from the indulgence of our own inherited or cultivated faults.

In view of the fact that we now stand before the bar of Judgment, which, if we are truly the Lord's people, we will endeavor more and more fully to realize, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" (2 Pet. 3:11.) Godlikeness certainly cannot include any harmful gossip, any unclean or unholy conversation, any disloyal or rebellious words. Let us remember daily to settle our accounts with the Lord, to make sure that no record of idle words not repented of, and, consequently, unforgiven, stands against us. "Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ."

HOLY THOUGHTS PRODUCE HOLY WORDS

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Phil. 1:27; 4:8.) Thus out of the good treasure of the heart we shall speak the words of truth and soberness, and honor our Lord by a godly walk and conversation, subduing the tendencies of our fallen nature, and "having our conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may, by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."--I Pet. 2:12.

If daily we render up our accounts to God and seek his grace for greater overcoming power with each succeeding day, we shall be acquitted in judgment and stand approved before God, through Christ, having the testimony of his Holy Spirit with our spirits that we are pleasing and acceptable to him. So, dear brethren, let us "take heed to our ways, that we sin not with our tongues." (Psa. 39:1.) There is nothing that is of so powerful an influence as the tongue. The influence of a good word, a good thought, may become world-wide; an evil thought, an evil word, may also extend its influence to the end of the world.

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BEREAN QUESTIONS IN SCRIPTURE STUDIES

Series VI., Study V.--The Organization of the New Creation.

JUNE 4

APOSTOLIC INFALLIBILITY

(49) While assured of the Apostles' inspiration and their guidance by the Holy Spirit, how can we explain Peter's denial of our Lord? P. 223, par. 4,5.

(50) Did the Apostolic office bring with it perfection of every thought and action? P. 224, top, and par. 1.

(51) Did Peter's "dissembling" on one occasion affect his usefulness as an Apostle? P. 224, par. 2.

(52) What reply shall we make to the objection that the Apostles expected the Lord's second advent during their lifetime, and were therefore untrustworthy in their teachings? P. 225, par. 1,2.

(53) What shall we say to the objection that Paul's teaching and practice with respect to circumcision did not agree? P. 226, par. 1,2.

(54) How explain the Apostle Paul's course recorded in Acts 21:20-26? Pp. 227-229.

JUNE 11

THE APOSTLES NOT LORDS

(55) Were the Apostles ordained to be lords or rulers, or in any manner the vicars or substitutes of Christ in their relation to the other members of the Body? P. 229, par. 3,4.

(56) Were the Apostles ever regarded as lords by the early Church, or did they assume such dignity? P. 230, par. 1.

(57) Were the actions and experiences of the Apostles such as would be expected of lords? P. 230, par. 2.

(58) Did the Apostles counsel or encourage any other members of the Church to such aspirations? P. 231, par. 1,2.

(59) What were the respective attitudes of the Apostles and the other members of the Church toward each other? P. 232, par. 1.

(60) Why were the disciples at Berea especially commended by the Apostle Paul? P. 232, par. 2.

(61) Was this method of proving the Gospel also approved by our Lord? P. 233, par. 1, first part.

(62) What is the proof of Divine inspiration in the teaching of the Lord and the Apostles, the Law and the Prophets? P. 233, par. 1, last part, and par. 2.

JUNE 18

APOSTLES, PROPHETS, EVANGELISTS, TEACHERS

(63) What is the general thought of Christendom with respect to the organization of the Church, and what is the character of the Divine arrangement in contrast with this? P. 234, par. 1.

(64) In showing forth the Divine arrangement, should we consider ecclesiastical history? P. 234, par. 2, first sentence.

(65) In examining the Bible account of the Church's organization, how shall we regard the Old Testament with its types? P. 234, par. 2, and P. 235.

(66) In looking to the New Testament for directions respecting the organization and rules of the Church in her trial state, what must we keep constantly in mind? P. 235, par. 1.

(67) What Scriptural illustration (1 Cor. 12) beautifully illustrates this entire subject? P. 236, par. 1.

(68) What conclusion do we draw from this illustration as to the necessity for stringent rules in the Lord's organization of the Church? P. 236, par. 2.

JUNE 25

(69) Who is the Superintendent of affairs in the Church? P. 237, par. 1,2.

(70) Should those who fill the more responsible positions in the Body be able to produce evidence of their Divine appointment? P. 237, par. 3.

(71) Do we find the same variety of members in the Church now as were necessary in the early Church? P. 238, par. 1, first part.

(72) When and how did the "gifts" of the Spirit cease? P. 238, par. 1, last part.

(73) What did the Apostle mean when he said, "Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way"? (1 Cor. 12:31). P. 238, par. 2.

(74) Where do we find another Scriptural lesson concerning the oneness of the Church as one Body of many members, and the object of special service on the part of some members? P. 239, par. 1.

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